Guide to MBA’s High School Writing and Grammar Curriculum

9th and 10th Grades

Expectations:

1. Students should be able to recognize, diagram, and use the following:
   - Parts of speech and parts of the sentence
   - Various sentence types (s, cpd, cs, cpd-ex)
   - Clauses (noun, adverb, adjective)
   - Verbals (gerunds, infinitives, participles)
   - Pronouns (reference and case)

2. Students should know basic punctuation rules for different sentence types and for possession
3. Students should understand rules for agreement issues including subject-verb and pronouns
4. Students should have basic knowledge of the theory of the 5-paragraph analytical essay
5. Students should understand MBA outline form.
6. Students should have rudimentary knowledge of the mechanics of writing essays, including how to punctuate titles and how to format an MBA theme.

Goals:

- Review major components of grammar: sentence structure, clauses, verbals.
- Review and teach correct punctuation of all sentence types and of other structures such as clauses, participles, and other interrupting elements.
- Recognize fragments, comma-splices, run-ons.
- Review and teach rules for using clear pronouns (agreement, reference, manners).
- Review and teach rules for subject/verb agreement.
- Teach students to recognize errors by revising practice sentences and paragraphs.
- Use vocabulary quizzes to assist with grammar review throughout the year.
- Teach expository and analytical writing in the 5-paragraph essay and develop the students’ writing process. (9th and 10th)
- Concentrate on pre-writing techniques (lists of ideas, idea clustering, brainstorming in other ways). (9th and 10th)
- Teach correct form for MBA outlines, including these components: purpose, thesis statement, plan, and formal outline (see Writing Center). (9th and 10th)
- Teach the importance of the rough draft and basic revision principles. (9th and 10th)
- Teach how to introduce a paper with a generalization that leads to the thesis statement. (9th mostly)
- Teach how to introduce a paper with either an epigraph, a scene, or an incorporated quotation that leads to an argumentative thesis. (10th mostly)
- Teach the assertion-proof method of analysis in body paragraphs. (9th and 10th)
- Stress the importance of a train of thought throughout an essay so that the argument in the thesis statement is fulfilled near the essay’s end. (10th mostly)
- Introduce ways to conclude a 5-paragraph paper. (10th mostly)
- Instruct the proper form for turning in formal essays. (see Writing Center)
- Teach other forms of writing beyond the 5-paragraph essay: film review, memoir, personal essay, narrative. (9th and 10th)
- Teach the research paper (10th grade only): how to research online; how to use Noodletools; how to outline a research project; how to write a lengthy essay beyond 5 paragraphs; how to incorporate critics into an essay; how to cite correctly.

11th and 12th Grades

Expectations:

1. Students should have working knowledge of the following:
   - Parts of speech and parts of the sentence
   - Various sentence types (s, cpd, cs, cpd-cx)
   - Clauses (noun, adverb, adjective)
   - Verbals (gerunds, infinitives, participles)
   - Pronouns (reference and case)
2. Students should know basic punctuation rules for different sentence types and for possession.
3. Students should understand rules for agreement issues including subject-verb and pronouns.
4. Students should have a solid understanding of the theory of the 5-paragraph analytical essay, with experience writing various introductions (and maybe conclusions, depending on class level).
5. Students should have various strategies for pre-writing.
6. Students should have a full understanding of the MBA outline form.
7. Students should know how to turn in a formal paper showcasing the following skills: proper grammar, mechanics, punctuation, and formatting. (see Writing Center)

Goals:

- Review most elements of grammar taught at MBA: sentence structure, sentence types, punctuation, agreement (pronoun, subj-verb), clauses, verbals.
- Review components of grammar that lead to the teaching of stylistics. In particular, demonstrate and practice the way that verbals, dependent clauses, appositives, and effective use of prepositions and modifiers lead to sentence variety and rhythm.
- Teach the value of parallel structure and subordination to sophisticated writing.
• Teach grammatical and stylistic errors by correcting errors in trial sentences.
• Master the 5-paragraph essay by solidifying the writing process: pre-writing strategies, outlining, drafting, revising.
• Teach multiple methods of introducing and concluding essays.
• Demand that students turn in formal papers showcasing the following skills: proper grammar, special rhetorical devices, mechanics, punctuation, and formatting. (see Writing Center)
• Teach other forms beyond the 5-paragraph essay: film review, memoir, personal essay, narrative.
• Teach research methods and how to write critical essays that incorporate other critics’ ideas.
• In AP English, teach strategies for writing essays under time restraints.
• In AP English, offer topics and writing opportunities that go beyond the 5-paragraph theme process.