

**Official SAT Practice**

# Lesson Plans

for Teachers by Teachers

## LESSON 5

## Writing and Language—Development and Evidence

**Subscore:** Expression of Ideas, Command of Evidence

**Focus:** Revising a text for development and effective use of evidence

**Objectives:**

Students will

- understand how to refine the content of a passage to achieve a writer's purpose.
- identify ways to add, revise, or retain thesis statements, claims, and evidence.
- recognize how to add, revise, or retain material that supports the passage's claim.

**Before the Lesson:**

- Review Chapters 10 and 11 in the SAT® *Study Guide for Students*.
- Preview the overview of the Writing and Language Test video.
- Review the article on *Writing and Language Test: The Format* at <https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/sat/new-sat-tips-planning/about-the-sat-writing-language-test/a/writing-and-language-test-formatting>.
- Review the article on Writing and Language passages at <https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/sat/new-sat-tips-planning/about-the-sat-writing-language-test/a/the-sat-writing-and-language-test-the-passages>.

- Review the article on Expression of Ideas at <https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/sat/new-sat-tips-planning/about-the-sat-writing-language-test/a/writing-and-language-test-expression-of-ideas>.
- Preview and print (if necessary) the student materials.

## Introductory Activity | 20 minutes

1. Class discussion: What are the qualities that make effective (or ineffective) academic writing? Ideally, students mention aspects such as clear arguments and claims; relevant and sufficient evidence; organization that can be followed by the reader; and writing free from significant grammatical errors.
2. Share a 2-minute video that provides an overview of the SAT Writing and Language Test:  
<https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/sat/new-sat-tips-planning/about-the-sat-writing-language-test/v/sat-writing-and-language-test-what-to-expect>.
3. Let students know that the Writing and Language Test focuses on “using your knowledge of and skill in writing to make each passage clearer, sharper, richer, and more engaging.”
4. Share with students that the focus of this lesson will be on the topic of **writing development**, which consists of the following:
  - a. Proposition: Is the topic sentence of a paragraph or the thesis statement of an essay clear, concise, and as sharp as possible?
  - b. Support: Does the writer provide the most effective evidence to support the topic sentence or thesis?
  - c. Focus: Is the evidence included relevant to the topic sentence or thesis?
5. For most high school students, these three elements are not unfamiliar; they use these aspects in almost all of their academic writing. Ask them to recall a paragraph or an essay they have written recently and to identify the thesis or topic sentence and to briefly summarize the kinds of evidence they used to support that sentence. In the rare case that students cannot identify something they have written recently that fits this mode, ask them to work with a partner.
6. One of the more difficult parts of writing effectively is determining whether the evidence included is effective and relevant. As a class, read the paragraph below, which is also included in their materials under Introductory Activity. The topic sentence is the first sentence because it identifies the fact that transportation planners work with a lot of different people. The second and fourth sentences are evidence of the types of people they might meet in their work. Look back carefully at sentence 3, which is underlined. Ask students whether this sentence is relevant to the topic sentence, and discuss the reasons why a writer might keep it or delete it. Note that the rationale for the correct answer is below. Be sure that students understand that the sentence should be removed because its focus on the benefits of walking is off topic to the purpose of the rest of the paragraph.

Transportation planners work closely with a number of community stakeholders, such as government officials and other interested organizations and individuals. **7** Next, representatives from the local public health department might provide input in designing a network of trails and sidewalks to encourage people to walk more. **8** According to the American Heart Association, walking provides numerous benefits related to health and well-being. Members of the Chamber of Commerce might share suggestions about designing transportation and parking facilities to support local businesses.

### Rationale for #8:

**Explanation:** Choice C is the best answer because it identifies the best reason the underlined sentence should not be kept. At this point in the passage and paragraph, a general statement about the benefits of walking only serves to interrupt the discussion of the community stakeholders with whom transportation planners work.

7. Summarize again for the students that, for questions about **writing development**, they should be thinking about:
- Topic sentences, thesis statements, and claims.
  - Supporting evidence.
  - Relevancy of the supporting evidence.

### Group/Pair Discussion/Activity | 15 minutes

- Ask students, with a partner or a small group, to read the next excerpt in their materials about the painter Dong Kingman. As they read, remind them to **annotate** for the following: main ideas of each paragraph and supporting evidence that relates to the main ideas. They should also consider putting lines through sentences that they feel are not relevant to the topic sentence.
- After reading, direct students to compare their annotations with those of their classmates and to discuss what they believe to be the main ideas of each paragraph and the thesis of the overall piece. Students should discuss which pieces of evidence are most relevant to the thesis and why.
- After they have discussed the main ideas and evidence, ask students to respond to Questions 18 and 20 that ask about main idea and evidence. They should write and discuss their own explanation for why they chose the answers they did. The rationales are below. Be sure that they are aware of how a topic sentence is expected to address the overall topics of the paragraph, not simply a detail of that topic.

## Rationale for #18:

**Explanation:** Choice C is the best answer because it clearly establishes the main topic of the paragraph: Kingman’s urban landscapes.

Choice A is not the best answer because it would begin the paragraph with a loosely related detail about Kingman’s painting style and would not clearly establish the main topic of the paragraph.

Choice B is not the best answer because it would suggest that the main topic of the paragraph is the natural landscapes Kingman occasionally painted, which is incorrect given the focus of the rest of the sentences in the paragraph.

Choice D is not the best answer because it would begin the paragraph with a loosely related detail about Kingman’s life and would not clearly establish the main topic of the paragraph.

## Rationale for #20:

**Explanation:** Choice D is the best answer because the phrase “enormous ships docking at busy urban ports” effectively continues the sentence’s series of details (“skyscrapers towering in the background” and “bridges connecting neighborhoods”) conveying the majesty of city skylines as depicted by Kingman.

Choice A is not the best answer because the phrase “delicately painted creatures, such as a tiny, barely visible cat prowling in the bushes of a park” does not convey a sense of the majesty of city skylines as depicted by Kingman and thus does not effectively continue the sentence’s series of details (“skyscrapers towering in the background” and “bridges connecting neighborhoods”).

Choice B is not the best answer because the phrase “exquisitely lettered street and storefront signs” does not convey a sense of the majesty of city skylines as depicted by Kingman and thus does not effectively continue the sentence’s series of details (“skyscrapers towering in the background” and “bridges connecting neighborhoods”).

Choice C is not the best answer because the phrase “other details that help define Kingman’s urban landscapes” is too vague and general to constitute a third example that conveys a sense of the majesty of city skylines as depicted by Kingman and thus does not effectively continue the sentence’s series of details (“skyscrapers towering in the background” and “bridges connecting neighborhoods”).

## Individual Application | 15 minutes

1. Ask students to read the paragraph about the possible reasons why bees are dying off in the Independent Activity section. Be sure that they note that the underlined sentence is a perfect example of a topic sentence.
2. Question 18 is similar to ones they have practiced before, as it asks about the relevance of evidence; however, it is a little different in that additional possible evidence is suggested in the question stem. Students are expected to read the possible new evidence and envision it in the spot identified. Ask students to answer the question and write an explanation for their reasoning, and be sure to clarify with the rationale below.

### Rationale for #18:

**Explanation:** Choice A is the best answer because the information supports the preceding claim by showing how lingering neonicotinoids impact bees in particular. The previous sentence notes “one reason” why bees are vanishing (the use of neonicotinoids), and this proposed sentence usefully elaborates on how neonicotinoids harm bees. Choices B, C, and D are incorrect because the information doesn’t introduce a new idea that will become important later in the passage, belong elsewhere in the passage, or contradict the main idea.

3. Ask students to reflect on their current abilities to identify main ideas, recognize relevant and effective evidence, and incorporate quantitative texts.

## Homework | 20 minutes

- Students should begin practicing on the Writing portion of Official SAT Practice on Khan Academy®. If students do not have score information in their College Board accounts, they should take Diagnostic Quiz 3—Writing.
- Ask students to take note of the questions that ask about development, including adding or deleting evidence. Teachers may want to ask students to copy or take a screenshot of these questions for in-class discussion.
- Students should read the following two article from the Tips and Strategies tab:
  - The SAT Writing and Language Test: the passages  
<https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/sat/new-sat-tips-planning/about-the-sat-writing-language-test/a/the-sat-writing-and-language-test-the-passages>
  - Writing and Language Test: Expression of Ideas  
<https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/sat/new-sat-tips-planning/about-the-sat-writing-language-test/a/writing-and-language-test-expression-of-ideas>

## Teacher Notes

### A Note About Skill Levels

Skill Levels range from 2–4 on Official SAT Practice on Khan Academy and correlate to practicing easier (Level 2), medium (Level 3), and hard (Level 4) passages in terms of complexity. Once students have linked accounts, taken a diagnostic quiz (on Official SAT Practice), or taken a practice test, practice question sets will be personalized to their skill level. By practicing questions successfully, they will be able to “level up” to more complex passages.

### A Note About Personalization

Official SAT Practice on Khan Academy will recommend a Writing and Language writing type (argument, informative, narrative) in which students should practice. Students can apply the lesson’s skills (e.g., revising a text for development) to whichever content area Official SAT Practice recommends.

## Student Materials—Lesson 5

### Introductory Activity

Transportation planners work closely with a number of community stakeholders, such as government officials and other interested organizations and individuals. **7** Next, representatives from the local public health department might provide input in designing a network of trails and sidewalks to encourage people to walk more. **8** According to the American Heart Association, walking provides numerous benefits related to health and well-being. Members of the Chamber of Commerce might share suggestions about designing transportation and parking facilities to support local businesses.

**8**

The writer is considering deleting the underlined sentence. Should the sentence be kept or deleted?

- A) Kept, because it provides supporting evidence about the benefits of walking.
- B) Kept, because it provides an additional example of a community stakeholder with whom transportation planners work.
- C) Deleted, because it blurs the paragraph's focus on the community stakeholders with whom transportation planners work.
- D) Deleted, because it doesn't provide specific examples of what the numerous benefits of walking are.

## Group/Pair Discussion/Activity

[1] Kingman was keenly interested in landscape painting from an early age. [2] In Hong Kong, where Kingman completed his schooling, teachers at that time customarily assigned students a formal “school name”. [3] His interest was so keen, in fact, that he was named after it. [4] The young boy who had been dong moy shu became Dong Kingman. [5] The name Kingman was selected for its two **14** parts, “king” and “man”; Cantonese for “scenery” and “composition.” [6] As Kingman developed as a painter, his works were often compared to **15** paintings by Chinese landscape artists dating back to CE 960, a time when a strong tradition of landscape painting emerged in Chinese art. [7] Kingman, however, **16** vacated from that tradition in a number of ways, most notably in that he chose to focus not on natural landscapes, such as mountains and rivers, but on cities. **17**

**18** His fine brushwork conveys detailed street-level activity: a peanut vendor pushing his cart on the sidewalk, a pigeon pecking for crumbs around a fire **19** hydrant, an old man tending to a baby outside a doorway. His broader brush strokes and sponge-painted shapes create majestic city skylines, with skyscrapers towering in the background, bridges connecting neighborhoods on either side of a river, and **20** delicately painted creatures, such as a tiny, barely visible cat prowling in the bushes of a park. To art critics and fans alike, these city scenes represent the innovative spirit of twentieth-century urban Modernism.

**18**

Which choice most effectively establishes the main topic of the paragraph?

- A) Kingman is considered a pioneer of the California Style school of painting.
- B) Although cities were his main subject, Kingman did occasionally paint natural landscapes.
- C) In his urban landscapes, Kingman captures the vibrancy of crowded cities.
- D) In 1929 Kingman moved to Oakland, California, where he attended the Fox Art School.



**20**

The writer wants to complete the sentence with a third example of a detail Kingman uses to create his majestic city skylines. Which choice best accomplishes this goal?

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) exquisitely lettered street and storefront signs.
- C) other details that help define Kingman's urban landscapes.
- D) enormous ships docking at busy urban ports.

## Independent Activity

**17** Studies have offered several possible reasons that bees are vanishing. One reason that is often cited is the use of pesticides called neonicotinoids, which are absorbed by plants and linger much longer than do topical pesticides. **18** Chemicals such as herbicides and fungicides may also play a role, contaminating the pollen that bees typically feed on and inhibiting healthy insect maturation.

**18**

At this point, the writer is considering adding the following information.

Prolonged exposure to neonicotinoids has been shown to increase bees' vulnerability to disease and parasitic mites.

Should the writer make this addition here?

- A) Yes, because it provides support for the claim made in the previous sentence.
- B) Yes, because it introduces a new idea that will become important later in the passage
- C) No, because it would be better placed elsewhere in the passage.
- D) No, because it contradicts the main idea of the passage.