**ILC Mini Lesson 1.4**

**Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes.**

**ILC Week 1.4** – October 6-10, 2014

**CCSS WHST 1** - Introduce a topic and organize ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

**“I CAN” statement:** *I can introduce a topic clearly and preview what is to follow.*

**Content Objectives**: **Compose a topic sentence (aka “lead” or “hook”) that catches the reader’s attention and clearly introduces a topic.**

**Language Objectives**: **Identify possible ways to start a paragraph or essay (also known as a “lead”). Create/write topic sentences.**

**Key Vocabulary**: “Hook,” lead, topic sentence, preview

### What Is a Topic Sentence?

The topic sentence contains the central idea around which a paragraph is developed. A good one has the following six characteristics:

1. It introduces the topic of a paragraph without announcing it.
2. It hooks the reader.
3. It plants questions in the readers' mind.
4. It uses thought-provoking words.
5. It is usually the first sentence; however, it can occur anywhere in the paragraph or it can be implied.
6. It provides a transition from the previous paragraph.

Not all topic sentences will contain every single characteristic.

**Materials Needed**: Texts for students to read, examples of topic sentences, paper, pencil/pen

**Activities**:

Teaching students how to write leads involves the following procedures:

* 1. Explain that a good topic sentence hooks the reader and heightens the reader's curiosity by arousing interest.
  2. Provide examples of great leads or topic sentences from great writers. Use different genres: novels, newspaper articles, selections from textbooks, essays, short stories, or writing samples from the class.
  3. List various methods:
  4. Describe a character
  5. Action
  6. Dialogue
  7. Emotion
  8. Detail or statistic
  9. Setting
  10. Quotation
  11. Thought-provoking question

4. Analyze aforementioned writing samples and discuss effective techniques used.

**Application and Assessment**

APPLICATION

* 1. Instruct students to pick a topic and use at least five different types of leads/topic sentences as a hook.
  2. If you are revising a rough draft, evaluate the topic sentence and rewrite it.
  3. In groups of 3-4, have students share each of their leads and let the group determine which is best.

ASSESSMENT

* 1. Have students read their sentences to the class. Have the class respond to its effectiveness in hooking the reader.
  2. Write the sentences on a board and have students evaluate them.
  3. For a grade, collect the sentences created by the student and assess them based in completion, technique, and interest.
  4. Make the assessment part of a challenge or contest.

**Resources**:

Writing topics sentences with “OOMPH!” - <http://jockmackenzie.wordpress.com/2009/12/10/writing-topic-sentences-with-oomph/>

Paragraph challenge: <http://www.brighthubeducation.com/middle-school-english-lessons/4326-paragraph-lesson-plan-incorporating-student-competition/>