

# A Typical Teaching Week

**T**hese guidelines are intended to help bring some predictability to lesson planning. Although the elements of grammar are important aspects of this course, its primary focus is writing and rhetoric. We recommend that you teach a simple, but rich, grammar curriculum in parallel with the lessons in *Writing & Rhetoric: Commonplace*. By simple, we mean to suggest that you avoid a grammar program with a writing component. Two different writing methods would most likely work against each other and cause an imbalance in the school day. Instead, look for a grammar program that focuses on grammatical concepts, provides plenty of practice sentences, and encourages diagramming.

You may want to provide same-day grammar instruction several days a week, preferably separating *Writing & Rhetoric* from grammar study by several hours. Or, you may want to alternate weeks between a grammar program and *Writing & Rhetoric*. This requires some negotiation in your language arts program for the year. If you aim to do two *Writing & Rhetoric* books per school year, that would equal approximately twenty-two lessons. If you spend one week on each lesson, that leaves you with about thirteen weeks to focus on grammar. However, as the reading selections grow longer and the writing tasks more extensive, you may need to spend more time on each *Writing & Rhetoric* lesson according to the needs of your students. You will have to choose a grammar program with these considerations in mind.

## Day One

1. The teacher models fluency by reading the text aloud while students follow along silently.
2. Tell It Back—Narration and Talk About It should immediately follow the reading of the text, while the text is still fresh in the students' minds. "Talk About It" is designed to help students analyze the meaning of texts and to see analogous situations, both in the world and in their own lives. Narration, the process of "telling back," can be done in pairs or by selecting individuals to narrate to the entire class. Solo students can tell back the story into a recording device or to an instructor. The process of narration is intended to improve comprehension and long-term memory.

## Days Two and Three

1. Optional: As time allows, the teacher can ask students to reread the text silently or pair students to reread it independently.
2. Students work with the text through the Go Deeper and Writing Time exercises. Go Deeper is all about building vocabulary and understanding the nuances of the text better. Writing Time includes sentence play, copiousness, and the commonplace exercises themselves. You will probably want to take more than one day for this step.

## **Day Four**

1. Rather than going directly to revision, we recommend that students take a breather from their essays for a day while they work on their speaking skills. Keeping a day between essay completion and revision helps students to look at their work with fresh eyes.
2. The Speak It sections create opportunities for students to memorize, recite, play word games, and playact. Please consider using a recording device whenever it suits the situation. When using electronics, the student should listen to his recording to get an idea of what sounds right and what needs to be improved. Have students read the elocution instructions to help them work on skill in delivery.

## **Day Five**

At this level, students will continue to work toward a foundation in revision. In the first several lessons in this book, the “Revise It” section provides basic exercises that introduce students to revision. Later in the book, the lessons provide a self-editing checklist that covers some of the most important aspects of improving an essay. Most students can do rudimentary self-editing at this age and provide some useful feedback to one another. However, teachers are still the best source for giving editorial feedback and requesting rewrites.