

TIQA Paragraph Strategy

Type of Writing Supported:
**Informational, Literary Analysis,
Constructed Response**

Grade Level:
Grades 6-12

Stage of Writing Supported:
Drafting and Revising

PURPOSE:

What does this strategy help students do?

TIQA helps students write well-structured paragraphs that include a clear topic sentence, relevant textual evidence, and thoughtful analysis.

Why is this strategy effective?

It breaks down paragraph writing into manageable steps, supports text-based writing, and encourages deeper thinking about evidence

T

Topic Sentence

What is the main idea or claim of my paragraph?

I

Introduce Evidence

Who or what is the source of the evidence?

Q

Quote or Paraphrase

What specific evidence supports my idea?

A

Analyze

How does this evidence support my topic sentence?
What does the evidence show or mean?

TIPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

How to Introduce:

- Practice writing TIQA yourself to build confidence.
- Clarify citation expectations before teaching.
- Model and explain each TIQA part during whole-group instruction.
- Learn More

Scaffolding:

- Use Color-coding to mark TIQA paragraphs
- Use sentence starters and graphic organizers
- Partner or small group writing
- Use Anchor Charts with examples

Practice Ideas:

- Group write base on text read as a class
- Use paragraph strips in order and paste them onto a template with labeled TIQA boxes

DO'S

- ✓ Teach each step explicitly and sequentially
- ✓ Use consistent language for each step
- ✓ Model how to introduce a source properly
- ✓ Provide sentence starters for each step
- ✓ Use color-coding or visual cues
- ✓ Practice with short, accessible texts

DON'TS

- ✗ Don't skip the "Introduce" step
- ✗ Don't let students use quotes without analysis
- ✗ Don't allow vague or off-topic evidence
- ✗ Don't assume students know how to analyze

✓ Teach Each Step Explicitly and Sequentially

- Because the steps are so closely connected, work through the entire process each time. As students become stronger, they can help with some steps, even as you think aloud for other steps.

✓ Use Consistent Language for Each Step

- Reinforce the terms Topic, Introduce, Quote, and Analyze so students internalize the structure.

✓ Model How to Introduce a Source Properly

- Show how to name the author, title, or organization before quoting (e.g., “According to...”).

✓ Provide Sentence Starters for Each Step

- These can be especially helpful for students who struggle with writing or organizing their thoughts.
- See the [TIQA Student Handout](#) for some sentence starters for each step.

✓ Use Color-Coding or Visual Cues.

- Highlight each part of a model paragraph in a different color to make the structure visible.

✓ Practice with Short, Accessible Texts

- Use familiar or high-interest materials to focus on the writing process, not reading comprehension. You can even use videos for those who struggle with paying attention to text. Just be sure to turn on closed captioning and model going back to check the quote and its introduction.

✓ Give Feedback on Each Part of TIQA

- Comment specifically on how well students introduced the source, selected evidence, or explained it.

✗ Don't Skip the "Introduce" Step

- Jumping straight into a quote without context confuses readers and weakens credibility.

✗ Don't Let Students use Quotes Without Analysis

- A quote alone doesn't show understanding—students must explain its meaning and relevance.

✗ Don't Allow Vague or Off-Topic Evidence

- Teach students to choose quotes that clearly support their topic sentence.

✗ Don't Assume Students Know How to Analyze

- Analysis is often the hardest part—model it often and provide guided practice.

✗ Don't Forget to Differentiate

- Some students may need close paragraphs, oral rehearsal, or visual support to succeed.

✗ Don't Rush the Modeling Step.

- Think aloud to share how you complete each step. Slow your own thinking, so you can verbalize it. Once most of the class no longer needs modeling, consider modeling with think-alouds in a small group while other students practice in pairs or independently.

✗ Don't Treat TIQA as a Fill-in-the-Blank Formula.

- Encourage flexible, thoughtful writing rather than robotic responses.

✗ Don't Force the Format Before Natural Writing

- TIQA is a tool to help students become better writers. It is not the end goal and should not be used to squelch a student's writing voice.

TIQA Strategy: Tips for Implementation

When to use the strategy:

- The TIQA writing strategy is all about providing credible evidence and showing how it supports a claim.
- TIQA can be valuable in English language arts classes, but it is also helpful when writing about content areas, such as social studies, science, and the arts.
- The TIQA paragraph writing format is useful when students are asked to use text evidence to support their answer to a provided question or their analysis of a text.
- Consider removing the answer choices from multiple-choice practice questions and asking students to write a TIQA paragraph.
- TIQA paragraphs encourage students to consider why they choose the answers they do.
- Once students have learned to write TIQA paragraphs, they can utilize them during the study of credible sources and reliable evidence.
- TIQA is designed to support students who cannot yet write to answer a question, provide text evidence, and analyze the evidence to show how it supports the answer. Students who can do all this may find the TIQA strategy confining, but those who cannot yet do those steps independently will benefit from the structure provided by a TIQA paragraph.

How to introduce the strategy:

- Get ready: Teacher preparation makes or breaks strategy instruction for students.
 - First, practice writing your own TIQA paragraphs using this guide and the attached materials. This will build your confidence, which will, in turn, make students more comfortable following your lead.
 - Before sharing TIQA with students, make sure you are clear on how you want them to cite their sources. If you do not have a school expectation for this, consider using the Modern Language Association (MLA) format. You can learn more about this format at the [OWL at Purdue](#). For beginning writers, you might just want to have them put the page number or line number in parentheses to build toward proper citation.
 - Plan to introduce TIQA after your class has read a text together.
 - Provide a question that can be answered using the text, but for which the answer is not provided word-for-word.
 - Pre-write your own model TIQA paragraph to answer the question.
- Start out with whole-group instruction after the class has read the text.
- Read the question aloud to students and tell them that you are going to use a strategy that will help you answer the question and show why you chose that answer. Tell them that this strategy helps your readers trust you because it uses evidence from the text for the answer.

TIQA Strategy: Tips for Implementation

- State that the paragraph is called a TIQA (tee-kwuh or tee-kuh) paragraph. Choose the pronunciation that is easier for you or is used by other teachers in your school. Have students repeat the word TIQA. Tell them that it sounds funny, but it is going to help them become a trustworthy or credible writer.
- Begin by thinking aloud as you write your model paragraph. Type or write the paragraph one sentence at a time using an interactive screen or projector. As you write, name the parts of the paragraph and tell why they are included.
 - “First, I need to write my answer. This will be the topic of the sentence.” Write out your T section.
 - “Now I need to find some text evidence to support my answer.” Read the sentence or section you want to use from the text. “I need to introduce this quote to my readers. This will help them see where I got the quote and why they should trust it. I don’t want to just write that the passage says something. Let me choose an interesting way to let my readers know who said this.” At this point you can refer to the posters with synonyms of the word said for literary analysis or informative or argumentative writing if you have them displayed. Write your introduction (person/expert/character) (synonym for said) followed by a comma.
 - “Now I can write my quote. I just introduced it with a comma because it is a whole sentence. I need to use quotation marks around it and write it exactly as it is in the text. I will also cite my source.” Copy the quote exactly from the text and use the citation method that your students are expected to use. Last, I need to analyze the quote. This is the most challenging part. I need to explain how my quote supports what I wrote for my topic. Let me review my topic and quote to start my thinking.” Read your topic and quote aloud. Then write and share aloud how the quote supports the topic.
 - Now, I have a complete TIQA paragraph, and my readers will understand why I chose the answer I wrote and how the text provides evidence to support my answer.
- Use color-coding to mark TIQA paragraphs.
 - Color coding can help students check that they have all the required elements.
 - You can choose your own set of colors, but the colors below are used with materials attached to this guide. Be sure the colors are found in a standard set of highlighters.
 - **Topic sentence**
 - We start with blue because it is the big idea, just like the big blue sky or big blue sea.
 - **Introduction**
 - We then use green to introduce the quote because we are moving toward the quote, just as a green light tells us to go.
 - **Quote**
 - We write the quote in yellow, as we slow down and use caution to ensure we get each word exactly as it is in the text.
 - **Analysis**
 - We then use pink for our analysis because we cannot see through red very well. We stop and spend some time in the analysis. This should be the longest part of our paragraph and the one where we really stop to think.

TIQA Strategy: Tips for Implementation

- Display the color guide in your classroom where students can see it anytime. The color coding above is shown in this [Anchor Chart](#) to make it easy to display for students.
- Students can practice checking TIQA paragraphs by color-coding them to determine if all the elements are present and correct.
- Struggling writers may benefit from writing the parts of a TIQA paragraph on colored strips of paper or arranging pre-written sentence strips in order and then highlighting them with the corresponding colors.

Scaffolding for different learners:

- Sentence starters for each step (see [TIQA Student Handout](#)).
- Graphic organizers
- Partner or small group writing
- Anchor charts with examples (Create these as a class, but see the samples attached under sections 6 and 10 below for examples.)

Ideas for group or independent practice:

- Group write TIQA paragraphs together based on texts the class has read.
- Give students a set of paper strips, each with one part of a TIQA paragraph. Have them arrange them in order and paste them to a template with TIQA boxes.
- Use short texts or videos for practice to keep the focus on the TIQA practice.
- Teach students to use a [TIQA checklist](#) or rubric to review their peers' writing and their own.

Publication Details

Contributors

Writing Classroom Development Team

What is the Writing Classroom?

The Writing Classroom was developed to help educators apply effective, evidence-based writing interventions. Originating at the University of Kansas with funding from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs, this initiative supports instructional strategies for all students, especially those who struggle with writing.

What is AI SCORE?

AI-SCORE enhances writing competency for students with learning disabilities by:

- Integrating evidence-based instructional strategies
- Providing immediate AI-generated feedback
- Personalizing the writing process to improve outcomes

Design and Production

Jenica Stock

Graphic Design

Amber Glover

Content Creation

Sydney Lewis

Development Support

Bridget Smith

Development Support

Samantha Goldman

Project Oversight

Project Leadership

Sean J. Smith, PhD

APLM Principal Investigator

AI SCORE Principal Investigator

Samantha R. Goldman, PhD

AI SCORE Co Principal Investigator

Suzanne Myers, EdD

APLM Co Principal Investigator

Amber Rowland, PhD

APLM Co Principal Investigator

Jocelyn Washburn, PhD

APLM Co Principal Investigator

Learn More

[WritingClassroom.org](https://writingclassroom.org)

[ProjectAIScore.org](https://projectaiscore.org)

[KUCRL.KU.edu/aplm-online](https://kucrl.ku.edu/aplm-online)

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