



TIDE

Best Practices and Adaptations



Understanding the TIDE Strategy

TIDE is a **mnemonic** for **structuring informational paragraphs**

- **Topic Sentence:** The main idea of the paragraph
- **Important Evidence:** A fact or reason to support the topic
- **Detailed Explanation:** Clarification of how the evidence supports the topic
- **Ending Sentence:** A concluding thought that wraps up the main idea



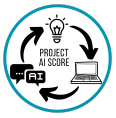
Understanding the TIDE Strategy

This strategy...

Supports: Planning & Drafting

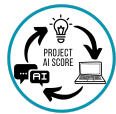
Applies To: Informational Writing

Grade Levels: Grades 3-8



Suggestions for Implementation

- **Model each step** using a think-aloud strategy so students can hear your thought process while using TIDE
- **Use visual aids** like a graphic organizer or anchor chart to reinforce the strategy.
- **Teach the purpose** each sentence plays in the paragraph, not just the order, to help students understand why each sentence matters.
- **Encourage students to explain their evidence** in their own words, as the "D" step should be original thinking, not just repetition.



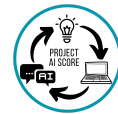
Suggestions for Implementation

- **Circulate and check** student work during early practice to catch misunderstandings before students continue with a flawed structure.
- **Provide students with fun choices** for writing topics to increase their motivation.
- **Consider a small-group instructional setting** for students who need extra support while other students work independently or with a partner.
- **Practice applying the strategy yourself** and create sample paragraphs that are relevant to your students' interests and content.



Common Pitfalls to Avoid

- **Don't assume students know what “evidence” means.** Many confuse it with an opinion or summary, so explicitly teach what counts as evidence/support.
- **Don't skip modeling the “D” (Detailed Explanation) step.** This is often the hardest part for students.
- **Don't treat the strategy like a rigid fill-in-the-blank formula.** The structure should be flexible and purposeful, not robotic.
- **Don't grade first attempts too harshly.** Focus on student's ability to use the process and their growth.
- **Don't demand that strong writers use TIDE.** Some writers may feel restricted by TIDE. Instead, set expectations around organizing ideas and explaining the role of their sentences within paragraphs.



Troubleshooting

TIDE Step	Issue/Challenge	What to Do
T- Topic Sentence	Vague or general topic sentences	Provide examples and models of clear, focused topic sentences.
I- Important Evidence	Uses weak or off-topic evidence	Model strong vs. weak examples and teach students to ask: “Does this piece of evidence help prove my point?”



Troubleshooting (Part 2)

TIDE Step	Issue/Challenge	What to Do
D- Detailed Explanation	Skips the explanation	Make explaining a required step and use color coding or sentence frames to show what it looks like.
E- Ending Sentence	Ends abruptly or with an off-topic idea	Teach that the ending should connect back to the topic and use sentence starters to guide their focus.



Adapting TIDE for Struggling Writers

- Pre-highlight evidence in a text so students can focus on creating a narrative rather than searching for pieces of evidence.
- Use sticky notes for each part of TIDE to help students organize their thoughts before writing a full draft.
- Provide a bank of sentence starters for each part of the TIDE model.
- Allow students to orally rehearse their ideas before they write them down.
- Provide digital organizers or speech-to-text tools for students who prefer typing or dictating.



Adapting TIDE for Advanced Writers

- Challenge them to add a second piece of evidence and a detailed explanation (TIDIDE) to their paragraphs once they've mastered the basic structure.
- Encourage them to rewrite a paragraph for a new purpose or audience, such as turning a science paragraph into a blog post.
- Introduce voice and tone as style goals to encourage them to experiment with different styles of writing.
- Assign research-based prompts that require them to find evidence independently from materials in the library or trusted online sources.



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