

"Favorite Person" Lesson Plan

Middle School (6-8), Expository Writing

Duration: 2 class periods of 45-55 minutes

Adaptation: Upper Elementary (4-5), "A Person You Admire" Prompt, Expository Writing

Favorite Person Prompt:

We all have a favorite person, someone who we like or respect more than anyone else. Think about the person in your life you consider your favorite. What is this person like? What does this person do to make him or her your favorite?

Write an essay about this person explaining what he or she is like and the things that he or she does that makes him or her so special to you.

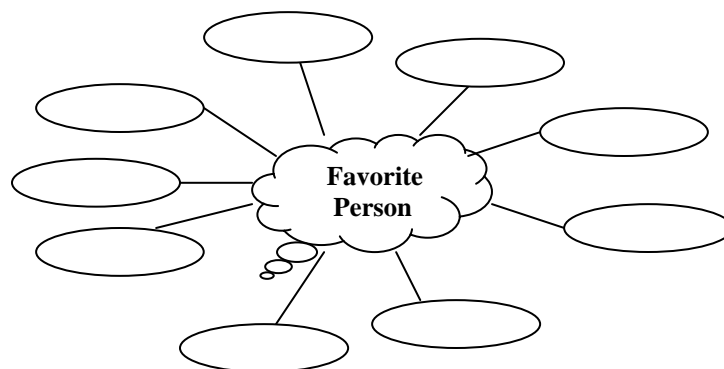
As you write, remember your essay will be scored based on how well you:

- Develop a multi-paragraph response to the assigned topic that clearly communicates your controlling idea to the audience.
- Support your controlling idea with meaningful examples, reasons, and information based upon your research or readings.
- Organize your essay in a clear and logical manner, including an introduction, body, and conclusion.
- Use well-structured sentences and language that are appropriate for your audience.
- Edit your work to conform to the conventions of standard American English.

Teacher Background: Allison Whittenberg writes young adult novels that deal with the importance of having special people in our lives during difficult times. Her novels *Sweet Thang* and *Life is Fine* offer us a look how special people in our lives can make a difference. Read a transcript and listen to an interview at [Author Series: Interview with Allison Whittenberg](#).

Day One: Who is Your Favorite Person? (offline)

- 1) Students use their writer's journal to tell about someone in their life who is important to them and to explain what makes this person so special. (5 minutes)
- 2) Students use a concept map organizer (see below) to organize the traits and actions of the person that they have written about in their journal. Students should think of things this person has said and done that has earned them this special place in their lives. (8 minutes)



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- 3) Teacher plays the audio file "Philadelphia and Role Models" from Author Series: Interview with Allison Whittenberg. What does Whittenberg say about role models? How are her comments relevant to the students' experience of role models? (12 minutes)
- 4) Each student imagines that their favorite person is being honored with an award, and he or she has been asked to give a speech about that person. Students outline what they would say about this person's character, admirable traits, and accomplishments, using the [Prewriting Handout: Organize Your Essay](#). (20 minutes)
- 5) For homework, students write a first draft of their speech. This need not be typed.

Day 2: Peer Revision (offline)

- 1) Students come to class prepared with their first draft.
- 2) In groups of three or four, students take turns reading their drafts aloud. The student reading is referred to as the "writer." The other students are "critics." As the writers read their work, the critics take notes (that they will later share with the writer), considering the following questions:
 - What is the relationship between the writer and their favorite person?
 - What has the "favorite person" done to earn this position in the writer's eyes?
 - What was the most vivid example that the writer used?
 - Are there any questions that the writer left unanswered? What more would you like to know? (15 minutes)
- 3) Following the reading of the speech (i.e., the expository essay), the critics discuss their responses to the above questions. The writer listens carefully, taking notes. (10 minutes)
- 4) After everyone has shared with their group, each group selects one writer to read his/her draft to the class. The writer and his/her critics then highlight three points of feedback about that specific essay. (20 minutes)

Day Three: Attacking the Prompt (online)

- 1) Using their prewriting materials and peer feedback from the day before to guide them, students begin drafting their essay in MY Access! Teacher circulates throughout the classroom or computer lab, spending a few minutes with each student discussing the direction of his/her essay. If they wish, students may submit once after 20 minutes. After a student has submitted, the teacher should focus his/her instruction on making sure that the student understands the feedback he/she received. For example, if a student has a revision goal that states, "Use transitional words to help connect your ideas," you may conduct a mini-lesson in which you introduce them to [Transient Transitions](#). (30 minutes)
- 2) Students submit again. They should receive a holistic score and, paging down, should find "My Tutor Revision Goals." Students should select two revision goals and write the goals in their writers' journals as reminders. (3 minutes)
- 3) Teacher asks students for one revision goal and copies it onto the board. Teacher reviews any necessary vocabulary, like "thesis statement." Students suggest strategies for how one would complete the example revision goal. For example, if the revision goal is "Understand and write for your audience," students might suggest, "You should tell some jokes about your favorite person," or "You should be respectful at all times." (7 minutes)

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- 4) Using the Revision Plan Guidelines, students copy their revision goals under MY Goals. Then, considering his/her specific essay, each student brainstorms strategies to achieve his/her goals. Teacher circulates throughout the classroom, ensuring that each student fully understands his/her goals. (10 minutes)
- 5) Students may begin working on an additional draft of their essays for homework.