## *English Instructional Plan Developing Thesis Statements 6-8*

## Primary Strand: Writing 6.7, 7.7 and 8.7

## Integrated Strand/s: Communication and Multimodal Literacies 6.1, 7.1, 8.1

## Essential Understanding:

* understand that a thesis statement is not an announcement of the subject (statement of intent) but rather a unified and specific statement.

## Essential Knowledge, Skills, and Processes:

* identify audience and purpose for any piece of writing
* write an effective thesis statement focusing, limiting, or narrowing the topic.
* differentiate between a thesis statement and a topic sentence.

## Primary SOL: 6.7g - Compose a thesis statement for expository and persuasive writing.

**7.7f**/**8.7f** – Compose a thesis statement for persuasive writing that advocates a position.

## Reinforced (Related Standard) SOL:

* **6.7d** – Organize writing to fit form or topic.
* **7.7d/8.7d** – Organize writing structure to fit form or topic
* **6.7f** /**7.7e**/**8.7e** – Establish a central idea incorporating evidence, while maintaining an organized structure and formal style.

## Academic Background/Language:

* The teacher should introduce, define and use academic language throughout the lesson to include audience, purpose, format, thesis statement, and topic sentence.

## Materials

* Writing Prompt
* “News About Fast Foods” from ReadWorks.org

## Student/Teacher Actions: What should students be doing? What should teachers be doing?

* Ask students to brainstorm as many details as they can about Fast Food. They should make a list on a sheet of paper of everything they can think of that describes Fast Food.
* Ask students to share their responses, and create a class list on the board.
* Guide students through attacking the prompt below. Be sure to get them to identify/highlight the commands in the prompt, and identify the format of their response, the intended audience, the topic of their response and their purpose.
  + **Prompt -** Fast food is a highly debated topic in the news. Should people eat fast food? Why or why not? Write a letter to a friend persuading him or her of your opinion.
* After the students attack the prompt, distribute copies of “News about Fast Foods.” Have students read the article to find information that would help them to write their response to the prompt.
* Lead the students through making a decision on their stance. Have students who feel that people should eat fast food move to one side of the room, and the students who feel that people should not eat fast food move to the other side of the room. Once they are with like-minded peers, the students should brainstorm reasons for their opinion.
* Have students share the reasons they brainstormed with their groups.
* Look at the brainstormed list, and show students how to eliminate any information in the brainstorm that does not specifically support a response to the prompt and eliminate information that is repetitive.
* Explain to students that they should choose two to three reasons for their opinion that they can elaborate upon the most. Explain to students that these are the ideas they will use to begin to organize their essays.
* Explain the idea of a thesis statement to the students—it is the blueprint for the entire essay. It shows the reader your position and what the entire essay will be about. It is a main idea statement for the essay.
* Explain to students the importance of organizing ideas. It helps them to visualize how the information will be presented in their essays, it helps them to make sure they have enough information before drafting, etc.
* Explain to students the criteria for creating a solid thesis statement. Use the following elements as a checklist for creating and evaluating a thesis statement:
  + Provides a one sentence answer to the prompt
  + Includes 2-3 reasons for your position
  + Is clear and to the point
  + Uses the language of the prompt
  + Does not use the personal pronoun “I”
* Give students several examples of thesis statements: some that fulfill all of the criteria and some that do not. Have students sort the thesis statements into two categories: Those that need revision and those that do not. After students sort the thesis statements into categories, they should revise the ones that need revision to meet all of the qualifications of a solid thesis statement.
* Ask students to look at the article “News about Fast Foods” to see if they can find the author’s thesis statement in the text.
* Model creating a thesis statement for the prompt that the students are using.
* Use the checklist above to evaluate the thesis statement after it has been created.
* Have students create a thesis statement using their position.
* Have students partner up and use the checklist to evaluate each other’s statements.
* Allow students to share the thesis statements they developed.
* Have the students go back to piece of writing they already created and revise the thesis statement using the checklist above.
* Close the lesson by having the students compare their original thesis statement with the revised one, and share them with a partner.

## Assessment (Diagnostic, Formative, Summative)

* To assess student learning, teachers should incorporate checks for understanding throughout the lesson by having students repeat back to you or a partner the definitions of the academic language, or criteria for thesis statements.
* As a formative assessment, teachers should evaluate the identification of the author’s thesis statement in “News about Fast Foods” and student thesis statements.

## Writing Connections:

* Give students alternate prompts to go through the process of attacking the prompt, brainstorming, and developing a thesis statement.

## Extensions and Connections (for all students)

* Students use each reason in their thesis statement to craft a topic sentence for each body paragraph that will follow in their essay.
* Students can research additional facts and information that will support each reason given for their position in the thesis statement.
* Students continue the steps of the writing process to develop an essay.

## Strategies for Differentiation

* Provide images to represent some of the academic language in the lesson.
* Provide several examples of solid thesis statements for students to see before crafting their own.
* Students with accommodations use available technology to allow them to access to an audio recording of the articles.
* Students with accommodations have the option to choose a shorter article with a lower Lexile level.
* For English Learners, find alternative magazine articles representative of their culture and language backgrounds.
* Provide ELs with sentence frames/starters to help get the conversation started when they are in their small groups. For example, “At first I thought \_\_\_\_ but now I think\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_. I like how this article uses \_\_\_\_ to show \_\_\_\_. This word/phrase stands out to me because \_\_\_\_.”
* Provide ELs with sentence frames/starters for creating their own thesis statements.