

Invention Module 3: Topic 1—Definition 1

This module is designed for use in Lesson 3: Basic Persuasive Essay I (see chart, Year-at-a-Glance). You should expect to use at least two class periods to complete this module.

Getting Ready

To teach this module, you will need to:

Be able to

- Guide your students through Invention Exercise Form 1A, Definition, Level 1 (I1A).
- Define terms using groups or kinds (genus) and differences (differentia) as outlined on I1A.

Understand

- That the most useful group for a definition is the group one generalization higher than the term.
- What we mean by the word “term.”
- That a definition is a statement of the kind of thing something is (genus) combined with the characteristics that differentiate that thing from every other thing that is of the same kind (differentia).

Know

- The parts of a definition
 - the genus, or group, to which a term belongs—i.e., What kind of thing is it?
 - the differentia or unique qualities of the term—i.e., How is it different from every other thing of the same kind?
- The process of defining as demonstrated on the I1A.

To teach this module, you will need the following materials:

Invention Exercise Form 1A: Definition, Level 1 (I1A)

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When they complete this module, your students will:

Be able to

- Define a term using the pattern outlined on Invention Form 1A: Definition, Level 1 (IIA).

Understand

- That the most useful group for a definition is the group one generalization higher than the term.
- What we mean by the word “term.”
- That a definition is a statement of the kind of thing something is, combined with the characteristics that differentiate that thing from every other thing of the same kind.

Know

- The parts of a definition
 - the genus, or group, to which a term belongs—i.e., What kind of thing is it?
 - the differentia or unique qualities of the term—i.e., How is it different from every other thing of the same kind?
- The process of defining as demonstrated on the IIA.

Presenting the Material

Pre-Grammar: Preparation

| Subject matter | Presentation |
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| <p>Goal: Show students that a decision or argument can turn on the meaning of a term.</p> <p>Review earlier lessons.</p> <p>Review Discuss previous Lessons to ensure that they remember the basic process of Invention/Discovery</p> | <p><i>Today we are beginning our third essay. Let’s review what we learned from the first two.</i></p> <p><i>What are the three problems writing solves?</i></p> <p><i>What are the three canons?</i></p> <p><i>What are we doing when we use Invention?</i></p> |

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| <p>Preparation</p> <p><u>Ask a question that turns on the meaning of one or more of the words used in the question.</u></p> <p>Follow the pattern established in the example we have provided in the right column.</p> <p>When your students answer this question, respond as though you were using the opposite meaning for the word swipe. If they take it to mean “steal”, respond as though you meant “run it through the card reader,” and vice versa.</p> <p>Continue to deliberately “misunderstand” your students with each of the following questions.</p> | <p><i>Arrangement? Elocution? How do we Discover? How do we arrange? How do we express our ideas?</i></p> <p><i>What canon will we do today? What questions did we ask in the previous Discovery/Invention exercises?</i></p> <p><i>Suppose you are sitting around with your friends and one of them tells you he saw his friend swipe a card at the grocery store. Now he wants to know what he should do about it.</i></p> <p><i>What would you tell him to do?</i></p> <p><i>Suppose a female friend confides in you that she is trying to decide whether she should stop beating her boyfriend.</i></p> <p><i>What would you tell her to do?</i></p> <p><i>Suppose you get in a debate with some friends about whether one of them is losing her marbles.</i></p> <p><i>What position would you take?</i></p> <p><i>Have any of you ever run into a situation</i></p> |
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| | <p><i>like this?</i></p> <p><i>What led to a disagreement in each of the cases above? How could we have avoided an argument?</i></p> |
| <p>Transition to Grammar</p> | <p><i>We are going to begin a new essay today, and to develop it we are going to refine our ability to define words.</i></p> <p><i>We are going to see how we can add information to the I column, and thus think more deeply and clearly, by defining words carefully.</i></p> <p><i>We are going to learn how to define any word—without using the dictionary.</i></p> |

Grammar:

| Subject matter | Presentation |
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| <p>Warm your students up with some quick definition questions.</p> <p>Don't go into much detail here. Just get their answers and don't analyze them.</p> <p>Do not give them Invention Exercise Form 1A yet, but follow the pattern on that form while you ask questions. Keep it in front of you if it helps.</p> <p>Let your students decide if they mean the game or the ball itself. Then let them decide whether they mean American or FIFA football (what we call soccer).</p> <p>If a student gives you the genus and differentia, ask him to describe how he went about defining a football. Then ask for the meaning of another word.</p> | <p><i>Tell an Italian what a football is</i> <i>Tell a blind man what a birch is</i> <i>Tell a Martian what a trout is</i> <i>What is a noun?</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>How did you define each word?</i></p> <p><i>Let's define football. What does football mean?</i></p> |

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| <p>More likely your students will stumble over this apparently simple definition.</p> <p>The group it belongs to</p> <p>They may say “a game” or “a ball.” Either is fine, but the class has to agree on which they are using. Write the kind of thing you settle on where all your students can read it.</p> <p>Other members of the group</p> <p>Identify common characteristics</p> <p>Discover unique qualities</p> <p>The definition: The kind of thing and the unique characteristic</p> <p>Write the kind of thing. Write the differentia.</p> <p>Could be: A game played with a football or A ball used to play the game of football</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"><p>NB: This seems to break the rule of not defining words using the word you are defining. In general that is a good idea, but notice that we are not, technically using the same word. We are using a homonym – two words that sound the same. But they refer to two different (though closely related) things: a game and a ball.</p></div> | <p><i>What kind of thing is “football?”</i></p> <p><i>List other things of the same kind.</i></p> <p><i>What do they all share in common?</i></p> <p><i>This is often what makes them members of the same group – the same kind of thing.</i></p> <p><i>How is football different from every other member of the group? What is its unique characteristic?</i></p> <p><i>Does anybody want to venture a definition? What kind of thing are we talking about? How is it different from every other “thing” of the same kind?</i></p> <p><i>This is the definition: How did we get it? What did we include in the definition? It consists of identifying the kind of thing something is and how it is different from every other thing of the same kind.</i></p> <p><i>How do we define a term?</i></p> <p><i>Think of it this way: you define something by figuring out what group it belongs to, and then showing how it is different from every other member of the group.</i></p> |
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| | <p><i>What did we do every time we defined a word?</i></p> <p><i>What was different from one time to the next?</i></p> <p><i>Which steps did we repeat every time?</i></p> |
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Rhetoric A: Explanation

| Subject matter | Presentation |
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| <p>Student states the concept <u>Ask a few students to summarize the concept learned with various questions:</u></p> <p>If your students are unable to explain, go back to the Dialectic stage and ask them to compare what you did in each example. If they cannot make comparisons or are confused by the attempt, go back to the grammar stage and provide more types.</p> | <p><i>So how do we define a word or thing?</i></p> <p><i>Next time you have to define a term, what will you do?</i></p> <p><i>Describe how you would define a word if you didn't have dictionary.</i></p> |

Rhetoric B: Practice/ Application

| Subject matter | Presentation |
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| <p>Students begin their third essay by adding the definition worksheet to their tool box.</p> <p>Practice</p> <p>Instruct your students to retrieve their practice essays.</p> <p>Direct them to the Invention Exercise Form 1A and instruct them to use this as their model.</p> <p>Instruct them to define the terms from their practice essay.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">They will imitate the worksheet for each term.</p> <p>Check their work while they are practicing.</p> | <p><i>Take out your practice essay.</i></p> <p><i>This worksheet will be your model to help you define your terms.</i></p> <p><i>You will write on your own paper, following the pattern on the worksheet, to define each important term in your issue.</i></p> <p><i>Complete this pattern of defining for each main term in your issue.</i></p> |

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If any student is unable to complete the worksheet, return to Rhetoric A: Explanation and ask him to explain how to define a word. If he can't do that, return to Dialectic and ask him to compare the types you provided them. If he cannot do that, continue regressing through the steps of the Didactic process.

Application

Begin essay three

Each student should come up with some (at least three) questions of his own. The one the student uses should be a "should" question.

Provide individual help as needed.

NB: If the class ends before you get here, pause with at least five minutes left and direct your students to develop a question. Then assign the ANI process for homework. After the ensuing class they can add the Definition exercise.

If you are able to work through this entire discussion in one class period (not likely) your students should begin the essay and

Now we will begin our third essay. Write three things you wonder about from your reading.

Do you have at least one that begins with "should?" Can you change the others so they begin with "should?"

Choose one that you will use for your next essay.

Once you have a question you want to use, begin your Invention process by defining your terms.

If necessary:

How do we convert that question to an issue?

*What are the columns we put on the board?
What do they mean?*

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| focus on the topic of Definition. | |
| Define the key terms using Invention Exercise Form 1A. | |

Assessment

Evaluate your students' Invention Worksheet Form 1A as follows:

Did they complete one form for each key term?
Did they complete all the steps for each term?
Do the entries make sense?
 Are the groups valid?
 Did they choose the best one?
 Are the common features valid?
 Are the differences valid?

Do your students demonstrate that they understand how to use the exercise form to define a word or thing?