

Write- Thinking Improvement System
Daily Digest Levels 4-6
Parent Teacher Guide and Lesson Plan

This system is designed to teach, improve, develop and sharpen thinking, reasoning, comprehension and communication skills. Each student will progress at their own individual pace through **three phases**. It is perfectly acceptable to do more in each phase than assigned but do not proceed to the next phase until the current phase is mastered. Mastery comes when the daily writing assignments are completed with confidence and clarity as well as achieving a consistent grade point score of 90 or above.

It is equally acceptable to proceed at a slower pace if your student is struggling with the material at the pace suggested. Remember that it is more important to answer the questions in the **Daily Digest** thoroughly and creatively than it is to progress through the workbook quickly. The majority of children at this level are reluctant writers or are used to just replying to questions concerning facts or figures they have memorized. **Daily Digest** questions are unique and specifically designed to train children to think through and reason out an answer that does not necessarily have a ‘correct’ answer. The answer focuses more on how they evaluate, incorporate and apply what information they have gained. This is the reason we insist on mastery over memorization. Memorization only lasts for a short time until other information takes its place in order of priority. Mastery stays with us because it is used and applied on a personal day to day level.

Daily Digests have specifically customized questions designed to **cover all 10 areas of Critical Thinking and Reasoning**. There are a wide variety of questions to hold the student’s interest instead of being bored by the same questions over and over. Most of the inquiries are very different from what they are used to. They are even fun and interesting to think about.

There are **3 R’s** in this system.

Reading
Reasoning
Revising

The pace for working through each workbook is only a suggested pace assuming that no writing of this kind has been done previously and that the student is a reluctant writer. If you have a student who enjoys writing and thinking through things, you can assign more questions each day. Then you can progress through the various phases more rapidly. Make certain that each **phase** is mastered before moving on to the next. A student may complete an entire **level of Daily Digest** workbook and still be in the first **phase**. Another child may be ready to move on to **phase 2** after only a few weeks of writing in their first **Daily Digest** workbook. The pace is not as important as the improvement and progress.

Now it is time to discuss what is required in each of the **3 phases** of this system. Here is where we will also provide you with a lesson plan to follow and a grading system to implement. This will make using the **Daily Digest** very easy and grading the writing uncomplicated.

Each of the phases has **3 elements**:

The Focus
The Assignment
The Grading

The **Focus** tells you what to concentrate on. This is where you are instructed as to what to look for in the students answers and how to properly evaluate their work. The focus changes and becomes more in-depth as the **phases** change. The **Assignment** section is the actual lesson plan. Here you are told how much writing is to be done and at what pace. A suggestion as to how frequently will also be given. The amount assigned will also increase as they progress through the **3 phases**. Finally, the **Grading** point system will be explained. There will always be a total of 100 point possible to be earned for each writing assignment. The way these points are awarded will change as the assignments get more difficult and more thinking is required.

All **Daily Digest** workbooks are designed to ideally be used three times per week. It is suggested that a schedule that incorporated this system on a Monday, Wednesday, Friday basis is ideal. Each day the student answers the number of questions assigned based on the previous weeks worth of reading in a specific book. It does not matter how many pages or chapters were read. This will vary depending on each child's ability and on the degree of difficulty of the reading material. It usually takes about a weeks worth of reading (which with a history or literature book assigned as part of that subject may be 3 to 5 days worth of reading rather than 6 or 7) to provide enough material to answer the questions posed in the **Daily Digest**. The other two days can be devoted to other types of writing. Tuesday may be used to concentrate on creative writing, such as poetry, plays or short stories. Thursday could have correspondence letters, business writing or articles as the focus of the assignment. This would give the student a well rounded education as well as allow you to use other programs that you may be interested in.

Sample Week Writing Schedule:

Monday: # of questions are assigned in **Daily Digest** based on **phase** student is in.
Questions are answered based on what the student has read in Literature last week.

Tuesday: Student is asked to write a short story or a poem

Wednesday: # of questions are assigned in **Daily Digest** based on **phase** student is in
Questions are answered based on what the student has read in History last week.

Thursday: Student is asked to write a letter to their grandparents.

Friday: # of questions are assigned in **Daily Digest** based on **phase** student is in.
Questions are answered based on what the student has read in a book that they are reading just for the fun of it.

You are free to use any book or narrative. The great thing about these workbooks is that they can be applied to just about anything they read! You do not need a specific book list (although one can be obtained by contacting **Virtue In Knowledge** at www.virtueinknowledge.com), you can use what you already have chosen for your student to read. If they do come across a particular question that just does not seem to fit the reading for that day, just skip it and come back to it the next time. The questions are fun, unusual, and unique and thought provoking. They are intended to develop interest, fun, excitement and a greater love of writing and expression based on skillful thought and effective reasoning. Each and every question was carefully and specifically constructed to train the student to think, reason and communicate; effectively, efficiently and confidently.

Daily Digest Levels 4-6 **Lesson Plan**

PHASE 1: Reading Phase

Focus = Expression: The student is encouraged to enjoy expressing their thoughts and ideas in writing. **DO NOT:** grade grammar, spelling or vocabulary. **DO:** focus on how specifically they answered the question. **DO NOT:** point out problems with penmanship. **DO:** comment on how well they relate to the story. **DO:** focus on how personal their answers are. Praise and encouragement is the order of the day! Let them enjoy expressing themselves within the guidelines of the question before they are made to concentrate on how well they are formulating their ideas.

Assignment = 1 Question per day/ 3 times per week

You select the book that the question will apply to. It should be a different book each of the three days.

Grading = 20 Points for specific answers relating to assigned book

Such as including: name of a character, detail of an event or situation, citing a comment

25 Points for clear answers

These are answers given that are not just general no thought required responses

25 Points for personal reference

A personal opinion, belief, idea, view, like, dislike etc. of the student is included in answer.

10 Points for complete sentences

No fragments, or half thoughts, or one word answers.

20 Points for effort and attitude

Here is where you give points for the abilities of each individual. How hard they tried and what kind of attitude they show as they work through the assignment.

Total Points Possible = 100

When the student consistently earns 90 points or better they can move onto **Phase 2: The Reasoning Phase**. It does not matter if they are still in the same **level of Daily Digest** or starting a new level.

PHASE 2: Reasoning Phase

Focus = Interacting and Applying: Once the student has learned to express him/her self on the basic reading level and has gained confidence the daily writing should no longer be a tedious chore or a war of wills. He or she is ready to go beyond simply expressing their thoughts. They now need to learn to properly think through them before expressing them. Students are encouraged to apply each question to their own lives, ideas, beliefs and preferences. They must begin to relate to the characters and events and to see how their life compares and contrasts to the characters and events in their reading. Students are instructed to try and relate their answers to other subjects they are studying or have an interest in.

Assignment = 3 Questions a day/ 3 times a week

Again, you may select which ever book you would like the student to read and answer the questions on. It is best if a different narrative or book is selected for each day.

Grading = 10 Points for completing the assignment

20 Points for applying personal focus to answers

Using “I” think, believe, dislike, like, would, could, etc. Putting themselves into the answers.

10 Points for answers that are specific to the subject/story read.

Such as naming a character, citing a specific event, or supporting an answer with a quote from the book.

10 Points for creativity

Unique, thought out answers. Answers that took some thought to come up with.

20 Points for relating the answer to their personal life in some way

20 Points for detailed answers rather than general non specific ones

10 Points for effort and attitude.

TOTAL = 100 POINTS

PHASE 3: Revising Phase

Focus: Communication

Once the student reaches this **phase** they remain in it for the remainder of the **Daily Digest levels** that they have yet to complete. Answers in this phase will require far more detail. Attention is also paid to correct grammar, vocabulary building, spelling and penmanship. Each week you will select one area of grammar, spelling etc. that needs the most attention. Concentrate on correcting that error or improving the use of more advance vocabulary and so on.

For Example: Student repeats the same adjective such as ‘big’ over and over in their answers. The following week the student would be instructed to only use each adjective once. This then forces him/her to find other words that are synonymous thus increasing their vocabulary.

Another Example: Student has a glaring spelling problem. The focus next week would be learning the spelling rules associated with the misspelled words. Have him/her study the correct spelling of each of their misspelled words and test them on them the next week.

As each area is corrected move onto another focus. It is not important to correct everything. As they progress through the various workbooks and complete other language courses the student will learn to correct many of the errors they make on their own. The main purpose of the **Daily Digest** is to train the mind to think and reason, rightly, critically and efficiently. This is not a grammar or penmanship course.

Assignment: 5 Questions per day/ 3 Days per week

The answers need to be in paragraph form. Complete sentences and thoughts are required. The questions should be applied to a weeks worth of reading in whatever material you have selected for the student.

Grading: 10 Points for correctly and completely answering all questions
20 Points for correcting the grammar/vocabulary etc. errors found last week. This will vary week by week depending on the problem being worked on.
20 Points for personal application in the answers
20 Points for detailed rather than general answers
20 Points for referring to a specific detail from the material/book read
10 Points for creativity, uniqueness, effort, improvement.

TOTAL 100 POINTS

Please remember that the student can move onto the next **level** of **Daily Digest** once he or she has completed the entire workbook. However, they must not move onto the next **Phase** until they have mastered the previous one.

For Example: Christopher has begun this system in **Daily Digest Level 5**. He hates to write and is uncomfortable expressing himself. He would start in **Phase 1**. He gradually learns to enjoy writing a sentence or two for each assigned question. Each week it takes less and less effort to complete the assignment. Christopher still struggles to go beyond one question per day. He has completed all of the questions in the **Daily Digest Level 5** workbook. He would move onto **Daily Digest Level 6** workbook but he would still follow the **Phase 1** lesson plan. After a few weeks in level 6 he shows great improvement and is ready to answer more questions in greater depth. Christopher would now proceed to the lesson plan for **Phase 2** while still in **Daily Digest Level 6** workbook.

Each and every person is unique. Everyone will proceed at a different pace. The important thing is to ensure that the student is improving, growing and learning. Encouragement is very important especially at the beginning. Keep working at each Phase until it is complete mastered. Do not be in a hurry to rush through.

Once the **Daily Digest** has been incorporated successfully you can add the rest of the **Write Thinking Improvement System**. The **Truth Pursuits** is the same type of workbook but intended for use in personal Bible Study. The **Reader's Review** is to be used from age 13 on up to give a complete evaluation and critique of books after they have been completely read. The **Line Upon Line** is also to be used age 13 and up and is a complete thorough outlining course. This course is vital for any effective writing, communication, speech, memory improvement or thinking etc. It is completed over the

course of several years and through a wide range of reading material. Every one of the **Write Thinking Improvement System** components/workbooks are designed to be used with any reading material. They are easily incorporated into any educational style or focus or course of study. These simple easy to use resources are a one of a kind method to successful improvement of the student's mind and communication abilities. We have included a reproducible grading sheet to be used with **The Daily Digest** here. There is a separate Parent Teacher Guide for each of the other workbooks in the **Write Thinking Improvement System**.

