Medieval History-Based Writing Lessons
Structure, Style, Grammar & Vocabulary

Blackline Masters

by Lori Verstegen

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Also by Lori Verstegen

Advanced U.S. History-Based Writing Lessons
All Things Fun and Fascinating
Ancient History-Based Writing Lessons
Bible Heroes Writing Lessons
Dress-Ups, Decorations, and Delightful Diversions
Medieval History-Based Writing Lessons (Student Book)
Medieval History-Based Writing Lessons (Teacher’s Manual)
Student Resource Notebook
U.S. History-Based Writing Lessons, Vol. 1: Explorers to the Gold Rush

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Blackline Masters
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Introduction to Medieval History-Based Advanced Writing Lessons
Blackline Masters e-Book

These advanced source texts and helps are for experienced IEW students who are already comfortable with the basic elements of style and models of structure taught in IEW’s Teaching Writing: Structure and Style. They may also be useful for students in junior high and above who need more advanced material.

The advanced lessons provide extra source texts written at a more sophisticated level, a few more complex models of structure, and a few advanced style suggestions. They make it possible for families or classes with students of a wide range of IEW experience or abilities to use the medieval lessons together.

Teacher note: You are free to pick and choose which supplemental assignments to require or which to use as extra credit, if any. Keep in mind that if you require too much before a student is ready, frustration will result. Remember the IEW rule, “EASY PLUS ONE.” Be mindful of what is easy for a student, and add only one advanced suggestion to that.

To use these optional advanced lessons, first teach each basic lesson from the book; then, add the advanced elements only if students are ready for them.
Lesson 1: The Middle Ages

Outline this extra paragraph on your own paper using the same procedure as taught in Lesson 1.

Source Text

The Middle Ages around the World

While Europe was experiencing the Dark Ages, other areas of the world were thriving. In Europe, the most powerful institution was the Catholic Church, but farther east a new religion was growing: Islam. Muslim armies conquered many lands, and the Islamic empire spread all over the Middle East. Their lands had great cities that fostered education, arts, inventions, and other cultural activities. But probably the most advanced culture during the Middle Ages was China. The Chinese made many scientific advances, such as the invention of gunpowder and the first mechanical clock. In addition, they crafted paper and moveable type for printing books and the first paper money. Another area of the world that flourished during the Middle Ages was North Africa. This region had several rich, powerful kingdoms that traded with both the Middle East and China. So, while Europe in the early Middle Ages was in a process of cultural decline, other areas of the world advanced.

Lesson 2: The Middle Ages, continued

Note: When you write this paragraph in Lesson 2, it will be the last paragraph of a 2-paragraph report. Therefore, your title should come from its last line.
King Arthur

Before the Anglo-Saxons invaded Britain, it was inhabited by the Celts. The most famous hero of these people was King Arthur. The legend of this mighty warrior was probably first told by Celts who had been forced out of their land by the Saxons. The real King Arthur probably lived between 450 and 550 and united his people in their fight against these invaders. However, the first written record of him is in The History of the Britons, written in 830. After this, many more legends were written, each embellishing the story. Most write of majestic stone castles and knights in shining armor, neither of which existed in his time. The stories include magical swords, the glorious kingdom of Camelot, and a quest for the Holy Grail. Though they are not true history, the legends of King Arthur have become an important part of British folklore.
Unit 2: Writing from Notes

**Lesson 4: Beowulf**

*This source text has two paragraphs. Outline both on your own paper instead of the source in the basic lesson.* Format your outline into two sections, labeled I and II (one section for each paragraph).

**Source Text**

Beowulf’s Last Battle

Deep in a cave high on a cliff above the sea, a fierce dragon slept. He guarded a vast treasure. One day a runaway slave happened upon the chamber. At once he was both terrified of the dragon and astonished at the piles and piles of riches. As he turned to flee, he grabbed a golden goblet and was off. The dragon felt the loss of his goblet and heard the slave’s footsteps in the distance. He emerged from his lair, furious. He darted from village to village, spewing fire from his nostrils. All over the land fires blazed; then, the monster returned to his cave.

The king, Beowulf, though he was now old, knew he must stop the beast from terrorizing the villages again. As he and his warriors reached the dragon’s den, flames blasted out from the opening. Beowulf called to the monster, and the sinister serpent roared and hissed as the ground quaked with his steps. As soon as they met, Beowulf and the dragon fought fiercely. All of the warriors ran from fear except for one youngster who fought alongside his king. But Beowulf’s sword broke, and the dragon was able to seize him by the neck. The youngster climbed on the monster and stabbed at his throat until he finally dropped the king. Then the two men stabbed at the beast until he died. The town was safe, but Beowulf had been fatally wounded.
Unit 2: Writing from Notes

Lesson 5: The Byzantine Empire

Use your own paper to make a key word outline of the following paragraph. Write a paragraph from your outline. Add it to the first paragraph from Lesson 5 to make a 2-paragraph report.

Source Text

Constantinople

Under Justinian the Great, the Byzantine Empire expanded. Constantinople became the largest and most beautiful city in the world. It had fourteen palaces and the most glorious church in the world—the Hagia Sophia. In this church a huge marble dome towered over several smaller domes. The ceiling of pure gold sparkled in the sunlight. Beautiful stones of enchanting colors decorated the walls. No city or building in the world could boast of having a more glorious beauty. But Constantinople suffered through many attacks, and the Byzantine Empire grew and shrank many times. Eventually in 1453, Constantinople fell to Muslim Turks, and the Byzantine Empire ended.
Unit 3: Retelling Narrative Stories

Lesson 7: Mohammed

Outline the background introductory paragraph to this story using the method taught in Lessons 1–5 (three key words per sentence), and add it to the beginning of your story, before the title, as in the source text.

Background

Roman Catholicism was the dominant religion of Europe in the Middle Ages, but another religion began during this time—Islam. Islam is the religion of the Muslims. It is based on the claims of a man named Mohammed (also spelled Muhammed). After he died, his teachings were collected in a book called the Koran (Quran). Islam spread through the Middle East and across Africa as Mohammed’s followers, led by a warrior and leader named Abu Bakr, conquered surrounding lands. Today Islam is a major world religion. This is the story Muslims tell about how Islam began.
Lesson 10: Borrowing a Conflict

Rhyming Story

For this advanced lesson, write a rhyming story for a medieval storyteller.

During the Middle Ages, people listened to storytellers called minstrels, bards, or troubadours. These storytellers were highly respected and sought after because everyone loves a good story and books were rare. As they traveled from village to village and castle to castle, they also collected and shared the news of different regions. Many also played instruments and recited poetry. They were wonderful entertainers.

Many of the stories bards told were in poetry form because rhyme made them easier to remember. Your assignment is to take a familiar story and write it as a poem. You may use any rhyme pattern you desire. For example, you could rhyme each pair of lines, every other line, or just the last two lines of each four-line verse.

To help, you could also use assonance occasionally in place of rhyming. Assonance is the repetition of middle vowel sounds, such as in left and rest, love and enough, home and alone. These words do not exactly rhyme, but they have the effect of rhyme, so you can get away with using the device in place of rhyme at times. See the Decorations section in the SRN for more explanation of assonance.

See the next page as well as the appendix for some sample story poems. Do you recognize the stories from which they came? Note, too, that the three sections of the Story Sequence Chart are separated.

If you do the advanced rhyming story, use the checklist that follows the sample story poem.
In the kingdom of Constance, long, long ago,
Stood a castle high on a grassy plateau.
Below the great castle, a humble town sat,
With shabby brown houses and streets full of rats.
Here, the townspeople hid and cringed with fear,
For the dangerous, dreaded dragon lived near.
Enormous and green with a long spiky tail,
Sharp claws and horns, and wings like huge sails.
If the dragon crept out from its nearby lair,
It would attack and leave the town in disrepair.

But to their relief, there lived a young page
Who promised to protect them from the dragon’s rage.
Day by day, from the castle tower,
The page kept watch for the dragon each hour.
But then, he played a trick one day.
He was bored with watching and decided to say,
“Dragon! Dragon!” from the tower wall.
Then, every knight, each and all,
Rushed hastily to fight it away,
But found no dragon and shouted with dismay.
A few days later, the page decided then
That he would play his trick again
“Dragon!” the page yelled once more,
And the knights stormed out from the castle door.
They then found the town undisturbed,
And shouted again, extremely perturbed.

On the next day, the dragon came,
Crushing buildings, breathing flame.
When the page truthfully called, “Dragon!” this time,
Out from the castle, the knights did not climb.
The people were angered, the page was annoyed,
The castle was ruined, the whole town destroyed.
Later that day, the page felt contrite.
“Sorry,” he cried to the people all night.
And as he stared up at the starry sky,
He said to himself, “I shall not tell another lie.”
Lesson 10: Final Checklist (Advanced Lessons)
Borrowing a Conflict: Rhyming Story

**STRUCTURE**

- [ ] Story Sequence Chart followed _____ (5 pts)
- [ ] Poetry format (first word of each line capitalized) _____ (5 pts)
- [ ] Rhyme throughout (at least twelve lines) _____ (20 pts)
- [ ] Title repeats or reflects 2–3 key words from final clincher. _____ (2 pts)

**STYLE** Each paragraph must contain at least one of each element of style.

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<td>- [ ] -ly adverb _____ (2 pts)</td>
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<td>- [ ] who-which clause _____ (2 pts)</td>
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<td>- [ ] strong verb _____ (2 pts)</td>
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<table>
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<th>Decorations (Choose one.) (“dec” in margin or italics)</th>
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<td>- [ ] alliteration _____ (5 pts)</td>
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<td>- [ ] simile _____ (5 pts)</td>
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**MECHANICS**

- [ ] banned words: go/went say/said _____ (-1 pt)

**MORE ADVANCED ADDITIONS**

- [ ] vocabulary words *(Label voc or bold.)*
- [ ] conversation

Total ___________/50

Custom total _____ / _____
Charlemagne feared that the people of his empire were too influenced by the barbarian ways. They were neglecting religion and education. He wanted to revive the culture of the glorious Roman Empire. His kingdom would be a prosperous one with law and order, so he made many reforms. He made uniform laws throughout the land. He ordered all his subjects to attend church. He paid monks to make hundreds of copies of the Scriptures. He built roads and bridges, so priests could travel easily from town to town and teach people, and so people could trade goods more easily. He established schools throughout the empire. The most famous was the one in his palace. Here clergymen and the best teachers were trained. The revival of learning under Charlemagne is called the Carolingian Renaissance.

Charlemagne kept law and order in the kingdom by giving large amounts of land to loyal men. In return, they provided military and political service. They also maintained the roads, bridges, and buildings on their land. They evolved into the knights the Middle Ages are famous for, and the arrangement eventually was called feudalism. It became the basic system of government in Europe for the next four hundred years.
Unit 4: Summarizing a Reference

Lesson 14: Vikings

Add a second paragraph to your Vikings report using the source below. You could also add a third paragraph about Viking social life or religion by finding your own source.

Because the final report will be more than one paragraph, try to add an introductory sentence and final clincher as taught in Lesson 13: Charlemagne, Part 2.

Source Text, Extra Topic

Viking Explorers

Some Vikings were peaceful explorers. They developed new shipbuilding methods that helped them travel farther than ever before. They took these ships westward in the Atlantic Ocean into waters that had never been explored by Europeans before. In 815, Vikings sailed near Iceland. Later, between 870 and 930, ten thousand Vikings settled there. Their numbers grew to over 25,000. They created a governing body they called the Althing. Thirty-six chiefs represented twelve districts called Things. This law-making body has lasted until today. It is the oldest such assembly in the Western world.

One of the settlers in Iceland, Eric the Red, was exiled when he was accused of murder. When he sailed away, he discovered another island and named it Greenland, even though it was covered with ice and snow. The following spring, twenty-five ships from Iceland attempted to join him. Many were lost along the way, but in time, villages were established in Greenland. In about the year 1000, Leif Erikson (son of Eric the Red) reached the North American continent. He named the land he settled Vinland because of the abundant wild grapevines there. He had reached North America almost five hundred years before Christopher Columbus. He should be credited with being the first European to have discovered America, but the settlements that resulted from his discoveries only lasted for about three years. The Vikings left, and Vinland was forgotten. But because the Vikings impacted so many lands in so many ways, the Vikings will not be forgotten.
Outline a second paragraph using the following source text. Even though the source text has two paragraphs, you must summarize the facts into one paragraph. Add this second paragraph to the basic paragraph in Lesson 15.

Since your final report will be two paragraphs, add an introductory sentence and final clincher as taught in Lesson 13: Charlemagne, Part 2.

Source Text, Extra Topic

A Year to Remember: William the Conqueror

The rule of King William I brought much unrest and many changes to England. Many of the Englishmen were not happy about a Norman king ruling. For five years there were revolts. But William was ruthless. For example, when revolts continued in the North, his soldiers destroyed the region by burning down farms, killing livestock, and destroying food. Hundreds of people were killed as well. He also took land away from the Saxon nobles and granted it to those who had supported him. Most of these noblemen were Normans. They became William’s barons. Barons controlled large areas of land called manors. They had to swear an oath of loyalty to the king. They also provided soldiers (knights) for the king, and they collected taxes from the people. Thus, William began the feudal system in England. William also had castles built to help maintain order. The most famous of these is the Tower of London, which continued to be expanded after his death. The castles and fortresses he built across England were reminders of his power.

William’s rule of England changed the country in other ways, too. For example, since he did not speak English, French was spoken in the courts and upper society of England. As a result, many French words and terms were merged into the English language. But most significantly, William’s rule began a new line of kings and queens. His descendants have ruled England ever since he took the throne. Truly, his conquest of the throne changed the history of England. The year 1066 was indeed a fateful year.
Advanced Style: Dual Dress-Ups

You now have learned three dress-ups that can be used to form an advanced dress-up called a dual. This advanced dress-up may be a dual adjective, verb, or -ly adverb. To use this dress-up, simply do one of the following:

1. Use two adjectives to describe the same noun:
   Frightened and frantic, Ali ran for his life. (also note the alliteration)

   For a more dramatic effect, place the adjectives after the noun:
   Ali, frightened and frantic, ran for his life.

2. Use two verbs with the same noun:
   Arrows whooshed and whizzed.

3. Use two -ly adverbs with the same verb or adjective:
   The lamp began to shake rapidly and violently.

Indicate a dual dress-up by underlining the dual words.
Lesson 17: The King and the Dragon

Advanced Style: Triple Extensions

In the basic lesson, you learned a new decoration: the 3ss. Another pattern of threes is called a *triple extension*. This decoration can be like the dual dress-up, using three of the same dress-up together in the same sentence rather than two, or it can be the repetition of three of the same words or three of the same types of phrases or clauses. Here are a few examples. For more help, see the page on triple extensions in the SRN.

Indicate a triple extension with italics if typed. If handwritten, notate “trip” in the margin.

Note: For fun with these, play the sentence stretching game in the Teacher’s Manual either now or when brainstorming.

1. **Repeating a Part of Speech (verbs, adjectives, -ly adverbs)**
   
   The dragon’s *foul, fetid, fiery* breath blasted into the castle.

2. **Repeating Prepositional Phrases**
   
   *Up the cliff, around the boulder, and into the cave* the knight slipped.

3. **Repeating the Same Word**
   
   *Down, down, down* the knight tumbled.
Lesson 26: Genghis Khan and His Hawk

Avoid “You”

Use the word you only when you specifically mean your readers, e.g., when asking them a question. Do not use you to refer to people in general. It is too vague; the reader will not know who you is. There are several ways to avoid the indefinite you.

1. **Substitute words such as people, an individual, one, those, or readers.**
   
   You do not truly possess valor unless you recognize your fears.
   
   People do not truly possess valor unless they recognize their fears.

2. **If possible, however, it is better to substitute the precise person or group of people being referred to.**
   
   When you watch too much TV, you don’t get your homework done.
   
   Children who watch too much TV often neglect their homework.

3. **Sometimes you must rewrite the entire sentence.**
   
   Courage helps you get through everything that life throws at you.
   
   Courage provides the strength to persevere through the tribulations in life.

4. **When writing a personal essay in which you are writing about yourself, use I instead of you.**
   
   When “The Star Spangled Banner” plays, you feel proud to be an American.
   
   When “The Star Spangled Banner” plays, I feel proud to be an American.

Practice

Rewrite the following sentences to avoid using the indefinite you.

You will be sad when the king strikes his loyal friend.

This story teaches that you should not act when you are angry. (Rewrite the sentence, or substitute people and they for you.)

When the hawk knocks the cup from the khan’s hand, you wonder why. This makes the story intriguing.
Lessons 28–29: Renaissance Men: Scientists

In Lessons 28–29 students write the body of a research report about Renaissance men. The basic lesson gives sources for artists, but experienced students may opt to substitute scientists. Even better, write about two artists and two scientists as the student who provided the student sample in Appendix 3 did. Two sources about scientists follow.

Source Text, Extra Topic

Nicolaus Copernicus: Foundations of Astronomy

The great astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus was born in 1473 to wealthy parents. Unfortunately, when he was only ten years old, his father died. His uncle raised him and made sure that he was given the best education possible.

In college, Copernicus studied mathematics and painting, but it was there that he became very interested in the universe. He collected several books about it. In his time, most scientists believed that the earth was the center of the universe and that the sun revolved around the earth. This theory had been taught since ancient times, proposed by Ptolemy. It was called the Ptolemy model or the geocentric (earth-centered) theory.

In 1496, while studying in Italy, Copernicus met an astronomer named Domenico M. Novara. He was perhaps the first person Copernicus met who dared to challenge the authority of Ptolemy, the revered ancient philosopher. This impacted Copernicus greatly.

In 1500, Copernicus returned home to tend to his aging uncle. He explored astronomy whenever he could find the time. He developed his own model of the universe, which eventually evolved into the heliocentric (sun-centered) model he is famous for. He believed that the sun, not the earth, is the center of the universe and that all of the planets orbit around it. He further proposed that the length of a planet’s orbit is determined by how far away from the sun the planet is. He believed that the stars are much farther from the sun than the planets and that they do not move. He designed a complex mathematical system to support his ideas.

When he published his theory, it was not well received by most astronomers of the time. In addition, religious leaders among both the Catholics and Protestants rejected it. In 1616, seventy-three years after he died, the Church prohibited publication of his book. The prohibition was lifted partly in 1758 and fully in 1858. While there were some inaccuracies in his model, through the later work of Johannes Kepler and Galileo in correcting those errors, Copernicus’s heliocentric model of the solar system became the foundation of modern astronomy.
Galileo Galilei, born in 1564 in Pisa, Italy, was a brilliant astronomer and physicist. Galileo’s father wanted him to study medicine and become a doctor, so Galileo was sent to a renowned university. While at school, he discovered his mathematical talent and was able to persuade his father to let him study mathematics. One of his first scientific observations came when he watched a lantern hanging from a cathedral ceiling. This helped inspire him to study the motion of pendulums as well as of balls, falling objects, levers, and other things. He recorded his observations and used mathematical equations to explain the movements. These studies later helped Isaac Newton discover several laws of gravity, force, and motion.

Because Galileo did not base his beliefs simply on philosophies of the ancient great thinkers, but made his own observations and tested his ideas, he has been called “the father of the modern scientific method.” Probably his most famous experiment was a test to see if objects of different weights fall at different speeds, as was the accepted idea at the time. He dropped two balls of differing weight from the Leaning Tower of Pisa. People were surprised that they hit the ground at the same time.

In 1609 Galileo learned about the spyglass, a device that made remote objects appear closer. Using his complex mathematical knowledge and technical skill, he improved upon the weak spyglass and invented a much more powerful telescope. By grinding and polishing fine quality glass lenses, he improved the magnification from three to twenty times. Later in the same year, Galileo began to study the heavens using his telescope. He discovered craters on our moon, saw four of Jupiter’s moons, found out that the Milky Way was constructed of a multitude of stars, and noticed odd shapes around Saturn. He could not yet tell that these were rings. After observing changing shadows on the planet Venus, Galileo decided that it was moving around the sun, not around the earth as was believed by many. This discovery strongly supported the theories of Nicolaus Copernicus, who had insisted that the earth traveled around the sun instead of the other way around. Galileo’s gifts to the scientific world are immeasurable.