 



**Teacher**

**Lesson—Organizer—Rubric**

**Grades 6-8**

**Fall 2019**

**As part of The Stock Market Game your classrooms can participate in a fun national writing competition, InvestWrite. Dozens of students and teachers around the country win every semester. Check out the prizes and see more information on the website at**

[**www.investwrite.org**](http://www.investwrite.org)

Below you will find the competition information and assignment along with important guidelines, judging criteria and a rubric.

**To Think About First**

***“Whatever our dreams, ideas or projects, we plant a seed, nurture it and then reap the fruits of our labor.”*** *–*Oprah Winfrey

**6-8 Grade Writing Assignment**

What do you dream about achieving in your lifetime? In this essay, you will pitch your dream to a panel of investors for “seed money” to invest in your idea. Explain what your dream is, why it is important to you and how much money it will cost. Also explain a 10-year investment plan to grow your investors’ seed money over time to pay for your dream. Include a combination of stocks, bonds and/or mutual funds, explain why you selected each position, and describe why these are promising investments. Is there anything else you could do to help ensure your success?

**Performance Objectives**

Students will be able to:

* Identify the main idea/main problem in an InvestWrite question
* Write an essay that informs and/or persuades its readers
* Use appropriate grammar, spelling, structure, and language to convey intent

**Springboard Activities and Essay Breakdown**

* Introduce the “To Think About First” portion of the essay assignment
  + What is Oprah Winfrey referring to in this quote? Discuss the quote in parts; dreams, ideas, planting, nurturing, reaping. What do these different references mean? How can they be compared to things in our own lives? What does Oprah intend for the reader to take away from the quote? Develop other discussion related to specific things you might be studying in your classroom. Relate this discussion to the InvestWrite writing assignment.
* Ask students about the first sentence in the essay writing assignment and have them create lists. *What do you dream about achieving in your lifetime?* This can be anything related to their future, not limited to business ventures and retirement plans. Encourage them to think specifically about how those general goals could be accomplished.
* Encourage them to dream big!

* Encourage discussion about why these dreams and goals are important and who they might benefit.
* Have students create lists and compile a class list.
* Discuss: How much money would be necessary to save to accomplish these goals?
* Discuss: What combination of stocks, bonds and/or mutual funds would you select for your plan to be successful over 10 years?
* Discuss: Why would these be good investments?
* Discuss: How could you convince an investor that your plan would be successful?
* Think About and Discuss: What kinds of things would also contribute to your success?

1. **Explain to students they will have the opportunity to demonstrate what they are interested in and what they have learned in an InvestWrite essay. You can go to the website, or have your students go to the website and check out the prizes and the “News” section to generate excitement.**
2. **Distribute the** **Assignment Organizer (available to download from our website) or go directly to the website to explain the InvestWrite competition.**
3. **Go over the Rules and Guidelines below. (also included in the Assignment Organizer)**
4. **Guide the students through the Judging Criteria below. (also included in the Assignment Organizer). Consult the related Grading Rubric below.**
5. **Read the background (“To Think About First”) and the writing assignment for your grade level aloud and review what it is asking.**
6. **Organize Your Essay-Included in Assignment Organizer mentioned above.**

* What do you dream about achieving in your lifetime?
* In this essay, you will pitch your dream to a panel of investors for “seed money” to invest in your idea. Explain what your dream is, why is it important to you and how much money it will cost.
* Also explain a 10-year investment plan to grow your investors seed money over time to pay for your dream. Include a combination of stocks, bonds and/or mutual funds, explain why you selected each position, and describe why these are promising investments.
* Is there anything else you could do to help ensure your success?

1. **Draft Writing-discuss the writing process for your classroom and provide dates for drafts and final deadline.**
2. **Final Writing-discuss classroom process regarding final submission including dates. (Be sure to refer to Rules and Guidelines, below)** The last two pages of the **Assignment Organizer** can be customized with dates and distributed.

**COMPLETE INFORMATION AND AWARDS CAN BE FOUND AT:**

**www.investwrite.org**

**Submission Deadline: Wednesday, December 11, 2019**

**Rules and Guidelines:** Essays need meet all the guidelines before the deadline. Failure to meet the guidelines will result in disqualification.

* Each student in the 6-8 grade division may submit only one entry with a maximum of **900** words and a minimum of **400** words.
* This is an individual project. Group discussion is encouraged but **essays must be written and submitted by individual students.**
* If a title is chosen it must appear at the top of the first page of the text.
* The student author’s name **CANNOT** appear in the essay or title. Identification of the student or teacher in the essay will result in disqualification.
* If references are cited, include them at the end of the essay text.
* References must be formatted without footnotes. At the end of the essay simply list each source as: (Author. “Title”. Date. URL).
* Only the body of the essay will be included in the word count. The title and references will not count in the word limit.
* **Essays in PDF format cannot be accepted**. All essays need to be in a format that can be cut and pasted to the InvestWrite website.
* All essays must be submitted in plain text; no charts, graphs or symbols will be accepted.

**Judging Criteria-see related rubric below**

Judges of the InvestWrite competition will base their decisions on **your rationale, understanding of the subject matter, and writing style.** They will ask themselves the following questions as they review your essay submission:

**Rationale**

The essay should be well organized and written in a manner that indicates there was a logical thought process involved in addressing the assignment. In the essay, the student should present a thoughtful progression of ideas and recommendations. The essay should draw clear connections between the students thinking and recommendations or conclusions.

* Is your essay well organized?
* Do you address all the elements of the question in your essay?
* Have you written clearly when you described details?
* Have you omitted unnecessary details?

**Understanding the Subject Matter**

The judges will read the essay with the following questions in mind based on the student grade level. Does the student completely address the elements of the question and use appropriate terminology? Does the student exhibit knowledge regarding researching and planning an investment strategy? This aspect of scoring targets the students understanding of the basic concepts taught in the Stock Market Game.

* Are the words and terms you include in your essay used correctly?
* Will your statements make sense to a judge who is reading your essay?
* Have you described your strategies clearly?
* Do you talk about how the things you learned in the Stock Market Game relate to what you wrote in your essay?

**Writing Style**

This scoring element allows the student's creativity to be recognized. Judges ask if the essay is interesting and easy to read and if they were encouraged to continue reading to the conclusion of the essay. Students have an opportunity to exhibit the ability to communicate thoughts in an engaging and inviting manner. Writing style includes assessment of grammar, spelling, and punctuation. This scoring element also offers students the chance to think beyond examples provided and make their essay unique by expression of their own interests and creativity.

* Did you make your essay easy for the judges to read?
* Will the judges be able to see your creative side when they read your essay?
* Will judges who read your essay be interested in it and want to read to the end?
* Have you used proper punctuation and good grammar?
* Have you carefully worked on your drafts to make your final essay as good as it can be?
* Did you work on this essay without too much help from your teacher or an adult? Your essay should be in your very own personal writing style!

**GRADING RUBRIC**

The following is based on standards that students be able to incorporate narrative elements effectively into arguments and informative/explanatory texts.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **CRITERIA** | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** |
| RATIONALE | There a clear progression of logical thought. The introduction is engaging, and the conclusion is strong. | For the most part the progression of thought is logical. The introduction presents the writer’s point of view and the conclusion sums up the body of the essay. | The essay lacks a clear progression of logical thought. The introduction does not effectively present the writer’s point of view and the conclusion does not successfully sum up the body of the essay. | There is no logical order to how facts and sentiments are presented. The introduction does not successfully present the topic or the writer’s point of view and the conclusion does not effectively support the essay’s premise. |
| UNDERSTANDING THE SUBJECT MATTER | The writer expresses himself/herself effectively using the appropriate investment language and sustainable investing terminology to explain his or her position. | You can assume what the writer is trying to express. He or she uses terminology in a way that makes it unclear whether he or she fully understands investment terms and the concept of sustainable investing. | It is not clear what the writer is trying to express. He or she misuses investment and sustainable investing terminology throughout the essay. | There is a lot of misinformation in the essay. |
| WRITING STYLE | The writer has chosen an appropriate tone and format that makes his or her position clear and presents supporting evidence in an organized and convincing manner. | The writer has chosen an appropriate tone and format that makes his or her position clear but supporting evidence can be organized more effectively. | The writer has chosen a somewhat inappropriate tone and format that hurts his or her position. The writing unclear and fails to present supporting evidence in an organized and convincing manner. | The writer’s tone and style are completely inappropriate in stating his or her position. Supporting remarks are weak and disorganized. |