PLANIT TEACHERS

Teaching Script: Mastering Discursive Writing

Topic: Advanced Discursive Writing

Level: University/Higher Education

Duration: 90 minutes

Learning Objectives:

- Evaluate and differentiate between strong and weak evidence in academic writing
- Apply the SEAL framework for evidence integration
- Construct well-supported academic arguments
- Critically analyze source credibility and relevance

✓ Digital presentation system

✓ Evidence evaluation handouts

✓ Sample texts (3 types)

✓ Evidence evaluation matrices

✓ CRAAP method worksheets

✓ SEAL framework templates

Lesson Opening (0-15 minutes)

0-5 minutes

"Welcome to today's session on mastering discursive writing. Let's begin by examining three different texts that will challenge our understanding of evidence and argumentation."

[Display three contrasting texts on screen]

Opening Discussion Prompts:

- "What immediate differences do you notice in how these texts present their arguments?"
- "Which text appears most convincing and why?"
- "How does the use of evidence vary across these examples?"

Guide students to notice:

- Citation density and quality
- Evidence integration techniques
- Argument structure and progression

5-10 minutes

"Now let's establish our framework for evaluating evidence quality. This hierarchy will become your compass for source selection."

[Project Evidence Pyramid diagram]

Evidence Hierarchy (Top to Bottom):

1. Systematic Reviews & Meta-analyses
2. Randomized Controlled Trials
3. Cohort Studies
4. Case Studies
5. Expert Opinions
6. Anecdotal Evidence

10-15 minutes

"Let's analyze the difference between weak and strong evidence through practical examples."

Evidence Comparison Exercise:
Weak: "Social media is harmful to mental health."
Strong: "A 2023 longitudinal study of 10,000 adolescents found that daily social media use exceeding 3 hours correlated with a 70% increase in anxiety symptoms (Johnson et al., 2023)."

Common Student Mistakes:

- Overreliance on general statements
- Failing to quantify evidence
- Missing temporal context
- Inadequate source attribution

Evidence Integration Framework (15-30 minutes)

15-20 minutes

"The SEAL framework will become your foundation for integrating evidence effectively into your writing."

SEAL Framework Breakdown:

- **S**tatement: Present your claim clearly
- **E**vidence: Provide supporting data/research
- **A**nalysis: Explain significance and implications
- **L**ink: Connect back to main argument

SEAL Framework Example:

Statement: Remote work has significantly impacted workplace communication patterns.

Evidence: Microsoft's 2023 workplace study of 31,000 employees across 31 countries found that virtual meetings increased by 252% while informal communication decreased by 45% (Microsoft, 2023).

Analysis: This dramatic shift suggests a fundamental restructuring of workplace interactions, prioritizing formal channels over spontaneous exchanges.

Link: This transformation in communication patterns demonstrates the need for organizations to deliberately create opportunities for informal collaboration in remote settings.

Practical Application (30-45 minutes)

30-35 minutes

"Now it's your turn to apply the SEAL framework to your own writing."

[Distribute practice scenarios and evidence sets]

Differentiated Support:

- Basic: Provide full SEAL template with guided prompts
- Intermediate: Offer partial framework structure
- Advanced: Present open-ended topics with evidence database

Circulation Priorities:

- Check evidence selection relevance
- Monitor analysis depth
- Guide logical linking
- Encourage peer review

Evidence Evaluation Workshop (45-60 minutes)

45-50 minutes

"Let's explore the CRAAP method for evaluating source credibility."

CRAAP Method Breakdown:

- **Currency:** When was the information published?
- **Relevance:** How well does it fit your needs?
- **Authority:** Who is the author/publisher?
- **Accuracy:** How reliable is the content?
- **Purpose:** Why does this information exist?

Source Evaluation Exercise:

Source 1: Blog Post on Climate Change

- Published: Yesterday
- Author: Environmental activist
- Platform: Personal blog
- Citations: None

Source 2: Peer-reviewed Climate Study

- Published: Last year in Nature
- Authors: Research team from MIT
- Platform: Academic journal
- Citations: 127 references

Advanced Integration Techniques (60-75 minutes)

60-65 minutes

"Now we'll examine advanced techniques for weaving multiple sources into a cohesive argument."

Source Synthesis Patterns:

1. Linear Progression
   - Source A → Source B → Source C
   - Builds chronologically or complexity-wise
2. Contrast and Compare
   - Source A vs. Source B
   - Highlights debates or contradictions
3. Triangulation
   - Multiple sources supporting one point
   - Strengthens credibility through consensus

Sample Synthesis:

"While Smith (2022) argues that artificial intelligence will eliminate 30% of jobs by 2030, Jones (2023) presents a more nuanced view, suggesting job transformation rather than elimination. This aligns with Brown's (2023) longitudinal study of technological disruption, which found that historical technological advances created more jobs than they displaced."

Counter-Arguments and Rebuttals (75-90 minutes)

75-80 minutes

"The strength of your argument often lies in how well you address opposing viewpoints."

Counter-Argument Structure:

1. Acknowledge opposing view fairly
2. Present contradictory evidence
3. Analyze limitations of opposition
4. Reinforce original position

Model Counter-Argument:

"Critics argue that renewable energy cannot reliably meet global demand (Wilson, 2022). However, recent technological advances in energy storage have addressed intermittency issues, with battery

efficiency improving 300% since 2018 (Tesla Energy Report, 2023). Furthermore, the International Energy Agency's 2023 study demonstrates that renewable grids achieved 99.9% reliability in multiple test markets (IEA, 2023)."

Group Practice Exercise:

Topic: Social Media Content Moderation

Position A: Strict moderation protects users

Position B: Minimal moderation preserves free speech

- Platform safety statistics
- Free speech case studies
- User satisfaction data
- Economic impact reports

Evidence Integration Rubric:

Criterion	Exemplary (4)	Proficient (3)	Developing (2)
Source Quality	Consistently uses high-tier evidence	Usually uses credible sources	Relies on basic sources
Integration	Seamless SEAL implementation	Clear but mechanical SEAL use	Incomplete SEAL application
Analysis	Deep, nuanced interpretation	Clear but surface-level analysis	Limited analysis attempted

Self-Assessment Questions:

1. How effectively did I apply the SEAL framework?
2. What patterns emerged in my source selection?
3. Where could I strengthen my counter-arguments?
4. How balanced is my evidence presentation?

Further Development:

- Advanced source synthesis techniques
- Specialized disciplinary conventions
- Publication-specific requirements
- Advanced statistical interpretation

Digital Tools for Evidence Evaluation:

- Citation analyzers
- Plagiarism detection software
- Academic database interfaces
- Source credibility checkers

Essential Reading List:

- "The Craft of Research" (Booth et al., 2016)
- "They Say / I Say" (Graff & Birkenstein, 2021)
- "Writing Science" (Schimel, 2012)
- "Critical Reading and Writing" (Wallace & Wray, 2021)

Additional Practice Materials:

- Evidence evaluation worksheets
- Source comparison templates
- Argument mapping tools
- Peer review guidelines

"Let's review some exemplary work and discuss areas for improvement."

Model Response Analysis:

Statement: Urban green spaces play a crucial role in community wellbeing.

Evidence: According to a 2023 study in Environmental Health Perspectives analyzing 50 metropolitan areas, neighborhoods with 30% or more green space coverage showed 25% lower rates of stress-related health issues and 40% higher community engagement levels (Zhang et al., 2023).

Analysis: These findings demonstrate that urban green spaces serve not only as environmental assets but as catalysts for both individual and collective wellness.

Link: Therefore, urban planning policies must prioritize the preservation and expansion of green spaces to foster healthier, more connected communities.

Quality Indicators:

- Specific, measurable evidence
- Clear causal connections
- Precise quantification
- Relevant, recent sources