Meaningful Composition 9 (II): High School Creative Writing

A Second Semester Book+

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+**Reminder: "First or Second Semester Book" is just the division for all MC books.** First Semester Books for MC 2 through MC 9 are recommended for students who have not used CI books/methods before. Second Semester Books are usually specialized books. MC books do not have to be done in any certain order (once the CI methods are learned via one **First Semester** MC book or a CQLA* book). The **Second Semester books** for MC 2 through MC 9 and all other high school books are not specifically in order but are **various types**--research reports, essays only, and creative writing--at each grade level span. (*CQLA, *Character Quality Language Arts*, is our stand-alone language arts program for grades two through twelve.)

The *Character Quality Language Arts* (CQLA) program and *Meaningful Composition* (MC) books are designed for families who desire to study God's Word, biblical principles, and godly character while developing excellent communication skills. For more help in how to teach writing, check out our *Write On! Quick Kit* or *The Blogger's Write Right Quick Kit* -- (an audio cd and booklet set) or schedule a teacher or student writing seminar.

For more information about other curriculum items (including speech and debate); teaching audios for homeschooling parents; character books (including the popular *Character Sketches* books); *The Well-Trained Heart* (parenting book); additional materials written by the Reishes; *The Really Writing* (RW--Secular e-book series); and/or to schedule a (1) CI speaker, (2) *Almost 3 R's Workshop,* (3) Teacher and/or Student Writing Seminar, (4) SAT Essay Workshop, or (5) *Raising Kids With Character* seminar (Christian parenting), contact us:

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Note: Character Ink (CI) was formerly known as Training for Triumph (TFT).

Meaningful Composition: How to Use MC Books

The *Meaningful Composition* (MC) series was designed for home schools, co-ops, and Christian schools who want their students to learn to write compositions of many types that are meaningful, as opposed to typical "What I Want to Be When I Grow Up" types of essays and reports with little instruction in how to actually plan and write. It was designed to teach the entire writing process from thinking to researching (when needed) to outlining to writing to revising. **It is written in Character Ink's "Directed Writing Approach."** That is, there is **no guess work as to what to write, how many paragraphs to write, how many sources to use, how to outline, or how to revise.** It is **all laid out for the student step-by-step** within these pages.

***Meaningful Composition* may be used over one semester or an entire school year, depending on your school calendar and time allotted for composition.** (The elementary books are set up in a day-by-day format. The middle school and high school books are set up in a weekly or two week format.) It is recommended that each of the 2 through 4 books not be spread out over the school year but rather over one semester.

MC may be used as a stand-alone English curriculum for the student who has already mastered spelling and vocabulary studies and has a fundamental knowledge of grammar. It may be combined with a grammar program if your student is still in the grammar-learning stage. (It is not recommended that you add another grammar program while doing the second and third grade books as these introduce many grammar items throughout the writing instruction, and an additional grammar program simultaneously may confuse the young writer.)

The MC books are also ideal co-op, small group, or Christian school writing books as they give each teacher confidence to teach with CI's step-by-step Directed Writing Approach. MC teachers may also desire to schedule a teacher or student writing workshop taught by one or both of the MC authors.

To use *Meaningful Composition* as a one-semester, stand-alone English curriculum, you may simply start at the beginning of the book and spread the compositions out over the time recommended. (There are sixteen weeks worth of assignments in each *Meaningful Composition* book as a stand-alone curriculum book for one semester of instruction. This is shown in the layout of each book.) Your student will need to look up any grammar concepts that he is told to include in his compositions (colons, semicolons, etc.) if he is unfamiliar with writing with them. For the student who has already had the fundamentals of grammar study, ***Meaningful Composition* becomes the application of those grammar skills via the provided Checklist Challenge** that the compositions have applied to them. (You, as the writing teacher, may desire to secure the *Character Quality Language Arts Teacher's Guide* since it is a writing handbook with most of the skills in this book and our Grammar Cards with grammar skills laid out in alphabetical order.)

The method of instruction in most of the *Meaningful Composition* books will require one or two one-hour meetings each week with the teacher to discuss the assignments, introduce the outlining technique, check the student's rough draft, review his Checklist Challenge (CC), and grade his final composition. In addition, the student will need to work approximately 20 to 50 minutes (depending on level of book) a day four days a week by himself in *Meaningful Composition* in order to complete all of the assignments contained herein during a one-semester period of time. (Again, the time and teacher assistance needed in each book will vary according to whether the student is learning to write sentences or multiple paragraph compositions [as well as whether he is in the early or latter parts of the book].) It is recommended that you start out working together and see which areas your student is able to work alone and which areas he needs your assistance.

(continued on next page)

To use a *Meaningful Composition* book as a full-year curriculum along with a fundamental grammar course (such as *Easy Grammar* for middle school students or *Jensen's Grammar* or *Analytical Grammar* for high school students), you simply need to double the amount of time that each essay or report has allotted. (For example, if an assignment says two weeks for its time allotment, your student would complete all of the components of that assignment in four weeks instead.) In this "slower" way, your student will eventually learn all of the grammar concepts he is asked to apply in the Checklist Challenge via his grammar program during the course of the academic year while he is writing compositions. Using this approach, your student would need to work out of *Meaningful Composition* fifteen to twenty minutes per day, which leaves time for him to complete grammar studies simultaneously. The optimal way to learn grammar and composition is to combine the two and be sure that grammar application is included in the compositions, which is why *Meaningful Composition* (and our complete language arts program, *Character Quality Language Arts* [CQLA] and our ebook series, *Really Writing* [RW]) contains the Checklist Challenge for nearly every composition written. (An elementary student using any of the levels 2* or 3* MC books will not need an additional grammar course.)

All *Meaningful Composition* books have two skill levels within each level: Basic and Extension. These two levels provide two different skill levels of writing and revising for students in each book. Thus, a younger student using this book would not do as many paragraphs and revisions as an older (or more advanced) student using the same book.

The composition in all of MC (and all of CQLA, CI's complete language arts program) is dependent upon a student at least understanding the fundamentals of sentence structure (and these are introduced and built upon in the MC 2, 3, and 4 books). Students will be able to complete the Character Ink Outlines much more effectively if they understand the functions of subjects and verbs. Students will be able to insert the CC revisions into their writings much more easily if they understand how to do the revisions (how to combine sentences, how to add sentence openers, how to write SSS5's, etc.). The groundwork for many of those skills is laid out in Books 2, 3, and 4 -- for beginning students as well as for older students who need instruction in those fundamentals. (Also first semester books, in addition to being grade-level appropriate, are strong remediation books with specific instruction in "How to Create and Write From a Sentence-by-Sentence Outline" and "How to Complete the Checklist Challenge"--see the complete list of essay and report types and skill lessons provided in **each** MC book at the end of this "How to Use This Book" section.)

Note that MC books are not necessarily grade level specific (especially the second semester, type-specific ones). The books are labeled with numbers that approximate the grade level of the projects. However, writing is extremely subjective. An advanced seventh grader (with years of writing experience) may do great in one of the MC 10 books (*Essays Only* or *Four Research Reports*) whereas a seventh grader without much writing experience may be more comfortable going to the 4 I or 4 II for what a sentence or paragraph contains and how to put paragraphs together for essays and reports. Check out the samples at our blog to find the right fit for your student(s).

If your student has little grammar background and still needs instruction in spelling and vocabulary (as well as comprehension), you may want our full language arts curriculum, *Character Quality Language Arts* (CQLA). It is a complete language arts program for grades two through twelve and teaches the four major language arts skills--vocabulary, spelling, grammar, and composition--using character materials and topics as its subject matter. (It also incorporates study skills and comprehension-building throughout.) You can find out more about all of our programs, including CQLA, by accessing our blog at characterinkblog.com. You may also print off one full month of CQLA for each child to use free of charge and view the Tables of Contents and two weeks of sample lessons for each *Meaningful Composition* book at the same link.

*See our blog for availability of these levels of books: characterinkblog.com

Note: Character Ink now has non-religious composition books in ebook format called *Really Writing.* The *Really Writing (RW)* series is Character Ink's "secular" writing program. While writing topics are not biblically-based in the *RW* series, the topics are still character-based and interesting for students. The *Really Writing* series is available in an ebook format with three or four detailed specific-type projects from start to finish per ebook (or fewer for lengthy projects). The RW series is appropriate for public school classrooms, Christian schools, homeschools, co-ops, and private tutoring/after school supplementing. Check out our blog to find RW online vendors.

Choosing the Right *Meaningful Composition* Book(s) for Your Students

The *Meaningful Composition* series is a multi-level writing program for students in grades two through twelve who desire to use character-based (and sometimes biblically-based) materials, themes, and subject matter, including, but not limited to, character stories, biographies, science and weather/nature topics, animal information, Bible stories, and much more. (You may see the types of papers and assignments and content by looking at the two-week samples of each book at our blog: characterinkblog.com.)

Additionally, MC uses many of our original methods that we have tested with one hundred to two hundred students every year for the past ten years. These methods work—whether they are Directed Brainstorming and Scene-by-Scene development for Story Writing or Outlining Cards and Bibliography Cards for Research Report writing or the Three P's of Persuasion for Essay Writing. We take students by the hand and leave nothing to chance! (These methods can also be found in our samples.)

Here are some details that you might want to know about MC and choosing the book(s) for your student(s):

1. While MC has grade levels assigned to each book (2 I for first semester; 2 II for second semester; 3 I for first semester, etc.), those are simply designated for general leveling. As you can see by the boxes that follow, a student in fourth grade does NOT have to do a Level 4 book---you may pick and choose according to your child's strengths and interests. (Again, the boxes that follow will help you see this, as will viewing/printing off/trying our free samples.)

2. If your student is new to CI's writing approaches, we recommend that you try a first semester book close to your student's grade level (or below it) for one semester. The first semester books from grades four through (and including) grade nine all teach our beginning methods of "How to Do a Sentence-by-Sentence Outline Over Given Material" and "How to Complete the Checklist Challenge," etc.

3. Once a first semester book is completed, your student may desire to do a more type-specific book from our second semester ones (i.e. Creative Writing in 3II, 5II, 7II, 9 II, or 11 II; essay writing in 4 II, 6 II, and 10 I; Research Report writing in 8 II, 10 II, and 12 II). If you are teaching a group of students and you do not want just one type of writing, you will want to do any first semester book up through (and including) 9 I.

4. Again, please feel free to print off some samples and even use them with your student(s) before purchasing. The lessons will not be sequential like they are in a complete book, but if you print off four to six weeks of lower level lessons and work through them with your student (two weeks from two or three different books), you will get a good feeling for how he will do with the book that you think is more at his grade level.

1. *Remediation for Middle Schoolers Who Have Very Little Writing Experience

MC 4 II: *Put Those Paragraphs Together!*+
MC 5 I: *Writing For Real!*
MC 6 I: *Long and Strong*
MC Bonus Book: *Jump Start I**

+Optional: May not be needed. See Samples at CI website.
*Highly recommended for remediation. Check availability at our site.

2. *Remediation for High Schoolers

MC 7 I: *Reports and Essays Galore*
MC 6 II: *Junior High Essays*
MC 8 II: *Junior High Research Reports*
MC Bonus Book: *Jump Start II**

*Highly recommended for remediation. Check availability at our site.

3. *Creative Writing for Junior High School Students and High School Students

MC 5 II: *Creative and Clever*
MC 6 II: *Junior High Essays*+
MC 7 II: *Completely Creative*
MC 9 II: *High School Creative Writing*
MC 11 II: *Story Writing*

+Optional: May not be needed. See Samples at CI website.

4. *Essay Writing for Junior High and High School Students

MC 5 I: *Writing For Real!*+
MC 6 II: *Junior High Essays*
MC 10 I: *Essays Only*
MC Bonus Book: *The SAT Essay and Other Timed Writing*

+Optional: May not be needed. See Samples at CI website.

5. *Research Report Writing for Junior High and High School Students

MC 8 I: *Bridging the Gap*+
MC 8 II: *Junior High Research Reports*
MC 10 II: *Four Research Reports*
MC 12 II: *The BIG Research Report*

+Optional: May not be needed. See Samples at CI website.

Note: See the following pages of skills and composition types for each book to see availability of each MC level. The entire MC program (twenty-eight books) is scheduled to be done by the end of the 2016 calendar year.