**Informational Writing from Two Perspectives**

**KEY TERMS**

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| **Informational/Explanatory Writing** | Informational/explanatory writing conveys information accurately and is organized around a central idea with a coherent focus, answering a question that typically addresses *what, how or why*? |
| **Objective** | – Not influenced by personal feelings or opinions in considering and representing facts. |
| **Critical Issues** | Pressing issues that are hotly debated in politics, the media, and the community. They concern people’s freedoms, the way we live, and how society evolves. |
| **Perspective** | A particular attitude towards or way of regarding something; a point of view. When it comes to taking a side on an issue, this can also be termed a “stance.” |
| **Prior Knowledge** | All the information the writer has stored in his/her brain about a selected topic. |
| **Research Question** | An overarching question that steers the research and writing of an essay. These questions should be open-ended and require research and thinking to craft a thorough response. |
| **Central Idea** | The overarching idea behind an informational essay. The term central idea can also be used in reference to a paragraph, where the central idea should sit in the topic sentence. In a compare/contrast essay about a critical issue, the central idea defines the key questions in the debate about the issue that will be addressed. |
| **(Historical) Background** | Information that provides context about the critical issue including when the debate began, who has been involved, major events, significant court cases and decisions, and legislation passed. |
| **Compare/Contrast Organization** | The most prominent methods of organizing this kind of essay are the block format and the point-by-point format. |
| **Supporting Details** | Facts, statistics, quotations, and examples that support the central idea of a paragraph. |
| **Analysis** | The explanation of how supporting details address the central idea; a discussion of how the two perspectives on the critical issue are different and similar. |