Checklist for Informative Writing in Lower and Middle Grades

BEFORE the essay:

* Is your research complete? If research is not needed, do you have at least 3 ideas that clearly support your central idea?

☐ I have enough research about my topic to provide at least three details or examples to support my central idea.

☐ I have put the details and examples for my topic into logical groups.

☐ I have a single focus for my essay. I can write one statement that lets my reader know what to expect for the entire essay. My focus is small enough to develop thoroughly over the course of my essay. For example, if the topic of my essay is "dogs," I have chosen one specific sub-topic, such as "How to prepare your house for a new puppy."

☐ I understand that this is an informative essay, so it should have a formal style. I know that I need to present my ideas in a clear and concise way.

The BEGINING of the essay:

☐ I used clear, formal language in my opening paragraph.

☐ I engaged my reader with a question, an interesting or exciting fact, or a surprising piece of information.

☐ I used language that will inspire my reader to have confidence in the information I presented. My reader will understand the importance or significance of my topic.

The BODY of your essay:

☐ I organized my ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections.

☐ I made connections between ideas.

☐ I developed my essay with well-chosen, important facts, details, and examples.

☐ I used precise language throughout your essay? Remember that precise language is EXACT language. Did you say exactly what you meant? You do not want your reader to be confused.

☐ I used quotations when possible.

☐ I maintained a formal style throughout the essay. (This does NOT mean that your essay needs to be dry and boring. Be sure your own voice shines through. Your writing can maintain a formal tone while also maintaining your reader's attention.)

The CONCLUSION of the essay:

☐ I provided a conclusion that follows from and supports the information you presented in your essay.