



# **Text Structures From the Masters: 50 Lessons and Nonfiction Mentor Texts to Help Students Write Their Way In and Read Their Way Out of Every Single Imaginable Genre, Grades 6-10 (Corwin Literacy)**

*Gretchen S. Bernabei, Jennifer L. Koppe*

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*Gretchen Bernabei asks students to derive possible text structures from examining mentor texts. Instead of that one format students are given—the five-paragraph essay—she gives us fifty, and doesn’t pretend that’s a complete list. She changes the landscape students can work in from one of poverty to one of wonderful excess. She shows us that as writers we are playing a game with lots of moves. —Thomas Newkirk*

School writing has nothing to do with my life...If that sounds like your students, then you need this book, because it will prove to your students that writing counts in our world— and always has.

In *Text Structures from the Masters*, Gretchen Bernabei and Jennifer Koppe provide **50 short texts** by famous Americans who put pen to paper driven by what Peter Elbow described as “an itch” to say something. The book includes Sojourner Truth’s Speech (itch: join a heated debate), FDR’s Pearl Harbor message (itch: pick up the pieces), JFK’s inaugural address (itch: give a pep talk) . . . along with 47 more pieces and their explicit purposes.

By examining the structure of these mentor texts, students suddenly see that the itch is something they have in their own lives, too! And the **50 companion lessons** invite students to use the text structure of each the famous documents to express that itch.

Each 4-page lesson includes:

- A planning sheet that reveals the structure of the mentor text, giving students an X-Ray like device for looking at the piece of writing.
- Brainstorming boxes that invite students to discover their “itchiest” topic
- A method for “kernelizing” their own essay—making an outline of what they will write using the text structure as a guide.
- Student examples of both kernel essays and finished pieces.

- The bonus? Students report the historical document comes to life as they can see textual map that holds it together—and have used that map themselves.

*Text Structures from the Masters* shows students how writing can help get the work of their lives done. They don't need to be poised to send someone into the battlefield to have the desire to express something to others—just the itch to say it well.

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