

Lesson Plan: Writing an Investigative Report

By Evan Combs with SME consultation

Analysis Statement

- Weak police narratives are causing officers to be taken off the street to edit reports. How to complete a report in addition to honing investigative narrative skills should be reviewed.

Design Outline

- Align to CALEA standards 42.2.1(a) (Operations > Preliminary Investigative Steps).
- Objectives (Blooms level):
 1. Identify the components of a police report (Remember)
 2. Apply the qualities of a successful investigative narrative (Apply)
 3. Assess the effectiveness of a given report (Evaluate)
 4. Compose an investigative narrative in response to a scenario (Create)

Development & Implementation Guide

- Purpose of a report & How to Complete a Report (direct Instruction / behaviorism pedagogy)
 - Exemplars and real imagery representing reports
 - Identify major components and complete a report as a class
- The impact of an unsuccessful vs successful report (context learning / social constructivism pedagogy)
 - Role-playing Sergeant's evaluation of reports to internalize impact
 - Class composes a list of common errors and successful qualities of a narrative
 - Instructor distributes a comprehensive list that includes common errors, positive qualities in investigative narrative, and exemplars
- Class self-reflection on areas to improve and collaborative opportunities to support colleagues (metacognition development / constructivism pedagogy).

Evaluation

Formative Assessment Options

Objective 1 - Fill in the blank using appropriate identifiers of a police report

Objective 2 - Short responses (written or oral) targeting skills demonstrating investigative narrative mastery

Objective 3 - Provide feedback to example report, targeting report use and narrative

Objective 4 - Complete a police report based on scenario and compare to exemplar

Summative Assessment Option (based on concepts mastered prior to police reporting)

Complete a tabletop exercise that evaluates student's understanding of policy and procedures of preliminary investigation through to report submission.