

Writing - Grade 4 - Unit 1: The Arc of Story (Realistic Fiction)

Content Area: **ELA**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Marking Period 1**
Length: **8 weeks**
Status: **Published**

Course Pacing Guide

The main focus of this unit is to provide narrative writing skills and strategies encompassing the following:

BEND I F Creating and Developing Stories and Characters that Feel Real

1. **Imagining Stories from Ordinary Moments** In this session, you'll teach students that fiction writers get ideas for stories from small moments in their lives. You'll help them get started doing that.
2. **Imagining Stories We Wish Existed in the World** In this session, you'll tell students that when they sit down to write fiction, they might get ideas for stories by imagining the books they wish existed in the world. You can also teach them that fiction writers get ideas for stories by thinking about issues in their lives.
3. **Developing Believable Characters** In this session, you'll teach students that, like all writers, fiction writers need to choose a seed idea (a story idea) and then begin to develop characters by creating their external and internal traits.
4. **Giving Characters Struggles and Motivations** In this session, you'll teach children that writers can develop characters by telling about their characters' motivations and struggles and also by creating scenes that show these things.
5. **Plotting with a Story Arc** In this session, you'll teach children that writers sketch out possible plotlines for stories, often in story arcs that represent traditional story structure.

BEND II F Drafting and Revising with an Eye Toward Believability

6. **Show, Don't Tell: Planning and Writing Scenes** In this session, you'll help children realize that writing scenes is, in a sense, the same as writing Small Moment stories. Writers often begin by putting the character into action or by laying out the character's exact words and then unfolding the moment step by step.
7. **Feeling and Drafting the Heart of Your Story** In this session, you'll teach children that fiction writers create their best drafts when they experience the world through their character's skin, letting the story unfold as it happens to them.
8. **Studying Published Texts to Write Leads** In this session, you'll remind writers of various strategies for writing effective leads. You will also remind children that writers reread literature, letting it teach techniques for writing.
9. **Orienting Readers with Setting** In this session, you'll remind writers that as they write, they need to "stay in scene," making sure the action and dialogue are grounded in the setting.

10. Writing Powerful Endings In this session, you'll teach children that writers of fiction do their best to craft the endings that their stories deserve. In particular, they make sure their endings mesh with and serve the purposes of their stories.

BEND III F Preparing for Publication with an Audience in Mind

11. Revision: Rereading with a Lens In this session, you'll teach children that when revising, writers don't simply reread; they reread with a lens. Writers vary their lenses according to what they value for their work.

12. Making a Space for Writing In this session, you'll tell writers about the intimate work space you've created for your writing and teach students that they can create their own spaces inside their writing notebooks and their homes.

13. Using Mentor Texts to Flesh Out Characters In this session, you'll remind students that writers study mentor authors to notice what other writers do that really works. One thing writers do is use actions and revealing details to show rather than tell about or explain the character.

14. Editing with Various Lenses In this session, you'll explain that just as fiction writers revise with "lenses," they edit with them as well, rereading their writing several times for several reasons, making edits as they go.

15. Publishing Anthologies: A Celebration In this session, you'll give writers an opportunity to see their work "published" in book form

BEND IV F Embarking on Independent Fiction Projects

16. Launching Independent Fiction Projects In this session, you could teach students that writers take all they've learned about writing fiction stories to new projects.

17. Planning and Drafting Stories with Agency In this session, you'll show students how to quickly apply their planning and drafting skills from realistic fiction to their independent projects.

18. Mining the Connections between Reading and Writing Fiction In this session, you'll guide writers to study the work they do as readers of fiction and graft those skills into their revisions.

19. Focusing the Reader's Gaze In this session, you'll show students how writers can learn from visual artists and help readers visualize from different angles to make a variety of points.

20. Choosing Punctuation for Effect In this session, you'll remind students that punctuation can be used to make sentences easier to understand, as well as to have an effect on how the reader engages with the text.

21. Surveying Your Work and Planning for the Future In this session, you could teach students that writers reflect on the work they have done, celebrating their accomplishments and making new goals for future projects.

Unit Overview

In the first bend—section—of this unit you will let students know that writers see ideas for fiction stories everywhere. Children then begin to collect story ideas in their writer’s notebook, fleshing them out to include elements of an effective story. Then students will storytell their ideas to a partner, making sure to use a storyteller’s voice and include literary language. Once children have chosen a story idea, you’ll teach them ways writers develop their main characters: by thinking not only about a character’s external traits but also his or her internal life and surroundings. After this writers may dramatize a scene or small moment. Finally, writers think about a character’s needs, letting a storyline emerge in which the character meets obstacles. In the second bend you’ll focus on the classic “story arc,” showing students how stories with two or three strong scenes can successfully show the development of a character, a plot, and even a setting over the course of the story. The arc a writer creates in the planning stages becomes a touchstone for drafting. Each scene or event in the story arc is assigned its own page in a booklet, and this, plus an emphasis on skills developed in earlier years, helps fiction sound and feel storylike. In the third bend you will help children prepare their story for audiences through focused drafting, deep revision, and editing. When your students were younger, they were taught to intersperse dialogue with action as a revision strategy. Now you’ll add the need to ground the entire story in a place, a setting. You’ll also teach children to rethink the evolution and conclusion of their story. Writers know endings don’t come out of nowhere. You’ll teach children that in fiction, as in life, solutions are generally hinted at all along: they are solutions we arrive at little by little. In the final bend you will show students how to take the reins and write fiction independently, teaching them the systems and skills they need to feel confident that they can continue writing fiction throughout their lives.

Enduring Understandings

Readers envision the characters in texts and expect to develop relationships with these characters.

Readers recognize the patterns in characters and books and track the evolving nature of the characters changes in books across all texts.

Readers interpret life lessons experienced by characters in books and ponder the applications of these lessons to their own lives.

Essential Questions

How does a reader envision a story in their minds?

How can characters evolve in a story?

How do characters in literature imitate people in the real world?

New Jersey Student Learning Standards (No CCS)

RL.4.1 -Refer to details and examples in a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

RL.4.2-Determine the key details to identify theme in a story, drama, or poem and summarize the text.

RL.4.3 - Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).

RL.4.4- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in literature.

RL.4.7- Make connections between specific descriptions and directions in a text and a visual or oral representation of the text

RL.4.9- (previously RL.5.9.) Compare, contrast and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) stories in the same genre (e.g., mysteries and adventure stories) on their approaches to similar themes and topics.

RL.4.10- By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.

RF.4.3 - Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.

RF.4.4- Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. A. Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding. B. Read grade-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings. C. Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.

Amistad Integration

- Teach district mandated diversity lessons throughout the year
- Incorporate Responsive Classroom Program into classroom community daily

Holocaust/Genocide Education

- Teach district mandated diversity lessons throughout the year
- Incorporate Responsive Classroom Program into classroom community daily

Interdisciplinary Connections

SL.4.1.a-d- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

A. Explicitly draw on previously read text or material and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion. B. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles. C. Pose and respond to specific questions to clarify or follow up on information, and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to the remarks of others. D. Review the key ideas expressed and explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.

L.4.3 - Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

RL.4.1 -Refer to details and examples in a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

RL.4.2-Determine the key details to identify theme in a story, drama, or poem and summarize the text.

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Technology Standards

TECH.8.1.5.A.1	Select and use the appropriate digital tools and resources to accomplish a variety of tasks including solving problems.
TECH.8.1.5.A.2	Format a document using a word processing application to enhance text and include graphics, symbols and/or pictures.
TECH.8.1.5.A.3	Use a graphic organizer to organize information about problem or issue.
TECH.8.1.5.B.CS1	Apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes.
TECH.8.1.5.B.CS2	Create original works as a means of personal or group expression.
TECH.8.1.5.C.CS1	Interact, collaborate, and publish with peers, experts, or others by employing a variety of digital environments and media
TECH.8.1.5.C.CS2	Communicate information and ideas to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats.
TECH.8.1.5.C.CS4	Contribute to project teams to produce original works or solve problems
TECH.8.1.5.D.CS2	Demonstrate personal responsibility for lifelong learning

21st Century Themes/Careers

CAEP.9.2.8.B.3	Evaluate communication, collaboration, and leadership skills that can be developed through school, home, work, and extracurricular activities for use in a career.
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Financial Literacy Integration

9.1.4.B.1 Differentiate between financial wants and needs.

9.1.4.B.2 Identify age-appropriate financial goals.

9.1.4.B.3 Explain what a budget is and why it is important.

9.1.4.B.4 Identify common household expense categories and sources of income.

9.1.4.B.5 Identify ways to earn and save.

9.1.4.C.1 Explain why people borrow money and the relationship between credit and debt.

9.1.4.C.2 Identify common sources of credit (e.g., banks, credit card companies) and types of credit (e.g., loans, credit cards, mortgages).

9.1.4.C.3 Compare and contrast credit cards and debit cards and the advantages and disadvantages of using each.

9.1.4.C.4 Determine the relationships among income, expenses, and interest.

9.1.4.C.5 Determine personal responsibility related to borrowing and lending.

9.1.4.C.6 Summarize ways to avoid credit problems.

9.1.4.D.1 Determine various ways to save.

9.1.4.D.2 Explain what it means to “invest.”

9.1.4.D.3 Distinguish between saving and investing.

9.1.4.E.1 Determine factors that influence consumer decisions related to money.

9.1.4.E.2 Apply comparison shopping skills to purchasing decisions.

9.1.4.F.1 Demonstrate an understanding of individual financial obligations and community financial obligations.

9.1.4.F.2 Explain the roles of philanthropy, volunteer service, and charitable contributions, and analyze their impact on community development and quality of living.

9.1.4.G.1 Describe how valuable items might be damaged or lost and ways to protect them.

Instructional Strategies & Learning Activities

- Create and refer to anchor charts from Units of Study Writing Book 1: Realistic Fiction
- Create and refer to anchor charts.
- Study pages from exemplar writer's notebooks.
- Provide and present mentor texts as models.
- Teach children to read like writers using mentor texts
- Provide checklists to assess and develop ongoing goals.
- Use booklets, pages, and/or writer's notebooks for daily writing.
- Make mental movies and act out a story to make writing come alive
- Add dialogue to make characters come to life.
- Set mini goals to revise and edit as you move through writing pieces.
- Tap, sketch, or jot across the pages as a way of planning stories, books.
- Explore and try a variety of beginnings and endings to your writing piece
- Write long and strong to build stamina..
- Teach that sentences are used to group one idea and paragraphs are used to group similar ideas.
- Use technology to research information about a specific topic.
- Use technology to publish a piece of writing.
- Plan to celebrate the conclusion of classroom writing projects

Differentiated Instruction

- Curriculum Mapping
- Inquiry/Problem-Based Learning
- Learning preferences integration (visual, auditory, kinesthetic)
- Sentence & Discussion Stems
- Tiered Learning Targets
- Learning Through Play
- Meaningful Student Voice & Choice
- Relationship-Building & Team-Building
- Self-Directed Learning
- Choice Boards
- Debate
- The Hot Seat/Role-Play
- Student Data Inventories
- Mastery Learning (feedback toward goal)
- Goal-Setting & Learning Contracts
- Grouping
- Rubrics
- Learning Menus
- Jigsaws
- Learning Through Workstations
- Concept Attainment
- Flipped Classroom
- Mentoring
- Assessment Design & Backwards Planning
- Student Interest & Inventory Data

Formative Assessments

Conferencing

Checklist

Anecdotal Records

Previous Spring DWA

Summative Assessment

Published End-of-Unit Realistic Fiction writing

Narrative Writing Checklist (Completed by teacher)

Benchmark Assessments

DWA Assessment Fall

Published Writing for the Unit with Teacher Response Checklist (from Heineman)

Alternate Assessments

On Demand Pieces

FlashDrafts

Resources & Technology

- Heinemann <https://www.heinemann.com/>
- Writing Strategies-Jennifer Serravello
- TCRWP - Teachers College Reading & Writing Project

<http://tc.readingandwritingproject.com>

BOE Approved Texts

Fireflies by Julie Brinckloe

Pecan Pie Baby by Jacqueline Woodson

Closure

- Snowstorm - Students write down what they learned on a piece of scratch paper and wad it up. Given a signal, they throw their paper snowballs in the air. Then each learner picks up a nearby response and reads it aloud.
- Parent Hotline - Give students an interesting question about the lesson without further discussion. Email their guardians the answer so that the topic can be discussed over dinner.
- DJ Summary - Learners write what they learned in the form of a favorite song. Offer to let one or two sing thier summary.
- Gallery Walk - On chart paper, small groups of students write and draw what they learned. After the completed works are attached to the classroom walls, others students affix post-its to the posters to extend on the ideas, add questions.
- Sequence It - create timelines of major events discussed
- Low-Stakes Quizzes - Give a short quiz using technologies like Kahoot or a Google form.
- Have students write down three quiz questions (to ask at the beginning of the next class).
- Question Stems - Have students write questions about the lesson on cards, using [question stems framed around Bloom's Taxonomy](#). Have students exchange cards and answer the question they have acquired.
- Kids answer the following prompts: "What takeaways from the lesson will be important to know three years from now? Why?"
- Have students dramatize a real-life application of a skill.
- Ask a question. Give students ten seconds to confer with peers before you call on a random student to answer. Repeat.
- Have kids orally describe a concept, procedure, or skill in terms so simple that a child in first grade would get it.
- Direct kids to raise their hands if they can answer your questions. Classmates agree (thumbs up) or disagree (thumbs down) with the response.
- Have kids create a cheat sheet of information that would be useful for a quiz on the day's topic.
- Kids write notes to peers describing what they learned from them during class discussions.
- Ask students to summarize the main idea in under 60 seconds to another student acting as a well-known personality who works in your discipline. After summarizing, students should identify why the famous person might find the idea significant.
- Have students complete the following sentence: "The [concept, skill, word] is like _____ because _____."
- Ask students to write what they learned, and any lingering questions on an "exit ticket". Before they leave class, have them put their exit tickets in a folder or bin labeled either "Got It," "More Practice, Please," or "I Need Some Help!"
- After writing down the learning outcome, ask students to take a card, circle one of the following options, and return the card to you before they leave: "Stop (I'm totally confused. Go (I'm ready to

move on.)" or "Proceed with caution (I could use some clarification on . . .)"

ELL

- Alternate Responses
- Advance Notes
- Extended Time
- Teacher Modeling
- Simplified Written and Verbal Instructions
- Frequent Breaks
- E-Dictionaries
- Google Translate

Special Education

- Shorten assignments to focus on mastery of key concepts.
- Substitute alternatives for written assignments (clay models, posters, panoramas, collections, etc.)
- Specify and list exactly what the student will need to learn to pass.
- Evaluate the classroom structure against the student's needs (flexible structure, firm limits, etc.).
- Keep workspaces clear of unrelated materials.
- Keep the classroom quiet during intense learning times.
- Reduce visual distractions in the classroom (mobiles, etc.).
- Provide a computer for written work.
- Seat the student close to the teacher or a positive role model.
- Use a study carrel. (Provide extras so that the student is not singled out.)
- Provide an unobstructed view of the chalkboard, teacher, movie screen, etc.
- Keep extra supplies of classroom materials (pencils, books) on hand.
- Maintain adequate space between desks.
- Give directions in small steps and in as few words as possible.
- Number and sequence the steps in a task.
- Have student repeat the directions for a task.
- Provide visual aids.
- Go over directions orally.
- Provide a vocabulary list with definitions.
- Permit as much time as needed to finish tests.
- Allow tests to be taken in a room with few distractions (e.g., the library).

- Have test materials read to the student, and allow oral responses.
- Divide tests into small sections of similar questions or problems.
- Allow the student to complete an independent project as an alternative test.
- Give progress reports instead of grades.
- Grade spelling separately from content.
- Show a model of the end product of directions (e.g., a completed math problem or finished quiz).
- Stand near the student when giving directions or presenting a lesson.
- Mark the correct answers rather than the incorrect ones.
- Permit a student to rework missed problems for a better grade.
- Average grades out when assignments are reworked, or grade on corrected work.
- Use a pass-fail or an alternative grading system when the student is assessed on his or her own growth.

504

- preferential seating
- extended time on tests and assignments
- reduced homework or classwork
- verbal, visual, or technology aids
- modified textbooks or audio-video materials
- behavior management support
- adjusted class schedules or grading
- verbal testing
- excused lateness, absence, or missed classwork
- pre-approved nurse's office visits and accompaniment to visits
- occupational or physical therapy as needed or consult

At Risk

- Have student restate information
- Provision of notes or outlines
- Concrete examples and models
- Assistance in maintaining uncluttered space
- Weekly home-school communication tools (notebook, daily log, phone calls or email messages)
- No penalty for spelling errors or sloppy handwriting
- Follow a routine/schedule
- Teach time management skills

- Verbal and visual cues regarding directions and staying on task
- Adjusted assignment timelines
- Visual daily schedule
- Immediate feedback
- Work-in-progress check
- Pace long-term projects
- Pass/no pass option
- Cue/model expected behavior
- Use de-escalating strategies
- Use peer supports and mentoring
- Chart progress and maintain data

Gifted and Talented

- Offer choice
- Speak to Student Interests
- Allow G/T students to work together
- Tiered learning
- Encourage risk taking