

# Writing - Grade 4 - Unit 4: Bringing History to Life

Content Area: **ELA**  
Course(s):  
Time Period: **Marking Period 4**  
Length: **8 weeks**  
Status: **Published**

## Course Pacing Guide

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### Bend I: Informational Books: Making a Conglomerate of Forms

- Getting the sense of informational books
- Planning the structure of writing
- Planning and writing with greater independence
- Teaching as a way to rehearse for information writing
- Elaboration: The details that let people picture what happened long ago and far away
- Bringing information alive: Stories inside nonfiction texts
- Taking stock and setting goals: A letter to teachers

### Bend II: Writing With Greater Independence

- Writers Plan for their Research
- The intense mind-work of note-taking
- Drafting is like tobogganning: First the preparation, the positioning...Then the whooosh!
- Developing a logical structure using introductions and transitions
- Text features: Popping out the important information
- Quotations accentuate importance: Voices chime in to make a point
- Using all we know to craft essay and narrative sections
- The Other side of the story
- Self-assessment and goal setting: Taking on new challenges

### Bend III: Building Ideas in Informational Writing

- Information writing gives way to idea writing
- Digging deeper: Interpreting the life lesson that history teaches
- Using confusions to guide research
- Editing
- A final celebration: An Expert Fair

## Unit Overview

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This unit requires students to tackle the rigorous task of writing four chapters on the American Revolution. This includes two chapters that require research reports on the Revolutionary War using expository writing strategies and one historical fiction narrative chapter and lastly a persuasive essay based on historical texts. Unlike other units, this unit is purposefully scaffolded throughout to allow students to dive deeper into their research, making interpretations along the way. This unit teaches students how to research well, cite important sources and recognize conflicting perspectives about a topic. The challenging work of this unit asks students to collect, synthesize and organize their research into logical, structured chapters. This unit prepares students to

tackle more independent research endeavors later in their writing.

## **Enduring Understandings**

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1. Using specific structures, language conventions and strategies helps my readers to better understand my ideas, when I am writing an Information Research Essay.
2. Using a specific format when developing nonfiction writing helps a writer to organize their ideas and keep their reader interested.
3. Nonfiction writing can be thought provoking and interesting. Writers must use strategies to hold their reader's interest and bring information to life.
4. When writers are developing ideas they must go back and revisit their ideas and evidence to make sure that it supports their headings and subheadings.
5. Developing questions help to tailor your research in addition bias should be factored when considering multiple points of view.

## **Essential Questions**

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- How can I learn to write research reports by writing several research-based books, each teaching readers about a sub-topic related to the American Revolution? How can I learn to chunk my non-fiction books into chapters, to choose a structure/genre that works for each chapter, and to write each chapter in ways that weld together facts, quotations, stories, ideas? How can I learn a lot about my topics by doing this writing?
- Bend I:
  - How can I flash-draft a quick book on the American Revolution, doing this even before I engage in a lot of research, writing this book in a way that helps me get a handle on what I already know about the topic and also helps me get used to putting what I know into texts? How can I make a quick book that contains all-about chapters, a story with a turning point, and a quick essay about why the topic matters?
- Bend II:
  - How can I write another book on a sub-toic related to the American Revolution, this time working to make the writing as strong as it can be? How can I write in such a way that I choose an organizational plan that matches my content and work to forward my central ideas?
- Bend III:

- How can I write not only about the information but also about ideas, asking and exploring questions, and writing to think?

## **New Jersey Student Learning Standards (No CCS)**

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LA.W.4.1	Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
LA.W.4.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
LA.W.4.2.A	Introduce a topic clearly and group related information in paragraphs and sections; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
LA.W.4.2.B	Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, text evidence, or other information and examples related to the topic.
LA.W.4.2.C	Link ideas within paragraphs and sections of information using words and phrases (e.g., another, for example, also, because).
LA.W.4.2.D	Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
LA.W.4.2.E	Provide a conclusion related to the information or explanation presented.
LA.W.4.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using narrative technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
LA.W.4.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
LA.W.4.5	With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.
LA.W.4.6	With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of one page in a single sitting.
LA.W.4.7	Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
LA.W.4.8	Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.
LA.W.4.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
LA.W.4.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

## **Amistad Integration**

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

## Holocaust/Genocide Education

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

## Interdisciplinary Connections

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LA.RL.4.2	Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.
LA.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).
LA.RL.4.6	Compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations.
LA.RI.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.
LA.RI.4.2	Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.
LA.RI.4.3	Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.
LA.RI.4.4	Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area.
LA.RI.4.5	Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text.
LA.RI.4.6	Compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic; describe the differences in focus and the information provided.
LA.RI.4.7	Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.
LA.RI.4.8	Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.
LA.RI.4.9	Integrate and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
LA.SL.4.1	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.
LA.SL.4.2	Paraphrase portions of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, and orally).
LA.SL.4.3	Identify the reasons and evidence a speaker provides to support particular points.
LA.SL.4.4	Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.
LA.SL.4.5	Add audio recordings and visual displays to presentations when appropriate to enhance

the development of main ideas or themes.

LA.SL.4.6	Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion); use formal English when appropriate to task and situation.
LA.L.4.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.4.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
LA.L.4.2.B	Use commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text.
LA.L.4.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
LA.L.4.3.A	Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.
LA.L.4.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 4 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
LA.L.4.4.A	Use context (e.g., definitions, examples, or restatements in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
LA.L.4.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
LA.L.4.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).

## Technology Standards

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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.A.CS1	Understand and use technology systems
TECH.8.1.5.B.1	Collaborative to produce a digital story about a significant local event or issue based on first-person interviews.
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.CS3	Develop cultural understanding and global awareness by engaging with learners of other cultures.
TECH.8.1.5.D.CS3	Exhibit leadership for digital citizenship.
TECH.8.1.5.E.1	Use digital tools to research and evaluate the accuracy of, relevance to, and appropriateness of using print and non-print electronic information sources to complete a variety of tasks.

TECH.8.1.5.E.CS1	Plan strategies to guide inquiry.
TECH.8.1.5.E.CS2	Locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media.
TECH.8.1.5.E.CS3	Evaluate and select information sources and digital tools based on the appropriateness for specific tasks.

## **21st Century Themes/Careers**

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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**

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PFL.9.1.4.A.1	Explain the difference between a career and a job, and identify various jobs in the community and the related earnings.
PFL.9.1.4.A.2	Identify potential sources of income.
PFL.9.1.4.B.1	Differentiate between financial wants and needs.
PFL.9.1.4.B.4	Identify common household expense categories and sources of income.
PFL.9.1.4.B.5	Identify ways to earn and save.
PFL.9.1.4.C.4	Determine the relationships among income, expenses, and interest.
PFL.9.1.4.C.5	Determine personal responsibility related to borrowing and lending.
PFL.9.1.4.D.1	Determine various ways to save.
PFL.9.1.4.D.2	Explain what it means to "invest."
PFL.9.1.4.D.3	Distinguish between saving and investing.
PFL.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.
PFL.9.1.4.G.1	Describe how valuable items might be damaged or lost and ways to protect them.

## **Instructional Strategies & Learning Activities**

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- Create and refer to anchor charts from Units of Study Writing Book 3: Bringing History to Life - Expository, Narrative and Persuasive Writing
- 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.

- Understand and explain the structure of essay (intro, reasons, conclusion), narrative and expository writing
- Add, revise and edit for:
  - Elaboration strategies in all three genres of writing
  - Craft moves from within that genre
  - Structural elements
  - Punctuation that slows down or speeds up pacing of writing
- 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**

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- 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**

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Fall District Writing Assessment

Conferencing

Checklist

Anecdotal Records

Spring DWA

## **Summative Assessment**

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Published end-of-unit essay

Opinion Writing Checklist (completed by teacher)

## **Benchmark Assessments**

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

Spring District Writing Assessment

## **Alternate Assessments**

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On-Demand writing

Flash draft writing



Immersion week writing (mini-unit completed previous to the unit)

## **Resources & Technology**

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

<http://tc.readingandwritingproject.com>

- Padlet.com
- eboard
- Google Drive (for published writing)

## **BOE Approved Texts**

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Student sample writing pieces from Heineman website

## **Closure**

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Such as:

- Grade 4 American Revolution Expert Fair (Publishing Celebration) - families are invited to celebrate. Students will teach their expert topics in groups and share writing with families and peers. Families and peers are encouraged to leave a complement regarding their use of expository writing strategies.
- 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 . . .)"

\*Add to or remove any of these as you see fit.

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## ELL

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

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## 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

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- 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**

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- 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**

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