Unit 8: Writing a Memoir

Content Area: **Language Arts Literacy**
Course(s): **English 11 CP**
Time Period: **Marking Period 4**
Length: **10 Blocks**
Status: **Published**

Course Description

This course is designed for the student who has developed an exceptional proficiency in critical reading and thinking as well as advanced writing skills. Students are challenged with numerous fictional literary readings from several genres and related non-fiction. In addition, students complete many writing assignments and extensive outside readings. Students explore the modes of writing on a more sophisticated level; journal writing will address students' creative talents while other assignments will be analytical in nature. Students use MLA and The BIG6 information literacy model to conduct problem-based research projects.

Unit Description

Stage 1-- Desired Results

Unit Purpose:

In this unit, students will read memoirs to craft their own memoir. The 11th grade Honors teacher will teach the same standards from 9th and 10th grade but will increase the rigor. The 11th grade teacher will teach the skills based on the explicit standards and 12th grade teachers refresh/review those same skills from the year prior to check for complete understanding.

Established Goals:

The main focus in 11th grade will be to write a memoir.

New Jersey Student Learning Standards: English Language Arts Grades 11 and 12

Explicit:

W.11-12.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective

technique, well chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

1. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a

smooth progression of experiences or events.

2. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

3. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution).

4. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.

5. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.

W.11-12.5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, trying a new approach, or consulting a style manual (such as MLA or APA Style), focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

L.11-12.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

1. Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested.

L.11-12.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

1. Observe hyphenation conventions.

2. Spell correctly.

L.11-12.3. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

1. Vary syntax for effect, apply an understanding of syntax to the study of complex texts.

Implicit:

W.11-12.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

W.11-12.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, share, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

W.11-12.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes.

L.11-12.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

1. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

2. Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., conceive, conception, conceivable).

3. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage.

4. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

L.11-12.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

1. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.

2. Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.

L.11-12.6. Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Understandings:

Students will understand that…

-Memoirists reflect on their own lives.
-Memorists reflect and revise their own drafts to truly tell the experience they are sharing.
-Memorists study strategies to heighten their level or writing.
-Memoirs are meant to show readers all of an author's emotions
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Readers are able to use the craft moves they notice an d admire in their literary nonfiction
book choices and consider if and how to apply those moves to their own writing.

Students will know…

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Essential Questions:

-What is the meaning of a memoir?
-What literary devices do memoirists use to support their claims and story they are trying to tell?
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How can I use personal experiences to influence reade rs?
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How can I observe my life and my world, pushing bey ond just the telling of a good story,
and move toward insight that resonates with readers?
-
What decisions does a memoirist make that separate t his genre from storytelling?

Students will be able to…
-Write to show an event that had meaning in their lives.

How to use a writer's notebook to collect and develop ideas for memoirs, and use every step in the writing process to finely hone a finished pie ce;

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How to critically read other memoirs and mine them f or sophisticated craft moves to use in one's own writing

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How memoir is a blend of both persuasive/ argument and narrative genres: that it brings forth meaning through both storytelling and exposition ;

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To be able to discover moments that matter and that ar e worth exploring in a memoir, and how to craft that moment so it has impact on the reade r as well;

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When to stick to exact truths and when to use poetic li cense when writing from one's life;

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How to angle a memoir so a deeper insight or meaning is woven throughout and brought to light through symbolism, pacing, structure, and styli stic details.

-Determine how to retell that event.
-Explore their writer's notebook and choose a topic.
-Revise details, word choice, and literary devices.
-Edit with peers.

Stage 2 -- Assessment Evidence

Summative Assessments:

Finished Memoir(s) with rubric/ checklist

Self-assessment reflection

Writing On-Demand Skills Assesment

Formative Assessments:

Quizzes (3 "Minor" Assessments)- Demonstration of explicitly-taught skills through

1. Mid-Unit Quiz,

2. Grammar Quiz

3. Rough Draft.

Writer's Notebook (5 "Homework" student-selected entries) - Five entries over the course of the unit in which narrative writing skills are explored.

Stage 3 -- Learning Plan

Learning Activities:

-Introduce the standards, essential questions, assessment evidence and corresponding rubrics, and calendar of lessons to students.
-Establish each student's prior understanding of narrative/memoir writing through a relatable hook (story, survey, posing question, etc.) or through individual conferences.
-Execute standards-based mini-lessons to develop skills and strategies.
-Collaborate with an assigned partner to reflect and revise.
-Complete activities in order to review the writing process

-Confer individually with teacher and peers
-Write personal narrative.

Mini-Lessons

-1 & Multiple POVs
-Narrator vs. Characters
-Dialogue (stream of consciousness, experimental)
-Pacing
-Sequencing impact on tone - Build toward tone and outcome (mystery, suspense, resolution)
-Sophisticated techniques and figurative language (metaphor, apostrophe, senses)
-Reflection
-The writing process for a memoir

Resources

All student selected choices available through classroom library, school or public library, or bought buy student.

Works of Study:

Mentor texts to include short memoirs (David Foster Wallace, Lena Dunham, Harrison Scott Key, etc.)

Potential Works of Study:

NBC's The Office: Jim Halpert voicing a "true opinion" on jellybeans: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yUydgDGjmf8&NR=1

Paul Auster, "Why Write"

Joann Beard, "In the Current"

Geoffrey Canada, Fist, Stick, Knife, Gun (graphic novel)

Sandra Cisneros, "Eleven"

Anderson Cooper, "Tsunami: Washed Away." Dispatches from the Edge: A Memoir of War, Disasters, and Survival. 3941, 4245, 8992.

Joan Didion, "Why Write"

Amy Erlich, editor: "When I was Your Age: Original Stories about Growing Up

Ralph Fletcher, Marshfield Dreams (choose chapters)

Kelle James "Smile for the Camera"

Jean Little, Little by Little (choose chapters)

Anne Mazer, Going Where I'm Coming From (anthology)

Walter Dean Myers, Bad Boy

Cynthia Rylant, “My Grandmother’s Hair”

Marjane Satrapi, Persepolis

David Sedaris, various essays. In particular, look at “SantaLand Diaries” from Holidays on Ice, pps. 38.

Jerry Spinelli, “Knots in my YoYo String”

Nora Ephron, various essays

Stueent Potential Works of Study:

SEAL Team Six: Memoirs of an Elite Navy Seal by Howard E. Wasdin & Stephen Templin
On the Road by Jack Kerouac
Shoe Dog by Phil Knight
The Autobiography of An Ex-Colored Man by James Weldon Johnson
Night by Elie Wiesel
Shadow Divers by Robert Kurson
Breaking Night by Liz Murray
Girls Like Us by Rachel Lloyd
Cherry by Mary Karr
A Thousand Naked Strangers by Kevin Hazzard
Medium Raw by Anthony Bourdain
Yes, Chef by Marcus Samuelsson
The Job by Steve Osborne
Born a Crime by Trevor Noah
A Long Way Gone by Ishmael Beah
We Should Hang Out Sometime by Josh Sundquist
A Place to Stand by Jimmy Santiago Baca
You’ll Grow Out of It by Jessi Klein
The Wild Truth by Carine McCandless
Love Warrior by Glennon Doyle Melton
Choosing Hope by Kaitlin Roig-DeBellis
How to Murder Your Life by Cat Marnell
Dear Teen Me edited by Miranda Kenneally and E. Kristin Anderson
Writing My Wrongs by Shaka Senghour
How Dare the Sun Rise by Sandra Uwiringiyimana
Not My Father’s Son by Alan Cumming
Forever Liesl by Charmian Carr
Americanized by Sara Saedi
The Best We Could Do by Thi Bui
In Order to Live by Yeonmi Park
Hunger by Roxane Gay
Into Thin Air by Krakauer
Angela's Ashes by Frank McCourt
Eat Pray Love by Gilbert
The Color of Water by James McBride
The Dreams of my Father by Barack Obama
Believe It by Nick Foles
Manning: A Father, his sons and a football legacy by Archie and Peyton Manning

Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou
Fever Pitch by Nick Hornby
Between A Rock and a Hard Place by Aron Ralston
I AM Malala by Malala Youseff

The Bite of Mango by Mariatu Kamara

Laughing at my Nightmare by Shane Burcaw

Carly's Voice: Breaking Through Autism by Arthur Fleischmann and Carly Fleischmann

A Different Life: Growing Up Learning Disabled and Other Adventures by Quinn Bradlee

Some Assembly Required: the not-so secret life of a transgender teen by Arin Andrews

Naturally Tan by Tan France

Forward: A Memoir by Abby Wambach

The Secrets of My Life by Caitlyn Jenner

Boy Erased: a Memoir by Garrard Conley

Online Resources:

https://tetw.org/Memoir

http://www.davidrm.com/resources/writing-exercises/memoir-prompts/

https://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/11/13/500-prompts-for-narrative-and-personal-writing/

SAT Connection:

The Official SAT Study Guide

Chapter 6 Command of Evidence

Chapter 7 Words in Context

Chapter 9 Reading: Information and Ideas

Chapter 10 Reading Rhetoric

Chapter 11: Reading Synthesis

Chapter 14 Writing and Language: Expression of Ideas

Vocabulary:

- Student selected vocabulary

CONSIDERATIONS FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

Accommodations and Modifications:

Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners,

Students at Risk of Failure, Students with 504s, Gifted & Talented Students

Strategies and Practices that Support Students with Disabilities:

- Use of visual and multisensory formats
- Use of assisted technology
- Use of prompts
- Modification of content and student products
- Testing accommodations
- Authentic assessments
- Small group/One to one
- Additional time
- Review of directions
- Student restates information
- Space for movement or breaks
- Extra visual and verbal cues and prompts
- Preferential seating

- Follow a routine/schedule
- Rest breaks
- Verbal and visual cues regarding directions and staying on task
- Checklists
- Immediate feedback

Strategies and Practices that Support Gifted & Talented Students:

- Adjusting the pace of lessons
- Curriculum compacting
- Inquiry-based instruction
- Independent study
- Higher-order thinking skills
- Interest-based content
- Student-driven instruction
- Real-world problems and scenarios
- Problem-based learning
- Interest-based research
- Authentic problem-solving

Strategies and Practices that Support English Language Learners:

- Pre-teaching of vocabulary and concepts
- Personal vocabulary
- Text-to-speech
- Simplified instructions
- Visual learning, including graphic organizers
- Use of cognates to increase comprehension

- Teacher modeling
- Pairing students with beginning English language skills with students who have more advanced English language skills
- Scaffolding
- Word walls
- Sentence frames
- Think-pair-share
- Cooperative learning groups

Strategies and Practices that Support At-Risk Students:

- Guided notes and/or scaffold outline for written assignments
- Guided reading
- Introduce key vocabulary before the lesson
- Work in a small group
- The lesson taught again using a differentiated approach
- Allow answers to be given orally or dictated
- Use visuals / Anchor Charts
- Leveled texts according to ability
- Choice Boards
- Literature circles
- Project-based learning
- Graphic organizers
- Choice books
- Mini-Workshops to reteach or extend
- Jigsaw
- Goal-setting with students
- Use of a reading buddy

- Exploration based on interest

Strategies and Practices that Support Students with 504 Plans:

- Follow all the 504 plan modifications
- Text-to-speech/audio-recorded selections
- Amplification system as needed
- Leveled texts according to ability
- Fine motor skill stations embedded in rotation as needed
- Modified or constrained spelling word lists
- Provide anchor charts with high-frequency words and phonemic patterns

Standards

LA.W.11-12.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
LA.W.11-12.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
LA.W.11-12.5	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, trying a new approach, or consulting a style manual (such as MLA or APA Style), focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
LA.W.11-12.6	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, share, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.
LA.L.11-12.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.11-12.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
LA.L.11-12.3	Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
LA.L.11-12.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
LA.L.11-12.4.A	Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
LA.L.11-12.4.B	Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., conceive, conception, conceivable).
LA.L.11-12.4.C	Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or

	clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage.
LA.L.11-12.4.D	Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
LA.L.11-12.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
LA.L.11-12.5.A	Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.
LA.L.11-12.5.B	Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.
LA.L.11-12.6	Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Anchor Standards

LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R1	Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences and relevant connections from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R2	Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R3	Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R4	Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R5	Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R6	Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R7	Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R8	Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R9	Analyze and reflect on how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R10	Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently with scaffolding as needed.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W1	Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W5	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or

	trying a new approach.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W6	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W7	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects, utilizing an inquiry-based research process, based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W8	Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Interdisciplinary Standards

LA.WHST.11-12.2	Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes.
LA.WHST.11-12.2.B	Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.
LA.WHST.11-12.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
LA.WHST.11-12.5	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
LA.WHST.11-12.6	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, share, and update writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.
LA.WHST.11-12.7	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
LA.WHST.11-12.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Holocaust & Amistad Connections

SOC.6.1.12.A.3.h	Examine multiple perspectives on slavery and evaluate the claims used to justify the arguments.
SOC.6.1.12.A.3.i	Examine the origins of the antislavery movement and the impact of particular events, such as the Amistad decision, on the movement.
SOC.6.1.12.A.5.b	Analyze the effectiveness of governmental policies and of actions by groups and individuals to address discrimination against new immigrants, Native Americans, and African Americans.
SOC.6.1.12.A.11.e	Assess the responses of the United States and other nations to the violation of human rights that occurred during the Holocaust and other genocides.

SOC.6.1.12.D.5.d	Relate varying immigrants' experiences to gender, race, ethnicity, or occupation.
SOC.6.3.12.D.1	Analyze the impact of current governmental practices and laws affecting national security and/or individual civil rights/privacy.

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, & Key Skills (CLKS):

9.4.12.CI.1: Demonstrate the ability to reflect, analyze, and use creative skills and ideas

9.4.12.CT.2: Explain the potential benefits of collaborating to enhance critical thinking and problem solving

9.4.12.CT.4: Participate in online strategy and planning sessions for course-based, school-based, or other projects and determine the strategies that contribute to effective outcomes.

9.4.12.IML.2: Evaluate digital sources for timeliness, accuracy, perspective, credibility of the source, and relevance of information, in media, data, or other resources.

Computer Science & Design Thinking (CS & DT):

8.1.8.E.1 - Effectively use a variety of search tools and filters in professional public databases to find information to solve a real world problem.

8.1.8.D.4 - Assess the credibility and accuracy of digital content

LGBTQ & Persons With Disabilities

Persons with Disabilities

Potential Works of Study:

- *The Bite of Mango* by Mariatu Kamara

- *Laughing at my Nightmare* by Shane Burcaw

- *Carly's Voice: Breaking Through Autism* by Arthur Fleischmann and Carly Fleischmann

- *A Different Life: Growing Up Learning Disabled and Other Adventures* by Quinn Bradlee

LGBTQ

Potential Works of Study:

- *Some Assembly Required: the not-so secret life of a transgender teen* by Arin Andrews

- *Naturally Tan* by Tan France

- *Forward: A Memoir* by Abby Wambach

- *The Secrets of My Life* by Caitlyn Jenner

- *Boy Erased: a Memoir* by Garrard Conley