Unit 4: Informational Reading: Research Clubs; Elephants, Penguins, and Frogs, Oh My!

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s): **English Language Arts**
Time Period: **Generic Time Period**
Length: **7-8 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

The third graders again explore the world of nonfiction with this research based unit on the study of animals. The exciting thing is that while the children are researching and learning about animals, they are also learning to learn! The children will form clubs and study an animal with their research club. Club members will read subtopics independently and pull what they are learning together, organizing and synthesizing all their new knowledge. Clubs will then research a second animal and learn to compare and contrast across animals, mining ever deeper into the attributes of these varied species for ways they are linked together. Ultimately, the children will use all that they now know and understand about these animals to solve real-world problems; for example creating a better life for an animal in a zoo. This unit will prepare the third graders for a similar research unit taught in fourth grade on extreme weather.

Throughout the unit teachers will utilize *Fundations*, Level 3, (2012, Wilson Language Training Corporation) to continue the phonics and word study instruction students have been receiving. Instruction in the study of word structure with a focus on advanced spelling rules and morphology will contribute greatly to fluency, vocabulary development, and the applications of strategies for understanding text. All are necessary for the successful development of reading comprehension.

Standards

LA.RI.3.1	Ask and answer questions, and make relevant connections to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
LA.RI.3.2	Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.
LA.RI.3.3	Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.
LA.RI.3.4	Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3 topic or subject area.
LA.RI.3.5	Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.
LA.RI.3.6	Distinguish their own point of view from that of the author of a text.
LA.RI.3.8	Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence) to support specific points the author makes in a text.
LA.RI.3.9	Compare, contrast and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.
LA.RI.3.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.
LA.RF.3.3	Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding and encoding words.

LA.RF.3.4	Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
LA.W.3.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
LA.W.3.7	Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.
LA.W.3.8	Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.
LA.SL.3.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
LA.SL.3.1.A	Explicitly draw on previously read text or material and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.
LA.SL.3.1.B	Follow agreed-upon norms for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).
LA.SL.3.1.C	Ask questions to check understanding of information presented, stay on topic, and link their comments to the remarks of others.
LA.SL.3.1.D	Explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.
LA.SL.3.2	Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
LA.SL.3.3	Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.
LA.SL.3.4	Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace.
LA.SL.3.6	Speak in complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification.
LA.L.3.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.3.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
LA.L.3.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
LA.L.3.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 3 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
LA.L.3.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships and nuances in word meanings.
LA.L.3.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal spatial and temporal relationships (e.g., After dinner that night we went looking for them).

Essential Questions

How do readers learn from reading nonfiction texts?

How can readers support and push each other's learning during club or group work?

How do readers respond to the text and each other with reactions and

questions, and read on to draw conclusions?

How do readers learn to speak critically about a topic, using skills like compare and contrast to develop real world knowledge?

Application of Knowledge: Students will know that...

- readers can learn about any topic by reading.
- readers can support and enhance learning by asking questions and seeking answers collaboratively.
- readers develop evidence-based theories and apply them to find solutions to real-world problems.
- readers not only read on to seek answers, but think over everything they have read so far and synthesize it with everything they already know.
- readers pay attention to text structure to hold on to meaning and organize their learning.
- readers think deeply about texts while using analytical skills like compare and contrast and cause and effect.

Application of Skills: Students will be able to...

- organize and understand what they are learning by noticing and using text structures.
- prepare for reading a nonfiction text by reading the title, subtitles, and skimming the text.
- use questioning techniques to grow ideas about nonfiction.
- use the structure of nonfiction text to talk like an expert on the topic.
- compare and contrast the traits of animals within a topic and across topics; for example by noticing some ways a tiger is like a spider.
- develop theories about what they are learning and apply their theories to real-world problems.
- see patterns across topics and pursue questions about those patterns.
- think deeply about a topic by reading closely and noticing cause and effect relationships.

Teaching Points and Suggested Activities

The following teaching points and activities are adapted from the *Research Clubs; Elephants, Penguins, and Frogs, Oh My! (Grade 3)* unit of the *Units of Study for Teaching Reading (Calkins et al., 2015)* and serve as a loose framework for teachers, who will add and or emphasize based on their students' needs.

Teaching Points

- Teach students that to prepare for a research project readers familiarize themselves with lots of books on a topic.
- Teach students that readers mine for information in a text and add what they have learned to the information in other texts in order to synthesize what they are learning.

- Coach students to adopt the vocabulary required in order to talk like an expert on their topic.
- Teach students that readers pursue understanding by asking questions and seeking answers of the text and of their learning partners/team.
- Teach children that readers use their knowledge of language and conventions when writing and speaking about reading.
- Teach students that as readers uncover answers to questions and information about a topic, they begin to grow ideas about that topic by synthesizing new information.
- Coach students to continue to ask questions, even after they conclude their work on a project, just like researchers do.
- Teach students to use all they have learned about beginning research on a topic to begin a new study with more independence.
- Teach students that when readers are doing research they read lots of books on a topic and choose just right books so they are reading them with fluency.
- Coach students to apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
- Teach students that readers pay attention to the way a text is structured as a strategy for organizing what they are learning.
- Teach students that readers constantly compare and contrast the information they are learning to what they already know about this topic and about all topics.
- Teach students that readers look for cause and effect relationships as a strategy for organizing what they are learning.
- Coach students to read closely, thinking deeply about their topic; all they know about it, all the want to know about it, all they never even thought about and never would have believed could be true.
- Teach students that research experts really look at not just the topic in front of them but also the inter-related topics as well, seeking out patterns and answers to questions.
- Coach students to determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from non literal language.
- Teach students that as readers ask these questions they again grow bigger and bigger ideas and that these big ideas push them to pursue even more questions.
- Teach students that readers and researchers use the information they are accumulating to develop evidence-based theories about their topic.
- Coach students to look at the bigger picture of their topic and add to their theories by expanding their research to include these new concepts.
- Teach students that readers apply the new knowledge they are developing through their research to what they see and think about every day.
- Coach students to celebrate all of their new knowledge by thinking about some ways to find solutions to real-world problems.

Activities to Support Teaching Points

- create and refer to anchor charts
- study pages from exemplar reader's notebooks
- provide and present mentor texts as models
- teach the *Work of Readers* Charts
- teach children strategies for holding onto text, for example by using Post-its and graphic organizers
- model (Talk Aloud) the strategies good readers use
- model, provide, and use a reader's notebook
- tap, sketch, or jot across a story as a way of retaining information and details
- study book introductions and endings
- practice creating mental movies as you read
- investigate figurative language and descriptive vocabulary and how authors use them

- Turn and Talk the dialogue in a story to bring the characters' feelings alive
- set mini-reading goals for engagement, print work, fluency, comprehension, and/or conversation
- provide checklists and reading progressions to assess and develop on-going reading goals
- scaffold skills with strategies, for example using Post-its to identify key elements of a chapter
- write long about reading
- practice alternating the speed a text is read to reflect tone and mood
- plan to celebrate the conclusion of classroom reading projects
- use technology in the reading classroom; for example digital journals

Assessments

Assessment in this unit takes three forms: diagnostic, formative, and summative. The resource *Reading Pathways, Grades 3-5*, provides reading progressions, performance assessments, rubrics, tools for collecting data, a system for conducting running records, There are also digital versions of the assessment tools available through the online resources at; www.readingandwritingproject.org/resources. Teachers may also develop their own rubrics and assessments in order to include more specific elements of knowledge and skills listed in this unit summary.

Student self-assessment and peer assessment should take place whenever possible--again, in all three forms: diagnostic, formative, and summative. Removing the traditional emphasis on teacher assessment enables students to take more initiative and become self-directed.

On-going teacher assessment will take place in the context of a conference. Conferences, both small group and one-to-one conferring, are used to reinforce expectations, provide advice and/or assistance, and ultimately, to support growth.

Diagnostic Assessments

Running Records

www.readingandwritingproject.org/resources/assessments/running-records

Spelling Inventory

www.readingandwritingproject.org/resources/assessments/spelling-assessments

Individual beginning of the year "How's It Going?" conferences

Formative Assessments

Teacher-student conferences including: individual, small group, strategy group, and guided reading

Daily observation of students' participation during the active engagement segment of each mini-lesson.

Students' conversation with partners during Turn and Talk segment of mini-lessons.

Reading logs, Reader's Notebooks, Writing About Reading evidence (Post-its, journal entries, writing long about reading, for example)

Summative Assessment

Teacher-student conferences

Running Records

Spelling Assessments

Reading logs, Reader's Notebooks, and other evidence of students improving skills

Activities to Differentiate Instruction

The design of reading workshop allows for individualized instruction and independent growth for every child. At the heart of differentiation in Reader's Workshop is data and the analysis of data. Through the usage of monitoring student progress during independent reading, analysis of formal and informal running records, and other assessments such as high-frequency word lists and spelling inventories, teachers should be able to delineate which students are in need of additional supports, in what areas those supports should be targeted at, and which students are ready to be pushed further in their reading work.

Some methods to use to support struggling readers as well as advanced readers:

- Provide leveled books appropriate for all reading levels
- Provide support as needed through conferencing
- Provide support as needed through strategy groups
- Provide support as needed through guided reading groups
- Provide modified and/or alternate grade level checklists and rubrics to scaffold or stretch learning
- Scaffold or stretch learning through the use of various strategies
- Provide appropriate reading partners
- Utilize charts to provide a visual reminder for students throughout the mini-lesson.
    - Add drawings and visuals to charts
    - Provide individualized copies of teaching charts
    - Depending on the concept, the chart may be most effective to visually break the concept into parts and touch each part during a demonstration
- For students needing more support at the end of the mini-lesson, keep them at the rug for an extra minute after dispersing the rest of the class and clarify the main topic of the mini-lesson or work one-on-one with them to start their reading
- Set reading goals for students and follow-up with the reading goals after an appropriate amount of time.
- Create group and one-on-one conferencing calendars to ensure that students are being met with on a regular basis and working toward individualized goals
- As the unit progresses, the teacher, in coordination with the students, will develop a word wall that will highlight vocabulary specific to the topic chosen
- Assign roles to partners (Partner 1/Partner 2) to help scaffold which student should speak first and avoid one partner dominating the conversation and the other partner becoming a passive listener
    - For ELL students, creating a triad instead of partnership may be beneficial
- Provide students access to RAZ Kids which will provide students more reading options for leveled texts, access to technology, and the ability to have books read to them while they follow along or for students to record their reading

Supports for ELL students:

- Provide consistent teaching structures
- Use consistent teaching language
- Offer plentiful opportunities for reading practice
- Provide access to a broad variety of texts
- Use assessment to provide extra support
- Support students in the preproduction and early production stages of learning English

- Use visual examples in your teaching
- Modify our mini-lessons to be as concise as possible
- Provide extra ?active engagement? time in mini-lessons for extra practice
- Provide readers with topic-based text sets
- Provide opportunities for listening and learning the social language of the reading workshop
- Provide opportunities to read in both their home language and in English
- Plan instruction with the ELL teacher
- Extend the language ELLs are producing through questioning
- Provide explicit instruction in tenses, pronoun references, and connectives
- Support students in building vocabulary using their own reading as the context
- As the unit progresses, the teacher, in coordination with the students, will develop a word wall that will highlight vocabulary specific to the topic chosen

In order to support this differentiation work, teachers may want to consult the following materials:

- Units of Study books at lower or higher levels for teaching strategies that are appropriate to the support needed.
- The Reading Strategies Book by Jennifer Serravallo
- If. . . Then. .. Curriculum book for alternate units or teaching points to support the individual reading levels.
- A Guide to the Reading Workshop (Primary Grades) chapter 14 for more in-depth information on differentiation

Challenge gifted students to incorporate more complex reading techniques based on the 4th grade Reading Learning Progressions:

- preview a text to help decide how to organize thinking or note-taking
- check comprehension by pausing while reading and asking, "How does this part fit with my overall picture of the topic?"
- use new vocabulary learned through reading to discuss and write about a topic
- identify the craft techniques authors use in a text, for example, "The author made a comparison to help readers grasp an idea."
- recognize that author's want readers to think and feel a certain way about a topic and understand that a reader can disagree

Integrated/Cross-Disciplinary Instruction

Writing Workshop

- apply language and ideas from read alouds and independent reading
- utilize read alouds and independent reading as mentor texts
- apply spelling strategies
- identify areas of spelling needs
- apply grammar skills
- identify areas in need of addressing (spelling, grammar, mechanics)
- expand written vocabulary from read alouds and independent reading
- model sentence and paragraph structure after mentor texts

Content Areas: Science, Social Studies, Health

- read just right books in the content areas
- use mentor texts to deliver Social Studies content
- compare content area ideas and issues to what our characters deal with in our read alouds and mentor texts
- apply reading skills and strategies to the reading we do in the content areas
- apply the club approach to research within the content areas

Study Skills

- use graphic organizers to support reading
- use checklists and rubrics to monitor progress
- use Venn diagrams and t-charts to gather, compare, and contrast events
- use highlighters, note cards, post-its, and other tools to keep track of story events, details, and ideas
- keep a log and notebook

The Arts

- analyze illustrations in books for details
- compare illustrations to other forms of art
- illustrate a passage that was just read to show details, ideas, and lessons
- act out a scene from a book to better visualize how a character feels

Suggested Mentor Texts and Other Resources

Resources

Units of Study for Teaching Reading:

- *Research Clubs: Elephants, Penguins, and Frogs, Oh My!;* by Lucy Calkins and Kathleen Tolan
- *A Guide to the Reading Workshop, Intermediate Grades*; Lucy Calkins
- *Reading Pathways, Grades 3-5, Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions*; Lucy Calkins
- *If...Then... Curriculum: Assessment-Based Instruction, Grades 3-5*; Lucy Calkins; Julia Mooney; and Colleagues From the TCRWP
- *Online Resources for Teaching Writing*; Lucy Calkins
- website: www.readingandwritingproject.org/resources

The Art of Teaching Reading; Lucy Calkins

The Reading Strategies Book: Your Everything Guide to Developing Skilled Readers; Jennifer Serravallo

Leveled Books, K-8: Matching Texts to Readers for Effective Teaching; Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell

Reading Miscue Inventory: From Evaluation to Instruction; Yetta M. Goodman

Miscue Analysis Made Easy: Building on Student Strengths; Sandra Wilde

Around the Reading Workshop in 180 Days; Frank Serafini

The Book Whisperer: Awakening the Inner Reader in Every Child; Donalyn Miller

Mindsets and Moves: Strategies That Help Readers Take Charge; Gravity Goldberg

Guiding Readers and Writers, Grades 3-6; Irene C Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell

Smarter Charts; Marjorie Martinelli

Some Suggested Mentor and Classroom Texts

The One and Only Ivan; Katherine Applegate (S)

Charlotte's Web; E.B. White (R)

**Frogs*; Elizabeth Carney (K)

**Frogs and Toads*; Bobbie Kalman (P)

**Gorillas;* Lori McManus

**The Life Cycle of an Emperor Penguin*; Bobbie Kalman and Robin Johnson (N)

**The Life Cycle of a Frog; Bobbie Kalman and Kathryn Smithyman* (N)

**The Penguin, a Funny Bird*; Beatrice Fontanel

**Penguins*; Bobbie Kalman (M)

Bees; Susan Ashley (K)

Helpful and Harmful Insects; Molly Aloian and Bobbie Kalman (M)

A Butterfly is Patient; Diana Hutts Aston (N)

Life Cycles; Angela Royston (N)

Sharks; Anita Ganeri (O)

Whales; Seymour Simon (O)

Part of Reading Street Anthology

Penguin Chick; Betty Tatham (L)

***Part of Third Grade Trade Book Pack**

21st Century Skills

CRP.K-12.CRP2.1	Career-ready individuals readily access and use the knowledge and skills acquired through experience and education to be more productive. They make connections between abstract concepts with real-world applications, and they make correct insights about when it is appropriate to apply the use of an academic skill in a workplace situation.
CRP.K-12.CRP4.1	Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas, and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal, and/or visual methods. They communicate in the workplace with clarity and purpose to make maximum use of their own and others' time. They are excellent writers; they master conventions, word choice, and organization, and use effective tone and presentation skills to articulate ideas. They are skilled at interacting with others; they are active listeners and speak clearly and with purpose. Career-ready individuals think about the audience for their communication and prepare accordingly to ensure the desired outcome.
CRP.K-12.CRP8.1	Career-ready individuals readily recognize problems in the workplace, understand the nature of the problem, and devise effective plans to solve the problem. They are aware of problems when they occur and take action quickly to address the problem; they thoughtfully investigate the root cause of the problem prior to introducing solutions. They carefully consider the options to solve the problem. Once a solution is agreed upon, they follow through to ensure the problem is solved, whether through their own actions or the actions of others.
CRP.K-12.CRP12.1	Career-ready individuals positively contribute to every team, whether formal or informal. They apply an awareness of cultural difference to avoid barriers to productive and positive interaction. They find ways to increase the engagement and contribution of all team members. They plan and facilitate effective team meetings.