Unit 3 Opinion: Writing Reviews

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s): **English Language Arts**
Time Period: **Marking Period 3**
Length: **8 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

In this unit students will learn that writing can give them a way to make and defend decisions and opinions. They will learn to write their judgments, their reasons for those judgments, and to organize their reasons, supplying supporting details. These goals are pushing first graders beyond the NJ SLS expectation for opinion writing, which states that students will write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion, and provide some sense of closure. This unit will encourage writers to develop opinions with multiple reasons, provide detailed descriptions, as well as strong openings and closings. It will also encourage students towards using and revising more complex sentences, using linking words. Students will draft both handwritten pieces as well as pieces using appropriate technology.

Standards

LA.RL.1.1	Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
LA.RL.1.2	Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.
LA.RL.1.3	Describe characters, settings, and major event(s) in a story, using key details.
LA.RL.1.4	Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses.
LA.RL.1.9	Compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in stories.
LA.RI.1.1	Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
LA.RI.1.2	Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.
LA.RI.1.3	Describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.
LA.RI.1.8	Identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text and explain the application of this information with prompting as needed.
LA.RF.1.1	Demonstrate mastery of the organization and basic features of print including those listed under Kindergarten foundation skills.
LA.RF.1.2	Demonstrate mastery of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes) by using knowledge that every syllable must have a vowel sound to determine the number of syllables in a printed word.
LA.RF.1.3	Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
LA.RF.1.4	Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
LA.W.1.1	Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion, and provide some sense of closure.

LA.W.1.3	Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.
LA.W.1.5	With guidance and support from adults, focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers and self-reflection, and add details to strengthen writing and ideas as needed.
LA.W.1.6	With guidance and support from adults, use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers.
LA.SL.1.1	Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
LA.SL.1.2	Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
LA.SL.1.3	Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.
LA.SL.1.4	Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.
LA.SL.1.6	Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation.
LA.L.1.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.1.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
LA.L.1.5	With guidance and support from adults, demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships and nuances in word meanings.
LA.L.1.6	Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts, including using frequently occurring conjunctions to signal simple relationships (e.g., because).

Essential Questions

- How do writers share their ideas with others?
- How do writers support their ideas?

Application of Knowledge: Students will know that...

- There are issues in our lives that we have opinions about.
- There are many ways to persuade our audience.
- When writing about opinions, writers need to give several reasons and provide supporting details for these reasons.
- Writers read and study the work of other writers and then try to incorporate what they have learned into their own writing.
- Writers use checklists to make sure that every part of their writing is as strong as it can be
- Writers write not only to share their opinions but to persuade others to share their opinion.

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

- Give several reasons for an opinion and provide supporting details for these reasons.
- Provide some sense of closure.
- Read and study the work of other writers and then try to incorporate what they have learned into their own writing.
- State an opinion and supply a reason for the opinion.
- Use checklists to make sure that every part of their writing is as strong as it can be.
- Write not only to share their opinions but to persuade others to share their opinion.
- Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about.

Teaching Points and Suggested Activities

Preparation for the Unit

To get the students warmed up for opinion writing, immerse them in persuasion. For example, read them mentor texts that have strong persuasive voices. Some suggestions are books like *Earrings* by Judith Viorst, the *Pigeon* books by Mo Willems, o*r A Pet for Petunia* by Paul Schmid. Let students listen for the sound of persuasion and how the characters in these books try to convince others.

Mentor texts, such as the ones listed in "Resources", will be shared in whole or in part throughout the unit. The books may at times be read aloud outside of the Workshop but then referred to during the Workshop. Excerpts can be reproduced for close inspection or projected with the use of a document camera.

The following teaching points and activities are adapted from *Units of Study in Opinion, Information, and Narrative Writing, Grade 1* (Calkins et al., 2013) and serve as a loose framework for teachers, who will add and or emphasize based on their students' needs.

Teaching Points

- Teach students that when writers care a lot about something - dogs, hats, T-shirts, superhero figures - they often collect examples of that topic, and then spend time judging all they have collected, thinking, "This is the best because ..." They try to convince others of their opinions.
- Teach students that when writing about their opinions, writers need to give several reasons and provide supporting details for these reasons.
- Teach students that writers read and study the work of other writers and then try to incorporate what they have learned into their own writing.
- Teach students that writers don't always share the same opinion. When people disagree, this leads writers to back up their opinions with reasons.
- Teach students that reviewers, judges, don't always look for the most powerful, the most unusual, the most interesting item. Judges can also look for the least powerful, least unusual, the least interesting item. Sometimes in a joking and fun way, people talk about this as 'giving the booby prize.' To judge for the booby prize, judges again look at one trait, then another.
- Teach students that one way to be more convincing is to ask others who share your opinion to help bolster the argument. It can help to cite the person directly.

- Teach students that writers often use checklists to make their writing the best that it can be.
- Teach students that review writers write not only to share their opinion but also to persuade others to share their opinion. Writers can study mentor texts to learn the best ways to do that.
- Teach students that writers use a persuasive voice by writing as though they are talking right to their readers, offering important information.
- Teach students that persuasive writers make comparisons. They include ways that their topic is better (or worse) than others.
- Teach students that writers write introductions to grab their readers' attention right from the very start. One way to do this is to talk directly to readers.
- Teach students that writing partners can read each other's writing and use an editing checklist to give feedback on how to make their writing better.
- Teach students that review writers publish anthologies of pieces that go together. Reviewers think, "Who in the world might need to read this review? what is this review helping people to do?" in order to decide what kind of anthology to create.
- Teach students that writers write book reviews to recommend titles and authors that they believe others should read.
- Teach students that book review writers give a sneak peek summary and are careful not to give away too many details about the book.
- Teach students that writers check their sentences to make sure that they are just right. If the sentences aren't, writers use punctuation marks, linking words, or other tools to make them just right.
- Teach students that writers use checklists to make sure that each and every part of their writing is as strong as it can be.
- Celebrate the completion of a unit of learning and writing with a publishing party, a Reading Rainbow Fair.

Activities to Support Teaching Points

- 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 on-going 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.
- Use "sparkle" words to improve description in writing pieces and to improve description of characters and setting.
- 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.

Assessments

Assessment in this unit takes three forms: diagnostic, formative, and summative. Assessment rubrics are available in Lucy Calkins' Reading and Writing Project resource kits, but teachers may also develop their own rubrics 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

On-Demand Performance Assessment Prompt: Opinion/Argument Writing (E.g. "Think of a topic or issue that you know and care about, an issue around which you have strong feelings. You will have forty-five minutes to write an opinion or argument text in which you will write your opinion or claim and tell reasons why you feel that way. When you do this, draw on everything you know about essays, persuasive letters, and reviews. If you wnat to find and use information from a book or another outside source, you may use that to help you. Please keep in mind that you'll have forty-five minutes to complete this, so you will need to plan, draft, revise, and edit in one sitting.")

In your writing, make sure that you:

- Name your opinion.
- Give reasons and evidence to explain why you have that opinion
- Write an ending." - Taken from *Writing Pathways: Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions, K-5*)

Formative Assessments (Informal)

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.

Comments, corrections, and records from peer conferences between students.

Observation of daily writing progress in writing notebooks and/or folders.

Formative Assessments (Formal)

Teacher-student conferences

Summative Assessment

Summative writing will take the form of both handwritten pieces and pieces generated using appropriate technology.

Published Narratives

Completed unit writing projects

On-Demand Performance Assessment Prompt (Same prompt as the diagnostic on-demand)

Activities to Differentiate Instruction

The design of Writer's Workshop allows for individualized instruction and independent growth for every child. At the heart of differentiation in Writer's Workshop is data and the analysis of data. Through the usage of monitoring student progress during independent writing, analysis of student writing using the learning progressions and writing checklists, 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 writing work.

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

- Encourage student choice in topics to ensure that they are writing on topics that are meaningful for them
- Provide support as needed through conferencing
- Provide support as needed through strategy 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 writing 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 writing
- Set writing goals for students and follow-up with the writing goals after an appropriate amount of time.
- Create group and one-on-one conferring 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
- Demonstrate for students how to use writing checklists to set goals for their writing and also self-assess

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 Writing 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 Writing* Workshop (Primary Grades) chapter 14 for more in-depth information on differentiation

Challenge gifted students to incorporate more complex writing techniques in each writing piece based on the 1st and 2nd Grade Writing Learning Progressions:

- The writer writes his opinion or likes/dislikes and gives reasons for the opinion.
- In the beginning, the writer not only gives his opinion, but sets readers up to expect that his writing will try to convince them to agree.
- The writer includes at least two reasons to support his opinion and writes a sentence or two about each one.
- the writers includes details that would make his reader agree with his opinion.
- The writer's ending reminds readers of his opinion.
- The writer uses correct spelling, spacing, capital letters, and punctuation so that others can read the writing.

Integrated/Cross-Disciplinary Instruction

Science, Engineering, and Math

- Write opinion pieces about the importance of caring for the Earth.

- Write opinion pieces about the survival of animals on Earth.
- Write opinion pieces about plant life and survival.

Social Studies

- Write an opinion piece about family life and its importance.
- Write an opinion piece about life in early days compared to life today.
- Sketch pictures about Native Americans and different aspects of their lives. Then write an opinion piece about the life of a Native American.
- Write an opinion piece highlighting the good things Squanto did to help the Pilgrims.
- Write an opinion piece about a favorite career, such as a farmer, businessman, etc.

Study Skills

- Use graphic organizers to plan writing.
- 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 during revision and editing.

The Arts

- Act out feelings of a character from a story based on your opinion of the character.
- Write a review of a play or movie.
- Write opinions about comic books characters representing good vs. evil.

Reading Workshop

- Apply language and ideas from read alouds and independent reading.
- Utilize read alouds and independent reading as mentor texts.
- Apply spelling strategies.
- Apply grammar skills.
- Expand written vocabulary from read alouds and independent reading.
- Model sentence structure after mentor texts.

Suggested Mentor Texts and Other Resources

Resources

Units of Study in Opinion, Information, and Narrative Writing:

- *Small Moments, Writing with Focus, Detail, and Dialogue* by Lucy Calkins, Abby Oxenhorn Smith, and Rachel Rothman
- *Nonfiction Chapter Books* by Lucy Calkins, Kristine Mraz, and Barbara Golub
- *Writing Reviews* by Lucy Calkins, Elizabeth Dunford, and Celena Dangler Larkey
- *From Scenes to Series* by Lucy Calkins, Mary Ehrenworth and Christine Holley
- *A Guide to the Common Core Writing Workshop*, Primary Grades; Lucy Calkins
- *Writing Pathways, Grades K-5, Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions*; Lucy Calkins
- *If...Then... Curriculum*, Grade 1 (Assessment-Based Instruction); Lucy Calkins; and Colleagues From the TCRWP
- *Resources for Teaching Writing* (DVD) Units of Study in Opinion, Information, and Narrative Writing; Lucy Calkins

The Art of Teaching Writing; Lucy Calkins

The Writing Thief; Ruth Culham

Smarter Charts; Marjorie Martinelli

Launching the Writing Workshop; Denise Leograndis

Read Alouds and Mentor Texts

Click, Clack, Moo; Doreen Cronin

Dear Mrs. LaRue: Letters from Obedience School; Mark Teague

Earrings; Judith Viorst

I Wanna Iguana; Karen Orloff

I Wanna New Room; Karen Orloff

Don't Let the Pigeon Stay Up Late; Mo Willems

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.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.