Unit 2 Information: How-To Books

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s): **English Language Arts**
Time Period: **Marking Period 2**
Length: **8 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

This unit aims to take knowledge of what students already know and are passionate about and allow them to teach what they know. During this unit, students will be writing many information books about many different topics, choosing one to publish towards the end of the unit. Rather than researching new topics, the unit will help children select topics they are already knowledgeable about. This is a time for students to reveal their hobbies and passions. A variety of paper choices will be available, considering paper for a table of contents, diagrams, how-to, etc. to support the various structures students will be writing in throughout the unit. Students will draft both handwritten pieces as well as pieces using appropriate technology.

Standards

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.1.5	Know and use various text features (e.g., headings, tables of contents, glossaries, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text.
LA.RI.1.6	Distinguish between information provided by pictures or other illustrations and information provided by the words in a text.
LA.RI.1.7	Use the illustrations and details in a text to describe its key ideas.
LA.RI.1.10	With prompting and support, read informational texts at grade level text complexity or above.
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.1.2	Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, 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.W.1.7	Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of “how-to” books on a given topic and use them to write a sequence of instructions).
LA.W.1.8	With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.
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.1.4	Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.
LA.SL.1.5	Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.
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.1.5	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 write to teach what they know?

Application of Knowledge: Students will know that...

- Writers elaborate to make writing stronger.
- Writers organize information and use a teaching voice in their books.
- Writers revise to make writing better.
- Writers study books by other authors to help them with their writing.
- Writers teach all about their topics with pictures and words.
- Writers use different strategies to teach such as making comparisons.
- Writers write to teach what they know well.

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

- Organize information and use a teaching voice in their books.

- Provide some sense of closure.
- Study books by other authors to help them in their writing.
- Supply some facts about the topic.
- Teach about their topics with pictures and words.
- Use different strategies to teach such as making comparisons.
- Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic.

Teaching Points and Suggested Activities

Preparation before beginning the unit:

- Gather a stack of information books and texts to assist in the unit's focus. One sample book series that works well are *National Geographic for Kids.* The mentor text, *Sharks* by Anne Schreiber, part of the National Geographic series is recommended. Others from the National Geographic series will work well also*, such as Trucks and Trains,* level 1.
- It will be helpful to select a mentor text that will enable teaching of tables of contents, chapter titles, and diagrams.
- The text should ignite students' interest in learning about the world as well as teaching them about the genre.
- The text structure of the mentor text should use elaboration strategies and ways to organize writing.

***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 children that writers teach all about their topic by organizing their information and using a teaching voice.
- Teach children that writers plan what they are going to say before they write. They do this by telling information across their fingers, sketching, and then writing.
- Teach children that writers try to picture who their readers will be. Then, to reach their readers, they imagine and answer the questions their readers might ask.
- Teach children that writers teach with pictures and words. They include illustrations in their teaching books to help teach their readers even more.
- Teach children that writers bravely spell the challenging, expert words that help teach about their topic.
- Teach children that writers need readers to help them revise. Readers help writers know where to add more details and where to subtract details.
- Teach children that writers assess how well they are doing and set goals to become even better writers.
- Teach children that when a writer edits his or her piece of writing, it involves pulling in to work on things like sounds in a word, punctuation, and capital letters. And then it involves rereading and thinking to fix things again.

- Teach children that nonfiction writers, like story writers, learn how a book might go by studying books written by other authors, including their tables of contents.
- Teach children that writers plan individual chapters the same way they plan their teaching books. They tell the information across - and down - their fingers before they write.
- Teach children that nonfiction writers use different strategies to say more and teach others. One strategy is using comparisons to teach.
- Teach children that writers draw on everything they have already learned to teach their readers, including writing how-to pages, persuasive writing, and stories in their teaching books.
- Teach children that nonfiction writers fix up their writing for readers by pretending to be a reader and also by thinking, "Does this match what I know about how to write this kind of writing well?"
- Teach children that writers use all of the tools around them to make a plan to write their best book ever. These tools include charts, mentor texts, and other writers.
- Teach children that nonfiction writers use images and photos to help them say more about their topic.
- Teach children that writers use their voices to help teach their readers. One way they do this is by deciding how to punctuate their sentences.
- Teach children that writers rely on all the craft moves they have learned, even craft moves from other genres, to write their teaching books.
- Teach children that writers edit their writing so that is is ready to be published and go out into the world.
- End the unit with children publishing their writing and sending it out into the world. Celebrate being a community of writers and share students' writing with others. Add books to the classroom library. One idea for celebration might be a museum exhibit.

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: Information Writing (E.g. "Think of a topic that you've studied or that you know a lot about. You'll have only forty-five minutes to write an informational (or all-about) text that teaches others interesting and important information and ideas about that topic. If you want to find and use information from a book or another outside source to help you with this writing, you may bring that to school. Please keep in mind that you'll have only forty-five minutes to complete this. You will only have this one period, so you'll need to plan, draft, revise, and edit in one sitting. Write in a way that shows all that you know about information writing."

In your writing, make sure that you,

- Introduce the topic that you will teach.
- Include lots of information.
- Organize your writing.
- Use transition words.
- 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 teaches readers some important points about a subject.
- The writer's writing has different parts. Each part tells different information about the topic.
- The writer uses different kinds of information in her writing such as facts, definitions, details, steps, and tips.
- The writer tries to use words that show she is an expert on the subject.
- 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

- Use a journal to log observations.
- Draw and label parts of a brassica plant.
- Sketch observations of changes in a plant and write a sentence to describe.
- Write information text to explain the life cycle of a plant or animal.
- Write an information book about rainbows after reading the Magic School Bus and Making a Rainbow
- Draw and label parts of a balloon rocket or glider.
- Write an information book about a wind catcher, such as streamers, pinwheels, wind socks, wind canes, kites, or whiligigs.
- Write an information book about caring for the Earth after reading the Lorax.
- Write math problems about the growth of a plant.

- Write an information book about math topics.

Social Studies

- Write informational text about families and illustrate.
- Sketch pictures about Native Americans and different aspects of their lives. Label.
- Write informational text about life as a Native American after listening to "Moon of Falling Leaves".
- Write an information book about the good things Squanto did to help the Pilgrims.
- Write informational text about a familiar American hero, such as Sacajawea, Harriet Tubman, or Eleanor Roosevelt.
- Write informational text about Martin Luther King Jr.
- Write informational text about the seasons.
- Write informational text about a 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.
- Create comic books.

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

My Baseball Book, Gail Gibbons

My Soccer Book, Gail Gibbons

Noses by Melanie Mitchell, Level B

We Can Share at School, Rozanne L. Williams, Level B

What Is In Space? Vita Jimenez, Level B
Our Pumpkin Renee Keeler, Level B
G is For Grass, Marcia S. Freeman, Level B
Animal Coverings, Tracey Michele, Level C
Animals in Winter, Jane Snyder, Level C
At the Aquarium, Kerrigan King, Level C
Clownfish, Ryan Nagelhout, Level C
Flash, Firefly, Flash!, Dana Meachen Rau, Level C
I See a Ladybug, Alex Appleby, Level C
I See a Squirrel, Alex Appleby, Level C
Insects, Marcia S. Freeman, Level C
Is This a Monster, Scarlett Lovell, Level C
Sharks, Ryan Nagelhout, Level C
Spots, Feathers, and Curly Tails, Nancy Tufuri, Level C
Whales, Ryan Nagelhout, Level C
Hamsters, Helen Frost and Gail Saunders-Smith, Level D
Honey Bees, Martha E. H. Rustad, Level D
Koala Bears, Eliza Robbins, Level D
Let's Look for Birds, Marcia S. Freeman, Level D

The Panda Bear, Deborah Chilek, Level D
Rabbits, Fros, Level D
Animal Homes, Pam Holden, Level E
Birds Need Trees - Trees Need Birds, Michele Tracey, Level E
Bugs in Your Backyard, Rozanne Williams, Level E
How Do Baby Animals Grow? Caroline Hutchinson, Level E
Keeping Warm, Alan Rubin, Level E
What Would You Eat in the Rain Forest? Caroline Hutchinson, Level E
Where Do Plants Live? Caroline Hutchinson, Level E
Why Can't Plants Grow in the Desert? P. LaTour, Level E
Animal Patterns, Janet Reed, Level F
Baby Animals, Thea Feldman,Level F
Becoming a Frog, Greg Roza, Level F
Bird Families, Helen Frost, Level F
Big Black Bears, Greg Roza, Level F
Bird Nests, Helen Frost, Level F
Butterflies, Melanie Mitchell, Level F
Amazing Eyes Up Close, Melissa Stewart, Level G
Busy As a Bee, Louise P., Level G
Busy, Buzzy Bee, Karen Wallace, Level G
Chickens on the Farm, Mari C. Schuh, Level G
Count Your Chickens, Daniel Jacobs, Level G
Duckling Days, Karen Wallace, Level G
Fantastic Feet Up Close, Melissa Stewart, Level G
Ants, Margaret Hall, Level H
Born To Be a Butterfly, Karen Wallace*,* Level H
Diving Dolphins, Karen Wallace, Level H
Crickets, Margaret Hall, Level H
Grasshoppers, Margaret Hall, Level H
It's a Good Thing There Are Insects, Allan Fowler, Level H
About Birds, Cathryn Sill, Level I
Animal Families, Bobbie Kalman, Level I
Animals At Home, David Lock, Level I
Animals On the Go, Jessica Brett, Level I
Brave Norman, Andrew Clements, Level I
Cheetahs, Deborah Nuzzolo, Level I
Dolores and the Big Fire, Andrew Clements, Level I

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.