Unit 2 Information: Lab Books and Reports

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

Unit Overview

This unit's aim is to teach students about informational writing that scientists are likely to do. As part of this unit, science instruction will be folded into the writing workshop. The basic structure writing workshop model will remain consistent but during minilessons students will also be engaged in experiments and learn about the scientific method. Students will discover that the scientific method helps scientists develop hypothesis, record findings and develop further investigations. During workshop time, students will be dividing their time between conducting experiments and writing for a purpose. By inviting students to write like scientists, the unit helps to teach about informational texts. Our young writers(scientists) will write information books in which they aim to teach others what they have learned. The entire unit conveys a way writing can be used to accelerate and reveal learning. Students will draft both handwritten pieces as well as pieces using appropriate technology.

Standards

LA.RI.2.3	Describe the connection between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text.
LA.RI.2.5	Know and use various text features (e.g., captions, bold print, subheadings, glossaries, indexes, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text efficiently.
LA.RI.2.6	Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe.
LA.RI.2.7	Explain how specific illustrations and images (e.g., a diagram showing how a machine works) contribute to and clarify a text.
LA.RI.2.10	Read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at grade level text complexity proficiently with scaffolding as needed.
LA.RF.2.3.E	Recognize and read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words.
LA.RF.2.4.A	Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding.
LA.RF.2.4.B	Read grade-level text orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression.
LA.RF.2.4.C	Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.
LA.W.2.2	Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use evidence-based facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a conclusion.
LA.W.2.5	With guidance and support from adults and peers, focus on a topic and strengthen writing as needed through self-reflection, revising and editing.
LA.W.2.6	With guidance and support from adults, use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers.
LA.W.2.7	Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., read a number of books on a single topic to produce a report; record science observations).

LA.W.2.8	Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.
LA.SL.2.1	Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
LA.SL.2.1.A	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.2.1.B	Build on others' talk in conversations by linking their explicit comments to the remarks of others.
LA.SL.2.1.C	Ask for clarification and further explanation as needed about the topics and texts under discussion.
LA.SL.2.2	Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
LA.SL.2.3	Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.
LA.SL.2.6	Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification.
LA.L.2.1.E	Use adjectives and adverbs, and choose between them depending on what is to be modified.
LA.L.2.1.F	Produce, expand, and rearrange complete simple and compound sentences (e.g., The boy watched the movie; The little boy watched the movie; The action movie was watched by the little boy).
LA.L.2.2.A	Capitalize holidays, product names, and geographic names.
LA.L.2.2.E	Consult print and digital resources, including beginning dictionaries, as needed to check and correct spellings.
LA.L.2.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
LA.L.2.4.A	Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
LA.L.2.4.E	Use glossaries and beginning dictionaries, both print and digital, to determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases.
LA.L.2.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

Essential Questions

- How can I use what I already know about organization, details, and editing to write information books?
- How can I learn from a mentor author to make my information books longer and more interesting?
- How can I revise one of my books by studying and researching the topic?
- Can I even use artifacts, photographs and books to do some research and teach more?
- How can writers monitor their growth as writers?
- How can research extend my knowledge of a topic?
- How can I use and improve my editing skills to get my work ready for our celebration?

Application of Knowledge: Students will know that...

- authors choose how they present their information for a reason.
- informational writing can be organized in many different ways.
- writers can add to their knowledge of a topic through research.
- writers can teach others what they know.
- writers have many ways to develop and revise their writing.
- writers have routines and procedures to follow in a workshop setting.
- writers learn craft moves from a mentor text.
- writers need to revise and edit their written pieces.
- writers use notebooks to log their ideas.
- writing partners support each others' efforts during the writing process.

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

- choose a structure and organize their information so it is clear.
- choose and write an interesting beginning and conclusion.
- generate informational text from their own knowledge of a topic.
- include headings, sub-headings, charts, text boxes, graphs, charts, glossaries, pictures with captions and other visuals in their finished book.
- insert new information on their topic into their writing.
- produce a finished product.
- research a topic using books, the internet, and reference materials.
- write this information in a predetermined format.

Teaching Points and Suggested Activities

The following teaching points and activities are adapted from Units of Study, Information Writing, Grade 2 (Calkins et al., 2013) and serve as a loose framework for teachers, who will add and or emphasize based on their students' needs.

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

Teaching Points:

- teach students that scientists study the world around them, pose questions, conduct experiments and record their findings
- teach students that writers study mentor texts when learning to write a new kind of writing
- teach students that scientists like writers go through a process
- teach students that when scientists spend a lot of time writing and thinking about their conclusions and these thoughts often lead to more investigations and research
- teach students that when scientists want to improve their writing they learn more about what they are investigating.
- teach students that writers self assess and set goals for themselves making plans to improve informational texts

- teach students that scientists bring all they know about writing and science to new experiments
- teach students that scientists organize their results in different ways
- teach students that tables help to organize information
- teach students that scientists use labels and titles in their writings
- teach students that scientists compare their results to other scientists results and use these comparisons to grow and extend their thinking
- teach students that scientists revisit their experiments to generate new questions and experiments
- teach students that scientists use domain-specific language when speaking and writing about their topics
- teach students that writers choose topics they know a lot about and are experts on how to write information books. This helps them plan how their information will be presented.
- teach students that writers draft the chapters of their books by looking back at their table of contents and their plans
- teach students that writers look at mentor texts to find ideas for their own writings
- teach students that writers use comparisons in their information books
- teach students that science writers use special strategies to share concepts with their readers
- teach students that writers craft an introduction/conclusion to informational books
- teach students that writers edit and check their spelling, punctuation and word choice making their writing easier to read
- teach students that writers celebrate the end of their published writing and science exhibition

Activities to Support Teaching Points

- create anchor charts
- study pages from exemplar writer's notebooks
- provide and present mentor texts as models
- provide checklists to assess on-going writing goals
- use writer's notebook for daily writing
- creating mental movies and acting out a story in order to make writing come alive
- use figurative language and sparkle words to improve descriptions of character and setting
- use dialogue to make character's come to life
- set mini-writing goals as you move through the writing process
- tap, sketch, or jot across the pages as a way of planning stories
- explore a variety of leads and endings
- write long and strong to build stamina
- teach children to read like writers using mentor texts
- teach paragraphing to separate groups of ideas and sentences to separate ideas
- celebrate the conclusion of a writing unit
- use technology to research information about a specific topic
- make an on-going class book as a model of the writing process

Assessments

Assessment in this unit takes three forms: diagnostic, formative, and summative. Assessment rubrics are available in Lucy Calkins's 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.

Additionally, 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.

Also, whenever possible, teacher assessment should take place in the context of a conference, or at least be followed up by a conference. This reinforces expectations, advice, assistance, and ultimately, growth.

Diagnostic Assessments

*Since this is a subsequent information writing unit, the students' original On-Demand Performance Assessments will stand as a diagnostic tool the teacher can utilize. The volume of work; notebook work, drafts and final drafts; composed by each student at the conclusion of the previous Informational Writing Unit(s) also provides the teacher a wealth of diagnostic information.

Prompt: E.g. "Think of a topic that you have studied about or that you know a lot. Tomorrow, you will have 45 minutes to write an informational text that teaches others interesting and important information and ideas about the topic. If you want to find and use information from a book, you may bring it with you tomorrow. You will need to plan, draft, revise and edit in one sitting. Write in a way that shows all that you know about informational writing." - Taken from *Writing Pathways: Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions, K-2*)

Formative Assessments (Informal)

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

Students' questions, comments, suggestions to teacher

Comments, corrections, and records from peer conferences between students

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 writings

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 4th grade Writing Learning Progressions:

- writer groups information into sections and paragraphs
- writer includes different facts and details about a subject
- writer uses word families and spelling rules to edit the piece
- writer uses commas in long sentences

Integrated/Cross-Disciplinary Instruction

Reading Workshop

- apply language and ideas from read alouds and independent reading
- 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

Science, Engineering, and Math

- write journal entries related to scientific observation in animal unit
- write research lab book of animal/habitat for Safari Park
- use a notebook to log activities
- write narratives that include a math problem being solved
- write math problems tied to personal experiences

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 process

The Arts

- turn narratives from Social Studies/Health into posters
- add illustrations to further convey meaning

Houghton Mifflin Social Studies Neighborhoods

- *w*rite personal narratives about life in Green Brook
- write narratives involving following rules
- write journal entries about in and around the US
- write narratives about being good citizens

Macmillan/McGraw-Hill Health and Wellness

- use a notebook to log experiences
- write information concerning family relationships
- write information posters dealing with getting along with others
- write letters to friends and family about topics you care about
- write journal entries about health goals and practices
- write information posters involving consequences to poor health and safety practices

Suggested Mentor Texts and Other Resources

Resources

Crafting True Stories by Lucy Calkins and Marjorie Martinelli

Launching the Writing Workshop, Grades K-2; Lucy Calkins and Marjorie Martinelli

A Guide to the Common Core Writing Workshop, Intermediate Grades; Lucy Calkins

Writing Pathways, Grades K-5, Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions; Lucy Calkins

If...Then... Curriculum, Grade 2 (Assessment-Based Instruction) by Lucy Calkins, Julia Mooney 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

Creating Classrooms for Authors; Jerome C Harste, Kathy G Short with Carolyn Burke

Guiding Readers and Writers, Grades K-2; Irene C Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell

Smarter Charts; Marjorie Martinelli

Launching the Writing Workshop; Denise Leograndis

Suggested Mentor Texts

Owls By Gail Gibbons

Bats By Gail Gibbons

Spiders By Gail Gibbons

ZooBooks By Wildlife Education

National Geographic "Animal" Series

Mentor Texts: (Classroom Texts from the district approved science curriculum)

Soils

Balance and Motion

Butterflies and Life Cycles

Safari Park Habitat Books and Animals

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.