Unit 1: Personal Narrative Writing: Crafting True Stories

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s): **English Language Arts**
Time Period: **Marking Period 1**
Length: **8 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

The beginning of the third grade year is the time for establishing a well-managed, productive writing workshop. Students will learn procedures for participating in their new classroom community, for writing independently, and for working with partners. Students will become familiar with the routines and expectations of the workshop model as well as engage in writing to build stamina and independence. Writers will be assisted in beginning their Writer's Notebook, collecting entries, and selecting and developing seed ideas. They will demonstrate their writing stamina and proficiency through their narrative writing. The real goal of this unit is not only to improve the quality of narrative writing but also to improve the quality of writing as writers. Students will practice how to progress with independence through the writing process while working on early personal narratives. They will learn to monitor their growth as writers by utilizing checklists and rubrics. Students will draft both handwritten pieces as well as pieces using appropriate technology.

Standards

LA.W.3.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using narrative technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
LA.W.3.3.A	Establish a situation and introduce a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
LA.W.3.3.B	Use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations.
LA.W.3.3.C	Use temporal words and phrases to signal event order.
LA.W.3.3.D	Provide a sense of closure.
LA.W.3.4	With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
LA.W.3.5	With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.
LA.W.3.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
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.L.3.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.3.1.B	Form and use regular and irregular plural nouns.
LA.L.3.1.C	Use abstract nouns (e.g., childhood).

LA.L.3.1.D	Form and use regular and irregular verbs.
LA.L.3.1.E	Form and use the simple (e.g., I walked; I walk; I will walk) verb tenses.
LA.L.3.1.F	Ensure subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement.
LA.L.3.1.G	Form and use comparative and superlative adjectives and adverbs, and choose between them depending on what is to be modified.
LA.L.3.1.H	Use coordinating and subordinating conjunctions.
LA.L.3.1.I	Produce simple, compound, and complex sentences.
LA.L.3.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
LA.L.3.2.A	Capitalize appropriate words in titles.
LA.L.3.2.B	Use commas in addresses.
LA.L.3.2.C	Use commas and quotation marks in dialogue.
LA.L.3.2.D	Form and use possessives.
LA.L.3.2.E	Use conventional spelling for high-frequency and other studied words and for adding suffixes to base words (e.g., sitting, smiled, cries, happiness).
LA.L.3.2.F	Use spelling patterns and generalizations (e.g., word families, position-based spellings, syllable patterns, ending rules, meaningful word parts) in writing words.
LA.L.3.2.G	Consult reference materials, including beginning dictionaries, as needed to check and correct spellings.
LA.L.3.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
LA.L.3.3.A	Choose words and phrases for effect.
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 writers become invested in the Writing Workshop?
How do good habits, routines, and procedures within the workshop model enable writers to grow?
How do writers write with volume, stamina, and speed?
How can writing partners, mentor texts, and writing strategies help a writer?
How can writers monitor their growth as writers?

Application of Knowledge: Students will know that...

- writers draw upon personal experiences to write personal narratives.
- writers have many ways to develop and revise stories they create.
- writers have routines and procedures to follow in a workshop setting.
- writers learn craft moves from a mentor text, for example using dialogue to bring characters to life.
- writers need to revise and edit their written pieces, for example by checking punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

- 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...

- write narratives in which they include details to describe actions.
- write narratives in which they include details to describe feelings.
- write narratives in which they include details to describe thoughts.
- write narratives in which they provide a sense of closure.
- write narratives in which they recount a short sequence of events.
- write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event.
- write narratives in which they use temporal words to signal event order.

Teaching Points and Suggested Activities

Preparation before beginning the unit:

- ***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.
- Begin a Writer's Notebook to use as a living mentor text. Decorate it, include a heart map, and write some sample pieces to be used during minilessons and small group work.
- Collect the mentor texts you will be using. Read them to the class in the first few days of school to build up a mentor text set you will refer to over and over.

The following teaching points and activities are adapted from the *Crafting True Stories (Grade 3)* unit of the *Units of Study for Teaching Writing (Calkins et al., 2013)* and serve as a loose framework for teachers, who will add to and or emphasize based on their student's needs.

Teaching Points

- Invite students to become writers and teach them that writers make New Year’s resolutions; they think about the kind of writing they want to make and set goals for themselves to write in the ways they imagine.
- Teach students that one strategy for generating ideas for true stories is to think of a person who matters, then to brainstorm small moments spent with that person.
- Teach students that writers sometimes think of a place, list small moments that happened in that place, and then write about one of these moments.
- Teach students that one way writers draw readers in is by telling their stories in scenes rather than summaries.
- Teach students that writers sometimes pause to consider what's going well in their writing and what they might try next to take their writing up a level.
- Teach students that writers don't wait to edit; they take a minute as they write to make sure their writing is as clear as possible for their readers.
- Coach students to use resources to check sentences for capitalization and punctuation as they go rather than waiting until the end of a piece.
- Teach students to rehearse for writing by teaching them that writers story-tell and generate alternate leads as ways to rehearse a story.
- Teach students that writers draft by writing fast and furiously, working to capture the mental movie on the page.

- Teach students that one way writers revise is by studying other author's craft and naming what the author does so they can try it in their own writing.
- Teach students that writers revise by asking, "What's the most important part of this story?" and developing that section.
- Teach students that one way writers improve their stories is by choosing precise words to clarify meaning.
- Show students how writers can revise their stories by grouping related sentences into paragraphs and then elaborating on those paragraphs.
- (The children will begin a second piece, aiming for more independence) Emphasize that writers draw on all they have learned to become their own job captains; overseeing the entire writing process more independently.
- Teach students to vary the length and types of sentences in their writing to increase interest; for example by turning simple sentences into complex sentences.
- Teach students that writers replay life events in ways that let readers feel the experience.
- Draw on a mentor text to teach students how writers correctly punctuate dialogue.
- Teach students how revision can bring writing to a new level so that it rings with clarity and purpose.
- Remind students that during the editing process writers check that their stories contain correct capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.
- Teach students that writers deliberately craft the endings of their stories, and show students how to learn techniques for improving their own work by studying published writing.
- Remind students that writers edit to make their writing exactly how they intend it to be for readers, using checklists to help them.
- Celebrate being a community of flourishing writers and share students' writing with the public.

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
- create an on-going class book for modeling and trying out new skills
- use writer's notebook for daily writing
- tap, sketch, or jot across the pages as a way of planning stories
- explore and try a variety of leads and endings
- practice 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
- add dialogue to writing to bring characters alive
- set mini-writing goals as you move through the writing process
- provide checklists to assess and develop on-going writing goals
- write long and strong to build stamina
- teach that sentences are used to group one idea and paragraphs are used to group similar ideas
- plan to celebrate the conclusion of classroom writing projects
- use technology to research information about a specific topic
- use technology to publish a piece of writing

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: Narrative Writing (E.g. "I'm really eager to understand what you can do as writers of narratives, of stories, so today, will you please write the best personal narrative, the best Small Moment story, that you can write? Make this be the story of one time in your life. You might focus on just a scene or two. You'll have only forty-five minutes to write this true story, so you'll need to plan, draft, revise, and edit in one sitting. Write in a way that allows you to show off all you know about narrative writing. In your writing, make sure you:

- Write a beginning for your story.
- Use transition words to tell what happened in order.
- Elaborate to help readers picture your story.
- Show what your story is really about.
- Write an ending for your story." - 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 4th grade Writing Learning Progressions:

- tell a story bit by bit but then remove unimportant parts
- use paragraphing to separate different parts or times of the story or to show when a new character is speaking
- show why characters do things by including their thinking
- vary the pace of the story; make some parts go quickly, some slowly
- use figurative language such as simile, metaphor, and/or personification to bring a story to life

Integrated/Cross-Disciplinary Instruction

Reading 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

Houghton Mifflin Social Studies

- *w*rite personal narratives about life in Green Brook
- write narratives involving following rules
- write journal entries about life in and around the US
- write narratives that compare/contrast life in early communities to today
- write journal entries from the perspective of Native Americans or colonists
- write narratives about being good citizens

Macmillan/McGraw-Hill Health and Wellness

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

Science, Engineering, and Math

- write journal entries related to scientific observation
- use a notebook to log activities
- write journal entries as if on a space journey
- 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 narrative pieces into skits and plays
- add illustrations to further convey meaning
- create narratives from pictures and photographs
- create comic books or graphic novels

Suggested Mentor Texts and Other Resources

Resources

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

- *Crafting True Stories* by Lucy Calkins and Marjorie Martinelli
- *Launching the Writing Workshop*, Grades 3-5; 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 3 (Assessment-Based Instruction); 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

Wondrous Words; Katie Wood Ray

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

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

Smarter Charts; Marjorie Martinelli

Launching the Writing Workshop; Denise Leograndis

Some Suggested Mentor and Classroom Texts

Come On Rain!; Karen Hesse (M)

Owl Moon; Jane Yolen (O)

My Very Own Room; Amada Irma Perez

My Diary From Here to There; Amada Irma Perez (M)

What You Know First; Patricia MacLachlan (O)

William's Doll; Charlotte Zolotow (L)

Chrysanthemum; Kevin Henkes (M)

Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge; Mem Fox (K)

When I Was Young in the Mountains; Cynthia Rylant (K)

Kitchen Dance; Maurie J. Manning

The Best Story; Eileen Spinelli

Ralph Writes a Story; Abby Hanlon

Arthur Writes a Story; Marc Brown (L)

Rocket Writes a Story; Tad Hills (M)

The Word Collector; Sonja Wimmer

Fireflies; Julie Brinckloe (K)

The Little Mouse, the Red Ripe Strawberry, and the Big Hungry Bear; Don and Audrey Wood (I)

Roller Coaster by Maria Frazee (K)

Three Hens and a Peacock; Lester Laminack (L)

The Relatives Came by Cynthia Rylant (L)

Courage; Barnard Waber

What Do Authors Do?; Eileen Christelow (O)

The Boy Who Loved Words; Ronni Schotter (Q)

Punctuation Takes a Vacation; Robin Pulver (M)

The Plot Chickens; Mary Jane Auch

Miss Alaineus: A Vocabulary Disaster; Debra Frasier

Part of Reading Street Anthology

When Charlie McButton Lost Power; Suzanne Collins

Prudy's Problem and How She Solved It; Carey Armstrong-Ellis

Suki's Kimono; Chieri Uegaki (M)

Jalapeno Bagels; Natasha Wing (L)

Some Suggested Read Aloud Novels

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; J.K. Rowling (V)

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

The One and Only Ivan; Katherine Applegate (S)

Because of Winn Dixie; Kate DiCamillo (R)

A Series of Unfortunate Events, The Bad Beginning; Lemony Snickett (V)

The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane; Kate DiCamillo (V)

The Boy On the Porch; Sharon Creech

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory; Roald Dahl (R)

Poetry Books

Forest Has a Song: Poems; Amy Ludwig VanDerwater

I'm in Charge of Celebrations; Byrd Baylor

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.CRP11.1	Career-ready individuals find and maximize the productive value of existing and new technology to accomplish workplace tasks and solve workplace problems. They are flexible and adaptive in acquiring new technology. They are proficient with ubiquitous technology applications. They understand the inherent risks-personal and organizational-of technology applications, and they take actions to prevent or mitigate these risks.