Unit 2--Informative Writing: Personal Expertise

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s): **English Language Arts**
Time Period: **Marking Period 2**
Length: **6 to 8 weeks**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

As reading lessons begin to take on nonfiction topics, students will take a new direction in their writing, choosing topics on which they will relate factual information based on research that they carry out themselves. Students will learn and apply various organizational structures for their essays, such as sequence of events, comparison and contrast, problem and solution, and cause and effect. More advanced and ambitious students may even attempt to synthesize their own structure based on one or more of these.

The sixth grade research-based writing unit is based on topics of individual students' expertise. Each student will choose a topic on which he or she is highly knowledgeable and develop a thesis statement based on it. From there, students will supplement their own knowledge with light research and attribution to reliable, credible sources.

Standards

LA.W.6.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
LA.W.6.3.A	Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
LA.W.6.3.B	Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
LA.W.6.3.C	Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
LA.W.6.3.D	Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.
LA.W.6.3.E	Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.
LA.W.6.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, voice and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
LA.W.6.5	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
LA.W.6.6	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.
LA.W.6.10	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.6.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
LA.SL.6.1.B	Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
LA.SL.6.1.D	Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.
LA.L.6.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.6.1.A	Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive).
LA.L.6.1.B	Use intensive pronouns (e.g., myself, ourselves).
LA.L.6.1.C	Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.
LA.L.6.1.D	Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).
LA.L.6.1.E	Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.
LA.L.6.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
LA.L.6.2.A	Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.
LA.L.6.2.B	Spell correctly.
LA.L.6.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Essential Questions

1. What is an informative essay supposed to do?

2. How do I develop a thesis statement based on my research question or topic?

3. What kinds of sources command the most respect and trust from my readers?

4. How should I organize my essay in order to support my thesis statement consistently and present information coherently?

5. How might I manipulate sentence structure as well as the voice and mood of verbs in order to add nuance and style to my writing?

6. Which conventions and habits define informative writing--and which habits should I avoid?

7. How and why should I make use of my skills, resources, peers, and teacher as my work takes shape?

How can I immerse myself in a topic by researching and note taking with power and purpose, draft an informational essay, research and construct an informational book that launches into a digital teaching tool?

- **Bend I:** *How can I immerse myself in a topic by researching and note taking with power and purpose*

from different media of informational texts, and highlight my learning by drafting an essay?

- **Bend II:** *How can I choose a focused topic angle and shape it into an informational book by infusing targeted research while revising for effective text features, literary and informational writing moves?*

- **Bend III:** *How can I transfer my focused topic expertise into an effective, engaging and educational online format that both excites and educates others about my findings digitally?*

Application of Knowledge: Students will know that…

- All information and ideas taken from sources must be attributed—even if the information is paraphrased.
- Basic skills such as spelling, grammar, and punctuation apply to all writing.
- Clear and coherent writing illustrates development, organization, and style that are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Conferences are two-way discussions whose frank interchange of ideas facilitates good writing.
- Daily practice in writing is essential for development of skills and enjoyment.
- Personal pronouns have case and number in relation to their antecedents.
- Sources of information have potential biases and varying degrees of credibility and authority.
- The research process gains significant momentum when a researcher formulates a research question from the topic.
- Writing is a process that unfolds over time, beginning with ideas, taking refinement over several drafts, and improving with inspiration from outside texts as well as with consultations with peers and teachers.

Application of Skills: Students will be able to…

- Apply personal pronouns properly in relation to their antecedents.
- Apply the basic skills of spelling, capitalization, and punctuation properly to their writing.
- Assist and receive assistance from peers in developing ideas, writing, revising, and editing.
- Attribute information presented in writing back to its source.
- Complete at least the final phase of their work using digital and cloud capabilities and produce final products in digital form.
- Compose a thorough, organized research-based essay that conveys facts and ideas and attributes research back to its sources.
- Evaluate the authority of a source of information and assess the source for bias.
- Find information from print and online sources.
- Include a clear introduction, an ample body, and a thorough conclusion in an essay.
- Include pertinent facts and add their own appropriate analysis and synthesis to their topics.
- Observe formal writing conventions, suiting vocabulary and tone to an academic audience.
- Participate in meaningful peer and teacher conferences, providing and evaluating advice and applying

it as appropriate.

- Spell, capitalize, and punctuate correctly.
- Use a research question as the basis for investigation, research, articulation of a thesis, and composition of an essay.
- Use appropriate transitions to optimize continuity.
- Use punctuation to set off parenthetical elements.
- Vary the voice and mood of verbs in order to enhance nuance in their writing.
- Write on a daily basis toward the completion of an extended research-based project.

Teaching Points and Suggested Activities

Teaching Points

The following teaching points and activities are adapted from the *Units of Study in Argument, Information and Narrative Writing, Grades 6-8* (Calkins et al., 2014) and serve as a resource for teachers.

Writing Information Books on Topics of Personal Expertise

This unit provides foundational teaching and learning about information writing that students will need before attempting more complex units such as research-based information writing. This unit invites students to draw from their own areas of personal expertise to create lively, voice-filled information books; it is filled with opportunities for choice, engagement, and exploration.

Bend I: Drafting and Revising to Teach What You Know

Considering Different Structures

- Writing an information book is similar to teaching—and one of the things a teacher does is break down a topic into smaller topics so it is easier for the learner to grasp the content. Teachers and writers, both, try to think of a logical way to organize the information for learners.

Studying Qualities of Good Information Writing to Write Well from the Start

- Although information writers are mostly fastening information onto the page so that others can learn it, their goal is the same goal that fiction writers have—to write well, to write in ways that get through to their readers. Two way information writers can do this is to read the work of other information writers and to write with their readers in mind, thinking, “How can I make this really good?”

Working of Self-Assessment, Goal-Setting, and Revision

- Writers use checklists to reinforce previous learning by setting goals and decided next steps.

Writing with Specifics

- Information writers know it matters to use precise, specific language to create an accurate and detailed picture for readers.

Selecting Appropriate Content

- Writers give careful attention to the content they include in their piece, deciding not only what should go in each section, but also what might be excluded.

Creating Cohesion Using Transition Words

- Writers create cohesion across a piece of writing by linking parts of a texts—paragraphs, sections, chapters—like a chain in a logical order.

Developing Text Features to Teach Information and Ideas

- Text features can be used to teach additional information or convey information more quickly in a better format than words

Bend II: Using Brief Research to Supplement and Extend Books

Researching to Find New Information that Bolsters Writing

- One way information writers set out to research is to think about kinds of research they need to do to find the information they need, such as interviewing an expert, using books or online sources, or creating a survey. Writers keep in mind audience/deadlines and make smart decisions about what kind of research makes the most sense for their project.

Quoting Experts

- Information writers draw on the testimony of experts to support their writing. They research, alert to ‘juicy quotes’ that they can incorporate into their writing, quote that capture precisely what they writers are hoping to say or that support a fact or idea they’re included in their writing.

Including Expert Language or Content Vocabulary

- Because information writers teach others, they make sure they are using the technical vocabulary that distinguishes them as experts and that informs others about their topic.

Using Diagrams and Illustrations to Convey Information

- Information writers look for opportunities to use a diagram or illustration from a source that would be just right in their own writing.

Self-Assessing and Setting Goals

- Writers use checklists to reinforce previous learning by setting goals and decided next steps.

Bend III: Using Mentor Texts to Lift Writing to the Next Level

Using Mentor Texts for Ideas on Presenting Information and Structuring Texts

Analyzing Texts by Published Authors, Asking, "What makes this text so effective at conveying information?"

Readying Writing for Presentation

Sharing Published Pieces with the World

"Writing Information Books on Topics of Personal Expertise." *If...Then... Curriculum*, Grade 6 (Assessment-Based Instruction). Lucy Calkins, TCRWP

Research-Based Information Writing: Books, Websites, and Presentations

In this unit, students explore multiple ways of learning from informational texts and help them to shape that knowledge to explain complex and important topics to others in their communities—whether they are small and within earshot or wide and composed of the entire online world. In this unit, students will start with learning to write an information, explanatory essay on a broad topic. Then, they'll follow their interest into a more focused topic within the broad one, writing about it in information book form. Finally, then they'll take all their writing and revise and edit it, reshaping it into a informational website or digital presentation form. As part of their research and writing across the whole unit, they will wrestle with synthesizing an array of information, creating a logical and clear structure for their writing, incorporating quotations, including citations, and adopting a correct and appropriate tone and style as they teach their readers.

Bend I: Writing Research-Based Informational Essays

Becoming Engaged with a Topic

- Information writers research and gather information quickly to be able to teach others.

Reading for a Wide View of a Topic: Teen Activism

- Writers read and analyze a wide variety of sources to develop a big-picture view of a topic.

Preparing to Write Informational Essays: Finding and Supporting Key Points

- When writers want to become expert on a topic, they analyze each new piece of information to determine how it fits into the topic as a whole.

Structure Sets You Free: Using Prior Knowledge to Flash-Draft Essays

- Writers rely on a structure for their essays that helps them write quickly and efficiently.

Bend II: Drafting and Revising Information Books on More Focused Topics

The Trail of Research: Pursuing Information and Focusing in on Topics

- As writers pursue a research subject and think about what makes the topic important, this leads them on a trail of research, of one topic leading to another.

Envisioning Structures to Plan an Information Book

- Writers of information books envision several possible ways to use or combine structures to create a working plan for a book.

Constructing Texts with Solid Bricks of Information

- Writers construct information writing with solid bricks of information—quotations, facts, anecdotes, and numbers— connecting them with ideas and transitions.

Research: Gathering Specific Information and Creating Meaning

- When doing research, writers read with an eye toward collecting specific bits of information—the information they need for their writing.

Writing with Detail

- Writers write long, with vivid, concrete details that help readers fully understand what the writers are trying to teach.

Lifting the Level of Sentence Complexity

- One way writers make text more authoritative and academic is to write more complex sentences.

Using Text Features to Strengthen Writing

- Informational writers create useful, engaging text features to teach information to readers in a variety of ways.

Planning Ready-to-Go Chapters

- Writers have to write a chapter that's ready to go, they go through the whole writing process in their minds, even before they write the first word on the page.

Quoting with a Purpose in Mind

- When writers prepare to write final drafts, part of their work is to use meaningful quotations with a specific purpose in mind.

Celebrating with a Book Exhibit Tour

- Writers learn from studying each other's books and sharing feedback, especially when feedback is precise and concrete.

Bend III: Digital Writing Projects: Sharing Expertise Online

Studying Digital Mentor Texts

- To get insights for new writing projects, writers often study mentor texts to get a broad vision of a particular kind of writing and an in-depth look at genre or format.

Revising to Fit Digital Formats: Determining Importance

- When writers present their work within the constraints of a digital format, they must determine what information is most important to share.

Pouring into Digital Forms . . . and Publishing

- As writers transition their writing into digital forms, they must make decisions quickly, be flexible about formats, spot errors with an editor's eye, and know that they can go back to revise.

Celebration: Presentations, Feedback, Reflection

- Informational writers want to teach information and ideas effectively and engagingly to their audiences— whether it's a printed book, a website, a digital slideshow, and/or a live presentation by the writer.

"Research-Based Information Writing: Books, Websites, and Presentations." Units of Study in Argument, Information and Narrative Writing, Grade 6. Lucy Calkins, TCRWP

Alternate Teaching Points:

- Writers of informational essays use many different strategies to convey information to the reader, including cause and effect, definition, compare and contrast, and classification. Cause and effect explores how and why something happened and what occurred as a result of an event. Cause and effect links situations and events together in time, with causes coming before effects.

- Writers examine pieces by other writers to learn about informational essay strategies. Writers use cause and effect in informational essays to show the relationship between related events, people, and issues.

- Writers usually produce their best writing when focused on a topic they care about. They brainstorm and pre-write to identify and explore possible topics, then carefully select a topic based on their interests and the assignment.

- Writers perform research to increase their knowledge of the chosen topic. They sort through their prior knowledge and research information, categorizing facts, details, quotations, and examples into categories and sub-categories.

- Writers determine a central idea to focus the drafting of their essay. In a cause-and-effect-based essay, the central idea will explain these relationships: Cause(s) --> Event/Issue --> Effect(s)

- Writers of informational essays select a logical structure for their piece as they draft. With the cause-and-effect strategy, the nature and number of the causes and effects determine the structure.

- Informational essay writers select key facts, details, quotations and examples to support the central idea in the topic sentence as they draft body paragraphs. They also analyze this information to help the audience make sense of the facts and link them to the central idea.

- Informational essay writers craft concluding paragraphs that show the importance of their topic. With the cause-and-effect strategy, the concluding paragraph discusses *probable* results from the cause-effect relationship instead of giving an *absolute* conclusion about what will happen.

- When they have completed a draft of their essay, informational essay writers may use a reverse outline to determine the effectiveness of their piece, make a revision plan, then make changes accordingly. They also carefully edit their pieces so that the reader has a smooth and enjoyable reading experience.

- To complete the writing process, writers must share their pieces with an audience—either in print or on the web—and then celebrate the accomplishment of completing a significant writing task. They then reflect on the writing process to become more independent writers in the future.

The following teaching points address the objectives of this unit, as well as the standards in the Common Core:

- Generating ideas for research topics--your interests and the audience's
- Developing a research question based on a research topic
- Gathering information and assessing the reliability and authority of sources
- Sources from multiple media: print, digital, and broadcast
- Developing a thesis statement
- Introduction, body, conclusion, and transitions
- Text structure (description, sequence of events, comparison/contrast, cause and effect, problem and solution, hybrids)
- Writing conventions and style guidelines (basic skills--spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; advanced skills--habits to strengthen, habits to avoid)
- Integrating research into your writing--then adding your own ideas
- Attribution, citation, and listing sources
- Priorities for peer conferences
- Digital and cloud resources for composing, revising, editing, and publishing
- Making personal pronouns agree with their antecedents

- Using punctuation to set off parenthetical elements.

Typical Daily Activities

- Mini-lesson (connection, teaching point, modeling, active engagement, independent practice, sharing)
- Daily writing
- Conferences (between peers and with the teacher) and sharing

Critical Phases of Student Activity

- Developing topics
- Research
- Drafting
- Revising
- Editing
- Publishing

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

Review of student's portfolio from the previous school year, particularly informative writing projects

On-demand informative essay (E.g: "Think of a topic that you've studied or that you know a lot about. Tomorrow, you will have forty-five minutes to write an information (or all-about) text that teachers others

interesting and important information and ideas about that toic. 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 with you tomorrow. Please keep in mind that you'll have only forty-five minutes to complete this, 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 you: write an introduction, elaborate with a variety of information, organize your writing, use transition words, and write a conclusion." - Taken from *Writing Pathways: Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions, 6-8*)

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

Published research-based informative pieces

On-demand informative pieces (Same on-demand prompt as for the diagnostic assessment)

Activities to Differentiate Instruction

The Writing Workshop framework enables students to generate research topics based on their own interests and experiences. The inherently self-directed nature of developing initial concepts requires continual reinforcement, however, at all phases of instruction during the unit.

This particular unit on research-based writing also enables students--based on interest and ability--to choose in consultation with their teachers from a range of approaches to organizing their pieces. Struggling students may choose more basic structures such as a sequence of events or analysis by comparison and contrast. Teachers will encourage other students to examine causes and effects, Highly imaginative students may

require advice and guidance as the depth of their work transcends the typical understanding of text structure. All students will learn the nuances of verb voice and mood.

The active participation component of mini-lessons enables a teacher to move around and observe students at work on concepts and strategies that were presented in a whole-class format. The teacher can intervene at his or her discretion.

Likewise, a sharing component of many lessons will allow for a sampling of work from multiple students. A greater flow of ideas and products brings about a more thorough appeal to the individual dispositions and learning styles of students listening. Also, this unit will culminate in a publishing/celebrating day on which students put their individual skills and products on display.

Supplementing this, multiple exemplar texts in varying styles will broaden the appeal and accessibility of the knowledge and skills students are developing.

Due to those varying dispositions and learning styles, teachers promote various strategies during all phases of the writing process. Students will have opportunities to work alone, in pairs, and in groups. They will choose either to compose in a traditional pen-on-paper mode or to compose, revise, edit, and publish digitally.

Conferences also provide a critical opportunity for students to receive individual attention and instruction. Small-group conferences with a teacher will allow for a diverse mix of ideas and advice that students can apply to their work whether it was specifically given to them or not, and the discussion is often easier to follow and takes place in closer proximity to individual students than whole-class instruction. Of course, at several stages in the writing process, the teacher will hold conferences with individual students for formative and summative purposes.

In compliance with 504 plans and IEP's, teachers will review applicable documents, consult appropriate personnel connected with special-needs students' cases, work closely with inclusion teachers and classroom aides, and communicate with parents in an effort to see to the specific needs of all students.

In some cases, most often in GATE classes, teachers may elect to have students compile their research-based informative pieces into a true publication. Such an undertaking is highly compatible with the Writer's Project unit on investigative journalism and will require many individual students to work in specialized capacities such as copy editors, section editors, editors-in-chief, and layout and design specialists. Over several instructional units, additional students will serve as archivists.

Integrated/Cross-Disciplinary Instruction

Consistent with the concept of differentiated instruction, students should learn the knowledge and skills of this unit in conjunction with concepts from various content areas. The topics and research questions for informative writing span far beyond the middle school curriculum. Here are some possible research questions and the content areas to which they apply:

- How does pollution affect the environment? (science)
- How has young people's activism affected the world? (socials studies)
- How has technology improved communication? (STEM, social studies)
- How has the Internet changed entertainment forever? (social studies, performing and visual arts)
- What are the potential costs of scientific or technological development? (STEM, social studies)

While some teachers will provide instruction that includes specific concepts from various content areas, all should direct students to specific text and online resources pertinent to various content areas. Also, teachers will consult grade-level content area teachers on concepts covered in their classes, allowing subjects, lessons, and experiences to reinforce each other.

Suggested Mentor Texts and Other Resources

Mentor Texts:

Text sets can be developed by students and teachers to contain a wide variety of links to articles from which he or can choose a smart path of reading: excerpts from books, news articles, student blogs, etc. Refer to Starter Packet Text Set and other resources on the CD-ROM.

Benefits of Teen Activism and Community Service

"How to Become an Activist." WikiHow.com

http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.wikihow.com%2FBecome-an-Activist&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNG9w151-w3bzz03MMcNKO9n_FFePg

A text that lays out the process of activism. (Longer text, but can be broken easily into parts.)

"Why Is Community Service Important?" By Caridad Sanchez, VP of Academic Affairs, Florida National University. Fnu.edu http://www.fnu.edu/community-service-important/

A text on Florida's National University's web page that lays out the physical and emotional benefits of helping others for teens.

Global Teen Activists and Their Plights

Environmental Issues

Alex Lin, Environment, Teen Activist, text "Alex Lin, Teenage Activist." By Salvatore Cordoni. Takepart.com http://www.takepart.com/article/2010/04/05/alex-lin-teenage-activist

This article spotlights a teen who is finding ways to reuse and recycle e-waste (computers and other electronics) as well as lobbying the legislature to pass bills requiring this type of recycling.

The Clock is Ticking: Youth and Environmental Activism, Environment, text "The Clock is Ticking: Youth and Environmental Activism." By Joi Officer, Laura Cockman, and Rebekah Taft. What Kids Can Do.Org.

http://www.whatkidscando.org/featurestories/2009/06_clock_is_ticking/index.html

This text from takepart.com, explores actions and initiates being taken by young people to address the growing environmental issue

Alex Lin, lobbyist for e-waste legislation

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Weqt0N0vxH4 YouTube search term: "Alex Lin Helps Reduce E-Waste"

Equality In Girls' Education

Malala Yousafazi, Girls Education, Teen Activist, text "A Heroic Return." By TIME for Kids. Time for Kids.com. March 20, 2013.

http://www.timeforkids.com/news/heroic-return/85451

This article from Time Magazine for Kids, is about Malala's heroic journey of healing after being shot by the Taliban for advocating for gender quality in education.

Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani education activist

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X3vK5qVNOWw YouTube search term: "Malala Yousafzai Speaks Out"

Jon Stewart interviewing Malala Yousafzai.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gjGL6YY6oMs YouTube search terms: “Malala” and “Daily Show”

Digital High Interest Nonfiction Text Sets from TCRWP:

http://readingandwritingproject.com/public/themes/rwproject/resources/booklists/nonfiction%20sets/High_interest_nonfiction_sets_-_edit.pdf

Digital Middle School Nonfiction Text Sets from TCRWP:

http://readingandwritingproject.com/public/themes/rwproject/resources/booklists/nonfiction%20sets/Middle_School_Nonfiction_Text_Sets.pdf

Other Nonfiction Resources

- http://www.history.com
- http://www.smithsonianmag.com/
- http://www.teenink.com/nonfiction/academic/top/
- http://scope.scholastic.com/
- http://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/
- http://www.timeforkids.com/
- http://www.cnn.com/studentnews/
- http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/
- http://magma.nationalgeographic.com/ngexplorer/
- http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/kidspost/
- http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/
- http://video.pbs.org/
- http://headlinespot.com/for/kids/
- http://tweentribune.com/frontpage?link
- http://www.highlightskids.com/articles
- https://www.dogonews.com/grade_tag/grades-5-8
- http://teachingkidsnews.com/

Resources:

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. Modern Language Association, 2009.

MLA website (www.mla.org)

"Style Guidelines for Formal Essays." A resource composed by GBMS ELA teachers and distributed to students.

Purdue University Online Writing Lab (owl.english.purdue.edu)

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

- "Research-Based Information Writing: Books, Websites, and Presentations." *Units of Study in Argument, Information and Narrative Writing, Grade 6.* Lucy Calkins, TCRWP
- *A Guide to the Common Core Writing Workshop, Intermediate Grades*. Lucy Calkins, TCRWP
- *Writing Pathways, Grades K-8, Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions*. Lucy Calkins, TCRWP
- *If...Then... Curriculum*, Grade 6 (Assessment-Based Instruction). Lucy Calkins, TCRWP
- *Resources for Teaching Writing* (DVD). Lucy Calkins, TCRWP

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.