Unit 4 - Persuasive Writing

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

Unit Overview

In this unit students will learn that they can make their classroom, school and world a better place. The students are writing persuasive pieces for a real audience. They will be thinking about what readers need to know and to write for an audience. The students begin by writing signs, songs, petitions and letters about problems they see in their classroom or school, then move on to challenges they see in their town. As they progress towards addressing concerns that are not right underfoot, they tackle slightly more distant topics and address different audiences. Students also learn more about persuasive writing and writing in general. Children will apply what they learn not only to the newest piece they are about to write, but also to their growing folder, full of completed pieces.

Standards

LA.W.K.1	Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces in which they tell a reader the topic or the name of the book they are writing about and state an opinion or preference about the topic or book (e.g., My favorite book is...).
LA.W.K.5	With guidance and support from adults, strengthen writing through response and self-reflection using questions and suggestions from peers (e.g., adding details).
LA.W.K.6	With guidance and support from adults, explore a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers.
LA.W.K.7	Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of books by a favorite author and express opinions about them).
LA.SL.K.1	Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
LA.SL.K.1.A	Follow agreed-upon norms for discussions (e.g., listening to others with care and taking turns speaking about the topics and texts under discussion).
LA.SL.K.1.B	Continue a conversation through multiple exchanges.
LA.SL.K.2	Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.
LA.SL.K.3	Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.
LA.SL.K.4	Describe familiar people, places, things, and events and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail.
LA.SL.K.5	Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail.
LA.SL.K.6	Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.

Essential Questions

1. How can writers look at the world around them in a new way to see what could make things better?
2. How can our writing spread our opinions and convince people to agree with us?
3. How can we join together to make a change in our world?

Application of Knowledge: Students will know that...

- Our opinions can be spread by writing letters that use words and writing tools to help convince and persuade others to join our cause
- Writers can write individual pieces about a common cause and join together to present the information to an audience to help convince and persuade them
- Writers look at the world in new way seeing not just what it is, but what could be and write to help make a change

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

- Write a persuasive letter
- Write about topics in their neighborhood and the wider world
- Write for specific audiences by considering what the reader needs to know

Teaching Points and Suggested Activities

The following teaching points and activities are adapted from Units of Study in Opinion, Information, and Narrative Writing, Grade K (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

Bend I: Exploring Opinion Writing Making Our School a Better Place

- Words are like magic wands:they can make things happen - teach students that just as magicians use magic wants to make things happen, writers use words
- Convincing People: Providing reasons and consequences - teach students that the more reasons they can provide, the more convincing their writing will be
- Don't stop there! Generating more writing for more causes - teach students that opinion writers cast a wide net when writing, writing in a variety of genres and to a variety of audiences
- Writers reread and fix up their writing - teach students that writers do not wait for others to tell them how to revise their writing. They reread what they have written and think, "What ca I do to make my writing better?"
- Spelling strategies give writers word power - teach students that writers cal upon many strategies to

figure out how to write words that are hard to spell
- Writing to spread the word - teach students that opinion writers get their words out into the world to enable change

Bend II: Sending Our Words out into the World: Writing Letters to Make a Change

- Writing letters that reach readers - teach students that writers write letters as if they are talking to their reader
- Studying a mentor text - teach students that writers read and study the work of other writers and then try to incorporate what they have learned into their own writing
- Knowing just what to say: Angling letters to different audiences - teach students that when writers are working to make changes, they write letter to many different people, angling those letters to the different audiences
- How can we make it better? Imagining solutions - teach students that persuasive writers include possible ideas for how to fix the problem they are writing about
- What's that say? Fixing up letters before mailing them - teach students that before writers send their letters out into the world, they reread their writing to make sure it is clear and easy to read

Bend III: Persuasive Writing Projects

- Draw on a repertoire of strategies to write about a word problem - teach students that when writers want to tackle new, ambitious projects, they draw on all they know - in this case, all they know about writing persuasively
- Sound like an expert! Teaching information to persuade your audience - teach students that persuasive writers make their writing convincing by including facts that teach their readers important information about their topic
- More on adding detailed information to persuasion writing - teach students that writers read about their topic so they can include more detailed information int heir writing. Or, you might teach student that writers reread their writing to see where more precise details can go
- Writing how-to books to make a change - teach students that writers can write how-to books to give their readers detailed instructions about how to solve a problem
- Editing for punctuation - teach students that writers reread their writing to be sure they have included the right punctuation that will tell their readers how to read their piece
- Speaking up and taking a stand: Planning and rehearsing speeches - teach students that writers make a plan for th ideas they want to share when giving a persuasive speech
- Fixing and fancying up for publication using the super checklist - teach students that writers revise and edit their writing before publication using writing tools, in this case a checklist.

Activities to support teaching points

- create and refer to anchor charts
- use two-pocket folders for each student to organize writing
- use whiteboards, post-its and alphabet charts for individual use and engagement
- study pages from exemplar writing
- 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
- tap, sketch, or jot across the pages as a way of planning stories
- practice creating mental movies and acting out a story in order to make writing come alive
- add dialogue to writing to bring characters alive
- set mini-writing goals as you move through the writing process

- write long and strong to build stamina
- provide editing checklist to improve 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 - most useful if done pre and post unit

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

In your writing, make sure that you:

- Name your opinion.
- Give reasons and evidence to explain why you have that opinion

Write an ending." - Taken from Writing Pathways: Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions, K-5)

(More information can be found in *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

Published Work

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

Integrated/Cross-Disciplinary Instruction

Social Studies

Write a letter to a local or national public figure asking for a change in policy (can be a follow up to a Scholastic newsletter, for example)

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

Mentor Texts

Click Clack Moo: Cows that Type by Doreen Cronin

Corduroy Writes a Letter by Allison Inches

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.