Unit 2 - Writing for Readers

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

Unit Overview

This unit is an opportunity to draw on the natural instinct students have to tell the truth as you channel them to tell true stories from their lives. In class, students will have been telling many stories of experiences together and their own stories to help prepare for this work. In this unit, the teacher will be teaching children strategies for making clearer, richer stories and help them strengthen the conventions and mechanics of their writing. Until now, the teachers has wanted their children to feel so good as writers that the teacher has hidden their struggles to translate their letters into meaning. It's crucial however, that as soon as children have the ability to begin to write in ways a reader could conceivably read, the teacher lets them in on the truth. Right away, the teacher will challenge their writers to not only tell the true stories of their lives, but to do so through writing that is easy for others to read.

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.2	Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.
LA.W.K.3	Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.
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.W.K.8	With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.
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.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. What can writers do to write stories that readers can read?
2. What tools can writers use to make their writing more powerful?
3. How can writers make their writing more fun to read?

Application of Knowledge: Students will know that...

- Writers can use checklists to prepare their writing for publication
- Writers can work with partners to help make their stories more fun to read
- Writers can write words and sentences so that they can be read by others
- Writers use tools to create more powerful writing

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

- use capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing
- use drawing, dictating and/or writing to narrate an event

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: Writing Stories That People Can Really Read

- Writing for readers - Writers read their own writing like its a real book and if they can't figure out what the writing says, they need to fix it up so other people won't have the same trouble.
- How to write true stories that readers really want to read - Don't just focus on making your writing readable, it is important to also remember everything you already learned about writing great stories and that you can reread old charts to remember those strategies.
- Drawing stories for readers - Pictures created during the planning of a story can be used to remind the writer about what they were writing about and help them write the story.
- Writing Sentences that tell a story - Writers writer sentences in their mind, then writes the sentence, writing word after word.
- The Power of Rereading - Writers reread for lots of reason. Writers write a little, and then read a little,

flipping back and forth between being writer and reader of the story.

Bend II: Tools Give Writers Extra Power

- Checklists can help writers make powerful stories - Writers use tools to help them write the best that they can. One of the tools that help writers write powerful true stories is a checklist.
- A vowel chart can help with the middles of words - Vowels can help you spell the middles of words. A vowel chart can help you hear the vowel sound and come up with the right vowel to put on your paper.
- Writing readable stories using work walls - Every writer has words that he or she just knows and can writ easily, in a snap. Writers don't stretch out those words - they just write them quickly. Word walls are a great tool for writers because they remind writers of the words they know in a snap.
- Writing stories with true words: making stories talk - Writers need to write with their own true, storytelling words, even though that means they have to work a little harder to spell those true words. It helps to story-tell your story to your partner, using your best storytelling voice. Listen to your own storyteller voice, and put that voice onto the page.
- Using reading partnerships to support more conventional writing - When writers are working to make their writing more readable, it helps if the writer has a partner who works with the writer - like a team - to get the job done.
- Using a partner to hear more sounds in words -
- Putting it together: how to make readable writing -

Bend III: Partnering for Revision: Making Stories More Fun To Read

- Writers search their mental and drawn pictures to make their stories better - Writers revise stories. When a writer likes his or her story, the writer returns to it, thinking, "How can I make this even better?" One way to revise is writers picture what happened in their mind (and sometimes by making a drawing) and then put what they picture onto the page.
- Writers use flaps to make better stories - Paper flaps are a kind of revision tool that can make your stories better. Writers think carefully about where to put those flaps and use them in many different place in a story to help tell a better story.
- Writing amazing story beginnings - One of the best ways to become a better writer is to look closely at the work of authors we love and to think, "What did this writer do that I could try?" Because th e lead to a story is really important, authors study other writers' leads and learn ways to revise their own.
- Writers work with partners to answer reader's questions - Everyone can be a writing teacher. To be a writing teacher, you need to really listen to the writer's draft, trying to really understand it, and you need to notice the places where you go, "Huh?" to help the writer make those parts clear.

Bend IV: Preparing for Publication

- Writers use all they know to select and revise a piece to publish - Writers get ready to publish by choosing the story they want to share with the world. Then, they use all they know to make their stories come to life and be easy to read.
- Ending with feelings - One way writers write strong endings it to end their stories with a feeling. Sometimes writers just tell how they feel, but other times, writers use dialogue or actions to show a feeling.
- Writers make their pieces beautiful to get ready for publication - Here are three ways you can make your stories as clear as possible: you can add missing bits to your drawings, you can add color to your pictures, and you can check your words to make sure they are not too messy to read.

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

(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

Technology

Sketch a small moment in Kidpix

Watch videos of book readings, author interviews, or a small moment

Science

Write about a class science experiment

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

The mentor texts listed are mentioned in the *Units of Study*, but many of the titles can be substituted with books you already own having similar characteristics

Mentor Texts

Short Cut by Donald Crews

A Day With Daddy by Nikki Grimes

The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats

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.