Unit 3 - How-to Books

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

Unit Overview

This unit is designed to teach students how to teach something to an audience by drawing and writing a sequence of steps. Students will learn that one purpose of writing is to teach others. To begin a unit on How-To books, the teacher will tell children that writers not only use their writing to tell the rich stories of their lives, or to label their environment or to celebrate others, but also to teach others. Writers can teach all about a topic, in which case the writing is informational, or they can teach people how-to-do something, in which case the writing is procedural. This unit focuses on the latter. In writing these books, students describe a sequence of steps they hope the learner will take. This kind of procedural writing requires explicitness, clarity, sequence and that writers anticipate what their readers will need to know. In addition to reading aloud wonderful models, you may also want to make something with children and then together write a shared/interactive writing How-To piece. The teacher can even look for occasions across the year to create class models. For instance, if the class creates playdough or popcorn together, this experience could be used as content for a shared How-To piece. In October, the class might carve a pumpkin and create a "How To Carve a Pumpkin" shared text. After the first fire drill, the teacher might want to create a how-to chart. The work you do during shared and interactive writing should be displayed to serve as a model for your How-To writers.

Standards

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.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.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. Why do writers write?
2. How do writers write to teach others?

Application of Knowledge: Students will know that...

- writers have many ways to develop and revise their writing.
- writers have routines and procedures to follow in a workshop setting.
- writers learn craft moves from a mentor text for example by noticing new ways to structure text.
- Writers often teach readers about something they know well.
- Writing can come in steps.
- writing partners support each others' efforts during the writing process.

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

- Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, told in sequence
- Write a how-to book

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: Writering How-To Books, Step by Step

- Writers study the kind of writing they plan to make - There are different kinds of writing. Before a writer writes, the writer thinks, "What kind of thing am I making?"
- Writers use what they already know: touching and telling the steps across pages - When writing how-to books, you still say what you are going to write across the pages - touch and tell - and you still draw the pictures, saying the words that go with a picture. Only this time, each picture and page is another step."
- Writers become readers, asking, 'Can I follow this?' - How-to writers reread to check that their writing makes sense. To do that kind of rereading, writers reread to a partner or to themselves and make sure it is easy to follow the steps.
- Writers answers a partner's questions - Writers feel really lucky if they have readers who not only try to follow their directions, but who also speak up, saying things like "I'm confused' or " Can you explain

that more clearly?" when they need to do so.
- Writers label their diagrams to teach even more information - One way writers add detail to information books is by adding detailed pictures called diagrams. Writers often help readers understand their how-to books by making detailed diagrams and by labeling the diagrams, using the most precise, specific words they can.
- Writers write as many books as they can
- Writers reflect and set goals to create their best information writing - It is important to remember everything you already learned about writing informational books. You can use old charts to help you keep track of all the work you are already doing and to help you set new goals.

Bend II: Using Mentor Texts for Inspiration: Revising Old How-To Books and Writing New Ones

- Writers emulate features of informational writing using a mentor text
- Using the word "you" - When you're writing a hot-to book, your words need to reach your reader. One of the best ways to reach your readers is to talk directly to them, by saying the word you: "First you . . and then you . . "
- How-to book writers picture each step and then choose exactly right words - To write how-to steps that a reader can easily follow, it is really important to remember yourself doing something and to picture it, almost like you're watching video in slow motion, pausing often to say, "What exact words describe what I just did?"
- Elaboration in how-to books - In how-to books, writers don't just teach the steps. They also add little warning and tips. They do this by thinking about how the learner could go wrong and then addig advice to keep that from happening.
- Using comparisons to give readers clear directions - Making comparisons is another way to show readers exactly what you mean for them to do when they read your how-to directions.

Bend III: Keeping Readers in Mind

- Writers write how-to books about things they learn together throughout the day and from books - There are lots of objects in school that can remind you of hot-to books you could write.
- Writing a series or collection of how-to books to teach others even more about a topic - You can write lots of how-to books about one topic by thinking of it in many different ways.
- Writers can write introductions and conclusions to help their readers - Writers of how-to books often write a special page to introduce their books to help their readers understand their topic. How-to writers often pretend that they people who will read the book have never heard of the topic, and then they write an introduction page to give the readers some information or facts so that the rest of the how-to book will make more sense.
- Using everything you know to make their how-to books easy to read - Writers don't just wait until they are finished to go back and make their writing easy to read. They work on it all the time, using all their strategies combined.

Bend IV: Giving How-To Books as Gifts

- How-to books make wonderful gifts - Writers often write books for people they care about or for people they would like to teach. Writers often write dedications for those people, to let everybody know who the book was really written for.
- Writers do their best work now to share it later - You can be an editor and edit your own writing to make sure it's easy for readers to read. You can use our new editing checklist ot make sure you used capital letters at the beginning of each sentence and lowercase letters for the rest of the letters in words, and that you spelled word wall words correctly.

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: Information Writing (E.g. "Think of a topic that you've studied or that you know a lot about. You'll have only forty-five minutes to write an informational (or all-about) text that teaches others interesting and important information and ideas about that topic. 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 to school. Please keep in mind that you'll have only forty-five minutes to complete this. You will only have this one period, 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 that you,

- Introduce the topic that you will teach.
- Include lots of information.
- Organize your writing.
- Use transition words.

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

Science

Write the steps in performing an experiment or activity

Technology

Use PowerPoint or Kidpix to outline the steps in a process

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

How-to Carve a Pumpkin in *The Pumpkin Book* by Gail Gibbons

How-to Make a Bird Feeder by Liyala Tuckfield (Rigby Literacy)

How-to Make Salsa by Jamie Lucero

Make a Valentine by Dale Gordon.

How To Make A Hot Dog by Joy Cowley

Peanut Butter and Jelly by Nadine Bernard Westcott

How a House is Built by Gail Gibbons

Building a House by Byron Barton

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.