

Unit 5: Personal Narrative

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s): **English Language Arts, Generic District Course**
Time Period: **Generic Time Period**
Length: **Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

The last unit of the year will focus on enhancing personal narrative writing by incorporating all the skills learned throughout the year. In Bend 1, students will study samples of writing and discuss what makes the writing successful. They will also be given the opportunity to assess their earlier writing pieces using the narrative checklist and will then set their own personal writing goals for the unit. Bend 2 focuses on choosing a seed idea that students will develop into a personal narrative story. Students will use time lines to experiment with their writing as they try out different ways to begin and end their stories. Students will ask themselves, "What do I want my reader to know and feel?" At the end of this bend, students will practice the writing process again with a new seed idea. The last bend in this unit (Bend 3) will allow students to practice the skills they have learned by choosing another seed idea and fast-drafting a story. Students will end the year using everything they have learned about writing to choose a story to bring to final publication. Students will draft both handwritten pieces as well as pieces using appropriate technology.

Standards

LA.4.CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
LA.4.CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.6	Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.
LA.4.CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.5	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
LA.4.CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.6	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.1.f	Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.3.a	Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.3.b	Choose punctuation for effect.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.4.c	Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.5.a	Explain the meaning of simple similes and metaphors (e.g., as pretty as a picture) in context.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.5.b	Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.5.c	Demonstrate understanding of words by relating them to their opposites (antonyms) and to words with similar but not identical meanings (synonyms).
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.3.a	Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.3.b	Use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.3.c	Use a variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.3.d	Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.3.e	Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.5	With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.3	Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.1.d	Review the key ideas expressed and explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.

Essential Questions

- What is the difference between a fictional narrative and a personal narrative?
- What makes a personal narrative successful?
- How does a writer know when they have written a successful narrative?
- What do I really want my reader to know and feel?

Application of Knowledge: Students will know that...

- Writers continuously jot ideas and stories in their Writer's Notebooks
- Writers explore significant moments that become seed ideas for personal narratives
- Writers plan and rehearse their stories several times before publishing
- Writers practice multiple strategies and skills when writing

- Writers set goals and assess their work throughout the writing process
- writers understand how to use figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings in their writing
- writers use and understand the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing
- writers use correct grammar and punctuation in their published work

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

- use a variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings
- Examine entries and revise writing using skills taught during the mini lesson
- Generate ideas and entries in their Writer's Notebook
- incorporate similes and metaphors correctly in their narratives
- orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally
- provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events
- recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs
- Reflect on authors' practice and intent to deepen comprehension of the writing process
- Set personal writing goals using the 4th grade narrative writing checklist
- Study and discuss personal narratives and mentor texts
- use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely
- use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations
- Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing
- use synonyms and antonyms in their writing
- write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences
- write with volume throughout the writing process.

Teaching Points and Suggested Activities

The following teaching points and activities are adapted from *Units of Study, Narrative Writing and If...Then, Grade 4* (Calkins et al., 2014) and serve as a loose framework for teachers, who will add and or emphasize based on their students' needs.

Teaching Points

- Teach students that their ideas matter and their voices should be heard
- Teach students that writers study the craft of authors they admire

- Teach children strategies for generating ideas for writing pieces that are significantly important to them
- Teach children to examine and diagnose their entries, thinking, "Have I done everything I have learned to make this a strong piece of writing?"
- Teach children that a personal narrative zooms in on one episode where one character experiences one thing, then the next, then the next
- Teach children to create a movie in their mind as a strategy for rehearsing their story before drafting
- Teach children to plan a beginning, middle, and end before drafting a story
- Teach children to vary their writing by making some parts of the story slow and other parts fast
- Teach children that writers often start a story with dialogue, a small action, or by conveying the setting
- Teach students that good writers often end their stories by mirroring what happened in the beginning or middle of the plot
- Teach students strategies for editing and revising, such as circling misspelled words and redrafting
- teach students that writers get their essays ready for the world by carefully checking their spelling, punctuation, and other conventions.
- teach students that writers work on their craft and development by incorporating figurative language, dialogue, and other writing risks
- teach students to take writing risks by incorporating similes and metaphors in their narratives
- teach students how to use idioms, adages, and proverbs in their writing based on the content of the narrative
- remind students of the difference between a simile and metaphor and how they can use them to convey and clarify ideas in writing

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 dialog 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 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

Note: these strategies can be adapted to scaffold for students needing more support or extending the learning for higher level students.

- provide support as needed during individual teaching sessions
- provide feedback in small group setting
- provide personal copies of teaching charts
- provide modified and/or alternate grade level checklists and rubrics
- provide modified writing paper
- provide appropriate writer partners

Challenge gifted students to incorporate more complex writing techniques in each writing piece based on the 5th grade Writing Learning Progressions:

- writer tells a story of an important moment; it read like a story, even though it might be a true account.
- writers shows why characters did what they did by including their thinking and their responses to what happened.
- writer slows down the heart of the story and made less important parts shorter and less detailed and blended storytelling and summary as needed.
- writer includes precise details and uses figurative language so that readers can picture the setting, characters, and events. Writers use objects or actions as symbols to bring forth his/her meaning.
- writer varies sentences to create the pace and tone of his/her narrative.

Integrated/Cross-Disciplinary Instruction

Reading Workshop

- apply language and ideas from read alouds and independent reading
- 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

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

Professional 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

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

Mentor Texts:

The Boy Who Loved Words, Schotter, Roni

Come On Rain!, Hesse, Karen

Fireflies!, Brinckloe, Julie

Hurricane!, London, Jonathan

Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale, Williams, Mo

A Letter to Amy, Keats, Ezra Jack

The Listening Walk, Showers, Paul

Nothing Ever Happens on 90th Street, Schotter, Roni

Owl Moon, Yolen, Jane

Peter's Chair, Keats, Ezra Jack

Roller Coaster, Frazee, Marla

Shortcut, Crews, Donald

Those Shoes, Boelts, Maribeth

When I was Little, Curtis, Jamie Lee

Eating the World, or "Statue," from Ralph Fletcher's memoir, *Marshfield Dreams*

"Mr. Entwistle," from Jean Little's *Hey World, Here I Am!*

"Everything Will Be Okay," by James Howe from Amy Erlich's *When I Was Your Age: Original Stories About Growing Up*

selected pages from Jean Little's memoir *Little by Little*

Eleven, Cisneros, Sandra

Strong to the Hoop, Coy, John