Unit 1: Descriptive Writing

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Title Section

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Belleville Public Schools

Curriculum Guide

Creative Writing: Grade 8

Unit 1: Descriptive Writing

Belleville Board of Education

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Unit Overview

The primary purpose of descriptive writing is create imagery. That is, to paint a picture of a person, place, thing, idea, or event so clearly, the reader can *experience* what the writer is describing. This type of writing requires concise vocabulary, incorporation of the five senses, and effective use of figurative language. In order to do this, careful examination of exemplars in this type of writing is paramount. Students will be asked to search and find short excerpts of highly descriptive excerpts that speak to them to share with the class. The teacher will do the same. After small group analysis and whole group share, students will engage in all phases of the writing process to emulate exemplar descriptive writing: brainstorm; prewrite; exploratory draft and draft 2 following peer edits; final draft; publish and share. Unit 1 seeks to teach young writers how to express themselves in a more colorful, interestingly, and ultimately, in a more meaningful way through the use of emotions and concise wording. Mediums to present descriptive writing will be decided by the student. At the end of the unit, writers will choose one piece to polish and add it to their portfolio.

Enduring Understanding

By the end of Unit 1, students should expect to learn:

- How to make observations
- How to analyze observations
- How to write a physical description of a person, place,thing, event, memory, etc., using the five senses as well as colorful, interesting adjectives to support the description
- Elaboration techniques to allow the reader to "experience" what is being described. This is also known as "show, don't tell."
- To use metaphors and similes to show comparison
- To use prepositional phrases in descriptions to show location
- To use adjectives that are not run of the mill
- To enhance writing through the use of active verbs
- How to include personal feelings about what is being to described to enhance description and meaning

Essential Questions

Essential Question:

- What things should be observed?
- What are ways of analyzing?
- What is descriptive writing?
- Why do writers write?
- How do authors improve their craft?
- What inspires an author to write?
- What techniques and strategies can writers use to create highly descriptive pieces of writing?

- What are the steps to developing a well-crafted, original piece of writing?
- How do you critique another writer's work?

Exit Skills

The skills students should obtain by the end of this unit are:

- How to make astute observations
- Strategies for analyzing different forms of media and observations
- To create imagery
- Write a well developed, highly decriptive essay
- Use all phases of the writing process
- Elaboration techniques to build a descriptive essay
- Effective use of figurative language
- Appropriate use of prepositonal phrases
- Differentiate between action verbs and linking verbs
- Evaluate essays using peer review guidelines
- Edit and revise essays based on comments from peer review

New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS-S)

LA.RL.8.3	Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.
LA.RL.8.5	Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.
LA.W.8.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
LA.W.8.3.A	Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
LA.W.8.3.B	Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
LA.W.8.3.C	Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events.
LA.W.8.3.D	Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
LA.W.8.3.E	Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.
LA.W.8.4	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.8.5	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, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
LA.W.8.6	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.
LA.W.8.8	Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
LA.W.8.9.A	Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new”).
LA.W.8.9.B	Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced”).

Interdisciplinary Connections

SOC.6.3.8.CS3	Critically analyze media to assess different viewpoints and detect bias, opinion, and stereotypes.
SOC.6.3.8.CS9	Make informed and reasoned decisions.

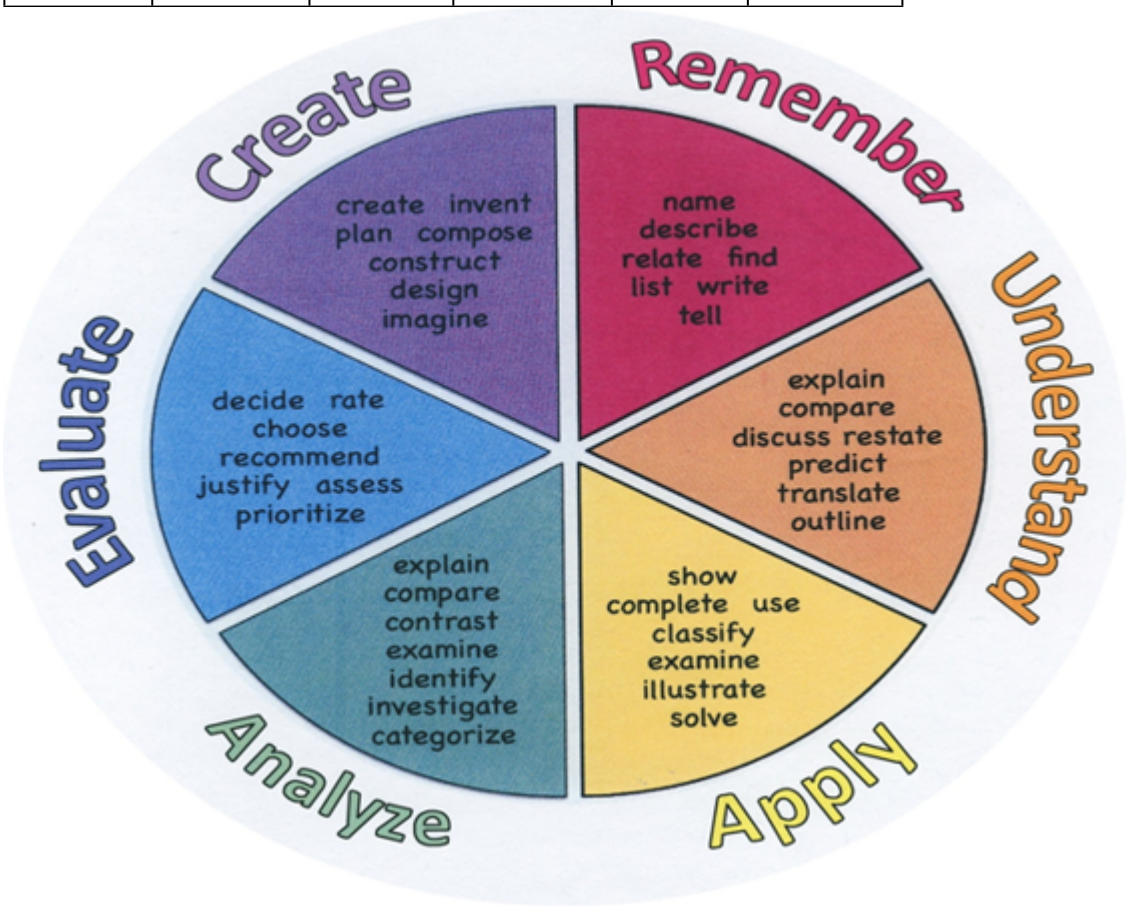
Learning Objectives

- Produce a journal with daily entries of personal observations/thoughts/experiences
- Examine exemplary descriptive texts and apply techniques to original compositions
- Develop highly descriptive essays using the five senses
- Create original similes and metaphors to make comparisons
- Write descriptively about literature, art, film, music, photography, poetry, personal experience, and imagination
- Integrate prepositional phrases into compositions
- Differentiate between active and linking verbs
- Differentiate between the active and passive voice
- Critique peer's writing utilizing peer review guidelines and rubrics
- Edit and revise writing according to peer edits
- Build a Writing Portfolio

Action Verbs: Below are examples of action verbs associated with each level of the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy.

Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyze	Evaluate	Create
Choose	Classify	Choose	Categorize	Appraise	Combine
Describe	Defend	Dramatize	Classify	Judge	Compose
Define	Demonstrate	Explain	Compare	Criticize	Construct
Label	Distinguish	Generalize	Differentiate	Defend	Design
List	Explain	Judge	Distinguish	Compare	Develop
Locate	Express	Organize	Identify	Assess	Formulate
Match	Extend	Paint	Infer	Conclude	Hypothesize

Memorize	Give	Prepare	Point out	Contrast	Invent
Name	Examples	Produce	Select	Critique	Make
Omit	Illustrate	Select	Subdivide	Determine	Originate
Recite	Indicate	Show	Survey	Grade	Organize
Select	Interrelate	Sketch	Arrange	Justify	Plan
State	Interpret	Solve	Breakdown	Measure	Produce
Count	Infer	Use	Combine	Rank	Role Play
Draw	Match	Add	Detect	Rate	Drive
Outline	Paraphrase	Calculate	Diagram	Support	Devise
Point	Represent	Change	Discriminate	Test	Generate
Quote	Restate	Classify	Illustrate		Integrate
Recall	Rewrite	Complete	Outline		Prescribe
Recognize	Select	Compute	Point out		Propose
Repeat	Show	Discover	Separate		Reconstruct
Reproduce	Summarize	Divide			Revise
	Tell	Examine			Rewrite
	Translate	Graph			Transform
	Associate	Interpolate			
	Compute	Manipulate			
	Convert	Modify			
	Discuss	Operate			
	Estimate	Subtract			
	Extrapolate				
	Generalize				
	Predict				



Suggested Activities & Best Practices

Some "print" suggestions:

- The short story entitled, "My Hometown is my Heart" helps with imagery - A specific example with this text is reading it multiple times. The first time using reader's theater, second time having students read this independently to identify various forms of imagery. What aspects of this excerpt appeal to the 5 senses? How can you relate to the author?
- magazine articles (with titles, subsections & pictures)
- personal essay
- a letter
- a poem
- a story
- a news article
- and any other possible, creative way to get the writer's message out to the reader

Some multi-media suggestions:

- media presentation with a script and audio that targets a specific audience.
- TED-talk
- prezi
- speech
- create a you tube video or commercial
- *media presentations or talks must have a written script to add to the portfolio
- How to include personal feelings about what is being to described to enhance description and meaning

Assessment Evidence - Checking for Understanding (CFU)

- Exit ticket example - List one thing you learned today and one thing you want the teacher to review tomorrow (formative assessment)
- KWL chart used for "imagery" to review narrative elements (formative assessment)
- Create an original composition (summative assessment)
- Create an original graphic composition utilizing media of choice (alternative assessment)
- Writers Workshop editing (formative assessment)

- Admit Tickets
- Anticipation Guide
- Common Benchmarks
- Compare & Contrast
- Create a Multimedia Poster
- DBQ's
- Define
- Describe
- Evaluate
- Evaluation rubrics

- Exit Tickets
- Explaining
- Fist- to-Five or Thumb-Ometer
- Illustration
- Journals
- KWL Chart
- Learning Center Activities
- Multimedia Reports
- Newspaper Headline
- Outline
- Question Stems
- Quickwrite
- Quizzes
- Red Light, Green Light
- Self- assessments
- Socratic Seminar
- Study Guide
- Surveys
- Teacher Observation Checklist
- Think, Pair, Share
- Think, Write, Pair, Share
- Top 10 List
- Unit review/Test prep
- Unit tests
- Web-Based Assessments
- Written Reports

Primary Resources & Materials

- Personal novels
- Excerpts based on student choice
- Anthology
- Teacher resources
- Suggested Novel for excerpts * The House on Mango Street
- Scope
- SmartBoard
- Laptops

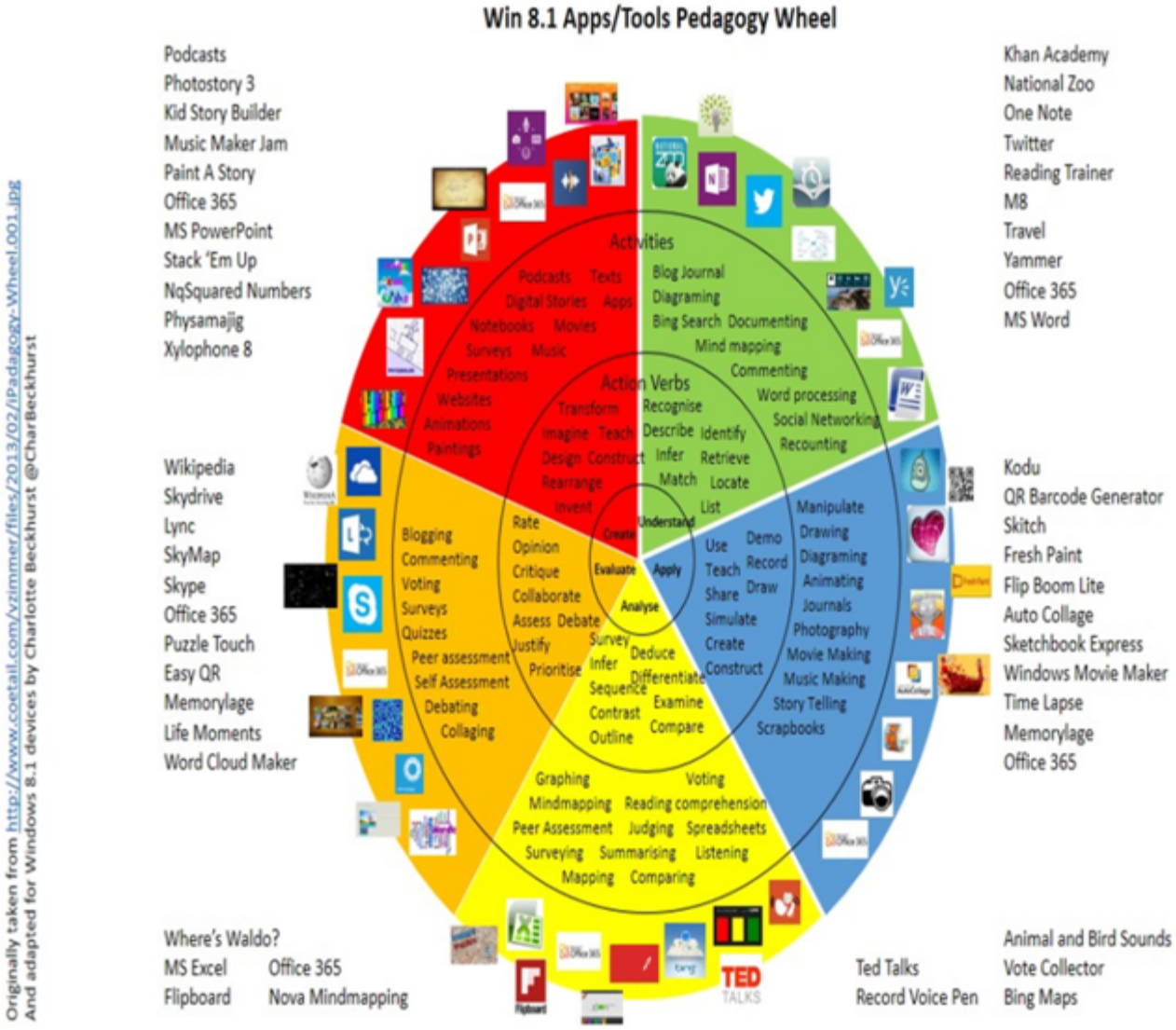
Ancillary Resources

- Scholastic Scope
- NEWSELA
- Common Lit
- Novels that are in district

Technology Infusion

A specific example of technology infusion would be using Google Classroom to write a narrative essay for the short story based on "My Hometown Has My Heart" by Marissa Martinez. The prompt can be: What makes a home? What are some aspects of your hometown that you enjoy and how do they impact your daily life?

- Each student has a Chrome book and access to Google services
- Microsoft Word
- Google Docs
- Edmodo
- blogs
- discussion boards
- Power Point
- Ted Talks
- podcasts
- Prezi
- New York Times often run writing contests for teens
- Smithsonian Tween Tribune



Alignment to 21st Century Skills & Technology

Upon completion of this section, please remove all remaining descriptions, notes, outlines, examples and/or illustrations that are not needed or used.

Mastery and infusion of **21st Century Skills & Technology** and their Alignment to the core content areas is essential to student learning. The core content areas include:

- English Language Arts;
- Mathematics;
- Science and Scientific Inquiry (Next Generation);
- Social Studies, including American History, World History, Geography, Government and Civics, and Economics;
- World languages;
- Technology;

- Visual and Performing Arts.

21st Century Skills/Interdisciplinary Themes

Please list only the **21st Century/Interdisciplinary Themes** that will be incorporated into this unit.

- Communication and Collaboration
- Creativity and Innovation
- Critical thinking and Problem Solving
- ICT (Information, Communications and Technology) Literacy
- Information Literacy
- Life and Career Skills
- Media Literacy

CRP.K-12.CRP2	Apply appropriate academic and technical skills.
CRP.K-12.CRP4	Communicate clearly and effectively and with reason.
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.
CAEP.9.2.8.B.3	Evaluate communication, collaboration, and leadership skills that can be developed through school, home, work, and extracurricular activities for use in a career.
TECH.8.1.8.A.1	Demonstrate knowledge of a real world problem using digital tools.
TECH.8.1.8.A.2	Create a document (e.g., newsletter, reports, personalized learning plan, business letters or flyers) using one or more digital applications to be critiqued by professionals for usability.
TECH.8.1.8.A.3	Use and/or develop a simulation that provides an environment to solve a real world problem or theory.
TECH.8.1.8.A.4	Graph and calculate data within a spreadsheet and present a summary of the results.
TECH.8.1.8.A.5	Create a database query, sort and create a report and describe the process, and explain the report results.
TECH.8.1.8.A.CS1	Understand and use technology systems.
TECH.8.1.8.A.CS2	Select and use applications effectively and productively.
TECH.8.1.8.B.CS2	Create original works as a means of personal or group expression.
TECH.8.1.8.C.1	Collaborate to develop and publish work that provides perspectives on a global problem for discussions with learners from other countries.
TECH.8.1.8.C.CS1	Interact, collaborate, and publish with peers, experts, or others by employing a variety of digital environments and media.
TECH.8.1.8.C.CS4	Contribute to project teams to produce original works or solve problems.

21st Century Skills

- Civic Literacy
- Environmental Literacy
- Financial, Economic, Business and Entrepreneurial Literacy
- Global Awareness
- Health Literacy

Differentiation

- Provide students when breaks
- Create your own study guides
- Review vocabulary prior to reading the text
- Allow students to reformat their own writing

Differentiations:

- Small group instruction
- Small group assignments
- Extra time to complete assignments
- Pairing oral instruction with visuals
- Repeat directions
- Use manipulatives
- Center-based instruction
- Token economy
- Study guides
- Teacher reads assessments allowed
- Scheduled breaks
- Rephrase written directions
- Multisensory approaches
- Additional time
- Preview vocabulary
- Preview content & concepts
- Story guides
- Behavior management plan
- Highlight text
- Student(s) work with assigned partner
- Visual presentation
- Assistive technology
- Auditory presentations
- Large print edition
- Dictation to scribe
- Small group setting

Hi-Prep Differentiations:

- Alternative formative and summative assessments
- Choice boards

- Games and tournaments
- Group investigations
- Guided Reading
- Independent research and projects
- Interest groups
- Learning contracts
- Leveled rubrics
- Literature circles
- Multiple intelligence options
- Multiple texts - Allowing students to find another personal narrative that includes imagery if they cannot connect to the above mentioned text
- Personal agendas
- Project-based learning
- Problem-based learning
- Stations/centers
- Think-Tac-Toes
- Tiered activities/assignments
- Tiered products
- Varying organizers for instructions

Lo-Prep Differentiations

- Choice of books or activities
- Cubing activities
- Exploration by interest
- Flexible grouping
- Goal setting with students
- Jigsaw - An example of using jigsaw with the above mentioned text would be to have different groups analyze differnt paragraphs to find examples of imagery/figurative language and then jigsaw all the sections so that all students have various examples prior to writing.
- Mini workshops to re-teach or extend skills
- Open-ended activities
- Think-Pair-Share
- Reading buddies
- Varied journal prompts
- Varied supplemental materials

Special Education Learning (IEP's & 504's)

- A specific example would be having student working with an assigned partner in order to define key words as they are used in the narrative, "My Hometown Has My Heart" to help identify imagery and other aspects of the writing process.
- Modify based on students IEP requirements
- Extend time for writing assignments

- printed copy of board work/notes provided
- additional time for skill mastery

- assistive technology
- behavior management plan
- Center-Based Instruction
- check work frequently for understanding
- computer or electronic device utilizes
- extended time on tests/ quizzes
- have student repeat directions to check for understanding
- highlighted text visual presentation
- modified assignment format
- modified test content
- modified test format
- modified test length
- multi-sensory presentation
- multiple test sessions
- preferential seating
- preview of content, concepts, and vocabulary
- Provide modifications as dictated in the student's IEP/504 plan
- reduced/shortened reading assignments
- Reduced/shortened written assignments
- secure attention before giving instruction/directions
- shortened assignments
- student working with an assigned partner
- teacher initiated weekly assignment sheet
- Use open book, study guides, test prototypes

English Language Learning (ELL)

- The writing process is used heavily within this course. Students that are struggling should be checked for understanding about what areas of the process they are struggling with using BME outlines, graphic organizers and assessing their prior skills.
- Pair with native language speakers
- Allow students to use Google translate
- Provide extended time
- Allow students additional time to work at home

- teaching key aspects of a topic. Eliminate nonessential information
- using videos, illustrations, pictures, and drawings to explain or clarif
- allowing products (projects, timelines, demonstrations, models, drawings, dioramas, poster boards, charts, graphs, slide shows, videos, etc.) to demonstrate student’s learning;
- allowing students to correct errors (looking for understanding)

- allowing the use of note cards or open-book during testing
- decreasing the amount of workpresented or required
- having peers take notes or providing a copy of the teacher's notes
- modifying tests to reflect selected objectives
- providing study guides
- reducing or omitting lengthy outside reading assignments
- reducing the number of answer choices on a multiple choice test
- tutoring by peers
- using computer word processing spell check and grammar check features
- using true/false, matching, or fill in the blank tests in lieu of essay tests

At Risk

- The writing process is used heavily within this course. Students that are struggling should be checked for understanding about what areas of the process they are struggling with using BME outlines, graphic organizers and assessing their prior skills.
- Allow students opportunities to select thier own writing topics
- Choose anchor text based on students' interest

- allowing students to correct errors (looking for understanding)
- teaching key aspects of a topic. Eliminate nonessential information
- allowing products (projects, timelines, demonstrations, models, drawings, dioramas, poster boards, charts, graphs, slide shows, videos, etc.) to demonstrate student's learning
- allowing students to select from given choices
- allowing the use of note cards or open-book during testing
- collaborating (general education teacher and specialist) to modify vocabulary, omit or modify items to reflect objectives for the student, eliminate sections of the test, and determine how the grade will be determined prior to giving the test.
- decreasing the amount of workpresented or required
- having peers take notes or providing a copy of the teacher's notes
- marking students' correct and acceptable work, not the mistakes
- modifying tests to reflect selected objectives
- providing study guides
- reducing or omitting lengthy outside reading assignments
- reducing the number of answer choices on a multiple choice test
- tutoring by peers
- using authentic assessments with real-life problem-solving
- using true/false, matching, or fill in the blank tests in lieu of essay tests
- using videos, illustrations, pictures, and drawings to explain or clarify

Talented and Gifted Learning (T&G)

A specific example would be completing a narrative essay using the same prompt listed above without the use of a graphic organizer for writing assistance. In addition, the length of the narrative can vary so that students can challenge themselves with their writing abilities.

Choose a new topic and add additional research

Writing genius hour

Publish work to share with school/ district

Submit work for writing contests

- Above grade level placement option for qualified students
- Advanced problem-solving
- Allow students to work at a faster pace
- Cluster grouping
- Complete activities aligned with above grade level text using Benchmark results
- Create a blog or social media page about their unit
- Create a plan to solve an issue presented in the class or in a text
- Debate issues with research to support arguments
- Flexible skill grouping within a class or across grade level for rigor
- Higher order, critical & creative thinking skills, and discovery
- Multi-disciplinary unit and/or project
- Teacher-selected instructional strategies that are focused to provide challenge, engagement, and growth opportunities
- Utilize exploratory connections to higher-grade concepts
- Utilize project-based learning for greater depth of knowledge

Sample Lesson

Unit Name: Descriptive Writing

NJSLS: See attached

Interdisciplinary Connection: Technology

Statement of Objective:

Compose a paragraph of description using metaphor, simile, alliteration, and sound words

Anticipatory Set/Do Now:

Using a 3-column chart with the headings: pleasant, nuetral, unpleasant, list as many sound words (onomatopoeia) as you can under its proper heading.

Learning Activity:

Notice the reactions of students when unpleasant sounds are described. Explain that they are "experiencing" that sound when they cringe. When writers paint a picture using the senses, readers can actually experience

what is being written.

Distribute the handouts. Students will first apply their knowledge of metaphors, similes, alliteration, and sound words by completing sentences with the correct figurative language. After correcting whole group, students will read, annotate, and analyze descriptive language in JK Rowling's "The Monster." Finally, small groups will mirror Rowling's writing by creating a similar descriptive paragraph. Handouts attached.

Student Assessment/CFU's:
think, write, pair, share

describe

evaluate

Materials:

The Monster

writing notebooks

figurative language practice

21st Century Themes and Skills:

communication and collaboration

Creativity and innovation

Differentiation/Modifications:

provide examples

provide stems

model close reading

Integration of Technology:

If possible, type paragraphs on laptops and preform a read aloud for the class