Unit 2 Writing: Using Research to Craft Informational and Persuasive Writing

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Trimester 1**
Length: **5-6 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

In this unit, students will begin by learning the structure of informational writing by studying a variety of published informational text. They will then learn to research, keep track of information, and compose writing pieces according to a text structure. Finally, they will learn a variety of more sophisticated strategies for introducing their topics, and students will learn to provide reasons to support their opinions, as well as facts and details to elaborate on these reasons. This unit does not attempt to take on the job of teaching students everything about essay writing, but rather it focuses on teaching a few key qualities of that kind of writing.

This unit is designed to be part of a developmental progression across grade levels and make interdisciplinary connections across content areas including physical and social sciences, technology, career readiness, cultural awareness, and global citizenship. During this course, students are provided with opportunities to develop skills that pertain to a variety of careers.

Revision Date: June 2022

Pacing Guide

Please refer to this Language Arts Reading and Writing Workshop Pacing Guide for grade 4; Sentence Study is paced and aligned within the Syntax, Style, Grammar and Conventions section. Please refer to this folder for the scope and sequence as well as specific lessons and materials.

A sample K-5 Literacy Schedule Across a Week is accessible in instructional materials section of the Grades K-5 folder.

Standards

The identified standards reflect a developmental progression across grades/ levels and make interdisciplinary

connections across content areas including social sciences, technology, career readiness, cultural awareness and global citizenship. The standards that follow are relevant to this course in addition to the associated content-based standards listed below.

LA.W.4.1	Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
LA.W.4.1.A	Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer's purpose.
LA.W.4.1.B	Provide reasons that are supported by facts from texts and/or other sources.
LA.W.4.1.C	Link opinion and reasons using words and phrases (e.g., for instance, in order to, in addition).
LA.W.4.1.D	Provide a conclusion related to the opinion presented.
LA.W.4.2.A	Introduce a topic clearly and group related information in paragraphs and sections; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
LA.W.4.2.B	Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, text evidence, or other information and examples related to the topic.
LA.W.4.2.C	Link ideas within paragraphs and sections of information using words and phrases (e.g., another, for example, also, because).
LA.W.4.2.D	Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
LA.W.4.2.E	Provide a conclusion related to the information or explanation presented.
LA.W.4.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
LA.W.4.5	With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.
LA.W.4.6	With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of one page in a single sitting.
LA.W.4.7	Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
LA.W.4.8	Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.
LA.W.4.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
LA.SL.4.2	Paraphrase portions of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, and orally).
LA.SL.4.4	Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.
LA.SL.4.6	Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion); use formal English when appropriate to task and situation.

LA.L.4.1.A	Use relative pronouns (who, whose, whom, which, that) and relative adverbs (where, when, why).
LA.L.4.1.F	Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.
LA.L.4.1.G	Correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., to, too, two; there, their).
LA.L.4.2.A	Use correct capitalization.
LA.L.4.2.B	Use commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text.
LA.L.4.2.C	Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence.
LA.L.4.2.D	Spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed.
LA.L.4.3.A	Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.
LA.L.4.3.C	Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion).
LA.L.4.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).
LA.4.W.4.1.A	Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related idea the writer's purpose.
WRK.9.2.5.CAP.1	Evaluate personal likes and dislikes and identify careers that might be suited to personal likes.
WRK.K-12.P.8	Use technology to enhance productivity increase collaboration and communicate effectively.
TECH.9.4.5.CI.1	Use appropriate communication technologies to collaborate with individuals with diverse perspectives about a local and/or global climate change issue and deliberate about possible solutions (e.g., W.4.6, 3.MD.B.3,7.1.NM.IPERS.6).
TECH.9.4.5.CI.3	Participate in a brainstorming session with individuals with diverse perspectives to expand one's thinking about a topic of curiosity (e.g., 8.2.5.ED.2, 1.5.5.CR1a).
TECH.9.4.5.DC.4	Model safe, legal, and ethical behavior when using online or offline technology (e.g., 8.1.5.NI.2).
	Different digital tools have different purposes.
	Digital tools and media resources provide access to vast stores of information, but the information can be biased or inaccurate.
	Culture and geography can shape an individual's experiences and perspectives.
	Accurate and comprehensive information comes in a variety of platforms and formats and is the basis for effective decision-making.
	The ability to solve problems effectively begins with gathering data, seeking resources, and applying critical thinking skills.

Essential Questions/ Enduring Understanding

- How can writers raise the level of their information writing, in particular working on structure, development, and language conventions?
- Why is it important for writers to use nonfiction text structures to share their ideas?
- How can writers learn to write nonfiction with compelling content and ideas?
- How can writers gather and revise their evidence so that it supports their essay?
- How can writers narrow down their research to find the information they need?

- How can I raise the level of my personal and persuasive essay writing, in particular by working on structure, development, and language conventions?
- How can I strengthen and support my thesis in my opinion writing?
- How can I arrange my persuasive piece in a way that will make my points clear to readers?

- Using specific structures, language conventions and strategies helps my readers to better ␣understand my ideas, when I am writing an Information Research Essay.
- Using a specific format when developing nonfiction writing helps a writer to organize their ideas and keep their reader interested. ␣
- Nonfiction writing can be thought provoking and interesting. Writers must use strategies to hold their reader's interest and bring information to life. ␣
- When writers are developing ideas, they must go back and revisit their ideas and evidence to make sure that it supports their headings and subheadings. ␣
- Developing questions help to tailor your research in addition bias should be factored when considering multiple points of view.
- When writing a persuasive essay, I can develop an opinion about a specific topic and use clear reasons and evidence to support my opinion and suggest a course of action to my readers.
- Writers must research from a variety of sources to collect evidence to support and strengthen the thesis of their opinion writing.
- Writers know to use organizational structures to develop their opinion writing in a clear and coherent way.

Students Will Know/ Students will be Skilled at

- How to write informative texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- How to introduce a topic clearly and group related information in paragraphs and sections; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- How to develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, text evidence, or other information and examples related to the topic.
- How to link ideas within paragraphs and sections of information using words and phrases (e.g., another, for example, also, because).
- How to use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- How to provide a conclusion related to the information or explanation presented.
- How to produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- How to, with guidance, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.
- How to with some guidance, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of one page in a single sitting.
- How to recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information and provide a list of sources.
- How to write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
- How to introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer's purpose.
- How to provide reasons that are supported by facts from texts and/or other sources.
- How to link opinion and reasons using words and phrases (e.g., for instance, in order to, in addition).

- How to provide a conclusion related to the opinion presented.
- How to produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience for opinion writing.
- How to, with guidance and support, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.
- How to, with some guidance and support, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of one page in a single sitting.

- Students will organize their writing to include formats such as headings and subheadings.
- Students will include information in their writing that is rich, detailed, and concrete.
- Students will choose a structure for their books to follow based on knowledge previously learned about text structure.
- Students will use increasingly sophisticated transition words and phrases in a purposeful way
- Students will learn to make logical choices about structure to help readers to understand the most important information in their pieces.
- Students will consider themes and lessons, consider different points of view, and integrate information from texts in way that feels purposeful and organic.
- Students will differentiate between narrative, informational, and persuasive writing structures.
- Students will elaborate their thinking on a specific topic.
- Students will determine a thesis for their essay and provide a variety of evidence to support.
- Students will write focused essays that follow a non-narrative structure.
- Students will elaborate their thinking through discussion and writing.
- Students will write introductions and closings that focus on the thesis of their essay.
- Students will use transitional words and phrases when writing essays.

Evidence/Performance Tasks

Students demonstrate differentiated proficiency through both formative and summative assessments in the classroom. Based on individual student readiness and performance, assessments can be implemented as formative and/or summative.

Developmental progression across years in both reading and writing is evidenced by multiple benchmark assessment screeners, administered three times per year. Follow up diagnostic assessments are used to target skill remediation. Student proficiency allows for additional or alternative assessment based on demonstration or absence of skill.

The performance tasks listed below are examples of the types of assessments teachers may use in the classroom and the data collected by the district to track student progress.

Formative:

- Answer essential questions
- Teacher observations/conferring notes
- Turn and talks
- Partnerships rehearsing their writing
- Peer Conferences
- Writer's Notebook (quick writes/drafts/prewrites)
- Teacher checklists using mini-lessons for measurable skills
- Writing Conferences: Individual and small group
- Writing Partnership work and discussions
- Writing folders with student work
- Writing pieces to note the growth need of the writer
- Observations
- Listening in on partnership discussion of writing piece
- Drafts online (Google Docs)
- Writing Club work and discussions

Summative:

- Students should have 2-3 final pieces to score not including the post assessment.
- Published pieces
- Score grammar and spelling in final drafts only
- Student portfolios
- During publishing students read their piece to assess oral speaking and reading skills
- Teachers College Reading and Writing Project Learning Progressions
- Teachers College Reading and Writing Project Rubrics and Student Samples
- Rubrics: created for the standards-based report card as well as teacher-created.
- Standards should be addressed as reported on the Standards-Based Report Card and should reflect this work:

    *Orients the reader by establishing a situation (introduction)

    *Organize your writing into a sequence that unfolds naturally and uses a variety of transitional words

    *Provides an appropriate end to their writing piece

    *Elaborates by using precise details and descriptions

Benchmark:

- Benchmark writing assessments: opinion, narrative, and informational, scored using rubrics, district-created and provided.
- Located in the shared Grades K-8 Language Arts folder on the Google Drive, reported three times per year

Learning Plan

Our upper elementary writing instruction follows a balanced literacy approach including a number of strategies and techniques in Writing Workshop. These include mini-lessons, shared writing, independent writing, small group strategy instruction, one-to-one conferencing, partnerships and/or writing clubs. Writing Workshop emphasizes immersion, independence, and choice. Individual conferences with each student will address specific needs of the writer. Each unit ends with a celebration of learning where children share their writing with others in the school community.

Lessons should follow the mini-lesson format:

- Teaching point(s) for each lesson
- Connection: Connects new learning to previous learning/lessons
- Teach/Modeling: Uses 'think alouds' when modeling what you expect students to do
- Guided Practice/Active Engagement: Guides students through practice of the teaching point
- Link to Independent Practice: Helps writers understand the purpose for the writing they are about to do and the skills/craft they will be practicing/applying independently as good writers
- Independent Writing/Student Conferences: Provides time for students to do independent writing while teacher confers with individual students, works with small groups, or writing clubs.
- Closure/Sharing: Pull students back together and recognize the work they have done relating to the teaching point.

The architecture of a writing conference includes:

- Research
- Decide
- Teach and Coach with guided practice
- Link

A writing club is like a book club. It is a group of students that meet to discuss one student in the group's piece at a time. The students listen to the piece read aloud. If on Google Docs, it can be shared with the group and they can follow along. (This takes a lot coaching in the beginning.) Students provide feedback to the writer, first what they did really well, and provide evidence from the piece that supports it. Then they provide something that they can use to enhance their piece and evidence as to why it can be changed. The writer that shared can use the advice. Developing trust in the group and valuable advice takes time. Over time groups can run on their own.

*This unit of writing fits with the nonfiction unit of reading. Students can gather evidence to support their opinion during reading workshop. It will be helpful to have some quick writes or flash drafts to help students think of ideas for opinion writing.

Teachers may personalize instruction during this unit and address the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual students.

Suggested Teaching Points and Possible Lessons

Bend 1: Intro to Informational Writing

Writers imagine the text they are going to make. They think about the parts and the whole and then come up with a plan for their writing project.

- One way you can do this is by showing students an example mentor text of what you are expecting them to complete by the end of the unit (Scholastic News/Time for Kids, or another final published piece you want the students to mimic)
- Read first section/chapter of sample text and create anchor chart of questions that will help students understand what she/he did as a writer.
- What do I notice about this part? What kind of writing is it?
- How is this part organized?
- What would I need to do to be ready to write something like this on my own topic?
- Summarize what you have learned—start broad and get narrower with the topic.

Writers study published research and informational books, articles, and even other media. (Similar teaching point to the one above)

- One way to do this is to have a class inquiry holding a brief, guided analysis with a variety of texts.
- Locate a text to study such as a short grade-level appropriate article.
- Share that research writers don't just list facts, they intend to teach their readers.
- What is the author teaching you?
- How are they teaching you?
- What text features did they include?
- Create a chart

Writers keep track of new information in an organized way. One way to do this is to use a mentor text used in reading and model how to identify and record the main idea and supporting details.

Writers summarize information the information they learned during research to check for understanding.

Writers use words and phrases that help readers transition from one idea to the next.

- One way is to group phrases based on their effect on readers' thinking and choose with these effects in mind.
- Phrases that link ideas (chart)
- Phrases that move forward from one idea to a similar one:

  For example, . . .
  In addition, . . . and . . . also . . .
  First . . . then . . . next . . .
  That is to say . . . another way to say that is . . .

- Phrases that turn a corner from one idea to a different one:

  In contrast . . .
  However, . . .
  Alternately . . .
  This is different from . . .

- Phrases that give directions and tell readers how to pay attention:

  Notice how . . .
  There are three main points, first . . .
  Consider this when you realize that . . .
  Look at the picture at the right . . .

- Show the students an example. The following example is from Energize: Research Reading & Writing by Christopher Lehman: (think aloud)
- 'Rats use their many senses to survive.'
- Adding on a transition: 'Rats use their many senses to survive. For example, according to "Whisker Wonders", a PBS Science Bytes episode, rats' whiskers work in a similar way to humans' hands. That is to say, they help them precisely feel and understand what they are touching.
- Or 'Rats use their many senses to survive. Three parts of their body are most essential…'
- You might want to use transitions to show contrast: 'In contrast, rats cannot see very well at all. While you can see a piece of bread lying on the floor, rats would see a very blurry image and would have to use their other senses.'
- Remind students that while they write they have to ask themselves what they want their readers to do next. They can use the words and phrases to help them. (Like road signs)

Writers to use a variety of strategies to help their readers understand new vocabulary.

- One way to do this is by adding new parts to sentences, or additional sentences after a domain-specific vocabulary word.
- To start is demonstrating how you can choose a word, write it in a sentence, and either add the definition after a comma or in a new, second sentence
- Example: Rats can chew through so many hard surfaces with their incisors. Incisors are four long teeth at the front of a rat's mouth that it uses for gnawing. The incisors are curved, like claws, so it can scratch and scratch a surface.
- Explain to the students that definitions are best when they come from the writer's own understanding not just recopied from the dictionary or online.
- Another way for students to share the meanings of unknown words is to show them in a word or vocabulary box located as a text feature in the article.
- Share that these are the words that aren't easily defined in the text the reader needs to understand to maintain the meaning of the piece.
- Model how to create a text box within the piece itself, naming the word and definition.
- Use Scholastic News and Time for Kids as an example
- Through Notice and Name (other nonfiction articles) students might recognize that the authors use a variety of ways to introduce new vocabulary words. Possibilities include:
- Through a quote from an expert
- Caption in a picture

- Direct definition etc.
- If you feel it would be helpful to the students, create a chart of the options taught or found.

Bend 2: Structuring informational Writing According to Text Structure

Writers of informational texts make a plan for the structure of their writing and then use this structure to organize research and note-taking. Or Writers group their information in different ways.

- One way you can do this is to show students an example of how to structure their research paper chronologically and have them think about what their subsections might be. Then show students how they could do this same work in a structure that is more categorical and have them think about what their subheadings would be if they chose that structure for their writing.
- Begin an anchor chart entitled "Ways to Structure Research Essay"
- Chronologically-Telling things in order from first to last Categorically- different categories within the topic
- You may want to do this lesson over a course of a few days showing the students articles that are structured differently or that combine structures.

  Compare and Contrast
  Problem and Solution
  Cause and Effect
  Descriptive

- Often times students think their research essay has to follow one structure, be sure to show them that one article can follow many. (Time for Kids and Scholastic News articles show this the best and they are grade-level appropriate.)
- Another strategy is to teach students to go back through their teaching-through-writing experiments and practice grouping related information
- Begin a chart of texts and the type of structure they are for students to reference. Next, have the students use the mentor texts to help them structure their piece refer to the chart: Published Tests Teach Ways to Structure Our Writing
- Students should have a plan of how their writing should be structures based on what they want to teach their reader.

Writers try out their proposed structures by writing brief drafts.

- One helpful demonstration is to teach them to write quickly and when they feel stuck to make little notes to return to and move on.
- Have them think about shopping for clothes. We try a lot on before we decide which fits us the best. Show connection to that and writing within the structures. We chose one, but it might not be the best fit for our piece.
- Have students think about a part that they want to write about, it doesn't have to be the beginning of their piece, just a part they know well.
- If the students don't know what to write, they should start by making notes and going fast thinking about the structure they want to use.
- The following example is from Energize: Research Reading & Writing by Christopher Lehman: (think aloud)
- "I was thinking this could be organized as a process with steps. I thought I could write about baby rats

and what they do and adult rats and what they do. So let me take what I know (notes). Here are a bunch I put together on adult rats and how they get food. I'm going to look at these, then start writing. Okay, like a race, here I go…"

- 'Adult rats need to find food for themselves and their babies. It can be hard for them to find food, though, especially because they like many things that we like. Most people can't stand rats and do whatever they can to keep them away from our food. But Oh Rats, a book about how people and rats sometimes hurt and sometimes help each other, says "Rats' bodies are built for survival." It's true, their jaws and…'
- "Now, I can't find that paper that I wrote the facts about jaws on, and I think there are some facts about their teeth that I remember reading, but I don't know if I know them well, I could stop everything and try to find that information now. But then I'd lose the race! So instead, I'm just going to write a note to myself, put a star in the margin so I remember to come back to this, and then skip some lines and keep writing."
- Students should practice, then stop and read their work to see if the structure works for their piece. If it doesn't restart the quick write using a different structure.

Writers write introductions—as well as conclusions—at the end of their research process.

- The reason you can teach introductions and conclusions at the end of the research piece is, so they are purposeful and connected to the piece. Students don't often know enough about the topic to write a powerful introduction or conclusion.
- One strategy is to use the Scholastic News and Time for Kids articles and have the students look at how those authors started and ended their piece. Students can name the strategy and you can keep a chart of the possibilities.
- Another strategy is to write an introduction that previews a main point from the beginning, middle, and end of a piece.
- Share that movie previews are like introductions, good ones tell you just enough that you are excited to read on, and the bad ones tell you too much. You want to think of something from the beginning, middle, and end of the piece. If there is a surprising point, it might get someone to keep reading.
- The following example is from Energize: Research Reading & Writing by Christopher Lehman: (think aloud)
- 'Many people either think rats are disgusting and terrible or they try not to think about them at all. Rats are actually a lot smarter and can do a lot more than people think.' (Beginning of an introduction)
- "Now, I'll list a few big points, from the beginning, middle, and end, not everything.:"
- '…a lot more people think. Baby rats learn to do things adults can do very quickly, even the way their appearance changes fast. When a rat learns to care for itself, its body allows it to find food and protect itself. As adults, rats can do everything from gnawing through concrete to surviving a long fall. Rats are a lot more social than people think and often people can do more hurt to them than they do to hurt people.'
- Point out that there is a fact from all parts of the selection.
- Students can rehearse ideas with a partner, important facts, and then begin to write.

Writers can structure not just the main topics of their writing, but also to thoughtfully organize ideas and details within parts.

- One strategy is to consider overarching structures as ideas for smaller sections as well. Review this idea with some of the mentor texts you've been working with. Read and think aloud to point out the changes to the class.

- Explain that the structures can be used on a smaller scale. First students need to decide the section they are going to work in and then decide what structure works best.
- Provide examples or use a class writing piece to model.
- Other visuals and media can be brought in as well. Charts and diagrams can be used to compare and contrast, etc.

Writers include visuals or other media to support their writing.

- One way is to demonstrate gathering a variety of images, then selecting they one that most closely matches a writer's central idea. (text features)
- The Scholastic News and Time for Kids articles are excellent resources for this work.
- Review what text features are and their purpose in research writing.
- Students need to understand that they don't just chose a picture and 'slap it in' their piece because they need a picture. The image they choose should continue to 'teach' the reader about the topic.
- Charts, graphs, and maps should also have a purpose in the writing.
- Model how to Google search (or other search engine) images, etc. for a topic. Be sure to point out the hundreds of images shown.
- Think aloud how to choose the image that BEST fits the topic and will TEACH the reader.
- Which images show the most or add to the ideas in the text.
- Be sure to show the students how to give credit to the photographer.

Bend 3: Writing Research Based Persuasive

Writers read persuasive essays and identify opinion, audience and purpose to understand the format of opinion writing.

- This lesson can be done with the quick writes/flash drafts. Look at an article and chart findings and then flash draft.
- Locate three opinion articles for the students to read.
- Create an anchor chart with the following four headings: Article Title, Writer's Opinion, Writer's Audience, Writer's Purpose
- Model reading an article together and mark the opinion with a colored pencil. Discuss the audience and purpose and mark on the chart.
- Students can work in partnerships or groups to mark up another article.
- Knowing the structure of opinion writing will help students with their own writing, they will have something to refer to.

Writers use several strategies for growing insightful ideas including using important people, places, and objects for inspiration.

- Suggestions: things that bug you, pet peeves, etc. What is your pet peeve? Where were you the last time this happened? What were you thinking? What do you wish you could do about it? What advice could I give to others?
- Students also might find it helpful to have idea charts hanging in the room with suggested topics. Topics listed below are from this website*: https://static01.nyt.com/images/blogs/learning/pdf/2017/401PromptsArgumentativeWriting.pdf

- Does technology make us more alone?
- Do Apps help you or waste your time?
- Does punctuation in a text message matter?
- Should there be more educational video games in school?
- Should parents let their children play football?
- Is cheerleading a sport?
- Are scary movies OK for kids?
- Do teachers assign too much homework?
- Does class size matter?
- Are school dress codes a good idea?
- Should video games be considered a sport?
- Should parents bribe their children?
- Should schools cancel summer vacation?
- Should the school day start later?
- What words or phrases are overused?

*Not all of the topics are appropriate so pick and choose. At the end of a lesson, have children carousel and write their opinion on a post-it note and place it on the chart with the prompt. Students might develop the idea further in their piece.

Writers support their thesis by developing different types of reasons.

- One way you might do this is to review some of the opinion essays used to learn structure and form in an essay. Inform students they will put their thesis in a box (model this and allow them to do the same). Let them know they will then be planning out their essay in a boxes and bullets format. Talk to students about how to generate reasons for your thesis focusing on when, why, and how it is true.
- Show students the variety of evidence real authors use: quotes, background knowledge, graphics, surveys, personal stories.
- Model mistakes and fix them as you show the work of providing reasons for your thesis.
- Highlight repeating the claim and using "because" to help think of reasons to support that claim.

Writers support an opinion with reasons and evidence. Reasons are supported by facts and details.

- Explain to the class that a good argument does not simply list reasons. Just like in all expository writing (informational article), you'll need to include details that explain or prove your point.
- Model providing details to explain or prove a point. Refer to chart, 'Classroom Parties' (or another article you looked at with your students) and review. Choose one idea from the chart, for example, 'Parties can be a learning experience'. Share that you know the audience values learning. You know adults want students to use their time in school with a focus on building skills. So, this is a strong argument. But, the reader may not know how parties can be a learning experience. We need to explain or prove how learning can happen with a classroom party.
- Jot down words or phrases that give details or evidence of learning:
- Plan the party date, time, and schedule
- Teach and play learning games like 'Bingo Math' or 'Where In The World?'
- Use math skills to budget food and supplies
- Collaborate; work as a team.
- Remind students that, in order to convince an audience they will need to:
- choose strong reasons
- show why this is a good for the audience
- explain or prove with details.

- Students should look at their reasons and provide facts and details that support them.

Writers organize for drafting by checking that their evidence is supportive and varied.

- Allow students to use books from their nonfiction reading as well as websites to gather information.
- Utilize the school media specialist to aid in gathering age appropriate online sources.

Writers use a variety of strategies when opening and closing their essays, and writers try out multiple leads and conclusions before deciding which work best for their essays.

- Set up an anchor chart that includes closings for opinion writing. (Some examples below). Have students read the paragraph and notice what the author did to leave the reader with their opinion.
- Next have students name the type of closing they just noticed. Keep the chart hanging in the room for reference during the unit. A copy of the closings can be placed in the students writing notebooks.
- I am not sure when our public schools decided that classroom parties needed to become a part of the school calendar, but I do not see the importance. Children are watching adults all hours of the day and looking up to these adults for guidance. Showing an interest in homework and volunteering in classrooms should be our PTA responsibility, not preparing for parties. Therefore, I do believe schools should ban classroom celebrations. Our tax dollars must be focused on the learning of our children.
- Yes, the smell and feel of a new book will always capture me. But, I've grown to like audio books over the last few years. Both are enjoyable and valuable opportunities for adventure! Readers, I encourage you to try an audio book and please, never reject it as not 'real reading'!
- Imagine an empty classroom. As students trickle in, without a word, they immediately take out a piece of paper and a pencil to start writing down today's homework assignment. The teacher walks to the front of the class to admire her focused students as they work silently. Ring! Class is in session. We can make this longed-for dream a reality. Our high school's motto has always been "Be the Best You Can Be" and if the required homework proposal is implemented, we really would be.
- Saving money, keeping kids healthy, and our helping our school stay clean are good reasons for the hand dryers. Let's install them as soon as possible!
- Remember, people do deserve a second chance. You need to think about how students' lives are busy. Don't take away a second chance for busy students. Keep the privilege to turn their work in late.

Writers chose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.

- Look at some of the opinion articles/essays used as mentor texts. Show students that the writers used words to get their point across. Words can be used to sway someone to your opinion. Start a chart of the words used and share more.
- Possible words that 'Pack A Punch' to use in opinion writing essays
- Always/Never
- Awful/Wonderful
- Beautiful/Ugly
- Better/Best/Worst
- Delicious/Disgusting Definitely
- Enjoyable/Horrible
- Favorite
- For/Against
- Good/Bad
- Inferior/Superior
- Oppose/Support

- Terrible
- Unfair
- Worthwhile

Writers create cohesion with logically sequenced information, transition words, and repeated phrases.

- Look at some of the opinion articles/essays used as mentor texts. Show students that the writers used words to link each paragraph together. Start a chart of the words used and share more.
- Possible transition words to use in opinion writing essays
- First/second/third First of all
- Next
- After that
- Additionally
- Equally important
- Consequently
- Besides
- Further/furthermore
- Clearly
- Obviously
- In addition
- For all these reasons Finally
- In conclusion

Writers revise their writing with their goals in mind, they self-assess their writing and begin a brand-new, revised draft. (Opinion Writing Checklist)

- Students can work in partnerships, writing clubs, and teacher conferences to revise their piece.
- Have students refer to mentor essays use throughout the unit.

Writers often choose to edit their work and correct any run-on sentences or sentence fragments.

Writers draw on evidence from a variety of sources to be more convincing and persuade their audience of their opinion.

Writers link their evidence to their reasons and thesis statement so that there are no gaps in their logic or reasoning.

Writers get their essays ready for the world by carefully checking their spelling, punctuation, and other conventions.

Writers think carefully about how (and where) to publish their pieces, making sure their opinions will be heard by their chosen audience.

- If possible, allow students to share their writing pieces with the audience it was written for. For example, if students wrote about their perfect holiday gift, they can share their piece with their family or mail it to a relative.
- If it is a school related opinion essay, students can meet with the school principal, superintendent, supervisor, etc.

Possible Closing Ideas for Writing Lessons: There is a wide variety of ways to share, and it doesn't always

have to be at the end.

- Pair share: Students are directed to share a certain part of their writing i.e., only the part that reflects the writing lesson focus; a favorite sentence; or read their entire piece, with a partner. ␣
- Think-Pair-Share: Think-pair-share allows students to share and reflect on their ideas or answers with a partner before sharing with the large group. A question is posed and students are given a few minutes to think independently about their responses. Students then partner with a peer and discuss responses or ideas to the question or problem posed. ␣
- Turn and Talk: During a lesson, there may be opportunities to have the students do a turn and talk activity for a few minutes. This allows students to talk about the information presented or shared and to clarify thoughts or questions. This is an effective alternate strategy to asking questions to the whole group and having only a few students respond. All students have a chance to talk in a non-threatening situation for a short period of time. ␣
- Small groups (ex. table groups): Students take turns sharing at table groups. ␣
- Pop-up share: Students pop-up from their seats and quickly share the way they used the writing lesson, i.e., "pop-up share today will be your interesting lead." ␣Everyone who wants a turn gets to share. ␣
- Zip Around: Each student briefly shares a small, targeted piece of their writing that reinforces the writing lesson. For example, after revising for verb, have each ␣student share a verb they changed. ␣
- Teacher-selected share (you may share one or more samples you noticed during conferences that are solid examples of the teaching point. Or you may want to ask a few students who have done work that illustrates your point to stand up and share (or show work on the document camera). ␣
- Author's chair: a designated place in the classroom where the writer sits when sharing with the class. Sharing from the Author's Chair usually signified a particular form of response (ex., help for work in progress, celebrator comments for finished work).
- Other methods you discover as you experiment and share Regardless of format, sharing has certain characteristics: ␣

  Predictable structure ␣
  Provides another time to teach ␣
  Provides opportunity to use Anchor Charts and reinforce skill or concept ␣
  Demonstrates what was taught in the writing lesson ␣
  Many voices should be heard (sharing is NOT about one student) ␣
  Sharing can be an opportunity to share what is working as well as to get advice about where they are 'stuck' ␣
  Great time to make someone "famous"

Learning Plan: Grammar and Conventions

Infuse Grammar during the writing process but you can have a stronger focus during the revision and editing process) Some of these skills will be repeated in other units.

Students should be held accountable for previous lessons in addition to the following:

You can use mentor sentences to model the grammar skills. Examples are below:
Writers correctly use relative pronouns (who, whose, whom, which, that) and relative adverbs (where, when,

and why)

- Use relative pronouns to identify nouns with additional details.
- She sat straight up, which instantly made her feel sick. -The Changelings
- He coughed and sneezed so often that he carried a handkerchief in one paw at all times. -The Tale of Despereaux Kate DiCamillo

Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.

Review that sentences need a subject and predicate and that we can connect more than one sentence with a coordinating conjunction. (Review if needed)

- He was an ugly dog, but already I loved him with all my hear. -Because of Winn Dixie (pg. 14) - Compound sentence identifying subject and predicate

Writers use a comma before a coordinating conjunction.

- Introduce FANBOYS: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so
- Then he picks me up, and swirl around the room. -In My Momma's Kitchen -compound sentence

Correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., to, too, two; there, their).

- For this unit focus on the words:
- Your, you're
- Our, hour, are

Use correct capitalization.

- Students should build upon capitalization from the last unit: Capitalize the pronoun I and names, titles of written works, and months and days.
- Students will capitalize nationalities and languages.

  The Golden Lotus is a famous Chinese restaurant, about two hours away from where we live. -The Great Wall of Lucy Wu – Wendy Wan-Long Shang

Use commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text.

- "I didn't hear you, or even see you!" said the iguana. -Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears By Verna Aardema
- You should also model taking pieces of text and quoting them in the opinion piece explaining that writer's give credit to those that provided the information.
- Show to introduce these quotes in a text.

Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.

- In opinion writing students can use certain words to get their point across.
- Some words are stronger than others, see the teaching point in the writing section above for ideas and examples

Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where

informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion).

- Allow time for students to discuss their pieces and ideas. It is important for students to rehearse their thoughts for their piece before writing or typing.

Spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed.

- Assess spelling on final pieces or when you tell them you will be looking for correct spelling.
- Hold students accountable for using the syllable types and the spelling patterns you have covered at the time of assessment.

Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).

- Share with the students that when writing opinion essays, students need to use domain specific words. These words are words specific to the topic
- Using class model, create a list of specific words related to the topic.

Materials

The materials used in this course allow for integration of a variety of instructional, enrichment, and intervention materials that support student learners at all levels in the school and home environments. Associated web content and media sources are infused into the unit as applicable and available.

Materials used for grammar and convention study include the following: Patterns of Power: Inviting Young Writers into the Conventions of Language by Jeff Anderson.

Instructional Materials

Possible Mentor Texts:

- Various Time for Kids articles or Scholastic News

  Newsela

  Raz Kids Plus

  Reading A-Z titles

"Most Likely to Succeed" by Malcom Gladwell shows compare and contrast

- o Compared picking teachers to scouting football players.

Snakes by Seymour Simon shows Ideas grouped together

- o Each page or two is about another category of snake facts with one big picture, but no chapter headings like an essay.

Oh, Rats by Albert Marrin shows pros and cons.

- o Some chapters are about problems rat cause, others about ways they help or are very interesting.
- *Should There Be Zoos?* by Tony Stead
- *Groundhog Gets a Say* by Pamela Curtis Swallow
- *All The Places to Love* by Patricia MacLachlan
- *The Great Kapok Tree* by Lynne Cherry
- *Animals Nobody Loves* by Seymour Simon

To use with strong/weak reasons:

- *Earrings*, by Judith Viorst
- *I Wanna Iguana*, by Karen Orloff.
- *Can I Keep Him?*, Steven Kellogg
- *Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type*, Doreen Cronin
- *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!*, Mo Willems

Questions to ask during mentor text read to aid opinion writing:

- Can you tell how the author feels about the topic? How?
- How is the opinion stated or shown?
- What reasons are given or shown for the opinion? Are there other reasons or details the author could include?
- What key words and phrases are used to express the opinion?
- How does the author introduce the piece? Does the introduction begin to draw the reader toward the opinion? How? If not, what other ideas could the author try?
- What reasons does the author use to help convince? Who would be drawn toward these reasons?
- How did the author close the piece? If the closing doesn't move you, what other ideas could the author try?
- How is this piece organized?
- What linking words are used?
- I agree/disagree with the writer about...

Potential Teaching Charts:

- Current and Previous Student's work to use as models of writing done well and writing that could be revised.
- Teacher writing piece and examples (write along with the class)

- Sample Pieces: "Parties are Simply a Waste," "Why Not Air Dry?" "Three Cheers For Audio Books"
- Opinion Articles to dissect
- Scholastic News and Time for Kids have a 'Debate' section that provides a prompt and two opinions. These can be used to developing ideas, quick writes, etc.
- Elements of Persuasive Texts
- Ideas for Persuasive topics (Things that Bug Me!)
- Testing the Quality of my Reasons
- Notice and Name (Parts of opinion writing)
- Reasons that Support (Strong/Weak)
- Ways to Convince an Audience
- Persuasive Words (Words That Pack a Punch)
- When to Use transition words (or a list of transition words and phrases)
- Opinion writing leads
- Opinion writing closings
- Quoting Text Prompts: The author of ___stated that___, In the article___ it said, for instance, from the reading I learned, For example, according to,

Teacher Resources

- Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Lucy Calkins with Colleagues from the Reading and Writing Project, Grade 3 Heinemann, 2013.
- Resources for Teaching Writing CD, Grade 3, Heinemann, 2013.
- *The Writing Strategies Book*, Jennifer Serravallo
- *Feedback that Moves Writers Forward,* Patty McGee
- *Patterns of Power*, Jeff Anderson
- *Mechanically Inclined*, Jeff Anderson
- *The Story of My Thinking*, Gretchen Bernabei
- Trail of Breadcrumbs Website
- Two Writing Teachers Blog
- *Assessing Writers*, Carl Anderson
- Cranford Public School Grades K-8 Google Folder for instructional materials
- Crosswalk (suggested IRA titles and Mini Lesson numbers)

Suggested Strategies for Modifications and Accommodations

Content specific accommodations and modifications as well as Career Ready Practices are listed here for all students, including: Special Education, English Language Learners, At Risk of School Failure, Gifted and Talented, Students with 504 plans.

The structure of writing workshop is designed to differentiate and address specific goals and learning for

each reader:

- The unit includes presentation of material through multiple modalities such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic to address the unique learning styles of all students.
- The teacher will assign, assess and modify if necessary to address the specific needs of the learner.
- Students have individualized choice of topics within each unit.
- Individual conferences with each student will address specific needs of the writer.

Possible accommodations during writing workshop include, but are not limited to:

- Use visual presentations of all materials to include organizers, charts, word walls.
- Allow students to set individual goals for writing.
- Work in partnerships
- Give responses in a form (verbal or written) that is easier for the student
- Take additional time to compete a task or project
- Take frequent breaks
- Use an alarm to help with time management
- Mark text with a highlighter or other manipulative such as a post-it
- Receive help coordinating assignments
- Answering fewer questions or completing shorter tasks
- Create alternate assignments or homework
- Provide distinct steps in a process; eliminate unnecessary steps, as needed.
- Manage executive function by scaffolding process and amending deadlines
- Access speech to text function on computer

For possible modifications to content during writing workshop, please . . .

- Adhere to all modifications and accommodations as prescribed in IEP and 504 plans.

- Refer to [Strategies for striving students](#)

- Refer to the [Pathways to Intervention](#) documents in the K-5 folder for specific appropriate interventions.

- Consult with Cranford Problem Solving Team (CPST), as needed.