# Unit 3: Writing Nonfiction

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Marking Period 2**
Length: **4 weeks**
Status: **Published**

## Brief Summary of Unit

In this unit students will engage in writing for various purposes and audiences including a personal essay and character sketch.

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. When completing this course, students can make informed choices and pursue electives that further their study and contribute toward the formation of career interest.

Revision Date: July 2023

## Standards

In accordance with New Jersey's Chapter 32 Diversity and Inclusion Law, this unit includes instructional materials that highlight and promote diversity, including: economic diversity, equity, inclusion, tolerance, and belonging in connection with gender and sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, disabilities, and religious tolerance.

The identified standards reflect a developmental progression across grade 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.

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| 9.2.12.CAP.2 | Develop college and career readiness skills by participating in opportunities such as structured learning experiences, apprenticeships, and dual enrollment programs. |
| TECH.K-12.1.2.c | demonstrate an understanding of and respect for the rights and obligations of using and sharing intellectual property. |
| TECH.K-12.1.3.a | plan and employ effective research strategies to locate information and other resources for their intellectual or creative pursuits. |
| LA.RI.11-12.1 | Accurately cite strong and thorough textual evidence, (e.g., via discussion, written response, etc.), to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferentially, |

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| | including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain. |
| LA.RI.11-12.2 | Determine two or more central ideas of a text, and analyze their development and how they interact to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text. |
| LA.RI.11-12.3 | Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text. |
| LA.RI.11-12.4 | Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10). |
| LA.RI.11-12.5 | Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging. |
| TECH.K-12.1.4.d | exhibit a tolerance for ambiguity, perseverance and the capacity to work with open-ended problems. |
| LA.RI.11-12.6 | Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text. |
| LA.RI.11-12.8 | Describe and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. and global texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning (e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court majority opinions and dissents) and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy (e.g., The Federalist, presidential addresses). |
| LA.RI.11-12.10a | By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at grade level text-complexity or above with scaffolding as needed. |
| LA.RI.11-12.10b | By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at grade level text-complexity or above. |
| TECH.K-12.1.6.a | choose the appropriate platforms and tools for meeting the desired objectives of their creation or communication. |
| LA.W.11-12.1.A | Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. |
| LA.W.11-12.1.B | Develop claim(s) and counterclaims avoiding common logical fallacies and using sound reasoning and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases. |
| LA.W.11-12.1.C | Use transitions (e.g., words, phrases, clauses) to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims. |
| LA.W.11-12.1.D | Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. |
| TECH.K-12.1.7.b | use collaborative technologies to work with others, including peers, experts or community members, to examine issues and problems from multiple viewpoints. |
| LA.W.11-12.1.E | Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the argument presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic). |
| TECH.K-12.1.7.c | contribute constructively to project teams, assuming various roles and responsibilities to work effectively toward a common goal. |
| LA.W.11-12.2.A | Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding |

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| | comprehension. |
| LA.W.11-12.2.B | Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic. |
| LA.W.11-12.2.C | Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts. |
| LA.W.11-12.2.D | Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic. |
| LA.W.11-12.2.E | Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. |
| LA.W.11-12.2.F | Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the argument presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic). |
| LA.W.11-12.3 | Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences. |
| LA.W.11-12.3.A | Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events. |
| LA.W.11-12.3.B | Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. |
| LA.W.11-12.3.C | Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution). |
| LA.W.11-12.3.D | Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters. |
| LA.W.11-12.3.E | Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative. |
| LA.W.11-12.4 | Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.) |
| LA.W.11-12.5 | Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, trying a new approach, or consulting a style manual (such as MLA or APA Style), focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. |
| LA.W.11-12.6 | Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, share, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information. |
| | Range of Writing |
| LA.W.11-12.10 | 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 tasks, purposes. |
| LA.SL.11-12.1 | Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with peers on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. |
| LA.SL.11-12.1.A | Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well reasoned exchange of ideas. |
| LA.SL.11-12.1.B | Collaborate with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and assessments (e.g., student developed rubrics), and establish individual roles as needed. |
| LA.SL.11-12.1.C | Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and |

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| | evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives. |
| LA.SL.11-12.1.D | Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task. |
| LA.SL.11-12.2 | Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, qualitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source. |
| LA.SL.11-12.3 | Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used. |
| LA.SL.11-12.6 | Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. |
| LA.L.11-12.1 | Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. |
| LA.L.11-12.1.A | Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested. |
| LA.L.11-12.2 | Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. |
| LA.L.11-12.2.B | Spell correctly. |
| LA.L.11-12.3 | Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening. |
| LA.L.11-12.3.A | Vary syntax for effect, apply an understanding of syntax to the study of complex texts. |
| LA.L.11-12.4 | Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. |
| LA.L.11-12.4.A | Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. |
| LA.L.11-12.4.C | Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage. |
| LA.L.11-12.4.D | Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary). |
| LA.L.11-12.5 | Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. |
| LA.L.11-12.5.A | Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text. |
| LA.L.11-12.5.B | Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations. |
| LA.L.11-12.6 | Acquire and use accurately 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 considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression. |

## Essential Questions

- • How may the conventions of standard written English be used to best convey crucial ideas to a reader?

- What is effective writing?
- How can personal experience provide ideas for original nonfiction
- How can syntax, vocabulary, and grammar be used effectively?
- How does effective writing connect the reader and the intended audience?
- What strategies give writing a dynamic quality?

## Students Will Know

- construct narratives using effective writing technique, details, and a well-structured sequence of events.
- develop and strengthen writing technique by revising, editing, and rewriting drafts during the writing process.
- produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- generate ideas for original nonfiction using journal entries and other strategies

## Students Will Be Skilled At

- employing a variety of strategies to generate original ideas for personal essays
- mirroring author's craft and mimicking strategies from informational and literary texts to improve writing technique
- organizing and outlining the elements of an essay
- revising and editing two drafts of an essay
- using a variety of strategies to generate ideas for a personal essay
- using effective techniques to strengthen writing
- using original material to write creative nonfiction
- using technology to produce and publish writing and to interact with other writers

## Evidence/Performance Tasks

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.

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.

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:**

- Teacher Observations
- Accountable Talk, Socratic Seminars/Fish Bowls
- Analysis of critical commentary, literary criticism
- Writers Notebook (quick writes/drafts/prewrites), emphasizing author's craft
- Close reading analysis of text using evidence as substantiation
- Conferences: Individual and small group, accompanying conference notes
- Reflective exercises and assessments
- Oral Reading and Interpretation
- Peer and self-evaluations of learning
- Entrance and Exit Tickets
- Open-Ended Responses in Journal

**Summative, including Alternative Assessments:**

- On-demand Writing Assessments, timed and untimed
- Researched Presentations
- Performance Assessments
- Project-based Learning
- Problem-based Learning
- Personalized Learning
- Visual Literacy Prompts
- Digital Portfolios
- Online Discussion Forums
- Answer Essential Questions

**Benchmark:**

- Benchmark reading and writing assessments, scored using rubrics, district-created and standards-aligned; based on NJSLA, reported twice per year
- Engage in text set analysis using visual literacy and close reading analysis strategies to compose a claim and use evidence as support
- Grade-level Standards-based Rubrics
- Common Lit Reading Benchmark Assessments, three times per year (grades 9-11)
- Advanced Placement tests (grades 11-12)
- NJGPA (grade 11)
- NJSLA (grade 9)
- PSAT (grades 10-11)
- SAT (grades 11-12)
- Final Exam
- IXL

## Learning Plan

Taught using a Writing Workshop approach, this unit of study will move through the development and publication of a work or multiple works of writing (while study mentor texts relevant to a specific genre of study or rhetorical mode). Strategies and techniques in Writing Workshop 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.Various forms of writing including digital writing are emphasized as well. Grammar instruction is embedded in writing instruction through mini-lessons, holding students accountable for skills taught and practiced; modelling is done through mentor texts, both published and student-crafted. Teachers focus on process in addition to product with an emphasis on synthesizing texts with nuanced understanding; teacher-created multi-modal text sets may be used as materials. High-and low-stakes, timed and untimed pieces are all important. Each unit ends with a celebration of learning where writers share their work with others in the school community.

Lessons may 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 teacher will confer and offer feedback throughout the writing process. The architecture of a writing conference includes:

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

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

Suggested Lessons:

- Preview the essential questions and connect to learning throughout the unit.
- Learn strategies for writing for various audiences and various purposes.

- Write daily journal entries in response to various prompts
- Read and analyze writing samples.
- Outline an idea and present to a peer for feedback.
- Follow the steps of the writing process, drafting, revising, editing.
- Publish and present to the class, greater community.
- Write daily for short periods in response to journal prompts.
- Utilize standard English grammar and usage in writing.
- Produce a final product for each genre of writing studied (personal essay, short story, poetry, drama, tall tale, children's book).

## Materials

The materials used in this course integrate a variety of leveled 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.

Teachers must refer to the district-approved Core Book List while selecting whole-class or small-group leveled resources.

- Best American Essays series
- Fifty Essays, High School Edition, Bedford Freeman Worth
- Journal/Writers Notebook
- Models for Writers, High School Edition
- Patterns for College Writing
- samples of published nonfiction from NYTimes, Atlantic Monthly, New Yorker
- samples of student nonfiction
- The Daily Writer and the Daily Reader
- The Five Minute Writer
- The Writer's Book of Ideas

## Suggested Strategies for Accommodation and Modification

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.

Possible accommodations include:

- Access speech-to-text function on computer
- Use visual presentations of all materials to include organizers, charts
- Allow students to set individual goals for writing/reading
- Offer graphic organizaers, note-taking models, strategies for summarizing, and questioning techniques
- Offer oral assessments
- Supply study guide questions and access to class notes
- 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
- Scaffold by chunking material and texts
- Individualize reading choices based on ability and level
- Take frequent breaks
- Use an alarm to help with time management
- Small group and one on one assessment
- Mark text with a highlighter or other manipulative such as a post-it
- Receive help coordinating assignments
- Answering fewer questions or completing shorter tasks
- Modify the length and quantity of assignments to fit individual
- Differentiate roles in discussion groups
- Use digital technology, eBooks,, audio version of printed text
- Create alternate assignments or homework
- Provide distinct steps in a process; elminate unnecessary steps, as needed
- Use art, music, and film to convey alternate interpretation of literature and assessment
- Manage executive function by scaffolding process and amending deadlines

Adhere to all modifications and accommodations as prescribed in IEP and 504 plan