

# Unit 04 Writing: Opinion

Content Area: **English Language Arts**  
Course(s):  
Time Period: **Trimester 3**  
Length: **12 weeks**  
Status: **Published**

## **Brief Summary of Unit**

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In this unit, teachers teach kindergarteners that they can write to make their classroom, their school, and their world into a better place. They are writing particular kinds of texts for specific real audiences. They will be thinking about what their readers need to know and to write with audience awareness. This unit is designed so that the children do lots and lots of persuasive writing. They begin by writing signs, songs, petitions, and letters about problems they see in their classroom and their school, and then they address problems they identify in the larger world of their neighborhood. As they progress towards addressing concerns that are not right underfoot, they tackle slightly more distant topics and address more distant audiences, they meanwhile also learn more about persuasive writing and writing in general. With teacher help, children apply what they learn not only to the newest piece they are about to write, but also to their growing folder, full of completed pieces. The NJ Student Learning Standards prioritizes opinion/argument writing. Thus, this unit lays the foundation for some of the work the NJ Student Learning Standards considers essential to students' academic and professional success.

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: June 2021

## **Pacing Guide**

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Please refer to [this Language Arts Reading and Writing Workshop Pacing Guide for grade K](#); mentor sentences will be paced and aligned within the Grammar and Conventions section.

[A sample Literacy Schedule Across a Week for both full and half-day is accessible in instructional materials section of the Grades K-5 folder](#)

## Standards

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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.L.K.1.A	Print many upper- and lowercase letters.
LA.L.K.1.B	Use frequently occurring nouns and verbs.
LA.L.K.1.C	Form regular plural nouns orally by adding /s/ or /es/ (e.g., dog, dogs; wish, wishes).
LA.L.K.1.D	Understand and use question words (interrogatives) (e.g., who, what, where, when, why, how).
LA.L.K.1.E	Use the most frequently occurring prepositions (e.g., to, from, in, out, on, off, for, of, by, with).
LA.L.K.1.F	Produce and expand complete sentences in shared language activities.
LA.L.K.2.A	Capitalize the first word in a sentence and the pronoun I.
LA.L.K.2.B	Recognize and name end punctuation.
LA.L.K.2.C	Write a letter or letters for most consonant and short-vowel sounds (phonemes).
LA.L.K.2.D	Spell simple words phonetically, drawing on knowledge of sound-letter relationships.
LA.W.K.1	Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces in which they tell a reader the topic or the name of the book they are writing about and state an opinion or preference about the topic or book (e.g., My favorite book is...).
LA.W.K.5	With guidance and support from adults, strengthen writing through response and self-reflection using questions and suggestions from peers (e.g., adding details).
LA.W.K.6	With guidance and support from adults, explore a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers.
LA.W.K.7	Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of books by a favorite author and express opinions about them).
LA.SL.K.1	Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
LA.SL.K.3	Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.
LA.SL.K.4	Describe familiar people, places, things, and events and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail.
LA.SL.K.5	Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail.
LA.SL.K.6	Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.
TECH.8.1.2.B.1	Illustrate and communicate original ideas and stories using multiple digital tools and resources.
TECH.8.1.2.D.1	Develop an understanding of ownership of print and nonprint information.
TECH.8.1.2.E.1	Use digital tools and online resources to explore a problem or issue.

## Essential Questions

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- How can writers look at the world around them in a new way to see what could make things better?
- How can our writing spread our opinions and convince people to agree with us?
- How can we join together to make a change in our world?
- What is opinion writing?

- What do writers really do?
- How can I make writing a part of my life?
- What makes writing interesting to read?

## **Students Will Know/Students Will Be Skilled At**

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- Writers look at the world in new way seeing not just what it is, but what could be and write to help make a change.
- Our opinions can be spread by writing letters that use words and writing tools to help convince and persuade others to join our cause.
- Writers can write individual pieces about a common cause and join together to present the information to an audience to help convince and persuade them.
- To help students use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces in which students tell a reader a topic or the name of a book they are writing about, and state an opinion or preference about the topic or book.
- Students will write letters to convince and persuade an audience to support their cause.
- Students will work independently, in partnerships, and as a class to present information about a common cause to an audience to persuade others to join the cause.
- Students will know the characteristics of opinion or persuasive writing.
- Students will be skilled at the commands and conditional statements to share opinions.
- Students will use different strategies to share their opinions.
- Students will revise their work independently and in peer partnerships to make his/her work the best it can be.

## **Evidence/Performance Tasks**

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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)
- 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

**Summative:**

- Students should have 2-3 final pieces to score not including the post assessment.
- Published pieces
- 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

**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**

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Our primary writing instruction follows a balanced literacy approach including a number of strategies and techniques in Writing Workshop. These include mini-lessons, shared writing, interactive writing, independent writing, guided drawing, small group strategy instruction, one-to-one conferencing, and partnership work. Writing Workshop emphasizes immersion, independence, and choice. Individual conferences with each student will address specific needs of the reader. 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.

For teaching purposes, see attached template for structure of a Writing Workshop lesson. Change red font to match your teaching point. Click [here](#).

Here is a sample of a Writing Workshop template. Click [here](#).

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.

Please reference the [Phonological Awareness scope & sequence](#).

## **Suggested Teaching Points/Activities**

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### **Bend I: Exploring Opinion Writing: Making Our School a Better Place**

#### **Session 1:**

Words are like magic wands: They can make things happen. Today I want to teach you that if you are going to make the world a better place, first you need to ask, “Where is there a problem?” After thinking of a problem, you think of ways to solve it. Then you write to make things better.

Writers Write to Make the World Better by:

1. See a problem.
2. Think of ways to solve it.
3. Write it down.

### **Session 2:**

So writers, today I want to teach you that you can be like the Pied Piper, getting people to follow your idea, and you can do this using words, not a flute. One way that sometimes works to get people to follow your ideas is to give them lots and lots of reasons why they should follow your idea. The more reasons you give them, the more convincing you will be!

We can convince others by:

- Including lots of reasons

### **Session 3:**

Today I want to teach you that opinion writers don't just say one thing and say "Oh well. I hope that helps, but it is not my business." No way! Instead, they keep writing more and more to tackle the problem they've seen. They write to different people, in different ways, and suggest different solutions. They keep at it..

Writers Can Make by creating/writing a...

- Sign
- Letter
- Song
- List
- Petition

**~Anchor Chart: Writers Write to Make the World Better!**

**(We care a whole awful lot, just like the Lorax)**

- 1. See a problem.**
- 2. Think.**
- 3. Write a lot**

## **Session 4:**

Today I want to teach you that writers don't wait around for someone else to tell them how to make their writing better-or in this case how to make their writing more persuasive, more convincing. Writers reread what they have written and think, 'How can I make this even better?' then they change their writing , without anyone telling them what to do. Writers are the bosses of their own writing. (Note: Chart "When we are done, we've just begun - revised from beginning of the year)

### **Review Anchor Chart: When we are done, We've just begun!**

**We can...**

- **Reread**
- **meet with partners**
- **add more drawings and labels**
- **fix up parts that are not easy to read tell more reasons**
- **give and "or else..."**
- **add speech bubbles**

## **Session 5:**

Writers can have word power by using what we know about spelling strategies. Today I want to teach you that even when words are hard, writers don't say "Help me! Help me!", instead writers think about all the ways they know how to write words. Then they decide which strategies they will use to spell the best they can. We use classroom resources to help.

### **Writers Don't Say..... "How do you spell?"**

**Writers:**

- 1. Check the word wall**
- 2. Use the room.**
- 3. Stretch and listen.**
- 4. Listen for little words.**
- 5. Don't forget the vowel.**

## **Session 6:**

Writers have celebrations to help spread the word. Today I want to teach you that opinion writers don't wait around quietly, hoping that someone will ask to learn their opinion. Opinion writers get their words out into

the world so lots of people will be able to know and care about the message.

Spreading the Word! We do this by:

1. Think WHO needs to read this?
2. Think, "How can I get my writing to those readers?"
3. Plan
4. Share your writing

**~Anchor Chart: Writers Write to Make the World Better!**

**Add: decide who?**

**Bend II: Sending Our Words Out into the World: Writing Letters to Make a Change**

**Session 7:**

Today I want to teach you that when you are writing a letter, it helps to imagine the person is standing right beside you, and then you almost talk to the person, only you are talking to the page.

1. See a problem
2. Think
3. Decide who you're writing the letter to!
4. Tell the reader the problem
5. Give details!
6. Write a lot!

**Anchor charts!**

**~Powerful Letters....**

**Tell the reader the problem.**

**Give reasons why this is a problem. Add some details.**

**Session 8:**

Guided Inquiry: "Writers can look at a mentor to help us learn how our writing can look and sound. What



does the author do to convince his/her reader to help him/her make things better?" *Note: Students looking at enlarged shared text while teacher guides, coaches and prompts.*

~We Can Be Really Convincing

1. Tell your opinion. "I think...."
2. Tell a little story.
3. Give lots of reasons.
4. Give a fix-it idea
5. Be polite... "Please..." "Thank you!"

### **Session 9:**

Today I want to teach you that persuasive writers write many letters to fix the problems they see. They ask, "Who else can help me fix this problem? What do I need to tell this reader? Or that one?"

~Fixing the Problem

1. Who else can help?
2. Write a letter to them!
3. What do I need to tell this reader?

### **Session 10:**

Today I want to teach you that persuasive writers suggest solutions to the problems they see. Writers include "fix-it" ideas into their letters so that readers know possible ways to take action. To include solutions first the writer thinks of what the solution might be, and then the writer writes. First, you think of exactly what you want the other person to do, and then you write, "Maybe we can..." or "We should..." and include the solution right in the letter.

~Imagining Solutions

1. Think of what you want the other person to do.
2. Write.  
    "Maybe we can..."  
    "We should..."

~Review Anchor Chart: We Can Be Really Convincing

### **Session 11:**

Today I want to remind you that writers check over their work carefully before sharing it with others, making

sure it is clear and easy to read. One way you can make sure your writing is clear is to reread, looking especially for places that are confusing or hard to read. Then you can pick up your pens and fix those parts.

#### ~Checking Your Work

1. Reread your work.
2. Look for places that are confusing or hard to read.
3. Pick up your pen and fix it up!

### **Bend III: Persuasive Writing Projects**

#### **Session 12:**

Today I want to teach you that when writers tackle new projects, they start by recalling all they already know how to do. If the project is writing to persuade people of something, writers think, “What do I know about ways writers can write to make the world better?” Then, writers go back and use what they already know how to do as directions to help them get started.

#### ~Tackling New Projects

1. Think of a specific problem.
2. Think, “How could people fix this problem?”
3. Think...

“What can I write?”

“Who can help?”

#### ~Review Anchor Chart: Writers Make the World a Better Place

#### **Session 13:**

Writers can try and sound like an expert! We can teach information to try and persuade our audience. The best way to make your writing stronger is to include important information. You can get that information by researching, which means looking closely, talking to people, asking questions, and reading. Then you can include those details and facts in your writing. That’s another way we can be really convincing.

#### ~How to Include Important Information in Opinion Writing

1. Think about all you know about your topic.
2. Add the information to your piece.

## **~Anchor Chart: We Can Be Really Convincing**

- tell your opinion**
- tell a little story**
- give lots of reasons**
- give a fix-it idea**
- be polite**

**Add: include important information**

### **Session 14:**

We can add more detailed information into our persuasive writing. Writers, today I want to teach you that if you want to be sure that whatever you are writing about is filled with lots of precise details, it can often help to read a bit about the topic you are writing about. We also should remember that precise names, numbers and colors matter.

1. Reread what was already written
2. Pick a book on your topic and be on the lookout for new information you can read about
3. If it's important put a post it on the page and keep reading on!
4. Come back to your writing and add the details from the post its!

### **Anchor Chart:**

**~Writers Add Details to their Opinion Pieces by...**

- **Reading about that topic.**

### **Session 15:**

Today I want to teach you that when you explain your solutions to readers, sometimes it helps to do that by writing a how-to book. After you think, "What should people do to fix this problem", you write every step in a way that teaches readers exactly what to do. We can think about adding warnings and suggestions into our persuasive writing.

~Explaining your solution

1. Think...

- “WHAT should people do to fix this problem?”
  - “HOW can people fix this problem?”
2. Plan out all the steps, one at a time.
  3. Write every step so that it teaches the readers exactly what to do.

~Review Anchor Chart: How-To Writing

~Review Anchor Chart: Writers Can Make a...

**\*Make a book, sign, song, lists, letters, petitions, how to books.**

### Session 16:

Today I want to teach you that writers make sure that punctuation marks are in all the right places so that their writing sounds exactly the way they want it to. You can reread your piece and include the marks that will tell the reader exactly how to read it. Partners can edit too.

~Punctuation Parties

1. Read your story the way you want it to sound.
2. Think, “What punctuation mark matches my voice?”
  - Exclamation mark = excitement
  - Question mark = questioning or wondering
  - Period = telling
3. Insert the matching punctuation with a punctuation pen!

### Session 17:

Writers speak up and take a stand. Today I want to teach you that presenters make a plan for the words and ideas they want to share with their audience. You can reread your writing and think, “What sentences are most important: What else do I think? What stories can I tell to say even more?” Then you can mark parts in your writing where you can say more- things you haven’t yet written- and rehearse your speech out loud, practicing reading part of it and then saying more.

~Planning and Rehearsing Speeches

- 1, Reread your writing.
2. Think...
  - “What sentences are most important?”

- “What else do I think?”
- “What stories can I tell to say even more?”

3. Mark those parts.

4. Rehearse out loud to practice how your speech might go.

### **~Anchor Chart: Planning Out Loud!**

**\*This is important because...**

**\*You should know...**

**\*I think...**

**\*One time...**

### **Anchor Chart: Make People Really Listen! \*Speech Makers Can.**

**\*. Talk LOUD!**

**\*. Show big feelings**

**\*. Stand up talk**

**\*. Use body talk.**

### **Session 18:**

Writers fix and fancy up their work for publication using a checklist (or other teacher tool).. Today I want to teach you that writers need to make sure that their writing says exactly what they want it to say and also make sure that is readable, before they send it out to the world.

~Is My Writing Readable?

1. Choose an item from your writing checklist to look for in your writing.
2. Reread your writing to make sure you included that.
3. Check off: NOT YET, STARTING TO, or YES on your writing checklist.
4. Choose another thing to look for on your checklist.
5. Repeat.

## Session 19:

**Writers celebrate. Celebration!!**

### **Grammar and Conventions**

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Mentor sentences introduce students to a CORRECTLY written sentence. It shows students what GOOD writing is all about. Rather than students identifying what is wrong with a sentence, they have to find what is RIGHT about a sentence's grammar, structure, and style. Students will be able to independently use their learning to develop and strengthen their independent writing skills

### **Materials**

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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.

Core materials include:

- *Units of Study for Teaching Writing*, Lucy Calkins with Colleagues from the Reading and Writing Project, Grade K Heinemann, 2013.
- Resources for Teaching Writing CD, Grade K, Heinemann, 2013.

For Fountas & Pinnell classroom shared reading and interactive read aloud books that link to each unit, please see [the FPC and Units of Study Crosswalk](#).

Possible intervention materials including resources from FCRR and West Virginia may be found in the [Pathways to Intervention](#) document. Teachers can access the blue Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) kits for striving readers.

### **Supplemental Instructional Materials**

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Possible Readaloud Texts

- *The Lorax*, Dr. Seuss
- *Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type*, Doreen Cronin
- *I Wanna Iguana*, Karen Kaufman
- *I Wanna New Room*, Karen Kaufman

- *Don't Let The Pigeon Drive the Bus!*, Mo Willems
- *Hey, Little Ant*, Phillip Hoose
- *Corduroy Writes a Letter* by Allison Inches
- *Bad Dog* David McPhail (Level C)
- *Birthday Surprise* by Rachel Walker (Level D)
- *The Case of the Lost Cecilia* (Level A)
- *Dust Everywhere* by Robert Rosen (Level D)
- *Going to the Zoo* by Michael Taylor (Level D)
- *Having Fun* by Pam Holden (Level A)
- *I See and See* by Ted Lewin (Level B)
- *It's Time for A Haircut* by Cathryn Summers (Level C)
- *The Man Can* by Sharon Coan (Level B)

#### Possible Teaching Charts

- *Writers Write to Make the World Better!*
- *Writers Can Make A...*
- *Persuasive Language*
- *We Can Be Really Convincing*

#### [Pathways to Intervention](#)

**[Heinemann link with login information for anchor charts and other teacher resources & materials](#)**  
(username: [deacon@cranfordschools.org](mailto:deacon@cranfordschools.org). password: Hillside125)

#### [FCRR](#)

#### [Crosswalk Grade K](#)

#### **Teacher Resources**

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- *Units of Study for Teaching Writing*, Lucy Calkins with Colleagues from the Reading and Writing Project, Grade K Heinemann, 2013.
- *Resources for Teaching Writing CD*, Grade K, Heinemann, 2013.
- *Persuasive Writing of All Kinds: Using Words to Make a Change* by Lucy Calkins and Elizabeth Dunford
- *The Writing Strategies Book*, Jennifer Serravallo
- *About the Authors*, Lisa Cleveland and Katie Wood Ray
- *More About the Authors*, Lisa Cleveland
- *In Pictures and In Words*, Katie Wood Ray
- *Patterns of Power*, Jeff Anderson
- *Assessing Writers*, Carl Anderson
- [Kinderconfidential](#) Blog
- Cranford Public School [K-5 folder](#) instructional materials
- Heinemann website: <https://www.heinemann.com/extracreditclub/home.aspx> for anchor charts, unit

resources, and other online materials. (Consult with building principal or literacy team for access).

- [Florida Center for Reading Research](#)

## **Suggested Strategies for Modifications and Accommodations**

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[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.

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.
- Work in partnerships
- Give responses in a form (verbal or written) that is easier for the student
- Take additional time to complete 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 . . .

- Consult with Cranford Problem Solving Team (CPST) at your school, as needed.
- Adhere to all modifications and accommodations as prescribed in IEP and 504 plans.
- Refer to the [Strategies for Striving Students](#) and [Pathways to Intervention](#) documents in the Grades K-5 folder for specific appropriate interventions.



