

# Unit 3 Writing: Nonfiction Books

Content Area: **English Language Arts**  
Course(s):  
Time Period: **Trimester 2**  
Length: **5-6 Weeks**  
Status: **Published**

## Brief Summary of Unit

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In this unit, students will write informational texts including three or more pages on their topic. Students will begin by gathering and organizing information about a familiar topic. Learning the elements of nonfiction writing, such as text features, will be a focus. Students will follow the process approach to writing instruction by rereading their own work, revising to clarify meaning, and completing simple editing. They will work in partnerships, conferring with one another and responding to each other's work by asking questions and offering suggestions. By the end of the unit, students will apply their informational writing skills to create chapter books about a topic. Each chapter should have more than one sentence. The chapter book(s) will be a culmination of the strategies learned in the beginning bends.

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.

**Revised:** June 2021

## Pacing Guide

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Please refer to [this Language Arts Reading and Writing Workshop Pacing Guide for grade 1](#). 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

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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.

Information Literacy

This unit challenges students to locate, evaluate, and use information effectively. Information literacy includes, but is not limited to, digital, visual, media, textual, and technological literacy. Lessons may include the research process and how information is created and produced; critical thinking and using information resources; research methods, including the difference between primary and secondary sources; the difference between facts, points of view, and opinions, accessing peer-reviewed print and digital library resources.

- LA.L.1.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- LA.L.1.1.A Print all upper- and lowercase letters.
- LA.L.1.1.B Use common, proper, and possessive nouns.
- LA.L.1.1.C Use singular and plural nouns with matching verbs in basic sentences (e.g., He hops; We hop).
- LA.L.1.1.D Use personal, possessive, and indefinite pronouns (e.g., I, me, my; they, them, their, anyone, everything).
- LA.L.1.1.E Use verbs to convey a sense of past, present, and future (e.g., Yesterday I walked home; Today I walk home; Tomorrow I will walk home).
- LA.L.1.1.F Use frequently occurring adjectives.
- LA.L.1.1.G Use frequently occurring conjunctions (e.g., and, but, or, so, because).
- LA.L.1.1.H Use determiners (e.g., articles, demonstratives).
- LA.L.1.1.I Use frequently occurring prepositions (e.g., during, beyond, toward).
- LA.L.1.1.J Produce and expand complete simple and compound declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences in response to prompts.
- LA.L.1.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- LA.L.1.2.A Capitalize dates and names of people.
- LA.L.1.2.B Use end punctuation for sentences.
- LA.L.1.2.C Use commas in dates and to separate single words in a series.
- LA.W.1.1 Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion, and provide some sense of closure.
- LA.W.1.2 Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.
- LA.W.1.5 With guidance and support from adults, focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers and self-reflection, and add details to strengthen writing and ideas as needed.
- LA.W.1.6 With guidance and support from adults, use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers.
- LA.W.1.7 Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of “how-to” books on a given topic and use them to write a sequence of instructions).
- LA.W.1.8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.
- LA.RF.1.1 Demonstrate mastery of the organization and basic features of print including those listed under Kindergarten foundation skills.

LA.RI.1.2	Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.
LA.RI.1.5	Know and use various text features (e.g., headings, tables of contents, glossaries, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text.
LA.SL.1.1	Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
LA.SL.1.2	Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
LA.SL.1.3	Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.
LA.SL.1.5	Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.
CRP.K-12.CRP1	Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.
CRP.K-12.CRP2	Apply appropriate academic and technical skills.
CRP.K-12.CRP4	Communicate clearly and effectively and with reason.
CRP.K-12.CRP6	Demonstrate creativity and innovation.
CRP.K-12.CRP8	Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
CRP.K-12.CRP9	Model integrity, ethical leadership and effective management.
CRP.K-12.CRP10	Plan education and career paths aligned to personal goals.
CRP.K-12.CRP11	Use technology to enhance productivity.
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 do I teach my audience and communicate my ideas meaningfully?
- How can I organize my thoughts before and while I write?
- How can I use all the strategies that I know to make my writing better?
- What are some revision and editing techniques that I could use to make my writing the best it can be?
- How can I help others make their writing better?

## Students Will Know/Students Will Be Skilled At

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- conventions (spelling-phonetic and high-frequency words, punctuation, capitalization, grammar)
- the elements of nonfiction writing
- nonfiction text features including headings, diagrams, and table of contents
- handwriting (appropriate letter formation, spacing, appropriate use of lowercase letters)
- organizing in a way that conveys meaning
- structuring a piece with a clear beginning, middle, and end
- including details to clarify and illuminate meaning further
- elaboration through pictures and words
- mimicking author's and illustrator's craft

- stretching, hearing, and writing sounds
- publishing their work for an audience

## **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
- Observations
- Listening in on partnership discussion of a writing piece
- Drafts online (Google Docs)
- Writing Club work and discussions

### **Summative including Alternative Assessments:**

- 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 [K-5 folder](#) Language Arts folder on 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, independent writing, small group strategy instruction, one-to-one conferencing, and partnerships. Writing Workshop emphasizes immersion, independence, and choice. Individual conferences with each student will address the 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 aloud" 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 partnerships.
- 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.

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

Please refer to the Grades [K-5 Google folder](#) for specific lessons and materials.

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

## **Suggested Teaching Points/Lessons: Writing Teaching Books with Independence**

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**Writers teach all about their topic by organizing their information and using a teaching voice.**

- Read nonfiction (All About) mentor texts and compare/contrast to fiction
- Teacher will demo teaching an all about topic orally, using a teacher voice and fingers to differentiate one subtopic, another, and another.
- Writers brainstorm what they know all about
- Writers orally teach partners about one of their topics.

**Writers plan what they are going to say before they write. They do this by telling information across their fingers, sketching, and then writing.**

- Make “How to Write a Teaching Book” anchor chart
  1. Think of a topic
  2. Plan – say it on your fingers, sketch across pages
  3. Write the words



- Writers orally practice with partners
- Teach how to “hook” the reader and name your topic

**Writers try to picture who their readers will be. Then, to reach their readers, they imagine and answer the questions their readers might ask.**

- Review question words: who, what where, when, why, and how. Partners will share topics and ask each other questions about them.
- Teach twin sentences to help writers elaborate more
- Begin “How Can I Teach My Readers?” chart
  1. Think about questions my readers might have
  2. Write in twin sentences
- Below is a picture of what the chart will look like after being added to over multiple sessions



**Writers teach with pictures and words. They include illustrations in their teaching books to help teach their readers even more.**

- Do guided inquiry lesson on comparing illustrations in fiction vs. illustrations in nonfiction. Use *Sharks* by Anne Schreiber
- Create chart that names and explains features found in mentor texts. (e.g. Labels, arrows, zoom in, bold words, etc.)
- Add to “How Can I Teach My Readers” chart
  - Add pictures and text features (zoom in, lines and arrows, labels)
  - Use number, size, color, and shape words
- Below is a picture of what the chart will look like after being added to over multiple sessions



Writers bravely spell the challenging, expert words that help teach about their topic.

- Make “Ways to Spell Words” chart
  1. Say it, slide it, hear it, write it
  2. Use snap (sight) words
  3. Listen for little words inside
  4. Use words you know
  5. Write it part by part
  6. Listen for syllables – write sounds – remember a vowel





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- Writers get their ideas down first and then go back to tricky words they have circled.

**Writers need readers to help them revise. Readers help writers know where to add more details and where to subtract details.**

- Students will find a new partner who has never read their work to work with on revising.
- Teach how to end or close your topic.

**Writers assess how well they are doing and set goals to become even better writers.**

- Give out Illustrated Information Writing Checklist and review using one finished book
- Students will assess what they do well and set goals on what they can do better by writing it on a Post-it note.

**Writers will reread their work paying close attention to spelling, capitals, and punctuation**

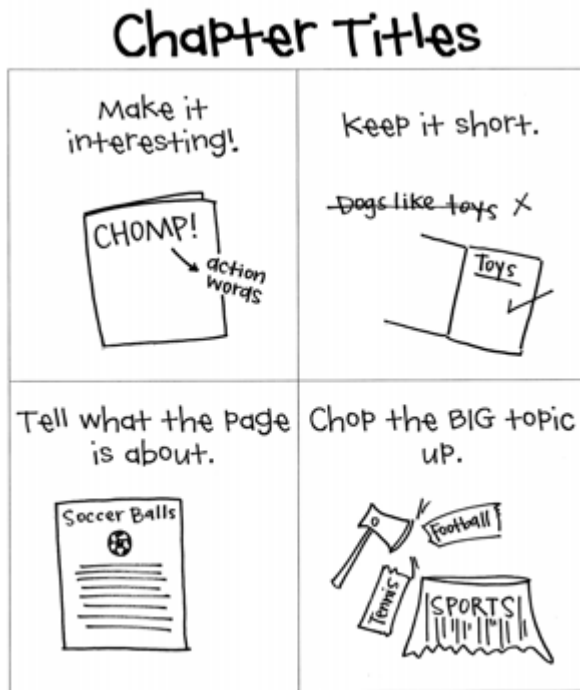
- Review COPS and Conventions part of Illustrated Informational Checklist

## Suggested Teaching Points/Lessons: Nonfiction Writers Can Write Chapter Books!

Nonfiction Writers Can Write Chapter Books! (pp. 63-101)

**Nonfiction writers like story writers, learn how a book might go by studying books written by authors that include a table of contents. (\*\*This can be taught at the beginning of the unit as a way to organize)**

- Do a guided inquiry lesson to look at title pages and tables of contents in several nonfiction mentor texts (ie. Sharks by Anne Schreiber) Compare/contrast books
- Teach structure - Create “Chapter Titles . . . “ anchor chart
  1. Make it interesting – action words
  2. Are short
  3. Tell what page is about
  4. Chop the big topic up



**Writers plan individual chapters the same way they plan their teaching books.**

- Writers will plan chapters on their fingers like they initially planned their books saying more than just one thing about each heading or chapter.
- List tips for writing about each chapter – Introduce the topic, write a sentence or two, use expert words, end with a thought or idea, use pictures with labels, check for end marks and capitals.

**Nonfiction writers use different strategies to say more and teach others.**

- One strategy is using comparisons to teach.
- Writers reread to look where they can add more detail and add “a \_\_\_\_ is like a \_\_\_\_ because . . . “ or “For example . . .”

- Add to “How Can I Teach My Reader” chart –
  - Compare and
  - Give an example
- Below is a picture of what the chart will look like after being added to over multiple sessions



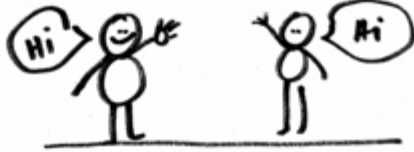
**Writers draw on everything they have already learned to teach their readers, including writing how-to pages, lists, persuasive writing and stories in their teaching books.**

- Writers think about each chapter, what kind of writing it is and what the rules are for that kind of writing.
- Writers can use different kinds of paper for different chapters. Ie. How to paper, list paper, small moment paper.

**Writers hook their reader to get them interested in their topic and then name their topic, they also end their books with a conclusion, a big thought, or idea.**

- Writers study introductions and endings of mentor text to get ideas about ways to begin and end a nonfiction book.
- Teacher and students will create chart together based on what they notice. – Introductions /Hooks can . . . (start with a question, start with an action, a story, a big idea) Create a second chart with Conclusions/Endings can . . .

# Introductions Can...



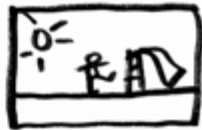
• start with a question



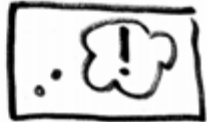
• start with action



• start with a story



• start with a big idea



One way writers get their books ready for their readers is by pretending to be the reader, checking for any mistakes or confusing parts.

- Writers read their books aloud to look for mistakes
- Writers use commas in lists and dates.

## **Suggested Teaching Points/Lessons: Writing Chapter Books with Greater Independence**

Writers use all the tools around them such as charts, mentor texts, and other writers, to make a plan to write their best book ever.

- Writers plan their books by thinking of a topic and then headings or chapters about their topic and what order they want to write them in.
- Writers can use post-its for their headings/chapter titles or make a table of contents. They might even start with a web to jot their ideas and then think about the order before they just start in their books.
- Writers look around the room for tools that can help them plan their books such as mentor texts, anchor charts, checklists, or other writer's books

Nonfiction writers use images and photos to help them say more about their topic.

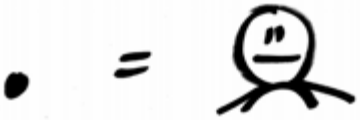
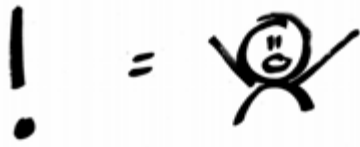
- Students can use photos from the internet (everystockphoto.com) or bring in photos/pictures from home for their book.
- Studying a picture can help you think of more detail to put in your writing.
- Review “How Can I Teach My Readers” chart and add #7. Use a picture or a photo to add more information.
- Below is a picture of what the chart will look like after being added to over multiple sessions



**Nonfiction writers choose ending punctuation that reflects how they are trying to speak. They use periods when they want to tell facts, question marks when they want to ask questions, exclamation marks when they want to tell something exciting, commas and colons when they want to make lists.**

- Make punctuation chart

# Punctuation



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- Writers read their books to partners in their best teaching voice and look out for or give each other feedback on punctuation.
- Writers use transitional words like but, because, so, as, and or to make more complex sentences.
- Stop for a “make sense minute.” Readers stop everything and reread whatever they were working on to see if it makes sense. They fix anything that might be confusing then and there.

**Writers use craft moves like pop-out words and speech bubbles in teaching books to five more information or make some information stand out.**

- Add to “How Can I Teach My Readers?” chart:
  - Use big, bold pop-out words
  - Use speech Bubbles
- Below is a picture of the completed anchor chart



about a sentence's grammar, structure, and style. Students will be able to apply 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 1 Heinemann, 2013.
- Resources for Teaching Writing CD, Grade 1, Heinemann, 2013.

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

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](#).

## **Supplemental Instructional Materials**

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### **Possible Mentor Texts**

- *Bugs, Bugs, Bugs* by Jennifer Dussling
- *My Football Book* by Gail Gibbons
- *Star Wars: R2-D2 and Friends* by Simon Beecroft
- *The Story of Chocolate* by Caryn Jenner
- *Invaders from Outer Space* by Philip Brooks
- *Sharks!* by Anne Schreiber
- *Animal Families* by DK Publishing
- *Star Wars: Spaceships* by Scholastic
- *Trucks* by Wil Mara

### **Suggested Anchor Charts**

- "How to Write a Teaching Book"
- "How Can I Teach My Readers?"
- "Ways to Spell Words"
- "Chapter Titles..."



- “Introductions can...”
- “Conclusions can...”
- Use resource CD for rubrics, student samples, and charts.

## **Suggested Teacher Resources**

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- Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Lucy Calkins with Colleagues from the Reading and Writing Project, Grade 1 Heinemann, 2013.
- Resources for Teaching Writing CD, Grade 1, Heinemann, 2013.
- *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
- Cranford Public School [K-5 Google folder](#) for instructional materials
- [Heinemann](#) for anchor charts and other teacher resources & materials. (Consult with building principal or literacy team for access).

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

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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.