Unit 6 Writing: Experimenting with Voice and Choice Through Poetry

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Trimester 3**
Length: **4 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

Students will write poetry that employs device, craft, and creativity, while showing an understanding of themselves, others, and the world.

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. In this course, students are provided with opportunities to develop skills that pertain to a variety of careers.

Revision date: July 2023

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.6.3.D	Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.
LA.W.6.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, voice and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
LA.W.6.6	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 three pages in a single sitting.
LA.SL.6.1.A	Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
LA.L.6.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.6.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
LA.L.6.2.A	Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical

	elements.
LA.L.6.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
LA.L.6.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
LA.L.6.5.A	Interpret figures of speech (e.g., personification) in context.

Essential Questions

- How are poetic devices used to engage readers?
- How do student-writers cultivate a writing life?
- How do writers develop a personal voice over time?
- How does poetry contribute to our understanding of ourselves, others, and the world?
- What is the definition of poetry?

Students Will Know/Students Will Be Skilled At

- how to reflect on writing and build stamina
- building stamina.
- developing voice in writing.
- how to achieve a writing life as often as possible
- how to apply the writing process
- how to develop a growth mind set
- how to identify audience and purpose
- how to make purposeful visual choices that support and enhance the central ideas of poetry
- how to use a variety of crafts to elaborate and enhance their own writing.
- how to use different types of sentence structures and punctuation.
- how to use precise language and sensory details
- how to use word relationships and nuances in word meanings
- monitoring writing.
- reflecting on writing through discussion.
- revising their writing.
- thinking while writing.
- writing with reflection and purpose.

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:

- Answer essential questions
- Teacher observations/conferring notes
- Turn and talks
- Partnerships rehearsing their writing
- Peer Conferences/Partnership Discussion and Rehearsing
- 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 including Alternative Assessments:

- 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.
- On-demand Writing Assessments
- Standards should be addressed

Benchmark Assessments:

- Benchmark reading and writing assessments, scored using rubrics, district-created and standards-aligned; based on NJSLA, reported twice per year
- Grade-level Standards-based Rubrics
- Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, grades 3-8, Levels L-Z, Heinemann (part 3, Writing about Reading section)
- New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA)

Learning Plan

Middle School 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 writers share their work 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

Throughout the year, students write in all modes of rhetoric including narration/description, argument/persuasion, and exposition. A variety of writing forms, including digital writing, are emphasized. Grammar lessons are embedded in writing instruction, holding students accountable for skills taught and practiced; modeling is done through published and student-crafted mentor texts. Teachers focus equally on process and product with an emphasis on synthesizing across texts for nuanced understandings; teacher-created multi-modal text sets will be used as materials. High-and low-stakes writing and timed and untimed

assignments will be used throughout the unit.

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

Sentence study teaches syntax, diction, grammar, and punctuation. Students will learn how to write like an author by mimicking specific sentence patterns and applying it to their own writing. Please see this grade level folder for details.

This unit of study focuses on the study of author's crafts and their use in poetry. Students will learn to model various crafts and devices and incorporate them into their own writing.

Students will use poetry to provide a deeper understanding of themselves, others and world around them. Students will write with an audience and purpose in mind. They will practice

incorporating difference sentences structures and punctuation.

For this particular unit, teachers should...

- Prepare materials for discussion, writing, and synthesis
- Select mentor texts for modeling
- Prepare for conferences with students
- Prepare materials for review of literary devices
- Create formative and summative assessments

Instructional 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.

Please reference the materials in this Middle School ELA, grade 6 folder under "writing."

- *Poetry Friday Anthology* by Janet Wong
- www.readingandwritingproject.com
- Poems used throughout the year: "The First Day of School" by Janet Wong, "Fishing Trip" by Charles Waters, "Seeing the World" by Stephen Herrick, "The Invisible Beast" by Jack Prelutsky, "City Autumn" by Joseph Moncure March, "I Am Offering You This Poem" by Jimmy Santiago Baca, "Mother to Son" by Langston Hughes
- *Naming the World: A Year of Poems and Lessons* by Nancie Atwell
- *www.CommonLit.org*
- Poets: Jack Prelutsky, Robert Frost, Edgar Allan Poe, Shel Silverstein, Walt Whitman,
- *Scholastic Scope*

Teacher Resources

- *Units of Study in Argument, Informatiion, and Narrative Writing, Grade 6*, Lucy Calkins, Teachers College Reading and Writing Project
- Associated Online Resources, Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, readingandwritingproject.org
- 50 Instruction Routines to Develop Content Literacy – Pearson Publishing 2011), Inclusion Strategy Book
- *The Power of Grammar,* Mary Ehrenworth and Vicki Vinton
- *A Writer's Notebook,* Ralph Fletcher
- *Writing a Life,* Katherine Bomer
- *Writing in the Middle,* Nancie Atwell, associated videos
- *Study Driven*, Katie Wood Ray
- *Thinking Through Genre*, Heather Lattimer
- *Feedback that Moves Writers Forward*, Patty McGee
- *The Big Book of Details*, Roz LInder
- *Assessing Writers*, Carl Anderson

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.

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

- 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.
- Instruction provides focused small-group strategy lessons.
- Individual conferences with each student will address specific needs of the writer.

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

- Access speech-to-text function on computer
- Use visual presentations of all materials to include organizers, charts, word walls.
- Allow students to set individual goals for writing.
- Offer graphic organizaers, note-taking models, strategies for summarizing, and questioning techniques.
- Offer oral assessments
- 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.
- 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
- Modify the length and quantity of assignments to fit individual
- 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.
- Manage executive function by scaffolding process and amending deadlines

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