Unit 2 Writing: Generating Personal Narratives

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Trimester 1**
Length: **3-4 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

Students will write personal narratives that are focused on a purpose and an audience, showing depth of idea development supported by elaborated, relevant details. Student-writers aim to compose narratives that are logical, coherent, and well-organized, while trying varied organizational structures. First person pronouns are used along with varied sentences and effective language.

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.RL.6.3	Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.
LA.W.6.2.D	Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
LA.W.6.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
LA.W.6.3.B	Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
LA.W.6.3.C	Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
LA.W.6.3.D	Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.
LA.W.6.3.E	Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or 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.6.5	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
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.W.6.10	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.L.6.1.A	Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive).
LA.L.6.1.D	Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).
LA.L.6.1.E	Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.
LA.L.6.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
LA.L.6.2.B	Spell correctly.
LA.L.6.3.B	Maintain consistency in style and tone.
LA.L.6.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
LA.L.6.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Essential Questions

- How can I continue to develop my writing throughout the year?
- How can I draft and revise my narrative, deliberately using craft moves to convey the larger meaning of the story?
- How can I tell my story with honesty and power?
- How can mirroring authors' crafts who inspire and move student-writers help raise the level of their own writing?
- How do writers use their Writer's Notebooks to create and to flesh out ideas?
- How does a deliberate text structure alter (or enhance the quality) of a personal narrative?
- What in my life is worth writing about?
- What practices can student-writers use to focus on process rather than product?
- Why do writers need to increase their stamina? .

Students Will Know/Students Will Be Skilled At

- stretching out a scene or moment to build suspense in a creative narrative.
- crafting leads and conclusions.
- creating a suspenseful build up of events.

- designing a meaningful resolution.
- elaborating on key scenes in their narratives.
- finding ways to collect and develop ideas.
- how authors create voice and purpose.
- how to add, delete, or change writing to improve organization and support, sharpen focus, achieve clarity, and refine language and sentences.
- how to discuss the writing with teacher and others and use their questions, comments, and suggestions to aid revision and editing.
- how to identify various author's craft moves.
- how to use brainstorming strategies to generate ideas.
- how to use dialogue and sensory details effectively when appropriate.
- how to use pre-writing strategies to structure a rough draft.
- Mirroring various author's crafts to enhance their narratives.
- noticing the qualities of a personal essay
- transitioning from one idea to the next.
- when it is appropriate to summarize in the narrative and when it is important to expand on a scene.

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 1-2 final pieces.
- 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 developing a personal narrative where they are sharing a significant moment in their lives. Students will use dialogue to create realistic characters and exchanges, use figurative language and other author's crafts to add color, use first person pronouns to connect with the reader and include setting to allow the reader to visualize the event.

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 dialogue punctuation and formatting
- Prepare materials for author's crafts including figurative language
- 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."

Suggested for Use with Students During the Learning Plan

Mentor Texts

- "Eleven" by Sandra Cisneros
- "Green Salami" by Patty Hansen, taken from *Chicken Soup for the Kid's Soul*
- "My Side of the Story" by Adam Bagdasarian
- "The Dogs Could Teach Me" by Gary Paulsen
- Exerpts from autobiographical novels such as "Moving Still" from T*he Circuit* by Francisco Jimenez
- Excerpts from ficitional novels such as *Bridge to Terabithia* by Katherine Paterson and *The Cay* by Theodore Taylor
- Narrative poems taken from *The Poetry Anthology* by Janet Wong
- *Chicken Soup for the Soul for Middle School* (Jack Canfield)
- *Chicken Soup for the soul Preteen 1 or 2* (Jack Canfield)

- Post-its
- Anchor charts –(see pp. 5, 15, 18, 23, 25, and 29) in TCRWP Unit
- Cranford Reading and Writing Workshop Haiku Site
- Excerpts from novels such as “Moving Still” from The Circuit by Francisco Jimenez, “The Dogs Could Teach Me” from Woodsong by Gary Paulsen, “Mrs. Flowers” from I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou

- Falling in Love with Close Reading by Lehman and Roberts
- http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/books-strong-characters
- Notice and Note by Beers and Probst
- Read-aloud texts for mentor/modeling
- Reading logs
- See appendix in Unit 1 on p. 25-26 in Reading TC binder (for more independent reading book
- The Poetry Friday Anthology, Love that Dog and Hate that Cat by Susan Creech,
- Whole class novels: The Bridge to Terabithia by Katherine Paterson, Shakespeare's Secret by Elise Broach, The Devil's Arithmetic by Jane Yolen, The Cay by Theodore Taylor, The View from Saturday by E.L. Konigsburg

Teacher Resources

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

- *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
- *The Power of Grammar,* Mary Ehrenworth and Vicki Vinton
- *A Writer's Notebook,* Ralph Fletcher
- *Writing a Life,* Katherine Bomer
- *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