Unit 2 Writing: Writing Realistic Fiction: Symbolism, Syntax, and Truth

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Trimester 1**
Length: **10-12 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

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.

Amistad Commission

This unit also reflects the goals of the Department of Education and the Amistad Commission including the infusion of the history of Africans and African-Americans into the curriculum in order to provide an accurate, complete, and inclusive history regarding the importance of African-Americans to the growth and development of American society in a global context.

Asian American and Pacific Islander History Law

This unit includes instructional materials that highlight the history and contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in accordance with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in Social Studies.

New Jersey Diversity and Inclusion Law

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.

Commission on Holocaust Education

This unit further reflects the goals of the Holocaust Education mandate where students are able to identify and analyze applicable theories concerning human nature and behavior; understand that genocide is a consequence of prejudice and discrimination; understand that issues of moral dilemma and conscience have a profound impact on life; and understand the personal responsibility that each citizen bears to fight racism and hatred whenever and wherever it happens.

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; the economic, legal, social, and ethical issues surrounding the use of information.

LA.W.7.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
LA.W.7.3.A	Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
LA.W.7.3.B	Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
LA.W.7.3.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.7.3.D	Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
LA.W.7.3.E	Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.
	Production and Distribution of Writing
LA.W.7.4	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.7.5	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, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
LA.W.7.6	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.
LA.SL.7.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
LA.SL.7.6	Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.
LA.L.7.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.7.1.A	Explain the function of phrases and clauses in general and their function in specific sentences.
LA.L.7.1.B	Choose among simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences to signal differing relationships among ideas.
LA.L.7.1.C	Place phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers.
LA.L.7.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
LA.L.7.2.A	Use a comma to separate coordinate adjectives (e.g., It was a fascinating, enjoyable movie

	but not He wore an old[,] green shirt).
LA.L.7.2.B	Spell correctly.
LA.L.7.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
LA.L.7.3.A	Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.
LA.L.7.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 7 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
LA.L.7.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
LA.L.7.6	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.

Brief Summary of Unit

This unit will expose students to the elements of a realistic fiction story. After examining several mentor texts, they will be challenged to emulate techniques that they have previously only experienced as readers. Students will learn other character development techniques, such as exploring character's motivations and obstacles, their quirks and passions, their internal and external lives. Additionally, they will also focus on enhancing the plot of the story, using elements such as: suspense, descriptive language, plot twists, and dialogue. After spending a little more time developing their plot and characters, students will move on to shaping their stories and bring them to meaningful ends.

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.

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Essential Questions/Enduring Understandings

- How can we hook the reader and maintain engagement?
- How can we clearly convey my intentions through a clear, logical structure?
- How can we use imagery to create engaging characters and plot?

- How can we bring my story to a meaningful close?
- How can we infuse a meaningful message that readers can apply to their lives?

Students will understand that:

- Using a hook in the beginning entices readers and allows them to become invested in their story.
- Establishing and maintaining a clear, logical structure enables readers to follow plots easily.
- Using a variety of techniques will help bring a story to life.
- Creating powerful endings will leave readers satisfied.
- Infusing stories with meaningful messages will provide worthwhile experiences for readers.

Students Will Know/Students will be Skilled at

Students will know how to. . .

- create many types of hooks to engage readers
- vary their wording, choosing rich, vivid descriptive words
- include meaningful dialogue
- reveal a meaningful message for readers to apply to their life.

Students will be able to independently use their learning to…

- Craft an engaging beginning for their story
- Use transition words to make their writing flow
- Elaborate to help readers visualize your story
- Create a satisfying ending that provides closure
- Include a message that readers can relate to/learn from
- Understand the elements of realistic fiction and apply it to their own writing.
- Be able to recognize and appreciate the elements of realistic fiction in their reading lives.

Students will be skilled at...

- Crafting hooks to engage the reader
- Structuring realistic and meaningful dialogue with detailed tags.
- Properly punctuating dialogue
- Infusing strong sensory details and figurative language
- Using sophisticated vocabulary to engage the reader
- Using logical transitions and concise wording to support author's intent
- Including compelling details and pivotal moments to reveal the message.
- Creating powerful clinchers to provide closure

Potential 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:

- Various photo prompts and story starters to provide low risk writing opportunities
- Descriptive language "show and tell" guessing game: Students bring an object from home that they can describe in vivid detail. All objects are displayed. As writer reads their description, class must try to identify the object being described.
- 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:

- Photo Fun! Zooming in on a small moment: Students choose a photo that they can describe using sensory detail and figurative language.
- Realistic Fiction Narrative using suspense and plot twist ("Scary Story")
- Realistic Fiction Narrative

- 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 including Alternative 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.

BEFORE EACH SESSION, review the "Getting Ready" post-it in Writing Realistic Fiction.

USEFUL RESOURCES FOR STUDENT MODELS: See Writing Realistic Fiction pages 162-end + CD supplement).

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.

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

This particular unit focuses on teaching students a few ways to see the world as fiction writers see it. Over the course of the unit, students will find fictional possibilities in their true lives, from moments that happened to them to values they hold dear and character-developing techniques such as exploring characters' motivations and obstacles, their quirks and passions, their internal and external lives. Rather than a teaching formulaic style of writing, students will consider the arc of a story and the natural journey it takes the reader On. Students will go through several revisions. These revisions will be focused on the meaning and messages behind students' stories. By focusing on where the heart beats in the story, our hope is that students will look to crafting and developing in ways that help spotlight the meaning.

For this particular unit, teachers should...

- Select texts that have clear, realistic plot lines, a few central characters, and good writing
- Prepare materials for discussion, writing, and synthesis (finding commonalities among them to find

what you admire and what you want to teach)

- Select mentor texts for modeling
- Prepare materials for review of signposts
- Create formative and summative assessments
- Find time to work on your own model narrative piece
- build a text set for discussion, writing, and synthesis
- select common reading and literature circle texts
- prepare for conferences and/or small groups with students
- generate a list of skills students will master throughout the unit (focusing specifically on a few in each area)
- create a summative assessment (backward design)

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. This Middle School ELA folder for grade 7 contains instructional materials for writing.

Suggested Instructional Materials

- ways writers build tension chart.pdf

  anchor narrative piece.pdf

  ways to create conflict chart.pdf

  revise to include imagery and symbolism chart.pdf

  narrative writing checklist.pdf

  tips for writing realistic dialogue chart.pdf

student narrative samples.pdf

how to write compelling fiction anchor chart.pdf

thirteen and a half mentor text option.pdf

How to find ideas for fiction.pdf

techniques for crafting leads chart.pdf

internal v external.pdf

narrative rubric .pdf

"If Cornered, Scream, " Thurmond
- Owl Moon, Yolen
- "The Tell Tale Heart," Poe
- Various Personalized and Blended Learning Stations:
- Frozen and Toy Story movie trailers, (original and horror versions);
- Touch sensory station with horror manipulatives; sound effect websites;
- Roll and Write activity (to build suspense and mood)
- www.soundbible.com: website with sound bites to inspire story ideas
- Using pop songs and movie clips to identify types of figurative language:

Additional Student Resources:

- Chromebooks/laptops
- Google Classroom or other LMS
- Writing Portfolios
- Writer's Notebook/Journal
- Google Documents/Drive
- Think Cerca
- Audible
- Padlet
- Socrative.com
- Poll everywhere
- Remind.com
- Skype
- Edublogs
- Soundcloud
- Netflix
- YouTube

Narrative instructional Materials folder on Google Drive

Teacher Resources

- *Units of Study in Argument, Informatiion, and Narrative Writing, Grade 7*, Lucy Calkins, Teachers College Reading and Writing Project
- Associated Online Resources, Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, readingandwritingproject.org
- *Read Write Teach: Choice and Challenge in the Reading-Writing Workshop*, Linda Rief
- *Lessons that Change Writers*, Nancie Atwell
- *In the Middle: New Understandings about Writing, Reading, and Learning*, Nancie Atwell, associated videos
- *Energize Research Reading and Writing,* Chris Lehman, Grades 4-8
- *Comprehension and Collaboration: Inquiry Circles in Action*, Stephanie Harvey and Harvey Daniels
- *Finding the Heart of Nonfiction,* Georgia Heard
- *Patterns of Power: Inviting Young Writers into the Conventions of Language*, Jeff Anderson
- *The Power of Grammar,* Mary Ehrenworth and Vicki Vinton
- *A Writer's Notebook,* Ralph Fletcher
- *Writing a Life,* Katherine Bomer
- *Study Driven*, Katie Wood Ray
- *Thinking Through Genre*, Heather Lattimer
- *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