Unit 1 Writing: Reflecting on Writing Life, Preparing for a Writing Future

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Marking Period 1**
Length: **2-3 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

Students will reflect on themselves as writers, and write a complete an extended metaphor assignment about themselves as writers.

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.

July 2022

Pacing Guide

Please refer tothis Language Arts Reading and Writing Workshop Pacing Guide for grade 8 Advanced.

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.8.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

LA.W.8.4	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.8.5	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.8.6	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.
LA.W.8.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
LA.W.8.10	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.8.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.8.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
LA.L.8.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

Essential Questions

- How can writing a self-reflective work on one's writing process enhance that process?
- How does purpose influence form in writing?
- How is writing used in real life?
- Why is it important to know one's audience when writing?

Enduring Understandings

- Writing is a process and is influenced by purpose and audience.
- Writing is used in real life.
- Writing when shared builds community.

Students Will Know

- How to brainstorm, freewrite, draft, and revise a reflective writing piece.
- How to reflect on their writing with the goal of improvement.
- Writers consider purpose and audience when writing.

Students Will Be Skilled At

- Analyzing a piece of writing for its purpose and audience.

- Identifying and apply the stages of the writing process.

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
- Peer Conferences/Partnership Discussion
- Writer's Notebook (quick writes/drafts/prewrites)
- Teacher checklists using mini-lessons for measurable skills
- Writing Conferences: Individual and small group
- Writing folders with student work
- Writing pieces to note the growth need of the writer
- Observations
- Drafts online (Google Docs)
- Writing Club work and discussions
- Students will respond in a "Writer's Log Notebook" or separately to the Writing Habits Journal Questions and share in groups
- Students will read a poem about writing, share their reactions, identify the speaker, setting, and use of metaphor.
- Students will consider their own experiences as writers to complete the Writing Metaphor Assignment

Summative:

- Students should have 1-2 final pieces.
- Published pieces
- Score grammar and spelling in final drafts only

- Student portfolios
- 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
- Students will choose a project option for the Writing Metaphor Assignment which includes one of the following: a persuasive paper, a paper-based or online PowerPoint scrapbook, or a CD cover for a soundtrack for a movie of their writing process.

Benchmark:

- 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

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.

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.

Instructional Materials

- "The Writer" by Richard Wilbur
- Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL): Using Metaphors in Creative Writing
- Writing Habits Journal Questions
- Writing Metaphor Rubric

Teacher Resources

- *Units of Study in Argument, Informatiion, and Narrative Writing, Grade 8*, 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
- *The Journey is Everything*. Katherine Bomer
- *Writing with Mentors*, Allison Marchetti, Rebekah O'Dell
- *Fearless Writing*, Tom Romano
- *Crafting Digital Writing*, Troy Hicks
- *The Digital Writing Workshop*, Troy Hicks

- http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson905/WritingHabits.pdf
- https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/writer
- Swartzendruber-Putnam, Dawn. "Written Reflection: Creating Better Thinkers, Better Writers." English Journal 90.1 (September 2000): 88-93. http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Resources/Journals/EJ/0901-sept00/EJ0901Written.pdf
- Writing About Writing: An Extended Metaphor Assignment, Tracy Gardner, National Council of English Teachers, www.readwritethink.org