

# Unit 1: Narrative Reading and Writing (Weeks 1-6)

Content Area: **Template**  
Course(s):  
Time Period: **Full Year**  
Length: **9 Weeks**  
Status: **Published**

## Unit 1: Narrative Reading and Writing

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Unit 1 provides a framework for narrative writing that can be altered to suit the varying purposes and student populations of districts statewide. For example, this unit would most easily work as a college essay unit, but can also be used to create cover letters, letters to/from characters from literature, scholarship essays, and written pieces that ask the writer to adopt multiple points of view. To inform the writing, students will read and analyze models in the genre in which they are writing, read informational texts, and discuss their questions/findings to inform their writing.

## Essential Questions

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1. What elements make a personal narrative intriguing?
2. How can I identify these elements in personal narratives as well as infuse them into/demonstrate them in my own?
3. Why is a sense of purpose the most essential ingredient of a personal narrative?

## Pre-Assessments

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Students will begin by reading a personal narrative together then collaborating to analyze and evaluate it. The goal is for students to determine what makes it an effective narrative piece so that they will later be able to effectively evaluate works in this genre as well as write their own.

## Instructional Plan

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## Text Analysis

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### Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to ... (WALT)

WALT to use effective techniques, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequencing in our narratives.

WALT engage and orient the reader by developing experiences, events, and/or characters

## **Student Success Criteria ... “I can statements”**

I can analyze narrative elements of the text

## **Instructional Strategies and Activities**

Reading “My Dad Tried to Murder Me with an Alligator” by Harrison Scott Key together as a class; then students will break into groups to analyze it for the 5 elements.

## **Formative Assessments**

-[Collaborative reading activity chart](#): “My Dad Tried to Kill Me with an Alligator”

## **Instructional Materials and Resources**

Activity Chart

## **Reflections and Suggested Modifications**

## **Text Analysis**

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### **Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to ... (WALT)**

WALT engage and orient the reader by developing experiences, events, and/or characters

WALT use dialogue in our narratives.

WALT to pace our narratives effectively and logically.

## **Student Success Criteria ... “I can statements”**

I can use dialogue in my narrative

I can pace my narrative logically

## **Instructional Strategies and Activities**

Reading three narratives from a collection of nine to read individually, analyze and discuss in groups, then

with the whole class. (See [doc 1](#) and [doc 2](#))

Individual reading, logging, analysis, and evaluation (of narrative essays, memoirs, and college essays)  
CommonLit assessments & feedback

### **Formative Assessments**

Individual reading assessment - [various college essays](#)

### **Instructional Materials and Resources**

Commonlit

### **Reflections and Suggested Modifications**

## **Text Analysis**

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### **Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to ... (WALT)**

WALT to use effective techniques, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequencing in our narratives.

### **Student Success Criteria ... “I can statements”**

I can analyze the pacing of a work of fiction

I can write narratives using literary elements

### **Instructional Strategies and Activities**

Reading “The Terror” by Junot Diaz (on CommonLit) individually, then analyzing it for the 5 elements; completing a CommonLit assessment.

### **Formative Assessments**

[Individual reading activity chart](#): “The Terror”

[-Individual reading assessment](#): “The Terror”

## **Instructional Materials and Resources**

Commonlit

## **Reflections and Suggested Modifications**

## **Self Analysis**

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### **Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to ... (WALT)**

WALT include a sense of reflection in our personal narratives.

WALT use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution)

### **Student Success Criteria ... “I can statements”**

I can conclude my narrative with self reflection

I can make text to self connections

## **Instructional Strategies and Activities**

Writing, self-evaluating, conferencing with their teacher about, then revising a personal narrative about a memorable moment of the summer

## **Formative Assessments**

Individual writing conferences with teachers throughout memorable moment essay and college essay

## **Instructional Materials and Resources**

Writing resources

## **Reflections and Suggested Modifications**

## **Independent Reading**

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### **Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to ... (WALT)**

WALT analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.

WALT analyze how an author's structural choices contribute to its overall meaning.

WALT authors use multiple literary elements to establish their point of view.

### **Student Success Criteria ... "I can statements"**

I can choose a book to read in my lexile level

I can discuss elements of my book with peers

### **Instructional Strategies and Activities**

Choosing an IR memoir to read, analyze, and evaluate in order to determine effectiveness in genre.

Discussing their evaluation of their IR memoir formally in front of the class via a Google Slides presentation.

### **Formative Assessments**

[-IR Memoir Log](#)

[-IR Memoir Presentation](#)

### **Instructional Materials and Resources**

Commonlit

### **Reflections and Suggested Modifications**

## **Annotation**

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### **Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to ... (WALT)**

WALT initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with our peers.

WALT build on others' ideas and express our ideas clearly and persuasively.

## **Student Success Criteria ... “I can statements”**

I can participate in a collaborative academic discussion

## **Instructional Strategies and Activities**

Reading and annotating [an article about CommonApp college essays](#) in preparation for writing their own.

(See [brainstorming doc](#))

## **Formative Assessments**

Individual reading assessment - [various college essays](#)

Individual writing conferences with teachers throughout memorable moment essay and college essay

## **Instructional Materials and Resources**

Commonlit

## **Reflections and Suggested Modifications**

## **Personal Narrative**

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### **Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to ... (WALT)**

WALT read and research material to prepare for discussions.

WALT make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly.

WALT analyze how an author’s structural choices contribute to its overall meaning.

## **Student Success Criteria ... “I can statements”**

I can self reflect on my work

I can revise my work based on the feedback of my peers and myself

## **Instructional Strategies and Activities**

Writing, completing a [self-evaluation](#) about, then revising a [personal narrative in response to one of the CommonApp college essay prompts](#).

## **Formative Assessments**

[-College Essay Self-Evaluation + Teacher Assessment](#)

## **Instructional Materials and Resources**

College Essay Resources

## **Reflections and Suggested Modifications**

## **Review of Writing Skills**

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### **Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to ... (WALT)**

WALT develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting or trying a new approach.

### **Student Success Criteria ... “I can statements”**

I can develop and strengthen my writing based on feedback

## **Instructional Strategies and Activities**

Completing a relevant [CommonLit. Assessment](#) to assess their skills in this unit, with an additional extended [writing assignment](#).

## **Formative Assessments**

Commonlit Assessment

## **Instructional Materials and Resources**

## Reflections and Suggested Modifications

### **Modifications and/or Accommodations**

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#### **Suggested Modifications (ELL, Sp. Ed, Gifted, At-risk of Failure)**

##### **English Language Learners**

Native language support: The teacher provides auditory or written content to students in their native language.

Adjusted Speech: The teacher changes speech patterns to increase student comprehension. This could include facing the students, paraphrasing, clearly indicating the most important ideas, and speaking more slowly.

Visuals: The teacher uses graphics, pictures, visuals, and manipulatives. This helps ELL students better understand and comprehend the subjects at hand.

Front-Loading Vocabulary: The teacher front loads vocabulary. This means providing students with a list of important vocabulary words they will need to know for a book, lesson, etc. prior to the lesson being taught. Including pictures to go with the vocabulary words is also very beneficial for the students.

##### **Special Education Students**

Chunking: The teacher presents information in a way that makes it easy for students to understand and remember. Chunking is based on the presumption that our working memory is easily overloaded by excessive detail. The best way to deliver information is to organize it into meaningful units. Because students with special needs get overloaded easily, chunking is an effective strategy to use with them.

Checking for Understanding: It is important to constantly check for understanding, especially for students who have accommodations. Teachers want to make sure students understand the concepts being covered in a way that makes sense to them.

Extra time: The teacher provides students with special needs extra time to complete work or answer questions. It is important to give students enough time to process their thoughts.

Oral Reading: The teacher will read work orally to students. Class work such as tests and literature circles may need to be read aloud to the student.

Timers: The teacher will use timers as an instructional tool. The use of timers is beneficial for students who have trouble completing tasks. Timers can be helpful so the student is aware of how



much time they have to complete an assignment.

## Students with 504 Plans

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**Extra time:** The teacher provides students with special needs extra time to complete work or answer questions. It is important to give students enough time to process their thoughts.

## Gifted & Talented Strategies

**Extensions/Enrichments:** Teachers will provide gifted and talented students with extension/enrichment projects. Students will be challenged to further their understanding, to apply acquired knowledge, and/or to produce something in reference to acquired knowledge.

**Modify/Change Activities:** Teachers will monitor and modify activities to accommodate those students who need to be challenged further. Additional reading, problem-solving, writing, or project work is necessary for those students who are ready to move on at a rate more accelerated than their peers. In this way, G & T students are provided the same opportunity for support as special needs students.

## Students at Risk of School Failure

**Directions or Instructions:** Make sure directions and/or instructions are given in limited numbers. Give directions/instructions verbally and in simple written format. Ask students to repeat the instructions or directions to ensure understanding occurs. Check back with the student to ensure he/she hasn't forgotten.

**Peer Support:** Peers can help build confidence in other students by assisting in peer learning. Many teachers use the 'ask 3 before me' approach. This is fine, however, a student at risk may have to have a specific student or two to ask. Set this up for the student so he/she knows who to ask for clarification before going to you.

**Alternate or Modified Assignments:** Always ask yourself, "How can I modify this assignment to ensure the students at risk are able to complete it?" Sometimes you'll simplify the task, reduce the length of the assignment or allow for a different mode of delivery. For instance, many students may hand something in, the at-risk student may jot notes and give you the information verbally. Or, it just

may be that you will need to assign an alternate assignment.

**Increase One to One Time:** When other students are working, always touch base with your students at risk and find out if they're on track or needing some additional support. A few minutes here and there will go a long way to intervene as the need presents itself.

**Contracts:** It helps to have a working contract between you and your students at risk. This helps prioritize the tasks that need to be done and ensure completion happens. Each day write down what needs to be completed, as the tasks are done, provide a checkmark or happy face. The goal of using contracts is to eventually have the student come to you for completion sign-offs.

**Hands On:** As much as possible, think in concrete terms and provide hands-on tasks. This means a child doing math may require a calculator or counters. The child may need to tape record comprehension activities instead of writing them. A child may have to listen to a story being read instead of reading it him/herself.

**Tests/Assessments:** Tests can be done orally if need be. Break tests down in smaller increments by having a portion of the test in the morning, another portion after lunch and the final part the next day.

**Seating:** Seat students near a helping peer or with quick access to the teacher. Those with hearing or sight issues need to be close to the instruction which often means near the front.

## **New Jersey Student Learning Standards: Content Area**

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ELA.L.SS.11–12.1.C	Recognize spelling conventions.
ELA.L.VL.11–12.3	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, including technical meanings, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
ELA.RL.CR.11–12.1	Accurately cite strong and thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to strongly support a comprehensive analysis of multiple aspects of what a literary text says explicitly and inferentially, as well as interpretations of the text; this may include determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
ELA.RL.CI.11–12.2	Determine two or more themes of a literary text and analyze how they are developed and refined over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account or analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.
ELA.RL.IT.11–12.3	Analyze the impact of the author's choices as they develop ideas throughout the text regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).
ELA.RL.TS.11–12.4	Evaluate the author's choices concerning the structure and the effectiveness of specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) and how they contribute to its overall structure and meaning, as well as its aesthetic impact.
ELA.RI.PP.11–12.5	Analyze an author's purpose in a text distinguishing what is directly stated in a text or through rhetoric, analyzing how style and content convey information and advance a point of view.
ELA.W.WP.11–12.4	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, trying a

new approach; sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; tracking and reflecting on personal writing progress (e.g., using portfolios, journals, conferencing); or consulting a style manual (such as MLA or APA Style), focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

ELA.W.RW.11–12.7	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes.
ELA.SL.PE.11–12.1	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with peers on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
ELA.SL.PE.11–12.1.A	Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.
ELA.SL.PE.11–12.1.D	Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

## **Integration of Career Readiness, Life Literacies and Key Skills**

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TECH.9.4.12.CI.1	Demonstrate the ability to reflect, analyze, and use creative skills and ideas (e.g., 1.1.12prof.CR3a).
TECH.9.4.12.CI.2	Identify career pathways that highlight personal talents, skills, and abilities (e.g., 1.4.12prof.CR2b, 2.2.12.LF.8).
TECH.9.4.12.CI.3	Investigate new challenges and opportunities for personal growth, advancement, and transition (e.g., 2.1.12.PGD.1).

## **Integration of Computer Science and Design Thinking**

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CS.K-12.2.a	Cultivate working relationships with individuals possessing diverse perspectives, skills, and personalities.
CS.K-12.2.b	Create team norms, expectations, and equitable workloads to increase efficiency and effectiveness.
CS.K-12.2.c	Solicit and incorporate feedback from, and provide constructive feedback to, team members and other stakeholders.

## **Interdisciplinary Connections: NJSLs for ELA, Social Studies, Science and/or Math**

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SOC.K-12.5	Presenting Arguments and Explanations  Using a variety of formats designed for a purpose and an authentic audience forms the basis for clear communication. Strong arguments contain claims with organized evidence and valid reasoning that respects the diversity of the world and the dignity of each person. Writing findings and engaging in civil discussion with an audience provides a key step in the process of thinking critically about conclusions and continued inquiry.
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## **21st Century Life and Career**

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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.CRP7	Employ valid and reliable research strategies.
CRP.K-12.CRP8	Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.

## **Integration of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Climate Change, Informational and Media Literacy**

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See Crosswalks

## **SEL Competencies**

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SEL.PK-12.2.2	Recognize the skills needed to establish and achieve personal and educational goals
SEL.PK-12.2.3	Identify and apply ways to persevere or overcome barriers through alternative methods to achieve one's goals
SEL.PK-12.3.2	Demonstrate and awareness of the differences among individuals, groups, and others' cultural backgrounds