

03 The How-To Guide for Nonfiction Writing

Content Area: **ELA**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Full Year**
Length: **27 Days**
Status: **Published**

UNIT ORIENTATION

: During this unit, children will write books on self-selected topics about which they have some knowledge. They will also do a bit of research on these topics, incorporating new knowledge into what they already know. The theory is that by writing information books on topics of their own choosing, children are more apt to feel invested in the project and therefore more likely to write with voice and conviction. Writing volume is an important goal in this unit, and for starters, this means children will write many information books. A second goal is that children begin to explore and learn about different ways of structuring nonfiction texts. As they move from one book to the next, you will want to encourage them to experiment with a variety of text structures, thinking about which one best conveys information about a given topic. As children learn more about text structures, they may return to a book they wrote earlier in the unit, rewriting it with a new structure. Ultimately, of course, it is up to children to decide how best to structure each book to teach others.

Enduring Understandings

Information writers gather information about their topic through a variety of ways. □

Information writers write with stamina, volume and independence

Information writers write with elaboration and can study a mentor text to make information books longer and more interesting

Information writers write one book and then conduct research to create an expert project

Information writers need to edit, fancy up, and publish their writing so that it teaches in clear and exciting ways.

Essential Questions

How can I use what I already know about organization, details, and editing to write information books?

How can I learn from a mentor author to make my information books longer and more interesting?

How can I revise one of my books by studying and researching the topic?

Can I even use artifacts, photographs and books to do some research and teach more?

How can I use and improve my editing skills to get my work ready for our celebration?

How can I include text features to strengthen my nonfiction writing?

CONTENT AREA STANDARDS

LA.W.2.2	Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use evidence-based facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a conclusion.
LA.W.2.5	With guidance and support from adults and peers, focus on a topic and strengthen writing as needed through self-reflection, revising and editing.
LA.W.2.7	Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., read a number of books on a single topic to produce a report; record science observations).
LA.W.2.8	Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.
LA.SL.2.1.A	Follow agreed-upon norms for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).
LA.SL.2.1.B	Build on others' talk in conversations by linking their explicit comments to the remarks of others.
LA.SL.2.1.C	Ask for clarification and further explanation as needed about the topics and texts under discussion.
LA.SL.2.2	Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
LA.SL.2.3	Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.
LA.SL.2.4	Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.
LA.SL.2.6	Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification.
LA.L.2.1.A	Use collective nouns (e.g., group).
LA.L.2.1.B	Form and use frequently occurring irregular plural nouns (e.g., feet, children, teeth, mice, fish).
LA.L.2.1.E	Use adjectives and adverbs, and choose between them depending on what is to be modified.
LA.L.2.1.F	Produce, expand, and rearrange complete simple and compound sentences (e.g., The boy watched the movie; The little boy watched the movie; The action movie was watched by the little boy).
LA.L.2.2.A	Capitalize holidays, product names, and geographic names.
LA.L.2.2.C	Use an apostrophe to form contractions and frequently occurring possessives.
LA.L.2.2.D	Generalize learned spelling patterns when writing words (e.g., cage → badge; boy → boil).
LA.L.2.2.E	Consult print and digital resources, including beginning dictionaries, as needed to check and correct spellings.
LA.L.2.3.A	Compare formal and informal uses of English.

LA.L.2.5.A	Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., describe foods that are spicy or juicy).
LA.L.2.5.B	Distinguish shades of meaning among closely related verbs (e.g., toss, throw, hurl) and closely related adjectives (e.g., thin, slender, skinny, scrawny).
LA.L.2.6	Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts, including using adjectives and adverbs to describe (e.g., When other kids are happy that makes me happy).

RELATED STANDARDS (Technology, 21st Century Life & Careers, ELA Companion Standards are Required)

CRP.K-12.CRP1.1	Career-ready individuals understand the obligations and responsibilities of being a member of a community, and they demonstrate this understanding every day through their interactions with others. They are conscientious of the impacts of their decisions on others and the environment around them. They think about the near-term and long-term consequences of their actions and seek to act in ways that contribute to the betterment of their teams, families, community and workplace. They are reliable and consistent in going beyond the minimum expectation and in participating in activities that serve the greater good.
CRP.K-12.CRP2.1	Career-ready individuals readily access and use the knowledge and skills acquired through experience and education to be more productive. They make connections between abstract concepts with real-world applications, and they make correct insights about when it is appropriate to apply the use of an academic skill in a workplace situation.
CRP.K-12.CRP4.1	Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas, and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal, and/or visual methods. They communicate in the workplace with clarity and purpose to make maximum use of their own and others' time. They are excellent writers; they master conventions, word choice, and organization, and use effective tone and presentation skills to articulate ideas. They are skilled at interacting with others; they are active listeners and speak clearly and with purpose. Career-ready individuals think about the audience for their communication and prepare accordingly to ensure the desired outcome.
CRP.K-12.CRP6.1	Career-ready individuals regularly think of ideas that solve problems in new and different ways, and they contribute those ideas in a useful and productive manner to improve their organization. They can consider unconventional ideas and suggestions as solutions to issues, tasks or problems, and they discern which ideas and suggestions will add greatest value. They seek new methods, practices, and ideas from a variety of sources and seek to apply those ideas to their own workplace. They take action on their ideas and understand how to bring innovation to an organization.
TECH.8.1.2.A.2	Create a document using a word processing application.
TECH.8.1.2.A.CS1	Understand and use technology systems.

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Alternate Assessments

- Portfolios

- Verbal Assessment (instead of written)
- Multiple choice
- Modified Rubrics
- Performance Based Assessments

Summative Assessments

Published Pieces

Rubrics

Open Ended Responses

Written responses

Formative Assessments

- Checklists
- Conferences
- Class Discussions
- Exit Slips
- Interactive Notebooks
- Quizzes
- Reflections
- Review of classwork/homework
- Student Participation
- Teacher Observations
- Text Dependent Questions

Benchmark Assessments

- iXL
- Dibels

RESOURCES (Instructional, Supplemental, Intervention Materials)

Teachers College Units of Study

Interactive notebooks

Mentor texts

Writer's notebooks

Chromebooks

IXL

Readworks

EPIC

Suggested Mentor Texts: Extreme Sports by Sean Finnegan

How to Be a Baby by Me, the Big Sister by Sally Lloyd-Jones

Why Do Dogs Bark? By Joan Holub

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS

- Dramatization: Writers will act out the steps of their How-To Books as part of the planning process. Writers will ensure that they are using the proper fancy words such as (pour, twist, stir, etc.)

ACCOMMODATIONS & MODIFICATIONS FOR SUBGROUPS

Special Education:

Provide modified notes and access to extra copies online

Provide oral reminders and check student work during independent work time

Model skills/techniques to be mastered

Check and sign assignment planner

Preferential seating

Pair visual prompts with verbal presentations

Modified or scaffolded homework and classwork

Extended time as needed

Provide graphic organizers and study guides

English Learners:

Provide scaffolded assignments and assessments

Pair visual prompts with visual presentations

Check and sign assignment planner

Extended time for assignment and assessment as needed

Highlight key vocabulary

Use graphic organizers

Provide verbal and written directions

Preferential seating with a English-speaking peer

At Risk of Failure:

Encourage class participation and reinforce skills

Model skills and assignments

Extended to time to complete class work

Preferential seating

Provide extra help outside of class and 1:1 instruction when needed

Communicate regularly with students' other teachers

Provide positive feedback for tasks well done

Encourage student to proofread assessments and projects and ask for teacher proofreading of large writing assignments

Gifted and Talented:

Pose higher-level thinking questions

Provide higher level reading and writing materials for literacy based activities

Probe student to extend thinking beyond the text or connect two or more texts

Provide alternate or project-based assessments and assignments

Students with 504 Plans

Provide extended time as needed

Modify length of writing assignment

Provide short breaks within the lesson

Provide scaffolding for students

Utilize graphic organizers