

Curricular Plan for Writer's Workshop
Grade 5 (4th grade unit)
Unit 1: Raising the Level of Personal Narrative Writing

Students should understand and be able to:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate ideas for personal narratives • Demonstrate a growing command of conventions of standard English grammar usage and spelling • Develop an understanding of the qualities of narrative writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use strategies learned in the past and develop new strategies for improving their writing • Analyze mentor texts and identify qualities of effective writing to use in their own writing |
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Possible Teaching Points

Part One: Lift the Level of the Entries Your Students Collect
Revising Your Children's Knowledge of Narrative Writing Even before They Write Draft One
 (W.5.10)

- Writers get ready to read and write by setting up places and gathering tools that will make it easy.
 - Think back to times when you were successful as a writer. Ask, 'What have I seen or done in the past that was helpful?'
 - Use classroom charts to help you remember strategies.
- Writers study the writing of other authors they admire. We read their writing and ask, 'What did this author do that I could also do to make my own writing more powerful?'
- Writers record many ideas for personal narrative writing in their writer's notebook. We remember that we write best about small, important moments.
 - Make a list of moments in your life that have been turning points.
 - Think of the first times, last times, or times when you realized something really important.
 - Think back on times when you felt a particularly strong emotion or wanted something badly.
- Writers make a movie in their mind to help them write a story. We use the movie we see in our mind to write in a way that helps the reader picture exactly what is happening.
- Writers use revision skills so much that they eventually become a natural part of planning and writing a first draft

Part Two: Selecting a Seed Idea and Rehearsing for Writing
 (W.5.3, W.5.3a, W.5.3b, W.5.3c, W.5.3d, W.5.3e)

- Writers begin writing personal narratives by asking, *What is my story really about?*
 - We know that the same story could be written to show very different things, so we have to have our purpose clear in our mind when we begin.
- Writers plan and rehearse their writing before they begin writing.
 - Create multiple time lines for your story—consider different starting points and different ways the story might unfold.

- Add a clear build-up or follow-up to the heart of your story. Zoom in on a small-moment and tell it well but then look just outside of that small moment and ask, *Is there another moment, either soon before or soon after this one, that will help my reader see the importance of this moment in my life?*
- Writers admire other writers. When we admire another author’s writing, we study how they begin their stories and try to improve our own writing.
 - Learn ‘moves’ you want to add to your writing.
 - Notice how they start or end a story.

Part Three: Writing a Rough Draft One
(W.5.3,W.5.3c,W.5.4)

- Writers write stories from their own lives by transporting themselves back to the moment when the story happened. Our job is to tell the story as we see it unfolding.
- Writers use their timelines to help them sequence their story—but they write more than just the events, they write about the experience.
- Writers get into the character’s shoes (really *their* shoes) and write on and on and on.

Part Four: Revising Drafts
(W.5.5)

- Writers often revise first drafts by writing a second, brand-new draft of their story.
- Writers reflect on what is working in their writing and make plans based on self-reflections.
 - Step back from your first draft and ask, *Is this really saying all that I want it to say? What else can I do to bring out the meaning of this story to the reader?*
 - Revise your writing by rereading your story and asking, *Is the situation clear to my readers? Do they know not only when and where this is happening, but also why it matters?*
 - Tell the external story (what happens, events) and internal story (reactions) to give your story more meaning.
- Writers return to mentor writers and mentor texts throughout the revision process for guidance and ideas.
- Writers don’t just revise to clean up messes in their writing. They also revise to find the part that really matters—the heart of the story—and develop this into powerful writing.
- Writers use a variety storytelling components and are careful to not rely on just one.
 - Action
 - Dialogue
 - Thought
- Writers make sure to establish the situation and introduce the narrator and characters to orient their readers from the beginning. Reread your story thinking,
 - Is the situation clear to my reader?
 - Do they know when and where this takes place?

- Do they know why it matters?

Part Five: Editing
(W.5.5, L.5.2, L.5.2e)

- Writers study punctuation marks in published texts to help them learn its power. When we understand how a punctuation mark adds power to writing, we can use it more effectively.
- Writers know we will make spelling mistakes, especially in our first drafts.
 - Keep track of words you want to edit later by circling them to come back to later.
 - Attempt three different ways to spell the word on a scrap piece of paper or a Post-it note and choose the word that seems closest.
 - Try your best and move on!
- Writers reread their writing many times, with a different focus each time. They clarify their writing bit by bit.
 - Read your writing with a focus on spelling.
 - Read your writing with a focus on complete sentences.
- Writers use each other as a resource. Peer editors look at our writing with fresh eyes.
 - Help to notice ways to improve a piece
 - Lookout for spelling and grammar mistakes

Part Six: Celebration
(W.5.4, W.5.6, L.5.3)

- A few stories can be read as a community, but then students will go to their “story corners” to read their stories in a small group.

Helpful Tips

- It is important that you use your own writer’s notebook so that you are doing the work you are asking students to do. Without a clear model of the notebook, students will not understand what theirs should look like. For every writing lesson, you must not only tell students what to do, but also show them.
- When students are brainstorming ideas for making writer’s workshop work for them, allow them to share those ideas and write them on an anchor chart. You might consider a mid-workshop teaching point if students are failing to mention some key ideas. You can pull out anchor charts from past years or ask 3rd grade teachers for their charts from prior years. New charts should be made each year with student involvement but some teachers keep them as a reference.
- Draft One: Tell students they will have just one day to write their first draft. Students should write on and on during this stage of the writing process.
- Revising Drafts: Be sure to make it clear to students that, even though they used to edit and add on to their first draft, this year they will begin revising by redrafting their story in a new and improved way.
- Identify students who still tend to talk about, rather than relive, an event. These students could benefit from some practice envisioning and adding detail to their stories.
(If you see students are struggling to complete a first draft because they are spending too much time on spelling, consider moving some of the

teaching points from Part Five to Part Two.)

- Spelling: As stated in the teaching points, students should not get hung up on perfect spelling. We want students to write as much as possible. Stopping to edit spelling/punctuation during the drafting stage inhibits the amount of writing a student can accomplish.
- Students should be praised for their efforts to edit independently. Teachers should not be marking up drafts for students to fix. We want to give students ownership of their work and build their motivation and confidence. It is certainly appropriate to have a word wall for words students “use and confuse” to refer to when needed.
- Emphasize that students should be using punctuation automatically in their first draft.
- Students will need to review sentence structure, run-on sentences, and fragments prior to the final edit of their story.

Common Core State Standards

W.5.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

W.5.3a Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.

W.3b Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, description, and pacing, to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.

W.5.3c Use a variety of transitional words, phrases, and clauses to manage the sequence of events.

W.5.3d Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.

W.5.3e Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

W.5.10 Write routinely over extended time frames.

L.5.3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

W.5.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

W.5.5 With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

W.5.6 With some guidance and support from adults, 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 two pages in a single sitting.

W.5.7 Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

W.5.8 Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.

W.5.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.