

Mendham Borough Public Schools
Mendham, New Jersey

Curriculum and Instruction

Course of Study

Language Arts: Grade 1

August 23, 2016

I. RATIONALE, DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

The Mendham Borough Schools seek to instill and cultivate a love of reading and writing; independent reading and writing for varied purposes, including individual genre and learning interests; and “readerly” and “writerly” lives in students’ school and personal worlds.

Language arts literacy embraces the integrated development of reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing/media literacy skills in purposeful and meaningful contexts. Literacy skills develop within a continuum according to each student’s readiness.

The Teachers College first grade reading and writing workshops cultivate reading and writing within fiction and nonfiction genres for authentic and engaging purposes. The Teachers College model proceeds on three premises. First, students are readers and writers who develop distinctive reading and writing identities that include preferences, strengths and needs. Readers and writers engage reading and writing lives in the classroom and in their out-of-school worlds. Second, the fundamental goal of reading and writing is to develop a love of both interactions with text, ideas and the larger world. Third, readers and writers need tools and strategies to engage their craft purposefully and authentically. Teachers of reading and writing provide direct and explicit instruction in the development of these tools and strategies as meets readers’ and writers’ varying readiness levels.

II. DISTRICT OBJECTIVES

The district adopts the Anchor Standards set forth in the New Jersey Student Learning Standards, as objectives for all students to meet by the end of Grade 8. Separate objectives for reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language, are as follows:

Reading

1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

Writing

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.
7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
10. 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, and audiences.

Speaking & Listening

1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.
4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.
6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Language

1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
3. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.
5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
6. Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

III. ALIGNMENT TO STANDARDS

Language arts literacy development in first grade aligns with the following **New Jersey Student Learning Standards:**

Reading

- Ask and answer questions about key details in a text. (RI.1.1)
 - Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text. (RI.1.2)
 - Describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text. (RI.1.3)
 - Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text. (RI.1.4)
 - Know and use various text features (e.g., headings, tables of contents, glossaries, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text. (RI.1.5)
 - Distinguish between information provided by pictures or other illustrations and information provided by the words in a text. (RI.1.6)
 - Use the illustrations and details in a text to describe its key ideas. (RI.1.7)
 - Identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text. (RI.1.8)
 - Identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures). (RI.1.9)
 - With prompting and support, read informational texts appropriately complex for grade 1. (RI.1.10)
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- Ask and answer questions about key details in a text. (RL.1.1)
 - Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson. (RL.1.2)
 - Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details. (RL.1.3)
 - Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses. (RL.1.4)
 - Explain major differences between books that tell stories and books that give information, drawing on a wide reading of a range of text types. (RL.1.5)
 - Identify who is telling the story at various points in a text. (RL.1.6)
 - Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events. (RL.1.7)
 - Compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in stories. (RL.1.9)
 - With prompting and support, read prose and poetry of appropriate complexity for grade 1. (RL.1.10)

Writing

- Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion, and provide some sense of closure. (W.1.1)
- Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure. (W.1.2)
- Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure. (W.1.3)

- With guidance and support from adults, focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers, and add details to strengthen writing as needed. (W.1.5)
- With guidance and support from adults, use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers. (W.1.6)
- Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of “how-to” books on a given topic and use them to write a sequence of instructions). (W.1.7)
- With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question. (W.1.8)

Speaking & Listening

- Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups. (SL.1.1)
 - Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).
 - Build on others’ talk in conversations by responding to the comments of others through multiple exchanges.
 - Ask questions to clear up any confusion about the topics and texts under discussion.
- Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media. (SL.1.2)
- Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood. (SL.1.3)
- Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly. (SL.1.4)
- Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings. (SL.1.5)
- Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation. (SL.1.6)

Reading Foundational

- Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print. (RF.1.1)
 - Recognize the distinguishing features of a sentence (e.g., first word, capitalization, ending punctuation).
- Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes). (RF.1.2)
 - Distinguish long from short vowel sounds in spoken single-syllable words.
 - Orally produce single-syllable words by blending sounds (phonemes), including consonant blends.
 - Isolate and pronounce initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in spoken single-syllable words.
 - Segment spoken single-syllable words into their complete sequence of individual sounds (phonemes).
- Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words. (RF.1.3)
 - Know the spelling-sound correspondences for common consonant digraphs (two letters that represent one sound).
 - Decode regularly spelled one-syllable words.
 - Know final -e and common vowel team conventions for representing long vowel sounds.
 - Use knowledge that every syllable must have a vowel sound to determine the number of syllables in a printed word.

- Decode two-syllable words following basic patterns by breaking the words into syllables.
- Read words with inflectional endings.
- Recognize and read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words.
- Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. (RF.1.4)
 - Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding.
 - Read grade-level text orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression.
 - Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.

Language

- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. (L.1.1)
 - Print all upper- and lowercase letters.
 - Use common, proper, and possessive nouns.
 - Use singular and plural nouns with matching verbs in basic sentences (e.g., He hops; We hop).
 - Use personal, possessive, and indefinite pronouns (e.g., I, me, my; they, them, their, anyone, everything).
 - Use verbs to convey a sense of past, present, and future (e.g., Yesterday I walked home; Today I walk home; Tomorrow I will walk home).
 - Use frequently occurring adjectives.
 - Use frequently occurring conjunctions (e.g., and, but, or, so, because).
 - Use determiners (e.g., articles, demonstratives).
 - Use frequently occurring prepositions (e.g., during, beyond, toward).
 - Produce and expand complete simple and compound declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences in response to prompts.
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. (L.1.2)
 - Capitalize dates and names of people.
 - Use end punctuation for sentences.
 - Use commas in dates and to separate single words in a series.
 - Use conventional spelling for words with common spelling patterns and for frequently occurring irregular words.
 - Spell untaught words phonetically, drawing on phonemic awareness and spelling conventions.
- Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 1 reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies. (L.1.4)
 - Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
 - Use frequently occurring affixes as a clue to the meaning of a word.
 - Identify frequently occurring root words (e.g., look) and their inflectional forms (e.g., looks, looked, looking).
- With guidance and support from adults, demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships and nuances in word meanings. (L.1.5)
 - Sort words into categories (e.g., colors, clothing) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent.
 - Define words by category and by one or more key attributes (e.g., a duck is a bird that swims; a tiger is a large cat with stripes).

- Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., note places at home that are cozy).
- Distinguish shades of meaning among verbs differing in manner (e.g., look, peek, glance, stare, glare, scowl) and adjectives differing in intensity (e.g., large, gigantic) by defining or choosing them or by acting out the meanings.
- Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts, including using frequently occurring conjunctions to signal simple relationships (e.g., because). (L.1.6)

IV. **CONTENT, SCOPE AND SEQUENCE, LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Grade level benchmarks in first grade Language Arts Literacy are built into the chart below:

Reading Workshop	Writing Workshop
Unit 1: Readers Build Good Habits and Stamina When Reading (“Launch”)	Unit 1: Launching the Writing Workshop
Unit 2: Readers Use Print Strategies to “Figure Out” Unfamiliar Words in Their “Just Right” Books	Unit 2: Writers Write “Small Moment” Stories by Thinking About Their Own Lives
Unit 3: Readers Read and Talk About Books to Grow Ideas	Unit 3: Writers Write in a Way That Readers Can Read Their Writing: Small Moments with a Focus on Conventions Unit 4: Writers Write for Many Purposes
Unit 4: Readers Use Nonfiction Strategies to Read and Talk About Nonfiction Books with Others	Unit 5: Writers Can Teach Others How to Do Something by Writing “How to” Books Unit 6: Writers Teach Others All About a Subject by Writing “All About” Books
Unit 5: Readers Read with Fluency in Order to Better Understand the Story	Unit 7: Writers Learn How to Make Their Small Moment Stories Better by Reading and Emulating the Works of a Mentor Author or Mentor Texts
Unit 6: Character Study: Readers Read, Think and Talk About Characters Across Books	Unit 8: Writers Use All That They Know About Narrative Writing to Write Realistic Fiction Stories
Unit 7: Readers Reflect on Their Reading Lives and Plan Summer Reading Projects	Unit 9: Writers Reflect on Their Writing Lives and Plan Summer Writing Projects

Reading Workshop Unit 1: Readers Build Good Habits and Stamina When Reading

This unit “launches” the reading workshop and addresses procedures and students’ identity as readers. Students begin to read with a partner at the end of this unit.

In unit 1, readers will understand that:

1. Meaning is the purpose of reading.
2. They can read books that are “just right” for them.

In unit 1, readers will be able to:

1. Listen attentively to a mini-lesson on the rug;
2. Read one book with stamina (“When you think you’re done, you’ve just begun!”);
3. Read environmental print and texts;
4. Apply picture clues to read with meaning;
5. Track words to read independently;
6. Identify “just right” books;
7. Read a “just right” book cooperatively with a partner by sitting hip to hip.

Reading Workshop Unit 2: Readers Use Print Strategies to Figure Out Hard Words in Their “Just Right” Books

Readers identify “just right” books, use prior knowledge to get ready to read, use a variety of print strategies and engage in partner talk.

In unit 2, readers will understand that:

1. They can activate relevant background knowledge and build a schema for a book to get ready to read with meaning.
2. They can use strategies to solve decoding and comprehension problems independently.

In unit 2, readers will be able to:

1. Continue to identify “just right” books;
2. Activate relevant background knowledge by interpreting a book’s print features (i.e., title, cover illustration, cover “blurb”) to get ready to read;
3. Predict the topic/story of a book to get ready to read;
4. Build a schema for a book by interpreting visual cues in a “book walk” to predict more closely its topic/story to get ready to read;
5. Build a schema for a book cooperatively with a reading partner by interpreting visual cues in a “book walk” with a partner;
6. Decode unfamiliar words by applying word-initial sounds;
7. Decode unfamiliar words by applying word-final consonants;
8. Apply picture clues to decode unfamiliar words;
9. Self-monitor reading comprehension by asking, “Does it make sense?”
10. “Bravely” solve decoding and comprehension problems independently;
11. Read aloud in a talking voice;

12. Self-monitor meaning during reading, and self-correct and reread as needed;
13. Self-monitor meaning by asking questions about the story during reading;
14. Engage in accountable partner talk;
15. Apply spelling patterns to decode unfamiliar words;
16. Apply strategies to identify “just right” books;
17. Read familiar stories “smoothly” (with fluency).

Reading Workshop Unit 3: Readers Read and Talk About Books to Grow Ideas

Readers focus on comprehension strategies, especially retelling. Readers think about books in order to comprehend, and they share their thoughts with their reading partners. Readers develop strategies for self-monitoring comprehension.

In unit 3, readers will understand that:

1. Retelling and connecting themselves and their lives to a story are strategies to build meaning.
2. The author’s message is a “big idea” for the reader.

In unit 3, readers will be able to:

1. Retell a book in chronological order;
2. Apply characters’ names in retelling;
3. Retell the important parts of a story with necessary details;
4. Self-monitor the accuracy of their retelling by referring to the book;
5. Retell in a storyteller’s voice;
6. Recognize and describe thoughts about the book (e.g., funny, confusing, sad);
7. Identify funny, confusing and sad parts of the book with corresponding post-it note faces;
8. Make predictions before they read;
9. Make and revise predictions as they read;
10. Envision the story as they read (“pictures in their minds”);
11. Respond to text with “post-it” notes;
12. Envision the story as they read (“hear it, smell it, taste it, feel it”);
13. Connect themselves and their lives to a story to understand it better;
14. Refine personal connections to focus on the story vs. the self;
15. Self-monitor reading comprehension (“getting the words and the meaning”);
16. Resolve comprehension breakdowns (“clearing up confusion”);
17. Identify the main idea or “big idea” of a book (“So what was this book about?”).

Reading Workshop Unit 4: Readers Use Nonfiction Strategies to Read and Talk About Nonfiction Books with Others

Readers learn a variety of ways to read nonfiction text; use nonfiction text features to help them read; and develop strategies for understanding nonfiction text. Readers continue to use context clues to help them “figure out” unfamiliar words and understand new concepts.

In unit 4, readers will understand that:

1. The author of a nonfiction book writes to teach the reader about the topic, and readers read nonfiction to learn about a given topic.
2. The author writes each part of a nonfiction text to help the reader learn about the topic.

In unit 4, readers will be able to:

1. Identify nonfiction texts in school and in their out-of-school lives;
2. Identify topics about which they are interested in learning;
3. Recognize that fiction and nonfiction books are different;
4. Identify the parts of a nonfiction book (e.g., table of contents, visual representations, glossary, index);
5. Apply the table of contents to locate specific information in a nonfiction text;
6. Interpret photographs to learn about the nonfiction topic;
7. Interpret the glossary and index to locate specific information and learn about the nonfiction topic;
8. Interpret diagrams and labels to learn about the nonfiction topic;
9. Activate relevant background knowledge and build a schema for the nonfiction topic by applying the nonfiction text features (#6-9) to get ready to read;
10. Self-monitor new learning by asking, “What is this page about?”
11. Recognize that nonfiction books teach about a variety of topics and categorize books by topic;
12. Identify a topic for further study and gather books on that topic;
13. Reread books on a topic to get ideas about their topics;
14. Self-monitor new learning about their topic as they read (“What is this page about?” “What am I learning?”);
15. Accumulate growing knowledge of their subject from multiple books;
16. Plan to keep and accumulate nonfiction reading in their reading lives;
17. Teach their reading partners about their topic (cumulative project).

Reading Workshop Unit 5: Readers Read with Fluency in Order to Better Understand the Story

Readers read fluently by using punctuation and context clues; using prior knowledge; using a story teller’s voice (reading aloud with expression); and by connecting with the character and the character’s feelings.

In unit 5, readers will understand that:

1. Fluent oral reading relies on text comprehension.
2. Text features that build comprehension also enable fluent reading.

In unit 5, readers will be able to:

1. Define “fluency”;
2. Read fluently (“smoothly” and with meaning) with a partner’s help;
3. Read fluently (“smoothly” and with meaning) to comprehend their own and a partner’s oral reading;

4. Develop fluency in oral reading by identifying “easy” books for practice;
5. Reread familiar books and poems to increase fluency;
6. Predict words that “go together” and read them in “chunks” (“scooping words up together”);
7. Attend to punctuation marks as “road signs” to inform fluent reading;
8. Interpret dialogue in text by modulating their voices to match the character’s;
9. Interpret a word’s visual (typographical) cues (e.g., bold, all capital letters, italicized, large font) to inform inflection;
10. Recognize and interpret a character’s feelings to inform inflection;
11. Reread a book several times to interpret the sound and inflection of a character’s voice;
12. Apply illustrations to build comprehension that supports more fluent reading;
13. Apply setting to inform inflection.

Reading Workshop Unit 6: Character Study: Readers Read, Think and Talk About Characters Across Books

Readers identify the main character and the roles of a book’s characters. They learn about characters from multiple perspectives and sources of data (textual evidence), and grow to understand one or more characters more deeply.

In unit 6, readers will understand that:

1. An author portrays a character in several dimensions to convey him or her to the reader.
2. They can understand a character not only by studying him or her individually, but also by studying characters in relation to other characters and in relation to themselves.

In unit 6, readers will be able to:

1. Identify the main character in a book in order to understand his or her role in the story;
2. Identify the roles played by other characters in a story;
3. Interpret the characters in a book by envisioning what they look like;
4. Interpret the characters in a book by envisioning how they act;
5. Interpret the characters in a book by envisioning what their character is thinking or feeling across the book;
6. Recognize and describe how characters change across a book;
7. Interpret a character by deciding if they want to be friends with him or her and explaining their rationale;
8. Interpret the main character by envisioning his or her relationships with other characters;
9. Interpret an interesting character in a book by envisioning how they are like or unlike him or her;
10. Interpret and apply several traits of their character (#3-9) to understand him or her more deeply.

Reading Workshop Unit 7: Readers Reflect on Their Reading Lives and Plan Summer Reading Projects

Readers reflect on their reading year, share these reflections with reading partners and plan a summer reading project that includes a product to share with their new classmates in September of second grade.

In unit 7, readers will understand that:

1. They have accumulated a repertoire of text and print strategies to read with meaning.
2. Reading skills developed in first grade will help them read independently during the summer.

In unit 7, readers will be able to:

1. Reflect on their reading lives in first grade: read alouds, genre, partner work, word study, literacy centers, artifacts from reading work (i.e., post-its, writing), shared reading, reading habits;
2. Reflect in writing and in partner talk on their achievements and difficulties as readers:
 - What was hard about reading this year?
 - What do I feel good about as a reader?
 - What is still hard for me as a reader?
 - What do I still want to learn as a reader?
 - What can I go out and do in the world as a reader?
3. Plan a summer reading project as follows:
 - What's my goal?
 - What materials will I need?
 - How would I share this work with others?
 - How much time do I have?
 - How much can I realistically do each day?
 - How will I know when I'm finished?
 - What other projects do I want to do?

Writing Workshop Unit 1: Launching the Writing Workshop

This unit “launches” the writing workshop with routines and stories in students’ lives. Students develop the art of storytelling, develop writing “tools”, and begin to widen writing possibilities.

In unit 1, writers will understand that:

1. Writing is an ongoing process, and that there is always more to write.
2. They write to convey meaning.

In unit 1, writers will be able to:

1. Gather ideas for writing by thinking about things they love (“hearts”);
2. Remember and apply strategies to get ready to write;
3. Generate ideas for stories by envisioning their topic (beginning, middle and end of one “heart” topic);
4. Plan their stories by touching pages, telling stories across pages and telling stories across three fingers (beginning, middle, end);
5. Plan their stories by sketching across pages (beginning, middle and end);
6. Build stamina to stay with one story (“When you think you’re done, you’ve just begun.”) by adding to their pictures and/or adding words;

7. Learn that there is always more to say in writing by adding to pictures, adding words, starting a new piece;
8. Gather ideas for writing by looking at pictures (e.g., writing folders);
9. Apply writing “tools”: writing supplies, writing spots, writing partners;
10. Approach writing with an idea in mind and envision their ideas to tell the story in pictures;
11. “Do the best they can and keep going” when they can’t draw a story idea;
12. Write like authors they admire: rehearsing/planning what they want to write, “stretching” each word, writing, rereading;
13. “Do the best they can and keep going” when they want to write an unfamiliar word (hearing and writing the main sounds);
14. Reread pieces they wrote and “wake them up” to add more to them (cf. #7);
15. Encode “the best they can and move on”;
16. Organize writing that is “done for now” and writing on which they are “still working” in the writing folder;
17. Write other than “story” forms (i.e., multiple genres) on a topic they love; e.g., story about the beach, list of items brought to the beach;
18. Write for “real-world” purposes; e.g., grocery list, letter, directions, invitation;
19. Edit their writing (“fixing up” writing) so that a word’s spelling and sounds correspond: making sure the words “look right”;
20. Edit their writing with a checklist.

Writing Workshop Unit 2: Writers Write “Small Moment” Stories by Thinking About Their Own Lives

In this unit, writers understand that they can create stories out of the details of their own experiences. Writers think of something that happened to them, picture (envision) it in their minds, sketch it on paper, write words on each page, and add detail. Writers continue to develop writing “tools”.

In unit 2, writers will understand that:

1. They can gather ideas for writing from events in their lives.
2. A vivid “small moment” tells the special parts with detail and the “inside” story.

In unit 2, writers will be able to:

1. Distinguish a vibrant, detailed story and a matter-of-fact retelling;
2. Elaborate a small moment story with details; e.g., action, dialogue, thinking, feeling;
3. Narrate a small moment story across three fingers (beginning, middle, end) to a partner;
4. Narrate their small moment stories by touching pages;
5. Envision, sketch and draft a small moment story;
6. Analyze a “long moment” to recognize several “small moments” and identify one on which to focus;
7. Collaborate with a writing partner to share previous work and discuss future writing;
8. “Stretch” a small moment story across several pages with more detail (e.g., action, dialogue, thinking, feeling) and sequence (e.g., “One day”, “All of a sudden”, “A little later”);
9. “Stretch” the sounds in words to write all the sounds they hear;
10. Sketch a “small moment” story;
11. Plan details to be added to a “small moment” story;

12. Refine storytelling to a writing partner to focus on the important or special parts of a basic story grammar (beginning, middle, end);
13. Recognize that they can write some words quickly (“sight words”) and can write other words after checking the word wall list;
14. Revise small moment stories by “zooming in” on important or special parts and eliminating other parts;
15. “Stretch” a small moment story by focusing on the “outside” story and the “inside” story (i.e., writer’s thoughts, observations, feelings, reactions to the “outside” story);
16. Edit their small moment stories with the editing checklist and their partners’ assistance.

Writing Workshop Unit 3: Writers Write in a Way That Readers Can Read Their Writing: “Small Moments” with a Focus on Conventions

In this unit, writers view their writing from the reader’s perspective as they develop strategies to write so that readers can read their writing.

In unit 3, writers will understand that:

1. They can write so readers can read their writing.
2. They can write readably by using multiple strategies and their writing partners’ perspective.

In unit 3, writers will be able to:

1. Adopt the reader’s perspective to recognize the features that make writing easier to read (i.e., spaces between words; neatness; many letters in each word);
2. Recognize that they can write certain words quickly and easily (“sight words”) without “stretching” sounds;
3. Put spaces between words;
4. Continue to “stretch” words by writing the sounds they hear;
5. Write focused “small moment” stories (i.e., “watermelon” vs. “seed” stories) by applying the strategies developed in unit 2 (e.g., envisioning, details);
6. Develop a wider repertoire of words they can spell and read in a “snap”;
7. Increase the number of stories they write while maintaining writing that is easier to read (cf. #1);
8. Provide feedback on their partners’ writing in sensitive and respectful ways;
9. Reread their own and their partners’ writing to edit (e.g., spacing, spelling);
10. Reread their own and their partners’ writing to revise (e.g., adding details);
11. Apply multiple strategies to write readably: match spoken and written stories; spell word wall words correctly; “stretch” unfamiliar words to hear as many sounds as possible; put spaces between words;
12. Identify a sentence as a complete thought with a capital letter and a period;
13. Write beginnings and endings for “small moment” stories that capture the special part of the story;
14. Revise small moment stories with multiple strategies (e.g., adding words, adding dialogue).

Writing Workshop Unit 4: Writers Write For Many Purposes

In this unit, writers collect “real life” writing for authentic purposes (e.g., letters, postcards, restaurant orders) and produce lists and note cards (e.g., birthday, get well) for authentic purposes. Writers also write letters for a specific purpose and audience.

In unit 4, writers will understand that:

1. Writers write for many purposes.
2. The purpose for writing determines its form.

In unit 4, writers will be able to:

1. Recognize exemplars of “real life” writing for authentic purposes (e.g., restaurant orders, postcards, songs, letters, shopping lists, “to do” lists);
2. Write lists for authentic purposes (e.g., items to bring to school, items to buy) in the style of the genre (e.g., single word or short phrase without punctuation or capital letters);
3. Craft note cards for authentic purposes (e.g., thank you, birthday, get well);
4. Identify the features of the “letter” genre: a longer note; written by anyone addressed to anyone; written for a specific reason; written with text conventions (i.e., date, greeting, message with words and sentences, closing, signature);
5. Craft letters to a specific individual for a given purpose, including “pen pal” letters.

Writing Workshop Unit 5: Writers Can Teach Others How to Do Something by Writing “How to” Books

In this unit, writers write to teach others how to do something. They consider, “What do I know a lot about?” as they explore procedural (“how to”) writing as a dimension of nonfiction writing.

In unit 5, writers will understand that:

1. The purpose of “how to” writing determines its form and features.
2. They adopt the perspective of the reader to determine clarity in their writing.

In unit 5, writers will be able to:

1. Adopt the perspective of a teacher as they describe and explain how to do something;
2. Analyze “how to” exemplars (mentor texts) to recognize the features of this genre;
3. Identify skills they can teach people and select a topic that has steps;
4. Use “how to” writing paper to plan their writing by touching each box and sketching each step;
5. Craft a “how to” book (i.e., materials needed; steps in sequence);
6. Reread their “how to” steps for procedural clarity with their writing partners;
7. Revise (“find and fix”) confusing sections in their texts;
8. Incorporate features of the “how to” genre (e.g., “how to” title; materials needed; pictures that teach the reader what to do; numbered steps; captions under the pictures; cautionary notes);
9. Compare their “how to” texts and exemplar (mentor) texts to determine that their text reflects what “how to” writers do;
10. Revise their “how to” texts as needed (#6-9);

11. Edit their “how to” texts for “how to” genre punctuation (e.g., periods, parentheses, colons).

Writing Workshop Unit 6: Writers Teach Others “All” About a Subject by Writing “All About” Books

In this unit, writers write to teach others “all” about a particular subject. They consider, “What do I know a lot about?” as they explore informational (“all about”) writing as a dimension of nonfiction writing.

In unit 6, writers will understand that:

1. The purpose of “all about” writing determines its form and features.
3. They adopt the perspective of the reader to determine clarity in their writing.

In unit 6, writers will be able to:

1. Adopt the perspective of a teacher as they describe and explain a particular subject;
2. Analyze “all about” exemplars (mentor texts) to recognize the features of this genre;
3. Identify possible topics about which they can teach people;
4. “Rehearse” (“try on”) several topics to decide on the best “all about” topic;
5. Craft an “all about” book to include an “all about” title, “how to” page, chapters (including “how to”, “different kinds of *something*”, “parts of *something*” chapters) or sections, headings, table of contents;
6. Select a genre and writing paper to match each chapter (table of contents);
7. Revise (“find and fix”) confusing sections in their texts;
8. Compare their “all about” texts and exemplar (mentor) texts to determine that their text reflects what “all about” writers do and to find other organizational structures to use in “all about” books;
9. Reread their “all about” texts and ask the focal question of this genre: “What do I have to teach that my readers might not already know?”;
10. Recognize that they can teach their readers names (vocabulary items) related to their topics (e.g., parts of the violin) and enact this function as needed;
11. Recognize that they can share advice or “weird facts” related to their topics and enact this function as needed;
12. Recognize that they might need to learn more about their topics before they can teach readers and pursue further learning as needed;
13. Reread their writing to determine that it is organized (#5) and excludes extraneous information: “Does my sentence fit the chapter?”;
14. Revise their “all about” texts as needed (#7-13);
15. Edit their “all about” texts as resourceful “word solvers”; i.e., looking for little words within a big word.

Writing Workshop Unit 7: Writers Learn How to Make Their “Small Moment” Stories Better by Reading and Emulating the Works of a Mentor Author or Mentor Texts

In this unit, writers develop purposeful strategies for revision, including learning from mentor authors or mentor texts. Writers learn about the basics of revision and the qualities of good writing.

In unit 7, writers will understand that:

1. They have a “toolbox” from which they can choose a single strategy or combination of strategies to meet a given writing need or accomplish an identified goal.
2. They can continue to grow and learn as writers by studying and emulating mentor texts and authors.

In unit 7, writers will be able to:

1. Apply accumulated revision strategies (i.e., rereading, envisioning one’s subject, asking, “How can I make this better?”);
2. Make a story “even better” by elaborating (“adding on”) for multiple purposes (e.g., to make a more vivid picture, build suspense, develop the main idea, show the “internal” story, develop the character);
3. Apply more complex rereading strategies in the service of revision (i.e., reread and make plans for revision; reread, make a movie in their minds and add words; reread and ask, “Where should I add that?”; reread and ask, “What parts will be confusing?”);
4. Revise effectively by adding new text to the middle of a story (using flaps) as needed;
5. Revise by adding details to their drawings;
6. Revise by adding dialogue to their stories;
7. Revise by adding missing information;
8. Revise by substituting more specific words;
9. Revise by subtracting language (e.g., unnecessary information) that doesn’t build the main idea or purpose of the text;
10. Revise effectively by using a specific tool or strategy to accomplish a given purpose (cf. #2-9);
11. Plan revision for parts of pieces that “deserve” to be enhanced, recognizing that “revision” means “to see again”;
12. Recognize from mentor texts that good writing includes an effective lead, and revise their leads as needed to write with detail, “show the weather” and make it “sound like a song”;
13. Confer about their writing by responding to “What are you working on as a writer?” with their subject and a specific writing plan or work they are doing as a writer;
14. Recognize from mentor texts that good writing “shows, not tells”, and revise their writing accordingly;
15. Recognize from mentor texts that good writing includes an effective ending that captures the “heart” of their “small moment”, and revise their endings as needed;
16. Alternate between writing and revising in a first draft, recognizing that revision need not wait until the end of a piece;
17. Increasingly rely on their writing partners as writing teachers for one another: “What’s the main thing you want to say?”;
18. Recognize that the content of a piece in one genre can be refashioned into one or more other genres: rereading and asking, “Into what other genre can I reshape this piece?”;
19. Learn from an author who has written a type of writing that they are going to explore;

20. Recognize interesting, enticing features of an author’s style or a book and ask, “Why did the author write this way?”;
21. Emulate an interesting feature of an author’s style or a book to accomplish a particular purpose in their own writing;
22. Identify a specific need in their own writing and emulate an author who can help them with this work.

Writing Workshop Unit 8: Writers Use All That They Know About Narrative Writing to Write Realistic Fiction Stories

In this unit, writers capture the difference between fiction and realistic fiction. Writers apply their knowledge of story elements to the genre of realistic fiction, and learn to tell stories and “stretch” them out across pages.

In unit 8, writers will understand that:

1. A three-dimensional (“real”) character lies at the core of a realistic fiction genre.
2. A story’s genre determines its grammar (i.e., problem-solution vs. beginning, middle, end).

In unit 8, writers will be able to:

1. Identify the elements of realistic fiction by reading a variety of realistic fiction stories;
2. Collaborate with classmates to develop a character at the core of a realistic fiction story;
3. Use the class character to tell stories using the third person perspective;
4. Develop their own characters for their realistic fiction stories;
5. Plan and draft new stories using sketches across pages;
6. Craft realistic fiction stories using story booklets (three to five pages);
7. Develop a problem (trouble and tension) for their realistic fiction stories;
8. Show characters’ internal thought;
9. Craft story actions that slow the moment;
10. Develop strong endings in which characters solve their problems;
11. Confer with a writing partner to make sure their writing sounds realistic.

Writing Workshop Unit 9: Writers Reflect on Their Writing Lives and Plan Summer Writing Projects

Writers reflect on their writing year, share these reflections with writing partners and plan a summer writing project that includes a product to share with their new classmates in September of second grade.

In unit 9, writers will understand that:

1. They have accumulated a repertoire of writer’s craft and print strategies to write for a variety of purposes.
2. Writing skills developed in first grade will help them write independently during the summer.

In unit 9, writers will be able to:

1. Reflect on their writing lives in first grade: small moments, letter writing, “how-to” books, “all about” books, realistic fiction; read aloud, partner work, word study, shared writing, writing habits;
2. Reflect in writing and in partner talk on their achievements and difficulties as writers:
 - What was hard about writing this year?
 - What do I feel good about as a writer?
 - What is still hard for me as a writer?
 - What do I still want to learn as a writer?
 - What can I go out and do in the world as a writer?
3. Plan a summer writing project as follows:
 - What’s my goal?
 - What materials will I need?
 - How would I share this work with others?
 - How much time do I have?
 - How much can I realistically do each day?
 - How will I know when I’m finished?
 - What other projects do I want to do?

V. INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES

The reading and writing workshops incorporate a variety of instructional techniques to meet the continuum of learners’ interests, learning profiles and readiness levels. Differentiation is the commitment and mechanism through which the developmental needs of a range of readiness levels are met. Differentiated instruction is accomplished through pre-assessment and ongoing formative assessment that inform independent work, the small group strategy lesson and the individual conference. Differentiation in content, product and/or process addresses the needs of exceptionally able students, and scaffolding of varying degree is provided to support less ready students in meeting worthy and appropriately rigorous learning outcomes. Instructional objectives, strategies and materials emphasize relevance, authenticity, and student-centered learning.

Instructional techniques in the reading workshop include the following:

- Using a reading log
- Word study
- Literacy centers
- Writing about reading
- Shared reading
- Mini-lessons (connection, teaching point, modeling, active student engagement, link to independent work)
- Independent reading
- Partnership talk (including retelling)
- Whole class sharing
- Read aloud with teacher modeling/thinking aloud
- Read aloud with accountable talk (“turn and talk”)

- Small group strategy lesson
- Individual reading conference
- Shared reading with “big books” and companion “little” books

Instructional techniques in the writing workshop include the following:

- Using a writing folder
- Word study
- Literacy centers
- Shared writing
- Mini-lessons (connection, teaching point, modeling, active student engagement, link to independent work)
- Independent writing
- Mid-workshop interruption
- Partnership talk
- Whole class sharing
- Read aloud with teacher modeling/thinking aloud
- Read aloud with accountable talk (“turn and talk”)
- Small group strategy lesson
- Individual writing conference
- Interactive writing (e.g., chart stories)

VI. ASSESSMENT

Assessment in the reading workshop includes **interim/formative assessments of the reading life, including performance assessment:**

- Periodic teacher-student reading conferences to assess development of unit skills (performance assessment of fluency, thinking during reading, decoding and comprehension problem-solving skills)
- Periodic review of the reading log to assess developing stamina (i.e., length of independent reading time and number of pages read)
- Teachers’ observation of students’ independent reading behavior (i.e., stamina for focused reading, decoding and comprehension problem-solving skills)
- Teachers’ observation of students’ partnership reading (i.e., retelling, accountable talk)
- November and March criterion-referenced report card assessment (“reading” and “comprehension” indicators)

Assessment in the reading workshop includes **summative assessments of the reading life, including performance assessment:**

- Teachers College running record assessment to identify students’ baseline and maturing independent reading levels

- End-of-unit “celebrations” in which students demonstrate integrated use of the reading skills (decoding and comprehension problem solving) taught in the unit
- June criterion-referenced report card assessment (“reading” and “comprehension” indicators)

Assessment in the writing workshop includes **interim/formative assessments of the writing life, including performance assessment:**

- Students’ drafts (leading to a “published” piece) in each unit
- Periodic teacher-student writing conferences to assess development of unit skills (performance assessment of planning, writing and problem solving)
- Periodic review of the writing folder to assess developing stamina (i.e., number of pieces and “staying with” a piece [revision, editing])
- Teachers’ observation of students’ independent writing behavior (i.e., stamina for focused writing, encoding and content problem-solving skills)
- Teachers’ observation of students’ partnership writing (i.e., questioning, suggestions for revision and editing)
- Students’ use of the editing checklist to self-assess mechanics (e.g., capitalization, punctuation, spelling)
- November and March criterion-referenced report card assessment (“writing” indicators)

Assessment in the writing workshop includes **summative assessments of the writing life, including performance assessment:**

- “Published” piece in each unit (maintained in the writing folder)
- Baseline writing assessment to identify students’ benchmark skills in content and organization, usage, sentence construction and mechanics (adaptation of the New Jersey Registered Holistic Scoring rubric criteria) (portfolio piece)
- End-of-unit “celebrations” in which students “publish” and share the unit’s topic/genre piece
- Students’ year-end review of the writing folder to self-assess growth in the writing life
- Teacher’s year-end review of the writing folder to assess growth in the writing life
- June criterion-referenced report card assessment (“writing” indicators)