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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
The District of South Orange-Maplewood would like to acknowledge and thank the following staff member for their invaluable contributions:
Donna Grohman
Unit Description: The Arc of Story: Writing Realistic Fiction – Book 1

Fiction writers get their ideas by paying attention to the moments and issues in their lives. Students will collect ideas for possible fiction stories. Once students have chosen a story idea, they need to know their characters well, and focus on their wants and needs. Then, students create a story arc with a clear rising and falling action. This helps to develop strong scenes in the planning stages of the unit. By the end of the unit, students are taught how to develop, plan and carry through their own independent fiction projects. By doing this they are given the skills they need to feel confident when writing in any genre.

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<tr>
<th>Writing</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Big Ideas:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Students will strive towards independence and dramatic growth in the level of their writing.</td>
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<td>• Students will understand the routines and structures of writing workshop.</td>
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<td>• Students can develop and strengthen their writing as needed by planning, revising, trying new approaches, and editing</td>
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<tr>
<th>Time Line: September-October</th>
<th>Duration of Unit: 5-6 Weeks</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Essential Questions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Enduring Understandings</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</td>
<td>What will students understand about the big ideas?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What makes a realistic fiction story?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• How can I use the moments and issues in my life to create a believable fictional world with complex characters, using a story arc to ensure that my characters struggle, address their problems, and come to some sort of resolution?</td>
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<td>• How can I study the work of published authors to develop a story that has meaningful scenes, including dialogue, thought, and action, as well as strong leads and endings?</td>
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<td>Students will understand that...</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Writers explore ideas for fiction stories and techniques for storytelling (story arc).</td>
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<td>• Writers write with volume and stamina.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Storytelling is an effective strategy over summarizing for writing stories.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Acting out and planning with a partner, can help a writer gain a vision for their own writing.</td>
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NEW JERSEY STUDENT LEARNING STANDARDS

ELA Curriculum 2017-2018
Progress Indicators for Writing

W.4.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using narrative technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
   A. Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
   B. Use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.
   C. Use a variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events.
   D. Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.
   E. Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

W.4.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

W.4.5. With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.

W.4.6. 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 one page in a single sitting.

Progress Indicators for Speaking and Listening

SL.4.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.

   A. Explicitly draw on previously read text or material and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.
   B. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles.
   C. Pose and respond to specific questions to clarify or follow up on information, and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to the remarks of others.
   D. Review the key ideas expressed and explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.

Progress Indicators for Language - Conventions of Standard English

L.4.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

   A. Use relative pronouns (who, whose, whom, which, that) and relative adverbs (where, when, why).
   B. Form and use the progressive (e.g., I was walking; I am walking; I will be walking) verb tenses.
   C. Use modal auxiliaries (e.g., can, may, must) to convey various conditions.
   D. Order adjectives within sentences according to conventional patterns (e.g., a small red bag rather than a red small bag).
   E. Form and use prepositional phrases.
   F. Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.
   G. Correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., to, too, two; there, their).
L.4.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
   A. Use correct capitalization.
   B. Use commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text.
   C. Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence.
   D. Spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed.

Knowledge of Language
L.4.3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
   A. Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.
   B. Choose punctuation for effect.
   C. Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion).

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use
L.4.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 4 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
   A. Use context (e.g., definitions, examples, or restatements in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
   B. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., telegraph, photograph, autograph).
   C. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.

L.4.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
   A. Explain the meaning of simple similes and metaphors (e.g., as pretty as a picture) in context.
   B. Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs.
   C. Demonstrate understanding of words by relating them to their opposites (antonyms) and to words with similar but not identical meanings (synonyms).

L.4.6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quized, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TECHNOLOGY STANDARDS AND 21ST CENTURY SKILLS</th>
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<tr>
<td>The following skills and themes listed should be reflected in the design of units and lessons for this course or content area.</td>
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<tr>
<td>21st Century Themes (as applies to content area):</td>
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<td>Financial, Economic, Business,</td>
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ELA Curriculum 2017-2018
21st Century Skills:
- Creativity and Innovation
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Communication and Collaboration
- Information Literacy
- Media Literacy
- Life and Career Skills

and Entrepreneurial Literacy
- Civic Literacy
- Health Literacy

PRE AND POST ASSESSMENT

Pre Assessment
Before beginning the unit, writers should complete an ‘on-demand’ writing prompt as a starting point for instruction. The on-demand piece is a personal narrative, small moment story of a time in their life. They should focus on a just a scene or two. They will have 40 minutes to plan, draft, revise, and edit.

Students should have familiar paper to write on and a supply of additional pages.

“I’m really eager to understand what you can do as writers of narratives, of stories, so today, you will be writing the best personal narrative, the best small moment story, a story of one time in your life. You will have one writing workshop session to write this true story, so you’ll need to plan, draft, revise, and edit in one setting. Write in a way that shows all that you know about narrative writing.”

“When you get your paper/booklet, think about how you want to organize your writing. You will have one writing workshop session to finish your narrative writing piece.”

In your writing, make sure you:
- Write a beginning for your story.
- Use transition words to tell what happened in order.
- Elaborate to help readers picture your story.
- Show what your story is really about.
- Write an ending for your story.

Use the Narrative Writing Learning Progression to assess what your students already know about narrative writing and begin planning teaching points.

Post-Assessment – can be the same as the pre assessment.

Grammar and Conventions

Sentence Structure
- Write complete sentences with noun and verb
- Place clauses in sentences
- Place phrases in sentences
Parts of Speech
- Use nouns and pronouns that are in agreement
- Use objective and nominative case pronouns correctly (me, him, her, I, he she)
- Use indefinite and relative pronouns correctly (everyone, both; who, whom)

Tense
- Maintain consistency of tense

Paragraphing
- Understand and use paragraph structure (indented or block) to organize sentences that focus on one idea
- Create transitions between paragraphs to show the progression of ideas
- Understand and use paragraphing to show speaker change in dialogues

Capitalization
- Use a capital letter for the first word of a sentence
- Use capital letters appropriately for the first letter in days, months, holidays, city and state names, and titles of books
- Use capital letters correctly in dialogue

Punctuation
- Learn about the possibility of using punctuation and its effect on readers by studying mentor texts
- Notice effective or unusual use of punctuation marks by authors
- Try new ways of using punctuation

Spelling
- Spell a large number of high-frequency words (500+), a wide range of plurals, and base words with inflectional endings
- Use a range of spelling strategies to take apart and spell multi-syllable words-word parts, connections to known words, complex sound-to-letter relationships
### Resources and Materials

- Student writing notebooks
- Mentor text, such as Julie Brinkloe’s *Fireflies!* or another picture book with a realistic plotline and few central characters
- Create a class generated fictional story to use as you model strategies
- Short story mentor text such as *The Marble Champ*
- Drafting booklets (stapled together draft paper) for scenes
- TC Narrative Writing Checklist Grades 4 and 5 from The Pathways Book – Units of Study for Opinion, Information and Narrative Writing
GOALS AND MINI-LESSONS

Bend 1: Creating and Developing Stories and Characters that Feel Real

GOALS: Spend a few days teaching the routines and management of writing workshop. During this time you can read aloud mentor texts of realistic fiction stories that you will refer to in your mini lessons. Students will develop story ideas and collect entries that could possibly become fiction stories. In their notebooks, students will not write possible stories, but rather plans for how their stories might go, developing ideas and characters. Students will create a story arc, creating two to three strong scenes to show a character and the plot. Students will not actually draft their story until Bend 2.

Mini-Lessons:
 Writers think about past writing experiences and think, “How can we make this the best year for us as writers?” (Launching)
  - Writers do this by thinking and jotting quickly about a time when writing was a particularly good thing or a hard thing, and then discussing with a partner/small group/whole class.
  - Create a chart, The Kind of Writing Community We Want...

Session 1 - Imagining Stories from Ordinary Moments (pages 2-11)
  - Writers rely on strategies learned from previous grades to generate possible fiction story ideas (ex. thinking of a strong feeling helps you remember how embarrassed you were as a kid when you tripped and fell when square dancing in school, then gives you an idea for a possible fiction stories: A girl who is dreading going to P.E. because she knows she has to square dance so she pretends to be hurt).
  - Writers jot small moments from their life and fictional entries that sound as if thinking on the page: “I’m thinking I might...” or “later I could tell about.” Write about 5-6 sentences of a story idea, skip a line and try out a different idea.

Session 2 - Imagining Stories We Wish Existed in the World (pages 12-18)
  - Writers think of stories they wish existed and write a few sentences about how the story might go and what the character might want. (Ex. Kid comes to school at the start of 4th grade and isn’t as tall as the others, he used to be great at basketball, but now his height gets in the way, the kids call him a shrimp)
Session 3 - Developing Believable Characters (pages 19-30)

- Writers do this by listing external and internal features of their main character on a T-chart making sure the traits cohere ex. Boy who is called shrimp is short (external) and sensitive (internal)
- Advice for Developing a Character:
  1. Start with whatever you’ve decided matters to you about your character. Is he or she like you?
  2. Put together a character so that all the parts fit together into a coherent person.
  3. Reread often, asking, ‘Do these different things make sense within one person? Do they fit together in a believable way? Are these traits here for a reason?’
  4. Open up any broad, general descriptors – words like sensitive – and ask, ‘What exactly does this word, this trait, mean for this particular character?’
  5. If a character seems too good to be true, make the character more complex and more human by asking, ‘What is the downside of this trait? How does this characteristic help and hurt the character?’
  6. Know your character’s motivations (longings) and struggles. Writers know what their character wants and keeps them from getting it. They ask, ‘What does the character really want and what struggles will get in the way?’ Writers create little scenes (not summaries) that show character’s wants and struggles.

Session 4 - Giving Characters Struggles and Motivations (pages 31-40)

- One way writers increase suspense and tension in stories is by raising the stakes for what the characters want (ex. time limit for when something needs to be finished, make consequences for doing or not doing something matter more, make it challenging for characters to act (laryngitis, untied shoelace), etc.)
- Writers update story arc to include tension.

Session 5 - Plotting with a Story Arc (pages 41-51)

- Writers spend time planning how the plot will go, making sure there is an arc to the story, trying again and again until the plan feels just right.
- Writers try 2-3 arcs (a hill shape – plot points that move the character toward a moment when he or she solves a problem, confronts someone, changes, or learns something), each time improving on the one before, and choosing the best one.
- Writers think about only 2-3 small moment scenes.

Differentiation:

If a story arc seems too complex for some students they can fold a sheet of paper into fourths: quickly sketching how the story will unfold – writer must be able to storytell the entire story of what he or she might write on each page. Remind struggling writers how stories tend to go: character will want something, but something gets in the way, so my character does something to tackle the trouble and the
story ends. Writers should make multiple story booklets, before deciding which is best.

**Additional Possible Teaching Points:**
(Can be taught during minilesson, mid-workshop, or small group instruction)
- Demonstrate and identify ways in which books include author’s craft, thinking processes and purposes. Examples of Author's Craft include: repetition, similes, italics, ellipses, onomatopoeia, sensory details, vivid verbs, multiple adjectives, dialogue, personification
- Model (your notebook) / brainstorm what writer's notebooks look like.
- Rehearsal before writing draft
- Character's traits and motivations lead character to encounter struggles
- Writing short stories, include only 2-3 Small Moment stories
- Include what your character thinks/feels of himself or herself
- Characters are complex, they have good and bad traits
- Plot the story arc of a mentor text you can use as a model for your own

**Bend II: Drafting and Revising with an Eye toward Believability**

**GOALS:** In this bend, students will shift from planning to drafting. They will transfer each moment (2-3 Small Moments) from their story arc to its own page in a drafting booklet. Students will draft their stories across several pages, with the first two or three pages telling one Small Moment story, and the next two or three pages telling the story of a second scene.

**Mini-Lessons**
**Session 6 - Show, Don't Tell Planning and Writing Scenes (pages 55-64)**
- Writers have the character talk and think. They describe a small action and make the character move/react.
- Realistic fiction stories are made of scenes, or Small Moments. Writers plan and write each scene on the story arc. They each become a page in the drafting booklet.
- Writers transfer their story arc onto a story booklet, add a lead to page one and begin drafting a scene.
- Writers refer to the Narrative Writing Checklist as they continue to draft.

**Session 7 - Feeling and Drafting the Heart of Your Story (pages 65-73)**
- Writers find the most important part of the story and stretch it out by using narrative techniques, i.e. dialogue, description, and action.
- **GRAMMAR:** Writers use strong nouns and verbs, not relying on adjectives and adverbs to prop them up - the young dog is a puppy, and if the man walked quietly, he tiptoed.” (pg. 71)
Session 8 - Studying Published Texts to Write Leads (pages 74-85)
- Writers study a published lead (from one of the mentor texts you’ve previously read aloud) and notice what made it powerful. They ask, “What did this author do that I could do?”
- Writers revise their lead by drafting several possible leads in their notebook and picking the best one.

Session 9 - Orienting Readers with Setting (pages 86-99)
- Writers reread their draft, asking “Will this make sense to the readers? Will my readers know where my characters are?” If not, they revise to add setting.
- GRAMMAR: Writers put quotation marks before and after a direct quotation (someone’s exact words). Writers capitalize the first word of a direction quotation. Writers place punctuation marks inside the quotation marks. Writers put a comma before the first quotation mark.

Session 10 - Writing Powerful Endings (pages 100-108)
- Writers revise their ending by asking:
  - Can the reader see evidence of the main character’s evolution?
  - Does my ending make sense or come out of nowhere?
  - Are the loose ends tied up? Have I answered the reader’s key questions?
  - Have I revealed everything I need to for the story’s purpose?
- Writers revise their ending by drafting several possible endings in their notebook and picking the best one.

Additional Possible Teaching Points
(Can be taught during minilesson, mid-workshop, or small group instruction):
- When writers move from page to page in their story the character’s troubles escalate, getting worse and worse
- Writers read mentor text to find inspiration for their stories.
- Be writing teachers for each other Partners help revise
- Revising leads
- Writers refer to the Narrative Writing Checklist to help them revise their story
- Writers use dialogue for a reason, such as to show something about a character.
Bend III: Preparing for a Publication with an Audience in Mind

GOALS: Students will prepare a more focused draft, deep revision work, and editing. Revision lessons will start early, even with many students still drafting since the stories will be long.

Mini-Lessons
Session 11 - Revision: Rereading with a Lens (pages 110-116)
- Writers continuously stop and reread through their draft, thinking about how to make it better, such as asking, ‘Is the character believable?’
- Writers study published text, noticing what the author has done and asking, ‘Are there places in my draft where I could do that?’ They find places in the text that seem powerful and name what the author is doing, then look at their own writing and find places where it would help their draft to try something similar.

Session 12 - Making a Space for Writing (pages 117-124)
- Writers refer to the Narrative Writing Checklist - Grades 4 & 5, noticing what they have already learned, and therefore should include in their writing, and what they will learn more about later.
- GRAMMAR: Writers use prepositional phrases to communicate complexity. (pg. 121) Writers identify fragments and run-ons to correct and form complete sentences. Writers use a comma before the coordinating conjunction in compound sentences. Writers vary their sentences by using the three basic sentence structures: simple, compound, complex.

Session 13 - Using Mentor Texts to Flesh Out Characters (pages 125-133)
- Writers demonstrate applying specific techniques they have noted from the mentor text to their own writing.
- Students will use a mentor text, studying an excerpt for what they might try. Students will meet with their partner and refer to the class story discussing ways to apply what they discover.
- Teachers will share examples of actions revealing emotions. They will remind writers they can do this in their own writing.

Session 14 - Editing with Various Lenses (pages 134-142)
- Teachers - Decide what areas students need help with most. Students can spend more than one day editing.
- Writers reread a draft many times, checking for one sort of editing concern
- Writers use an editing checklist to edit and revise
- Writing partners edit one another’s draft using a checklist
- GRAMMAR: Writers capitalize proper nouns. Writers put quotation marks before and after a direct quotation.
Session 15 - Publishing Anthologies (pages 143-148)

- Writers will type their final copy. They may include a cover, illustrations, dedication page, “meet the author” page, and/or a blurb on the back cover.
- Students celebrate their work by having a writing celebration. Students can share their story (partners, small groups, swap stories) and jot compliments for classmates.
Bend IV: Embarking on Independent Fiction Projects

GOALS: In this bend, students will work on independence through partner work. They will gear their writing toward a particular audience and independently revise and edit their work.

Mini-lessons:

Session 16 - Launching Independent Fiction Projects (pages 150-152)
- Writers look at all they know and examine the repertoire of strategies they know for independent work time.
- Students will choose a story idea to writing about. They will review character work from earlier bends and share ideas with their partners.

Session 17 - Planning and Drafting Stories with Agency (pages 153-161)
- Writers study their own best work to remind themselves of what they are capable of doing. They remind themselves of mentor texts they have studied that have influenced their writing. Teachers can model studying a story arc to identify what they did well and want to include in the class piece, as well as what to do differently this time.
- Mid-workshop: Make a pacing calendar.

Session 18 - Mining the Connections Between Reading and Writing Fiction (pages 162-169)
- Students think about what they do as a reader and as a group rename them as strategies a fiction writer can use. Teachers can share what they notice that readers do when they are reading.
- Students look through their current stack of books and find one they think is worth studying as writers. Teachers encourage them to work with their partner and articulate the reasons they determined which book to study.

Session 19 - Focusing the Reader’s Gaze (pages 170-176)
- Writers determine what focus their writing piece will take. Teachers will introduce a video clip, recruiting writers to notice close-ups, medium shots, and wide shots. Students will re-watch the video, this time with students assigned to different angles to focus on, looking to understand why the filmmaker made those choices.
- Writers sometimes describe some aspects of their stories with more encompassing detail and some with the tiniest detail, depending on the purpose. Teachers will model revising with an eye toward the angle of a camera.
- Students will revise their draft with camera angles in mind.
- Students will revisit the Narrative Writing with increasing independence.

Using Punctuation for Effect (Session 20 pages 177-185)
• Teachers will demonstrate returning to a draft with an eye toward revising with punctuation in mind. Show how writers can consider using punctuation for clarity and effect.

Session 21 - Surveying Your Work and Planning for the Future (page 186-187)
• Students will share their work to celebrate.
**Instructional Strategies**

**Interdisciplinary Connections**
*Correlates to any science, math, or social studies unit of study*
- Students can explore topics to write about related to any subject matter.

**Technology Integration**
- Use rapid fire inspiration to brainstorm ideas for your writing topic
- Use Timeliner to flush out the beginning, middle, and end events of your story
- Use KidPix to draw ideas and then write about them.
- Use Microsoft Word to publish your final story.
- Write a script for a podcast sharing a small moment from your life
- Help your peers by offering writing suggestions and posting writing for feedback on a classroom blog or forum
- Media Literacy Integration
- Skype with students in other classes or schools and share their writing/storytelling

**Global Perspectives**
Students can write about their thoughts and feelings of world events and issues. Read from the following books during read alouds or shared reading.
- Buffalo Bill by Ingri and Edgar Parin d’Aulaire
- Cassie’s Journey: Going West in the 1860s by Brett Harvey
- Dandelions by Eve Bunting
- Going West! Journey on a Wagon Train to Settle a Frontier Town by C. Johmann
- Long Way to a New Land (I Can Read Series)

**Professional Resources:**
- The Arc of the Story: Writing Realistic Fiction. Lucy Calkins and Colleen Cruz Units of Study in Opinion, Information and Narrative Writing
- Adapted from Branchburg Township Schools District Curriculum Guides
Unit Description: Boxes and Bullets: Personal and Persuasive Essays – Book 2

Students will develop thesis statements to use when writing essays. Students will learn a variety of more sophisticated strategies for introducing their topics, and students will learn to provide reasons to support their opinions, as well as facts and details to elaborate on these reasons. They will collect mini-stories to support reasons as well as lists. They will then organize this evidence by selecting the most powerful. They will learn to use the introduction of a piece to orient and engage the reader and the conclusion to provide final related thinking. Then, students move from personal to persuasive essay. They will develop a plan for a persuasive essay. They will be work through the process of developing and drafting an essay with greater independence, transferring and applying all that they have learned.

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<td><strong>Big Ideas:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Developing quality thesis statements</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Structure of expository writing</td>
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<td>• Writers will use transitional words</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Writers will provide support for a claim in ways that chunk the supportive evidence into logically grouped categories</td>
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<th>Time Line: November-December</th>
<th>Duration of Unit – 6 Weeks</th>
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<th>Essential Questions</th>
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<tr>
<td>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</td>
<td>What will students understand about the big ideas?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What is the difference between expository and narrative writing?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• How can I use “boxes and bullets” to plan and organize generalized personal opinions and then transfer this work to generate a persuasive essay with reasons supported through mini-stories and lists?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• How do writers become helpful partners to each other during the writing process?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• How can I raise the level of my personal and persuasive essay writing, in particular by working on structure, development and language conventions?</td>
<td>Students will understand that...</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Writers will learn to write well within an expository structure, first writing personal essays and then writing a persuasive essay.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Using specific structures, language conventions and strategies helps my readers to better understand my ideas, when I am writing a persuasive essay.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Writers will apply a variety of more sophisticated strategies in fourth grade, for introducing their topics, providing reasons to support their opinions, as well as facts and details to elaborate on these reasons.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Using a specific format when developing nonfiction writing helps a writer to organize their ideas and keep their reader interested.</td>
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NEW JERSEY STUDENT LEARNING STANDARDS

Progress Indicators for Writing

Text Type and Purposes
W.4.1. Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
   A. Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer’s purpose.
   B. Provide reasons that are supported by facts from texts and/or other sources.
   C. Link opinion and reasons using words and phrases (e.g., for instance, in order to, in addition).
   D. Provide a conclusion related to the opinion presented.

W.4.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
   A. Introduce a topic clearly and group related information in paragraphs and sections; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
   B. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, text evidence, or other information and examples related to the topic.
   C. Link ideas within paragraphs and sections of information using words and phrases (e.g., another, for example, also, because).
   D. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
   E. Provide a conclusion related to the information or explanation presented.

Production and Distribution of Writing

W.4.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
W.4.5. With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.
W.4.6. 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 one page in a single sitting.

Progress Indicators for Speaking and Listening

SL.4.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.
   A. Explicitly draw on previously read text or material and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.
   B. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles.
   C. Pose and respond to specific questions to clarify or follow up on information, and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to the remarks of others.
   D. Review the key ideas expressed and explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.

SL.4.2. Paraphrase portions of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, and orally).
SL.4.3. Identify the reasons and evidence a speaker provides to support particular points.
Progress Indicators for Language

Conventions of Standard English

L.4.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
   A. Use relative pronouns (who, whose, whom, which, that) and relative adverbs (where, when, why).
   B. Form and use the progressive (e.g., I was walking; I am walking; I will be walking) verb tenses.
   C. Use modal auxiliaries (e.g., can, may, must) to convey various conditions.
   D. Order adjectives within sentences according to conventional patterns (e.g., a small red bag rather than a red small bag).
   E. Form and use prepositional phrases.
   F. Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.
   G. Correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., to, too, two; there, their).

L.4.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
   A. Use correct capitalization.
   B. Use commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text.
   C. Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence.
   D. Spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed.

Knowledge of Language

L.4.3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
   A. Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.
   B. Choose punctuation for effect.
   C. Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion).

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

L.4.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 4 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
   A. Use context (e.g., definitions, examples, or restatements in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
   B. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., telegraph, photograph, autograph).
   C. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.
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<tr>
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ELA Curriculum 2017-2018
## PRE AND POST ASSESSMENT

Before beginning the unit, writers complete an on-demand writing prompt as a starting point for instruction. Students should have familiar paper to write on and a supply of additional pages.

"Think of a topic or issue that you know and care about, an issue around which you have strong feelings (ex. recess, lunch food, bedtime, cell phones, school uniforms, or year-round schooling). You will have forty minutes to write an opinion or argumentative piece, in which you will write your opinion or claim and tell reasons why you feel that way. Be sure to draw on everything you know about, plan, draft, revise, and edit in one sitting."

In your writing, make sure you:
- Write an introduction
- State your opinion or claim
- Give reasons and evidence
- Organize your writing
- Acknowledge counterclaims
- Use transition words
- Write a conclusion"

Use the Opinion Writing Rubric to score assessments.

### Formative and Summative (*) Assessments:
- Pre-assessment/Post-assessment * (online resources)
- Published Writing

### Other Evidence
- Conferring notes/records of conferences, small groups
- Teacher observations
- Prewrites
- Random collection of notebooks
- Rough drafts
- Partner conversation
## Grammar and Conventions

**Based on assessment, teach the following in Unit 2: Boxes and Bullets**

**Sentence Structure**
- Use conventional sentence structures for complex sentneces with embedded clauses
- Write simple and compound sentences

**Parts of Speech**
- Use prepositions and prepositional phrases correctly
- Use verbs that are often misused (lie, lay; rise, raise)
- Use verbs and objects that are often misused ([verb] to her and me; she and I [verb])

**Tense**
- Maintain consistency of tense

**Paragraphing**
- Understand and use paragraph structure (indented or block) to organize sentences that focus on one idea
- Create transitions between paragraphs to show the progression of ideas
- Understand and use paragraphing to show speaker change in dialogue

**Capitalization**
- Use capitalization for specialized functions (emphasis, key information, voice)
- Use a capital letter for the first word of a sentence
- Use capital letters appropriately for the first letter in days, months, holidays, city and state names, and titles of books
- Use capital letters correctly in dialogue

**Punctuation**
- Consistently use periods, exclamation points, and question marks as ending marks
- Use commas and quotation marks correctly in writing interrupted and uninterrupted dialogue
- Use apostrophes in contractions and possessives
- Use commas to identify a series and to introduce clauses

**Spelling**
- Spell complex plurals correctly (knife, knives; woman, women; sheep, sheep)
- Be aware of the spelling of common suffixes (for example, ion, ment, ly)
Teacher Notes

Suggestions:
- This unit does not teach students everything about essay writing, but rather it focuses on teaching a few key qualities.
- In this unit, students will collect evidence, but it will not be research based and it does not yet involve quotations from texts.
- This unit places an emphasis on the more foundational aspects of this kind of writing: structure and elaboration.

Materials
- Boxes and Bullets: Personal and Persuasive Essays by Lucy Calkins, Kelly Boland Hohne, and Cory Gillette (book 2 in Writing Units of Study)
- Breathing Life into Essays by Lucy Calkins and Cory Gillette (found in previous Writing Units of Study, Grades 3-5)
- Your own demonstration writing to model your teaching points.
- Student writing notebooks
- Opinion Writing Checklist Grades 4 and 5
- Editing checklist
GOALS AND MINI-LESSONS

Bend I: Essayists Grow Ideas

GOALS: Students will engage in the whole process of writing this new kind of text: “essay boot camp.” Students will spend a few days gathering entries in their notebooks, writing long about ideas, people, objects, events, and so on. Students will notice what makes strong, free-writing by looking at mentor examples. Students will use what they’ve written in their notebooks to develop thesis statements, and build plans for their essay.

Mini Lessons

Session 1 - Essay Structure Boot Camp (pages 2-13)

- Writers structure their essays in a boxes and bullets framework. First, they write about their opinion, to communicate the thesis statement (their idea), then they include reasons for the thesis statement.
- SUGGESTION: Kick off the unit by leading the class in a guided practice session in which you and the class co-create a quick personal essay on a shared topic (e.g. “I love ice cream.”) with each student (or partnership) writing a version of the essay that the class is working on (see charts on pages 7-8).

Session 2 - 5 - Collecting Ideas as Essayists (pages 15-57)

ANCHOR CHART: Strategies for Generating Essay Entries

- Writers think of a person, place, or object that matters to them, and then list specific ideas. They take one of those ideas and write about it. (Session 2)
- Writers use other strategies to develop ideas. They might picture a scene in their minds, something that really matters to them such as playing at recess. As they observe that scene in their mind, they begin writing, “The thought I have about this is...” (Session 2 Mid-Workshop)
- Writers can also free-write (anchor chart: Qualities of Good Free-writing p. 29 & 33). Writers can start writing about a new idea or an old entry they want to revise. (Session 3)
- Essayists extend their first ideas and use writing as a way of generating new thinking. They do this by elaborating on their ideas by using thought prompts (anchor chart: Ways to Push Our Thinking, page 38). (Session 4)
- Essayists can also push their thinking by rereading entries in their notebook and asking, “What bigger idea might this entry be about? What does this make me realize? What do I want readers to know about this?” or “What does this teach about me?” They can then start writing, “The thought I have about this is...” and then keep writing to grow more thoughts. (Session 5) Writers develop a seed idea into a thesis or opinion statement. (Session 5 Mid-Workshop and Share) (Anchor chart: To Develop a Thesis, I... See page 54).
- Writers can ask themselves, “What new idea does this make me realize?” They can, frame it as a possible thesis statement (or several thesis statements).
Session 6 - Boxes and Bullets: Framing Essays (pages 58-67)

- Writers make sure their essays are strong in both form and content. They do this saying their thesis, then saying because, to generate reasons that support their claim. Writers plan their boxes (thesis/opinion statement) and bullets (supporting reasons).

SUGGESTION: Have students stay at the rug to complete their essay outline, while partners and you are there to coach in.
  - Collect their plans at the end of the workshop to look over.
  - Plan to confer with writers who need support. Have all writers on the right track toward developing essays before Bend 2.
- Writers revise their thesis statement to match their reasons (see page 66).

Additional Possible Teaching Points:
(Can be taught during mini-lesson, mid-workshop, small group instruction, or share)
  - Students set writing goals by looking over the Opinion Writing Checklist.
  - Writers flash draft essays often (can be done for homework).
  - Writers use everything they previously learned about hooking their readers in their introductions and writing a powerful ending.

Session 7 - Return to Boot Camp (pages 68-72)

- Writers work together to create a shared essay. Students will work independently to flash draft.

Bend II: Raising the level of essay writing

GOALS: Students will write out the evidence to support the reasons for their opinion. Students will collect mini-stories and lists to support reasons. Students will organize evidence by selecting the most powerful and revising it to angle all information to support their reasons. Students will construct a draft using transition words and phrases. Students will develop an introduction to engage the reader and a conclusion for final thinking. Students will self-assess to determine growth (compare draft to pre-assessment). Students will revise and edit with goals in mind.

Mini-Lessons

Session 8 - Composing and Sorting Mini-Stories (pages 74-85)

- Writers generate stories to support their thesis. They select one story and draft it (“For example, one time, I...”) telling the tiny story step by step - telling only the parts that support the thesis. Students plan to write a couple of stories in one folder today and then a couple in another folder, and try to add to the third folder (anchor chart: Guidelines for Writing Supporting Stories for Essays, page 84).

Session 9 - Creating Parallelism in Lists (pages 86-93)

- Writers gather a lot of different material to write their essays, including lists, and they decide which material should go in their essays. Students learn that one way to do this is by turning some possible micro-stories into lists – by repeating the keywords of the reason, making sure it matches the reason (see example on page 88).
Session 10 - Organizing for Drafting (pages 94-103)

- Writers reread through each piece of evidence, thinking about whether the evidence supports their reasons, and revising any evidence to make sure every bit matches the reason (adding more parts to match the reason and cutting parts that don’t).

Anchor chart: Steps to Take before you Draft, page 95.

- Writers can also check material before drafting by checking to make sure they have material based on different information (see page 99).
- Writers talk through essay drafts to help organize their thoughts (see page 101).

Session 11 - Building a Cohesive Draft (pages 104-111)

- Writers assemble those materials together today by using several techniques: arrange writing pieces in an order they choose, use transition words, and repeat key words from their thesis statement and topic sentence.
- Writers order their reasons and evidence (see page 109).
- Writers select words to make their organization strong (see page 110).

Session 12 - Becoming Our Own Job Captains (pages 112-119)

- Writers solve their own problems, taking ownership of the writing process by developing their own systems. They do this by figuring out plans for getting each part of their writing done. First, they think back over everything they know how to do and then make a plan for the upcoming parts of their writing. Finally, writers refer to charts and their own writing to remind them of writing moves they know how to do (see example of a to-do list on page 114).
- GRAMMAR: Guidelines for Paragraphing (pg. 117)

Session 13 - Writing Introductions and Conclusions (pages 120-127)

- Strong writers use the introduction of a piece to orient and engage the reader. (Anchor chart: Ways to Start an Essay and Ways to End an Essay, page 122) They write a few possible introductions, and then choose the best one to include in their draft.
- Writers use the conclusion to provide final related thinking. (see page 126).

Session 14 - Revise Our Work with Goals in Mind (pages 128-134)

- Writers read through each section to make sure the information in that section goes together and supports that part of the essay.
- Writers look at the Opinion Writing Checklist. Writers ask, “Am I living up to the goals I set for myself? Am I getting better? What should I work on next?”
- Writers transfer their revision plans to their on-demand piece (pre-assessment see page 134).
Session 15 - Correcting Run-On Sentences and Fragments (pages 135-139)

- Writers check that each sentence is complete. They correct run-on sentences and sentence fragments.
- Writers reread their essay multiple times, each time focusing through a different lens, such as:
  - Reread for sense and missing words.
  - Edit for punctuation.
  - Check for capital letters at the beginning of new sentences, when using proper nouns, or when giving someone's title.
  - Check that known, high-frequency words are spelled correctly.

Additional Possible Teaching Points:
(Can be taught during mini-lesson, mid-workshop, small group instruction, or share)

- Conferring and Small Group Work: paragraphing, using transition words, and revising
- Writers check their work for evidence that they are following the “Guidelines for Writing Supporting Stories for Essays” (anchor chart)
- Writers revise all of their flash drafts using what they have learned about revising an opinion essay.

Bend III: Personal to Persuasive

GOALS: Writers will develop persuasive opinions that are more generalized. Students will develop a plan for a persuasive essay. Students will work with greater independence to apply all they have learned. Students will include a greater variety of evidence, such as outside evidence. Students will revise not only this current piece but all of their essays by elaborating on how that evidence connects to their reason and opinion. They will self-assess, reflect on growth, revise and edit. Students will publish and celebrate their pieces.

Mini-Lessons

Session 16 - Moving From Personal to Persuasive (pages 146-156)

- Writers turn their personal essays into persuasive opinions. Writers look over the ideas they had when writing personal essays, and ask, “How could the world change for the better? Is there anything that people do that I think is wrong or unfair? Some people think... but I think...” Students will see their ideas transform from clear but personal statements into bold persuasive mottos, as they revise their thesis from a personal opinion, to an opinion that could be stated by many people (anchor chart: Persuasive Thesis Starters, page 151)
- Writers not only think of reasons to support their thesis statement, they also make sure their reasons convince a particular audience (see page 154)
Session 17 - Inquiry Into Persuasive Essay (pages 157-166)

- Writers transfer all they know about one genre of writing to another genre. They ask themselves, "What is similar about personal essay writing and persuasive essay writing?" and "What is different?" (This can be an inquiry lesson with students studying persuasive essays; Anchor chart: Moves Persuasive Essay Writers Make That Are Also Used in Personal Essay Writing, page 161). Students should be reminded of the resources that exist to help them – the charts, checklists, mentor texts, demonstration pieces, etc.
- Writers refer to anchor chart, Opinion Writers..., to guide their writing process (see page 163).
- Writers notice how persuasive essays are different from personal essays (see page 165).

Session 18 - Broader Evidence (pages 167-171)

- Persuasive writers draw on evidence from the world to convince others. One way to do this is to gather a variety of broad evidence that can apply to lots of people (stories from other people, quotes from experts, and so on).
- Students will flash draft their persuasive essay.

Session 19 - Connecting Evidence, Reason, and Thesis (pages 172-181)

- Writers reread each body paragraph. They stop after each piece of evidence, and look to make sure there is a link back to their reason and thesis. If not, writers revise to say how those facts and details are connected to the reason by using transition phrases (Anchor chart: Transition Phrases to Connect Evidence and Reasons, page 174).

Session 20 - Getting Ready to Put Our Opinions into the World (pages 182-191)

- Writers get their essays ready to share with the world. They do this by carefully checking their spelling, punctuation, and other conventions. They use an editing checklist, checking essay carefully for errors, and using every strategy you know to correct mistakes.
- Partners proofread the final piece.
- Writers evaluate their essays against the Opinion Writing Checklist (see page 188).
- Writers publish their persuasive essays (see page 190).

Session 21 - Hey World, Listen Up! Sharing Our Opinions Loudly and Proudly (pages 196-197)

- See pages 196-197
### Instructional Strategies

**Interdisciplinary Connections**
*Correlates to routine units in math, rules and community units in social studies*
- Write a research essay about a curriculum topic in science or social studies. (immigration, space, etc)

**Technology Integration**
- Brainstorm topic using Inspiration
- Type final product in Microsoft Word
- Write a script for a podcast sharing a small moment from your life
- Help your peers by offering writing suggestions and posting writing
- For feedback on a classroom blog or forum

**Media Literacy Integration**
- Skype with students in other classes or schools and share their writing

**Global Perspectives**
- Students can pick topics ranging from a number of ideas and sources around the world, and conduct research from around the world

**Professional Resources:**
- Box and Bullets: Personal and Persuasive Essays Teachers College Units of Study, Unit 2 by Lucy Calkins, Kelly Boland Hohne, Cory Gillette, Units of Study in Opinion, Informative and Narrative Writing
- Launching the Writing Workshop by Lucy Calkins with Marjorie Martinelli, contributing author
- Raising the Quality of Narrative Writing by Lucy Calkins with Ted Kessler, contributing author
- Adapted from Branchburg Township Schools District Curriculum Guides
Unit Description: The Literary Essay: Writing about Fiction - Book 4

In this unit students will write well about reading. They are taught the value of close reading complex text. They first learn to notice the details in a text, appreciate that authors choose the setting, objects, word choices, metaphor, and characters they put into their texts for reasons, and therefore can ask why authors have made these decisions. Students learn to write structured, compelling essays in which they make and support claims, analyze, unpack, and incorporate evidence. By the end of the unit students will then write compare-and-contrast essays, noting the different texts' approaches to the same theme or issue. Children will compare and contrast themes and topics in literature, writing to analyze the similarities and differences in the approaches to two texts.

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<td><strong>Big Ideas:</strong></td>
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<td>• Students will respond to a text with a reasoned, well-crafted piece of writing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Students will become more skilled in opinion writing.</td>
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<td><strong>Time Line: March-April</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Essential Questions</strong></td>
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<td>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</td>
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<td>• How do writers organize and develop their ideas about literature?</td>
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<td>• How do you write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information?</td>
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<td>• How do writers cite texts?</td>
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NEW JERSEY STUDENT LEARNING STANDARDS

Progress Indicators for Writing
W.4.1. Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
   A. Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer’s purpose.
   B. Provide reasons that are supported by facts from texts and/or other sources.
   C. Link opinion and reasons using words and phrases (e.g., for instance, in order to, in addition).
   D. Provide a conclusion related to the opinion presented.

W.4.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
   • Introduce a topic clearly and group related information in paragraphs and sections; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
   • Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, text evidence, or other information and examples related to the topic.
   • Link ideas within paragraphs and sections of information using words and phrases (e.g., another, for example, also, because).
   • Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
   • Provide a conclusion related to the information or explanation presented.

W.4.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

W.4.5. With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.

W.4.6. 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 one page in a single sitting.

Progress Indicators for Speaking and Listening
Comprehension and Collaboration
SL.4.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.
   A. Explicitly draw on previously read text or material and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.
   B. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles.
   C. Pose and respond to specific questions to clarify or follow up on information, and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to the remarks of others.
   D. Review the key ideas expressed and explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.
SL.4.2. Paraphrase portions of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, and orally).
SL.4.3. Identify the reasons and evidence a speaker provides to support particular points.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas
SL.4.4. Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.
SL.4.5. Add audio recordings and visual displays to presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes.
SL.4.6. Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion); use formal English when appropriate to task and situation.

Progress Indicators for Language
Conventions of Standard English
L.4.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
   A. Use relative pronouns (who, whose, whom, which, that) and relative adverbs (where, when, why).
   B. Form and use the progressive (e.g., I was walking; I am walking; I will be walking) verb tenses.
   C. Use modal auxiliaries (e.g., can, may, must) to convey various conditions.
   D. Order adjectives within sentences according to conventional patterns (e.g., a small red bag rather than a red small bag).
   E. Form and use prepositional phrases.
   F. Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.
   G. Correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., to, too, two; there, their).

L.4.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
   A. Use correct capitalization.
   B. Use commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text.
   C. Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence.
   D. Spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed.

Knowledge of Language
L.4.3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
   A. Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.
   B. Choose punctuation for effect.
   C. Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion).
Vocabulary Acquisition and Use
L.4.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 4 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
   A. Use context (e.g., definitions, examples, or restatements in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
   B. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., telegraph, photograph, autograph).
   C. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.

TECHNOLOGY STANDARDS AND 21ST CENTURY SKILLS

The following skills and themes listed should be reflected in the design of units and lessons for this course or content area.

21st Century Skills:
Multicultural and Cultural Competency Perspectives
Creativity and Innovation
Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
Communication and Collaboration
Information Literacy
Media Literacy
Life and Career Skills

21st Century Themes (as applies to content area):
Financial, Economic, Business, and
Entrepreneurial Literacy
Civic Literacy
Health Literacy

PRE AND POST ASSESSMENT

Before beginning the unit, writers complete an on-demand writing prompt as a starting point for instruction. Students should have familiar paper to write on and a supply of additional pages.

Distribute copies of Slower Than the Rest by Cynthia Rylant, and read it aloud to students.

“Think about the big idea or theme in this story or ideas you have about a character. You will have 40 minutes to write an opinion or piece in which you will write your opinion or claim and tell reasons why you feel that way. When you do this draw on everything you know about essays, persuasive letters and reviews. Please keep in mind that you have 40 minutes to complete this, so you will need to plan, draft, revise, and edit in one sitting. In your writing, make sure you:

• “Write an introduction
• State your opinion or claim
• Give reasons and text evidence to support your thoughts

ELA Curriculum 2017-2018
Organize your writing
Acknowledge counterclaims
Use transition words
Write a conclusion.

Use the Opinion Writing Rubric to score assessments.
Give post-assessment using a different grade-level agreed upon text.

Formative and Summative (*) Assessments:
- Pre-assessment/Post-assessment * (online resources)
- Published Writing

Other Evidence
- Conferring notes/records of conferences, small groups
- Teacher observations
- Prewrites
- Random collection of notebooks
- Rough drafts
- Partner conversation
Grammar and Conventions

Sentence Structure
- Place clauses in sentences
- Place phrases in sentences
- Descriptive clauses enable the writer to tuck tiny bits of information about a character immediately after mentioning what the character has done or said (see page 138).
  Example:
  - Gabriel picked up the kitten.
  - Gabriel, the main character in this story, picked up the kitten.
  - Gabriel, bursting with pleasure, picked up the kitten.
  - Gabriel, bursting with pleasure, picked up the kitten, putting it close to his cheek.

Parts of Speech
- Pronoun/verb agreement: words such as anybody, anyone, nobody, no one, and neither are all singular (see page 138).
- Use nouns and pronouns that are in agreement (Mike/he)
- Use objective and nominative case pronouns correctly (me, him, her; I, he, she)

Tense
- Writers revise essays by shifting all the verbs to present tense (see pages 136-137).
- Write sentence in past, present, future, present perfect, and past perfect tenses.

Paragraphing
- Understand and use paragraph structure (indented or block) to organize sentences that focus on one idea.
- Create transitions between paragraphs to show the progression of ideas
- Understand and use paragraphing to show speaker change in dialogues

Capitalization
- Use capital letters correctly in dialogue
- Use capitalization for specialized functions (emphasis, key information, voice)

Punctuation
- Writers use commas to let the reader know how to read their writing. (See page 178 for details on teaching an inquiry lesson on the use of commas by studying a mentor text).

Spelling
- Spell a full range of contractions suffixes (for example, ion, ment, ly)
- Spell a full range of contractions, plurals, and possessives, and compound words
- Correctly spell words that have studied (spelling words)
Teacher Notes

Suggestions:
- This unit is designed for students to have repeated practice writing arguments about texts and relies upon their prior experience writing personal and persuasive essays.
- A new challenge for students will be asked to cite texts in their essay.
- During Interactive Read Aloud, teach close reading strategies. Students can practice these strategies during that time with short texts.
- Begin the unit by immersing students in this new genre. Spend a few days having them compare and contrast literary essays to narratives. Have students help you create a chart comparing the content and structure of narratives to literary essays. Students should have copies of short texts so they can refer back to them and write on when close reading.
- During read aloud time – read the mentor text picture book and short texts.
- Students will grow ideas about the short texts in their writer’s notebook, before deciding on one short text to focus on, drafting in several booklets.

Materials:
- Units of Study, Unit 4 The Literary Essay: Writing About Fiction by Lucy Calkins, Kathleen Tolan, and Alexandra Marron
- Literary Essays: Writing About Reading by Lucy Calkins and Medea McEvoy (found in previous Writing Units of Study Grades 3-5)

Examples:
1. Student writing notebooks
2. Mentor text, such as *Fox* by Margaret Wild and Ron Brooks, *The Other Side* by Jacqueline Woodson, and another picture books with opportunities for character study and filled with author’s craft
3. Create a literary essay to use as you model strategies using a mentor text
4. Copies of short story mentor text for each student (be mindful of text levels), such as:
   - The Marble Champ by Gary Soto
   - Eleven by Sandra Cisneros
   - Spaghetti by Cynthia Rylant
   - Retired by Cynthia Rylant
   - Stray by Cynthia Rylant
   - The Other Side by Jacqueline Woodson
   - Each Kindness by Jacqueline Woodson
5. Drafting booklets (stapled together draft paper)
6. Opinion Writing Checklist Grades 4 and 5
GOALS AND MINI-LESSONS

Bend I: Writing about Reading: Literary Essays
GOALS: Students will be growing ideas for literary essays, by learning to close read texts. Students will learn to notice the details in a text, notice that authors choose the setting, objects, word choice, metaphors, and characters for a reason. Students will focus on arguing ideas about characters while carrying forward what they learned about planning and drafting boxes and bullets essay, writing introductions and conclusions, and gathering evidence to support their reasons. Students will draft and revise their essays about a familiar short text.

Mini-Lessons

Session 1 - Close Reading to Generate Ideas about a Text (pages 2-13)
- Students reread closely, stopping at moments or details that seem important to the whole text, and write using thought prompts to push their thinking.
- Writers read to see what’s really there, by rereading, and underlining intriguing things they notice, then talking and writing about what they see, feel, wonder, and think (see page 9).
- Writers ask questions to explore the text (see page 11-12)

Session 2 - Gathering Writing by Studying Characters (pages 14-24)
- Students pay close attention to details that reveal a character’s traits, motivations, struggles, changes, and relationships and use evidence from the text to support their thinking. Then they write long and strong in their notebook, growing their ideas.
- When readers read more they add on to their idea or revise their original theory (see page 21).

Session 3 - Elaborating On Written Ideas Using Prompts (pages 25-35)
- Writers do this by first jotting a thought about a story, then pushing themselves to revise those first thoughts by using prompts (see chart on page 28), and finally going back into the text to find specific evidence for thoughts.
- Writers take the time to develop one idea. They do this by zooming in on a single idea, then developing that idea by citing parts that go with it (see page 31).
- Writers elaborate on central ideas. They do this by asking, ‘Is this one portion of writing especially important and central to the text?’ If not, writers revise their initial interpretation (see pages 33-34).

Session 4 - Finding a Testing a Thesis (pages 36-47)
- Students do this by first rereading all of their related entries for ideas, not for facts and thinking, ‘What is the big idea I really want to say?’ Then gathering a bunch of possible theses about a text, thinking, ‘Does this opinion relate to more than one part of the text?’ Finally choosing one thesis statement and supporting ideas.
• Writers rely on a few go-to structures to support their thesis (see page 42).
  o With reasons
  o With times when...
    o With evidence of how it is true for one character, then for another character.
    o With evidence of how it is true at the beginning of the story, then at the end of the story.
• Writers develop a system to collect essay materials (see page 45).

Session 5 - Using Stories as Evidence (pages 48-59)
• Writer reread, finding portions of the text that can be told as stories, and then angling those tiny stories to support the point they want to make.
• Writers alter their story to make a point. They do this by stretching out parts of the story that match their thesis, retelling details from the story that connect to and provide evidence for the thesis (see page 54).
• Essay writers show and tell. They do this by writing a micro-story in a way that pops out the point you want to make, then telling the point by using sentence starters, such as:
  o An example that shows this is... or this shows that...
  o For instance...
  o One time...
  o This is evidence that...

Session 6 - Citing Textual Evidence (pages 60-68)
• Writers find just right quotations, ones that provide strong evidence for a claim, making readers say, ‘I see what you mean.’ One strategy is to start by choosing a handful of possible quotes for each bullet and then to pick the best ones by thinking about which gives the strongest evidence for that bullet and why.
• Writers make sure the quotes they’ve chosen to support their bullets are strong enough evidence that they don’t require a whole lot of explaining (see page 66).
• Writers introduce quotes into their texts in a variety of ways (see page 67 for chart of examples).

Session 7 - Using Lists as Evidence (pages 69-76)
• Writers include lists (repeating the beginning of several sentences, ex. “I Have a Dream” speech). They first decide on what the message is that they really want to say, then collect tiny specific examples that will provide evidence for whatever it is that they want to say.
• Writers identify weak spots in their argument and make a plan of action going forward (see page 74).
**Session 8 - Putting it All Together: Constructing Literary Essays (pages 77-86)**

- Writers study a mentor text essay thinking about the inquiry question. They do this by reading the work of other literary essays, asking, ‘What does she do that I could do?’ then making a quick outline of how their essay will go, choosing the best evidence, and finally drafting while piecing together their evidence with transitions (see page 83). Instead of writing a coherent draft, students can just cut and paste pieces together from across their booklets to make their body paragraphs.
- Writers reread their draft to revise and then set goals using the Opinion Writing Checklist Grades 4-5 as a guide (see page 85).

**Bend II: Raising the Quality of Literary Essays**

**GOALS:** Students will take what they learned in Bend 1, and draft a new literary essay working to write more interpretively and analytically. Often, children’s comprehension is mostly literal, so teach them how to read interpretively. Readers pause to think, “So what is that text saying to me?” The Common Core/ New Jersey Student Learning Standards is asking students to think deeper about text (not just inferring character traits or growing ideas from one chapter). Students will be challenged to think more deeply by developing ideas that are multileveled and relate to the text as a whole. Students will not only infer and interpret, but will learn to sustain and support the theories they develop. After developing a complex, interpretative thesis, writers will support that claim in a way that logically groups ideas to support their purpose. Students will prepare for a final publication by editing, sharing, and celebrating their work.

**Mini-Lessons**

**Session 9 - Writing to Discover What a Story Is Really About (pages 88-98)**

- Writers look for deeper patterns of issues, events, or feelings that aren’t obvious, but occur over and over again in the book. Then, thinking about something that keeps happening a lot, asking, ‘What is my story really saying about this pattern?’ and finally speculating the answer.
- Writers include both the big ideas about the story and the tiny specific ideas (see page 95).
- Writers develop new thinking by using sentence starters (see page 97).

**Session 10 - Adding Complexity to Our Ideas (pages 99-108)**

- Writers take a starting idea, (see chart ‘To Develop Complex Idea’s on pages 101-102) and decide how they are going to write about it, using the tips for developing more complex ideas, and then coming up with a few possibilities. They go back into their book and think about specific details, and finally say an idea that feels supportable in different ways.
- Writers allow one idea to lead to another and to another. They do this by using words such as maybe, but, and also (see page 104).
- Writers find ideas in their writing that will become their thesis statements (see chart on page 106).

**Session 11 - Flash-Drafting Literary Essays (pages 108-116)**

- Writers first create an image in their mind of how the whole essay will go. They then read over the possible theses they grew in their notebook, and finally drafting their essay in fifteen minutes (see pages 110-113 for how to coach students step by step to write a literary
essay).

- Writers study their flash-draft with their writing partner. They do this by, rereading their draft, marking it up by noticing the different components of the essay and labeling what they notice. They finally discuss and jot their ideas on a goal sheet, planning what they will do in the next essay to improve the quality (see Link on page 113).
- Mid-workshop teaching point has students writing another flash-draft (see page 114).
- Writers choose one of their flash-drafted essays to revise (see page 116).

**Session 12 - Beginnings and Endings (pages 117-126)**

- Writers first think about what the general themes might be for the essay and then choose one. Next, they generate a list of possible leads that shows the theme, and finally choose the one that best represents what they want to say.
- Writers use the language of literary scholars such as protagonist, narrator, setting, plot, theme, and tone (see page 123).
- Writers craft their conclusions with care (see page 125 and chart on page 126).

**Session 13- Using Descriptions of an Author’s Craft as Evidence (pages 127-134)**

- Essayists go back into the text and find places that prove their thesis or claim, then reread, this time noticing the literary devices/language the author uses to highlight what they want to say, and thinking, ‘What literary language did the author use? Why did the author choose this word or phrase? How does this show what the text is really about?’
- Writers recognize that authors send messages through repeated images or objects (see page 131-132).
- Writers consider purpose in crafting by not only looking at what the author did do in her text, but also what the author did not do (see page 133).

**Session 14 - Editing (pages 135-140)**

- Teachers will plan for editing mini-lessons, strategy groups, and conferences by looking over students’ drafts to find greatest area of need.
- Writers will read through their draft to correct verb tense and revise pronouns, and then switch with a partner who will recognize areas of confusion.
- Writers set goals. They do this by assessing their writing using the Opinion Writing Checklist and asking, ‘What on this checklist have I already done in my essay? What am I starting to do? What have I forgotten?’, and celebrating their accomplishments by comparing this essay to the essay they wrote in Bend 1 (see page 139-140).
Bend III: Writing Compare and Contrast Essays

GOALS: Students will learn to write compare and contrast essays.

Mini-Lessons

Session 15 - Building the Muscles to Compare and Contrast (pages 142-152)

• Writers decide on texts they will use (would be helpful to use at least one of the texts they’ve written about in Bend 1 or 2) and begin thinking about the similarities – jotting, mapping, planning.
• Writers will spend about 4 days writing their compare and contrast essay.
• TIP - You can kick off this bend by modeling how to compare and contrast 2 objects (ex. apples and oranges, a baseball and a football, two photographs, two shoes etc.), then during active engagement students try comparing and contrasting another set of objects, and finally during the independent portion travel through centers of different objects, comparing and contrasting them in an organized way in their notebooks.
• Writers ask, ‘How are they similar? How are they different? What does this show?’ Then, they write about their observation in a structured, organized way.

Session 16 - Comparing and Contrasting Familiar Texts (pages 153-162)

• Writers look at similar themes across texts, or similar characters, and name how the texts approach the themes differently or how the characters are similar and different. Writers think about the larger theme of one text and ask ‘What is this text really about?’ Then they list other texts that address the same theme, and finally choose a second text that seems to especially “go” – ‘Of all the possibilities, which would work best?’ Writers think about how the two texts both address the same theme. They think, “How are they similar? Why is this important? And how do they address the theme differently?
• Writers refer to templates to craft comparative essays (see page 158).
• Writers continue to use literary language, such as archetype (see page 160).

Session 17 - Using Yesterday’s Learning, Today and Always (pages 163-168)

• Writers look back at class charts and think about prior learning that needs to be applied to their draft. They update their goal sheet and revise.
• Essayists push themselves to not just record ideas, but develop new ones (see page 166).
• Writing partners help their partner see what he or she may not notice on their own (see page 168).

Session 18 - Developing Distinct Lines of Thought (pages 169-176)

• Writers focus on one thought at a time and then stretch it out, saying more about each one by providing evidence and examples in support of
their reason and claim.

- Writing partners look over each other's work, reading the draft, and leaving feedback on areas of confusion and offer suggestions (see page 173).
- Writers free-write to generate new ideas. They do this by, reading over one of their body paragraphs, then turning the paper over and free-writing, referring to the 'Ways to Push Our Thinking' chart. Finally reading over their free-writing and underlining new thoughts that they would like to add into their drafts (see page 175).

**Session 19 - Exploring Commas (pages 177-181)**

- Plan for editing mini-lessons, strategy groups, and conferences by looking over students' drafts to find greatest area of need.
- Refer to Grammar/Conventions section in this curriculum.
- Writers peer edit (see page 181).

**Session 20 Celebration (pages 182-184)**

- Suggested celebration: Create different anthologies featuring student essays (see pages 182-183).
- Students end the celebration by reflecting on their goal sheets and the work they did in this unit (see page 184).
Instructional Strategies

Interdisciplinary Connections
Correlates to routine units in math, rules and community units in social studies
- Students will write opinion essays about books from reading
- Students will write opinion essays about topics from science, social studies, and math

Technology Integration
- Brainstorm topic using Inspiration
- Type final product in Microsoft Word
- Help your peers by offering writing suggestions and posting writing for feedback using the track changes feature of Word.
- Using Inspiration or Smart Notebook compare and contrast ideas about a text.

Media Literacy Integration
- Write a podcast
- Help your peers by offering writing suggestions and posting writing for feedback on a classroom blog or forum

Global Perspectives
- Students can pick topics ranging from a number of ideas and sources around the world, and conduct research from around the world using the world-wide web.
- Students could interview people on Skype to gather information on their topic.

Professional Resources:
- Units of Study, Unit 4 The Literary Essay: Writing About Fiction by Lucy Calkins, Kathleen Tolan, and Alexandra Marron
- Literary Essays: Writing About Reading by Lucy Calkins and Medea McEvoy (found in previous Writing Units of Study Grades 3-5)
- Adapted from Branchburg Township Schools District Curriculum Guides
Unit Description: Bringing History to Live – Book 3

This is a research-based writing unit on the American Revolution. As this unit is taught in conjunction with the reading history unit, the research will be conducted primarily during reading workshop. Students will be writing an informational text that is a conglomerate of other kinds of texts (i.e., all-about, essay, historical fiction, how-to). Students will bring with them all they have learned about information writing from previous years, but also end the unit moving into a new realm: developing their own ideas about the information they have written about.

This unit will teach students more sophisticated ways to organize their writing, and to include information that is rich, detailed and concrete, including historical details, text features, and quotations. They are expected to draw evidence from texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. They will learn to use more sophisticated transition words and phrases and to clarify the structure in their writing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Big Ideas:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Get the sense of informational books</td>
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<td>- Utilize and incorporate research into writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Highlight important information in a variety of ways</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Time Line: February – March</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Essential Questions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</em></td>
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<td>- How can I use everything I know about research to write about one aspect of the American Revolution in a variety of genres?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- How do decisions about structure, text features and vocabulary underscore the main message of a piece of writing?</td>
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ELA Curriculum 2017-2018
NEW JERSEY STUDENT LEARNING STANDARDS

Progress Indicators for Writing

Text Types and Purposes

W.4.1. Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
   A. Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer’s purpose.
   B. Provide reasons that are supported by facts from texts and/or other sources.
   C. Link opinion and reasons using words and phrases (e.g., for instance, in order to, in addition).
   D. Provide a conclusion related to the opinion presented.

W.4.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
   A. Introduce a topic clearly and group related information in paragraphs and sections; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
   B. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, text evidence, or other information and examples related to the topic.
   C. Link ideas within paragraphs and sections of information using words and phrases (e.g., another, for example, also, because).
   D. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
   E. Provide a conclusion related to the information or explanation presented.

W.4.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using narrative technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
   A. Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
   B. Use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.
   C. Use a variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events.
   D. Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.
   E. Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

Production and Distribution of Writing

W.4.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

W.4.5. With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.

W.4.6. 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 one page in a single sitting.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

W.4.7. Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

W.4.8. Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.

W.4.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
Apply grade 4 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text [e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions].”).
Apply grade 4 Reading standards to informational texts (e.g., “Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text”).

Range of Writing
W.4.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Progress Indicators for Speaking and Listening
Comprehension and Collaboration
SL.4.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.
   A. Explicitly draw on previously read text or material and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.
   B. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles.
   C. Pose and respond to specific questions to clarify or follow up on information, and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to the remarks of others.
   D. Review the key ideas expressed and explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.
SL.4.2. Paraphrase portions of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, and orally).
SL.4.3. Identify the reasons and evidence a speaker provides to support particular points.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas
SL.4.4. Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.
SL.4.5. Add audio recordings and visual displays to presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes.
SL.4.6. Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion); use formal English when appropriate to task and situation.

Progress Indicators for Language
Conventions of Standard English
L.4.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
   A. Use relative pronouns (who, whose, whom, which, that) and relative adverbs (where, when, why).
   B. Form and use the progressive (e.g., I was walking; I am walking; I will be walking) verb tenses.
   C. Use modal auxiliaries (e.g., can, may, must) to convey various conditions.
   D. Order adjectives within sentences according to conventional patterns (e.g., a small red bag rather than a red small bag).
   E. Form and use prepositional phrases.
F. Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.

G. Correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., to, too, two; there, their).

L.4.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
   A. Use correct capitalization.
   B. Use commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text.
   C. Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence.
   D. Spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed.

Knowledge of Language

L.4.3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
   A. Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.
   B. Choose punctuation for effect.
   C. Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion).

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

L.4.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 4 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
   A. Use context (e.g., definitions, examples, or restatements in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
   B. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., telegraph, photograph, autograph).
   C. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.

L.4.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
   A. Explain the meaning of simple similes and metaphors (e.g., as pretty as a picture) in context.
   B. Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs.
   C. Demonstrate understanding of words by relating them to their opposites (antonyms) and to words with similar but not identical meanings (synonyms).

L.4.6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).
**TECHNOLOGY STANDARDS AND 21ST CENTURY SKILLS**

The following skills and themes listed should be reflected in the design of units and lessons for this course or content area.

**8.1: Educational Technology:** All students will use digital tools to access, manage, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to solve problems individually and collaborate and to create and communicate knowledge.

**8.1.5.A.2:** Format a document using a word processing application to enhance text and include graphics, symbols and/or pictures.

**8.1.5.D.1:** Understand the need for and use of copyrights.

**8.1.5.D.2:** Analyze the resource citations in online materials for proper use.

**8.1.5.D.3:** Demonstrate an understanding of the need to practice cyber safety, cyber security, and cyber ethics when using technologies and social media.

**8.1.5.D.4:** Understand digital citizenship and demonstrate an understanding of the personal consequences of inappropriate use of technology and social media.

**8.1.5.E.1:** Use digital tools to research and evaluate the accuracy of, relevance to, and appropriateness of using print and non-print electronic information sources to complete a variety of tasks.

**21st Century Skills:**
- Multicultural and Cultural Competency Perspectives
- Creativity and Innovation
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Communication and Collaboration
- Information Literacy
- Media Literacy
- Life and Career Skills

**21st Century Themes (as applies to content area):**
- Financial, Economic, Business, and Entrepreneurial Literacy
- Civic Literacy
- Health Literacy
# PRE AND POST ASSESSMENT

**Pre-Assessment:**
Students should have familiar paper to write on and a supply of additional pages. Give the following instructions:

"I'm really eager to understand what you can do as writers of informational texts. Think of a topic that you've studied or that you know a lot about. You will have forty-five minutes to write an informational (or all-about) text that teaches others interesting and important information and ideas about that topic. Please keep in mind that you'll have only forty-five minutes to complete this. You will have only this one period, so you'll need to plan, draft, and edit in one sitting. Write in a way that shows all that you know about information writing. In your writing, make sure you:

- Write an introduction
- Elaborate with a variety of information
- Organize your writing
- Use transition words
- Write a conclusion"

Use the Information Writing Rubric to assess student growth.

You may use the same assessment at the end of the unit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formative and Summative (*) Assessments:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Pre-assessment/Post-assessment *</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Published Writing</td>
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Other Evidence

- Conferring notes/records of conferences, small groups
- Teacher observations
- Pre-writes
- Random collection of notebooks and notebook entries (note use of note-taking structures)
- Rough drafts and revisions
- Partner conversation
**Grammar and Conventions**

**Sentence Structure**
- Use a range of sentence types (declarative, interrogative, imperative, exclamatory)
- Write in complete sentences, with the ability to recognize sentence fragments and run-on sentences
- Write dialogue in conventional structures (in narrative chapter)
- Write sentences to provide context clues to readers into the meaning of domain-specific words or phrases

**Parts of Speech**
- Form and use prepositional phrases correctly
- Use relative pronouns and relative adverbs
- Use first, second, or third person, knowing which to use for what purpose

**Tense**
- Write sentences in past, present, future, present perfect, and past perfect tenses
- Understand which tense is most appropriate for various genres of writing

**Paragraphing**
- Understand and use paragraph structure (indented or block) to organize sentences that focus on one idea
- Include formatting (e.g., headings) to aid comprehension
- Create transitions between paragraphs to show the progression of ideas
- Understand and use paragraphing to show speaker change in dialogue (in narrative chapter)

**Capitalization**
- Use correct capitalization with increasing accuracy

**Punctuation**
- Use commas correctly in writing, including to mark quotations from a text, set off prepositional phrases, items in a list, and to separate day and date, as well as town and state.

**Spelling**
- Correctly spell words that have been studied
- Use difficult homophones correctly
### Teacher Notes

- Students should begin reading about/studying the American Revolution during reading workshop a few days before the writing unit starts (can use videos, such as Liberty Kids, Schoolhouse Rock, etc. for a quick introduction).
- You may decide to have students continue writing about their first subtopic from Bend I, instead of researching a new one in Bend II.
- Bend I may take more time than anticipated (as they are working to write four chapters of a book).
- Students should spend the bulk of their time writing, with the research and note-taking aspect occurring during reading workshop.

### Mentor Texts
- Use Naomi’s finished text (found in the online resources), as well as others provided for the unit.

### Suggestions:
If you’ve taught the unit before, use texts from your former students as mentor texts/examples to share.

### Materials
- Resources to study (during reading workshop): books, videos, articles
- Mentor text (Naomi, or other) copied for each student; other examples of mentor texts
- Display previous anchor charts from information writing units
- Your own writing to serve as a demonstration text
- Information Writing Checklists – throughout the unit have students pause and self-assess their work, setting and revising goals
- Writing notebooks
- Drafting booklets
GOALS AND MINI-LESSONS

**Bend 1: Informational Books: Making a Conglomerate of Forms**

**GOALS:** Students learn that information texts are conglomerate, containing other kinds of texts. Students will first write two informational chapters, the first will be an 'all about' the American Revolution, and the second more focused on their chosen subtopic (e.g., the Boston Massacre, the Boston Tea Party). The first bend ends with students completing a small book in which each chapter is written as a different genre (e.g., all-about, essay, narrative).

**Mini-Lessons**

**Session 1: Getting the Sense of Informational Books** (page 2)
- Students learn that writers imagine the text they are going to make. They think about the parts and the whole and then come up with a plan for their writing project.
- They study texts that match their vision (can use Naomi's or from a student from a previous year) and begin to plan what will be needed.

**Session 2: Planning the Structure of Writing** (page 14)
- Students make a plan for the structure of their writing and then use this structure to organize research and note-taking.
- Students decide on using a chronological or categorical structure (or invent one of their choosing) for their first all-about chapter, as well as their note-taking.
- After deciding on a structure, students are expected to draft this all-about chapter very quickly.

* **Note:** Encourage quantity over quality here. Students will go back and revise later, adding more details and specifics.

* **Note:** If students have yet to create a timeline in reading workshop of the major events of the Revolution, it might be helpful to have them do so before this lesson, as using this timeline can help students as they draft this chapter.

**Session 3: Planning and Writing with Greater Independence** (page 22)
- Students learn that writers take strategies they've learned in the past and apply them to new situations, working with more independence and skill each time.
- Students are expected to plan, research (take notes), and draft...or draft, research, and plan (they work to figure out what they need to do to be successful).

**Session 4: Teaching as a Way to Rehearse for Information Writing** (page 30)
- Students learn that when writing to teach, it helps writers to do some actual teaching about their topic.
- Students think about what they want their audience to learn, what will interest people, and what might confuse them that they will need to clarify before writing; they will work alone first to plan for how they will teach and then they will be paired with another student (who is working on a different subtopic).
Session 5: Elaboration (page 38)

- Students learn that writers improve their writing by adding details. History writers often try to include details that help readers picture what happened long ago.

*Note – Students can look at pictures or use books like “If You Lived at the Time of the American Revolution” to help them get details about the time period.

Session 6: Bringing Information Alive (page 47)

- Students learn that writers who are writing a story about a time in history think about the three most important elements in any story: character, setting and conflict.
- Students work to create a “micro-story”: a piece of narrative writing that revolves around their subtopic. They will decide on whose story they are telling, what the tension or problem will be, and then decide where the scene takes place. They will work to include relevant historical details.

Session 7: Essays Within Information Texts (page 56)

- Students will learn that when writers are writing essays about historical topics, they think about all they know about essay writing: the structure, the thesis, and the supports. They also need to do research to find facts to develop and support their idea.
- Students are reminded of the glue that links claims, reasons, and evidence: transition words.

Session 8: Taking Stock and Setting Goals (page 67)

- To the teacher: You will take stock and assess if students are ready to move directly on to editing their entire piece, or if they still need a day or two to continue drafting.
- You may choose to focus on paragraphing, guiding students to use more deliberate organization and perhaps even greater elaboration.
- Students are asked to do some self-reflection, asking themselves, “Am I getting better at this? What do I need to work on next? How can I make sure I keep growing as a writer in big and important ways?”
- You may use a slightly longer share session to allow students to read each other’s pieces, leaving notes on something interesting they learned.
Bend II: Writing with Greater Independence

GOALS: Students narrow in on a subtopic of their choice, with some students continuing to research their original topic. Students will draw evidence from texts to support analysis, reflection and research. Students will choose a logical structure for their books. Students will use increasingly sophisticated transition words and phrases, and elaborate by using historical details, text features and quotations. Students will learn to make logical choices about structure to help readers to understand the most important information in their pieces.

Mini-Lessons

Session 9: Writers Plan for Their Research (page 76)
- Students learn that when tackling a new piece of informational writing, nonfiction writers come up with a research plan.
- Students make writing plans, which may look like a table of contents. They think about different chapters they might write and think about the genre of writing that chapter may be and what kind of research they'll need to do.
- After planning, students work on note-taking.

Session 10: The Intense Mind-Work of Note-Taking (page 87)
- Students learn that note-taking is not the easy part of research writing. When writers take notes, they need to understand what they are writing well enough so that they are able to explain their notes to someone else.
- By asking “Why?” and “What’s really going on?” as well as saying “This reminds me of…” can help nonfiction researchers grow and communicate meaning.

Session 11: Drafting is Like Tobogganing (page 97)
- You will coach students on how to draft fast and furious.

Session 12: Developing a Logical Structure and Using Introductions and Transitions (page 102)
- Students learn that when writing an informational text, writers need to organize information. In an introduction, writers let readers in on their organizational plan.
- Writers chunk information together and may include subheadings (which could later be deleted) to help provide structure.
- Writers include a conclusion.

Session 13: Text Features (page 113)
- Students learn that writers think about the most important information and ideas that they’re trying to convey in a chapter or a section, and they use text features (purposefully) to highlight that information.
- Writers work to ensure they’ve highlighted what is most important, and revise accordingly.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 14: Quotations Accentuate Importance (page 124)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Students learn that history writers add quotations to their writing to accentuate a central idea.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Writers continue to reread their writing and try to add more, especially in places that seem to jump from idea to idea.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Session 15: Using All We Know to Craft Essay and Narrative Sections (page 135)</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Students look back on their initial plans to see if they initially devoted a chapter to narrative or essay writing, then they draw on what they know and the tools they can use (i.e., charts, mentor texts) to write those chapters.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Session 16: The Other Side of the Story (page 140)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Students learn that history writers need to remember and address more than one side of a story.</td>
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<td>- Writers tuck historical details within their stories.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Session 17: Self-Assessing and Goal Setting (page 151)</th>
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<tr>
<td>- While this is the end of Bend II, students’ writing is not done; they will look back on completed work and anticipate new chapters they will write.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Students self-assess, looking at the fourth- and fifth-grade checklists, and set new goals for themselves.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Students can assess themselves by looking at their on-demand assessment and then share with a partner all the ways they have grown since the unit began.</td>
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**Bend III: Building Ideas in Informational Writing**

**GOALS:** Students move from organizing information to developing their own ideas about the information. Students generate life lessons from their topics, generate questions, and then hypothesize and research answers to those questions. They are considering themes and lessons, considering different points of view, and integrating information from texts. Students will also edit their writing before publication, with an emphasis on punctuation. The unit culminates in an expert fair (students teaching others about their topic).

**Mini-Lessons**

**Session 18: Information Writing Gives Way to Idea Writing (page 156)**

- Students learn that history writers write and develop their own ideas about the information that they find as they research.
- Historians grow ideas by comparing and contrasting them to now.

**Session 19: Digging Deeper (page 164)**

- Students learn that history writing is not just made from facts but also from ideas. History writers convey larger ideas about a people, a nation, and a time. As they write they ask themselves, “What life lessons might this be teaching?” and write about them.
• Writers uncover deeper ideas about historical figures by asking, “What did this person really, really stand for?”
• Writers reread their notebook entries, box out important ideas and then reread their informational books to look for places to insert ideas.

Session 20: Using Confusion to Guide Research (page 172)
• Students learn that nonfiction writers don’t always start out as experts on the topic they’re writing about, but instead work to become short-term experts on their topic. They start with their musing, then turn these into research questions, and then see what they can learn.
• Students look back at their notes, analyze their note-taking, and share tips with partners.

Session 21: Questions without a Ready Answer (page 183)
• Students learn that historians don’t always find answers to every question they have. But they can use all of their research and knowledge to create possible answers to questions for which people can’t find ready-made answers.
• Students work to revise by taking away things that aren’t needed or don’t fit.
*Note – Students are still meant to be drafting chapters and/or taking notes. See chart on page 186 for Suggestions for Drafting.

Session 22: Editing (page 192)
• In addition to other general editing reminders, explain to students that power of the comma in informational writing, especially its ability to help signal importance.
• Students are encouraged to a last check that they included all of the words their readers will need, to fully understand their topics.
*Note – Students prepare for their celebration by sharing about their topics and working to group themselves in a way that makes sense.
*Note – Invite others to your celebration.

Session 23: A Final Celebration (page 197)
• Before the celebration (recommended: an “Expert Fair”, in which writers teach others what they’ve learned), give writers time to prepare for the teaching they will be doing.
*Note – Make sure each group has a place to set up, and give writers time to get their displays ready to present their pages and any other images or posters they created. Depending on space, decide if you will have half your students present while the other half mingles.
**Instructional Strategies**

**Interdisciplinary Connections**
*Correlates to routine units in math, rules and community units in social studies*

- Social Studies and Science Units

- Students analyze timelines they may have created in reading: calculate how many years passed between various dates in history (i.e., between the French and Indian War and the Boston Tea Party) and since they occurred to the present.

- Students identify historical places on a map: determine the longitude and latitude of places like Boston, Philadelphia, and London. Students can create maps to include in their writing. Also, they can use a map scale to calculate the distance between Great Britain and the 13 colonies and include any relevant details in their writing.

**Professional Resources:**
- *Bringing History to Life, Grade 4, Unit 3 Information* by Lucy Calkins and Anna Gratz Cockerille
- Adapted from Branchburg Township Schools District Curriculum Guides
Unit Description: Historical Fiction

Students will write 2 historical fiction pieces in this unit. Students can choose a time period they know a great deal about or a time period they are familiar with from the reading unit. Students can build upon skills and strategies they were focusing on in the first narrative unit.

This unit will help students read their historical fiction books through the lens of a writer, considering the craft moves the author has written. They will learn strategies to both rehearse how their story will go and how to revise and edit. By the end of this unit, students will be better able to generate ideas for possible historical fiction stories, write for a sustained period of time with greater volume and stamina and write with a sense of historical accuracy. Students will develop believable characters and write in scenes rather than summarize. Students will draw on all they learned about narrative writing and apply this to historical fiction.

Big Ideas:
- Generate ideas for historical fiction
- Develop believable characters
- Understand the genre of historical fiction

This unit is ambitious and asks students to write two historical fiction stories, taking both through the entire writing process.

(You can scale this back so students write one story, the downside is they often revisit major revision, so the total amount of productivity becomes limited.)

Time Line: January - February

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Questions</th>
<th>Duration of Unit – 5 weeks</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</td>
<td>What will students understand about the big ideas?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

☐ How can I raise the level of my fiction writing, by establishing structure, development and language?
☐ How can I work on writing a historical fiction text that is well written—that draws readers in, is packed with specific information, and is structured in a cohesive

☐ Writers draw on previously learned narrative writing strategies with greater finesse and work with great control as they write historical fiction stories.
☐ Writers have the freedom and know how to transfer and apply all they’ve learned about narrative craft to accomplish their own goals.
☐ How can I raise the level of my fiction writing, by establishing structure, development and language?
☐ How can I work on writing a historical fiction text that is well written—that draws readers in, is packed with specific information, and is structured in a cohesive way?

ELA Curriculum 2017-2018
NEW JERSEY STUDENT LEARNING STANDARDS

W.4.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using narrative technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
   a. Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
   b. Use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.
   c. Use a variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events.
   d. Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.
   e. Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

W.4.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
   (Grade specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)

W.4.5: With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.

W.4.6: 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 one page in a single setting.

W.4.7: Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

W.4.8: Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.

W.4.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

W.4.10: Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

SL.4.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one on one, in groups, and teacher led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.
   a. Explicitly draw on previously read text or material and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.
   b. Follow agreed upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles.
   c. Pose and respond to specific questions to clarify or follow up on information, and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to the remarks of others.
   d. Review the key ideas expressed and explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.

SL.4.4: Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

SL.4.6: Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion); use formal English when appropriate to task and situation.

L.4.1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

L.4.2: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

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L.4.3: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
L.4.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
L.4.6: Acquire and use accurately grade appropriate general academic and domain specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).

**TECHNOLOGY STANDARDS AND 21ST CENTURY SKILLS**

8.1: Educational Technology: All students will use digital tools to access, manage, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to solve problems individually and collaborate and to create and communicate knowledge.
8.1.5.A.2: Format a document using a word processing application to enhance text and include graphics, symbols and/or pictures.
8.1.5.E.1: Use digital tools to research and evaluate the accuracy of, relevance to, and appropriateness of using print and non-print electronic information sources to complete a variety of tasks.
8.1.5.D.1 Understand the need for and use of copyrights.
8.1.5.D.2 Analyze the resource citations in online materials for proper use.
8.1.5.D.3 Demonstrate an understanding of the need to practice cyber safety, cyber security, and cyber ethics when using technologies and social media.
8.1.5.D.4 Understand digital citizenship and demonstrate an understanding of the personal consequences of inappropriate use of technology and social media.
PRE AND POST ASSESSMENT

Use Students' Unit 1 Narrative Post Assessment as the pre-assessment data.

Give the post assessment at the end of the unit.

Students should have familiar paper to write on and a supply of additional pages. Give the following instructions:

"I’m really eager to understand what you can do as writers of narratives, of stories, so today, will you please write the best personal narrative, the best Small Moment story, that you can write? Make this be the story of one time in your life. You might focus on just a scene or two. You’ll have only 40 minutes to write this true story, so you’ll need to plan, draft, revise, and edit in one sitting.

Write in a way that allows you to show off all you know about narrative writing. In your writing, make sure you:

- Write a beginning for your story
- Use transition words to tell what happened in order
- Elaborate to help readers picture your story
- Show what your story is really about
- Write an ending for your story."

Use the Narrative Writing Rubric to assess student growth.

Formative and Summative (*) Assessments:
- Pre-assessment/Post-assessment (*) (online resources)
- Published Writing

Other Evidence
- Conferring notes/records of conferences, small groups
- Teacher observations
- Prewrites
- Random collection of notebooks
- Rough drafts
- Partner conversation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammar and Conventions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sentence Structure</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use a range of sentence types (declarative, interrogative, imperative, exclamatory)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Write dialogue in conventional structures</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Parts of Speech</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use prepositions and prepositional phrases correctly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use nouns, adjectives, and adverbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tense</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Write sentences in past, present, future, present perfect, and past perfect tenses</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Paragraphing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understand and use paragraph structure (indented or block) to organize sentences that focus on one idea</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Create transitions between paragraphs to show the progression of ideas</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Understand and use paragraphing to show speaker change in dialogues</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Capitalization</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use more complex capitalization with increasing accuracy, such as abbreviations and quotation marks in split dialogue</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Punctuation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Use commas and quotation marks correctly in writing interrupted and uninterrupted dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use colons to indicate something is explained or described</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Use commas and parenthesis to set off parenthetical information</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Spelling</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Correctly spell words that have been studied (spelling words)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Use difficult homophones correctly</td>
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### Teacher Notes

- You may decide to have the whole class write about a time period you have already studied in social studies or the one they are reading about in book clubs.

- Students will spend the bulk of their time crafting stories based on what they already know about the time period in which their work will be set, instead of reading (which they will be doing during reading workshop).

#### Mentor Texts

- Use the same mentor texts you are reading aloud during Interactive Read Aloud and referring to during reading workshop, making sure your texts focus on one time period.

- Use the same mentor texts you are reading aloud during Interactive Read Aloud and referring to during reading workshop, making sure your texts focus on one time period.

#### Suggestions:

**If focusing on Segregation**

*Freedom Summer* by Deborah Wiles,
*Goin’ Someplace Special* (McKissack),
*The Other Side* (Woodson),
*Freedom on the Menu: The Greensboro Sit-Ins* (Weatherford),
*The Bat Boy and His Violin* (Curtis)

**If focusing on the Civil War**

*Pink and Say* by Patricia Polacco

**If focusing on the Holocaust**

*Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry,
*Rose Blanche* by Roberto Innocenti,
*The Butterfly* by Patricia Polacco

- Nonfiction materials such as texts, articles, and photos from the time period
- Create a one page fact sheet on important people, issues, places, and events for students to refer to.

#### Materials

- Display previous anchor charts from narrative writing units
- Your own writing to serve as a demonstration text
- Narrative Writing Checklists – throughout the unit have students pause and self-assess their work, setting and revising goals
- Writing notebooks
- Drafting booklets
GOALS AND SUGGESTED MINI-LESSONS

Bend I: Collect, Select and Develop Story Ideas -

GOALS:
While this bend is short, lasting no more than a week, it is ambitious with children producing writing that is ample and well crafted. Students will recall what they have learned about strong narrative writing and learn a few strategies for collecting and developing possible historical fiction ideas. Students will spend a little time planning and rehearsing, writing in their notebooks in ways to set them up for drafting. As they do this work, they will have samples of historical fiction and other resources related to the time period in which their stories are set.

Suggested Mini-Lessons

Historical fiction writers draw on the same skills and strategies for strong narrative writing. (page 72)
- Writers think carefully about how to introduce their readers not only to the characters and events in their story but also to the place and time period.
- Writers review some of those skills (referring to previous anchor charts from narrative units) and make goals for themselves.

*Note -Choose just one or two strategies to generate ideas then have students do this step of the work quickly coming up with a handful of possible story ideas. As soon as students have landed on a few ideas, they begin rehearsing several pages of writing a day, including story blurbs, different leads and endings, and a few one-page scenarios (the character wants...but...so).

TIP: Steer children away from writing from the perspective of an adult and instead have them write from a child’s point of view.

Historical fiction writers generate ideas by researching. (page 73)
- They do this by asking, ‘What would make a great story?’ Then, ‘What might have occurred within that particular time and that place that might make a great story?’ Next, conducting a bit of research on the historical era in which the story will be set in issues that matter most, what it was like for people to live through the events, to live in that time and place. Finally adding to their notebook lots of little blurbs about how possible stories could go.

Historical fiction writers generate ideas by thinking of one’s own desires and problems. (page 73)
- They do this by thinking of their own lives and how their particular desires and problems (pressure from parents, fitting in, sibling problems, and so on) might have played out during the time period during which their story will be set.
- Writers study photographs or artwork from the time period and imagine storylines from the images they are seeing.
Historical fiction writers generate ideas by considering historical contexts. (pages 73-74)

- They do this by examining timelines and facts for possible conflicts, characters, and plots. Then thinking, ‘What were some moments of conflict that might become central in a story? What stories might be hidden in this sequence of events?’

Writers test story ideas and characters for historical accuracy and consider other possibilities. (pages 74-75)

- They do this after collecting ideas for stories. Writers reread his or her entries and ask, ‘Does this make sense for the time period? Does it ring true? What is a different way it can go? Does this feel true to me?’ Then, writers revise the story blurb thinking about details such as period based motivations and conflicts, deleting scenarios that ring true only for current times, and thinking about time appropriateness of names, dress, speech, and interests.
- Historical fiction writers are first and foremost story writers, writing about people and issues that feel true to them. They do not overwhelm their writing with historical facts.
- Writers rehearse their story idea.

Bend II: Choose a First Seed Idea and Take It Through the Writing Process

GOALS:
Students will choose a seed idea to develop into their first full story.
Students will spend a day or two rehearsing different ways their stories might go prior to drafting.
Students will draft each two or three scenes in booklets on a sheet or two of loose-leaf paper.
Students will draft with an eye on strong narrative craft and on historical accuracy and detail. As they draft, students will pay attention to creating historically accurate plotlines and believable characters and to the elements of narrative writing they have learned, especially storytelling, not summarizing.
Students will use a variety of strategies to revise and edit.

Suggested Mini-Lessons
 Writers create a cohesive, focused plot. (pages 75-76)

- They do this by choosing a tool to facilitate planning and storytelling, using blank story booklets made from folded copy paper or loose-leaf paper. Then they sketch a micro-sequence of events on the four pages and story-tell that moment to themselves or a partner multiple times until finally deciding on the best way the story could unfold.
- Writers recall the difference between storytelling and summarizing, then revise their telling making sure they tell a detailed and engaging drama for each page of their booklet (bringing out the character’s inner thinking and making the setting more vivid).
- Writers keep their plot focused by linking a character’s wants/struggles to the larger events happening around him or her (a movement, war, a push for new rights for a particular group of people).
*Note: Before students begin drafting, collect their most recent plans for their stories and review them for any possible pitfalls (contains more than three scenes, not historically accurate, or have structural or other difficulties) then meet with small groups to address these problems.

Writers develop believable, interesting characters. (pages 76-77)

- They do this by, using previously learned strategies (Session 3, “Developing Believable Characters” from The Arc of Story: Writing Realistic Fiction), such as developing the character’s inside and outside traits that might go together. Then ask, ‘Does this ring true for the time period?’
- Writers further develop their characters by writing flash-drafts of single everyday scenes walking to school, eating dinner with family (scenes include dialogue and small actions, writing the external and internal story, making a movie in their mind, and storytelling rather than summarizing).
- Writers create more poignant short stories if they focus on just a few characters whose actions, words, and experiences illustrate something powerful, rather than including a whole bunch of characters.

*Note: Collect flash-drafts to assess whether your students are actually writing scenes and not just summarizing. Use what you notice about the flash-drafts to guide your choice of whole class mini-lessons you still need to teach, as well as the small groups you’ll lead.

Writers craft a compelling historical fiction story by drafting and revising. (pages 77-78)

(Break into two days.)

- Writers draft the opening scene by choosing details that tell the reader when and where the story takes place. They also study historical fiction mentor texts noticing ways published authors began their story.
- Writers draft by writing scenes not summaries. They do this by starting a story with a character saying something and doing something, making sure the action is detailed and specific. Then writers ask, ‘Am I telling a story that could have happened during the time period, or am I just reporting about the time period?’ Finally sprinkling in historical details by showing, not telling, them here and there, tucking in this information much as they would any other situational matter in a story.
- Writers develop an ending that resolves the main character’s problem. They do this by experimenting with different endings, thinking about realistic ways their stories might end. ‘Does the character learn a lesson? Change in some way?’
- Writers transfer all of the narrative writing habits they have learned all year. They do this by referring back to charts on qualities of good narrative writing, recalling that strong narrative include not just the external story but also the internal story (character’s thoughts and feelings), and that the heart of the story is given great attention and detail, so readers know to slow down and pay attention.
Writers revise and edit as they write and again once they finish their piece. (page 78)

- Writers revise the heart of the story. They do this by making sure it is powerful, all parts of the piece bring out their intended meaning.
- Writers revise by making sure the story events are as clear to the reader as they should be. They do this by reading their story like a stranger and reading their story to their writing partner.
- GRAMMAR: Writers edit their piece through different lenses such as: conventions, punctuation, verb tense, preposition use, and order of adjectives.

**Bend III: Take a Second Seed Idea through the Writing Process, with Greater Attention to Bringing Out Historical Accuracy Meaning**

**GOALS:**
Students will pick a second seed idea to turn into a full story. Students will once again rehearse for writing, trying out different leads and imaging ways their stories might go. Students will draft the stories, keeping in mind all that they learned from the first stories they wrote and aiming to write and revise with even greater attention to strong narrative craft, historical accuracy, writing the internal and external story, and bringing out meaning.

**Suggested Mini Lessons**

*Note Students will quickly thumb through their notebooks to the rehearsal work they did the first week of the unit and pick a second idea to develop into a story.

**Writers revisit historical fiction elements with greater attention to historical detail and meaning.** (page 79)

- Historical fiction writers use setting not only to orient readers to the particular time period in which a story is set but also to convey the feelings surrounding a major historical event.
- Historical fiction writers use dialogue to convey something about the period in which their characters live (code to cover a secret operation, such as hiding runaway slaves or Jews, dialects particular to the time period, formal speech when someone with less power is speaking to someone with greater power).
- Historical fiction writers weave “expert” vocabulary/time period terminology into their writing.

**Writers revise for believability.** (pages 79 - 80)

- They do this by creating flawed or complicated characters, when they are not all good or all bad, when they falter or make an unexpected alliance with another character or do something that is perhaps out of character.

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• They do this by thinking broadly about the setting it’s not just where the physical location but also the time period, the mood, all the historical details, big and small. What would a home look like in this time period? Landscape? Roads? Weather? Then writers include setting as either chunks of description, or weave it throughout the narrative, or both.

Writers revise for historical accuracy. (page 90)
• They do this by, continuing to research alongside their writing, aiming to ensure historical accuracy. They look at both their entire draft plan and the specific details they have been developing and ask questions like, ‘Does this feel true to the time period? Do I know a more specific way to describe this piece of clothing, item in the house, person's name, and so on?’
• When writers are on a roll in their writing, rather than stopping everything to check a historical fact or detail they’re not sure about, they can put a blank space or another word as a place holder. Then go back and do some quick research to fill in those gaps.

Writers craft satisfying endings. (page 80 - 81)
• Historical fiction writers can end without having to resolve the historical struggle. Instead the main character may make some small stride, the character could learn something, or show a small act of bravery. Writers consider whether their storylines are tied up, whether they have created a satisfying ending that is also historically accurate.

Bend IV: Edit and Publish: Prepare the Historical Fiction Story for Readers

GOALS:
Students will focus on important conventions cited in the CCSS.
(Based on what you determine your class most needs).

Note - Students choose between the two stories they wrote, deciding which they would like to revise and edit for publication.

Writers edit their piece to prepare for publication. (page 81)
• GRAMMAR: Choose editing lessons your students need in these final days of the unit. Refer to the CCSS.
  Suggestions:
  o Syntax of the narrator can often be different from that of the characters. Each character’s syntax could be different.
  o Writers study mentor texts trying out the syntax and punctuation in their own writing.
  o Writers maintain consistent verb tense.
  o Writers edit for spelling.
• Writers use editing checklists, reading their piece slowly, looking through one lens at a time as they reread, stopping at each sentence to ask, ‘Did I do such and such correctly in this sentence?’
• GRAMMAR: Writers can read their writing aloud, to themselves or their partner, noting how words, punctuation, and other structures

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help set the mood, tone, and content.

Writers publish and celebrate in ways that help our readers best get lost in the worlds we’ve created. (page 82)

Suggestions:
- students dress up as characters from their stories during your celebration
- students dramatize brief moments from a few student stories
- share stories with parents or pair up with another class

Instructional Strategies

Interdisciplinary Connections
Correlates to routine units in math, rules and community units in social studies
- Social Studies and Science Units
  - I Survived the San Francisco Earthquake 1906
  - If You Lived at the Time of the Great San Francisco Earthquake
  - Island
  - The Magic School Bus Explores the Senses
  - The Magic School Bus Inside the Earth
  - Magic Tree House Research Guide: Tsunamis and Other Natural Disasters
  - Maps and Mapping
  - On This Spot
  - Redwoods
  - Rocks and Minerals
  - Seymour Simon’s: Wild Earth
  - Tsunami!
  - Tsunami
  - Volcano
  - Volcanoes and Earthquakes
  - Yellowstone National Park

Professional Resources:
- If...Then...Curriculum by Lucy Calkins pages 69-82 Units of Study in Opinion, Informational and Narrative Writing
- Adapted from Branchburg Township Schools District Curriculum Guides

ELA Curriculum 2017-2018
Unit Description: Journalism (Curricular Calendar)

Journalism is a form of writing that allows students to blend much of what they know from writing other genres—weave in bits of powerful narrative, draw on their information writing skills to explain ideas and events, and even make arguments. This unit imagines that you first teach your class to write quick news reports—with an emphasis on helping students write concise, focused reports that tell the who, what, where, and when, with a sense of drama. A typical news report might feature headlines such as, Spider Gets Loose from Science Lab or Tears During Dodge Ball.

In the second part of the unit, students will work on feature article writing. Feature writers provide a unique perspective on familiar topics, provoking the reader to think about the topic in a new way: the reader might receive “food for thought,” get advice, be persuaded to think differently, or even be prompted to take action. Although the writer usually weaves in his/her direct personal experience with experiences and knowledge shared by others, he/she may need to do some minimal research that enables him/her to include interviews, facts, or statistical information to help support a stance. The writer of feature articles provides information about a topic in an interesting and engaging manner and makes the reader care about the topic. Writers of feature articles open a small window into someone’s life or a topic, but push toward making a bigger point or revealing a big idea. Students will see the connection between the event reporting they have just done and this new form of writing. In this part of the unit, you will also reinforce essential work on the foundations of information writing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Big Ideas:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Differentiate between a news article about an event and a feature article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Writing helps us clarify, as well as express, our thoughts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Journalists use a specific language and tone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| Time Line: May - June | Duration of Unit – 4 Weeks |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Questions</th>
<th>Enduring Understandings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</td>
<td>What will students understand about the big ideas?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How can I be a journalist that writes quickly, revises purposefully, and exposes thoughtful observations about my community?</td>
<td>Students will understand that...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Effective writers use specific techniques/structure to better inform the reader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Writers of nonfiction integrate facts with ideas; their goal is to teach and inform.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Nonfiction texts are written in a variety of formats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Writers of literary nonfiction weave together research, knowledge, and interests to develop a piece of writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Writers of nonfiction do conduct research through interviews, surveys, questionnaires and the internet to make their writing accurate and interesting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NEW JERSEY STUDENT LEARNING STANDARDS**

**Progress Indicators for Writing**

**Text Types and Purposes**

W.4.1. Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
- A. Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer’s purpose.
- B. Provide reasons that are supported by facts from texts and/or other sources.
- C. Link opinion and reasons using words and phrases (e.g., for instance, in order to, in addition).
- D. Provide a conclusion related to the opinion presented.

W.4.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- A. Introduce a topic clearly and group related information in paragraphs and sections; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- B. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, text evidence, or other information and examples related to the topic.
- C. Link ideas within paragraphs and sections of information using words and phrases (e.g., another, for example, also, because).
- D. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- E. Provide a conclusion related to the information or explanation presented.

W.4.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using narrative technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
- A. Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
SL.4.3. Identify the reasons and evidence a speaker provides to support particular points.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas
SL.4.4. Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.
SL.4.5. Add audio recordings and visual displays to presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes.
SL.4.6. Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion); use formal English when appropriate to task and situation.

Progress Indicators for Language
Conventions of Standard English
L.4.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
   A. Use relative pronouns (who, whose, whom, which, that) and relative adverbs (where, when, why).
   B. Form and use the progressive (e.g., I was walking; I am walking; I will be walking) verb tenses.
   C. Use modal auxiliaries (e.g., can, may, must) to convey various conditions.
   D. Order adjectives within sentences according to conventional patterns (e.g., a small red bag rather than a red small bag).
   E. Form and use prepositional phrases.
   F. Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.
   G. Correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., to, too, two; there, their).
L.4.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
   A. Use correct capitalization.
   B. Use commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text.
   C. Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence.
   D. Spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed.

Knowledge of Language
L.4.3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
   A. Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.
   B. Choose punctuation for effect.
   C. Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion).

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use
L.4.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 4 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
   A. Use context (e.g., definitions, examples, or restatements in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
   B. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., telegraph, photograph, autograph).
C. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.

L.4.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
A. Explain the meaning of simple similes and metaphors (e.g., as pretty as a picture) in context.
B. Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs.
C. Demonstrate understanding of words by relating them to their opposites (antonyms) and to words with similar but not identical meanings (synonyms).

L.4.6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).

TECHNOLOGY STANDARDS AND 21ST CENTURY SKILLS

8.1: Educational Technology: All students will use digital tools to access, manage, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to solve problems individually and collaborate and to create and communicate knowledge.
8.1.5.A.2: Format a document using a word processing application to enhance text and include graphics, symbols and/or pictures.
8.1.5.B.1: Collaborative to produce a digital story about a significant local event or issue based on first-person interviews.
8.1.5.C.1: Engage in online discussions with learners of other cultures to investigate a worldwide issue from multiple perspectives and sources, evaluate findings and present possible solutions, using digital tools and online resources for all steps.
8.1.5.D.1: Understand the need for and use of copyrights.
8.1.5.D.2: Analyze the resource citations in online materials for proper use.
8.1.5.D.3: Demonstrate an understanding of the need to practice cyber safety, cyber security, and cyber ethics when using technologies and social media.
8.1.5.D.4: Understand digital citizenship and demonstrate an understanding of the personal consequences of inappropriate use of technology and social media.
8.1.5.E.1: Use digital tools to research and evaluate the accuracy of, relevance to, and appropriateness of using print and non-print electronic information sources to complete a variety of tasks.

The following skills and themes listed should be reflected in the design of units and lessons for this course or content area.

21st Century Skills:
Multicultural and Cultural Competency Perspectives
Creativity and Innovation  
Critical Thinking and Problem Solving  
Communication and Collaboration  
Information Literacy  
Media Literacy  
Life and Career Skills  
21st Century Themes (as applies to content area):  
Financial, Economic, Business, and Entrepreneurial Literacy  
Civic Literacy  
Health Literacy  

**PRE AND POST ASSESSMENT**

Students should have familiar paper to write on and a supply of additional pages. Give the following instructions:

"You are about to begin a new type of informational writing - journalism! As journalists, you are going to report on events that matter to you and your life. So, today we are going to give this a try. Think of an issue or event that you know a lot about. You might think about the wrestling match that happened after school yesterday, or the fact that there are not healthy options for lunch in the cafeteria. You are going to have a period to report on that event or issue by writing an informational piece. As you do so, you will want to show off all you know about information writing. Specifically, you will want to make sure you...  
• Write an introduction  
• Organize your writing  
• Elaborate with a variety of information  
• Write a conclusion  
In addition, you will want to think about what you want your reader to think or feel after reading your writing. You will want to make sure that message comes out loud and clear in your writing."

Use the Informational Writing Rubric to assess student growth. In addition to the elements of the progression, you will also want to assess students’ command of tone, and their ability to express their ideas in a concise and straightforward manner.

Give the post assessment at the end of the unit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formative and Summative (*) Assessments:</th>
<th>Other Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Pre-assessment/Post-assessment *</td>
<td>• Conferring notes/records of conferences, small groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Published Writing</td>
<td>• Teacher observations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# South Orange Maplewood School District
English Language Arts Department
Writing Curriculum
Grade 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammar and Conventions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-writes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Random collection of notebooks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rough drafts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner conversation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Sentence Structure
- Use a range of sentence types (declarative, interrogative, imperative, exclamatory)
- Write in complete sentences, with the ability to recognize sentence fragments and run-on sentences
- Write sentences to provide context clues to readers into the meaning of domain-specific words or phrases

## Parts of Speech
- Form and use prepositional phrases correctly
- Use relative pronouns and relative adverbs

## Tense
- Write sentences in past, present, future, present perfect, and past perfect tenses

## Paragraphing
- Understand and use paragraph structure (indented or block) to organize sentences that focus on one idea
- Include formatting (e.g., headings) to aid comprehension
- Create transitions between paragraphs to show the progression of ideas

## Capitalization
- Use correct capitalization with increasing accuracy

## Punctuation
- Use commas correctly in writing, including to mark quotations from a text or interview, set off prepositional phrases, items in a list, and to separate day and date, as well as town and state.

## Spelling
- Correctly spell words that have been studied
- Use difficult homophones correctly
Teacher Notes

- Stage an “event” on the first day of the unit to provide grist for a sample shared piece of writing (i.e., another teacher barging into your room and demanding you return the book you borrowed, or some such thing) OR use a video of an event students can write off of, such as when a bird interrupts a teacher on Back to School Night (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwqBvBJSISGs).
- You could play and discuss this video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88MIdc38AUU (or go to YouTube and search: What is Journalism by Jennie Dear).
- Many examples of feature articles online are more akin to “all-about” informational writing. This is not the type of feature article this unit is aiming for. This unit aims for feature articles that are more angled—they are more suggestive and focus on an idea or concern.
- Collect mentor texts of news reports from newspapers and feature articles from magazines. You will also want write alongside the children, perhaps choosing topics that your class has experienced together. Field trips, classroom fiascos, book shortages...all make for great articles when written with a dramatic, journalistic tone.
- See the list of “beats” students might explore at the end of the Curricular Calendar.

Mentor Texts

- Various news and feature articles (from Scholastic magazines and/or the Scholastic Press Corp website, NewsELA.com, Nat Geo magazines, local online or print newspapers, Time for Kids, etc).

Suggestions (for feature articles, since news reports should be more current):
- https://newsele.com/articles/lib-procon-video-game-violence/id/23655/
- https://newsele.com/articles/dream-job-make-up-artist/id/23506/ (third grade level) or https://newsele.com/articles/dream-job-make-up-artist/id/23508/ (5th grade level)

Materials

Examples:
- Display previous anchor charts from information writing units
- Your own writing to serve as a demonstration text
- Information Writing Checklists – throughout the unit have students pause and self-assess their work, setting and revising goals
- Writing notebooks
- Drafting booklets
- Mini-notebooks/reporter’s notepad for each student
**GOALS AND SUGGESTED MINI-LESSONS**

**Bend 1: Reporting on Events: Lifting the Level of Journalism Writing**

**GOALS:** Students will write short focused news articles about events. The unit starts with students writing about a shared event—either one that is staged in the classroom or an event shown on video. Following that, students will write about events happening in the world around them.

**Suggested Mini-Lessons**

**Session 1: Flash-Draft**
- Students write a quick story based on the event you staged or the video you played (see Teacher Notes), but first, you will direct them to quickly jot down the key things they witnessed. Remind students to show, not tell, to describe what they saw.
- Students move from note-taking and rehearsing to flash drafting a news story.

*Note – You could decide to scaffold this lesson more by doing a shared writing of the start of the article, asking for students’ input as you scribe before sending students off to write their version of the same story.*

*Note – You may notice students writing in first person (“I saw…”); direct them to use third person and model how this may sound (“At 8:53am, [other teacher’s name] stormed into fourth-grade teacher [your name’s] room at West Lake School demanding she return the Harry Potter book she borrowed.”) You might even quote yourself, showing students how you refer to yourself in the third person.*

**Session 2: Journalists Live Wide-Awake Lives**
- Students learn that journalists see stories in everyday things. They notice newsworthy events and capture the details by taking notes on the who, what, where, and when.
- Students take an inquiry walk of the school (notebooks in hand), helping them locate possible stories (an injured child at the nurse’s office, a teacher hanging up a bulletin board, etc). Encourage students to jot the key details (who, what, when, and where...and why and how).
- Coach students to conduct short interviews and jot down the responses.
- Upon returning to class, students write short news articles on the information they gathered.

*Note – Consider giving each student a small reporter’s notepad to add to the energy and excitement of the unit.*

**Session 3: Getting the Main Ideas of a News Event**
- Students learn that when journalists collect ideas, they make sure to include the who, what, when and where of the event. Journalists know this is the most essential information in a news report, and that it must appear at the very beginning of the article.
- Use a mentor text and note the often long, complex sentences, and highlighting the comma use and placement.
- Students continue to draft news articles each period. Remind students to revisit their notes to ensure they include specific, detailed,
exact and accurate information to teach readers about the event they are reporting.

*Note – Consider giving students a template to write long, complex sentences, such as: “On month and day, year, at time, person and what they saw or did” and allow them to fill in their own information.

*Note – Before Session 3 and 4’s mini lessons, consider exposing students to more potential newsworthy events, either in school or the community. You can also expose them to current events via videos on websites like DOGO News or a local channel. Keep news watching brief to allow the bulk of class time for writing.

Session 4: More News Gathering, Writing, and Revising
- Students use the information writing checklist and note parts that are applicable to this genre of writing and other parts that might need revision. Students set goals from their new checklist and work to meet these goals.
- Students share their work and revise daily.

Session 5: Revision: Every Word Counts!
- Students learn that after capturing the details of an event, they return to what they’ve written with a critical eye, cutting and revising to make it more focused and concise.
- Students work to keep their writing brief, direct and to the point.

*Note – Students should select one news story to take through a final round of revision and editing.
*Note – Consider giving students an ideal word count for their article and push them to make cuts.

Session 6: Revision: Every Word Counts, Part II
- Students learn that titles can provide an angle or perspective (examples: Girls Jump on Desks; Boy Finds Snake; Reptile Seeks Freedom)
- Provide students with a chart of technical and academic words that relate to news reporters, such as witness, this reporter, incident, bystander, and quoted. Another possible chart could be on vivid verbs, such as shocked, bolted, surprised, dismayed, perplexed and other terms students (or mentor texts) have used.

Session 7: Revise for Detail and Drama or Technical and Academic Language
- Students refer to charts to continue revision process.
- Students refer to news reports (the inner pages of the Post, News Day, and Sports Illustrated Kids have short, kid-friendly examples) and chart their qualities, trying some of the craft moves they admire.

*Note – Don’t give your students editorials, feature articles, or investigative pieces to study; for now, stick to short, local, current news.
*Note – Introduce students to the concept of “yellow journalism,” like that found in tabloids. Explain the difference between making events more dramatic, and lies or fabricated information. This is an important distinction.
*Note — By the end of Bend I, students should have analyzed a variety of news reports, drafted several and published one or even two, in addition to learning to observe, write, and revise quickly. Consider ending the bend with a celebration of students’ news reports. One way to do this might be to stage a class newsroom live report, perhaps videotaping students as they deliver their reports on happenings around the school and current events. Another easy way to celebrate might be a publication of a class newspaper.

**Bend II: Feature Article Writing**

**GOALS:** Students work to draw on all they have learned about information writing to write feature articles to teach readers about topics. They’ll see how this writing is similar and different to the quick event reporting they have just done. Students will research and gather information about their topic in many ways—interview, conduct surveys, make observations—as well as engage in some research from text-based sources.

**Suggested Mini-Lessons**

**Session 9: Understanding the Difference Between a News Report and a Feature Article**

- Students study a feature article (can be from *Sports Illustrated for Kids, Scholastic News, Nat Geo Explorer*, etc.) and compare and contrast it to a news report.
- Students brainstorm topics they know a lot about (topics of expertise) and set off to draft a quick feature article or two.

*Note — Students should be encouraged to write quickly, sometimes without all the necessary details, which can be added later.*

**Session 10: Brainstorming Topics for Feature Articles**

- Students look for patterns across their news reports (from Bend I) to find topics for feature articles.
- Students again work on drafting quick feature articles.

*Note — If students struggle to find patterns in their news reports, coach them to ask themselves what seems big or important in any of the news reports they covered, what really matters about one of them? (Example: If a news report was on a child falling off the monkey bars at recess, perhaps students can determine that safety at recess is a “big” issue to write about.)

*Note — Encourage writers to choose subjects that are important to them, but are also “close to home,” that is, something they can research first-hand.*

**Session 11: Ready to Research**

- Students learn that journalists teach their readers by including factual information from a variety of sources. Journalists rely on research strategies like interviewing, surveying, and observing.
- Model with your research on an article: notes from an interview, thoughts about an observation, sketch something you witnessed.
- Students decide on a research strategy and begin collecting information.
*Note – If students are constantly interrupting each other to conduct interviews or surveys, consider giving each student two Post-Its. Each time they are interrupted, they hand in a Post-It. Once their Post-Its are gone, they can’t be interrupted again.

**Session 12: Conducting Online Research**
- Students learn how to craft search terms that will help them quickly find the information they need by choosing important words as well as additional related search terms.

**Session 13: Getting Organized for Drafting**
- Students learn how to group the information they gathered together, and can make a sort of table of contents for their feature article to help them know how the parts will go.

**Session 14: Rehearsing for Drafting**
- Students teach their writing partner about their topic orally in order to figure out what they need to teach and the questions that readers will ask; then they attempt to answer those questions.
- Students then segue quickly into drafting their feature articles.

**Session 15: Angling an Article**
- Students learn that a feature article is angled, tends to be suggestive, and focuses on an idea or concern (though it is not meant to be a persuasive piece).
- To angle their writing, students learn they can pose questions in order to open up investigations.

*Note – You might make a class list of issues that exist in life and then ask, “Do any of these apply to what I’m writing about?” Help students determine the issue their topic touches upon, as well as the impact it has on others to help them determine an angle for their article. Will they write to reveal an injustice? To highlight an act of kindness and emphasize the need for more of the same? To uncover the truth behind something mysterious? Or to expose a problem and suggest solutions?

*Note – You can model with your own writing and imagine the angles you might take. Show students there are multiple possibilities and show how you might revise your introduction to bring out the angle.

**Session 16: Craft Moves in a Feature Article**
- Students learn that feature articles are longer than a news report, and their craft needs to be concise and purposeful. Some examples: dialogue is in the form of a quotation; setting is used to create a vivid image; anecdotes help get the reader to care; repetition is used to hook and persuade the reader; a journalistic tone is used for power; ask burning questions.

**Session 17: Revising for Accuracy**
• Students learn that reporters revise for accuracy, checking names and information about people and places featured in their article, checking for the accuracy of quotes, and ensuring that any facts they include are correct. This often means returning to their original notes on an incident and/or doing additional research.
• Students learn that journalists think about word count and make sure their writing is concise and that every sentence has a purpose.

Session 18: Leads and Endings
• Students learn to write well by studying mentor texts and naming techniques used—specifically beginnings and endings. Some possible things they may notice with beginnings: hooking the reader with a question or anecdote, or recounting an incident with the 4Ws.
• Students study endings and may notice that journalists might state how this event will affect the future, tell how the event ended or was resolved, or end with a question the reader should ponder.

Session 19: Strengthening Transitions and Verb Choice
• Students learn to use more complex connectives, such as: as a result, in comparison, in that case, or on the other hand.
• Students learn about verb tenses, how to use more challenging irregular verbs, and to stick with one verb tense throughout the article.

*Note – Whereas students usually write a few news reports, they’ll probably only write one feature article. Some students may draft two and publish one.
*Note – Think about where and how to publish their articles. Some possibilities include creating a newspaper (can use Google Sites), holding an award ceremony that mimics the Pulitzer prize for journalism, or displaying the articles in the building where they would be the most relevant.
### Instructional Strategies

**Interdisciplinary Connections**

*Correlates to routine units in math, rules and community units in social studies*

- Social Studies and Science Units
- Important or interesting people in the community
- Different cultures and their holidays, traditions, beliefs, etc.
- Ways to bring about change and/or social justice at school or the larger community; rights and responsibilities of citizens

### Professional Resources:

- Teachers College Reading and Writing Project Curriculum Calendar: Journalism (Curricular Calendar)
- Books by Roy Peter Clark
- Adapted from West Windsor-Plainsboro Township Schools District Curriculum Guide
- Adapted from Branchburg Township Schools District Curriculum Guides