

Crafting Nonfiction

Lessons on Writing Process, Traits, and Craft



**Linda Hoyt
Kelly Boswell**

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INTERMEDIATE

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An imprint of Heinemann
361 Hanover Street
Portsmouth, NH 03801
www.heinemann.com

Offices and agents throughout the world

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Book and CD resources illustrations © Houghton Mifflin Harcourt/HIP

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Cover design: Lisa Fowler and Jenny Jensen Greenleaf

Composition: Eclipse Publishing Services

Cover photos: Bill Miller, Larry Crowley, and David Stirling

Text illustration: 3–5 students of Mrs. Hoyt and colleagues

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Hoyt, Linda and Boswell, Kelly

Crafting nonfiction intermediate, lessons on writing process, traits, and craft / Linda Hoyt and Kelly Boswell.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 978-0-325-03722-6

1. Authorship. 2. Authorship--Vocational guidance. I. Title.

PN145.H693 2012

808'.02--dc23

2011047791

ISBN 10: 0-325-03722-1

ISBN 13: 978-0-325-03722-6

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper

16 15 14 13 12 ML 1 2 3 4 5

To Deb Doorack
You epitomize grace, strength, and vision.
Working with you is an honor.
Linda

To Carson and Brady
Wherever you go, go with all your heart.
Kelly

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

From Linda

Kelly: From the day I first watched you in action with your students—and later with educators—I knew you were special. Working as your partner on this project has been absolutely wonderful. Thank you for sharing your enormous depth of understanding, your teacher heart, and your considerable writing talent.

Team Heinemann: It is an honor to stand in your shadow. Lesa Scott, Anita Gildea, Kate Montgomery, Deb Doorack, Charles McQuillin, Abby Heim, David Stirling, Lisa Fowler, Stephanie Levy, Heather Anderson, the sales team, and so many more. My thanks and appreciation to all.

To the teachers who tested lessons, provided feedback, and gathered work samples for this resource: Leah Starkovich, Portland, Oregon; April Willard and Kristal Lomax, Thomasville, North Carolina; Debbie Welemin, Burnsville, Minnesota; Jane Olson, Apple Valley, Minnesota; Linda Bozeman, Denton, Texas; Aleisha Fuller-Moore, Denton, Texas; Holly Smith, Sanibel Island, Florida; Kelly Davis, Ellicott City, Maryland; Teachers of East Woods Elementary, Hudson, Ohio; Jan Martin and Eric McMoine from Kinnaman Elementary, Beaverton, Oregon; Eileen Cronin, Melissa Sidiropoulos, Jennifer Gillingham, Boston Public Schools.

From Kelly

Linda: Thank you for giving me the opportunity of a lifetime. Working with you has been a joy and a delight! I am in awe of your talent, and I am honored to call you a friend.

Kerry Bishop, Sarah Dunkin, Kristy Castor, Michelle King, Melissa Mayes, and Renee Niepoky: You are amazing educators and best buddies from Beaverton School District. Your work with writers inspires me to believe in the power of possibilities. I am privileged to know you.

Sherri Downey, Leslie Whitmore, Sandy Kindt, Roxy Rogers, and Heidi Freeman, teachers and dear friends from Ruder Elementary in Columbia Falls, Montana. Thank you for your friendship, encouragement, and positive energy. Jerry Bauer and Nancy Loeza at Whittier Elementary in Bozeman, MT. Thank you for opening up your hearts and your classrooms to me. The work you do with students is fantastic!

Cory, my sweet husband and my best friend: Your unwavering love and support help me reach for the stars.

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Teaching Nonfiction Writing

Today's nonfiction writing brings excitement to both educators and children, fostering a fertile setting in which nonfiction writers can read, think, and write as they explore their innate interest in the world around them.



EMBRACING A MULTIFACETED VIEW OF NONFICTION WRITING

Nonfiction writing comprises the bulk of writing done by adults at home and in the workplace. It also represents the majority of the writing that students will do throughout their years in school. However, nonfiction writing does not have to sound like an encyclopedia! Instead, it can be filled with voice, engaging details, exquisite word choice, and sentences that sound lively and natural to the ear. As nonfiction writers, students have an opportunity to unleash their natural curiosity as they research, investigate, and wonder. As nonfiction writers who are empowered with a view of writing that includes consideration for *content, form, and craft*, students learn to execute writing that is driven by rich language and graced by intriguing visuals, text features, and page layouts. This multifaceted view of nonfiction writing creates a learning environment in which writing becomes an exciting invitation to embrace knowledge about the world while escalating each student's proficiency in the fine points of high-quality writing.

Raising the Bar with Nonfiction Writing

Lucy Calkins once said, *"Lifting the level of writing instruction matters . . . because writing matters"* (*A Guide to the Writing Workshop*, page 2). We agree! And we would like to add that we think this is more true than ever before. Today's schools, in response to increased accessibility of technology, demands of the workplace, and guidance of the Common Core State Standards, realize that nonfiction writing can and should be taken seriously in every dimension of the curriculum. Writers need to have explicit instruction showing them how to write in response to their learning, how to communicate points of view that are clearly supported by facts, and how to create summaries, explanations, informational reports, nonfiction poems, procedures, technical texts, and so much more. But the secret is to help writers also discover that they can make their work infinitely more engaging if they are diligent in applying stages of the writing process and infusing craft elements such as voice, word choice, and sentence variety into the writings they compose.

Just as a florist takes pride in creating the right balance between structural elements, color, and form in a display of flowers, young writers find satisfaction in knowing how to add the artistic touches that craft elements, literary devices, and process bring to nonfiction writing.

DELIVERING DYNAMIC DEMONSTRATIONS

Modeling is one of the most effective of all teaching strategies (Pearson and Fielding, 1991), so we believe that writers of nonfiction should experience modeled writing every day—sometimes more than once! When students see and hear an expert writer in action, they can imagine what is possible in their own writing. They have a clear vision of what their own writing should look like and sound like—and they understand how the writing was constructed. Like the picture on the box for a jigsaw puzzle, modeled writing helps writers see the path they are about to travel and establishes a yardstick for reflecting on progress toward an attainable target.

Modeling Mature, Well-Developed Writing

Modeled writing is an opportunity to set the stage for writers to gain maturity in word choice, sentence structures, or process elements. This means that, with the exception of writing models created to demonstrate drafting and spelling, modeled writing should look like it was written by an adult—not a child. During read-alouds, we read as an adult, delivering the reading selection with fluency, expression, and dramatic interpretation. *We don't read aloud like a child.* So the same high standard for performance and delivery should be evident when we write in front of students.

Modeled writing is a time to pull out all the stops and generate nonfiction text that elevates expectation and paves the way for excellence. This is a time to let writers observe the creation of intriguing nonfiction writing that has fascinating facts plus inviting sentence formations, sizzling interjections, and mood-shifting phrasing. This is

A super cell, characterized by its constantly rotating upward drafts, is a highly dangerous storm system that lasts for hours and may travel hundreds of miles. Winds swirl. Lightning cracks. Skies darken. Alarms begin to shriek.

Modeled Writing Example 1

When explicit

modeling and think-alouds are offered every day, writing blossoms into a state of richness that could never be achieved through assignments alone.

We must demonstrate to our students that we are writers, too. It is only through the act of writing that we can show students that we value writing and its role in our learning lives.

—Lynne Dorfman and
Rose Cappelli,
Nonfiction Mentor Texts

When students see and hear an expert writer in action, they can imagine what is possible in their own writing.

a time to create a model that writers can aspire to emulate. By raising the standard for your modeled writing, you will lift expectations for your students as well.

The frog is hungry after his long sleep, but he waits patiently. Suddenly, his bulging eyes fixate on a dozing fly. His long, sticky tongue darts out and . . . Snap! The unsuspecting insect pops into a greedy mouth.

Modeled Writing Example 2

A Tip:

In advance of a modeled writing lesson, jot the modeled writing that you plan to demonstrate on a sticky note. Then, place the sticky note on the chart where you will be modeling. With that little reminder, you will never have to worry about classroom distractions derailing the quality of your modeled writing.

Through careful

observation of their teacher as a writer, writers gain critical understandings that empower them with independence and strategy.

Letting Them See You Struggle

While we certainly want modeled writing to raise the bar and set a standard for excellence, intermediate-age writers can also benefit from occasionally seeing the struggles that adults face as writers. This is especially true of modeled writing opportunities focused on process. When modeling for pre-writing, drafting, and revision, give yourself permission to think aloud about possible topic choices or how to start a sentence, change your mind, and start again. It is okay to show kids the power of rereading and rethinking and then adjust your writing to reflect your new view. It is even okay to show kids that you occasionally throw away a draft and start again with a fresh piece of paper to support a new line of thinking.

Thinking Aloud

Think-alouds, when combined with modeled writing, provide invitations for students to *listen* in on the thinking of a proficient writer. During a think-aloud, the goal is to make your thinking transparent enough that your writers can understand the internal processing that supports the text you are creating. As you write and think aloud, learners are more likely to notice the techniques that empower nonfiction writing and perhaps even hold their breath in awe as they watch how onomatopoeia and creative punctuation bring voice and life to a piece of writing. As close observers unencumbered by paper and pen, writers are free to notice details and see the natural path a nonfiction writer takes as she flows from thinking to writing and back to thinking. Through careful observation of their teacher as a writer, writers gain critical understandings that empower them when they pick up their pencils to craft nonfiction texts of their own. And who could be better at offering those opportunities for close observation than the teacher they know and trust—the teacher who can take their hands and show them how to breathe life into nonfiction writing.

Think-alouds crack open a writer's thinking, making internal processes visible to learners.

Sample Think-Aloud 1

I am rereading this section about bald eagles, and I realize that I need to include more rich details. The writing doesn't have enough details to help readers create a picture in their minds. It says that eagles have talons and beaks, but it doesn't explain what their talons and beaks are used for—or even what they look like. I am going to revise and add some specific details to make my writing come to life. Watch as I scratch out this section and rewrite it to add details that will help my reader to visualize.

Sample Think-Aloud 2

We know that headings serve as mini-titles that are spaced throughout a piece of writing to keep each section clear and organized. Today I want to show you how I can use headings to help me as I draft. I am ready to create a draft about the great white shark. Watch as I make a list of headings to capture the big ideas I want to include in my writing today:

Ancient Predators; Teeth, Teeth, and More Teeth; Powerful Predators. Since the first heading is Ancient Predators, this section of my draft will need to talk about how great whites have been around for a long time. Watch as I write: Long before . . . oceans. Since my heading is about “ancient,” did you notice how I focused my draft on providing more information about how very long sharks have been in existence? Drafts and headings are powerful partners.

During a think-aloud, it helps to use phrases such as:

As I think about this, I realize that I can choose to _____ , _____ , or _____. I am going to choose _____ because. . . .

As I think about this, I realize that. . . .

As I prepare to write, I am wondering. . . .

Watch how I. . . .

Notice the way I. . . .

Tune in, writers. I am about to show you. . . .

Keep your eyes on my pen and check out the way that I. . . .

Rereading is a powerful tool, and it just helped me realize that. . . .

In a setting where explicit modeling and think-alouds are offered every day so writers can see what they need to do and listen to a proficient writer think out loud, writing blossoms into a state of richness that could never be achieved through assignments alone. When we have higher expectations for ourselves as writing educators and for our students as developing writers, amazing things are possible.

The important point is that your writers need to watch you engage in modeled writing every day. Empowered by the rich vocabulary and interesting language structures from your modeled

To maximize

achievement, writers need to observe explicit modeling and think-alouds every day.

writing, oral language will grow hand in hand with proficiency in nonfiction writing.

PONDERING THE POWER OF A REAL AUDIENCE

While the major purpose of this book is the minilessons that launch writing experiences in the writing workshop and in cross-curricular learning, it is essential that we remind ourselves of the power of an authentic audience. When writers write just to drop their creation into a basket for the teacher to grade, motivation and achievement suffer. Instead, if writers know they will be sharing their writing with a real audience, even a partner, intrinsic motivation and achievement soar! If we want writers to do the hard work of deep thinking, integration of fact and craft, revision, and editing, they must know that their writing will impact an actual audience. So as you investigate the lessons in this resource, we encourage you to always consider the potential for a real audience and wonder:

- Is this writing that is best linked to a writer's notebook and a partner share?
- Is this writing that is worthy of a team conference in which small groups of writers can share their work and discuss the facts, traits, and craft elements they were able to include?
- Is this writing that should be carried through all the stages of the writing process and be presented in a bound book, poster, or electronic text?

When writers

write for an authentic audience, motivation and achievement soar!

When writers

consciously attend to content, form, and craft, writing takes on depth and richness that cannot be achieved with attention to facts alone.

LEARNING FROM AN EXPERT

Seymour Simon, the award-winning author of more than 250 nonfiction books for young readers, has been called the dean of the children's science book field by the *New York Times*. What is unique about Seymour's work is that he keeps a list of nonfiction craft elements next to him as he drafts as a reminder to integrate the facts that anchor his work with rich descriptions, comparisons, exciting visualizations, and other literary devices. This is significant, as this list of craft elements fuels his work and helps him ensure that the content will be interesting and accessible to readers. When Linda asked Seymour if he would share a few thoughts for inclusion in this book, he wrote the piece that appears opposite.

Like Seymour Simon, you have an opportunity to help your students understand that great writing doesn't just roll off your pen like magic. We encourage you to let your writers know that even famous authors have to think about facts and then decide how to share them with a reader so the facts are exciting to read. Writers need to understand that even the published authors they see as mentors take time to consider interesting ways to open sentences, insert text features, and choose their words. These conscious and deliberate choices that all writers need to make are the difference between flat, monotonous nonfiction writing and nonfiction writing that sparkles.

CRAFTING MY BOOKS

When I write my books about space or animals or weather, I'm always aware of my readers and how my writing must explain and clarify yet still be exciting and interesting. I'm explaining difficult concepts in many of my books so I try to make connections to a young reader's world and understanding. One of the ways I do this is to make comparisons such as this one from my book *Stars*: "With powerful telescopes, we can see that the stars are as many as the grains of sand on an ocean beach." I also try to use strong verbs to dramatize the text. In my book *Icebergs and Glaciers*, I wrote, "When glaciers move, they grind and crush everything in their path."

I try to write effective leads in all kinds of ways, such as getting the reader to participate by doing something physical, writing exciting visualization, drama and suspense, comparisons and analogies. In my book *The Heart*, the first pages open with "Make a fist. This is about the size of your heart. . . . It weighs only about ten ounces, about as much as one of your sneakers." I also like to ask questions of my readers. I use descriptive detail as a story line in many of my texts. In my view, writing exciting nonfiction is not that different from writing exciting fiction.

—*Seymour Simon*

NAVIGATING THIS RESOURCE

Crafting Nonfiction is designed to provide an array of simple, ready-to-use minilessons that can be slipped into the writing workshop or into the nonfiction writing you provide in science, social studies, mathematics, and health. The goal of these lessons is to support you in providing top-quality nonfiction writing instruction that is embedded with craft and graced by process—with a minimum of preparation time.

As you dip into the lessons, you will find that there is a strong emphasis on cracking open the thinking that goes on inside a writer's head as text is created. Samples of teacher language provide think-alouds that invite your writers inside the writing process and expose the joy of crafting text that is both factual and artfully written. You'll also find lessons that provide strong support for trait-based instruction, offering writers tips on word choice, sentence fluency, research, and ideas, voice, conventions, and presentation.

There are no worries about taking the time to create fascinating passages for modeled writing. Samples for modeled writing are right here in these pages to springboard your thinking. You can use them as they are written or use them as a seed from which your own ideas can evolve.

These lessons are, by design, short and focused. Each lesson can and should be completed in 15 minutes or less so that writers have



time to do what they most need to do—write! With these brief minilessons, you may want to power up the writing that you do in science, social studies, and the other disciplines or add variety to the minilessons in your writing workshop. You can also use these lessons with small groups and in one-on-one conferring as a support to differentiation and targeted instruction.

A Few Tips for Using This Resource

This resource is organized into two major sections: Process and Traits and Craft Elements. Within each major section, you'll find subsections that are designed to make lessons organized and easy to find.

Process lessons are grouped according to the stages of the writing process. In Research and Planning, you will find a wealth of resources that range from modeling how to use the key word strategy to using a graphic organizer or planning page layout. In the section on drafting, lessons focus on drafting a persuasion, adding action, and experimenting with leads. Revising is the section where you will find helpful modeled writing lessons on how to tune up sensory images, how to combine sentences, how to maintain main ideas, and how to revise for sentence fluency. In the sections Editing and Presenting, the lessons turn toward audience and a focus on page layout, text features, and page breaks.

The section on traits and craft elements is rich in lessons that focus on the artistic side of writing. In this section, lessons are organized around traits of high-quality nonfiction writing, with craft elements woven into each section. The traits are as follows:

- Content and ideas
- Organization and text features
- Style (word choice and sentence fluency)
- Voice and audience
- Conventions (punctuation, grammar, sentence structure, capitalization, spelling consciousness)

Features of a Lesson

Each lesson is focused on a behavior that writers can absorb and attempt to immediately apply in nonfiction writing. The structure of the lesson is repeated throughout this resource, providing a familiar, predictable routine for both you and your students.

As you view the page, be sure to notice the *When To Use It* feature. This is designed to assist you in lesson selection.

Another feature you will want to notice is *Turn and Talk*. It is important to anticipate that there will be times for students to turn and talk woven into the fabric of the lesson. This is essential processing time when discourse is distributed so all writers are talking, thinking, and reflecting on the learning that you are modeling. It is often helpful to have writers come to your meeting area with a “thinking partner” and for the thinking partners to sit together on the carpet. Since thinking partner match-ups are already in place, you won’t need to waste valuable lesson time while students try to find someone with whom to discuss the learning.

Most importantly, be sure to notice the sample modeled writing. This sample can be copied as is and save you the time of getting creative, or you can use the modeled writing as a starter for your own thinking and shift the content toward a subject that is current within your classroom.



Steps of the Lesson:

- ***Focus the Learning*** is a brief explanation of why this lesson is helpful to primary-age writers, and it often provides tips for ensuring success with the target learning.
- ***Modeling*** is the heart of the lesson. In this step, you will find think-aloud language that you may want to consider as you demonstrate and consciously show your writers how to infuse the target learning in a piece of nonfiction. The modeling portion of the lesson is divided into two steps to provide a pause for turn and talks.

This portion of the lesson is essential and is worthy of a bit of advance thought. This is your vitally important opportunity to make your thinking transparent and show your students how proficient nonfiction writers construct a message, take notes, play with different sentence openers, and lift their nonfiction writing so it is not boring! So it is a good idea to read the sample text and think-aloud in advance and decide if you are going to use the think-aloud as is or modify it to make it your own.

- ***Analyze*** is a time to reread the modeled writing and reflect. Because rereading is one of the most important process tools we can teach writers, you want to make it clear that writers always reread and reflect on what they have created. Let your writers watch you start at the beginning and read aloud, touching each word as you go. Let them hear you notice places in your work where you applied the target learning or places where you are thinking you might revise to make a sentence more exciting or descriptive. Analyze includes a final turn and talk, plus a summary of the lesson that should refocus your writers on the target learning and prepare them to pick up their pencils.
- ***Variations*** Differentiation is an essential key to lifting nonfiction writers toward the highest possible levels of success. This section has suggestions for less experienced writers and more experienced writers. These tips can be used to modify the overall lesson, support additional lessons if they should be



appropriate, or guide your thinking as you plan for guided writing groups and confer with individuals.

- ***Cross-References*** Be sure to note the cross-references, as these will give you tips on additional lessons that can be linked to this lesson to provide additional support or offer an opportunity to stretch and extend the learning.

Tools to Have on Hand

Most lessons call for you to model a piece of writing, thinking aloud as you construct the text. Therefore, you will need a good supply of chart paper and markers. Once models are created, you and your students will want to return to them for reference and ongoing support. You'll need a strategy for saving your modeled writing. Some teachers find it helpful to place modeled writing on hangers and simply hang them from a clothes rack. Others use a spiral tablet of charts and flip back and forth as needed.

Selecting Lessons

Selecting a lesson from this resource is like going to a restaurant and preparing to order. As you view the menu, you have the joyful challenge of selecting meal items that best match your personal needs and interests. I encourage you to treat this resource like

a menu of possibilities. As you view the menu options, pick and choose from lessons that support observable needs in your learners, lessons that assist you in targeting a particular trait, or lessons that match a particular time of year, content, or unit of study.

Target Specific Needs

Formative assessments, your observations of writers during one-on-one conferences and your analyses of student writing samples, can and should guide your thinking and lesson selection. This resource is an opportunity to do what teachers do best—match instruction to learner need.

Examples of how to analyze a writing sample and then select specific lessons from this resource begin on page 44.

Target a Particular Trait

Your students may benefit from lessons that focus on a particular trait, such as word choice or organization. Knowing that we need to help writers develop across the full spectrum of traits, you may want to work through these sections in order. Or you may see a need in your students, such as creating a clear beginning, middle, and end, that would lead you to a particular trait such as organization.

Most of all, ensure that your writers experience modeled writing and support with an array of lessons representing each trait so their nonfiction writing development is structurally and artistically sound. When students have repeated exposure to high-quality models that demonstrate how to include a particular trait and when they have the opportunity to integrate that trait into their writing, achievement soars!

Organize by Time of Year

Early in the year, when you are establishing routines and understandings for the writing workshop, you might focus on the lessons for process—especially planning, drafting, and revising. As the school

year progresses and writers develop fluency and begin to consider publication, you might add lessons on editing and presenting.

If you are engaging writers in a unit of study on persuasion, report writing, procedural text, or written response, you might select lessons that best support the features of the unit. For example, when students are writing reports, you could select focus lessons that pertain to research or to specific text features such as bold words or a table of contents.

Weave Lessons Through the Day

Across the Curriculum

With so much content crowding our instructional day, we need to integrate content across the curriculum. These lessons can be used to teach writing in connection with science, social studies, health, or mathematics. For example, if students are learning about frogs in science, you might consider choosing lessons that teach students how to research, take notes, and create a labeled drawing. Likewise, if you are engaging in a mathematics unit on graphing, you might choose the lessons that teach how to locate and use facts from a visual or how to create a chart or table.

In the Writing Workshop

Writing workshop is grounded by an opening minilesson. The lessons and modeled writing presented in this resource will slip naturally into your workshop routines, saving you time and elevating your students' nonfiction writing.

To Differentiate

Use the lessons in this guide to support differentiation during small-group writing instruction or when conferring with individuals. Remember that modeled writing and think-alouds become even more powerful in the personalized settings created by a small group or conference. This is a time when you can stretch highly proficient writers to reach even greater heights or scaffold those who need additional support.

However you choose to utilize the lessons in this book, remember that all of them can be used for whole-class minilessons, for small-group supports, or as vehicles to live one-on-one conferences.

ONGOING, FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT: INFORMANT TO INSTRUCTION

Ongoing, authentic assessment is the heart of teaching. However, assessment is only useful when it is used to guide our instructional decisions. As teachers, it's imperative that we become careful observers, collecting writing samples to analyze, listening in on partner conversations between writers, conferring with individuals, and using expert kid-watching skills during guided writing sessions.

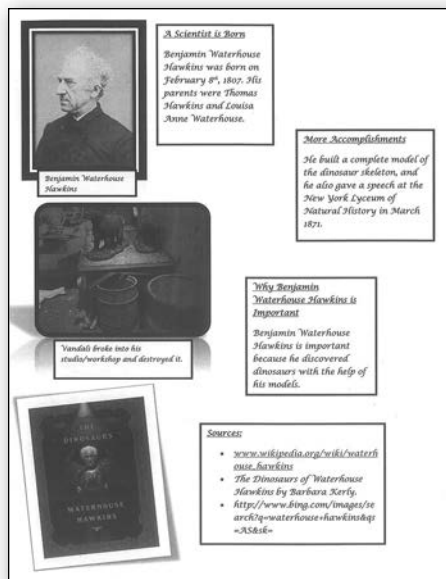
When we observe writers, analyzing writing samples and behaviors closely, we can determine which students are integrating the writing technique from modeled writing into their work. Close observation will make it clear which students might benefit from additional support in a small-group writing lesson or a one-on-one conference in which the skill, process, or craft element is modeled again. These careful observations will also guide you to know if the entire class may benefit from another modeled writing focused on the same writing technique.

Each piece of writing that you examine will broaden your base of understanding for your writers and improve the scaffolds you offer in conferences, in guided writing sessions, and in modeled writing demonstrations.

Analyzing Nonfiction Writing Samples: Observe, Reflect, Plan

The following nonfiction writing samples, reflective of those you might see in an intermediate classroom, offer invaluable insights into the development of each writer. As you analyze a writing sample, it is important to first identify strengths of the writer and then to consider teaching moves and specific crafting lessons that will best lift the development of this nonfiction writer.

As with all formative observations, it is important to note that while every writing sample provides valuable information, it takes a review of many samples over time to fully understand the strengths and areas of need for a learner. This is especially true with nonfiction writing, as each text type includes different text structures, features, and conventions.



Sea Turtle

Strengths of this writer:

Malik has included descriptive words and phrases that evoke strong imagery in the reader's mind (*beak like choppers ready to eat, boney shell, hard leathery skin*). He has experimented with using powerful action verbs to begin a few lines of his poem (*swimming, diving, chomp*).

Observations and possible teaching moves:

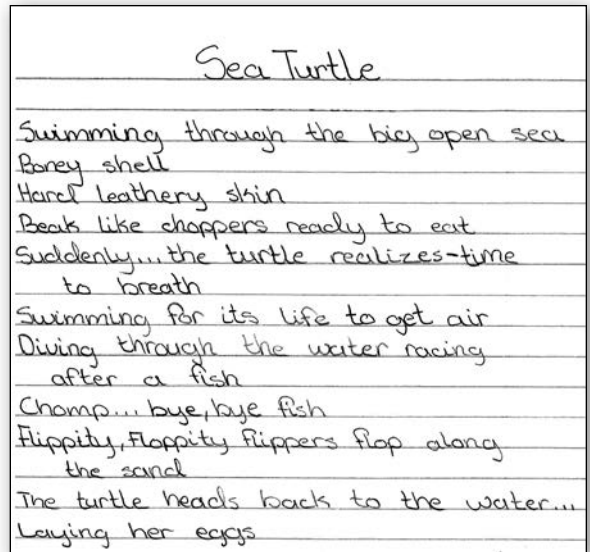
This writer is clearly having fun exploring descriptive language, but he may need more modeling on how to write an informational poem. He might also be ready for additional lessons in how temporal words and phrases can add clarity and flow to the piece. He may benefit from a short guided lesson on how using onomatopoeia can add some more voice and pizzazz.

Suggested lessons from this resource:

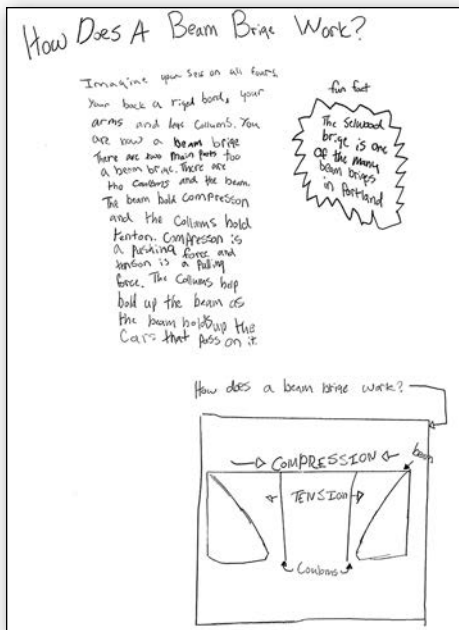
- Word Choice, Lesson 9, Using Temporal Words and Phrases to Signal Event Order
- Word Choice, Lesson 11, Use Onomatopoeia
- Sentence Structure, Lesson 3, Compound Sentences
- Drafting, Lesson 11, Writing an Informational Poem

Link to the Common Core:

- Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.



Sea Turtle



How Does a Beam Bridge Work?

How Does a Beam Bridge Work?

Strengths of this writer:

Lily has effectively organized her information and has displayed it in a visually pleasing way. She has included a diagram and a callout box in which she has placed a “fun fact.” As she begins her writing, she speaks directly to her reader and draws the reader in.

Observations and possible teaching moves:

If other writing samples suggest that Lily is having difficulty navigating homophones (such as *too*, *to*, and *two*), a modeled lesson in a small-group setting might be in order. Lily might also benefit from learning how including actual photographs can boost her nonfiction writing.

Suggested lessons from this resource:

- Sentence Fluency, Lesson 3, Using a Variety of Sentence Beginnings
- Text Features, Lesson 3, Using Photographs
- Spelling Consciousness, Lesson 4, Navigating Homophones
- Sentence Structure, Lesson 4, Opening Element

Link to the Common Core:

- Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
- Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view.

Maddie's Letter to Luke

Strengths of this writer:

Maddie has constructed an informative, engaging, and delightful letter! She opens with a question—a sure way to hook her reader! Her writing also includes a clear organizational structure (*the first stage, the second stage, etc.*). This makes the writing clear, focused, and easy to read. She shows engagement with her topic when she includes comparisons such as *its mouth is like a tiny vacuum* and the “*young frog*” is like a *teenager*.

Observations and possible teaching moves:

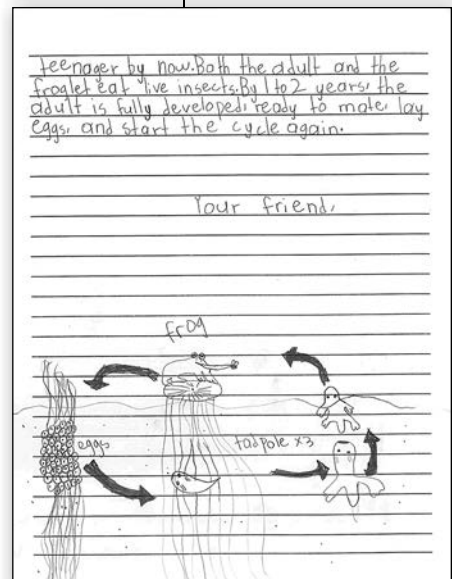
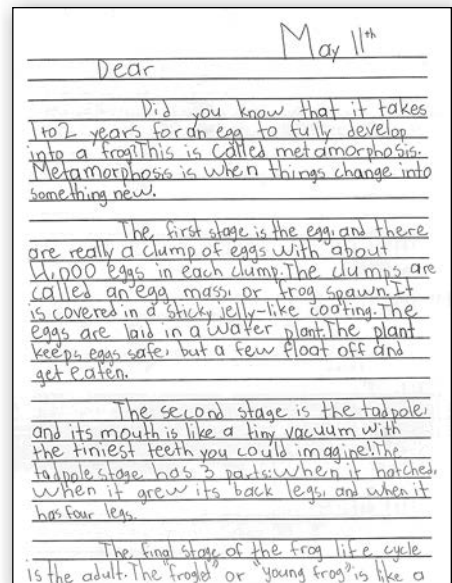
The writing is clear and organized, but in places, it is a bit choppy. Maddie would benefit from learning how to reread her writing with an ear for sentence fluency. She might also benefit from analyzing each sentence to make sure she has crafted sentences of varying lengths.

Suggested lessons from this resource:

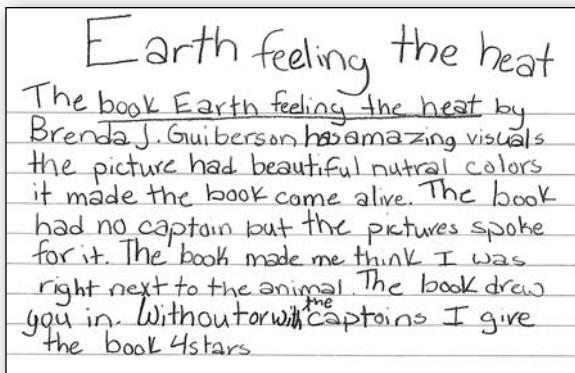
- Sentence Fluency, Lesson 2, Rereading to Check Sentence Fluency
- Sentence Fluency, Lesson 1, Sentences Are of Varying Lengths
- Grammar, Lesson 2, Use Prepositions to Enrich Descriptions

Link to the Common Core:

- Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey events.



Maddie's
Letter to Luke



Amalia's Book Review

Amalia's Book Review

Strengths of this writer:

Amalia writes convincingly about the visuals in the book and includes some nice descriptive language (*beautiful natural colors*). She has also effectively inserted her own opinion into the evaluation of the book (*The book made me think I was right next to the animal*). This provides a nice personal touch!

Observations and possible teaching moves:

Amalia has a lot to say about the book, but the lack of punctuation and capitalization makes it hard for a reader to follow. She may need a nudge toward identifying complete sentences and punctuating them accordingly. She might also benefit from additional support in combining her sentences to create a smooth and fluent piece of writing.

Suggested lessons from this resource:

- Grammar, Lesson 2, Use Prepositions to Enrich Descriptions
- Punctuation and Capitalization, Lesson 4, Punctuating Onomatopoeia
- Sentence Structure, Lesson 1, Two-Word Sentences
- Sentence Fluency, Lesson 3, Using a Variety of Sentence Beginnings

Link to the Common Core:

- Support the claim with clear reasons and relevant evidence, demonstrating an understanding of the topic.

Kaleb's Explanation

Strengths of this writer:

Kaleb has crafted a piece of writing that is informative and fairly clear. He's included an illustration, complete with a key, which shows that he's thinking about his reader. He also shows that he's becoming comfortable trying more complex sentences such as *After that the Krakawas use sap, rope, and even grasses to keep the wickup sturdy.*

Observations and possible teaching moves:

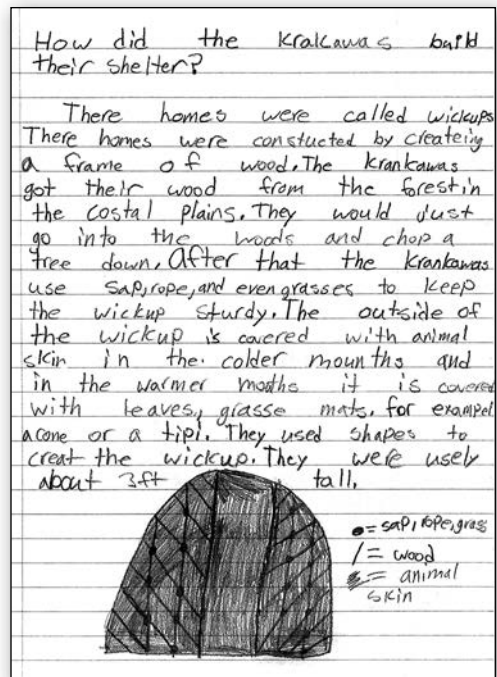
Kaleb might benefit from a quick refresher on the use of homophones such as *there*, *their*, and *they're*. It would also be helpful to encourage Kaleb to try using a comparison or even a little humor to show some engagement and bring some of *his* voice to the writing.

Suggested lessons from this resource:

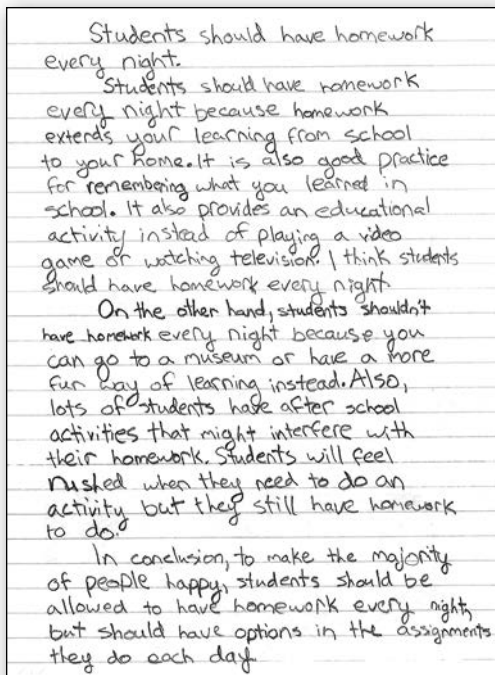
- Spelling Consciousness, Lesson 4, Navigating Homophones
- Grammar, Lesson 2, Use Prepositions to Enrich Descriptions
- Voice and Audience, Lesson 2, Show Engagement with the Topic
- Ideas, Lesson 8, Use Comparisons

Link to the Common Core:

- Include formatting and graphics when useful to aid comprehension.



Kaleb's Explanation



Antoine's Persuasion

Antoine's Persuasion

Strengths of this writer:

Antoine's piece has the beginning of a strong organizational structure. He's organized his writing into cohesive paragraphs, and he's utilized phrases such as *on the other hand* and *in conclusion*.

Observations and possible teaching moves:

Despite Antoine's attempts at organization, this piece is difficult for a reader to follow. He includes an opposing point of view but might need help in how to set up the alternate opinion so that it doesn't distract from his main argument. Antoine may benefit from more exposure to persuasive texts and lessons aimed at strengthening a written argument.

Suggested lessons from this resource:

- Organization, Lesson 9, Using a Persuasive Framework
- Ideas, Lesson 1, Create a Nonfiction Topics List
- Voice and Audience, Lesson 9, Target Voice in Persuasive Writing
- Revising, Lesson 2, Revising a Lead
- Word Choice, Lesson 12, Use Persuasive Language

Link to the Common Core:

- Acknowledge alternate or opposing claims.

Iliana's Personal Narrative

Strengths of this writer:

Iliana establishes the setting for her reader by including some nice sensory images in her opening lines. It's clear that this was a day that she remembers well and one that impacted her.

Observations and possible teaching moves:

Iliana has a lot to say about her day at the beach, but she needs to narrow the topic and develop just one little nugget of her day. For example, a reader would love to hear more about how the wave twisted her knee. She may need a nudge toward finding that one moment in time from that day and developing that into a more focused piece of writing.

As I walk along the sand I could hear the waves crash against the shore and see the dolphins far away in the ocean. I felt the water touch my feet as I walk into the water. The water was warm so I swam in. My foot stepped on something slippery and I fell in to the water. When I fell in I swam away as fast as I could because I didn't know what it was. When I got out of the water I ran to my mom to tell her about it. She said she had no idea what it could have been so I forgot about it and went to look for sand crabs. I found a sand crab by the water and I went to show my mom. She was impressed that I found one. I went to go put it back. After that me and my mom crashed into a wave. The wave twisted my knee. The water washed me up on the shore and my mom came running to me and carried me to our umbrella and I didn't go in the water again.

Iliana's Personal Narrative

Suggested lessons from this resource:

- Organization, Lesson 8, Paragraphs
- Grammar, Lesson 2, Use Prepositions to Enrich Descriptions
- Ideas, Lesson 5, Focus on the Main Idea(s)
- Grammar, Lesson 3, Select Precise Verbs
- Word Choice, Lesson 2, Target Powerful Action Verbs

Link to the Common Core:

- Use narrative techniques to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.

Mormor

Mormor, my Grandma has a smile that takes all your cares and worries away in a flash. Softly her hand, so worn and yet so soft gently touches mine. The air about her makes you feel loved and elated. Twinkling, her eyes look at me but never get tired doing so. When I am with her I never want to leave.

My Grandma was born on April 11, 1938 in Eveleth, Minnesota, the second child in her family. Her mother died when she was very young after having her younger brother. Later, her father remarried. Her grandparents were immigrants from Sweden and Germany in the 1800's.

Quickly, she grew up and started playing with rubber guns and games like kick the can and baseball in alleyways near her house. One summer the United States notified her that no kids were allowed off their property for the whole summer because of the polio epidemic. Also, a neighbor had a quarantine sign on her house that year because one of the family members had scarlet fever. Her family stressed education a huge amount, so she barely ever missed school except when she was horribly sick.

As she became an adult she worked in many places. Later she married David McCain and lived with him until he was fifty-five when he died of stomach cancer. Not surprisingly she never thought of dating or remarrying. She was a very industrious person that to me is the best Grandma in the world.

Mormor

Strengths of this writer:

Alex's first paragraph drips with voice and makes me want to read more. He's done an excellent job of including strong sensory images that make Mormor come to life!

Observations and possible teaching moves:

This piece starts off great but suddenly becomes dry, lifeless, and a bit jumbled. As you confer with Alex, you might show him how to infuse the important facts about Mormor in a way that still maintains the voice and tone of the first paragraph.

Mormor

Suggested lessons from this resource:

- Organization, Lesson 7, Craft an Ending that Brings Closure
- Presenting, Lesson 2, Inserting Illustrations and Visuals
- Revising, Lesson 6, Tuning Up Concrete Words and Sensory Images
- Word Choice, Lesson 3, Linking Words and Phrases

Link to the Common Core:

- Provide a sense of closure.

Let Your Wings Take Flight

Strengths of this writer:

This writer has used action and some powerful action verbs such as *flaps*, *gliding*, and *strikes* to engage the reader and paint a picture of this Rufous-tailed Jacamar. As a reader, my heart rate starts to increase with each sentence. What will happen? The colorful illustration also adds a nice touch to this piece.

Observations and possible teaching moves:

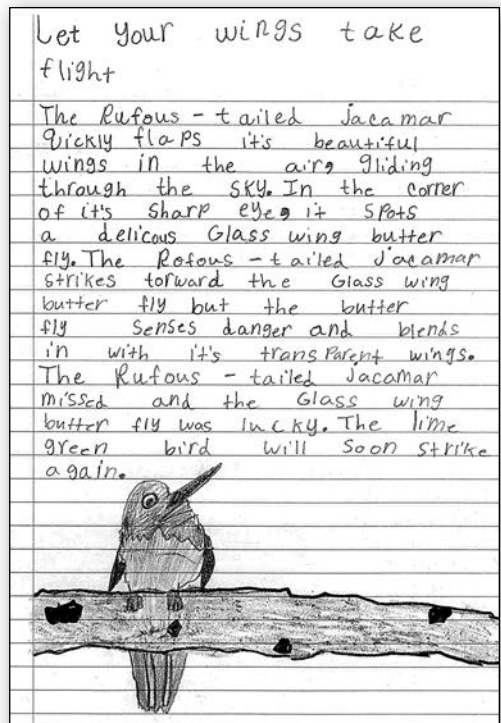
After all of the action and suspense in this piece, the conclusion feels a bit like running into a brick wall. You could challenge this writer to create a conclusion that is satisfying and matches the tone of the rest of the piece. You might also nudge this writer to experiment with some additional titles to see if there is one that might be a better fit.

Suggested lessons from this resource:

- Text Features, Lesson 1, Powerful Titles
- Sentence Fluency, Lesson 5, Vary Sentence Beginnings with Adverbs and Adverb Phrases
- Drafting, Lesson 9, Creating a Conclusion
- Word Choice, Lesson 7, Use Metaphor

Link to the Common Core:

- Provide a sense of closure.
- Orient the reader by establishing a situation.



Let Your Wings
Take Flight

Class Record-Keeping Grid

Writers	Draw pictures before you write	Add labels to drawings	Count the words in a message	Revise to add details	Add words with a caret	Combine sentences (<i>and, so, but, or</i>)	Make the setting stand out	Beginning, middle, end
Ji	9/8	9/16	10/14					
Alina	9/8	9/8	9/16	9/21	9/21	10/1	10/15	
Margetta	10/1	10/4	10/7					
Yolisa	9/8	9/22		10/15	10/1			
Angie	9/7	9/7	9/22	9/22	9/22			10/7
Harvey	10/1	10/4	10/15					
Ryanne	9/21	9/21			10/14			
Dominic	9/15	9/22	10/1		10/1			
Taylor	9/9	9/9	9/9	9/16	9/16	9/21	10/1	10/15
Marcos	9/22	10/7	10/1	10/7				
Brady	9/8	9/22	10/14					
Carson	9/7	9/21	10/4	10/4	10/4			
Angelina	10/4	10/4	10/7					

Class Record-Keeping Sheet

A class record-keeping sheet is a helpful tool for recording and keeping track of your modeled writing as well as your students' attempts to employ process, trait, or craft elements from your demonstrations. All you need to do is list your modeled writing lesson topics across the top of the grid and then note when you observe the target in an example of student writing. You will quickly be able to differentiate instruction, providing extra assistance for those who need it.

LINKS TO CD-ROM:



Demonstration Lesson Tracker: Planning

Planning		Date Modeled		Date Modeled		Date Modeled	
		Whole Class	Small Group	Whole Class	Small Group	Whole Class	Small Group
1	Selecting a Format for Writing						
2	Planning with Text Structure: Explanation						
3	Planning with a Graphic Organizer: Cause and Effect						
4	Planning for Generalizations						
5	Plan to Write with Imagery						
6	Planning an Informational Poem						
7	Planning Page Layout						
8	Using a Flowchart						
Other							

Monitor Demonstration Topics: Keep Track of Your Lessons

A lesson tracker can help you plan instruction and keep an eye on the topics you are teaching. This broad look will help you evaluate the balance of your instruction both across the writing process and within your grouping structures. The Demonstration Lesson Tracker pictured here is one of 17—one for each section in this book—on the accompanying CD-ROM.

LINKS TO CD-ROM:



Use a Scoring Guide to Monitor Progress with the Traits

The scoring guide that follows is designed to support your ongoing assessment of trait development in the writers in your classroom. You can use the guide “as is” or use it as a springboard to create your own scoring guide.

Trait Scoring Guide

	Just Beginning (1) _____	Developing (2) _____	Getting Stronger (3) _____	Wow! (4) _____
Content and Ideas (the meaning and core communication of the piece)	The writer has difficulty selecting a topic and offers few details.	The main idea is present, but there are few details and specifics.	Details are present and related to the broad topic. The writing is focused enough and rich enough in details to satisfy a reader's curiosity.	The topic is narrow and very well developed. Substantial detail is provided in a manner that interests the reader.
Organization and Text Features (the internal structure of the piece and the text and graphic features that support the piece)	The writing lacks a beginning or ending and lacks organization. No text features are included in the writing.	A beginning and ending are present but not well developed. The order and structure are not clear. A few text features, such as title and labels, are used.	The beginning and ending are more clear, and the order and structure are logical. Additional text features are included (labels, title, boldface words, and captions).	The beginning and ending are well crafted. There is a clear order and structure. Numerous text features are included in the illustration and text (labels, title, boldface words, captions, cutaways, diagrams).
Style (rich vocabulary and the way words flow from sentence to sentence)	Vocabulary is basic. Sentences are simple and do not flow together. The writing is choppy or incomplete.	The writing includes functional words but seldom selects words that are interesting. Sentences are of similar length and many start the same way.	Verbs are becoming active and nouns more precise. Sentences have variety in length and beginnings. The piece can be read aloud with ease.	Action verbs and precise nouns are used in a way that adds interest to the piece. Adjectives create clear sensory images for the reader. There is a smooth flow to the writing. The piece invited expressive oral reading.

continued on next page

LINKS TO CD-ROM:



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
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MASTER LESSON CHART

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Research

PROCESS

- 
1. Research
 2. Planning
 3. Drafting
 4. Revising
 5. Editing
 6. Presenting

TRAITS and CRAFT

7. Ideas
8. Organization
9. Word Choice
10. Sentence Fluency
11. Voice and Audience
12. Sentence Structure
13. Text Features
14. Punctuation and Capitalization
15. Grammar
16. Spelling Consciousness

The Heart of Nonfiction Writing

Research and the gathering of factual information is the heart of nonfiction writing. This is the time when writers explore the world around them, reflect on their learning, separate fact from opinion, and consider how to share their understandings with others. Research may take the form of observation, reading, real-life experience, focused listening and reflection, or Internet and digital sources. In all cases, writers must learn to determine importance, synthesize their understandings, and prepare to transfer their thinking to print.

LESSON	3	4	5	RELATED LESSONS
1 Selecting the Best Sources for Research		●	●	
2 Alphabox: Identify Important Words and Phrases	●	●	●	<i>Word Choice:</i> Lesson 1, Use Descriptive Words and Phrases <i>Word Choice:</i> Lesson 2, Target Powerful Action Verbs
3 Taking Notes	●	●	●	<i>Research:</i> Lesson 2, Alphabox: Identify Important Words and Phrases <i>Text Features:</i> Lesson 4, Bold Words
4 Use the Key Word Strategy	●	●	●	<i>Research:</i> Lesson 8, Using a Research Notebook
5 Very Important Points (VIP) Strategy	●	●	●	<i>Research:</i> Lesson 4, Use the Key Word Strategy
6 Represent Facts Visually	●	●	●	<i>Text Features:</i> Lesson 5, Cutaway Diagram with Labels <i>Text Features:</i> Lesson 7, Chart/Table/Graph
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8 Using a Research Notebook	●	●	●	<i>Research:</i> Lesson 3, Taking Notes
9 Keep a List of Sources		●	●	<i>Research:</i> Lesson 3, Taking Notes

Selecting the Best Sources for Research

WHEN TO USE IT: To assist researchers in choosing the best print resources

FOCUS THE LEARNING

Student researchers can easily assume that if a book is in print, it is high quality and accurate. Establishing criteria for selection of resources results in better-quality research.

Model

Select several resources on a topic of interest, some of which have current copyright dates, and authors who are known experts.

STEP 1: Demonstrate how to consider the usefulness and credibility of a print resource.

Possible Think-Aloud: To determine the credibility and usefulness of these resources on bats, I need to first look at the copyright dates to see if the information is current. Amazing Bats has a copyright of 2005. Bat Loves the Night is 2001. Bat Talk is 2009. Bats is 1986. I may not keep the 1986 resource for my research because it is not very current, but I will check the credibility of the authors to make my final choices. Watch as I look at the back cover and inside of the dust cover. I see that Seymour Simon has written 250 science books for children, more than half of which have won awards from the National Science Teachers Association. That suggests his work is well researched and credible. Bat Talk is from the Bat Conservation Society and is written by zoologists. That's good, too. Bats is by a group called Adventures Inc. They don't list any references about the author. That makes me suspicious.

TURN & TALK

Which of these four do you think is worthy of using for research? Support your thinking.

STEP 2: Show students how you evaluate the usefulness of research materials.

Possible Think-Aloud: Now it is time to analyze the usefulness of each of these resources. I will skim to examine photographs, labeled diagrams, and visual supports. I see that Amazing Bats and Bat Talk have powerful photographs. Nicola Davies' book has detailed



Sample Modeled Writing

drawings and sketches. Let's look at text features. Bat Talk has a table of contents. And none of the three has an index.

TURN & TALK Would you use these books even though they don't have very many text features?

Analyze

STEP 3: Rate the tools and decide if they should be used.

Possible Think-Aloud: I am going to use a rating tool for print sources to rate these resources. (Display a copy of the tool.) Let's review the decisions we have made and check them off on the chart. Watch as I insert the copyright dates in the second row. The form asks for an analysis, but the only one I need to add a comment on is the 1986 copyright. I will simply write, "too old." (Continue filling out rows.) The last row is critical. This is where I decide if I will use a resource and to what degree I will use it. For the first title, Bat Talk, I will mark the last option, "absolutely." For the Bat piece by Adventures Inc., I will mark the opposite. This one is a definite no. Think together. How would you rate these sources, overall?

Sum It Up

We can confirm the quality of the resource by looking at the copyright date and the credentials of the author. We can also look at visual supports, text features, and the writing itself.

VARIATIONS

For Less Experienced Writers: Analyze only one or two elements of the rating tool until students become confident in making high-quality selections for research.

For More Experienced Writers: Apply this rating tool or one the students design to resources on the Internet.

LINKS TO CD-ROM:

- Rating Tool for Print Sources

Alphabox: Identify Important Words and Phrases

WHEN TO USE IT: To focus writers on collecting content-based vocabulary

FOCUS THE LEARNING

When nonfiction writers collect important words and phrases from their reading and store them in an Alphabox, they have a rich cache of content-specific words to infuse into their writing.

Model

Before the lesson, create an Alphabox on chart paper using a grid that is five spaces across and five spaces down.

STEP 1: Model how to determine importance of content-specific words, and record those words in an Alphabox.

Possible Think-Aloud: *I am gathering research about Harriet Tubman and have learned that she was subjected to cruel beatings when she was a slave. That's terrible! But it is also important to her life, so I want to save "cruel beatings" and "slave" in an Alphabox. Once they are in the Alphabox, those important words will remind me to include these facts in my writing about Harriet Tubman. (Pause and insert words.) The book also says that when she was 12, she was beaten so badly that she had a head injury and suffered from narcolepsy for the rest of her life. Narcolepsy is a brain disorder that causes people to feel overly sleepy—even during the daytime. I will add "narcolepsy" to the Alphabox because that could really affect Harriet Tubman's ability to function.*

TURN & TALK Use the words that are in the Alphabox so far to summarize what you know about Harriet Tubman.

STEP 2: Extract words from the Alphabox, and show students how you integrate them into a piece of writing.

Sample Modeled Writing

Alphaboxes

Topic Harriet Tubman

A	B	C Cruel beatings Conductor	D Danger
E Escort	F Freedom	G	H
I Injured her head	J	K	L Liberate slaves
M	N Narcolepsy Network of safe houses	O	P Path to freedom
Q	R Return trips	S Slave	T
U Underground Railroad	V	W	XYZ

Possible Think-Aloud: *To begin a piece of nonfiction writing about Harriet Tubman, I can use the Alphabox to fuel my thinking and remind myself of important words I gathered while I was researching. Watch as I use “slave” and “cruel beatings” to launch my first sentence. “Harriet Tubman was born . . . young.” With an Alphabox I am not even tempted to copy sentences from a book. With all these words from my research, writing flows naturally. It is natural to talk about the result of the beatings next, so I will pull “injured her head” and “narcolepsy” from the Alphabox. Check my thinking as I write: “When she was . . . life.”*

Harriet Tubman was born a slave and subjected to cruel beatings from the time she was young. When she was twelve, an overseer injured her head so seriously that she suffered from narcolepsy for the rest of her life. When she finally escaped, she devoted the rest of her life to helping other slaves find the Underground Railroad and escorting them to freedom.

Sample Modeled Writing

TURN & TALK

Examine the Alphabox and select two or three words that fit together. Then, create a sentence about Harriet Tubman. Show me a thumbs up when you and your partner have reached agreement on a sentence.

Analyze

STEP 3: Reread and reflect.

Possible Think-Aloud: *Let’s reread my writing and think together. Have I covered the most important ideas about Harriet Tubman? Are there any other words in the Alphabox that are important to understanding her life?*

Sum It Up

Selecting and saving the most important words and phrases is a key factor in creating powerful writing. With an Alphabox, you have a great tool for collecting and saving content-specific words and phrases. You can use Alphabox words in labeled diagrams, as headings and titles, and most certainly as fuel for strong sentences on your topic.

VARIATIONS

For Less Experienced Writers: Demonstrate how to use a variety of sources for words and phrases to insert into an Alphabox.

For More Experienced Writers: Show writers how to extend beyond literal words taken directly from research and begin to infuse inferences. For example, *The references never said that Harriet Tubman was brave, but I can infer that she was very brave since it has been confirmed that she made at least 19 trips back into slave territory to escort runaways to freedom, even though those trips placed her in danger.* Inferences can be added to the Alphabox in a different color.

LINKS TO CD-ROM:

- Alphaboxes

Taking Notes

WHEN TO USE IT: To help writers understand that they don't need to write complete sentences when researching

FOCUS THE LEARNING

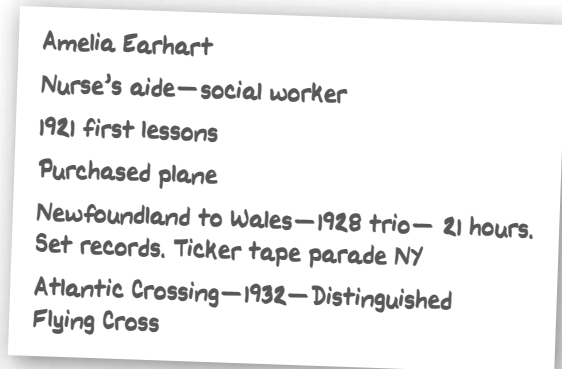
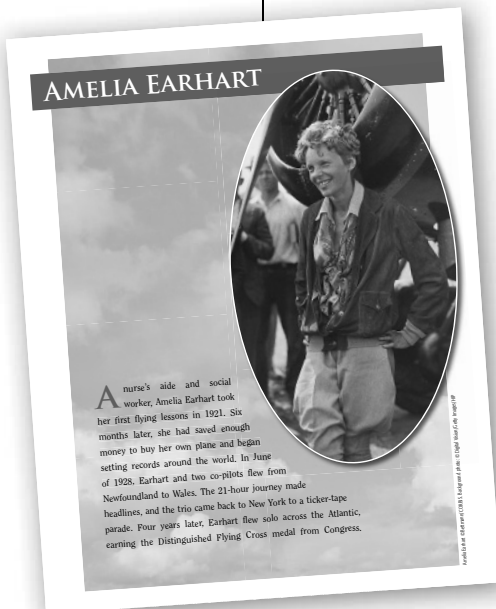
Writers can easily become discouraged with research if they are writing too much when taking notes.

Model

Either make copies of “Amelia Earhart” from the Resources CD-ROM, or project it onto a screen with a document camera or projection system.

STEP 1: Demonstrate how to take notes from research.

Possible Think-Aloud: Writers, one of the tricks that researchers learn is to limit the number of words they use when taking notes. When you find a great fact that you want to remember, the secret is to jot a phrase or make a bulleted list. You don't need to write articles and extra words—just the words that will help you remember the fact. Watch how I do it. The first sentence says that she was a nurse's aide and social worker. I definitely don't need the article, “and.” Watch as I simplify and use a dash: “Nurse's aide—social worker.” It goes on to say she took her first flying lessons in 1921. I can really shorten that: “1921 first lessons.” As the passage continues, it says that she bought a plane and began setting records.



Sample Modeled Writing

TURN & TALK Think together and shorten that sentence into brief notes with clues to help you remember what you learned in this research.

STEP 2: Continue modeling note writing.

Possible Think-Aloud: *The next section is about a long-distance flight with two co-pilots from Newfoundland to Wales. That was a record that earned Amelia Earhart a ticker-tape parade in New York. Watch as I write brief notes and cluster them together. By clustering the notes on this event together, I will remember to write about them in the same paragraph when I start drafting. Notice as I write: “Newfoundland to Wales—1928 trio—21 hours. Set records. Ticker tape parade NY.” Do you see how “Newfoundland to Wales” is like a heading for the notes on this event? I am thinking it will be good to create a heading for the notes I wrote about her previous occupation, her first lessons, and so on.*

TURN & TALK Think together and create a heading for the notes about her life before she became famous.

Analyze

STEP 3: Continue jotting brief notes.

Possible Think-Aloud: *Amelia Earhart became a national hero when she flew solo across the Atlantic Ocean. Watch as I create another heading and cluster my notes about that part of her life. “Atlantic Crossing—1932—Distinguished Flying Cross.” Brief notes and headings make research go quickly! Let’s reread the passage to be sure that my notes have covered the most important understandings from this passage.*

Sum It Up

Note writing is a text type of its own. You can’t use very many words, so you have to focus on giving yourself clues that will help you remember. It also helps to cluster notes together under headings because those will make great paragraphs when it is time to begin drafting.

VARIATIONS

For Less Experienced

Writers: Provide coaching in small groups to support determining importance and jotting brief phrases and words.

For More Experienced

Writers: Practice taking notes from a short video or other presentation that does not have a written text to use as support in determining importance.

LINKS TO CD-ROM:

- Amelia Earhart



Use the Key Word Strategy

WHEN TO USE IT: To help writers identify key words and phrases when researching



FOCUS THE LEARNING

The key word strategy is one that should reside in a prominent place on the tool belt of every researcher because it helps readers to extract key words and prepare to use them in writing.

frost

solid

condensation

gas

water vapor

temperature

Model

You will want to have a copy of *A Drop of Water* by Walter Wick or another high-quality nonfiction resource as the focus of this lesson.

STEP 1: Demonstrate how to extract key words and phrases using sticky notes.

Possible Think-Aloud: As I read from A Drop of Water by Walter Wick, I am going to collect key words and phrases that capture the most important ideas. Once I have collected key words, I can use them to summarize my research about how frost is formed. (Display the book, page 32.) The book says that water vapor condenses on cold surfaces, so I will write “water vapor” on a large sticky note. Next, I will take a second sticky note and write “condensation”—another important term. I put the key words and phrases on separate sticky notes so I can move them around and consider ways in which I would like to use them. (Continue reading and collecting content-specific words and phrases, writing each on a separate sticky note.)

TURN & TALK *I have identified the key word, “condensation,” and a phrase, “water vapor.” Are those the words you would have selected? Are there any others that I should add?*

STEP 2: Continue modeling how to extract key words, and then begin to use them in writing.

Possible Think-Aloud: (Select six to eight additional key words and phrases to work with.) Now I can arrange these sticky notes in an order that will help me see relationships in the ideas within my research. (Show students how you can rearrange the sticky notes into categories.) I can cluster “frost” and “solid” together because frost is a solid. I could link “condensation,” “gas,” and “water vapor.” Those are ideas that link well together. Watch as

I move the key words from my research around so I can see the relationships in the ideas. This makes it easier to write sentences. Watch as I write: “Have you ever . . . rained?” Did you notice that I wrote “frost” in bold? That makes it stand out as a key word, which helps my reader.

Have you ever wondered how **frost** forms on windows, even when it hasn’t rained? When there is a sudden drop in temperature, **water vapor** will condense on cold surfaces—just like you see on a cold glass of soda on a warm summer day. If the **temperature** drops below freezing, the damp **condensation** that clings to a glass, a window, or even a spider web turns into **frost** because the **water vapor** has changed from a **gas** into a **solid**.

Sample Modeled Writing

TURN & TALK Examine the key words that are displayed, and think together to construct a sentence that uses key words.

Analyze

STEP 3: Reread and reflect.

Possible Think-Aloud: As a researcher, I want to be sure that my facts are accurate and that I bring a reader the most important ideas and details. I also need to be sure that I provide examples that help a reader link new understandings to things that are familiar in their world. Watch as I write sentence two. I will add a dash and “just like you see on a cold glass of soda on a warm summer day.” Researchers can find the facts, but those facts will have the most power when they are offered with comparisons that help readers understand. Let’s reread and be sure we have both great research and easily understood writing.

Sum It Up

When researching, read your resources carefully and select only the most important words and phrases. Write each word or phrase on a separate sticky note. Then, experiment with different ways to cluster the key words, creating links between ideas from the research. Once the key words are clustered, your research is ready to become powerful nonfiction writing.

VARIATIONS

For Less Experienced Writers: Work with short passages so writers do not become overwhelmed by large numbers of facts. Once a few key words have been gathered, switch to another book on the same topic, and gather additional words. Then, rearrange the categories, showing writers that there are multiple ways to arrange and use the words they gather in research.

For More Experienced Writers: Extend key words to inferences, offering inferences, such as *Frost is nature’s artwork, forming beautiful patterns on clear surfaces*. The text does not say this, but it can be safely inferred from the photos and descriptive text.

LINKS TO CD-ROM:

- Key Word Strategy

