Writers Workshop Unit of Study
6th Grade – Launching Writer’s Notebook, Unit 1
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## Launching the Writer’s Workshop Unit Learning Progression

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<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **Text**    | Personal Narrative & Craft Units 1 & 2  
Mentor Texts:  
*Owl Moon*  
Jane Yolen  
*Night at the Fair*  
Donald Crews  
*The Rain Stomper*  
Addie Boswell  
*Song and Dance Man*  
Karen Ackerman  
Or other mentor text (listed in unit)  
| Personal Narrative  
Units 1 & 2  
Mentor Texts:  
*Shortcut; Big Mama’s*  
by Donald Crews  
or other mentor texts  
| Raising the Bar: Personal Narrative  
Mentor Text:  
*Through Grandpa’s Eyes*  
by Patricia Mclaughlan,  
*The Summer My Father was Ten*  
by Pat Brisson,  
*An Angel for Solomon Singer*  
by Cynthia Rylant,  
or other mentor texts  
| Refining the Personal Narrative  
Mentor Text:  
*Time of Wonder*  
By Robert McCloskey  
*Mr. Peabody’s Apples*  
By Madonna Ritchie  
*A Day’s Work*  
By Eve Bunting  
Or other mentor texts |
| **Analysis** | Navigation through the writing process using important moments from their life  
Write well-elaborated short stories  
| Crafting a Personal Narrative  
| Improving a Personal Narrative  
| Improving the quality of Personal Narrative |
| **Becoming a Community of Writers** | Establishing Routines, Setting Up Writer’s Workshop, Writing a Personal Narrative  
| Establishing Routines, Setting Up Writer’s Workshop, Writing a Personal Narrative  
| Establishing Routines, Setting Up Writer’s Workshop, Writing a Personal Narrative  
| Establishing Routines, Setting Up Writer’s Workshop, Writing, revising, editing and publishing Personal Narrative |
| **Generating a Small Moment Story** | Explore strong feelings to generate story ideas  
Zoom in on a topic  
Develop sense of story through sketching  
Use graphic organizers to plan stories  
Focus on small moments  
Using list to generate ideas  
Think about the heart of the story  
Use of mentor text and authors to get ideas/frame writing  
Rehearse stories through storyteller’s voice  
| Using strategies to generate story ideas: person, place, object  
Focusing on small moments  
Writing step by step in the moment  
Using timelines or fingers to plan your story  
Writing with small details  
Making a movie in your mind—visualizing  
Generating and experimenting with writer’s notebook entries  
Learning from mentor texts  
Writing like a writer  
Finding the heart of the story  
Understanding our role in a conference  
| Using strategies to generate story ideas: person, place, object  
Focusing on small moments  
Making a movie in your mind—visualizing  
Writing with tiny details  
Using lists to generate clear, small moments  
Generating and experimenting with writer’s notebook entries  
Learning from mentor texts  
Writing for readers  
Using strong emotions to generate story ideas  
Thinking of turning points to generate story ideas  
Mining writer’s notebooks  
| Using mentor text to generate ideas  
Use notebook to generate and develop ideas to include mentor craft techniques in personal writing  
Analyze mentor text for crafting techniques  
Focus on small moments and elaborating |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>2</th>
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<th>5</th>
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</table>
| **Drafting** | • Plan or rehearse story orally or pictorially  
• Consider a storyteller’s voice  
• Zoom in on a topic to find a small moment  
• Catchy leads  
• Include details  
• Show not tell  
• Strong ending  
• Use of mentor text and authors for style and crafting | • Finding notebook entries that matter to the writer  
• Committing to a topic or idea  
• Writing the internal and external story  
• Consider external and internal traits of characters  
• Use of a story mountain to plan and sequence events  
• Consider point of view  
• Elaborating on ideas to write longer more meaningful narratives  
• Crafting strong story leads: action, setting, description, dialogue, or thoughts  
• Using mentor texts to study leads and endings  
• Closing with strong endings: action, dialogue, thoughts, images, and whole-story reminders  
• Adding sensory words  
• Adding dialogue | • Read like a writer.  
• Using exact details and specific words to recognize and write concrete words and phrases.  
• Using concrete words, phrases to create scenes rather than summaries.  
• Using sensory details to help the reader experience the story  
• Plan stories using a story mountain  
• Use mentor texts to study the heart of the story or turning point  
• Develop/consider perspective  
• Use of line breaks, shape, imagery, literary devices to express clarity of thought (poetry)  
• Experiment with rhythm of words (poetry) | • Determine the heart of the story  
• Organize using a story mountain  
• Describe characters using detailed and figurative language  
• Use dialogue, description and pacing to develop experiences and events  
• Precise word choice and movement through time to convey experiences and events  
• Elaborating beyond one sentence forming paragraphs |
| **Revising and Editing** | • Relive or re-create events to show, not tell  
• Use revision checklist  
• Use word wall  
• Editing checklist  
• Work effectively with writing partner  
• Making revision a habit  
• Develop a purpose to revise  
• Introduce mechanics of revision  
• Specific revisions include: characters, show not tell, determining importance, word choice | • Writers create scenes rather than summaries  
• Using descriptive details and specific words  
• Encourage more sophisticated sentence structure for effect  
• Combining short sentences to include variety  
• Revising for internal thinking, emotions, reasons  
• Revise stories for meaning—reread to make sense  
• Use of literary devices such as repetition to emphasize action or idea in story  
• Edit for capitalization, end punctuation, and spelling of high-frequency words | • Create scenes rather than summaries  
• Create alternate leads and conclusions  
• Bringing forth the internal story  
• Elaborating ideas  
• Revising leads  
• Revising conclusions  
• Attend to meaning and clarity  
• Use of editing/revision checklists | • Eliminate extraneous details from writing  
• Word choice for clarity and meaning to include phrases and clauses  
• Improve leads and conclusions based on mentor texts  
• Edit for capitalization, end punctuation, and spelling of high-frequency words |
# Launching the Reader’s/Writer’s Notebook Learning Progression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Becoming a Community</strong></td>
<td><strong>Personal Narrative</strong></td>
<td>Teachers and students are establishing a way of living as writers and being an open, sharing community.</td>
<td>Establishing a special time to share our stories within the classroom community.</td>
<td>Developing writers are encouraged to feel safe about the writer’s workshop format.</td>
<td>Recording memories, conversations, and things that bother writers in a writer’s notebook.</td>
<td>Recall an event with a strong emotional impact and sequence the details to capture the problem and its impact on the narrator and other characters.</td>
<td>Use non-judgmental response.</td>
<td>Write to discover the personal meaning an event has.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Memoir</strong></td>
<td>Understanding routines and building relationships and correlations between the writer’s notebook and the classroom community.</td>
<td>Establishing a special time to share our stories within the classroom community.</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Poetry</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Reading Immersion and Drafting</strong></td>
<td><strong>Personal Narrative</strong></td>
<td>Forming partnerships between teacher &amp; student in the development of writerly abilities and independence.</td>
<td>Using anchor charts to learn new strategies and form the processes used by the writing community.</td>
<td>Unpacking watermelon and seed stories and use of writing strategies.</td>
<td>Use strategies to take events from our lives (seeds) and pulling out the small moments to reflect on their meaning.</td>
<td>Memoir is about reflection and contemplation of what we have learned from the small moments in the events of our lives, and how that effects how we relate to others and live in the world.</td>
<td>Use Think/Pair/Share while establishing a</td>
<td>Use poetry immersion to understand that poets use narrative poetry for a deep expression of self.</td>
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<td><strong>Consider active engagement for rehearsal, self-assessment and feedback.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Analyze the mood, tone and characteristics of the memoir.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Seek feedback to discover what a reader sees, where there is confusion, and where new possibilities exist.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Revise line breaks to explore an emerging poem.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reread poetry generated in writer’s notebook to plan a project (series of poems).</strong></td>
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<td>Monitoring the enactment of writer skill sets for assessment purposes through conferencing with writer groups.</td>
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<td>Produce a narrative poem that expresses a powerful emotion, a meaningful experience or a strong belief.</td>
<td>Create surprise or emphasis by creating and breaking patterns.</td>
<td>Reflect on decisions you are using and their effect on the meaning of the poems.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developed understanding that personal narratives are powerful opportunities for writers to engage readers and share various perspectives and experiences.</td>
<td>Use peer discussions and sharing times to revise and edit for meaning and clarity.</td>
<td>Developed understanding that narrative poems are powerful opportunities for writers to engage readers and share various perspectives and experiences.</td>
<td>Use response groups to gain insight on drafted poems to make revisions.</td>
<td>Use repertoire of decisions collected from studying a mentor poet for revision.</td>
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<td><strong>Note aspects of the poetry that are working well.</strong></td>
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Writers Workshop Unit of Study
6th Grade – Launching Writer’s Notebook, Unit 1

Preface

The following unit supports and aligns to the Common Core State Standards. This research-based work is the outcome of a collective effort made by numerous secondary teachers from around the state of Michigan. MAISA (Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators) initiated a statewide collaborative project bringing together educators from around the state to create and refine a K-12 English Language Arts model curriculum. The Launching unit is situated as the opening writing unit of study within a yearlong sequence of writing units. This unit develops foundational habits of mind, a process approach to writing, and reading like a writer. This foundation is essential to supporting writers into the complexities of subsequent writing units focused deeply within the three main types of writing (Opinion and Argument, Informational, and Narrative). Each unit within the MAISA yearlong model curriculum presents a string of teaching points that scaffold and spiral the content and skills. Units of study are structured to be student-centered rather than teacher-driven. Sessions emphasize student engagement and strive to increase critical thinking and writing skills simultaneously. Writing and thinking processes are stressed and are equally important to the end writing product. Sessions are designed as a series of mini-lessons that allow time to write, practice, and conference. Through summative and formative assessments specific to each unit, students will progress toward becoming independent thinkers and writers.

Significant input and feedback was gathered both in the initial conceptualizing of the unit and later revisions. Teachers from around the state piloted and/or reviewed the unit and their feedback and student artifacts helped in the revision process. Special thanks go to lead unit writers Bryan Hartsig and Lisa Kraiza who closely studied the CCSS, translated the standards into curriculum and practice, and revised with a close eye to classroom teacher feedback. Throughout the yearlong collaborative project, teachers reviewing units are finding how students’ habits of mind have shifted from task oriented to big picture thinking utilizing a critical literacy lens.
Writers Workshop Unit of Study
6th Grade – Launching Writer’s Notebook, Unit 1

Abstract

Students will create writer notebooks and participate in writer workshops that will hone writing through detailed instruction, explanation, examples, student models and activities. Using important aspects of language, narration and storytelling, the students will learn the academic and social importance of the personal narrative using the writer’s notebook. Students create personal narratives demonstrating a skillful use of settings, characters, point of view and conflict that applies to impactful everyday moments or experiences of the writer. The narratives will be revised and edited through peer discussions and sharing times for meaning and clarity. Students will conclude that personal narratives are powerful opportunities for students to engage readers and share various perspectives and experiences.
Standards

Common Core Standards: Narrative: The following College and Career Readiness (CCR) anchor standards apply to reading and writing in narrative template tasks. Refer to the 6-12 standards for grade-appropriate specifics that fit each task and module being developed. The standards numbers and general content remain the same across all grades, but details vary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>CCR Anchor Standards for Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCR Anchor Standards for Writing Narrative</th>
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<td>10</td>
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Overview of Sessions - Teaching Points and Unit Assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Unit Assessment Task</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Launching Unit anticipates some independence and familiarity with a writing life, a writing community, response groups and the writing process. Students will generate a list of possible personal narrative ideas based on personal experience.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TEACHING POINTS:**

**Becoming a Community of Writers**

1.2.3. Writers will establish a writer’s notebook and use strategies to gather ideas for generating personal narratives in a meaningful way.

**Reading Immersion and Drafting**

4. Students will decipher between watermelon stories and seed stories using strategies discussed with the teacher.

5. Personal narratives are often organized chronologically, told as a sequence of events not as a simple description of events. Writers of personal narratives are able to manipulate various proven strategies to determine what matters to them and how exemplary writing entries are developed to present to audiences.

6. Writers use effective writing conferences to confer with others what they are trying to do as a writer, what they’ve done as a writer and are planning to do next in their writing.

7. Writers look for possible stories, gather entries that matter, story tell to our friends, conference with others and evaluate our many entries to find one entry that especially matters to us.

8. Students improve leads by studying the work of other authors, mentor texts, and writing drafts to practice applying their learned techniques.

9. Students improve endings by studying the work of other authors, mentor texts, and writing drafts to practice applying their learned techniques.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Mid-Unit Formative Assessment Task</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will use writing exploration of personal narrative to eventually understand its elements and decision-making procedures. After a period of exploration the writers will express feelings, ideas and stories through their own personal narrative. Anchor charts will be used to keep ongoing understanding up to date. Writers and teachers will conference continually reflecting on generated personal narratives while tracking student understanding by reviewing unit tools and Writer’s Notebooks. Students are able to demonstrate visually writer like decisions in the notebook. Consider the following in observation of student writers: What seems to be getting better? What hasn’t changed? What shifts in thinking are the writers demonstrating?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Revising and Editing**

10. Writers evaluate and analyze their text by understanding revision is not about fixing errors; it is about finding and developing potentially great writing, sometimes by adding more to the heart of the story.

11. Writers evaluate and analyze their text by using editing checklists to remind themselves of strategies they can use to revise their writing.

12. Students will effectively publish and celebrate their personal narratives using the methodology of the writer’s workshop framework.

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<tr>
<th>Post-Unit Summative Assessment Task</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will use editing checklists, collaboration groups and teacher conferences to publish one personal narrative. The personal narrative shall be used to make your students feel like writers and proud of their accomplishments. The author celebration will be used as formal assessment following the provided rubric.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Session 1

#### Preparation

- Teacher explains that we have a special time during our school day to work just on writing.
- During our writing time, we must be respectful of everyone. We write silently and do not talk so we can all concentrate on our writing.
- Students will choose their “writer’s spot” in the room, and understand that their spots are safe, quiet spots where they will be able to work on writing without being disturbed.
- Writers have special notebooks (composition book) in which they keep images, thoughts, and ideas for future writing. These are our own, personal notebooks where we will be able to write down ideas and begin drafts of stories.
- We have a special place in our classroom where we store our writing materials and all will understand where writing notebooks, portfolios, and other writing materials are stored. Teacher and students make agreements about how and where materials will be stored and respected.
- Teacher demonstrates for the students how s/he has organized his/her own portfolio.
- Class discusses and agrees on how to organize the writing portfolio.

#### Teaching Point

Writers will establish a writer’s notebook and use strategies to gather ideas for generating personal narratives in a meaningful way.

#### Active Engagement

- Teacher demonstrates for the students how s/he has organized his/her own portfolio.
- Class discusses and agrees on how to organize the writing portfolio. Make anchor charts during discussions.

#### Independent Practice

- **Discussion:** During our class share-time, we need to be considerate of several things:
  - Being respectful of others with our bodies as well as the words that we say.
  - Whether we bring our notebooks to the carpet or not (The first week we will all bring our notebooks. After the first week it will just be those who are sharing.)

#### Share

- Allow students to use this time to personalize their writing notebooks to promote a sense of excitement and ownership. Decorate the outside of notebook.
- Students will also organize and personalize their writing notebooks and portfolios.

**Focus Question:** *How do writers use their notebooks to generate, gather and record ideas for writing?*

#### Homework/Extension

Students can bring in other items from home to continue personalizing the notebook.

#### Assessment

Ways we live and share in our notebook anchor charts should be duplicated in notebooks.
WAYS WE LIVE IN OUR NOTEBOOK

1.) WRITE IN PEN ONLY. VISUAL MISTAKES ARE A GOOD THING AND HELP US SHOW GROWTH IN OUR WRITING.

2.) PERSONALIZE YOUR COVER TO MAKE IT SPECIFIC AND SPECIAL TO YOU.

3.) WRITING TIME IS QUIET TIME. BE RESPECTFUL OF OTHERS AS THEY WRITE.

4.) NOTEBOOKS ARE FOR WRITING ONLY. THEY SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR MATH SCIENCE OR HISTORY.

5.) DO NOT TEAR PAGES FROM YOUR NOTEBOOK. ALL WRITING AND DRAFTING IS IMPORTANT TO OUR BECOMING GREAT WRITERS.

6.) PUT DATE AND TITLE EACH NOTEBOOK ENTRY.
WAYS WE LIVE DURING SHARING TIME

1.) BE RESPECTFUL TO ALL PEOPLE WHO SHARE. IT IS A TIME TO CELEBRATE STORIES AND BE PROUD OF THOSE WHO SHARE.

2.) GIVE POSITIVE CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK TO PERSON SHARING. WE WANT TO HELP THE WRITER.

3.) BE RESPONSIBLE WITH WHAT YOU HEAR FROM OTHERS. NOTEBOOK WRITING CAN BE VERY PERSONAL.

4.) BE ATTENTIVE TO THE PERSON SHARING. LISTEN WELL SO YOU CAN OFFER INSIGHTFUL FEEDBACK.
### Session 2

#### Preparation
- Name the teaching point by telling students that you will teach them ideas for generating personal narratives.
- To get started with selecting what to write about, Teacher poses the following prewriting topic and writes on a chart: Think of a person who matters to you and list clear small moments you’ve had with that person. List moments that you remember with crystal-clear clarity.
- Teacher models the entire process described above by writing on chart paper or other medium for all to see.

#### Teaching Point
**Writers will establish a writer’s notebook and use strategies to gather ideas for generating personal narratives in a meaningful way.**

#### Active Engagement
- Explain to the students that what you’ve demonstrated is what they will now do.
- Students think of someone that matters to them and lists on their fingers 2-3 little moments they especially remember.
- Students are to zoom in on the most important part and make a sketch or list to quickly show the order of their story.

#### Independent Practice
- Students then tell a partner their story, including all the tiny details.
- Next, students are to return to their writing area and in silence, write the stories they have just told in their notebooks.
- **Teachers should be doing these assignments with students until they have a notebook full of entries themselves.**

#### Share
- Convene students in the meeting area and have a quick recap of the expectations for share/reflect.
- Have students sit with a partner that has been assigned by the teacher using numbered paper (containing 1 and 2 followed by student names.) Students sit knee-to-knee or across from each other as they take turns discussing a person who matters to them. The intent is to let students practice the art of establishing partnership conversations.
- Students then recall and share one thing that was learned during the day’s writing lesson with their partners, taking turns so that each has an opportunity to talk.
- Post the Strategies for Generating Personal Narrative Writing chart in a place for all students to see, as it will be developed over time with the students.

**Focus Questions:** How do writers use their notebooks to generate, gather and record ideas for writing? What strategies do writers use to figure out how to express their stories that matter?

#### Homework/Extension
- Use and create **Qualities of Good Personal Narrative Writing** chart discussing each item individually. Ask students to help create the chart accessing their prior knowledge.

#### Assessment
- Review Notebooks to make sure all students are writing during writing time. Check that students are keeping anchor charts in their notebooks up to date for future use throughout the unit.
STRATEGIES FOR GENERATING PERSONAL NARRATIVE WRITING

1. THINK OF A PERSON WHO MATTERS TO YOU, THEN LIST IN CLEAR, SMALL MOMENTS YOU REMEMBER WITH HIM OR HER. CHOOSE ONE TO SKETCH AND THEN WRITE THE ACCOMPANYING STORY.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 3</th>
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| **Preparation** | • Remind children that today and every day the writing workshop will begin with a mini lesson. Remind them of what happens in a mini lesson.  
• Name the teaching point by telling students that you will teach them a second strategy for generating ideas for personal narratives.  
• Teacher poses the following prewriting topic and adds it to the chart: *Think of a place that matters to you, then list clear, small moments you remember there. Choose one to sketch and then write the accompanying story.*  
• Teacher shows students an exemplar or touchstone text that centers around a place. Teacher then talks about how the author might have used that strategy to get an idea about what to write and then of episodes that have happened in that place. It is important to choose just one episode to write about.  
• Exemplar texts such as *Bigmama’s* or *Shortcut* by Donald Crews. |
| **Teaching Point** | Writers will establish a writer’s notebook and use strategies to gather ideas for generating personal narratives in a meaningful way. |
| **Active Engagement** | • Teacher and students think of a place that matters to all (example: playground, cafeteria, library).  
• Together, they generate a list of small moments that happened in that place.  
• Students choose one idea and partner-share their stories orally.  
• Students are sent to their writing spots where they quietly begin to write.  
• After they have been writing awhile, teacher stops the class for a mid-workshop teaching point. Teacher says, *I want to also teach you that we can look at the stuff of our lives and let the things around us remind us of memories. Sometimes writers look at the things near us, and let those objects jog memories.*  
• Teacher models by providing his/her own special object and does a “think- aloud” based on the memory that object sparked.  
• Teacher adds this new strategy to the chart and reminds students that writers can use any of these strategies when they finish one entry to be able to start another entry.  
• Students return to the entry in progress. |
| **Independent Practice** | • Continued notebook Writing |
| **Share** | • Gather whole group (sitting with a writing partner) to sum up, share, and celebrate. Remind students that we are working on writing quickly and for longer periods of time, much the same as runners do as they often push themselves to run farther and faster.  
• Teacher poses the following question, *what can you do to push yourself as a writer, like some people push themselves as a runner? Talk with your partner about your plans for how to push yourself to write more.*  
• Teacher circulates and makes notes on some of the conversations s/he heard.  
• Reconvene group and discuss some of the thoughts students expressed. The intent is to help students identify ways they can begin to build stamina for writing.  
**Focus Question:** How do writers use personal narratives to express themselves and make connections to readers? When is an everyday moment worth writing about? How are specific details important to the moment? |
| **Assessment** | Review Notebooks to make sure all students are writing during writing time. Check that students are keeping anchor charts in their notebooks up to date for future use throughout the unit. |
STRATEGIES FOR GENERATING PERSONAL NARRATIVE WRITING

1. THINK OF A PERSON WHO MATTERS TO YOU, THEN LIST IN CLEAR, SMALL MOMENTS YOU REMEMBER WITH HIM OR HER. CHOOSE ONE TO SKETCH AND THEN WRITE THE ACCOMPANYING STORY.

2. THINK OF A PLACE THAT MATTERS TO YOU, THEN LIST CLEAR, SMALL MOMENTS YOU REMEMBER THERE. CHOOSE ONE TO SKETCH AND THEN WRITE THE ACCOMPANYING STORY.

3. NOTICE AN OBJECT, AND LET THAT OBJECT SPARK A MEMORY. WRITE THE STORY OF THAT ONE TIME.
### Session 4

| Preparation | • Tell children that today’s teaching point will begin with focus.  
|             | • Teacher explains that when we think of a topic and then list specific instances, sometimes those specific instances are still too big.  
|             | • Writers know that to write a story that draws readers close to listen, it helps to write about a small episode, something that happened in twenty minutes, or even in just three minutes! It is important to zoom in on one small story and to tell the parts of the story that matter, leaving out sections that don’t matter. Writers retell the sequence of events in our stories, writing with details, telling the story in a step-by-step way. |
| Teaching Point | Students will decipher between watermelon stories and seed stories using strategies discussed with the teacher. |
| Active Engagement | • Teacher creates a chart titled *Qualities of Good Personal Narrative Writing* and posts it for all to view.  
|                 | • Together, discuss how the first bullet point helps us think about not only what we’re going to write about but also how we’ll write our stories so that they really affect our readers. Usually when we think of a person, place, or object, for example, what comes to mind first are great big watermelon topics. To get to a really good story, it helps to select a particular, smaller subject, and tell not a watermelon story but a little seed story. Teacher provides explicit models to demonstrate the difference between *watermelon topics* and *seed stories*. |
| Independent Practice | • Students will practice distinguishing between big topics and focused stories. Teacher will provide a series of ideas and ask students to identify either watermelon or seed story.  
|                   | • Together with a writing partner, students look over the entries in their notebooks and identify “watermelon story” or “seed story” LABEL THEM IN NOTEBOOKS  
|                   | • Encourage those students who have written watermelon topics to look for possible seed stories within.  
|                   | • Allow students time to explore and develop their identified seed stories from any larger topics they may have written (watermelon topics). |
| Share | • Convene the group and have students sit with a writing partner.  
|       | • Students share any additions they have made and Teacher notes possible exemplars of students who have developed a seed story.  
|       | • Begin a discussion about what to do when you think you are finished writing.  
|       | • Teacher scribes ideas as students discover ways to extend their writing. (See chart in Materials Column) Continue to add as students come up with additional ideas. **Focus Question:** What strategies are used to transform our writing and focus our small moments to draw reader attention? |
| Homework/Extension | • Storyboard template (as needed)  
|                   | For students who struggle with oral storytelling or with sequencing events, you could offer them the option of creating a [storyboard](#) (Thought Organization For Generating More Writing Chart) to help them move through their narrative step-by-step. You could create a template that looks like this or use the one of your own: Carefully consider which students would benefit from using this template. For some students, doing so will only delay their drafts; for others, the necessity of doing so will support their drafts. |
| Assessment | Collect notebooks periodically to monitor student progress. Make note of skills and strategies that should be addressed during an individual writing conference or during a whole group mini-lesson. Teacher checks notebooks to make sure entries are labeled and students are making writer like decisions. |
**Qualities of Good Personal Narrative Writing**

- Write a little seed story, don’t write all about a giant watermelon topic.
- Zoom in so you tell the most important parts of the story.

**Possible ideas for identifying watermelon vs. seed:**

- Fun times I have with my dog (watermelon).
- When I spotted my dog at the pound and realized he was the one for me (seed).
- When the person who is now my best friend arrived in our classroom and we met each other for the first time. (seed)
- My best friend (watermelon).
- The year I was on the soccer team and we won six games and lost two (watermelon).
- The time Susan and I found a quarter that had been frozen in ice and we chipped it out (seed).

**LISTENER FOCUS**

- How much time passes from the beginning of the story to the end of the story?
- What are the key actions?
- Did the writer use transition words to tell the story?
- Why is this story important to tell?
- What details help a reader understand the story?
- Are there enough details?

**Remember ways we live in sharing chart**
Possible ideas for identifying watermelon vs. seed:

- Fun times I have with my dog (watermelon)
- When I spotted my dog at the pound and realized he was the one for me (seed)
- When the person who is now my best friend arrived in our classroom and we met each other for the first time. (seed)
- My best friend (watermelon)
- The year I was on the soccer team and we won six games and lost two (watermelon)
- The time Susan and I found a quarter that had been frozen in ice and we chipped it out (seed)
THOUGHT ORGANIZATION CHART FOR GENERATING MORE WRITING

FIRST:

IMPORTANT DETAIL #1

IMPORTANT DETAIL #2

IMPORTANT DETAIL #3

NEXT:

IMPORTANT DETAIL #1

IMPORTANT DETAIL #2

IMPORTANT DETAIL #3

THEN:

IMPORTANT DETAIL #1

IMPORTANT DETAIL #2

IMPORTANT DETAIL #3

AFTER:

IMPORTANT DETAIL #1

IMPORTANT DETAIL #2

IMPORTANT DETAIL #3

LAST:

IMPORTANT DETAIL #1

IMPORTANT DETAIL #2

IMPORTANT DETAIL #3
### Session 5

| Preparation | Tell children that today’s teaching point will begin with writing with specific details.  
|             | Teacher selects an exemplar from the class that shows how a student extended his/her own writing by telling *exact* details. As a result, the student may have created a movie in his/her head. |
| Teaching Point | **Personal narratives are often organized chronologically, told as a sequence of events not as a simple description of events. Writers of personal narratives are able to manipulate various proven strategies to determine what matters to them and how exemplary writing entries are developed to present to audiences.** |
| Active Engagement | Teacher provides a specific example to help students understand this idea. One possible idea might be to show how a photographer zooms in on one tiny part of a larger picture. For example, instead of photographing a whole meadow, a photographer might just zoom in on three daisies within that meadow. |
| Independent Practice | Students work with a writing partner to check for places in their own writing where they could apply this technique of using exact details.  
|             | Students return to their writing area and work on adding exact details to their writing.  
|             | Teacher circulates and provides support as needed, reminding students that “true details” need not to have specifically occurred in the event, but if they make sense in the context of the story; the author has the license to include them. |
| Share | Teacher adds to the criteria chart and reminds students to use this chart periodically in their writing to extend their sentences.  
|             | Students share with a writing partner the places where they have added exact details.  
| Focus Question: Why do writers tell narratives chronologically and not as simple descriptions of events? |
| Homework/Extension | Using a picture from home students are to demonstrate and practice zooming in on a particular moment or object depicted in the photo. Students may share these in a brief turn and talk session. |
| Assessment | Student created rubric for notebook expectations. |
**Qualities of Good Personal Narrative Writing**

- Write a little seed story, don’t write all about a giant watermelon topic.
- Zoom in so you tell the most important parts of the story.
- Include true*, exact details from the movie you have in your head.

*True details need not have specifically occurred in the episode, and the author has literary license to include them if they are realistic.

**Transition Words and Phrases for Sequencing Personal Narratives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>at first</th>
<th>before</th>
<th>after</th>
<th>at last</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>first</td>
<td>next</td>
<td>later</td>
<td>last</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the first place</td>
<td>then</td>
<td>soon</td>
<td>finally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the meantime</td>
<td>as soon as</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**When I’m Finished**

- After I finish one entry, I should start another one because some of mine are very short.
- Return to one already written and see if I can zoom in some.
- Spend less time talking and more time writing.
- Return to my entry ideas and add more moments to my list.

**Remember ways we live in sharing chart**
Discuss the use of rubrics to guide this conferencing and self reflection

GOALS TO INCLUDE IN A RUBRIC

1. required # of entries per week
2. increasing number of lines written each day (word count)
3. writing stories with personal importance
4. writing about seed ideas in different ways
5. date all entries
6. giving strategies and assignments titles
7. cover of notebook is decorated
8. using strategy each day to organize and remember their ideas
9. writing in pen
10. using quality details, dialogue and actions in their writing
THOUGHT ORGANIZATION CHART FOR GENERATING MORE WRITING

FIRST:

NEXT:

THEN:

AFTER:

LAST:

IMPORTANT DETAIL #1

IMPORTANT DETAIL #2

IMPORTANT DETAIL #3

IMPORTANT DETAIL #1

IMPORTANT DETAIL #2

IMPORTANT DETAIL #3

IMPORTANT DETAIL #1

IMPORTANT DETAIL #2

IMPORTANT DETAIL #3

IMPORTANT DETAIL #1

IMPORTANT DETAIL #2

IMPORTANT DETAIL #3

IMPORTANT DETAIL #1

IMPORTANT DETAIL #2

IMPORTANT DETAIL #3

IMPORTANT DETAIL #1

IMPORTANT DETAIL #2

IMPORTANT DETAIL #3
### Session 6

**Preparation**
- Tell teams that today’s teaching point will center on the writing conference and the structure in which they will be participating.
- Teacher explains that during the writing conference, the team’s job will be to talk to the writing teacher about their thinking.
- The teacher will want to know what they are trying to do as a writer, what they’ve done so far, and what they are planning to do next.
- The teacher will begin the conference by interviewing the writer, asking questions about their writing (not their topic).
- The teacher’s job will be to observe writing behaviors that will move the writing forward.

**Teaching Point**
Writers use effective writing conferences to confer with others what they are trying to do as a writer, what they’ve done as a writer and are planning to do next in their writing.

**Active Engagement**
- Set children up in timed pair share structure to practice their roles in the conference by asking questions you might ask of the writer. The student’s role will be to think about the answer, compare similarities and differences and look to the charts posted if unsure what to say. For now, the conference will be a “thinking” one and will be shared orally as students practice how to focus on the specific questions.
- Teacher and a pre-selected student will demonstrate what a writing conference might look like using a “fishbowl” format in which the class is looking in on a possible writing conference. Debrief with students what they saw.

**Independent Practice**
- Teacher poses the following question and allows students thirty seconds to silently answer the question: *What are you working on today as a writer?*
- Students turn and talk to their writing partner about what they are thinking while discussing similarities and differences. A further question might be posed: *What are you trying to do as a writer?*
- Teacher pulls group back together and asks students to consider the following question silently for thirty seconds and then to share with their partner: *What will you do today in your writing?*

**Share**
- Practice with a partner by asking the questions that were generated for a conference. (See Notes in Materials Column at right)
- Students then study their partner’s writing and name what is working well in it. (Partner 1 reads what they wrote today, while partner 2 talks specifically about what worked well and where this occurred). Repeat for second partner. Students are to note similarities and differences in what works and doesn’t work.
- Teacher reminds students to use the **Qualities of Good Personal Narrative Writing** chart as they write.

**Focus Question:** How can conferring with others affect the outcome of our stories? How do writers improve writing skills by studying and conferring about work from other authors?

**Homework/Extension**
Sometimes students write a summary instead of a story. To help with this, suggest that students make a movie in their mind detailing exactly, *What happened first? Where was I?* If the partners decide that the entry is not yet a story, consider having the writer start again, telling exactly what happened first and then next. Teachers tend to ask the following questions during a conference, so students should be prepared to answer them:
| Assessment          | Discuss the use of rubrics to guide this conferencing and self reflection. Assess understanding of using the rubric to guide their conferencing and self reflection. Create a reflection clipboard to record your thoughts daily on student progress. Let this guide you in your pacing of lesson and assessment of students. |
Qualities of Good Personal Narrative Writing

- Write a little seed story, don’t write all about a giant watermelon topic.
- Zoom in so you tell the most important parts of the story.
- Include true*, exact details from the movie you have in your head.

* (True details need not have specifically occurred in the episode, and the author has literary license to include them if they are realistic).

GOALS TO INCLUDE IN A RUBRIC

- required # of entries per week
- increasing number of lines written each day (word count)
- writing stories with personal importance
- writing about seed ideas in different ways
- date all entries
- giving strategies and assignments titles
- cover of notebook is decorated
- using strategy each day to organize and remember their ideas
- writing in pen
- using quality details, dialogue and actions in their writing
### Session 7

#### Teaching Point

Writers look for possible stories, gather entries that matter, story tell to our friends, conference with others and evaluate our many entries to find one entry that especially matters to us.

#### Preparation

- In this session you will be solidifying the foundation for writing focused pieces throughout the year. You’ll want to consider how to make this conversation public in order to continue to build on these ideas later.
- Tell students you’ll teach them to choose one entry to develop into a publishable piece. *Today I want to teach you that writers don’t just write one entry and then write another and another as we have been doing. As writers, after we collect entries and ideas for a while, we reread and we find one story, one entry that especially matters to us and we make a commitment to that one entry. We decide to work on it so it becomes our very best writing ever.*
- Using *Roxaboxen, by Alice McLerran* or any favorite narrative text as a reference, explain to the students that writing allows authors: *to take the stuff that is all around them in their lives – the little stories – and hold one small piece of life in their hands, declaring it a treasure.*

#### Active Engagement

- Model how you go back to your entries and you reread them and think about whether one of your entries might be worth developing into a story that you’d like to publish.
- Ask students to tell their partner three specific things they saw you doing in order to choose an entry that mattered to you.

#### Independent Practice

- Restate the goal for today’s writing time: *Today, and whenever it is time for you to stop collecting entries and begin working on one writing project, remember that you – like writers everywhere – can reread your entries and think, ‘Which of these really matters?’ Look for entries that draw you in, that seem to be saying, ‘Pick me!’*
- Students work in their writer’s notebooks to choose a seed idea to develop into a published piece.

#### Share

- Provide time for students to read books and stories that remind them of what they want to write.
- *With your seed idea in mind, take some time to read one of these books. Read it and reread it until you get the sound and the feeling in your bones. Feel the mood and the shape. You’ll want to feel that so that you can create it with the entry you’ve chosen.*
- Collection of mentor texts about seed moments.
  - Possible examples might include: *Emily* by Michael Bedard
  - *The Sleeping Porch* by Karen Ackerman
  - *The Sunsets of Miss Olivia Wiggins* by Lester Laminack

**Focus Question:** What makes a writer’s notebook entry worth developing into a published piece of writing?

#### Choosing a seed Idea

- Carefully reread all of your entries.
- Ask yourself, ‘Does this really matter to me? Does it say something about me?’
- Star the entries that seem like possibilities.
- Come back to all the starred entries and choose the one that’s saying ‘Choose me!’
- Choose the entry that you have a lot to say about.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Today represents a change for your students as writers. For the first time this year they will be taking one small idea – a seed idea – and thinking about how to turn it into a complete story for publication. This will be a good time for you to take stock of your students as writers, considering: What seems to be getting better? What hasn’t changed? As you review the work in your students’ writer’s notebooks, try to make both general observations about your students as a whole and observations specific to small groups or individual students. Find a way to record your observations so that they can guide your whole group instruction and your individual conferences with students. Use examples attached.  

Anecdotal notes are frequent written descriptions of observations while students are working. They provide a way to record aspects of students' learning that might not be identified by other techniques, such as physical behaviors and attitudes. Anecdotal notes should be taken on all students, although some students may warrant more entries than others. |
### Session 7

**Anecdotal Notes Example**

| Title of Piece: _________________________________ | Date: ________________ |
| Name of Student: ________________________________ |
| **Observations:** | |

| Title of Piece: _________________________________ | Date: ________________ |
| Name of Student: ________________________________ |
| **Observations:** | |

| Title of Piece: _________________________________ | Date: ________________ |
| Name of Student: ________________________________ |
| **Observations:** | |

---

**Include observations such as:**

- Completes daily assignments
- Organizes and develops ideas in writing
- Drafting and using strategies daily from sessions taught
- Using language from anchor charts and class to while conferring with others
### Session 8

#### Preparation
- Tell students that writers improve leads by studying the work of authors and then applying their techniques.
- Explain that leads in stories matter not only for the reader, but for the writer as well. *A great lead sets us (writers) up to write a great story.*
- Discuss with students ways that writers can improve their leads—reading beautiful leads written by other authors and closely examining their work. Writers can ask themselves: *What exactly has this author done that I could try?*

#### Teaching Point
**Students improve leads by studying the work of other authors, mentor texts, and writing drafts to practice applying their learned techniques.**

#### Active Engagement
- Demonstrate or model how to study the work of mentor authors. Think aloud as you study the lead of a mentor author and say, *Watch how I study the lead of Sandra Cisneros from The House on Mango Street.* Read and then reread the lead quietly. Then say, *I read it once, then reread it. I’m trying to figure out the feeling for the lead. I’m thinking, What has Sandra done that I could do? The first thing I notice is …*
- Chart the elements the mentor author included. They might include: main character doing a specific action, main character saying or thinking something, another character doing an action.
- Model taking what you’ve noticed and applying it to your own story or a class story, being explicit about what and how you are revising. You might say, *I decided to add action and a clearer picture of the setting to my lead.*

#### Independent Practice
- Share a lead written by one student.
- Ask children to revise the lead out loud with a partner.
- Restate the teaching point. *When you go back to your tables to write, think about what you have learned about writing leads and then try out three or four different leads in your notebook. Try starting with the setting, or actions, or dialogue, or a combination of these.*
- Notebook Writing

#### Share
- Name what you hope that your students learned from the demonstration on leads. Add this lesson to the *Qualities of Good Personal Narrative Writing* chart.
- Share the work of one or two students who wrote several possible leads
- Students orally tell a partner the remaining parts of their story.

**Focus Question:** *Why do writers work so hard on writing leads?*

#### Homework/Extension
Keeping charts alive in the classroom is very important. It’s not enough to hang them on the walls and expect students to look at them or use them. The more a chart is referred to, the more likely it will be used by the students.

**PRACTICE CHUNKING THE STORIES THIS WAY!!!!**
- Have students choose one of their entries cut the lead out of the story.
- Have students rewrite a new lead.
- Have students attach new lead back to existing story
- Share with a partner. Which is best?

#### Assessment
- Circulate the room assessing group participation and transitions made in lead writing work.
Qualities of Good Personal Narrative Writing

- Write a little seed story; don’t write all about a giant watermelon topic.
- Zoom in so you tell the most important parts of the story.
- Include true, exact details from the movie you have in your mind.
- Begin with a strong lead—maybe use setting, action, dialogue to create mood.

IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR TEACHER TO SHARE ITEMS FROM THEIR NOTEBOOK*

- Teacher’s personal notebook for example
  - Students’ writer’s notebooks
  - Loose-leaf notebook paper
### Session 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Teaching Point</strong></th>
<th>Students improve endings by studying the work of other authors, mentor texts, and writing drafts to practice applying their learned techniques.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preparation</strong></td>
<td>• Remind students how they have been writing fast and long on their drafts and how they worked really hard to write leads that would capture and hold the attention of the reader. (Read some examples of leads that students have revised.)&lt;br&gt;• Explain that a secret that many beginning writers don’t know is that writers work just as hard - or maybe even harder – on endings. Today, I am going to teach you to work on your endings by using one of our mentor texts (that we have read before).&lt;br&gt;• Explain that we want to be sure that our ending fits with the idea that we are writing about and that it stays with the reader. Examine an ending.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Active Engagement</strong></td>
<td>Mentor text, such as <em>Fireflies!</em> By Julie Brinckloe.&lt;br&gt;It is not necessary to use the exact text mentioned above to learn about writing endings. Select a narrative text with which children are already familiar and that has an ending that is succinct and memorable and has moves in it that children can see. Do not only read the last line of the text. Usually an author regards both the lead and the ending of the story as longer than one or two lines.&lt;br&gt;• Teacher rereads the mentor text and asks students to think about what the author did to make the ending powerful.&lt;br&gt;• Teacher models drafting a strong ending that ties together important ideas for his/her story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Practice</strong></td>
<td>• Remind students that writers work hard on endings. Writers study endings from mentor texts, make plans for their endings, and then write rough draft endings.&lt;br&gt;• Student will reread drafts asking themselves “What is the important message I have conveyed?” Students reread and mark places that seem especially important. The ending should somehow relate to these ideas.&lt;br&gt;• Students work quietly rereading and marking important actions, words, images that could maybe be woven into the final scene or image. Have students try several endings for their piece (important action, dialogue, images).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Share</strong></td>
<td>• Name what you hope that your students learned from the demonstration on endings. Add this lesson to the <em>Qualities of Good Personal Narrative Writing</em> chart.&lt;br&gt;• Share the work of one or two students who wrote several possible endings.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Focus Question:</strong> Why do writers work so hard on writing leads and endings?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Homework/Extension</strong></td>
<td>• As you read your students’ writing, checking conventions, determine areas of need for future mini-lessons: punctuation, consistent tense, etc.&lt;br&gt;• <strong>Paragraphs!</strong> The Thought Organization Chart can be used to guide 5 paragraph writing: see generating more writing; each sequence box and detail set can represent a paragraph&lt;br&gt;<strong>PRACTICE CHUNKING THE STORIES THIS WAY!!!!</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Have students choose one of their entries cut the ending out of the story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Circulate the room assessing group participation and transitions made in ending writing work.</td>
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<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Have students rewrite a new ending.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Have students attach new ending back to existing story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Share with a partner, which is best?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Qualities of Good Personal Narrative Writing

- Write a little seed story; don’t write all about a giant watermelon topic.
- Zoom in so you tell the most important parts of the story.
- Include true, exact details from the movie you have in your mind.
- Begin with a strong lead—maybe use setting, action, dialogue to create mood.
- Make a strong ending—maybe use important actions, dialogue, images, and whole-story reminders that make a lasting impression.

Rubric for students to self monitor their progress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>GOALS</th>
<th>POINT VALUE</th>
<th>POINTS EARNED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VOLUME</td>
<td>Writing 20 minutes daily in the writer’s notebook.</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TITLED AND DATED</td>
<td>Put date and label each entry with a title.</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRITTEN IN PEN</td>
<td>All entries are written in pen.</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOTEBOOK ENTRY IMPORTANCE</td>
<td>Writing quality stories – using strategies from sessions in class</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Session 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Point</th>
<th>Writers evaluate and analyze their text by understanding revision is not about fixing errors; it is about finding and developing potentially great writing, sometimes by adding more to the heart of the story.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Preparation    | • Remind students of the work they’ve been doing; rally their energies toward revision.  
• Celebrate how the students are writing from inside their stories (reliving) and not summarizing from a distance. 
• Name the teaching point: Revision is not about fixing errors; it is about finding and developing potentially great writing, sometimes by adding more to the heart of the story. We can also cross out parts that are not important to the story before we begin to write. |
| Active Engagement | • Students will reread the piece they have written and decide why it has special meaning to them; they understand why this is the piece that will be revised and published. What is the heart of their story?  
• Spotlight what one student did throughout this unit in a way that illustrates the teaching point. Reflect on the Qualities of a Good Narrative Chart. Retell the story of the writing process pointing out what the student did to find and develop the heart of his/her story. Point out and openly discuss writer decisions made throughout the writing process.  
• Review with students that writer’s don’t just sit down in front of a blank sheet of paper, pick up a pencil, and write. Instead, as writers, we live in a way that gets us ready to write. We look for possible stories, gather entries, then select an entry that matters to us, story tell to our friends and ourselves, and draft and revise the story sequence. We often explore different leads and endings to plan how our story will lay out across pages. |
| Independent Practice | • Practice this work on a story from your teacher notebook. Reread a story to the class. *Think and tell your students where the heart of this story might be for you. Demonstrate making a movie in your mind of what happened at that part and tell your students how you’d stretch that part out.*  
• Students partner up. Think and tell your partner where the heart of this story might be for you. Make a movie in your mind of what happened at that part and tell your partner how you’d stretch that part out.  
• As you confer with students, prompt them to elaborate and revise by asking questions, such as “What’s the most important part of this story? What’s the heart of this story? Have students reread drafts to answer these questions.”  
• Students return to their chosen draft to make their story the best in the world. |
| Share | • Highlight a student who took the session to heart. Tell the story of that student’s work in a way others can learn from.  

**Focus Question:** What role does revision play in the writer’s workshop? Why is stretching the heart of your story out so important to the writing process? |
| Homework/Extension | Keeping charts alive in the classroom is very important. It’s not enough to hang them on the walls and expect students to look at them or use them. The more a chart is referred to, the more likely it will be used by the students. |
| Assessment | Circulate the room assessing group participation and transitions made in the revision writing work. |
Keeping charts alive in the classroom is very important. It’s not enough to hang them on the walls and expect students to look at them or use them. The more a chart is referred to, the more likely it will be used by the students.

Qualities of Good
Personal Narrative Writing

- Write a little seed story; don’t write all about a giant watermelon topic.
- Zoom in so you tell the most important parts of the story.
- Include true, exact details from the movie you have in your mind.
- Begin with a strong lead—maybe use setting, action, dialogue to create mood.
- Make a strong ending—maybe use important actions, dialogue, images, and whole-story reminders that make a lasting impression.
- Relive the heart of your story as you write it.
**Session 11**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Point</th>
<th>Writers evaluate and analyze their text by using editing checklists to remind themselves of strategies they can use to revise their writing.</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **Preparation** | • Copies of Editing Checklist Chart.  
• Chart size created Editing Checklist Tool |
| **Active Engagement** | • Explain to students that there are many self-help books published, such as How to Become a Millionaire, How to Win Friends and Influence People, etc. Tell students that it is time for the part of the writing process called editing and that they deserve a self-help text that can act as a personal coach on editing.  
• Name the teaching point: Writers use editing checklists to remind us of strategies we can use to edit our writing. SEE EDITING CHECKLIST CHART |
| **Independent Practice** | • Distribute editing checklists for students to keep in their writing folders.  
• Teacher uses chart-sized editing checklist to explain the process to the students.  
• Students read through their drafts with partners, focusing on one item on the checklist. |
| **Share** | • Using a different color pen or pencil, or one with a special flair to it, can be a tool that inspires editing: a fancy editing tool can spark kids to make changes just for the thrill of using it – especially when it comes to correcting spelling and punctuation.  
• Ask students to reflect on the editing process. Students will then ask a writing buddy to help edit. Students exchange papers and are another pair of eyes for their partners. Have students select a different color pen or pencil and put on their best ‘editing glasses’!  
• At some point, the students will need to assess their writing and decide which editing tasks they need to add to their own editing checklists. The checklist is also a place you can add items you and the child discuss in conferences and strategy lessons. This helps to hold the student accountable for all of the sessions taught.  
**Focus Question:** Why are editing checklists a good tool to create and use? |
| **Homework/Extension** | Create take home Editing Checklist with parent column for review and editing at home. |
| **Assessment** | Editing checklist. |
## EDITING CHECKLIST CHART

**Name** __________________________  **Date** ____________________  

**Title:** ________________________

Reread your writing carefully. Put a check mark in each box under “Author” as you complete each editing item. Once all the boxes are checked, give this editing checklist to the teacher for the final edit.

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<tr>
<th>Editing Checklist</th>
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<td><strong>1. Clarity:</strong></td>
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<td>Read, asking, “Will this make sense to a stranger?” Find confusing spots and rewrite to make them clearer. Note places where you stumble as you reread and revise to make them easier to read.</td>
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<td>Read, paying attention to the actual road signs you’ve given readers. If you followed the punctuation as you’ve written it, will the piece sound the way you want it to sound? Have you guarded against sentences that run on and on? Have you punctuated dialogue?</td>
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<td>Do your words look correctly spelled to you? Circle ones that feel as if they could be wrong, try them again, get help with them. Check that the words on the word wall are correctly spelled.</td>
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<td>Narrative writers use a new paragraph or a new page for each new episode in the sequence of events. Do you paragraph to show the passage of time? Do you also paragraph to show changes in who is speaking?</td>
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— from Lucy Calkins’, *Resources for Teaching Writing*
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<td>Students will effectively publish and celebrate their personal narratives using the methodology of the writer’s workshop framework.</td>
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<td><strong>Preparation</strong></td>
<td>As you decide what Author Celebrations will look like in your classroom, consider these things:</td>
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<td>• Would invited guests provide a purpose for reading the published pieces aloud?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Will every student read their piece aloud for the whole audience or will students read to small groups?</td>
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<td>• Will the celebration include refreshments?</td>
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<td>• If there will be an audience, should they be given a purpose for listening to and commenting on the stories?</td>
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<td>How will the work that is celebrated today be shared with a greater audience?</td>
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<td><strong>Active Engagement</strong></td>
<td>• This first celebration should make your writers feel proud of what they have accomplished and should strengthen their motivation for writing.</td>
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<td>• Plan to celebrate children’s change into writers rather than celebrating exquisite writing. The children’s work should stand as examples of their best work so far.</td>
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<td><strong>Independent Practice</strong></td>
<td>• Set-up four sharing stations in your classroom that will accommodate one author’s chair and 8-10 audience members.</td>
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<td>• Bring guests into the room and explain the structure for the celebration, comparing it to a reading you’ve attended at a bookstore.</td>
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<td>• Explain that at each sharing station 5-6 authors will be sharing their stories and will be available to answer 1-2 questions about their life as writers from the audience.</td>
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<td><strong>Share</strong></td>
<td>• With your writers, you can prepare a Bulletin Board to display their work for the whole school to enjoy.</td>
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<td>• Students can be given stickers or crayons to decorate their pieces before they are posted on the board.</td>
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<td><strong>Active Engagement 2</strong></td>
<td>• Prepared bulletin board featuring copies of published pieces (optional)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Refreshments (optional)</td>
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<td><strong>Assessment</strong></td>
<td>Formal Assessment using Rubric for Grading the Personal Narrative.</td>
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