

Mount Laurel Language Arts Curriculum
Grade 6

Writing Unit: Launching and Narrative

Stage 1: Determine the Desired Results

Enduring Understanding(s):

Good writers use a repertoire of strategies that enables them to vary form and style, in order to write for different purposes, audiences, and contexts.

Writers develop ideas for personal narratives by paying close attention to the small moments in their lives.

Rules and conventions of language help readers understand what is being communicated.

Essential Question(s):

How do writers develop a well-written product?

How do writers generate ideas for personal narrative essays?

How do rules of language affect communication?

New Jersey Student Learning Standards for English Language Arts

Anchor Standards for Writing

Text Types and Purposes

NJSLSA.W3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well- chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

Production and Distribution of Writing

NJSLSA.W4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

NJSLSA.W5 Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

NJSLSA.W6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

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collaborate with others.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

NJSLSA.W7 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects, utilizing an inquiry-based research process, based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

NJSLSA.W8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

NJSLSA.W9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Range of Writing

NJSLSA.W10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Note on range and content in student writing

To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students need to learn to use writing as a way of offering and supporting opinions, demonstrating understanding of the subjects they are studying, and conveying real and imagined experiences and events. They learn to appreciate that a key purpose of writing is to communicate clearly to an external, sometimes unfamiliar audience, and they begin to adapt the form and content of their writing to accomplish a particular task and purpose. They develop the capacity to build knowledge on a subject through research projects and to respond analytically to literary and informational sources. To meet these goals, students must devote significant time and effort to writing, producing numerous pieces over short and extended time frames throughout the year.

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Progress Indicators for Writing

Text Types and Purposes

W.6.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

1. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
2. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
3. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
4. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.
5. Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

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Production and Distribution of Writing

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W.6.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, voice and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

W.6.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

W.6.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

W.6.7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.

W.6.8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources.

W.6.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Range of Writing

W.6.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

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Progress Indicators for Reading Literature

Key Ideas and Details

RL.6.1. Cite textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.6.2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

RL.6.3. Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.

Craft and Structure

RL.6.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and

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connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

RL.6.5. Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.

RL.6.6. Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RL.6.7. Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they “see” and “hear” when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.

RL.6.8. (Not applicable to literature)

RL.6.9. Compare, contrast and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

RL.6.10. By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, scaffolding as needed.

Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening Comprehension and Collaboration

NJSLSA.SL1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

NJSLSA.SL2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

NJSLSA.SL3. Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

NJSLSA.SL4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

NJSLSA.SL5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

NJSLSA.SL6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Note on range and content of student speaking and listening

To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students must have ample opportunities to take part in a variety of rich, structured conversations—as part of a whole class, in small groups, and with a partner. Being

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productive members of these conversations requires that students contribute accurate, relevant information; respond to and develop what others have said; make comparisons and contrasts; and analyze and synthesize a multitude of ideas in various domains.

New technologies have broadened and expanded the role that speaking and listening play in acquiring and sharing knowledge and have tightened their link to other forms of communication. Digital texts confront students with the potential for continually updated content and dynamically changing combinations of words, graphics, images, hyperlinks, and embedded video and audio.

Progress Indicators for Speaking and Listening

Comprehension and Collaboration

SL.6.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

1. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
2. Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
3. Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.
4. Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.

SL.6.2. Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.

SL.6.3. Deconstruct a speaker's argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

SL.6.4. Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate speaking behaviors (e.g., eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation).

SL.6.5. Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays in presentations to clarify information.

SL.6.6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

New Jersey Student Learning Standards for English Language Arts Anchor Standards for Language

Conventions of Standard English

NJSLSA.L1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing

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or speaking.

NJSLSA.L2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

Knowledge of Language

NJSLSA L3. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

NJSLSA L4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.

NJSLSA L5. Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

NJSLSA L6. Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

Note on range and content of student language use

To build a foundation for college and career readiness in language, students must gain control over many conventions of standard English grammar, usage, and mechanics as well as learn other ways to use language to convey meaning effectively. They must also be able to determine or clarify the meaning of grade-appropriate words encountered through listening, reading, and media use; come to appreciate that words have nonliteral meanings, shadings of meaning, and relationships to other words; and expand their vocabulary in the course of studying content. The inclusion of Language standards in their own strand should not be taken as an indication that skills related to conventions, effective language use, and vocabulary are unimportant to reading, writing, speaking, and listening; indeed, they are inseparable from such contexts.

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Progress Indicators for Language

Conventions of Standard English

L.6.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

- A. Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive).
- B. Use intensive pronouns (e.g. *myself, ourselves*).
- C. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.*
- D. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).*
- E. Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.*

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L.6.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

A. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.*

B. Spell correctly.

Knowledge of Language

L.6.3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

1. Vary sentence patterns for meaning (syntax), reader/listener interest, and style/voice.
2. Maintain consistency in style and tone.*

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

L.6.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

1. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
2. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., *audience*, *auditory*, *audible*).
3. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.
4. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

L.6.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

A. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., personification) in context.

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2. Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words.
3. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., *stingy*, *scrimping*, *economical*, *unwasteful*, *thrifty*).

L.6.6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Anchor Standards for Language: Conventions of Standard English

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spelling when writing.

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Interdisciplinary Technology Integration:

8.1 Educational Technology: Interdisciplinary Connection

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

Integration of 21st Century Themes and Skills:

- CRP6. Demonstrate creativity and innovation.
- CRP5. Consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of decisions.
- CRP7. Employ valid and reliable research strategies.
- CRP8. Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.

Stage 2: Assessment Evidence

Required Performance Task:

Construct a well-developed personal

Other Forms of Assessment:

Pre-assessment of a narrative writing essay

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<p>narrative that includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a beginning • Use transition words to delineate sequence • Use elaboration to assist readers with picturing the story • Show what your narrative is about • Write an ending 	<p>Multiple drafts of the narrative writing essay (pre-writing, rough draft, revising, etc.)</p> <p>Mini-lesson application and accountability: Student is able to effectively apply the mini-lesson concept to his/her writing</p> <p>Prewriting/planning check-in: Student is able to narrow in on a particular topic, then brainstorm and develop that topic</p> <p>Productivity: Student writes independently without needing teacher support, is able to revise and edit his/her work for clarity of thought and logical progression of ideas</p> <p>Mechanics: Student can spell high frequency words accurately; can use his/her knowledge of our sound/symbol system (the alphabet) to spell unfamiliar words; is able to use punctuation successfully; and can look back over his/her final product to edit the final draft for clarity, cohesion, and logical expression of ideas</p> <p>Teacher's anecdotal records</p>
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Stage 3: Learning Plan

Grade 7

Launching the Writing Workshop and Narrative Writing

The Components of a Minilesson

A writing minilesson is a short lesson focused on a specific principle or procedure (Calkins 1986, 1994). A minilesson's components are: Connection, Teaching, Active Engagement, and Link. Each minilesson follows the same architecture:

Connection: Students learn why today's instruction is important and how it relates to the prior work. They hear the teaching point that crystallizes the lesson.

Teaching: The teacher shows students how writers go about doing whatever is being taught. Usually this involves a demonstration, which the teacher sets up and explains.

Active Engagement: Students are given a chance to practice (for a minute) what has just been taught. The teacher scaffolds their work so they can be successful.

Link: The teacher crystallizes what has been taught, adding it to children's growing repertoire. Students are reminded that today's lesson pertains not only to today, but to every day. The teacher often summarizes the conditions under which a student is able to reach for this new knowledge.

The Architecture of a Conference

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Each conference is unique; however, they nevertheless do have a predictable structure.

Research: Observe and interview to understand what the student is trying to do as a writer. Probe to glean more about the student's intentions. Name what the student has already accomplished as a writer and remind the student to do this in future writing.

Decide: Weigh whether you want to accept or alter the student's current plans and processes. Decide what you will teach and how you will teach it. Although there may be several teaching decisions, think about the one teaching point that is apt to make the biggest difference in the child's writing. Plan the way in which you will provide the student with guided practice.

Teach: Instruct the student on critical writing strategies, i.e., adding details, creating a more effective hook, removing information that does not support the topic, or selecting a topic that the student may not know.

Link: Name what the student has accomplished as a writer and remind the student to do this often in the future.

UNIT 1

Personal Narrative: Crafting Powerful Life Stories

BEND I: Launching Independent Writing Lives and Generating Personal Narratives

Session 1 – Setting Up to Write

[FIG. 1-1 Personal narrative excerpt from Ai's notebook](#)

Session 2 – Calling on All Strategies to Write Up a Storm

Session 3 – Writing from Moments that Really Matter

Session 4 – Telling the Story from the Narrator's Point of View

[FIG. 4-1 Kei's personal narrative, before revision](#)

[FIG. 4-2 Kei's revised personal narrative](#)

[Checklist: Questions to ask yourself as you edit](#)

Session 5 – Reading Closely to Learn from Other Authors

[Mentor text: "Everything Will Be Okay"](#)

Session 6 – Taking Stock: Pausing to Assess and Set Goals

[Narrative Writing Checklist, Grades 5 and 6](#)

[Student writing exemplar: "Look Up and Watch the Show"](#)

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BEND II: Moving through the Writing Process and Toward Our Goals

Session 7 – Rehearsing: Experimenting with Beginnings

Session 8 – Flash-Drafting: Getting the Whole Story on the Page

Session 9 – Using Writer's Notebooks for Mindful, Goal-Driven Work

[Mentor text: "Everything Will Be Okay"](#)

Session 10 – Re-Angling and Rewriting to Convey What a Story Is Really About

[FIG. 10-1 Gracie's external-internal story arc](#)

[FIG. 10-2 Gracie's first draft](#)

Session 11 – Elaborating on Important Scenes and Adding New Ones from the Past

[Mentor text: "Everything Will Be Okay"](#)

Session 12 – Using All Available Resources to Aid with Final Touches

BEND III: Writing a Second Personal Narrative with New Independence

Session 13 – Taking Charge of the Writing Process: Deciding Where to Begin and How to Revise from the Get-Go

[Narrative Writing Checklist, Grade 6](#)

[Mentor text: "Everything Will Be Okay"](#)

Session 14 – Slowing Down and Stretching Out the Story's Problem

[Mentor text: "Everything Will Be Okay"](#)

[Narrative Writing Checklist, Grade 6](#)

Session 15 – Ending Stories in Meaningful Ways

[Anchor chart: How to Write Powerful Personal Narratives](#)

Session 16- Editing Sentences for Rhythm and Meaning

Session 17 – Publishing and Celebrating as a Community of Writers

[FIG. 17-1 "Needing to Be Heard" by Shayna](#)

[FIG. 17-2 "The Catfish" by Cale](#)

[FIG. 17-3 "The Unexpected Brother" by Gracie](#)

[FIG. 17-4 "Hard Work Beats Talent" by Austin](#)

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Modifications

Special Education:

- Use Research, Decide, Teach, Link methodology during conferring with students
- Teacher models own writing
- Show additional number of samples/examples
- Provide additional opportunities to practice
- Use individual teacher/student conferences to address student's needs
- Use small group table conferences to address needs
- Chunk mini-lessons over a number of days
- Develop target vocabulary
- Scaffold comprehension when reading is used to promote reader response
- Chunk reading material
- Use graphic organizers to develop key concepts/ideas
- Teach key aspects of a topic. Eliminate nonessential information
- Provide individual copies of the student's writing checklists
- Use sentence frames to promote student's thinking and writing (this is found in Lucy's Units)

English Language Learners (ELLs):

- Model Thinking Aloud
- Encourage Partner Talk
- Repeat and Clarify
- Provide a Sequence
- Encourage self-selection of topics
- Target vocabulary
- Scaffold comprehension when reading is used to promote reader response
- Scaffold content-literacy reading
- Allow products to demonstrate student's learning
- Provide on-going feedback

Students at Risk of School Failure:

- Utilize TIME Mentor Program
- Build a relationship
- Allow flexible due dates
- Employ strategies from Classroom Instruction that Works
- Create the Opportunity to Learn strategies
- Build lessons around student interests

Gifted Students:

- Use Flexible grouping
- Give Independent projects
- Differentiate product assignments
- Offer student choice
- Use multiple intelligence options
- Provide opportunities to research (Individual/Group)
- Focus on Habits of Mind
- Focus on Webb's Depth of Knowledge - Emphasis on Level 4

Core Instructional Materials:

- *Calkins Units of Study in Writing* Program 2014 edition
- Newsela.com for leveled texts
- Technology/Equipment: ACTIV Board, LCD projector, sound system , CDs, DVDs, videos, internet, iPod

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