

Mount Laurel Language Arts Curriculum
Grade 7

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 fictional writing 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 fictional stories?

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.

W.7.3. 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 point of view 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 capture the action and convey experiences and events.

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Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

Anchor Standards for Language: Conventions of Standard English

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

Knowledge of Language

L.7.3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

A. Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.*

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

L.7.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 7*

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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., *belligerent*, *bellicose*, *rebel*).
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.7.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

A. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., literary, biblical, and mythological allusions) in context.

B. Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., synonym/antonym, analogy) to better understand each of the words.

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C. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., *refined*, *respectful*, *polite*, *diplomatic*, *condescending*).

L.7.6. 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.

Progress Indicators for Reading Literature

Key Ideas and Details

RL.7.1. Cite several pieces of textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.7.2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.7.3. Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

Craft and Structure

RL.7.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

RL.7.5. Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.

RL.7.6. Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.

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Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RL.7.7. Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film).

RL.7.8. (Not applicable to literature)

RL.7.9. Compare, contrast and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

RL.7.10. 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.

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:

Your narrative essay needs to include:

- a beginning
- transition words to delineate sequence
- elaboration to assist readers with picturing the story
- words that show not tell
- an ending

Other Forms of Assessment:

Pre-assessment of a narrative writing essay

Multiple drafts of the narrative writing essay (pre-writing, rough draft, revising, etc.)

Mini-lesson application and accountability: Student is able to effectively apply the mini-lesson concept to his/her writing

Prewriting/planning check-in: Student is able to narrow in on a particular topic, then brainstorm and develop that topic

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

Mechanics: Student can spell high frequency words

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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

Teacher's anecdotal records

Stage 3: Learning Plan

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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 student'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

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.

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

UNIT 1: Writing Realistic Fiction-Symbolism, Syntax, and Truth
BEND I: Creating and Developing Meaningful Stories and Characters

Session 1 – Imagining Stories from Everyday Moments

[Narrative Writing Checklist, Grade 6](#)

Session 2 – Imagining Stories You Wished Existed in the World

Session 3 – Developing Believable Characters through Scene Boot Camp

[Anchor chart: How to Write Compelling Fiction](#)

Session 4 – Giving Characters Struggles and Motivations that Mirror Real Life

Session 5 – Plotting with Tools: Story Arcs, Timelines, Lists, Mentor Texts

[Link to Vonnegut story arcs](#)

[Mentor text: "Thirteen and a Half"](#)

[FIG. 5-1 Story Arc of "Thirteen and a Half"](#)

[Anchor chart: How to Write Compelling Fiction](#)

[Narrative Writing Checklist, Grades 6 and 7](#)

[Additional Mentor Text Suggestions for Realistic Fiction](#)

BEND II: Drafting and Revising with an Eye toward Meaning

Session 6 – From 2-D to 3-D: Planning and Writing Scenes by Including Evidence

[Mentor text: "Thirteen and a Half"](#)

[Anchor chart: How to Write Compelling Fiction](#)

Session 7 – Stepping into the Drama of the Story to Draft

[Mentor text: "Thirteen and a Half"](#)

[Anchor chart: How to Write Compelling Fiction](#)

Session 8 – Studying Published Texts to Write Leads

[Anchor chart: How to Write Compelling Fiction](#)

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Session 9 — Grounding Dialogue in Scenes

[Anchor chart: How to Write Compelling Fiction](#)

Session 10 — Writing Endings that Make Readers Swoon

[Anchor chart: How to Write Compelling Fiction](#)

[Mentor text: "Thirteen and a Half"](#)

BEND III: Meticulous Revision and Precise Edits with Audience in Mind

Session 11 — Reading Drafts like Editors

[Narrative Writing Checklist, Grades 7 and 8](#)

[Anchor chart: How to Write Compelling Fiction](#)

Session 12 — Revision: Weaving in Symbolism and Imagery to Bring out Meaning

[Excerpt from Max's draft](#)

[Anchor chart: How to Write Compelling Fiction](#)

[Chart: Tips for Writing Realistic Dialogue](#)

Session 13 — Conducting the Rhythm of Language: Creating Cadence and Meaning through Syntax

[Anchor chart: How to Write Compelling Fiction](#)

Session 14 – Using Mentor Texts to Help Match Authorial Intent with the Page

Session 15 –Economizing on the Sentence and Word Level

Session 16 — Editing with Lenses and Independence

[FIG. 16-2 Miriam edits for spelling](#)

[FIG. 16-3 Taylor's piece is ready to edit](#)

[Narrative Writing Checklist, Grades 7 and 8](#)

Session 17 — Publishing Anthologies: A Celebration

[FIG. 17-1 "Helping Ruby" by Miriam](#)

[FIG. 17-2 "Realistic Fiction Story" by Annabelle](#)

[FIG. 17-3 "One Friend to Another" by Samee](#)

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[FIG. 17-4 Yasmin's final piece](#)

[FIG. 17-5 "Forever Strong" by Gabriel](#)

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

Gifted Students:

- Use Flexible grouping
- Give Independent projects
- Differentiate product assignments

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Employ strategies from Classroom Instruction that Works● Create the Opportunity to Learn strategies● Build lessons around student interests | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● 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 |
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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