Big Idea/ Topic

Information Writing: Writing to Inform Others

Students will learn how to write an informational piece to share information with others. Students will learn how to efficiently research and organize information to share information effectively with a desired audience. At the end of the lesson sequence, students will write to inform the audience about a meaningful topic.

Lesson Six Topic:

How to Connect Ideas:

Using Transition Words, Phrases, and Sentences

Students will use transition words, phrases, and sentences in their informational writing pieces. It is important to transition smoothly between details and subtopics in writing. Students will practice ways to transition and reread their writing to add transitional words, phrases, and sentences.

NOTE: This learning plan uses specific texts (e.g., written, performed, illustrated) as concrete examples of standards-based learning activities. These texts are not endorsements. The selection of classroom texts is completely a local decision and subject to local approval processes.

Daily Learning Targets:

• I can use transitions to connect ideas and information in their writing.
Standard Alignment

**Standard(s): W2 Informational Writing**

**ELAGSE3W2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

a. Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension.
b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details.
c. Use linking words and phrases (e.g., also, another, and, more, but) to connect ideas within categories of information.
d. Provide a concluding statement or section.

**ELAGSE3W4:** With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

**ELAGSE3W5:** With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.

**WIDA English Language Development Standards for English learners (ELs):**

Teachers of ELs are encouraged to use the resources in the [WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition](https://www.wida.us/standards) to design language expectations (p.28) specific to the GSE. Examples of the English language needed to support informational writing can be found on p. 91.
Instructional Design

For more information regarding daily routine practices and/or additional information on the unit framework (including materials), please see the Unit Overview.

Various evidence-based practices (EBPs) are identified throughout the lesson below; however, we believe good teaching can be eclectic, “...thoughtfully, intentionally taking some of the best of different teaching methodologies, while always holding onto some research-based, core beliefs, we can help our students flourish in ways that teaching only one way will not” (Roberts, 2018, p. 6). Always feel free to adapt the lesson to meet your professional needs with your specific student population. Ideas for student supports and enrichments can be found in the “Student Learning Supports” section.

Materials

Teacher—
Chart Paper; Transition Anchor Chart

Mentor Texts (Some choices are listed below):

National Geographic Readers: Planets by Elizabeth Carney
Time for Kids: Take off! All about Airplanes by Jennifer Prior
Living Color by Steve Jenkins
An Egg is Quiet by Dianna Hutts
Mammalabilia by Douglas Florian
Cats vs. Dogs by Elizabeth Carney: Epic! Link: https://www.getepic.com/app/read/8135
Volcanoes by Anne Schreiber: Epic! Link: https://www.getepic.com/app/read/43485
Human Footprint by Ellen Kirk: Epic! Link: https://www.getepic.com/app/read/55331
Adaptations by Monica Davies: Epic! Link: https://www.getepic.com/app/read/42736
Jane Goodall by William Price: Epic! Link: https://www.getepic.com/app/read/13429

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Students—
Writer’s Notebook; Pencils
unplugged handout version
**Engage**

**Opening:**

**Synchronous**

- Explain the learning target for the day and how students will know they have met the learning target.
- Review: Encourage writers for the writing they have done so far. Explain that today we will look back at our writing pieces and look for ways to make it more appealing to our audience.
- Show and read two paragraphs to students. One paragraph should not use transition words, phrases, and sentences, and one paragraph should. Example paragraphs are linked under materials. You can display them side by side for students to compare. Prompt students to think about what they notice. Have students share their noticings with a partner. [EBP: Teach students to identify and use the text’s organizational structure to comprehend, learn, and remember content [Moderate evidence] (Shanahan et al., 2010)].
- Discuss that authors put transitions into their writing to smoothly transition between details and information.

**Asynchronous**

- Record opening for students and provide directions for work session.

**Unplugged/Offline**

- Have students work through part 1 of the Lesson Six [Unplugged] Handout.

**Explore**

**Synchronous**

- Prompt students to think about how the second paragraph used words that transitioned between and connected ideas and information. [EBP: Teach students to identify and use the text’s organizational structure to comprehend, learn, and remember content [Moderate evidence] (Shanahan et al., 2010)].
- Authors add use transitions in their writing to smoothly flow between different information. Yesterday we learned about different text structures like cause and effect, problem and solution, and compare and contrast. When authors organize information in different ways they transition between and connect ideas and information using different words, phrases, and sentences.
• Review **Transition Words Anchor Chart**. Ask students if they can think of more words to add to the list.

**Asynchronous**

• Record a brief minilesson showing and reviewing text structures and transition words, phrases, and sentences used in each one. Go over the anchor chart and provide it as a resource for students to use.

**Unplugged/Offline**

• Have students work through part 2 of the **Lesson Six [Unplugged] Handout**.

**Apply**

**Synchronous**

• Students will work in their Writer’s Notebooks and continue writing their subtopics. **[EBPs: Provide daily time for students to write [Minimal evidence]; Teach students to use the writing process for a variety of purposes. [Strong evidence] (Graham et al., 2016)]**.
• While students are working independently, the teacher should monitor around the room and conference with students as needed.
• Skills to focus on while monitoring and conferencing:
  • add transition words, phrases, and sentences. Think about text structure when choosing a transition.

**Asynchronous**

• Provide an online Writer’s Notebook if needed through a Google Slide or Document.
• Schedule a time to conference with each student to focus on skills focused on in the explore section of lesson.
• add transition words, phrases, and sentences. Think about text structure when choosing a transition.

**Unplugged/Offline**

• Have students work through part 3 of the **Lesson Six [Unplugged] Handout**.
Reflect

**Synchronous**
- Have students share where they used today’s strategy with a partner. If desired, students can share with the class. [EBP: Create an engaged community of writers [Minimal evidence] (Graham et al., 2016)].

**Asynchronous**
- Students can share their use of today’s strategy with a partner via Flipgrid or Jamboard.

**Unplugged/Offline**
- Have students work through part 4 of the Lesson Six [Unplugged] Handout.
- Students can reflect over using today’s strategy and share with the teacher via phone or someone at home.
- Schedule a time to call and conference with each student to focus on skills focused on in the explore section of lesson.
- add transition words, phrases, and sentences. Think about text structure when choosing a transition.

### Evidence of Student Success

**Formative Assessment**
Conference with students by walking around the room. When conferencing, ask students to show how they applied the skill (connecting ideas, words, etc.) of the day.

**Formative Assessment**

“More of What’s Meaningful”: Formative Assessments (Serravallo, 2013)

Formative assessment can occur in two ways:
- Conferring [Guidance: Tips for Conferring to Maximize Student Engage](#)
  - “Supercharge your Conferring: Focus on Goals, Strategies, and Feedback” (Serravallo, 2018)
- Sharing [“How to Create an Inclusive Virtual Classroom” (Kern, 2020)]
  - “8 Strategies to Improve Participation in Your Virtual Classroom” (Minero, 2020)
# Student Learning Supports

At all levels, the English Language Arts standards encourage students to become critical thinkers and communicators. The following strategies, though not exhaustive, are designed to support students struggling to meet this lesson’s learning target, and/or learning English as an additional language, and/or are exceeding and would benefit from enrichment.

## Supports/Scaffolding

- **Conceptual Processing:** Allow additional processing time. Review this content prior to the lesson occurring so that the student will have additional time to formulate responses. Summarize each lesson segment and keep summary accessible for students. Implement scaffolds identified below for various circumstances.
- **Language:** Prior to beginning of the lesson, explicitly teach vocabulary required to engage with the content. [EBP: Teach students academic language skills, including the use of inferential and narrative language, and vocabulary knowledge [Minimal evidence] (Foorman et al., 2016)].
- **Visual-spatial Processing:** Provide opportunities for students to engage with visual representations and/or manipulatives (virtual or concrete) as they explore concepts of power and communicate ideas.
- **Organization:** Maintain logical progression of big ideas/lesson segments in the course’s shared virtual space so that students can revisit lesson segments as necessary. Help students bookmark frequently utilized sites (such as Flipgrid) or how to group tabs in Chrome to assist with organization.
- **Memory:** Maintain logical progression of big ideas/lesson segments in the course’s shared virtual space so that students can revisit lesson segments, as necessary.

## Lesson-specific Scaffolds:

Strategic partnering for students who struggle with reading.

## Supports/scaffolds for English learners:

- Suggestions for this lesson include but are not limited to: providing additional guidance on the placement of transition words within a sentence (e.g. “for example” v. “yet” in the lesson’s handout), modeling how to use transition words for each of the text structures from the anchor chart, etc.
- Educators may find it valuable to review WIDA’s Proficiency Level Descriptors (pp. 102-103) when planning for differentiation based on students’ levels of English proficiency.
- Teachers of ELs are encouraged to incorporate high leverage practices for teaching EL students and to utilize relevant evidence-based strategies such as those found in Project EXCELL’s downloadable GO TO Strategies (Levine et al., 2013).
**Acceleration/Extension**

Encourage students to use more transitional phrases and sentences, not just transition words.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Engaging Families</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>• Aligning with your district’s family engagement plan to facilitate the most meaningful way to work with your families should remain the focus.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Have students bring home a book or show an online book to a family member and discuss the text structure and transitions with them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>Engage families of English learners</strong> by encouraging reading of bilingual informational texts on students’ chosen topics to identify/support the English language needed for the unit (sample online resources for free bilingual books: <a href="#">Unite for Literacy</a>, <a href="#">Global Storybooks</a>). Families can also encourage writing at home (<a href="#">Spanish version</a>) with students using transition words/phrases.</td>
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References

https://blog.heinemann.com/10-tips-for-conferring-with-student-writers-online


Shanahan, T., Callison, K., Carriere, C., Duke, N.K., Pearson, P.D., Schatschneider, C.,

Tovani, C., & Moje, E.B. (2017). *No more telling as teaching: Less lecture, more engaged learning (not this but that).* Heinemann.
