

Sample English Language Arts Learning Plan

Big Idea/ Topic

These digital plans have been designed by Georgia educators as examples of what's working well for their students. When making curriculum decisions for your students, consult the guidelines of your local school and district.

How to Write an Informative Writing Essay

This lesson sequence will teach students to write informative essays by following stages of the pre-writing process that will also include research on a topic of choice as a final writing piece. Students will learn to organize their research and choose an audience for their informative essay, and they will publish their work in a grade-wide culminating coffee house-style event.

This ten-lesson mini unit introduces students to informative writing while taking them through the steps of writing an informative essay. Students will be asked to critically think about the purpose of their informative writing and the audience they wish to share their writing. Students will generate their own informative essay in a step-by-step process which will include teacher support along the way. Students will be introduced to how to research a topic for the purpose of their writing. Students will demonstrate their understanding of how to write an informative essay by producing a final essay at the end of the unit. Synchronous students with access to technology may use Google Classroom or a similar school supported platform to complete their writing. Students who are asynchronous may do work online or have the option of paper and pencil journal writing. Unplugged students will pick up packets that will include materials (paper, pencils, graphic organizers, sample texts, etc.) necessary for the ten-day unit.

Topic: Learning the Process of Informative Essay Writing

Learning Targets:

- Students will be able to define the purpose of informative writing.
- Students will know how to brainstorm topics for informative writing.
- Students will know how to begin research for informative writing.
- Students will know how to organize their research findings into an essay.
- Students will know how to create a “hook” to grab the reader’s attention in their introduction.
- Students will know how to create a conclusion for their informative essay.

Skills:

- Students will learn the format of an informative writing piece and learn how to research a topic of choice.
- Students will also learn the skill of how to cite and reference work that they use in their writing.

Note: The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) does not endorse the books, resources, websites, programs, products, and other materials identified in the Remote Learning Plan Units. Any use of books, resources, websites, programs, products, and other materials are intended to serve as examples only. All curriculum decisions are made at the local level.

Standard Alignment

The elementary Georgia Standards of Excellence for English Language Arts encompass a [dynamic skillset](#) that steadily increases in sophistication, nuance, and complexity. All ELA standards target important and specific skills that are interconnected and that spiral throughout their entire K-12 education. The ELA GSE are designed to be revisited and reinforced throughout every school year. Primary grade students in Georgia regularly engage in the following holistic practices:

- » Participate regularly in thinking, talking, and writing about rich stories and other read-aloud books.
- » Learn to confer with peers about topics and texts by responding to others, asking questions, and following rules for discussions.
- » Begin to experiment with writing using a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing letters to share information, ideas, and feelings.

Of course, for students to expand their knowledge, increase their skills, and build lifelong literacy practices, they need to engage in focused instruction and participate in diverse educational experiences. Even when lessons require students to use an array of literacy skills and knowledgebases (as they always do), instruction must zero in on specific skills at specific times.

The lessons in this sequence are unified by Standard ELAGSE5W2 with a special focus on elements **ELAGSE5W2: a, b, and e**. Additional standards are leveraged when students are required to read or write using specific skills and practices.



ELAGSE5W2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

- a. Introduce a topic clearly, provide a general observation and focus, and group related information logically; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.
- c. Link ideas within and across categories of information using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., in contrast, especially).
- d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- e. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.

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](#), to design language expectations (p.28) specific to the GSE.

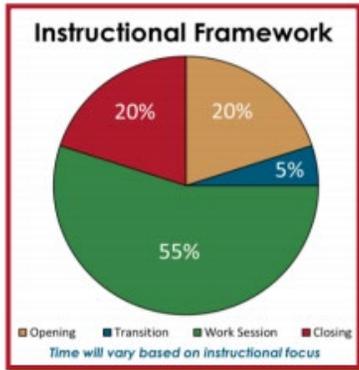
Examples of the English language needed to support informational writing can be found on pp. 114-115.



Instructional Design

GaDOE's Standards-based Classroom Instructional Framework

This learning plan supports the [whole child](#) and aligns to the [coherent instruction system](#) of [Georgia's Systems of Continuous Improvement](#). Each lesson of the sequence is designed in accordance with the [standards-based classroom instructional framework](#) put forth by the Georgia Department of Education's [Division of School & District Effectiveness](#).



This standards-based framework follows a workshop model of instruction and includes an **opening**, a brief **transition**, a **work session**, and a **closing**. *Figure 1* shows general percentages of class time devoted to each segment of the instructional framework; however, it is important to note that these percentages will vary with the instructional focus. For a more detailed description of the teaching practices contained within each segment, visit the [instructional framework](#) page on GaDOE's website.

Tovani (Tovani & Moje, 2017) puts forth a similar framework, which she calls the *student engagement model* (*Figure 2*). This model includes a *catch* segment during which the teacher refocuses the class by clarifying misunderstandings or introducing a new strategy. For more information, please see the professional learning study guide and framework template to design your own lesson: [“TIME: Planning for Students to do the Work”](#) (Tovani, 2020). Both frameworks are flexible, and any segment may serve as an entry point. While most class periods will incorporate all segments, this, too, will vary with the instructional focus.

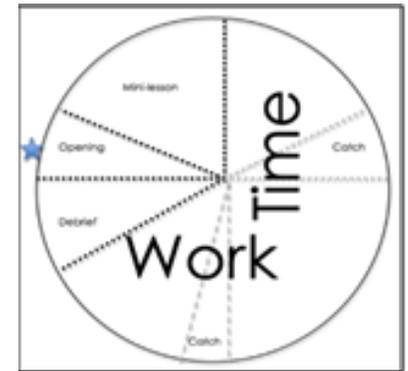


Figure 1

Tovani also writes about the “Curriculum You Anticipate (CYA)” structures, comprised of the six Ts: topic, text, time, targets, task, and tending, to help facilitate deeper dives into the content (2021).

Evidence-based Practices:

In addition, evidence-based practices have been identified throughout the Remote Learning Plan Reading Power lessons, by color-coding the evidence-based practices (**EBP**) and accompanying citation; these are practices that have been found to be effective at producing positive outcomes with adolescent student populations. For more specific information, please review the IES Practice Guide cited for each practice.



LONG-TERM PLAN:

TOPIC: Writing an Informative Essay

TIME: 10 lesson sequence

<p>Primary Unit Learning TARGETS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can define the purpose of informative writing.• I can brainstorm topics for informative writing.• I can research for informative writing.• I can organize my research findings into an essay.• I can create a “hook” to grab the reader’s attention in my introduction.• I can create a conclusion for their informative essay.	<p style="text-align: center;">TASK Unit “Big Make”</p> <p>Culminating task is a fully researched informative essay written by the student (about a topic of the student’s choice) that will be shared with other 5th grade students in a coffee house event.</p> <p>Rubric Options: <i>(The teacher can decide what rubric is preferred, including the option to use an informative writing rubric/checklist that is already working well in the classroom.)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Georgia Milestones 5th Grade Informative Writing Rubrics• Sample 5th Grade Informative Writing Learning Target Rubric <i>(could be easily edited for personal preference)</i>
<p>TEXTS:</p> <p>Throughout the course of this unit, you should keep the focus on selecting accessible texts for your students, with an emphasis on text variety (both genres/types and perspectives connected to the topic), though the true focus should remain on selecting accessible texts for your students that will also be interesting. Various texts are identified throughout the unit as samples that could be utilized with any given task.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Note: The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) does not endorse the books, resources, websites, programs, products, and other materials identified in the Remote Learning Plan Units. Any use of books, resources, websites, programs, products, and other materials are intended to serve as examples only. All curriculum decisions are made at the local level.</i></p>	

TENDING: When tending to students’ individual needs, utilizing “catch and release” times in addition to the other scaffolds, supports, and accelerations in the Student Learning Support portions can increase your awareness of your students’ needs. For more information on engagement strategies for a variety of disinclined learners, check out Tovani’s *Why Do I Have to Read This? Literacy Strategies to Engage Our Most Reluctant Students* (2021).



Lesson Sequence

Lesson 1 . . . Introduction to informative writing. EQ: What is informative writing?

Lesson 2 . . . EQ: How do we brainstorm informative writing topics and ideas?

Lesson 3 . . . EQ: How do I begin my research for my informative writing?

Lesson 4 . . . EQ: Where do I begin my research for my informative writing?

Lesson 5 . . . EQ: Why is it important to organize my research information?

Lesson 6 . . . EQ: What strategies can I use to organize my research?

Lesson 7 . . . EQ: When do I know if I am ready to begin my writing?

Lesson 8 . . . EQ: How can I create an interesting hook to grab my reader's attention?

Lesson 9 . . . EQ: How can I create a conclusion for my informative essay?

Lesson 10 . . .EQ: How can I edit my work before sharing with my audience?

Learning Environments

Synchronous, Asynchronous, & Unplugged/Offline Distance Learning

This mini unit is written for face-to-face (f2f) or synchronous distance learning; however, guidance is provided for modifications, including ideas for supporting students who are learning asynchronously and those with little or no access to technology. Throughout the lessons, the various learning environment modifications can be identified through the color-coded label of **Synchronous**, **Asynchronous**, or **Unplugged/Offline**. If you are in a face-to-face setting, you will likely be able to follow this plan with minimal adjustments; however, utilizing chart paper to create Anchor charts as you move through the lessons could be an excellent addition to keep track of the thinking.

Materials

Student Materials:

Synchronous: computer, charger, WIFI connection, pencil paper and access to the following sites:

Asynchronous: Same as above

Unplugged students: paper, pencil, writing journal, library books for topic of interest

Unplugged: Copies of the handouts provided by lesson.



Teacher Materials: List of all necessary learning materials, including links to online resources when appropriate.

Teacher will need:

- Computer access and strong Wi-Fi
- Platform to post assignments such as Google Classroom or other
- Access to Google Meets, Microsoft Teams, or Zoom, or another platform to present and provide student instruction
- [Informative Writing PowerPoint](#)

Evidence of Student Success

Assessment Plan:

Diagnostic or Pre-assessment

- If you wish to do so, you can have students write a short diagnostic informative text. You can say, “We are about to launch into a unit on informative writing, and that can mean a lot of different types of writing. In 10 minutes, I want you to create a short piece of informative writing – your choice.” This could be done as a ticket-out-the-door prior to beginning the unit, and it may help you identify misconceptions and areas of strength before you begin.

Formative Assessment (“Little Makes”)

- Tasks and reflections as indicated in each lesson template.
- Possible Resources: [Guidance: Tips for Conferring to Maximize Student Engage](#), ["How to Create an Inclusive Virtual Classroom"](#) (Kern, 2020), ["Small Group & Conferencing Tips from Kate Roberts \(2018\)"](#)

Summative/Post-assessment (“Big Make”)

- Culminating task is a fully researched informative essay written by the student (about a topic of the student’s choice) that will be shared with other 5th grade students in a coffee house event.
- **Rubric Options:** *(The teacher can decide what rubric is preferred, including the option to use an informative writing rubric/checklist that is already working well in the classroom.)*
 - [Georgia Milestones 5th Grade Informative Writing Rubrics](#)
 - [Sample 5th Grade Informative Writing Learning Target Rubric](#) *(could be easily edited for personal preference)*



Student Learning Supports

- **At all levels, the English Language Arts standards encourage students to become critical thinkers and communicators. The following strategies are designed to support students who are either struggling to meet this lesson’s learning target and/or are exceeding and would benefit from enrichment.**
- In this section of each plan, supports are identified for students who might struggle with conceptual processing, language, visual-spatial processing, organization, and/or memory.
- In addition, scaffolding and acceleration/extension are provided for use for each lesson.
 - o For more information about evidence-based teaching practices and scaffolding, see this [infographic](#) (REL Southeast, 2017).

Engaging Families

- Aligning with your district’s family engagement plan to facilitate the most meaningful way to work with your families. If you have a parent liaison associated with your school/district, you may want to reach out to that individual for further guidance.

Drawing upon the research of Day (2013), Ferguson (2005), and LaRocque (2013), Jacques and Villegas (2018) argue that family engagement best occurs for parents when the following conditions are met:

A relationship with a trusted staff person or teacher who is approachable, friendly, receptive to concerns, and a champion for the student and family. Perceptions that families are welcome and valued at the school. Receptivity, transparency, empathy, and flexibility from school staff regarding communication and collaborative efforts to support learning and success. (p. 1)

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