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.

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 Four Topic:

Develop the topic (Part II):

Subtopics, Research facts, Definitions, & Details

Students will examine informational writing to see the purpose, audience, and strategies used in informational writing. Students will begin writing subtopics and will focus on writing to a specific audience. In informational writing, key words and glossaries are used to provide readers with content vocabulary. Students will focus on adding vocabulary to their writing pieces today.

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 group related information together in my informational writing piece.
- I can develop my topic with definitions.
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, 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 Plan 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

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. Share a student’s work with the class of how they included facts and images in their writing. [EBP: Create an engaged community of writers [Minimal evidence] (Graham et al., 2016)].
- Explain that today we will continue adding to our informational writing piece.

Asynchronous

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

Unplugged/Offline

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

Explore

Synchronous

- Choose a couple of different mentor texts to show to the class using the list above. Choose pages to read that show keywords and definitions and a book that has a glossary. Ask students to share with a partner what they notice is similar between the texts read. [EBP: Teach students how to use reading comprehension strategies [Strong evidence]; Select texts purposefully to support comprehension development. [Minimal evidence]; Teach students to identify and use the text’s organizational structure to comprehend, learn, and remember content [Moderate evidence] (Shanahan et al., 2010)].
- Explain to students that writers use vocabulary specific to their topic in informational writing. Explain that sometimes the audience does not know what these words mean, so the writer includes definitions of these words. Show a glossary again to students and tell them that a writer will often put all of those vocabulary words, or key words, in one place for the reader, the glossary.
- Give students a moment to think how they can add key words, definitions, or a glossary to their writing. Have students share with a partner.

Asynchronous

- Record a brief minilesson explaining how to add key words, definitions, and a glossary to informational writing.
Unplugged/Offline

- Have students work through part 2 of the Lesson Four [Unplugged] Handout.
- Provide printed outline of how to add key words, definitions, and a glossary to informational writing. Books can be provided for students to research their topic.

Apply

Synchronous

- Students will work in their Writer’s Notebooks and write their subtopics. [EBP: Provide daily time for students to write [Minimal evidence]; [EBP: 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 key words, definitions, and a glossary to informational writing

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 key words, definitions, and a glossary to informational writing

Unplugged/Offline

- Have students work through part 3 of the Lesson Four [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
- Students can reflect over using today’s strategy and share with the teacher via phone or someone at home.

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### 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 (Introducing a topic) 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.

Scaffolds for Specific Lesson:

Provide assistance to students in using topic specific vocabulary. Give examples and/or pictures of vocabulary words to prompt their thinking.

Supports/scaffolds for English learners:

- Suggestions for this lesson include but are not limited to: providing students with word-to-word dictionaries or labeled illustrations to identify topic-specific vocabulary words in English, modeling how to add key words within the text & including sentence frames for students to use, 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 incorporate the definition of key word in the writing, not just in the glossary to explain to the reader what each word means by using context clues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engaging Families</th>
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<tbody>
<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. At the secondary level, much of the communication occurs with the student serving as a liaison.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Encourage students to show a glossary to families at home and discuss their importance and how to use them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Families of English learners can look for potential cognates in English and their first language as they review the vocabulary words that students have identified.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References

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


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