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.

Informative Writing

This ten-lesson mini unit introduces students to informative writing. Students will learn to brainstorm effectively, research a chosen topic of interest, organize research, learn to write an introduction with a “hook” that grabs the reader’s attention, learn to effectively conclude their writing, and review their work for editing purposes.

Lesson Six Topic: What strategies can I use to organize my research?

This whole-class lesson will show students two strategies for organizing their research notes before beginning their writing. Students will be asked to remember the reasons from yesterday’s lesson on why work should be organized before writing so that writing can be completed more efficiently.

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Learning Targets:  
- I can learn to organize my research notes before beginning my writing.  
- I can organize my research information.

Lesson “Small Make(s)”:
- Organization method for essay established (via graphic organizer, post-its, or otherwise)

Unit “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)

Standard Alignment

Standard(s):  
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.
ELAGSE5W7: Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

ELAGSE5W8: Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.

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

*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— Informative Writing PowerPoint;

Students— Access to Google Classroom or alternative, computer with Wi-Fi, graphic organizers, pencil, highlighter, paper, or journal, post-it notes; Informational Writing: Lesson Six Handout (Unplugged); Graphic organizer for struggling students

Engage

**Opening:** Yesterday, we practiced highlighting important information that might be useful to our writing by using one of the three graphic organizers that I shared with you. Please take those notes out now. Today I will show you two ways to organize your information so you can begin your writing.

[EBP: Teach students to identify and use the text’s organizational structure to comprehend, learn, and remember content [Moderate evidence] (Shanahan et al., 2010)]; [EBP: Teach students to use the writing process for a variety of purposes. [Strong evidence] (Graham et al., 2016)].

**Strategy 1:** Asks students to use questions to organize their work and then number their notes that have similar information that may be addressed in one paragraph. (Teachers may ask a student to present their work to practice; alternately, the teacher can share a prepared exemplar). Students will be asked to number their information based on for example, 1s = Where do most sharks live? 2s = Are there different types of sharks?, and 3s = Are sharks dangerous? Students should then rewrite their information under their topic question. The teacher may choose to demonstrate this using an Anchor Chart.
**Strategy 2:** Students will be given post-it notes to use to label their notes based on the type of information they have. If students are writing about a famous person for example, they may use post it notes to label sections of their work with for example: Childhood, Family Life, Later Life, Contributions to society, etc. The teacher may choose to demonstrate this using an Anchor Chart.

Encourage students to find ways to organize their information in a way that makes sense to them so they can write more efficiently, Stress the importance of how the more organized their information is, the more efficient their writing will be.

**Synchronous / Asynchronous**

Students will review their notes as the teacher shares strategies and/or follow along in Google Slides/PowerPoint. Students may create their own Google document to cut and paste related notes into if they prefer to do assignment digitally.

**Unplugged/Offline**

1. Have students complete Part I of the Informational Writing: Lesson Six Handout (Unplugged).
2. If possible, try to find a way to communicate with students about their thoughts and to provide feedback (even if it is via phone call or Google Voice).

Teacher will provide offline students with topic sentence organizer that they may use for organizing related notes. Students will use post-it notes in their packet to help with organization.
Explore

Synchronous / Asynchronous

Share the “Organizing our notes” slides in the Informative Writing PowerPoint.

Organizing Our Notes

Hello writers. Yesterday we learned that organizing our research before we begin writing our informational piece also makes it easier to organize our thoughts. Today you will learn how to organize your notes before you begin your informational writing.

STEP 1: Take your notes out from this week and look at your summaries and bullet points.

STEP 2: Decide on 3 important facts that you would like to include in your writing. Highlight these.

STEP 3: Use the organizer below to insert your 3 facts.

STEP 4: Give 2-3 reasons on the following slides and use your notes to support your facts. Be sure to tell what resource you got your information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example: What are moon grapes?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reason 1 Example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>According to Taste of Home, moon grapes are a tubular shaped grape with a dark-blue skin color.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason 2 Example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moon grapes are juicy and flavorful and like other grapes, naturally sweet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason 3 Example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moon grapes are just as healthy for you as regular grapes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students will explore/experiment with different ways to organize their text. Allow students approximately five minutes to share their organizational plan with a peer and to give/receive feedback.

[EBP: Create an engaged community of writers [Minimal evidence] (Graham et al., 2016)].

Unplugged/Offline

Students will work offline independently using organizer and post-it notes. Teacher should send explicit directions to students and parents for work completion. If possible, call parents or make yourself available for parent questions about the assignment.

Unplugged/Offline

1. Have students complete Part II of the Informational Writing: Lesson Six Handout (Unplugged).
2. If possible, try to find a way to communicate with students about their thoughts and to provide feedback (even if it is via phone call or Google Voice).
Apply

**Synchronous / Asynchronous**

Students will use their work session to organize their notes using one of the strategies introduced to them in the mini lesson. If work is completed online, students should share the document with the teacher to give feedback on notes and organization before beginning writing.

[EBP: Teach students to identify and use the text’s organizational structure to comprehend, learn, and remember content [Moderate evidence] (Shanahan et al., 2010)]; [EBP: Teach students to use the writing process for a variety of purposes. [Strong evidence] (Graham et al., 2016)]. Students will share work with the teacher, and the teacher will send feedback so that students will be ready to begin writing tomorrow.

**Unplugged/Offline**

1. Have students complete Part III of the *Informational Writing: Lesson Six Handout (Unplugged).*
2. If possible, try to find a way to communicate with students about their thoughts and to provide feedback (even if it is via phone call or Google Voice).

Reflect

**Synchronous**

**Ticket-out-the-Door:** How did organizing your work help you think more critically about how you will begin your writing? Was this helpful? Why or why not?

[EBP: Create an engaged community of writers [Minimal evidence] (Graham et al., 2016)].

**Asynchronous**

Ask on a Google slide or alternative as the **Ticket-out-the-Door:** How did organizing your work help you think more critically about how you will begin your writing? Was this helpful? Why or why not?

**Unplugged/Offline**

1. Have students complete Part IV of the *Informational Writing: Lesson Six Handout (Unplugged).*
2. If possible, try to find a way to communicate with students about their thoughts and to provide feedback (even if it is via phone call or Google Voice).
### Evidence of Student Success

**Formative Assessment “Small Make” Description:**
- Organizational Plans (reviewed by teacher in formative check)
- Ticket-out-the-Door

**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:

- The teacher will provide support in breakout rooms for students who need extra support.
- Students struggling with organization can use this graphic organizer to help organize their thoughts. The teacher will provide explicit instruction on using the graphic organizer before students use them independently.

Scaffolds for English Learners:

- Suggestions for this lesson include but are not limited to: supplying students with a word-to-word dictionary to categorize notes, strategically partnering students to complete assignments together, providing students with sentence stems to aid in writing, etc.
- Educators may find it valuable to review WIDA’s Proficiency Level Descriptors (pp. 136-138) 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:

- Once students’ organizational plan is done, have them trade with another student who would benefit from acceleration. Let them use post-its to give one another feedback (questions, ideas, and commendations).
- Students will be asked to turn in their writing for a check-in today. Teacher should look at organization and give feedback on organization and then return work to student with grows and glows.
Engaging Families

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

- Let students consider other ways organizational strategies can work in their lives. If you have the supplies, you could even give each student a number of post-its to help them organize their week ahead or something in their home life. If post-its are in short supply, perhaps students could be given a print-out of a calendar. Essentially, you can reinforce the connection that organization is a strategy to help in all different parts of life.

- Students can ask their families what tools they use to help them organize parts of their lives.

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