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.

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 an audience about a meaningful topic.

Lesson One Topic: What is Informational Writing?

Students will examine informational writing to see the purpose, audience, and strategies used in informational writing. Students will begin brainstorming topics and subtopics to begin their own informational writing piece.

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 Target

- I can brainstorm topics and subtopics by grouping information together.
Standard Alignment

Standard(s):

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; Sticky Notes

**PowerPoint for all lesson materials**

- “I see, I think, I wonder” Chart
- How is Informational Writing Different? Chart
- Informational Writing Ideas Chart

### Mentor Texts (Some choices are listed below to use throughout the unit):

- 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](https://www.getepic.com/app/read/8135)
- Volcanoes by Anne Schreiber: Epic! Link: [https://www.getepic.com/app/read/43485](https://www.getepic.com/app/read/43485)
- Human Footprint by Ellen Kirk: Epic! Link: [https://www.getepic.com/app/read/55331](https://www.getepic.com/app/read/55331)
- Adaptations by Monica Davies: Epic! Link: [https://www.getepic.com/app/read/42736](https://www.getepic.com/app/read/42736)
- Jane Goodall by William Price: Epic! Link: [https://www.getepic.com/app/read/13429](https://www.getepic.com/app/read/13429)
**Readworks Articles**

**Bug Power**  
Lexile: 530

**Important People**  
Lexile: 690

**A Little About Ants**  
Lexile: 800

**Disclaimer:** The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) does not endorse any of the books, resources, websites, programs, products, and other materials that may be featured as part of 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.

**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.
- Discuss: Writers write for different purposes. Sometimes writers write to inform others about a topic or issue. We call this type of writing informational writing. [EBP: Teach students how to use reading comprehension strategies [Strong evidence] (Shanahan et al., 2010)].
- Prompt students to give examples of books they have read that have informed them about an animal, place, person, or activity.

**Asynchronous**

- Record opening for students and have students respond on a Google Slide, Jamboard, or in their notebook to share with the teacher.

**Unplugged/Offline**

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

**Synchronous**

- Choose a **mentor text** from the list above to read aloud to the class.
- Use chart paper to create an **“I see, I think, I wonder” chart**. Pass out a sticky note to each student and prompt them to think about what they see, think, and wonder while listening to the mentor text. Students will write down one thing they see, think, or wonder and put it on the chart at the end of the read aloud.
- Use each student’s response to discuss how informational texts are different from other genres. For example, discuss how informational texts are about one topic, organized by grouping information together in chapters, or subtopics, and give facts and true information. You can use the [How is Informational Writing Different? Chart](#) for ideas. ![EBPs: Teach students to identify and use the text’s organizational structure to comprehend, learn, and remember content [Moderate evidence]; Select texts purposefully to support comprehension development. [Minimal evidence] (Shanahan et al., 2010)].
- Explain to students that they will be brainstorming topics and subtopics to write about. Encourage students to choose a topic they already know a lot about. For example, if you do not know much about surfing other than surfers use a surfboard, this would probably not be the best topic.
- Show the [Informational Writing Ideas Chart](#) to students to help them begin brainstorming topics and subtopics. Model for students how to think through creating a list of topics and subtopics. Then, have students share a topic and subtopics with a partner.

**Asynchronous**

- Have students read a mentor text and have them respond on a digital “I see, I think, I wonder” chart. Record a brief minilesson explaining the characteristics of informational writing and how to brainstorm topics and subtopics using the Informational Writing Ideas Chart.

**Unplugged/Offline**

- Have students work through part 2 of the [Lesson One [Unplugged] Handout](#).
- Provide printed out examples of informational texts from Readworks.org (sample texts are linked in materials).
Apply

Synchronous

- Students will work in their Writer’s Notebooks to brainstorm topics and subtopics for their informational writing piece. [EBP: Teach students to use the writing process for a variety of purposes. [Strong evidence] (Graham et al., 2016)].
- Encourage students to list multiple topics and subtopics.
- 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:
  - Encourage students to choose topics that they have knowledge of.
  - Use the Informational Writing Ideas Chart to guide students that are having difficulty brainstorming.

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.
  - Encourage students to choose topics that they have knowledge of.
  - Use the Informational Writing Ideas Chart to guide students that are having difficulty brainstorming.

Unplugged/Offline

- Have students work through part 3 of the Lesson One [Unplugged] Handout.

Reflect

Synchronous

- Have students share their brainstorming 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 topic and subtopics on a shared document with a partner.
Unplugged/Offline

- Have students work through part 4 of the Lesson One [Unplugged] Handout.
- Schedule a time to call and conference with each student to focus on skills focused on in the explore section of lesson.
- Encourage students to choose topics that they have knowledge of.
- Use the Informational Writing Ideas Chart to guide students that are having difficulty brainstorming.

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 (brainstorming topics and subtopics) 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:**

Create smaller versions of anchor charts for students to have and keep on their desk.

**Supports for English learners:**

- Suggestions for this lesson include but are not limited to: using multilingual mentor texts and/or realia when reading mentor texts with students, providing students with additional examples of informational writing characteristics (as writing structures may vary across languages), 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 push their thinking and think of different sets of subtopics for each topic. Begin having students think of ways to organize the information in their subtopics.

<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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Encourage students to go home and discuss with their family how informational writing is used in the world. What are some examples of informational writing that your family uses?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Engage families of English learners by encouraging reading of bilingual informational texts (sample online resources for free bilingual books: Unite for Literacy, Global Storybooks). Families can also encourage writing at home (Spanish version) with students.</td>
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</tbody>
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References


