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 a 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 One Topic: What is informative writing?

Lesson One Description: Students will be introduced to informative writing and will be given the opportunity to view and give feedback to sample 5th grade informative writings.

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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Targets</th>
<th>Lesson “Small Make(s)”</th>
<th>Unit “Big Make”</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can <strong>use</strong> background knowledge of informative writing to discuss what I already know.</td>
<td>Evaluation of two sample texts</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I can <strong>explore</strong> two informative writing samples and compare and contrast those two texts.</td>
<td>Reflection response</td>
<td>Rubric Options: <em>(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.)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can <strong>reflect</strong> on what I learned about informative writing.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Georgia Milestones 5th Grade Informative Writing Rubrics</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Sample 5th Grade Informative Writing Learning Target Rubric</strong> <em>(could be easily edited for personal preference)</em></td>
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</table>

**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.
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**—5th Grade writing sample link: [GaDOE Archived Writing Assessment Sample](#) (Teacher will choose two samples (one scored with a 2 and another scored with 4)); [Teacher Informational Writing Presentation](#).

**Students**—[GaDOE Archived Writing Assessment Sample](#); [Informational Writing: Lesson One Handout](#) (Unplugged)
**Engage**

**Opening:**

*Synchronous*

Today we will learn about informative writing by discussing what you already know about this type of writing. Dig into your background knowledge filing cabinet in your brain and tell me everything you know about this type of writing.

Ask: What do you think about when you hear the words informative writing? Have students drop their thoughts in the chat box and then begin discussion based on responses.

*[EBP: Teach students to identify and use the text’s organizational structure to comprehend, learn, and remember content [Moderate evidence] (Shanahan et al., 2010)].*

*Asynchronous*

As we begin our unit on informative writing, I’d like to know what you already know about informative writing. Dig into your background knowledge filing cabinet in your brain and tell me everything you know about this type of writing.

Create a Google document/Microsoft document (or other digital document that your school uses) with the heading: Last Name - What I know about informative writing. Please share the document with me after you have written about what you know about informative writing. This document will also serve as your note page for this unit.

**Unplugged/Offline**

1. Have students complete Part I of the *Informational Writing: Lesson One 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).
Explore

Synchronous
We will be taking a look at TWO sample informative writing texts written by some 5th graders. Follow along with your copy as I read aloud. Ask: What do you notice about the first sample? How is the first sample different from the second sample. (Present sample online)

GaDOE Archived Writing Assessment Sample (Teacher will choose two samples (one scored with a 2 and another scored with 4)).

[EBP: Teach students to identify and use the text’s organizational structure to comprehend, learn, and remember content [Moderate evidence] (Shanahan et al., 2010)].

Asynchronous
Post the following directions:
Please read the two sample student writings. What similarities or differences do you see between the two texts?

Post the link to the sample essays; direct students via instruction about which ones you want them to read. GaDOE Archived Writing Assessment Sample (Teacher will choose two samples (one scored with a 2 and another scored with 4)).

Unplugged/Offline
1. Have students complete Part II of the Informational Writing: Lesson One 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
As you look over both student samples, jot down notes about any noticings, differences, or similarities between the sample writings. Please write your responses in your writing journal. We will discuss your responses after you write.

[EBP: Teach students to identify and use the text’s organizational structure to comprehend, learn, and remember content [Moderate evidence] (Shanahan et al., 2010)].

Asynchronous
In your Google document that you created earlier please write down any noticings, differences, or similarities between the sample writings. We will discuss your responses after you write.

Unplugged/Offline

1. Have students complete Part III of the Informational Writing: Lesson One 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
Come back together to look at the slide that states, “What is informational writing?” in the Teacher Informational Writing Presentation. As a class, add phrases that they generate to support it. You may want to save a version of the PowerPoint for each class you teach (or just duplicate that slide to include a version for each class to give it voice moving forward).

What is one thing you learned about informative writing that you did not already know before today? Drop your full answer in the chat box.

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

Asynchronous
Post the following question: What is one thing you learned about informative writing that you did not already know before today? In your Google document, write down your response.
**Unplugged/Offline**

1. Have students complete Part IV of the [Informational Writing: Lesson One Handout (Unplugged)](https://example.com).
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).

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**Evidence of Student Success**

**Formative Assessment “Small Make” Description**

- Students’ examination of the two sample texts and their reflections will serve as a check for understanding.

**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)

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**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)].
o **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.

o **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.

o **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.

### Specific Lesson Scaffolds:

- Teachers can provide support in breakout rooms or via scheduled meeting times for those students who need additional support.
- If students are still somewhat confused as to the breadth of informational text, teachers can show students samples of authentic informational texts they may encounter in their lives: the back of a cereal box, a recipe, directions for a product. It can be anything on hand. For synchronous/in-person, you can let students pass around/examine the samples to gain that tactile connection as well. For asynchronous learners, you could post photos.

### Scaffolds for English Learners:

- Suggestions for this lesson include but are not limited to: providing students with a recording of sample texts to relisten to, providing graphic organizers (e.g. Venn Diagram) to note similarities and differences, teacher modeling of task, etc.
- Educators may find it valuable to review [WIDA's Proficiency Level Descriptors](https://www.wida.us/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](https://www.compass.exCELL.org/strategies) for teaching EL students and to utilize relevant evidence-based strategies such as those found in Project EXCELL’s downloadable [GO TO Strategies](https://www.compass.exCELL.org/strategies) (Levine et al., 2013).

### Acceleration/Extension:

**Standard (if different):**

ELAGSE5W5: With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.

**Acceleration/Extension Activities:**

- Students can take the sample text (scored a 2) that they reviewed and revise it (or tell how they would revise it) to make it a 4.
• Have students explore FDA.gov to design their own food label to display to the class as another type of text. **A Food Labeling Guide** (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2013). (Note: It’s quite extensive, so you may want to only share a few pages with students.)

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**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.

• Based on what they learned in class, have students engage in a scavenger hunt for informational text in their homes or communities (it may be the guide that comes with an appliance, the back of a shampoo bottle, food packaging instructions, bus schedule, etc.).

• Families can discuss topics of interest with their child and then discuss what they already know from their background knowledge.

• As an extension, parents can ask their child to research the topic at home and take notes in their writing journals. This topic may end up being the topic their child chooses to write about for their informative writing.

• Families of English learners can read informational texts in their home language together and note the similarities and differences between texts.

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**References**


