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.

Introduction:

Informational 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.

Topic: Informational Writing

Learning Targets:

- I can write an informative text to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- I can introduce a topic and group related information together.
- I can develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details.
- I can use linking words and phrases to connect ideas within categories of information.
- I can include a concluding statement or section.

Skills:

- Organizing ideas into topics and subtopics
- Researching facts and details
- Convey ideas and information clearly

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.
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 ELAGSE3W2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly with a special focus on elements:

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.

Additional standards are leveraged when students are required to read or write using specific skills and practices.
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.

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).
LONG-TERM PLAN:
TOPIC: Informational Writing
TIME: 10 lesson sequence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Unit Learning TARGETS</th>
<th>TASK Unit “Big Make”</th>
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<tr>
<td>• I can <strong>write</strong> an informative text to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.</td>
<td>Students will use the skills learned through the first seven lessons to write an informational piece. Students will choose a meaningful topic to write about to a desired audience. Students will research facts and details to inform their audience of their topic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• I can <strong>introduce</strong> a topic and <strong>group</strong> related information together.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• I can <strong>develop</strong> the topic with facts, definitions, and details.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• I can <strong>include</strong> a concluding statement or section.</td>
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POTENTIAL TEXTS:
- 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 Huitts
- *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)

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.

**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.
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).

**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.

**Lesson Sequence**

*Lesson 1: What is informational writing? Brainstorming topics and Subtopics*
*Lesson 2: Drafting an introduction: Begin drafting introduction and grouping related information together*
*Lesson 3: Develop the topic: Begin writing subtopics. Research facts, definitions, details*
*Lesson 4: Develop the topic: Begin writing subtopics. Research facts, definitions, details*
*Lesson 5: Develop the topic: Begin writing subtopics. Research facts, definitions, details*
*Lesson 6: How to connect ideas: Using transition words, phrases, and sentences*
*Lesson 7: How to conclude my writing: Provide a concluding statement or section.*
*Lesson 8: Culminating “Big Make” Task: Choose a meaningful topic to inform others*
*Lesson 9: Culminating “Big Make” Task: Choose a meaningful topic to inform others*
*Lesson 10: Culminating “Big Make” Task: Choose a meaningful topic to inform others*

**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:
Writer’s Notebook; Pencils

Teacher Materials:
Sticky Notes; Chart Paper; ReadWorks.org
PowerPoint for all lesson materials

Evidence of Student Success

Formative Assessment (“Little Makes”)
- Conferencing with students to check for application of skills taught in lessons.
**Summative/Post-assessment (“Big Make”)**

- Students will use the skills learned through the first seven lessons to write an informational piece. Students will choose a meaningful topic to write about to a desired audience. Students will research facts and details to inform their audience of their topic.

**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 (including that for English language learners) and acceleration/extension are provided for use for each lesson.
  - 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. At the secondary level, much of the communication occurs with the student serving as a liaison.

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)

References


classroom


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