

Unit 7: Nonfiction: Spotlight on Determining Importance (4 weeks)

Rationale

Why is this unit important and appropriate for this grade level and at this time of the year?

During this unit, students will apply nonfiction reading strategies with a particular emphasis on determining importance to research a topic of interest. In writing workshop, students will use the research gathered during reading workshop to compose Specialist Books.

Learning Outcomes

What do we expect students to know and be able to do at the end of the unit?

Students will:

- Select a topic to research
- Generate questions and collect information about a topic
- Accumulate information about a topic across texts
- Develop opinions about topics read and supply reasons for the opinion
- Share new learning with a partner

Minilessons/Notes/Tips

What minilessons will lead to student learning outcomes?

Possible Minilessons:

- Exploring the classroom library nonfiction baskets for possible research topics
- Selecting a topic of interest to read, research, talk and write about over an extended period of time
- Gathering resources (books, articles, online sources, artifacts) about a topic
- Activating background knowledge to identify what is already known about a topic
 - What do I *think* I already know about this topic?
- Generating questions about a topic
 - What do I want to learn about the topic?
 - What do I want to teach someone about the topic?
 - What is important to know about the topic?
- Building background knowledge about a topic by categorizing resources from easiest to challenging and selecting a simpler text to read first
- Reviewing nonfiction features and their purposes from Unit 5
- Using text features to determine which resources will be helpful in researching
- Using the class coding system (see Unit 5) for tracking thinking
- Paraphrasing new information learned about a topic both verbally and in the written form
- Understanding that there may be a difference between what the reader thinks is important and the author's big ideas (i.e., what's important vs. what are cool facts)
- Comparing and contrasting information about a topic across texts
 - What does the author want me to think about the topic?
 - Do the authors have the same or different perspective about this topic?
 - What is my opinion about the topic? And what are the reasons for my thinking?
- Organizing notes by sorting and categorizing
- Rereading notes to determine what additional research needs to take place
- Teaching partners about topics

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- Do partners have similar/different opinions about the topic?
- Celebrating the end of the unit. Possibilities may include but are not limited to the following:
 - Gather students in small groups. Have each student “teach” the group about the topic he/she studied. Students are encouraged to ask questions of one another. (Another way for individual students to share their learning is with a reading buddy.)
 - Have students create a poster of the topic studied. Posters should include illustrations as well as text. Features such as a diagram, photo/illustration with caption, fun fact pop up boxes might be included on the posters.
 - Have students complete a nonfiction study reflection. What did you learn about reading nonfiction that you did not know before? How can you apply what you have learned about reading nonfiction to all of your reading? Be as specific as possible. How can you apply what you have learned about reading nonfiction to the nonfiction you write? Be as specific as possible.
 - Have students write an opinion piece about the topic and include reasons (evidence) for their opinion. Students reading about similar topics can read one another’s piece.

Notes/Tips:

- Each day students will spend time independently reading nonfiction just right books for a **minimum** of 30 min. and talking about nonfiction books with a partner for 5-10 min. Then students will independently read fiction just right books for 15-20 min.
- Students will have a collection of nonfiction texts about a single topic as well as several just right fiction texts in their book baggies.
- The majority of nonfiction texts should be just right texts.
- Choose a topic for a whole class study. Model reading and researching the topic during read aloud, shared reading and reading workshop minilessons. Choose a topic for a class study. Gather many resources (books, articles, artifacts, online resources) about the topic. Model how to read, research, note-take and talk about the topic during daily read aloud, shared reading and minilessons as a model for what the students will be expected to do independently.
- Model for students how author’s perspective may effect the way a topic is presented (books on spiders and sharks are often great to show how different authors have different opinions about these subjects).
- Create baskets of books/test sets based on interests of students and to support their book shopping.
- Have students each choose a topic to study and begin to create texts sets for each student. Students can be part of this work by bringing in books from home, library, etc. Text sets can include articles as well as well. In addition to nonfiction texts from the classroom library other resources include nonfiction articles. Recommended resources for gathering articles includes: *The Primary Comprehension Toolkit Keep Reading! A Source Book of Short Texts* by Stephanie Harvey and Ann Goudvis, *Toolkit Texts for Grades Pre-K-1: Short Nonfiction for Guided and Independent Practice* by Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis. Recommended nonfiction resources include books as well as articles. To access Time for Kids articles archived on the district website login to eChalk, select Grade 2 ELA Resources, choose related folders in Resources. There are also a host of high quality online databases (e.g.. World Book Online, Searchasaurus, Pebble Go) available to all teachers. To access online databases login to eChalk, select My Account, click on Applications. Other suggested resources for gathering articles include the following: Scholastic News, National Geographic Explorers, BOCES booklists.
- Stephanie Harvey talks about expanding the concept of text sets to source sets when students are studying nonfiction. Source sets include but are not limited to the following: books, articles, figures/models (if appropriate), primary documents (if appropriate), visual images (e.g., painting, ad, video clips).
- Support the vocabulary development of students by having them keep track of specialist words related to their topic.
- Think about how students will collect, record and categorize their notes and create templates accordingly. Model using these templates as part of the whole class study.
- Consider using video cameras to record students sharing what they’ve learned.
- **To view Grade 2 archived artifacts for the unit please visit the Grade 2 reading/writing page. Select “Resources” from the top nav bar. To access the units of study website use the link http://ww3.mamkschools.org/units_of_study/.**
- Chart Chums is a great online resource for creating interactive, clear and visually rich anchor charts. To view use the link <http://chartchums.wordpress.com/>.
- Additional resources of sample anchor charts for reading and writing units of study include the following: <http://readingandwritingproject.com/resources/classroom-charts/second-grade.html>.

Professional Resources

What professional resources will be helpful in planning the unit?

- *The Common Core Lesson Book K-5* by Gretchen Owocki
- *The RTI Daily Planning Book* by Gretchen Owocki
- *Teachers College Reading and Writing Project 2nd Grade Reading Curriculum Calendar 2010-2011*
- *The Complete Year In Reading and Writing Grade 2* by Karen McNally and Pam Allyn (Chapter 4, pp. 107-122)
- *The Primary Comprehension Toolkit* by Stephanie Harvey & Anne Goudvis (Strategy Guide 5 Determine Importance)
- *The Primary Comprehension Toolkit Keep Reading! A Source Book of Short Texts* by Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis
- *Toolkit Texts for Grades 2-3: Nonfiction for Guided and Independent Practice* by Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis
- *Reading with Meaning* by Debbie Miller (Chapter 10)
- *Strategies That Work* by Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis (Chapter 10)
- *Making it Real: Strategies For Success with Information Texts* by Linda Hoyt
- *The Next Step in Guided Reading: Focused Assessments and Targeted Lessons for Helping Every Student Become a Better Reader* by Jan Richardson