

2014-2015 Grade K Writing Units of Study

Unit 1: Launching the Writing Workshop (4 weeks)

Rationale

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

Establishing routines and habits for writing workshop allows students to become more independent. Focusing students on telling stories about their lives through pictures helps to build the classroom community and learning about classmates.

Learning Outcomes

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

Students will:

- Learn routines of writing workshop
- Generate ideas for stories
- Represent stories through pictures and/or words

Minilessons/Notes/Tips

What minilessons will lead to student learning outcomes?

Possible Minilessons:

- Introducing tools and materials (e.g., writing folders, crayons, markers, pencils)
- Finding/storing/taking care of materials
- Learning workshop routines (e.g., minilesson, independent writing, share)
- Building writing identities - what do writers write? (e.g., pictures, words, letters, books, lists, cards, stories, messages, signs)
- Generating ideas – what can writers write about? (e.g., family, friends, school, pets, hobbies, vacations)
- Labeling writing with name
- Labeling writing with date
- Drawing pictures to tell a story
- Choosing different types of writing paper
- Adding labels/initial letter to objects in pictures
- Deciding on the important things to show (i.e., big ideas)
- Saying more by adding details (e.g., more pictures, more color, a background, more words)
- Rereading, retelling stories written
- Editing for punctuation, capitalization, grammar (See Common Core Language Standards for grade level expectations)

Notes/Tips:

- Refer to the District Conventions Continuum to determine appropriate convention objectives (punctuation, capitalization, syntax) to teach during the unit. Copies are available in the grade level literacy binders and on the district website http://ww3.mamkschools.org/ela/Units_of_Study.html.
- Assess writing for fine motor development (pencil grip, control, letter formation) and knowledge of letter/sound correspondence; pool data with district assessments to plan for whole group, small group and one-on-one instruction).

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- Have different types of paper available so students have paper choice for independent writing. Writing paper for writing workshop should include lines for name, date and story (i.e., writing lines). Writing workshop paper should look different than Choice Time drawing paper. (Some teachers prefer students to use a date stamp. All work should be dated to support ongoing assessment and progress.)
- Interactive writing and shared writing are essential daily balanced literacy components that allow teachers to demonstrate strategies repeatedly for planning, illustrating, and writing stories. Many teachers use interactive writing to teach strategies such as spacing between words, strategies for spelling words, ending punctuation, etc. Many teachers use shared writing to model the genre of writing being studied. Through shared writing the class can compose “mentor” stories that reflect the unit of study. (Teachers use chart paper for shared writing.) These mentor texts are referred to during writing workshop minilessons to model the day’s teaching point. Shared writing texts developed by the class are excellent because all students can be involved in the composing (students share ideas orally and teacher scribes) and also because they reflect the type of writing students will be expected to do. It is highly recommended that teachers use class shared writing texts in addition to published mentor texts to teach a unit of study.
- Create a print rich room – label classroom objects (e.g., door, table, window) during daily interactive writing.
- Create a display of all different types of writing found in the world. Students can be asked to bring in different types of writing for homework.
- Make charts such as “What do Writers Write?”, “Reasons For Writing” and refer to the charts throughout the unit as well as save for future units. (Charts should always include visuals along with print.) Read and reread anchor charts for shared reading to support students independent use of the charts.
- Collect baskets of label books and alphabet charts for students to use as needed during independent writing. (Explicit instruction on how to use alphabet charts is essential for students to use them independently.)
- Create student writing portfolios and select one (or more) piece of student writing a month to add to the portfolio as a way to document student progress.
- Students write daily so teachers may decide to clean out student writing folders at the end of each unit for management and organizational reasons.
- **To view Grade K archived artifacts for the unit please visit the Grade K 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/kindergarten>,
- To view samples of student writing across genres and grade levels use the link <http://tc.readingandwritingproject.com/resources/student-writing>.

Professional Resources

What professional resources will be helpful in planning the unit?

- *The Common Core Writing Book* by Gretchen Owocki
- *Units of Study in Opinion, Information, and Narrative Writing, Grade K* by Lucy Calkins et al
- *About the Authors: Writing Workshop with our Youngest Writers* by Katie Wood Ray (Chapter 2, pp. 23–37)
- *Teachers College Reading and Writing Project Kindergarten Writing Curriculum Calendar 2010–2011*
- *In Pictures and In Words* by Katie Wood Ray
- *Talking, Drawing, Writing: Lesson for Our Youngest Writers* by Martha Horn and Mary Ellen Giacobbe
- *Units of Study for Primary Writing: A Yearlong Curriculum* (Guide 1 Launching the Writing Workshop by Lucy Calkins and Leah Mermelstein)
- *Mentor Texts: Teaching Writing Through Children’s Literature, K-6* by Lynne R. Dorfman and Rose Cappelli
- *Interactive Writing: How Language and Literacy Come Together, K-2* by Andrea McCarrier, Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell
- http://ww3.mamkschools.org/ela/Units_of_Study.html (See the District Conventions Continuum)