THE UNIVERSITY OF
KU KANSAS
Achievement & Assessment Institute

WRITING AN INFORMATIONAL BOOKLET

3.W.2.B.b Write informative/ explanatory texts that develop the topic with simple facts, definitions, details, and explanations.

CONTENTS

WRITING AN INFORMATIONAL BOOKLET

TEACHER NOTES

UNIT OVERVIEW

This writing unit is divided into three subunits. Each subunit includes a scaffolded lesson sequence that addresses the steps of the writing process, including planning, researching, and drafting. In total, the writing unit includes seven mini lessons to address components of the 3.W.2.B standards, allowing time for students to plan, draft, write, revise, and edit. Writing instruction is demanding for both teachers and students. Adjust the pacing and content of the lessons to accommodate any unique concerns, class schedules, and student ability levels.

The unit is centered on a provided model text to make implementation easier. However, the lessons are designed so that you may substitute a different model text and so that you may allow the context of your classroom to guide students' writing topics. This flexibility is based on the research that indicates writing for authentic purposes may improve students' writing outcomes (Duke, Purcell-Gates, Hall, & Tower, 2006; Graham, McKeown, Kiuhara, & Harris, 2012). Duke et al. (2006) defines authenticity as:

> authentic literacy activities in the classroom . . . that replicate or reflect reading and writing activities that occur in the lives of people outside of a learning-to-read-and-write context and purpose. Each authentic literacy activity has a writer and a reader—a writer who is writing to a real reader and a reader who is reading what the writer wrote. (p. 346)

There are an infinite number of ways to make writing activities in your classroom more authentic, and we invite you to do so.

PART 1 (3.W.2.B.a and 3.W.2.B.b)

Lesson 1: In this lesson, you guide students in deconstructing a model text to use as an example for creating their own texts in the rest of the unit. The model text helps students set goals for their own writing and provides them with an understanding of exactly how their end product should look. At the end of the lesson, you introduce a procedure for organizing students' materials and handouts for the rest of the unit.

Lesson 2: In this lesson, students color-code the topic, facts, and details in the chosen model text. Then, they record the topic, facts, and details into the lesson's handout.

Lesson 3: In this lesson, students use provided resources, such as curated websites or books, to find facts and details about their chosen topic. You model how to document facts and details from the resources on the handout.

PART 2 (3.W.2.B.e)

Lesson 4: In this lesson, students identify linking words in a mentor text, and you create an anchor chart of linking words for students to reference as they write. Students use the facts and details from the previous lesson's activity and a structured handout to write a body paragraph for their informational booklet.

Lesson 5: In this lesson, students learn how to write a lead sentence and an introduction. You model exciting and dull leads, pointing out characteristics that define exciting leads, and students practice writing leads in the lesson's handout. Then they deconstruct the introduction paragraph from the model text to use as an example and draft their own introduction paragraphs.

PART 3 (3.W.2.B.f)

Lesson 6: In this lesson, students write a conclusion for their informational booklet. First, students circle the parts of the concluding paragraph from the model text to use as an example. Then, they draft their own concluding paragraphs.

Lesson 7: In this lesson, students complete their informational booklet. You review how the informational booklet should look and then help students organize the handouts from the unit to use as they complete their informational booklets.

Research Findings	Lesson Strategies, Approaches, or Activities
Students benefit from setting writing goals, being taught the structure of informational text, and understanding what the end product should look like. (Graham, McKeown, Kiuhara, & Harris, 2012)	At each stage of the writing process, students deconstruct or analyze a model text. These exercises help students understand the parts of an informational text and how their own should be structured.
Mentor texts provide something for writers to imitate. Mentor texts are especially helpful to inexperienced and young writers, helping them visualize how good writers organize their thoughts and ideas. (Gallagher, 2014)	Students use a mentor text throughout the unit to aid in their understanding of the structure of an informational text.
Students benefit from the understanding that writing is a process rather than a product. (Graham, Harris, & Santangelo, 2015)	The lessons emphasize a process approach to writing and are designed to scaffold students through planning and drafting their texts. Students understand the end goal and have time to plan, research, and write.

Students benefit from being explicitly taught about writing strategies and how to use them. (Graham, McKeown, Kiuhara, & Harris, 2012)	The lessons break down the process of writing into manageable chunks, allowing students access to the process of writing. Separating big writing assignment into smaller manageable chunks is an important writing strategy for students to learn.
Teachers tend to underestimate young students' ability to comprehend and write informational text and instead focus on personal narrative writing. Teachers should provide opportunities for students to write and become familiar with informational text. (Read, 2005)	These lessons are an opportunity for students to spend time examining and writing informational text.

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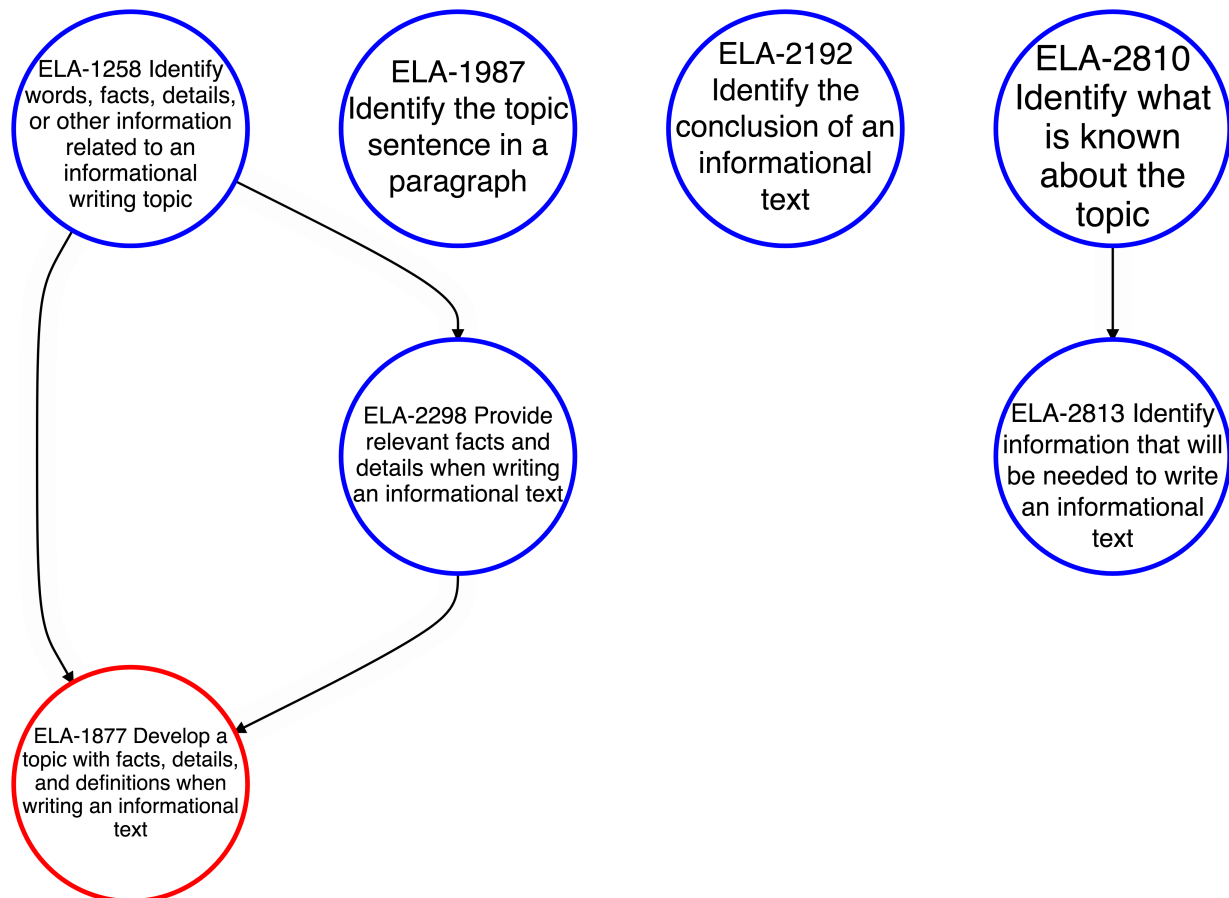
STANDARD

3.W.2.B.b Write informative/ explanatory texts that develop the topic with simple facts, definitions, details, and explanations.

ELA-1258 Identify words, facts, details, or other information related to an informational writing topic

ELA-1987 Identify the topic sentence in a paragraph

ELA-2192 Identify the conclusion of an informational text

ELA-2810 Identify what is known about the topic

ELA-2298 Provide relevant facts and details when writing an informational text

ELA-2813 Identify information that will be needed to write an informational text

ELA-1877 Develop a topic with facts, details, and definitions when writing an informational text

Learning map model for 3.W.2.B.b

Node ID	Node Name	Node Description
ELA-1258	IDENTIFY WORDS, FACTS, DETAILS, OR OTHER INFORMATION RELATED TO AN INFORMATIONAL WRITING TOPIC	Identify the words, facts, details, or other information that relates to a specific topic when preparing to write an informational text.
ELA-1877	DEVELOP A TOPIC WITH FACTS, DETAILS, AND DEFINITIONS WHEN WRITING AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT	Develop a topic by including relevant facts and definitions when writing an informational text.
ELA-1987	IDENTIFY THE TOPIC SENTENCE IN A PARAGRAPH	Identify the topic sentence in a paragraph when it is not explicitly stated.
ELA-2192	IDENTIFY THE CONCLUSION OF AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT	Identify the conclusion of an informational text based on its characteristics.
ELA-2298	PROVIDE RELEVANT FACTS AND DETAILS WHEN WRITING AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT	Include facts and details related to the topic when writing an informational text.
ELA-2810	IDENTIFY WHAT IS KNOWN ABOUT THE TOPIC	Identify personal knowledge about a topic to use for writing an informational text.
ELA-2813	IDENTIFY INFORMATION THAT WILL BE NEEDED TO WRITE AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT	Identify the information that will be needed to write a text about an informational topic.

LEARNING GOAL

In this lesson, students learn how to organize an informational text into a model booklet for writing their own informational text.

STANDARD

3.W.2.B.b Write informative/ explanatory texts that develop the topic with simple facts, definitions, details, and explanations.

PREPARATION

This instructional activity is critical because it provides students with an opportunity to plan and think about how their final writing product will look.

Before the lesson, select a short informational text with a clear text structure, including headings, topic sentences, and facts and details. This unit includes a passage, SOME POINTS ABOUT PENCILS, which you are free to copy. Follow all copyright restrictions and guidelines as they pertain to material you select for classroom use from any other source.

Prepare a MY INFORMATIONAL BOOKLET MODEL for students to reference as they create their own model. Also, prepare an organizing system for students to keep all writing materials and handouts in the unit.

MATERIALS & HANDOUTS

- ▶ stapler
- ▶ scissors
- ▶ glue
- ▶ STUDENT HANDOUT: MY INFORMATIONAL BOOKLET MODEL
- ▶ PASSAGE: SOME POINTS ABOUT PENCILS or other model informational text

IMPLEMENTATION

As a class, turn the learning goal into an I Can statement, "I can organize an informational text into a model for writing my own informational booklet."

Provide students with copies of the chosen model text (e.g., SOME POINTS ABOUT PENCILS) and unstapled copies of the STUDENT HANDOUT: MY INFORMATIONAL BOOKLET MODEL.

Read the informational text and **discuss** with students how they will write an informational text like this one and design it as a booklet.

First, **ask** students to staple the pages of the MY INFORMATIONAL BOOKLET MODEL in the correct order: Title Page, Introduction, Body Paragraph, and Conclusion.

Using your prepared booklet model, **discuss** which parts of the text go into which sections of the model. Then, **ask** students to cut apart the sections of the model text, and guide students toward pasting them into the appropriate sections in the handout.

As a class, **discuss** why the parts of the instructional text go into the corresponding sections. **Remind** students again that they will use this booklet as a model for booklets they will write on their own topics.

To close the lesson, **introduce** students to the organization system you prepared for the unit.

For a discussion of the research that supports this instructional model, see the TEACHER NOTES for this lesson set.

Some Points About Pencils

by Harmony Hanson

Introduction

Yellow pencils with pink erasers are all around in American classrooms. These ordinary pencils may be a simple school supply, but they have an interesting history. People have used pencils for hundreds of years. Pencils did not always look the way they do now, though. Today's common pencils have some unexpected facts in their past.

Pencil History

Early pencils were different from the pencils we use today. The wooden pencil was first described in 1565, and it was not yellow. Painting pencils yellow began over 300 years later, in 1889. Also, the first pencils came without erasers. Before erasers were invented, people removed pencil marks with squished-up old bread! Later, yellow pencils with connected erasers became the standard writing tool.

Conclusion

Today, yellow pencils topped by pink erasers appear in schools, desks, and fingers. But pencils did not begin this way. At first, pencils were not yellow. Also, early pencils did not have erasers. These handy tools have changed as people have used them to write and draw—and erase!

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Nadworny, Elissa, Cole, Adam, & Kellman, Ryan. "Trace the remarkable history of the humble pencil." *NPR*. NPR, 11 Oct. 2016. Web. 24 Oct. 2016.

My Informational Booklet Model By

Paste author's name.

Introduction

Paste text title.

Paste heading.

Paste paragraph.

Find or draw an illustration to go with the introduction.

Body Paragraph

Paste heading.

Paste paragraph.

Find or draw an illustration to go with the body paragraph.

Conclusion

Paste heading.

Paste paragraph.

Find or draw an illustration to go with the conclusion.

LEARNING GOAL

In this lesson, students identify facts and details in a model informational text.

STANDARD

3.W.2.B.b Write informative/ explanatory texts that develop the topic with simple facts, definitions, details, and explanations.

MATERIALS & HANDOUTS

- ▶ colored pencils or highlighters
- ▶ completed STUDENT HANDOUT: MY INFORMATIONAL BOOKLET MODEL from Lesson 1
- ▶ PASSAGE: SOME POINTS ABOUT PENCILS or other model informational text
- ▶ STUDENT HANDOUT: MODEL BODY PARAGRAPH

Follow all copyright restrictions and guidelines as they pertain to material you select for classroom use.

IMPLEMENTATION

As a class, turn the learning goal into an I Can statement, "I can identify facts and details in a model body paragraph."

Referring students to the body paragraph in the STUDENT HANDOUT: MY INFORMATIONAL BOOKLET MODEL, **discuss** how writers use body paragraphs to inform readers about the informational topic. Explain that a body paragraph has a topic and provides facts and details. Facts are true pieces of information about the topic. Details make the facts clear or add more information to the fact.

Group students and **pass out** different colored pencils or highlighters. **Instruct** students to work together to color-code the pieces of the model body paragraph: topic sentence, facts, details, and concluding sentence. Each student should color-code their own model. As students work, **circulate** and collect evidence about student thinking.

CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING

Determine if the student can IDENTIFY THE TOPIC SENTENCE IN A PARAGRAPH (ELA-1987):	Determine if the student can IDENTIFY WORDS, FACTS, DETAILS, OR OTHER INFORMATION RELATED TO AN INFORMATIONAL WRITING TOPIC (ELA-1258):	Determine if the student can IDENTIFY THE CONCLUSION OF AN INFORMATIONAL TEXT (ELA-2192):
▶ What color did you code the topic sentence? ▶ How does the topic sentence relate to the topic of the informational text? ▶ What is the purpose of a topic sentence in a paragraph?	▶ Why did you color-code this word [or sentence] in [green, blue, etc.]? ▶ What makes the word [or sentence] you coded in [blue] different from the word you coded in [green]? ▶ Why did you decide to color-code this word in [blue] instead of [green]?	▶ What color did you code the concluding sentence? ▶ How does the concluding sentence relate to the rest of the paragraph? ▶ What is the purpose of a concluding sentence in a paragraph?

Next, **model** how to complete the STUDENT HANDOUT: MODEL BODY PARAGRAPH with the color-coded items, using your preferred method of presentation (overhead, chart paper, whiteboard, etc.). **Ask** students to complete the chart on their own.

To close the lesson, **instruct** students to save the lesson's notes and materials and turn in their completed handout.

For a discussion of the research that supports this instructional model, see the TEACHER NOTES for this lesson set.

Topic	
Topic Sentence	
Fact #1	
Detail	
Fact #2	
Detail	
Concluding Sentence	

LEARNING GOAL

In this lesson, students gather facts and details for their own booklet topics.

STANDARD

3.W.2.B.b Write informative/ explanatory texts that develop the topic with simple facts, definitions, details, and explanations.

PREPARATION

Before this lesson, give students time to select appropriate writing topics. This lesson set does not provide a writing topic because the topic you choose depends on the timing of the unit and the class needs. Some possibilities include an expert topic (something the students already know about), a shared experience such as a field trip, or a common class topic like the history of pizza or Egypt.

Provide or have students choose resources from which they can gather the facts and details needed to write their booklets. Resources may be books, periodicals, websites, or student's own knowledge, depending on the topic. Follow all copyright restrictions and guidelines as they pertain to material you select for classroom use.

MATERIALS & HANDOUTS

- ▸ sources for student research
- ▸ sticky notes
- ▸ STUDENT HANDOUT: MY FACTS AND DETAILS

IMPLEMENTATION

As a class, turn the learning goal into an I Can statement: "I can gather facts and details for my own informational booklet topic."

Review *topic*, *facts*, and *details* and remind students that they will gather facts and details about their own topic so they can write a body paragraph like the one in the model booklet.

Hand out the sticky notes. **Direct** students to write one question about their topic on a sticky note and place their question in a display that all students can see from their desks.

Next, **group** like questions together, thinking-aloud about why certain questions go together. As a class, choose three questions to guide the discovery of facts and details. Make sure that the questions are broad enough to use with any topic students choose. **Write** the questions on the board and ask students to copy them down to reference as they research.

Using the provided resources, **model** how to use the questions to find an important or interesting fact or detail and how to write it in the STUDENT HANDOUT: MY FACTS AND DETAILS.

Instruct students to complete the handout as they find important and interesting facts about their own topics. Provide as much class time as necessary for students to complete the handout.

As students research, **circulate** and check for understanding.

CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING
Determine if the student can IDENTIFY WORDS, FACTS, DETAILS, OR OTHER INFORMATION RELATED TO AN INFORMATIONAL WRITING TOPIC (ELA-1258):

▶ How is this fact [or detail] related to your topic?	▶ How does this fact [or detail] answer the question?	▶ Why is this fact [or detail] important to know?

To close the lesson, **direct** students to save the lesson's notes and materials for the next lesson.

For a discussion of the research that supports this instructional model, see the TEACHER NOTES for this lesson set.

My Topic

_____

Directions: Using your questions as guides, gather facts and details about your topic. Write a fact in the top box and a detail about the fact in the bottom trapezoid.

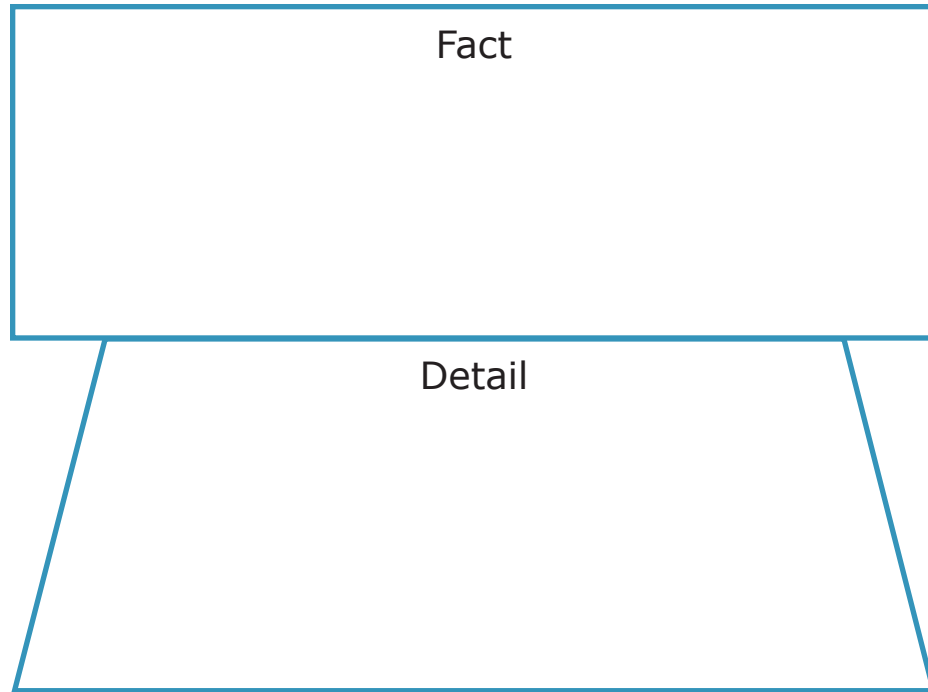Question: Question:

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