

Grade 5 Writing Unit of Study

Unit of Study: Science Fiction



Genre

Craft (Choice of Genre)

Process (Choice of Genre)

of Weeks (Mini-Lessons): 4 (20)

Primary Goals:

1. Students will write a short science fiction text including a connection to science or the future.

Secondary Goals:

1. Writing habits- Students will practice using the full period for writing-related tasks (staying on task).
2. Revision- Students will practice revising and checking that individual sentences and phrases “sound right”.
3. Writing quality- Students will write descriptively to help the reader understand characters, conflict, setting.
4. Editing/Conventions- Students will apply their knowledge of punctuation and capitals accurately.

Grade 5 Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.2.D

Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.3.B

Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, description, and pacing, to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.3.D

Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.3.E

Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

Anticipated Issues

1. Some students may not enjoy writing fiction texts and have little to no interest in science or technology.
2. Some students struggle to find and use academic vocabulary to enhance their writing.

Projection of Possible Mini-Lesson Topics

1. Setting the stage: What might our present/future look like if....?
(Possible provocation: [What If? By Jackie French Koller](#))

Taking stock of everyday activities and predicting what they would look like in the future. Short paragraph, freewrite.

- a. Brainstorm task ideas- brushing teeth, doing groceries etc.
 - b. Brainstorm technology/science terms
2. Introduce genre and identify elements of sci-fi
(Possible clips: [Sci-Fi Short Film "Two Worlds" | DUST](#), [Phone Is My Hand!, Wall-e](#))
3. Immersion - dive into mentor texts (focus on plot and conflict with [thinking routine](#))
4. Immersion - dive into mentor texts (focus on character and setting with [thinking routine](#))
5. Immersion - class read aloud (sci-fi short story) - The Long Night (focus on elements of fiction [plot, conflict, character, setting])
6. Mini-lesson: themes in sci-fi (good vs evil, redemption, courage, perseverance, coming of age, revenge, power)
 - a. Find themes and evidence of the theme in mentor texts
7. Brainstorm ideas for sci fi short stories
 - a. Review-where do writers get their ideas from?
8. Planning fiction writing- creating an outline (including: plot, conflict, characters, setting, theme)
9. Writing workshop- Flashdraft of possible beginnings
 - a. Beginnings could start with: action, description, dialogue, questions
10. Mini-lesson: academic language - science and technology-based vocabulary
 - a. What language do scientists use?
 - b. Researching possible terminology
11. Let's write!
12. Peer conference- focus on character development
 - a. show why characters did what they did by including their thinking and their responses to what happened
13. Let's write!
14. Peer conference- focus on plot and conflict
15. Let's write!
16. Mini-lesson: descriptive writing - include precise details (review show not tell) and using figurative language
17. Mini-lesson: descriptive writing- how to vary sentences to create the pace and tone
18. Revision and editing
19. Revision and editing in final draft
20. Celebration - reading stories to an audience, celebrating strengths and learning, giving and receiving feedback

Resources/Materials/Books

- Project X books
- [There's a Hole in my Galaxy](#)
- Diary entry format: <https://www.scaryforkids.com/science-project/>
- What If Poem http://www.jackiefrenchkoller.com/files/WHAT_IF.pdf
- [Life in 1990 - Issac Asimov](#) snippets

- The Long Night (Chickadee Magazine)
- Space Hoppers - Victory For Venus by Tommy Donbavand
- Space Hoppers - Panic on Pluto by Tommy Donbavand
- Doctor Who - Borrowed Time by Naomi A. Alderman
- The Time Machine by H.G. Wells
- Science fiction Poems for the Classroom
- <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/articles/147279/agents-of-imagination>
- Teacher written sci-fi
- Student written sci-fi from previous years

Assessment Rubric:

Lead	I wrote a beginning in which I not only showed what was happening and where, but also gave some clues to what would later become a problem for the main character.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transitions	I used transitional phrases to show passage of time in complicated ways, perhaps by showing things happening at the same time (<i>meanwhile, at the same time</i>) or flashback and flash-forward (<i>early that morning, three hours later</i>).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ending	I wrote an ending that connected to the main part of the story. The character said, did, or realized something at the end that came from what happened in the story.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	I gave readers a sense of closure.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organization	I used paragraphs to separate different parts or time of the story and to show when a new character was speaking. Some parts of the story were longer and more developed than others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Development			
Elaboration	I developed characters, setting, and plot throughout my story, especially the heart of the story. To do this, I used a blend of description, action, dialogue, and thinking.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Craft	I showed <i>why</i> characters did what they did by including their thinking and their responses to what happened.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	I slowed down the heart of the story. I made less important parts shorter and less detailed and blended storytelling and summary as needed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	I included precise details and used figurative language so that readers could picture the setting, characters, and events. I used some objects or actions as symbols to bring forth my meaning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	I varied my sentences to create the pace and tone of my narrative.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Helpful Anchor Charts

ELEMENTS OF SCIENCE FICTION				SCIENCE FICTION VERSUS FANTASY	
SETTING FUTURE SET IN A WORLD THAT IS AHEAD OF PRESENT TIME	PLOT Includes conflict of humanity vs. nature	CHARACTERS androids, robots and artificial intelligence	THEME Gender roles may be irrelevant, or certain characters may transcend gender entirely.	Science Fiction is a genre based on imagined future scientific or technological advances	Fantasy is a genre that uses supernatural elements as a main plot element, theme, or setting.
Past Can go back to years past Utopia An ideal or perfect society	HUMANS IN CONFLICT WITH TECHNOLOGY May involve time travel	ALIENS & MONSTERS	Social issues: Work may eliminate social issues such as racism, misogyny, and political problems.	Science Fiction has its base in science.	Fantasy is not based on science or reality.
dystopia A ruined society		Humans with supernatural abilities (telekinesis, etc).	CAUTIONARY TALE: some sci-fi serves as a warning about current human behavior.	Science Fiction describes improbable possibilities.	Fantasy describes plausible impossibilities.
Space	Postapocalyptic Imagine after the end of the world	SCIENTISTS & DOCTORS	ACCEPTANCE OF OTHERS	Science Fiction deals with scientific concepts.	Fantasy deals with imaginary concepts.
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