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# **ELEMENTARY WRITING INITIATIVE**

**REPORT**

**JULY 2008**

**LORETTA RADULIC  
SUPERVISOR OF LANGUAGE ARTS**

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## *Overview*

*Trophies* is an all encompassing literacy program that was fully implemented in the elementary schools by 2004. The fifth grade graduating class of 2006 experienced the complete program. While student standardized scores have shown improvement, teachers have voiced a few concerns, primarily with the writing component. Another area of concern, outside of the program, is the lack of communication among buildings.

To address these concerns and continue to grow as a district, teachers from every grade level and every elementary school came together to review the weaknesses of our current language arts writing program, explore four other writing programs: *Lucy Calkins*, *Collins*, *Power Writing*, and *Four Blocks*, and determine the district's philosophy on writing. As an aside, this was also their first exposure to the district's newly adopted curriculum writing style.

## **Committee Members**

Loretta Radulic, Supervisor

### **Center Grove**

Beata Darbig, Grade 5  
Donna Marucci, Grade 5  
Christina Theodoropoulos, Grade 4  
Lisa Barrett, Grade 4  
Michael Contuzzi, Grade 3  
Beth Laureano, Grade 2  
Danielle Miller, Grade 2  
Alissa Hicok, Spec. Ed.

### **Fernbrook**

Debbie Grefe, Principal  
Ruth Herr, Literacy Coach  
Brienne Finnerty, Grade 5  
Cynthia Scott, Grade 3  
Jenise Janulis, Grade 2  
Lynn Carmen, Grade 2  
Marisa Varum, Grade 1  
Arlene Tarnowski, BSI

### **Ironia**

Roberta Greenhill, Grade 4  
Janice Sgalia-Friedland, Grade 2  
Catherine Murphy, Grade 2

### **Shongum**

Laurie Pandorf, Grade 5  
Christine Giousios, Grade 3  
Lili Krajewski, Grade 2 (3, 4, K)  
Jessica Boyce, Grade 2  
Sarah Jane Murray, Grade 2



## **Daily Objectives and Procedures**

In preparation for our four day meeting, teachers reviewed the writing programs on the following sites: [www.thewritingsite.org](http://www.thewritingsite.org) and <http://unitsofstudy.com>.

New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards, updates on the NJASK, and other supplemental materials, such as Learning Targets, Teaching Strategies, Process Writing, and Traits of Quality Writing, were distributed at the meetings and used to generate ideas.

Each of the four days, June 26<sup>th</sup> to July 1<sup>st</sup>, was structured to meet daily objectives that would bring us to our **overarching goals**:

- To formulate a philosophy that addresses the goals and objectives of teaching and assessing writing.
- To create an overview of elementary students' writing development as aligned with state standards and Randolph expectations.
- To select and implement a supplemental resource to enhance the instruction of writing at the elementary level.

**Daily Objectives** included:

June 26<sup>th</sup>

- To review the current writing program in Trophies and determine areas of strength and areas in need of enhancement through Situation Appraisal.
- To formulate a writing philosophy that addresses the goals and objectives of teaching, assessing, and establishing exit standards.
- To align writing development with New Jersey state standards for writing.

June 27<sup>th</sup>

- To edit and revise draft of writing philosophy.
- To create district writing goals.
- To align writing development with New Jersey state standards and Randolph expectations.
- To introduce the concept of Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions.

June 30<sup>th</sup>

- To revise Writing Development Overview to align with New Jersey state standards, learning targets, and Randolph expectations.
- To develop Enduring Understandings.
- To review Writing Programs: Power Writing, Four Blocks, Lucy Calkins, Collins.

July 1<sup>st</sup>

- To revise Writing Development Overview.
- To listen to presentation by Collins Representative: Henry Dembowski
- To select a supplemental resource to enhance the instruction of writing at the elementary level through Decision Analysis.

### **Situation Appraisal**

The following chart presents the findings of the Situation Appraisal:

		S*	U*	G*
1.	Doesn't connect with expectations of standardized tests.	H	H	H
2.	No transitions between lessons.	M	M	M
3.	Addresses too many topics with lower expectations.	H	M	H
4.	Intervention portion is weak. No concrete practice.	L	L	L
5.	No exploration of a genre.	H	M	M
6.	Final product every week. No depth.	H	H	H
7.	No time to develop skills.	H	H	H
8.	Students can't relate to the topics.	M	M	M
9.	Too fast paced within week. Expectations are unrealistic.	H	H	M
10.	Children should be writing on topics of their own choice.	M	M	M
11.	Not kid friendly.	H	M	M
12.	Grammar component is weak.	H	H	H
13.	Lack of logical sequencing.	H	H	H
14.	No exit standards.	H	H	H
15.	NJ State test results do not show improvement.	H	H	H
16.	Inconsistency among schools.	M	M	L
17.	Too many rubrics: state, Trophies, 6 <sup>th</sup> grade placement.	H	M	M
18.	No "How to" teach. Lack of instruction for students.	H	H	H
19.	Doesn't build upon previous skills.	M	M	M
20.	Not enough resources, esp. grammar.	H	M	M
21.	Breadth, not depth.	H	H	H
22.	Connection of writing skills with grammar.	H	H	H
23.	Professional development for teachers.	H	H	H
24.	Professional development for administrators.	H	H	H

*\*Seriousness, Urgency, and Growth were used to determine the significance of the objectives.*

## **Commentary on Options**

**\*\*Copies of data included in binder.**

After reviewing information on writing programs, the committee discussed the following:

### **Four Blocks:**

- More of a language arts program with one component of writing.
- Does not seem to meet the needs of the elementary students.
- Proposes mini-lessons that could be useful.
- Not specific enough.
- No information on conferencing.

### **Power Writing:**

- More of a teaching tool.
- Does not emphasize the writing process.
- Although the three step analogy is useful and many students can benefit from more structure, we do not want to reduce writing to a formula. We need to invite students to engage their unique voices into their pieces.
- A technique that may work with struggling writers, but not a holistic approach to address the needs of the many.
- Signal words are a great resource to support writing, but can be found in any writing strategy course.

### **Lucy Calkins – Units of Study**

- Provides genre focus, explicit teaching strategies, modeling, and appropriate language.
- Seems to address the needs of teachers through scripting.
- Skills are introduced in sequential order which means our young writers will develop over time.
- Effective writing conferences.
- Responsive program – strategies to use, but is based on the needs of the particular student population.
- Scripted to assist, but provides tools to truly develop teaching writing strategies.
- DVDs allow for continued professional development.

### **Collins**

- Wonderful presenter who captured his audience with enthusiasm.
- The program provided sufficient breadth and depth.
- The program was structured well and offered a good number of writing strategies.
- The program did not provide sufficient professional development.
- The program did not offer scripting and support for teachers who feel uncomfortable teaching writing.
- The program did not offer conferencing strategies.
- The program did offer focus correction areas.

We reviewed each of the programs, met with a Collins representative, and viewed Lucy Calkins materials and DVDs. After some discussion, the teachers voted to make a selection. There was only one teacher who was still unsure if she was ready to decide.

Using the Decision Analysis process, the teachers selected the following objectives for the writing program:

- Grammar connection to writing, rate 6
- Pacing and depth, rate 8
- Sequencing, rate 9
- Connection with expectations of state test, must
- Professional Development, rate 10
- Strategies to implement immediately, rate 10
- Assessments and Rubrics, rate 7
- Scripting, rate 9

Although all of the above aspects are important to a writing program, rating them helped teachers determine what was the most significant to consider when choosing a program.

## **Final Determination**

Of the four programs offered, Lucy Calkins and Collins were the top choices. The results of the Decision Analysis was Lucy Calkins: Units of Study at 539 points and the Collins program at 359 points. The overwhelming support of the Lucy Calkins program indicates that the teachers are looking for a program that will address the needs of the students while guiding the teachers.

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Lucy Calkins Units of Study offers an aspect to the teaching of writing that most programs lack. Units of Study allows students to discuss their writing in a way that is non-threatening and exciting. It guides teachers in conferencing methods. While most programs suggest strategies to ignite a student's imagination or ways to quickly assess a piece of writing, Lucy Calkins gives something more valuable. Through her scripts, she helps a teacher discuss writing from the writer-to-writer perspective.

Many teachers in our district have already begun to embrace her style of conferencing and guiding students to develop stronger, more focused, and more detailed pieces of writing. Last year through 18 Your Way professional development, our district's literacy coach met with thirty-seven teachers to evaluate Lucy Calkins Units of Study in the classroom. They believe the program was valuable for the following reasons:

- Prepared students at all grade levels to be life long writers.
- Adapted easily to all grade levels, k-5, including special education students.
- Organized by grade levels to differentiate and meet the needs of all students.
- Integrated lessons that could be taught throughout the day in all subject areas.
- Addressed genres in writing: narrative, expository, nonfiction, poetry.
- Connected to all students through suggested mentor books.
- Taught children what to look for in authentic literature, written by excellent authors, so they could incorporate ideas into their own writing.
- Explicitly taught all aspects of the writing process.
- Allowed for self selection of meaningful writing topics.
- Focused teaching on specific student needs.
- Put the student in charge of revising and editing through conferencing with peers and the teacher.
- Eliminated the need for "red marks" on writing pieces which is often discouraging to writers; this leads to students taking more responsibility for a final product that is worthy and meets the standards on a writing rubric.
- Allowed the teacher to get to know his/her students and allowed the students to get to know each other through conferencing; this builds a positive classroom climate.

## **Description of Program**

### **Lucy Calkins and her Co-Authors describe the series...**

"This series is for people who learn best by simply getting started. We hope teachers will regard the series as a sort of demonstration-teaching, and find companionship and comfort in its classroom specificity. It begins with Monday morning, with the decisions, words and insights that some of the nation's most respected teachers of writing make when we step past philosophy (and the place where everything is possible because no decisions have been made yet) and put ourselves on the line. We describe the days and weeks of a yearlong writing curriculum. We write in minute-by-minute detail so you can envision the words we actually say and the actions we actually take when we work with young writers.

We hope that by sharing our words and our decisions in all their specificity, we help you feel at home enough with teaching writing that you gather your youngsters close, and begin. For a time, you will probably adopt and adapt words and ideas you find here; know that each of us learned that way as well.

Because we have taught within a research and teaching collaborative, the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, we've each listened in on and adopted the teaching language of mentors and colleagues, and drawn strength from the details of each others' teaching. This book is for teachers who may not be lucky enough to have the same daily opportunities to peek in on the teaching of mentors. We hope our teaching ideas slide on like new jeans, to be worn and shaped by you over time in ways that make them comfortable, inviting, endlessly functional and uniquely yours.

The series is comprised of nine small books and a CD. The first book, *The Nuts and Bolts of Teaching Writing* will equip you to teach a productive, well-managed writing workshop, introduce you to the methods which underlie all writing instruction, and help you plan a yearlong curriculum in the teaching of writing. Then, each of the seven unit books will support 4-6 weeks of that yearlong curriculum, helping you plan goals, minilessons, and shares for that unit. *The Conferring Handbook* offers you support in your conferring in each unit, and the CD offers resources and reproducibles to support you throughout the year's writing workshop.

Each unit is divided into approximately fifteen sessions. In each session, we provide a detailed description of one day's teaching, and share ways in which that one day could be extended into several days.

This series grows out of the work that the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project does as staff developers in classrooms across the nation. We've found that some of the most powerful staff development of all occurs when we teach

alongside other teachers, coaching into the nitty-gritty details of teaching. I've tried to bring this sort of coaching into this book. Often in the midst of a minilesson transcript, readers will find the words of a coach who says, "Notice especially the way ..." or "This was a crucial move because..." I hope that these comments help you glean larger principles from the fast-paced details of this teaching."

## ***Frequently Asked Questions***

**\*\*From: [www.unitsofstudy.com](http://www.unitsofstudy.com)**

### **Has this curriculum been piloted?**

The units of study described in the two series of books—*Units of Study for Primary Writing*, and *Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5*—grew from the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project's deep, intensive and long-lasting affiliation with thousands of schools across the nation and the world. For almost three decades, my colleagues and I at the Project have collaboratively developed ideas on the teaching of writing, and then helped teachers and school leaders bring those ideas to classrooms and schools where, in turn, we learn from the young writers who help us outgrow our best-draft ideas about the teaching of writing. This cycle of curriculum development, teaching, action-research, assessment, and curricular revision has meant that for almost thirty years, those of us who are affiliated with the remarkable community that coalesces around the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project have been able to stand on the shoulders of work that has gone before us.

When the leadership of New York City decided several years ago to bring the writing workshop to every classroom throughout the city, I knew that teachers would need extra curricular support. At the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, we wrote incomplete, fast-draft versions of these units of study and distributed them in loose-leaf binders. I gave schools throughout New York City approximately 30,000 binders, each containing several hundred pages. These were trucked to the elementary and middle schools which ascribe to our Project's work. For three years now, we have watched those materials be translated into teaching and learning, and have continuously revised our thinking based on what we have learned. So yes, the series has been piloted.

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### **Is there scientifically-based data vouching for the effectiveness of these curricular materials?**

The only assessment measure that has been used for many years (thirty) and has been used across every state is the NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress). The NAEP has often been referred to as "the nation's report card," and it has been used to compare and contrast different state exams. Several years ago the NAEP assessment found that New York City's children write as well or better than children in every other

major city except Charlotte (New Yorkers jokingly question whether Charlotte qualifies as a *major city*!).

Across the nation, NAEP scores have been basically unchanging for thirty years. The current administration declared a triumph when this year's national average rose 1%. Meanwhile, scores in New York City rose a dramatic 7%, since the city's leadership brought balanced literacy and assessment-based reading interventions to scale. New York City's African-American students and English Language Learners improved in even more dramatic ways. According to the NAEP, New York City's lower income African-American and Latino children far outperformed similar studies in large cities in the nation as a whole.

From 2005 until now, NAEP has disaggregated data to show progress in ten large urban cities. From the first data point in 2002 until the most recent data in 2005, New York City has made a 10% gain. Sheila Ford, who announced the NAEP scores in a press conference in Boston, said, "This is a very significant gain." It is particularly important to bear in mind that meanwhile, New York City has 1.1 million children with 85% of them eligible for free and reduced lunch.

There is a great deal of data suggesting that improvements in writing will have a payoff across the curriculum.

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**If a school or district adopts the two series—*Units of Study for Primary Writing* and *Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5*—will the books within these series be enough to sustain children's growth and teachers' instruction across all the grades?**

The answer to this is no. These series of books were never intended to replace all the professional reading and study that teachers have been doing for all these years! You and your colleagues will absolutely need to continue to read other professional books, and you will need to continue to author your own ideas as well.

But yes, the two series of books can provide the *backbone* to a K-5 approach to the teaching of writing, bringing coherence to your schoolwide or district-wide writing curriculum.

These books absolutely support a spiral curriculum. For example, the books can help teachers of kindergartners to support children as they begin drawing, labeling, telling and writing simple Small Moment stories—and then over the years, the books will help teachers equip children to use more and more complex concepts, tools and strategies so that by fifth grade, children are not only writing sophisticated stories, they are also embedding those stories in memoir and personal essays, and using techniques developed in personal narrative to write short fiction. In a similar fashion, this spiraling curriculum supports teachers in scaffolding children's writing of expository and informational texts. The truth is that at no point will the books suffice as a script for your teaching. They are a very detailed model. They convey the story of what I (and in some instances, what colleagues of mine) did in order to teach a unit of study to a particular group of children. The books are filled with examples of my writing, with anecdotes about my dog and my family, and they are filled also with examples that come from particular



children. Teachers at every grade level in a school will need to revise these lessons so they reflect you and your particular children, and so they are tailored to what your children can almost do. This means that when third-grade teachers, fourth-grade teachers, then fifth-grade teachers all rely on the books, you will at every point need to bring yourself and your kids to this model.

But if you ask whether, in general, it is appropriate for third graders to proceed through these units and then for fourth graders to revisit these units, and for fifth graders to have yet another go at them, the answer is usually yes. It is like learning to play tennis. You work on serving the ball when you are starting to learn, and again when you have been playing tennis for a year, and you still continue to work on serving the ball when you are a member of a varsity tennis team. In a similar manner, those of us who write continue to work at the same challenges, year after year. I find that the lessons I teach to third graders are very much the same lessons, tweaked a bit, that I teach to graduate students, and then when I get a bit of time, alone at my desk, these are the lessons I teach myself.

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**If I teach children who have not grown up within a writing workshop, can I follow these units of study? Or do they require a foundation that I will need to provide children?**

If your children did not participate in a writing workshop before this year, you will certainly want to start with *Launching the Writing Workshop* and proceed (for the most part) in sequence. The truth is that you will want to do this even if your children did have the benefits of a writing workshop throughout their primary grades! So the answer to your concerns is this: Don't worry. Carry on! These units were designed, knowing that this would be the case for many teachers and children.

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**How much time should I devote to a single unit of study? If my children do not write particularly well, or if I am new to the teaching of writing, should I extend the time frame?**

These units are designed to support a month-long unit of study. If you or your children are new to writing workshop, then you should expect to progress more quickly, not more slowly, through a unit of study. That is, when your children are skilled and experienced writers, they'll be able to spend more time revising and improving their draft, but if they are less experienced (or if you are), they'll probably stay closer to the pathway I've laid out.

## **Tentative Timeline for Elementary Language Arts**

September: Introduction of Lucy Calkins Units of Study, Benchmark Testing, and Writing Prompt

Week of 22<sup>nd</sup>: Administer benchmark tests, grades 1 – 5  
Results submitted: 10/29

October: Score Writing Prompts, Literacy Coaches: 5 PD Days: AM/PM  
Board Meeting: Presentation of Writing Initiative  
Order materials for Lucy Calkins

November: Lucy Calkins Units of Study PD begins with Literacy Coaches

February:

Week of 9<sup>th</sup>: Benchmark Tests (Placement)  
Results submitted: 2/25

March: Evaluation of Lucy Calkins Units of Study - Zoomerang

April: Invitation for summer curriculum writing: Focus Correction Areas  
and Lucy Calkins Units of Study  
One representative from each grade level K-5 - 6  
Literacy Coaches - 2  
Special Education - 1

Total: 8 individuals

Tentative Dates: June 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, July 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>

Tentative Outline:

June 29<sup>th</sup>: Review of Curriculum Format  
Focus Correction Areas

June 30<sup>th</sup>: Complete Focus Correction Areas as a scope  
and sequence

July 1st and 2nd: Write Curriculum:  
Lucy Calkins Units of Study

May 26<sup>th</sup>: Benchmark Tests  
Results submitted: 6/10

***September 09: Official adaptation of new Writing Initiative.***

### **Budget Projections for Materials and Implementation:**

*Units of Study* will be introduced in the 08-09 school year through Randolph Academy classes, grade level meetings, and classroom visits/demonstrations. While the materials will be purchased through budgeted funds, the training will be funded through NCLB, Title IIA money.

**Approximate cost for start up materials including the Lucy Calkins Units of Studies teacher materials, DVDs, and writing paper for all four elementary schools:**

**\$ 60,000.00**

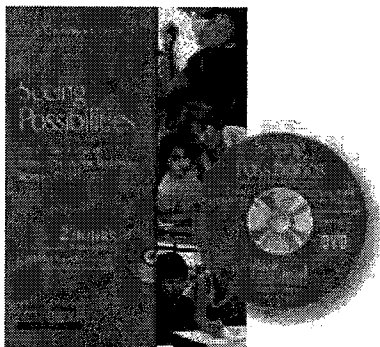
Costs are based upon the following numbers of classroom, special education, and BSI teachers:

Kindergarten – approximately 22 teachers  
Grade 1 – 25  
Grade 2 – 22  
Grade 3 – 22  
Grade 4 – 22  
Grade 5 – 22

### **Examples of materials:**

**Calkins Units of Study Bundle**  
by Lucy Calkins & Colleagues  
from the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project

Stock Number: 002194  
Price: \$286.00



**Seeing Possibilities DVD (3-5)**

An Inside View of Units of Study for Teaching Writing  
by Lucy Calkins and The Teachers College Reading and  
Writing Project

ISBN: 978-0-325-00968-1 / 0-325-00968-6

Price: \$45.00

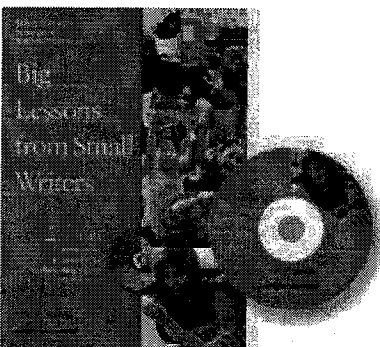


**Conferring with Primary Writers CD-ROM**

by Lucy Calkins, Amanda Hartman, & Zoë White

ISBN: 0-325-00638-5 / 978-0-325-00638-3

Price: \$25.00



**Big Lessons From Small Writers DVD**

by Lucy Calkins and The Teachers College Reading and  
Writing Project Community

ISBN: 0-325-00748-9 / 978-0-325-00748-9

Price: \$45.00

## **Professional Development Estimated Costs:**

The Literacy Coaches will offer Randolph Academy courses for K – 5 teachers. The sessions are as follows:

### **Writing Workshop K-2 Session and 3-5 Session Draft**

#### **Session 1 - Launching the Writing Workshop**

1. What is writing workshop
2. Units of Study
3. Materials
4. Management
5. Personal Narrative - Part 1
6. Notebook Entries
7. Drafting
8. Interactive writing
9. Share - Mentor Text

#### **Session 2 - Share and Personal Narrative - Part 2**

1. Successes and Struggles
2. How does this inform/lead instruction
3. Architecture of a mini-lesson
4. Raising the level of narrative writing
5. Storytell V Summarize
6. DVD lesson presentation
7. Share - Mentor Text

#### **Session 3 - The Teacher's Role during Workshop**

1. Conferencing
2. Table conferencing
3. Individual conferencing
4. Assessment
5. Partners
6. Homework

#### **Session 4 - The Nuts and Bolts of Writers Workshop - Grammar, Spelling and Mechanics Instruction**

\*\*\*\*\*

In 09-10, a one day conference will be offered to complete the professional development cycle:

One Day Conference

8:30am – 2:30pm

K-2 morning, 3-5 afternoon

Will present overview of program and support using books.

Up to 100 people.

**Cost: \$2700.00, plus travel expenses (coming from New York).**

## **Conclusion**

Elementary teachers have the responsibility to be well-versed in many subject areas. While all disciplines are important and hold significance for various reasons, writing well and expressing one's thoughts with clarity and precision supports all areas of academics and is, therefore, the underpinning of all educational endeavors.

Using Lucy Calkins Units of Studies provides the guidance and direction for our elementary school teachers to employ a variety of strategies to all parts of the writing process from pre-writing to the final draft. It offers teachers, as well as students, the opportunity to celebrate being writers by exploring their voices, enhancing "big moments," and having a common language during conferencing. Most importantly, this program allows elementary school teachers to feel comfortable as they embrace the teaching of writing.

## **Conclusion**

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***Elementary Writing Initiative  
Philosophy and Development Overview  
DRAFT***

***June 2008***

Language Arts Supervisor: Loretta Radulic

Debbie Grefe, Principal of Fernbrook

Committee Members:

Center Grove: Lisa Barrett, Michael Contuzzi, Beata Darbig, Alissa Hicok, Beth Laureano, Donna Marucci, Danielle Miller, Christina Theodoropoulos

Fernbrook: Ruth Herr, Literacy Coach, Lynn Carmen, Brianne Finnerty, Jenise Janulis, Cynthia Scott, Arlene Tarnowski, Marisa Varum

Ironia: Roberta Greenhill, Janice Sgalia-Friedland, Catherine Murphy

Shongum: Jessica Boyce, Christine Giousios, Lili Krajewski, Sarah Jane Murray, Laurie Pandorf

**Randolph School District  
Language Arts**

**Writing Philosophy**

Writing is a life-long literacy skill. As a recursive process, mode of thinking, and form of communicating, it is nurtured by providing daily, meaningful writing opportunities for various purposes, in different contexts, and for diverse audiences. This encourages individuals to reach their full potentials as authors.

A balanced program includes modeled, interactive, shared and independent writing situations. Students develop and demonstrate fluency and an appreciation for all phases of the writing process as they are encouraged to write what is important to them personally and academically. In a supportive and positive environment, students explore, experiment, and take risks with language throughout all aspects of the curriculum. Through self-reflection, peer feedback, teacher conferencing, and assessment, students discover their author's voice. Ultimately, a community of enthusiastic writers emerges through celebration of shared learning experiences.

**District Writing Goals**

- To develop skills and strategies to grow as successful writers
- To experience the joy of writing
- To develop an appreciation of the value of writing
- To connect to the writing experience
- To gain a sense of accomplishment and ownership
- To create an intrinsic motivation for writing
- To become well-rounded life-long writers

### **Components of the Writing Program**

- Writing Process: pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, post writing process that include publishing, presenting, evaluating, and/or performing
- Consistent Common Language of important writing terms shared across grade levels
- Varied Teaching Strategies: immersion, discovery, modeled writing, shared writing, guided writing, independent construction, and presentation to audience
- Traits of Quality Writing: ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions
- Consistent Editing Symbols and Rubrics
- Journals
- Working Writing Portfolio
- Assessment Portfolio
- Technology
- On-going Professional Development
- Exit Standards

**Curriculum DRAFT Template**  
**UNIT: Writing Development Overview**

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS	ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The writing process is learned skills and strategies to enable growth in writing.</li> <li>✓ The writing experience will foster an appreciation and value of writing</li> <li>✓ The writing experience creates personal connections and a sense of accomplishment and ownership.</li> <li>✓ Writing supports intrinsic motivation and well-rounded life-long writers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Why do I write?</li> <li>✓ What do good writers do?</li> <li>✓ Why do I use each step of the writing process?</li> <li>✓ What is the difference between good writing and great writing?</li> <li>✓ How does writing help me?</li> <li>✓ How do I find a topic to write about?</li> <li>✓ How will I adjust my writing to fit my audience?</li> <li>✓ What does it mean to have a voice?</li> <li>✓ Why do writers need to pay attention to word choice?</li> <li>✓ How does my writing make other people feel?</li> <li>✓ How do I know my reader understood my message?</li> <li>✓ What makes writing worth reading?</li> <li>✓ How do I know that I have shown improvement?</li> <li>✓ How will I know when I am done?</li> <li>✓ How can reading make me a better writer?</li> <li>✓ How can writing make me a better reader?</li> </ul>

KNOWLEDGE	SKILLS	NJCCCS <i>Randolph Standards</i>
<p><b>Students will know:</b></p> <p><b>Kindergarten:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traits of quality writing</li> <li>• Variety of forms of writing for different audiences and purposes</li> <li>• Steps of the writing process</li> <li>• Written work may result in a product</li> </ul>	<p><b>Students will be able to:</b></p> <p><b>Kindergarten:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Use Inventive spelling to create words.</li> <li>✓ Write (print) own first and last name.</li> <li>✓ Label words, write words, phrases, and/or sentences to describe their pictures.</li> <li>✓ Letter formation legibility.</li> <li>✓ Use letters and symbols available from resources (i.e. word walls).</li> <li>✓ Communicate responses through drawing or writing.</li> <li>✓ Generate and share ideas and experiences for a story.</li> <li>✓ Correspond pictures and writing.</li> <li>✓ Dictate/translate story referring to illustration or personal experience.</li> <li>✓ Put ideas into writing using pictures, developmental spelling, or conventional text.</li> <li>✓ Participate in group writing activities such as experience stories, interactive writing, and shared writing.</li> <li>✓ Begin to sequence story events.</li> <li>✓ Generate ideas for writing through talking or drawing.</li> <li>✓ Show and talk about work samples containing pictures, developmental spelling or conventional text.</li> <li>✓ Begin to collect favorite work samples to place in personal writing folder.</li> </ul>	

**Grade 1:**

- Traits of quality writing
- Variety of forms of writing for different audiences and purposes
- Steps of the writing process
- Written work may result in a product

**Grade 1:**

- ✓ Use developmental spelling or phonics-based knowledge to spell independently, when necessary.
- ✓ Develop awareness of conventional spelling.
- ✓ Apply sound/symbol relationships to write words.
- ✓ Write all upper and lowercase letters of the alphabet from memory.
- ✓ Use left-to-right and top-to-bottom directionality and use appropriate spacing between words.
- ✓ Begin to use basic punctuation and capitalization.
- ✓ Use simple sentences to convey ideas.
- ✓ Increase fluency (ability to write ideas easily) to improve writing.
- ✓ Use available resources (i.e. word walls).
- ✓ Begin to mimic an author's voice and patterns.
- ✓ Create texts for others to read.
- ✓ Show and talk about own writing for classroom audience.
- ✓ Begin to use a basic writing process to develop writing.
- ✓ Generate ideas for writing through talking, sharing, and drawing.
- ✓ Continue to use pictures, developmental spelling or conventional text to create writing drafts.
- ✓ Revisit pictures and writings to add detail.
- ✓ Begin to use a simple checklist to improve writing with teacher support.
- ✓ Begin to peer edit.
- ✓ Begin to use simple computer writing applications during some parts of the writing process.
- ✓ Produce stories from personal experiences.
- ✓ Produce finished writings to share with class and/or for publication.
- ✓ Collect favorite works to place in personal writing folder.
- ✓ Create a complete sentence.
- ✓ Begin to combine sentences to create a paragraph.
- ✓ Begin to construct a story using story elements.
- ✓ Show and talk about narratives for classroom audiences.
- ✓ Create a variety of writings, including stories, descriptions, and journal entries, showing relationships between illustrations and printed text.

**Grade 2:**

- Traits of quality writing
- Variety of forms of writing for different audiences and purposes
- Steps of the writing process
- Written work may result in a product

**Grade 2:**

- ✓ Continue to build on sound/symbol relationships to write words.
- ✓ Use correct spelling of high frequency words.
- ✓ Apply basic rules of capitalization.
- ✓ Use correct end point punctuation.
- ✓ Write legibly to meet district standards (manuscript or cursive).
- ✓ Use sentences to convey ideas in writing.
- ✓ Incorporate rudimentary grammar, usage, and mechanics.
- ✓ Use available resources (i.e. word wall, dictionary, glossary).
- ✓ Create written texts for others to read.
- ✓ Generate ideas and write on topics in forms appropriate to science, social studies, or other subject areas.
- ✓ Use reading and technology to support writing.
- ✓ Write in a variety of simple genres to satisfy personal, academic, and social needs, such as letters, plays, procedures, biographies, or simple reports.
- ✓ Develop basic use of the writing process.
- ✓ Generate ideas for writing: hearing stories, recalling experiences, brainstorming, and drawing.
- ✓ Use sentences to convey ideas in writing.
- ✓ Use graphic organizers to assist with pre-writing.
- ✓ Compose readable first drafts.
- ✓ Use everyday words in appropriate written context.
- ✓ Reread drafts for meaning, to add details, and to improve correctness.
- ✓ Participate with peers to comment on and react to each other's writing.
- ✓ Use a simple checklist to improve elements of own writing.
- ✓ Use computer writing applications during some parts of the writing process.
- ✓ Create complex and/or varied complete sentences.
- ✓ Use the writing process to create one - three detailed paragraphs.
- ✓ Include story elements: character, setting, plot.
- ✓ Produce finished writings to share with classmates and/or for publication.
- ✓ Produce stories from personal experiences.
- ✓ Produce a narrative with a beginning, middle, and end.
- ✓ Respond to a variety of prompts with a beginning, middle, and end.
- ✓ Write nonfiction pieces, such as letters, procedures, biographies, or simple reports.
- ✓ Organize favorite work samples in a writing folder or portfolio.

**Grade 3:**

- Traits of quality writing
- Variety of forms of writing for different audiences and purposes
- Steps of the writing process
- Written work may result in a product

**Grade 3:**

- ✓ Use Standard English conventions that are developmentally appropriate to the grade level: sentences, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.
- ✓ Incorporate grammar and mechanics based on district standards.
- ✓ Begin to use transitions and paragraph breaks.
- ✓ Begin to establish fluency and organization in writing.
- ✓ Begin to develop author's voice in own writing.
- ✓ Write legibility in manuscript and cursive to meet district standards.
- ✓ Use available resources (i.e. word wall, dictionary, thesaurus)
- ✓ Examine real-world examples of writing in various genres to gain understanding of how authors communicate ideas through form, structure, and author's voice.
- ✓ Build awareness of ways authors use paragraphs to support meaning.
- ✓ Expand use of the writing process.
- ✓ Generate possible ideas for writing through recalling experiences, listening to stories, reading, brainstorming, and discussion.
- ✓ Use graphic organizers to assist with pre-writing.
- ✓ Compose first drafts from prewriting work.
- ✓ Revise a draft by rereading for meaning, narrowing the focus, sequencing, elaborating with detail, improving openings, closings, and word choice to show voice.
- ✓ Participate with peers to comment on and react to each other's writing.
- ✓ Use reference materials to revise work, such as a dictionary or internet/software resource.
- ✓ Understand and use a checklist and/or rubric to improve writing.
- ✓ Edit work for basic spelling and mechanics.
- ✓ Reflect on own writing, noting strengths and areas needing improvement.
- ✓ Progress through developmental stages i.e. shared writing to independent writing.
- ✓ Use rubrics as part of peer editing.
- ✓ Begin to incorporate figurative language.
- ✓ Use computer word-processing applications during parts of the writing process.
- ✓ Incorporate dialogue and descriptive words.
- ✓ Use the writing process to construct a three paragraph piece of writing.
- ✓ Respond to picture and poetry prompts with beginning, middle, and end.
- ✓ Develop story elements: character, setting, plot



**Grade 4:**

- Traits of quality writing

- ✓ Produce a variety of finished pieces: narrative, non-fiction, description across the curriculum.
- ✓ Revise a draft.
- ✓ Organize favorite work samples in a writing folder or portfolio.
- ✓ Present and discuss writing with peers.

**Grade 4:**

- ✓ Use Standard English conventions that are appropriate to the grade level, such as sentence structure, grammar and usage, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and handwriting.
- ✓ Use grade appropriate knowledge of English grammar and usage to craft writing, such as subject/verb agreement, pronoun usage and agreement, and appropriate verb tenses.
- ✓ Use punctuation correctly in sentences, such as ending punctuation, commas, and quotation marks in dialogue.
- ✓ Use capital letters correctly in sentences, for proper nouns, and in titles.
- ✓ Indent writing to show the beginning of a paragraph.
- ✓ Spell grade-appropriate words correctly with particular attention to frequently used words, contractions, and homophones.
- ✓ Use knowledge of base words, structural analysis, and spelling patterns to expand spelling competency in writing.
- ✓ Recognize the difference between complete sentences and sentence fragments.
- ✓ Write sentences of varying lengths and complexity, using specific nouns, verbs, and descriptive words.
- ✓ Use increasingly complex sentence structure and syntax to express ideas.
- ✓ Provide logical sequence and support the purpose of writing by refining organizational structure and developing transitions between ideas.
- ✓ Use a variety of strategies to organize writing, including sequence, chronology, and cause/effect.
- ✓ Essays should have appropriate mechanics: subject/verb agreement, verb tense, spelling
- ✓ Demonstrate higher-order thinking skills through responses to open-ended and essay questions in content areas or as responses to literature.
- ✓ Use relevant graphics in writing (e.g., maps, charts, illustrations).
- ✓ Demonstrate the development of a personal style and voice in writing.
- ✓ Write legibly in manuscript or cursive to meet district standards.
- ✓ Use a variety of reference materials, such as a dictionary, grammar reference, and internet/software resources to edit written work.

- Variety of forms of writing for different audiences and purposes

- ✓ Examine published writing to expand knowledge of sentences, paragraphs, usage, and authors' writing styles.
- ✓ Write for different purposes (e.g., to express ideas, to inform, to entertain, to respond to literature, to question, to share) and a variety of audiences (e.g., self, peers, community).
- ✓ Apply the characteristics of a variety of genres, including expository, narrative, poetry.
- ✓ Develop independence by setting self-selected purposes and generating topics for writing.
- ✓ Use writing to paraphrase, clarify, and reflect on learning across the curriculum.
- ✓ Write narratives that relate recollections of an event or experience and establish a setting, characters, point of view, and sequence of events.
- ✓ Build knowledge of the characteristics and structures of a variety of genres.
- ✓ Write informational reports that frame a topic, include facts and details, and draw information from several sources.
- ✓ Study examples of narrative and expository writing to develop understanding of the reasons for and use of paragraphs and indentation.

- Steps of the writing process

- ✓ Apply writing process consistently to a variety of writing situations.
- ✓ Generate possible ideas for writing through talking, recalling experiences, hearing stories, reading, discussing models of writing, asking questions, and brainstorming.
- ✓ Use strategies such as reflecting on personal experiences, reading, doing interviews or research, and using graphic organizers to generate and organize ideas for writing.
- ✓ Recognize the difference between complete sentences and sentence fragments and examine the uses of each in real-world writing.
- ✓ Examine real-world writing to expand knowledge of sentences, paragraphs, usage, and authors' writing styles.
- ✓ Draft writing in a selected genre with supporting structure according to the intended message, audience, and purpose for writing.
- ✓ Engage the reader from beginning to end with an interesting opening, logical

sequence, and satisfying conclusion.

- ✓ Consistent use of figurative language and dialogue.
- ✓ Revise drafts by rereading for meaning, narrowing the focus, elaborating, reworking organization, openings, and closings, and improving word choice and consistency of voice.
- ✓ Improve the clarity of writing by rearranging words, sentences, and paragraphs.
- ✓ Review own writing with others to understand the reader's perspective and to consider ideas for revision.
- ✓ Review and edit work for spelling, mechanics, clarity, and fluency based on a rubric.
- ✓ Use a variety of reference materials to revise work, such as a dictionary, thesaurus, or internet/software resources.
- ✓ Reflect on one's writing, noting strengths and areas needing improvement.
- ✓ Use computer writing applications during most of the writing process.
- ✓

- Written work may result in a product

- ✓ Create narrative pieces, such as memoir or personal narrative, which contain description and relate ideas, observations, or recollections of an event or experience.
- ✓ Write informational reports across the curriculum that frame an issue or topic, include facts and details, and draw from more than one source of information.
- ✓ Craft writing to elevate its quality by adding details.
- ✓ Craft writing to include figurative language and descriptive words
- ✓ Sharpen focus and improve coherence by considering the relevancy of included details, and adding, deleting, and rearranging appropriately.
- ✓ Create a well developed three-five paragraph composition with clear opening and closing.
- ✓ Writing should consist of an opening and closing
- ✓ Employ compound and complex sentences in writing.
- ✓ Respond to literature in writing to demonstrate an understanding of the text, to explore personal reactions, and to connect personal experiences with the text.
- ✓ Write formal and informal letters for a variety of audiences and purposes.
- ✓ Develop a collection of writings (e.g., a literacy folder or a literacy portfolio).

**Grade 5:**

- Traits of quality writing

**Grade 5:**

- ✓ Use Standard English conventions in all writing, such as sentence structure, grammar and usage, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and handwriting.
- ✓ Use increasingly complex sentence structure and syntax to express ideas.
- ✓ Use knowledge of English grammar and usage to express ideas effectively.
- ✓ Use correct capitalization and punctuation, including commas and colons, throughout writing.
- ✓ Use quotation marks and related punctuation correctly in passages of dialogue.
- ✓ Use knowledge of roots, prefixes, suffixes, and English spelling patterns to spell words correctly in writing.
- ✓ Use a variety of reference materials, such as a dictionary, grammar reference, and/or internet/software resources to edit written work.
- ✓ Write legibly in manuscript or cursive to meet district standards
- ✓ Demonstrate higher-order thinking skills and writing clarity when answering open-ended and essay questions in content areas or as responses to literature.
- ✓ Demonstrate higher-order thinking skills and writing clarity when answering open-ended and essay questions in content areas or as responses to literature.
- ✓ Organize a response that develops insight into literature by exploring personal reactions, connecting to personal experiences, and referring to the text through sustained use of examples.
- ✓ Use transitions between and within paragraphs.
- ✓ Organize paragraphs using topic sentences.
- ✓ Use relevant graphics in writing (e.g., maps, charts, illustrations).
- ✓ Use a variety of strategies to organize writing, including sequence, chronology, cause/effect, problem/solution, and order of importance.



- Variety of forms of writing for different audiences and purposes

- ✓ Demonstrate development of voice in writing.
- ✓ Develop and use knowledge of a variety of genres, including expository, narrative, persuasive, poetry, critiques, and everyday/ workplace writing.
- ✓ Organize a response that develops insight into literature by exploring personal reactions, connecting to personal experiences, and referring to the text through sustained use of examples.
- ✓ Write for different purposes (e.g., to express ideas, inform, entertain, respond to literature, persuade, question, reflect, clarify, share) and a variety of audiences (e.g., self, peers, community).
- ✓ Gather, select, and organize information appropriate to a topic, task, and audience.
- ✓ Write narratives, establishing a plot or conflict, setting, characters, point of view, and resolution.
- ✓ Use narrative techniques (e.g., dialogue, specific actions of characters, sensory description, and expression of thoughts and feelings of characters).
- ✓ Write reports based on research with a scope narrow enough to be thoroughly covered, supporting the main ideas or topic with facts, examples, and explanations, and including a works consulted page.
- ✓ Write persuasive essays with clearly stated positions or opinions supported by organized and relevant evidence to validate arguments and conclusions, and sources cited when needed.
- ✓ Demonstrate higher-order thinking skills and writing clarity when answering open-ended and essay questions in content areas or as responses to literature.
- ✓ Demonstrate the development of a personal style and voice in writing.
- ✓ Develop a collection of writings (e.g., a literacy folder, a literacy portfolio).
- ✓ Study examples of narrative and expository writing to develop understanding of the reasons for and use of paragraphs and indentation.

- Steps of the writing process

- ✓ Use the writing process independently.
- ✓ Generate possible ideas for writing through listening, talking, recalling experiences, hearing stories, reading, discussing models of writing, asking questions, and brainstorming.
- ✓ Draft writing in a selected genre with supporting structure according to the intended message, audience, and purpose for writing
- ✓ Reflect on own writing, noting strengths and setting goals for improvement.
- ✓ Generate possible ideas for writing through listening, talking, recalling experiences,

hearing stories, reading, discussing models of writing, asking questions, and brainstorming.

- ✓ Develop an awareness of form, structure, and author's voice in various genres.
- ✓ Use strategies such as graphic organizers and outlines to elaborate and organize ideas for writing.
- ✓ Draft writing in a selected genre with supporting structure according to the intended message, audience, and purpose for writing
- ✓ Engage the reader from beginning to end with an interesting opening, logical sequence, and satisfying conclusion.
- ✓ Make decisions about the use of precise language, including adjectives, adverbs, verbs, and specific details, and justify the choices made.
- ✓ Revise drafts by rereading for meaning, narrowing focus, elaborating and deleting, as well as reworking organization, openings, closings, word choice, and consistency of voice.
- ✓ Review own writing with others to understand the reader's perspective and to consider and incorporate ideas for revision.
- ✓ Edit writing for correct grammar usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.
- ✓ Review and edit work for spelling, usage, clarity, organization, and fluency.
- ✓ Use a variety of reference materials to revise work.
- ✓ Use computer writing applications during the writing process.
- ✓ Understand and apply the elements of a scoring rubric to improve and evaluate writing.
- ✓ Reflect on writing and set goals for improvement.

- Written work may result in a product

- ✓ Construct a five paragraph composition.
- ✓ Write a range of grade appropriate essays across curricula (e.g., persuasive, personal, descriptive, issue- based)
- ✓ Write grade appropriate, multi-paragraph, expository pieces across curricula (e.g., problem/solution, cause/effect, hypothesis/results, feature articles, critique, research reports).
- ✓ Proficient use of dialogue, figurative language, and descriptive words.
- ✓ Write various types of prose, such as short stories, biography, autobiography, or memoir, that contain narrative elements.
- ✓ Support main idea, topic, or theme with facts, examples, or explanations, including information from multiple sources.
- ✓ Sharpen focus and improve coherence by considering the relevancy of included details and adding, deleting, and rearranging appropriately.
- ✓ Write sentences of varying length and complexity, using specific nouns, verbs, and descriptive words.
- ✓ Prepare a works consulted page for reports or research papers.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Provide logical sequence throughout multi-paragraph works by refining organizational structure and developing transitions between ideas, include engaging opening and closing.</li> <li>✓ Demonstrate the ability to write friendly/business letters in correct format and coherent style.</li> <li>✓ Write stories with multiple paragraphs that develop a situation or plot, describe the setting, and include an ending.</li> <li>✓ Write informational compositions with multiple paragraphs that present important ideas, provide details, and offer a concluding paragraph.</li> </ul>	
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**RANDOLPH TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Curriculum Pacing Chart**

**Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Subject \_\_\_\_\_**

<b>SUGGESTED TIME ALLOTMENT</b>	<b>CONTENT-UNIT OF STUDY</b>	<b>SUPPLEMENTAL UNIT RESOURCES</b>

**RANDOLPH TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT  
APPENDIX ORDER**

**APPENDIX A  
RESOURCES:**

**TEXT AND ELECTRONIC TEXT**

**ISBN NUMBER, NAME, COPYRIGHT**

**WEB ADDRESSES**

**SOFTWARE NAMES**

**APPENDIX B  
ASSESSMENT:**

**LIST OF ASSEMENT/TYPE**

**SUGGESTED RUBRICS**

**APPENDIX C  
SAMPLE INTERDISCIPLINARY UNITS**

**APPENDIX D  
PLACEMENT CRITERIA**

**APPENDIX E  
SAMPLE LESSONS**

Lucy Calkins

June 2008

## **SECTION IV**

- **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**
- **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**
- **UNITS OF STUDY FOR TEACHING WRITING, GRADES 3-5**
  - PRESENTS A DETAILED OVERVIEW OF THE WRITING WORKSHOP**
- **POWERPOINT FOR UNITS OF STUDY FOR PRIMARY WRITING**
  - OFFERS A SYNOPSIS OF THE WRITING WORKSHOP**
- **WITHIN THIS SECTION ARE SUB-SECTIONS THAT HOLD THE CURRICULAR CALENDAR FOR THE LUCY CALKINS PROGRAM**

## Units of Study for Primary Writing:

### A Yearlong Curriculum (K-2)



### About the Authors

**Lucy Calkins**, author of ten books including *The Art of Teaching Reading*, *The Art of Teaching Writing*, and *Raising Lifelong Learners: A Parent's Guide* is Professor of Curriculum and Teaching and the Founding Director of The Teachers College Reading and Writing Project. The Project is both a think-tank, developing state-of-the-art methods, and a provider of professional development for hundreds of schools. As the leader of this world-renowned organization, Lucy works closely with superintendents, district leaders and school principals to re-imagine what is possible when school leadership is closely aligned with professional development. She, meanwhile, also works closely with particular teachers and their vibrant, quirky classes full of children. This series of books grows especially out of Lucy's work with a handful of her staff, and with a small cadre of New York City's teachers who joined her in a year-long study group in primary writing. (Author of *The Nuts and Bolts of Teaching Writing* and the Co-Author of all seven *Units of Study*, *The Conferring Handbook*, and *Resources for Primary Writing*: CD-ROM of supporting print and video material)

Before her life as a kindergarten teacher at PS 116, **Zoë Ryder White** served as a writer-in-residence through the Teachers and Writers Collaborative in nearly 25 public schools throughout New York City. Her experience teaching creative writing in the complex, varied and lively classrooms of New York led Zoë, after finishing her MFA in poetry at Sarah Lawrence College, to obtain her MA in Curriculum and Teaching at Teachers College. She was lucky to study with Lucy Calkins, and to student teach with both Abby Oxenhorn, author of the *Small Moments* book, and Emily Smith, now a Reading and Writing Project Staff Developer. Zoë and her husband have (temporarily) relocated to Cape Town, South Africa this August, where she plans to continue teaching, researching and writing. (Co-Author of *The Conferring Handbook*)

**Pat Bleichman** always dreamt of being a teacher and after years in the workforce, attended college in order to make that dream a reality. She has been an educator for twelve years now, teaching special education as well as both kindergarten and first grade. Her classroom is a demonstration site for the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, and also serves as a research and practice site for Lucy Calkins and other Project staff members. Pat is the mother of two daughters, Jessica and Rebecca. (Co-Author of *The Craft of Revision*)

**Natalie Louis** is a teacher-researcher, a passionate advocate for her first grade students, a teacher-educator and a lifelong student. She's earned several Masters degrees - including one in diagnosing and working with struggling readers - and studies Spanish in order to communicate closely with the families of her Latino students. Before her life as a first-grade teacher and a teacher-educator with the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project in New York City, Natalie was a Peace Corps volunteer, living in a tree house on an island in the Pacific. (Co-Author of *Writing for Readers: Teaching Skills and Strategies*)

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- [Overview](#)
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- [Conferring with Primary Writers CD-ROM](#)
  - [Letter From Lucy](#)
  - [Authors](#)
  - [Contents](#)
  - [Study Guides](#)
  - [Samples](#)
- [Big Lessons from Small Writers DVD](#)
  - [Contents](#)
  - [Samples](#)
  - [Authors](#)
- [Units of Study for Primary Writing Professional Development PACK](#)

### Also Available



[Units of Study for Teaching Writing, 3-5](#)

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units of study. com/  
a ffiliation. asp*

As a staff developer at the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, **Amanda Hartman** has helped a dozen large urban schools establish state-of-the-art reading and writing workshops across every grade-level. The principals and teachers who study with Amanda win accolades, and their schools are widely visited as models for standards-based reading and writing instruction at its best. Amanda's own teaching experience was as a dual language teacher at P.S. 165 in Manhattan. A passionate advocate of social justice, Amanda has traveled widely across Latin America, Europe and the Middle East, and she draws on her travels, her teaching, her school reform and her work on behalf of social causes when she speaks at conferences and universities across the country. (Co-Author of *Authors as Mentors* and *The Conferring Handbook*)

As Deputy Director of the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, **Laurie Pessah** has major responsibility for designing, staffing and supervising the Project's work with several hundred schools. Laurie has a special interest in extending the Project's knowledge base pertaining to literacy instruction in the primary grades. Laurie works closely with some of New York City's finest primary teachers, and this book relies upon shared work she has done with teachers from P. S. 188 in Queens, District 26. Laurie was a principal in Port Washington, Long Island, before becoming a leader at the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, and she draws on that experience as she leads courses and study groups for principals, and as she coaches and provides demonstrations in leadership for principals at their schools. (Co-Author of *Nonfiction Writing: Procedures and Reports*)

**Stephanie Parsons** studied photography and sculpture at Yale, then spent the next few years acting in New York City. One day, a friend took her to hear Lucy Calkins speak at the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, and Stephanie stepped into her life as an educator. She wrote this book at her home in Brooklyn, near P. S. 321 where she taught first grade. She now assists and collaborates with teachers and principals all around the world, but especially in New York City's public schools. Along with that of Lucy Calkins, she is strongly influenced by the work of Katie Wood Ray and Isoke Titilayo Nia. (Co-Author of *Poetry: Powerful Thoughts in Tiny Packages*)

Thousands of teachers and principals have visited **Abby Oxenhorn's** kindergarten classroom since she began teaching at P.S.116 six years ago. The visitors always remark over the magical combination of joy and rigor in Abby's classroom, and they remark also on the clarity of Abby's teaching. "I never realized kindergarten children could do much," they say. While maintaining her position as a teacher, Abby is also a teacher-of-teachers through the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project. This book chronicles one month—October—in Abby's kindergarten classroom. (Co-Author of *Small Moments: Personal Narrative Writing*)

**Leah Mermelstein** taught both in Massachusetts and in New York City before becoming a staff developer at the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project. As a member of the Project's staff, Leah has mentored primary teachers in a dozen schools, providing the demonstration teaching, coaching and study groups necessary to help those teachers establish joyful, rigorous writing workshops. Leah has led leadership groups comprised of master teachers from many schools, and has led those groups to research writing conferences and reading-writing connections. The unit of study which Leah and Lucy detail in this book is based on their work in many, many classrooms and they thank all of those teachers, especially Shawn Brandon, of P. S. 11 in Manhattan. (Co-Author of *Launching*)

*a Writing Workshop)*

**Beth Neville** is the Associate Director of the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project. As a member of the Project's leadership team, she has the major responsibility at the Project for strategic planning, program creation, design and oversight of the Project's web site and development of support materials necessary to provide professional development to several hundred schools. Beth has special expertise on the interface between staff development, computer technology and video. Before coming to Teachers College, she was as Assistant Dean and the Director of University without Walls at Hofstra University. Beth loves Plato and Melville, classical piano and her devoted beagle, Charlie. (Co-Author of *Resources for Primary Writing: CD-ROM of supporting print and video material*)

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# LUCY CALKINS & COLLEAGUES

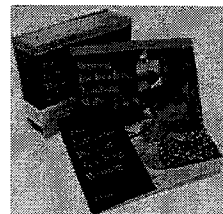
## FROM THE TEACHERS COLLEGE READING AND WRITING PROJECT



### Frequently Asked Questions

(excerpt from *Guide to the Writing Workshop*)

- Has this curriculum been piloted?
- Is there scientifically-based data vouching for the effectiveness of these curricular materials?
- If a school or district adopts the two series—*Units of Study for Primary Writing* and *Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5*—will the books within these series be enough to sustain children's growth and teachers' instruction across all the grades?
- If I teach children who have not grown up within a writing workshop, can I follow these units of study? Or do they require a foundation that I will need to provide children?
- How much time should I devote to a single unit of study? If my children do not write particularly well, or if I am new to the teaching of writing, should I extend the time frame?
- Which books and other materials do I need to purchase to support these units of study?



Units of Study for Primary Writing:  
A Yearlong Curriculum, K-2



Units of Study for Teaching  
Writing, 3-5

### Has this curriculum been piloted?

The units of study described in the two series of books—*Units of Study for Primary Writing*, and *Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5*—grew from the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project's deep, intensive and long-lasting affiliation with thousands of schools across the nation and the world. For almost three decades, my colleagues and I at the Project have collaboratively developed ideas on the teaching of writing, and then helped teachers and school leaders bring those ideas to classrooms and schools where, in turn, we learn from the young writers who help us outgrow our best-draft ideas about the teaching of writing. This cycle of curriculum development, teaching, action-research, assessment, and curricular revision has meant that for almost thirty years, those of us who are affiliated with the remarkable community that coalesces around the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project have been able to stand on the shoulders of work that has gone before us.

When the leadership of New York City decided several years ago to bring the writing workshop to every classroom throughout the city, I knew that teachers would need extra curricular support. At the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, we wrote incomplete, fast-draft versions of these units of study and distributed them in loose-leaf binders. I gave schools throughout New York City approximately 30,000 binders, each containing several hundred pages. These were trucked to the elementary and middle schools which ascribe to our Project's work. For three years now, we have watched those materials be translated into teaching and learning, and have continuously revised our thinking based on what we have learned. So yes, the series has been piloted.

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### Is there scientifically-based data vouching for the effectiveness of these curricular materials?

The only assessment measure that has been used for many years (thirty) and has been used across every state is the NAEP (National Assessment of Educational



Progress). The NAEP has often been referred to as "the nation's report card," and it has been used to compare and contrast different state exams. Several years ago the NAEP assessment found that New York City's children write as well or better than children in every other major city except Charlotte (New Yorkers jokingly question whether Charlotte qualifies as a *major* city!).

Across the nation, NAEP scores have been basically unchanging for thirty years. The current administration declared a triumph when this year's national average rose 1%. Meanwhile, scores in New York City rose a dramatic 7%, since the city's leadership brought balanced literacy and assessment-based reading interventions to scale. New York City's African-American students and English Language Learners improved in even more dramatic ways. According to the NAEP, New York City's lower income African-American and Latino children far outperformed similar studies in large cities in the nation as a whole.

From 2005 until now, NAEP has disaggregated data to show progress in ten large urban cities. From the first data point in 2002 until the most recent data in 2005, New York City has made a 10% gain. Sheila Ford, who announced the NAEP scores in a press conference in Boston, said, "This is a very significant gain." It is particularly important to bear in mind that meanwhile, New York City has 1.1 million children with 85% of them eligible for free and reduced lunch.

There is a great deal of data suggesting that improvements in writing will have a payoff across the curriculum.

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**If a school or district adopts the two series—*Units of Study for Primary Writing* and *Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5*—will the books within these series be enough to sustain children's growth and teachers' instruction across all the grades?**

The answer to this is no. These series of books were never intended to replace all the professional reading and study that teachers have been doing for all these years! You and your colleagues will absolutely need to continue to read other professional books, and you will need to continue to author your own ideas as well.

But yes, the two series of books can provide the *backbone* to a K-5 approach to the teaching of writing, bringing coherence to your schoolwide or district-wide writing curriculum.

These books absolutely support a spiral curriculum. For example, the books can help teachers of kindergartners to support children as they begin drawing, labeling, telling and writing simple Small Moment stories—and then over the years, the books will help teachers equip children to use more and more complex concepts, tools and strategies so that by fifth grade, children are not only writing sophisticated stories, they are also embedding those stories in memoir and personal essays, and using techniques developed in personal narrative to write short fiction. In a similar fashion, this spiraling curriculum supports teachers in scaffolding children's writing of expository and informational texts. The truth is that at no point will the books suffice as a script for your teaching. They are a very detailed model. They convey the story of what I (and in some instances, what colleagues of mine) did in order to teach a unit of study to a particular group of children. The books are filled with examples of my writing, with anecdotes about my dog and my family, and they are filled also with examples that come from particular children. Teachers at every grade level in a school will need to revise these lessons so they reflect you and your particular children, and so they are tailored to what your children can almost do. This means that when third-grade teachers, fourth-grade teachers, then fifth-grade teachers all rely on the books, you will at every point need to bring yourself and your kids to this model.

But if you ask whether, in general, it is appropriate for third graders to proceed through these units and then for fourth graders to revisit these units, and for fifth graders to have yet another go at them, the answer is usually yes. It is like learning to play tennis. You work on serving the ball when you are starting to learn, and again when you have been playing tennis for a year, and you still continue to work on serving the ball when you are a member of a varsity tennis team. In a similar manner, those of us who write continue to work at the same challenges, year after year. I find that the lessons I teach to third graders are very much the same lessons, tweaked a bit, that I teach to graduate students, and then when I get a bit

\* Create a  
\* monthly  
instructional  
strategy note  
to LA  
representatives.

of time, alone at my desk, these are the lessons I teach myself.

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**If I teach children who have not grown up within a writing workshop, can I follow these units of study? Or do they require a foundation that I will need to provide children?**

If your children did not participate in a writing workshop before this year, you will certainly want to start with *Launching the Writing Workshop* and proceed (for the most part) in sequence. The truth is that you will want to do this even if your children did have the benefits of a writing workshop throughout their primary grades! So the answer to your concerns is this: Don't worry. Carry on! These units were designed, knowing that this would be the case for many teachers and children.

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**How much time should I devote to a single unit of study? If my children do not write particularly well, or if I am new to the teaching of writing, should I extend the time frame?**

These units are designed to support a month-long unit of study. If you or your children are new to writing workshop, then you should expect to progress more quickly, not more slowly, through a unit of study. That is, when your children are skilled and experienced writers, they'll be able to spend more time revising and improving their draft, but if they are less experienced (or if you are), they'll probably stay closer to the pathway I've laid out.

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**Which books and other materials do I need to purchase to support these units of study?**

There is a chapter in this book which describes the pens, folders, paper and notebooks that your children will need. On the CD-ROM included with the series, you will find resources you'll use and suggestions for texts or additional materials organized on a session-by-session (day-by-day) basis. Of course, you'll want to be sure to have some children's literature. The texts that are referred to the most in this series include Sandra Cisneros' and *House on Mango Street*, Cynthia Rylant's *Every Living Thing*, an anthology of short stories, the picture books *Fireflies!* by Julie Brinkloe and Peter's *Chair* by Ezra Jack Keats.

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## ***Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3–5***

### **Tabbed Book Overview Script**

Show the complete *Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3–5*.

Highlight the picture of Lucy on the cover of *A Guide to the Writing Workshop*.

Refer to the complete *Units of Study for Primary Writing*.

Show each of the individual units of study

Thank you for the opportunity to introduce you to *Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3–5*.

Since this is a firsthand classroom resource from educators you know, trust, and depend on let's kick off this overview with a **brief introduction to the series' authors—Lucy Calkins and her colleagues from the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project.**

**For more than three decades Lucy has been teaching, researching, and writing about the teaching of reading and writing.** As an acclaimed author and literacy specialist you may know Lucy through her many books including the foundational texts, *The Art of Teaching Writing* and *The Art of Teaching Reading* or her *Units of Study for Primary Writing*; the DVD *Big Lessons from Small Writers*; and *One to One: The Art of Conferring with Young Writers*.

**Lucy is also the Founding Director of the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project at Columbia University's Teachers College.** For more than twenty-five years, the Project has been both a think tank, developing state of the art teaching methods, and a provider of professional development. This world-renowned organization is staffed by teachers and educational researchers who are committed to instigating and sustaining school-wide and system-wide educational reforms. In the course of their work Lucy Calkins and her colleagues from the Teacher's College Reading and Writing Project have helped hundreds of thousands of teachers become experts in the teaching of writing.

In 2003 they wrote an unprecedented series of books chronicling units of study for a year-long writing curriculum for primary (K–2) writers. This acclaimed series, *Units of Study for Primary Writing*, has helped launch writing workshops and advanced writing instruction across the country. Now Lucy and her colleagues are extending their writing curriculum to the upper-elementary grades with *Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3–5*.

IN A NUTSHELL, *Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3–5* offers crystal-clear advice on how to lead **strong, efficient writing workshops in upper-elementary classrooms.** Organized within a carefully crafted spiraling curriculum, the series' six sequential units of study help you teach **narrative and expository writing with increasing power and intimacy.**

Before we get into the details of individual books, let me first provide you with a **overview of the components that make up this resource.**

**UNITS OF STUDY FOR THE TEACHING OF WRITING, GRADES 3-5 CONTAINS SIX SEQUENTIAL UNITS OF STUDY.**

- Unit of Study 1 is ***Launching the Writing Workshop***
- Unit of Study 2 is ***Raising the Quality of Narrative Writing***
- Unit of Study 3 is ***Breathing Life into Essays***
- Unit of Study 4 is ***Writing Fiction: Big Dreams, Tall Ambitions***
- Unit of Study 5 is ***Literary Essays: Writing About Reading***
- Unit of Study 6 is ***Memoir: The Art of Writing Well***

Each unit of study lays out four to six weeks of instruction. Together the units provide the **teaching points, minilessons, strategies, and tools** you'll need to jump in and teach writing to your students with power and skill.

**Show A Guide to the Writing Workshop**

**Show Resources for Teaching Writing CD-ROM**

**Show A Guide to the Writing Workshop  
page v**

TWO OTHER RESOURCES PROVIDE ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT.

*A Guide to the Writing Workshop* is a comprehensive overview of the series. This volume equips you to:

- teach a productive, well-managed writing workshop,
- introduces you to the methods that underlie writing instruction, and
- helps you plan a yearlong writing curriculum.

*Resources for Teaching Writing CD-ROM* provides print and video resources to support your teaching over the course of the year and includes a full compliment of:

- homework options
- alternative minilessons
- instructional charts
- letters home
- assessment rubrics
- and much, much more.

NOW LETS TAKE A DEEPER LOOK AT EACH OF THESE COMPONENTS AND HOW THEY ARE STRUCTURED FOR SUCCESS.

We'll start where most teachers will likely start when they receive this package—the first book in the bundle, *A Guide to the Writing Workshop*. A look at this book's Table of Contents (page v) highlights some recurring themes that run throughout this series.

THE FIRST 3 CHAPTERS INTRODUCE AND CONTEXTUALIZE THE SERIES.

**Chapter 1: About the Series** is a brief introduction to the motivations and ideals behind the series and is an inspirational call to action for implementing writer's workshops.

**Chapter 2: The Foundations of a Writing Workshop** describes the shared principles and structures common to writing workshop.

**Chapter 3: The Writing Process for Upper-Elementary Grade Writers** examines the developmental needs of upper-elementary students and how they impact how you teach the writing process to eight-, nine-, and ten-year-olds.

Chapters 2 and 3 highlight **two recurring concerns that play off each other throughout the series**. This series emphasizes the importance of following **a set series of consistant principles and structures throughout the writing workshop**. At the same time instruction is constantly responding to the **idiosyncratic needs of students** and building on their unique insights and understandings.

Adhering closely to a set framework and focusing on the insights and experiences of the individual are not mutually exclusive concerns, they actually advance each other. This might be best explained in Lucy's own words.

*"If the writing workshop is always changing, always haphazard, children remain pawns waiting for their teacher's agenda. For this reason and others, I think it is so important for each day's workshop to have a clear, simple structure. Children should know what to expect. This allows them to carry on; it frees the teacher from choreographing activities and allows time for listening. How we structure the workshop is less important than that we structure it."* (*A Guide to the Writing Workshop*, page 36)

With these two recurring themes in mind lets take a look at the rest of the Table of Contents. **Chapters 5 through 8 detail the structures and rituals** that characterize a productive well-managed writing workshop. **Chapters 9–12 offer practical strategies on how you can tailor instruction** to meet the individual needs of your students and how to address the practical realities of the contemporary classroom.

NOW LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT THE OVERARCHING STRUCTURE OF THE 6 UNITS OF STUDY. As I mentioned earlier **each of the six unit books will support 4–6 weeks of writing instruction**, helping you plan goals, minilessons, independent writing time, share sessions, and assessment for that unit. These books are **sequentially organized**, with each unit building on the learning from the preceding unit.

AS WE GO THROUGH EACH UNIT NOTE HOW THE CAREFULLY-CRAFTED LEARNING PATHWAY DRAWS ON A STUDENT'S PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

**Show Unit of Study 1: *Launching the Writing Workshop***

The first unit of study, *Launching the Writing Workshop* initiates students into the structures and rituals of the writing workshop while it reviews and teaches the essentials of writing—collecting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. In addition to introducing practical strategies for finding topics and generating writing, children practice the strategy of making movies in their minds and writing so readers can picture exactly what is happening. Students also learn the value of focusing on small moments in such detail that readers feel they are experiencing the event.

**Show Unit of Study 2: *Raising the Quality of Narrative Writing***

Building on the learning from the first unit, the second unit of study, *Raising the Quality of Narrative Writing*, lingers another month on personal narrative writing. **Increasing the level of sophistication, the lessons in this unit help students write more significant, graceful personal narratives.** Students learn strategies for generating narrative entries that stand a greater chance of having emotional weight such as the first (or last) time they did something, a time they learned something, and a time they felt a strong emotion—hope, worry, sadness. Students learn how to focus their writing and how to turn timelines into cohesive, engaging story mountains.

**Show Unit of Study 3: *Breathing Life into Essays***

Having developed a heightened understanding of how to structure a compelling personal narrative, students translate these new insights into a different writing genre in Unit of Study 3, *Breathing Life into Essays* and focus on **expository writing**. Here students learn how to **craft thesis-driven essays drawn from personal experiences and expertise**. Throughout this unit students learn how to collect seed ideas, develop a thesis statement, organize their thinking into subordinate ideas, and use a range of evidence to support their argument.

**Show Unit of Study 4: *Writing Fiction: Big Dreams, Tall Ambitions***

After a month of writing essays students return to the land of narrative writing, but this time they get to write what students want to write most: short fiction. **Writing Fiction: Big Dreams, Tall Ambitions encourages students to live like fiction writer:** to collect story ideas by observing their own lives; to create characters with wants and struggles; and to use story arcs to create rising action. Children also revise their writing in significant ways. They reread with various lenses, including looking for “cardboard characters” and thinking about ways to ground their stories in a well-developed setting.

**Show Unit of Study 5: *Literary Essays: Writing About Reading***

In the fifth unit of study students draw on what they have learned about writing stories to read stories well. They use what they learned in the personal essay unit to help them craft analytical essays that respond to literature. **Literary Essays: Writing About Reading models how literary essayists observe a text closely;** craft a thesis statement that reflects their personal view of a story; and collect and “unpack” evidence from the text to support their argument.

**Show Unit of Study 6: *Memoir: The Art of Writing Well***

The writing of memoir is the last and biggest writing project of the year. ***Memoir: The Art of Writing Well* invites children to search for Life Topics, the recurring themes found in their writing.** To focus on these big ideas and write with greater depth, students apply such

strategies as writing-to-learn and writing about a topic from several perspectives. As in the previous units, students turn to published texts to consider other strategies for writing in depth and to get ideas for ways to structure their own texts. Students also consider the expressive potential of internal timelines and emblematic details and how to create metaphors and meaning from tiny details.

In addition to these six Units of Study, *A GUIDE TO THE WRITING WORKSHOP* DESCRIBES ALTERNATIVE UNITS OF STUDY YOU MAY WANT TO CONSIDER AND PROVIDES DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS ON WAYS TO DEVELOP YOUR OWN HOMEGROWN UNITS OF STUDY. (See Chapter 9, “Authoring Your Own Units of Study.”)

It is important to remember that the goal of these six units of study is to **help you watch thoughtful, reflective teaching in ways that enable you to extrapolate guidelines and methods, so that on another day you’ll feel ready to invent your own teaching.** A detailed look at a specific session will help you understand how the sessions are structured to achieve this overarching goal. For our detailed session walkthrough we’ll take a look at Unit of Study 1, *Launching the Writing Workshop*, Session 15, “Developing the Heart of a Story,” pages 157–167.

### Show Unit of Study 1: *Launching the Writing Workshop*

#### Tab 1: page 157

Each unit of study contains 14 to 18 sessions. The regular structure of each session provides a coherent framework on which to build your own curriculum.

Each session opens with the support you need to get started.

- **In This Session** provides a concise summary of the session.
- **Getting Ready** lists the materials needed to teach each session.

Each session also opens with an **INTRODUCTION** that describes the thinking behind the session and explains its place in the larger curriculum.

THE NEXT PAGE INTRODUCES SOME KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS WORTHY OF NOTE:

- One important feature introduced here is **Lucy’s side-column coaching commentary.** The side column of each session allows Lucy to whisper professional insights into your ear as you picture the teaching. Lucy coaches you:
  - to realize why she’s taught the way she has,
  - to see other choices she could have made,
  - to notice the aspects of today’s teaching that are transferable to other days,
  - to understand ways one day’s teaching stands on the shoulders of previous days, and
  - to consider ways the teaching could be adapted for children with different needs.
- The **boldface guidelines** that subdivide a session outline the session’s **teaching moves.** These clear, scannable guidelines provide a step-by-step framework that you can easily follow if you choose to teach with the text open on your desk or lap.
- The **running text** between the boldface guidelines **models the teaching language** and chronicles the classroom discussions that bring a session to life. Developed in hundreds of classrooms, this language has been crafted for optimum effectiveness. **The specificity of the narrative allows for a sort of DEMONSTRATION TEACHING.** You can listen in on and observe Lucy as she is teaching.

After the Introduction, the next part of a session is a brief **MINILESSON** that inspires and rallies students to apply the strategy or concept to be learned. Lucy describes minilessons as rather like the huddles in the midst of a football game or like the gathering of art students around one person’s easel. Each of these gatherings contains a mix of informality, clarity, and

urgency.

Each minilesson is sub-divided into four components

- CONNECTION
- TEACHING
- ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT
- LINK

The **CONNECTION** stage of a minilesson begins by **linking a session to students' prior learning**. Oftentimes this involves explicitly stating how the day's lesson builds on a previous session. **Then the Connection clearly states the teaching point**, helping students focus on what they will learn that day.

Tab 2: page 159

The second phase of a this minilesson begins on the next page. In the **TEACHING** phase of the Minilesson the teacher shows children how writers go about doing whatever is being taught. Usually this involves a demonstration, which the teacher sets up and explains. Providing the instructional language of the lesson, this Teaching component chronicles Lucy's conversation with her students and the discussion of the writing sample.

HERE ARE TWO OTHER SPECIAL DESIGN ELEMENTS THAT SUPPORT EACH SESSION.

- A rich array of **student writing samples supports each session**. These samples, rendered in the students own handwriting, document their struggle to express a feeling or experience. As primary source documents, these samples vividly highlight how students edit and revise their work. *Full-size versions of many of the student writing samples are included on the Resources for Teaching Writing CD-ROM. You can download and use them for class discussions.*
- Transcripts of the **student writing samples in distinct easy-to-read type** are also seamlessly integrated it into the narrative.

Tab 3: page 161

The **ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT** part of a Minilesson gives children a chance to **practice (for a minute) what has just been taught**. The teacher scaffolds their work so they can be successful. During Active Engagement Lucy oftentimes sets children up to be able to work successfully with what is essentially a whole-class text. Because they are all working with the same text for a moment or two, they are better able to learn from each other's work. In this Active Engagement, Lucy has her students collaborate on the revision of a miniature exercise text. This shared activity immediately involves the students in applying the strategy and builds momentum for the writing time that will follow.

Minilessons conclude with a **LINK** where the teacher **crystallizes what has been taught**, adding it to children's growing repertoire. Children are reminded that today's lesson pertains not only to today, but to every day. To help her students apply their new learning to their ongoing work, Lucy uses this Link to review the steps for using this revision strategy and then she encourages them to be job captains for themselves and consider if and when they will apply the strategy to their own writing.

Tab 4: page 163

After a minilesson each session contains a **WRITING and CONFERRING** feature. Writing and Conferring provides tips and ideas for making the most of **one-to-one conferences and small-group strategies**. As Lucy says,

**"Conferences are essential: when a teacher talks with a child about the child's rough drafts, the child internalizes this conversation and, in the end, is able to talk with himself or herself in the midst of writing. The writing process, in a sense, is an internalized conversation that occurs within any skilled writer."**

It is inevitable that in the midst of a writing workshop, a teacher will want to interrupt the hum of the workshop to teach the entire class. Often this teaching builds upon the minilesson. For this purpose **MID-WORKSHOP TEACHING POINTS** are a regular component halfway through each session. Most mid-workshop teaching points either **extend what children are working on or corrects the course of their work**.

Every writing workshop ends with a **SHARE**. This provides one more opportunity to sneak in some pointers. Usually during the share, Lucy will highlight one child's work in a way that creates a trail that others can follow, and then she'll channel each child toward a **productive conversation with his or her writing partner**.

Tab 5: page 165

The Share phase of a session concludes with a **HOMEWORK** option and a **TAILORING YOUR TEACHING** strategy.

- The **Homework** feature at the conclusion of each session suggests ways students can **extend the concept or strategy at home**. Written to be read by children, homework options always include a pep talk (a miniature minilesson) and sometimes include exemplar work. *Homework options are also provided in a modifiable format on the Resources for Teaching Writing CD-ROM.*
- **Tailoring Your Teaching** helps you adapt minilessons to the ability and interests of your students. Some suggestions are ways to reteach the session's key concepts. Others are ways to adjust your curriculum to reinforce and deepen your students' understandings as they revisit minilessons in the second or third year of study. *Lucy Calkins and co-author Kathy Collins offer additional follow-up minilessons on the Resources for Teaching Writing CD-ROM.*

Tab 6: page 167

ONE OF THREE SPECIAL FEATURES CLOSES EACH SESSION: **MECHANICS, COLLABORATING WITH COLLEAGUES, AND ASSESSMENT**

- **MECHANICS** provides you with practical and also inspirational ways to deepen your students' understanding of the **conventions of written language**. These sections help you teach spelling, punctuation, syntax, and vocabulary both within the writing workshop and during word-study time. *The Mechanics features from each unit, as well as the mechanics instruction within each session, are listed on the Resources for Teaching Writing CD-ROM.*
- **COLLABORATING WITH COLLEAGUES** highlights ways that you and your colleagues can use study-group time productively in support of this unit.
- **ASSESSMENT** suggests lenses you might use at this particular time in your children's development and helps you imagine ways to make sense of what you will probably see.

Tab 7: page 133

Tab 8: page 178

Tab 9: inside backcover

Assessments occur in little and big ways throughout a unit of study. Sometimes they are quick interventions focused on a specific concrete topic. Other times they are big unit-level rubrics. **ASSESSMENT RUBRICS** are provided at the end of each unit of study and **present clearly specified goals that help you assess each child's progress and your own teaching**. *These Assessment Rubrics are also provided on the Resources for Teaching Writing CD-ROM.*

THAT IS THE REGULAR STRUCTURE THAT FRAMES EACH SESSION. Just as the clear, simple structure of the writing workshop helps children know what to expect, allowing



them to carry on independently, the consistent, coherent framework of each session will help you internalize these effective methods for teaching writing. By detailing the way Lucy teaches writing

- the choices she makes (or could make),
- the theories and experience she draws on, and
- the resources she uses—

**each unit of study will enable you to extrapolate guidelines and methods so that you will feel ready to invent your own clear, sequenced, vibrant instruction in writing.**

### **Show *Resources for Teaching Writing* CD-ROM**

There is one more resource in this curriculum that we have touched on but that deserves special attention, it is the *Resources for Teaching Writing* CD-ROM. As I have already mentioned the *Resources for Teaching Writing* CD-ROM provides print and video resources to support your teaching over the course of the year. That includes:

- **Homework** options in a modifiable format
- full-size versions of the **Student Writing** samples
- **Tailoring Your Teaching** strategies (alternative minilessons) and
- each unit's **Assessment Rubric**

In addition the CD-ROM also provides:

- The **instructional charts** from each session in a modifiable format.
- Customizable **letters home** that describe each unit of study and communicate to parents the important work students are doing.
- **Bibliographies** of professional and children's literature

**Plus, video clips allow you to watch Lucy teach and confer with students.**

That is an overview of *Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3–5*. But just like in learning how to write, you will learn more by actively practicing a strategy rather than listening to someone else describe it, and since this program is designed for educators who learn best by simply getting started, I encourage you to jump in and try a few sessions on your own.

## Units of Study for Primary Writing

### Session Structure

- Introduction
- Minilesson
- Time to Confer
- Mid-Workshop
- Teaching Point
- After-the-Workshop
- Share
- If Children Need More Time
- Assessment
- Assessment Rubric

# Units of Study for Primary Writing

## Introduction

- shares thinking behind each session
- explains sessions place in larger curriculum
- lists needed materials

### SESSION II



## DISCOVERING ONE SMALL MOMENT

### GETTING READY

- Focused vignette from your everyday life; plan how to tell the story of this moment briefly, yet in a way that moves through time (first this happened, then this, and finally this) and includes a detail or two
- Text you used in yesterday's minilesson (perhaps it was *A Chair for My Mother*)
- Little pad and pencil to write what the children say
- Examples of stories that children can judge—Small Moment story or not?
- See CD-ROM for resources

YOU WILL HAVE READ THROUGH YOUR CHILDREN'S WORK and, in your mind, you'll have a long list of wishes for your kids. You'll wish they'd

- Draw more representationally
- Write more focused narratives
- Write more in addition to drawing
- Use their time more wisely
- Focus on writing more than on handwriting

You are wise to wish these things for your writers, but don't show children your feelings if you are discouraged. For now, instead of tackling all the problems, immerse the class in rich examples of what you hope they'll do. Act as if all is going splendidly, even if it isn't yet. Find the good in the classroom even if you know you are overlooking the problems that are really there. Many of the problems will go away with more time. The others, the ones that persist, can be addressed a few days from now when a "We need to fix things that are awry" tone won't deflate the energy in your room.

To follow up on Session I, then, you may decide to demonstrate how you go about writing a *Small Moment* across the pages in a booklet. Let children in on your thinking by demonstrating how you focus on just a *Small Moment* and then envision (or remember) that moment so that you can draw and write with detail.

In this session, you will write a story in the air that zooms in on one moment, demonstrating thinking hard and picturing the moment while you put it on the page.

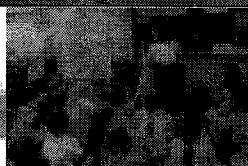


PERSONA

# Units of Study for Primary Writing

## Minilesson

- 10–15 minute lesson
- rally students to apply strategy
- 4-step plan—connect, teach, active engagement, link



### THE MINILESSON

#### Connection

Remind the class that they already saw how an author took a Small Moment and turned it into a story. Tell them that today, they can watch you do this.

"Yesterday, we saw that Vera Williams decided to write about what happened when she saw her apartment was on fire. We noticed that she didn't tell about the whole day. She told about one little part of the day. She told about walking home from buying shoes, then turning the corner, then seeing the fire truck. Today, I'll show you how I write about Small Moments in my life because all of you will be doing that, too."

#### Teaching

Write publicly, modeling whatever you want to highlight about the writing process. Show that you could have approached this writing with a broad topic in mind, but that, no, you instead zoom in on a more focused topic.

"I could write about all the things I did with my dog Tucker yesterday. But no, I am going to zoom in on just how I gave Tucker a bath! Writers do that. We zoom in on just a small part."

Model how writers envision their stories in their minds and sketch the stories, bit by bit, across pages.

"So I'm remembering giving Tucker a shampoo."



I am demonstrating by writing publicly. It is almost as if I take the top off my head and let children see the wheels in my brain turn. But, of course, the strategies I spotlight for kids aren't necessarily those that I actually use as I (as an adult) write. Instead I demonstrate and highlight strategies I see as within grasp of the kids.

Here I use a phrase over and over that I hope will become part of the writing vocabulary in the classroom. Writers "zoom in on Small Moments." I find it helps to make a funneling motion with my hands in to help children understand the term "zooming in."

Be sure your selected moment is an ordinary one to which children can relate. Perhaps when it was time to go to school you couldn't find your shoe, looked all over, and found it in a weird place. Perhaps you were making cookies and didn't have an ingredient so you substituted something different instead—and it turned out okay, or awful. You'll probably want your story to contain a problem that gets resolved (although don't say this to kids). It's great if even these very small stories have some emotional content. Children will respond to a story in

## Units of Study for Primary Writing

### Mid-Workshop Teaching Point

- mini-minilessons halfway through writing time
- extends what students are working on –or–
- corrects the course of student work

the moment you are writing about." I paused and did this, signaling for them to do so as well. "Thumbs up if you are remembering that one time. Can you picture in your mind what happened first . . . and then next? Thumbs up if you can. Okay, Sofie, you can get started writing your story. Jason, Krishna, off you go. Remember to make a movie in your mind, then draw and write. Okay, Evan. . . ."

#### MID-WORKSHOP TEACHING POINT

**Stop the class to celebrate that one student decided to stay with his piece, adding more to it, stretching it out.**

"Class, may I stop you? I have to tell you about a great thing I saw Sergio do today. When I was conferring with him, he was about to stop the book he was working on about a basketball game and start a new book. But then Sergio reread his piece and decided to *stay with* his basketball story. He decided to say more about what happened during his basketball game. He didn't have room in his booklet, so I showed him how to tape on lines so that he could keep stretching out his Small Moment. It's an incredible thing that Sergio, who is only five years old, is doing just like real writers do, adding more paper to say more about his story! Sergio, I am so happy you decided to stay with your piece and not just jump into a new story. Children, if any of you want to stay with a book for longer like Sergio has done and you need lines, just ask me or Angel's mom and we will help you."

*thoughts. Simply taking time to recall, and doing this in front of kids, makes an impression.*

*You are lucky indeed if you can recruit some of your children's parents to help in a writing workshop.*

*When I make such a fuss about the amazing thing Sergio has done, it's totally clear that others will do likewise. Sergio taped a small strip of paper containing a few blank lines onto his paper, then filled the lines up with print. I suggest that Angel's mom can help children tape similar flaps onto their papers.*



# Units of Study for Primary Writing

## Time to Confer

- tips and ideas for one-to-one conferences
- model and personalize writing strategies



### TIME TO CONFER

Each day, as your writers work, they draw on a growing repertoire of what you have taught them to do. By now, they will have learned to choose topics that are narratives; to plan their stories in their minds and, as they turn the pages of a booklet, to draw and then add even more detail; to say what they'll write and then locate the first word from the sentence; to say that word slowly, isolating and recording the first sound; and more. All of this is at their disposal, and you hope they draw on each strategy as needed.

The truth is your task is similar. You also have a growing repertoire of what you can do, and you, also, need to draw on whatever seems appropriate from that repertoire. If you ever feel empty-handed as a teacher of writing, recall earlier minilessons or earlier conferences, and remember today's work should incorporate all you've learned on previous days. Keep in mind that old lessons need to be relearned over and over. The writers in your care will seem able to do something, but then when they move on to tackle more complex tasks, they will probably no longer be able to do what once seemed easy. For example, children at this level still need to be able to finish one piece and start another without teacher intervention. They still need to go back to finished work and add details. They still need to be willing to approximate, to say, "I'll do the best I can and keep going." Meanwhile, however, try one also focusing on writing sequential narratives.



These conferences in *The Conferencing Handbook* may be especially helpful today:

- "Will You Touch Each Page and Say What You'll Write?"
- "Let Me Help You Put Some Words Down"
- "As a Reader, I'd Love to Hear More About That"

Also, if you have *Conferencing with Primary Writers*, you may want to refer to the conferences in part two.



# Units of Study for Primary Writing

## After-the-Workshop Share

- students regroup for closing point
- celebrates exemplary student work
- fosters conversations with writing partners



### AFTER-THE-WORKSHOP SHARE

Call children together on the carpet. Tell them that a lot of children have asked you, "Is this a *Small Moment*?"

"Today a lot of you have come up to me and showed me your story, asking, 'Is this okay?' I think you meant, 'Is this a *Small Moment*?' Today I want to teach you how you can be a writing teacher for each other! When Sam brings me his story and says, 'Is this a *Small Moment*?' I listen and ask myself: Is it a *true story*? Is it about a *Small Moment*? Does it make sense?"

Ask students to judge if a story is a *Small Moment* by listening to examples.

"Can you all be writing teachers with me today? Let's listen to Sam's story and then let's ask ourselves those three questions. Listen to Sam's story."

I went to the museum. We saw big, big dinosaurs. I touched one with my hand. Then I went home.

"So if Sam asked you, 'What do you think? Is this a *Small Moment* story?' What could you say? Does it do these three things?"

James: "It is true and when he touched it, it is a *Small Moment*."

Tiffany: "But it's a different time, when he went home. Maybe you could leave that out."

"I loved that detail about the touch too. Now let's listen to Nicholas's story and again, you will be a writing teachers. Ask yourself, 'Is it a *true story*? Is it about a *Small Moment*? Does it make sense?'" [Fig. 11-1]

"Tell your friend whether this is a *true story* about a *Small Moment*. Does it make sense?"

The children turned to talk, and most agreed that yes, Nicholas' story fit the bill as a *Small Moment* story.

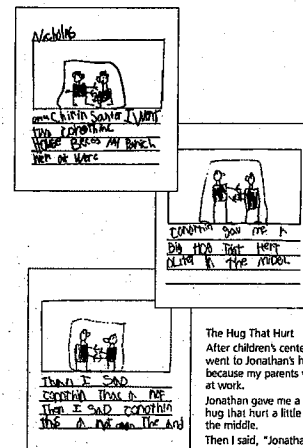


Fig. 11-1 Nicholas

The Hug That Hurt  
After children's center I  
went to Jonathan's house  
because my parents were  
at work.  
Jonathan gave me a big  
hug that hurt a little in  
the middle.  
Then I said, "Jonathan,  
that's enough." Then I  
said, "Jonathan, that's  
enough again." The end.

As often as you can, involve children in assessing their own narratives. This is a powerful way to teach children to apply criteria.

## Units of Study for Primary Writing

### If Children Need More Time

- reinforce session's concept or strategy
- helps adapt minilessons to differentiate instruction



#### IF CHILDREN NEED MORE TIME

- ▶ Repeat the same minilesson using another vignette from your life. We offered suggestions for finding Small Moment stories from your own life during the teaching component of this minilesson.
- ▶ Tell children the story of one time when you were going to write a Small Moment. Angle the story of your writing in a way that shows your children that you had to learn whatever it is you want them to learn. For example, perhaps your children seem to value only grand topics such as birthdays, sleepovers, or big trips, and you want to show that everyday life is worth writing about. Retell your own writing life to show how you got past this problem. "Let me show you what happened when I was learning to write Small Moment stories," you might say. "I thought, 'Hmm. What would be a great story?' And, I remembered long, long, long, ago when I went on an airplane trip to Disneyland. But my writing teacher said to me, 'Lucy, don't write about a Huge Trip that happened long ago. Write about a little moment that happened today, or yesterday.' And I said, 'Not much happened.' And he said, 'A million Small Moments happened.' And you know what—he was right. We made a list. I woke up and the sun was shining so I put my pillow over my head. (That's one moment, one story.) I made a pile of pancakes for breakfast, but my dog climbed up in my chair and ate them! (That's another moment, another story.)"
- ▶ You may want to slow down and make more of the concept of zooming in. Make or show a wide-angle picture and contrast it with a zoomed-in one of the same scene. You could use Istvan Banyai's picture book, *Zoom*, to make your point.



# Units of Study for Primary Writing

## Assessment

- highlights developmental markers
- strategies for monitoring student work
- tips for guiding instruction

### ASSESSMENT

#### Productivity

Take your children's folders home and look through the work they've accomplished in this new unit. Look with a range of different lenses.

One lens you'll want to use is the lens of productivity. How much work has each child produced since the unit began, and what do you make of this? When you look through each and every child's work you'll see work that hasn't had the benefit of one-to-one instruction. "How could she have accomplished so little?" you'll ask yourself. Sometimes you won't find any rationale for her disappointing work. You will wrack your brains, trying to remember the child's behavior during writing time.

The truth is, sometimes children have started, abandoned, and discarded work. Those pieces may be in the trash, and this is why it looks as if they've done nothing. Other times children have been socializing so much during writing time that they haven't gotten a lot of writing done. Then, too, sometimes the intricacies of the illustrations have lured children away from writing. You'll want to address these issues.

#### Sequential Narratives

Another lens you'll want to use is that of sequence. Can your able children write sequential narratives?

- Some children regard their sentences as captions not stories. On page after page, these children might write, "Here I am . . ." or "This is my mom. . . ." You'll want to intervene and get these children telling and then writing stories.
- Some children (like Henry [Fig. II-2]) will have written all about subjects listing their attributes rather than retelling what happened one time. Gather a small group of children who do this and point out that a writer could write all about the meeting area (listing descriptors) or the writer could tell what happened first, next, and next in a meeting area.

You'll want to use other lenses as well to look at children's work. How are children doing with high frequency words? With word endings? With writing in lowercase letters? With punctuation? With endings to their stories? Examining student work through any of these lenses can prove helpful. If I study this particular story by Danielle, for example, these are the things I notice.

- I can read her writing and so can she. [Fig. II-3]
- Danielle for the most part represents the major sounds in a word with a letter that is well chosen (if not correct). For example, she spells *tired* as *tard*.
- She fills up the space given to her (suggesting to me that steering her toward paper that contains another two lines for print would be great).
- She doesn't rely on sight words much.
- She is a fearless writer, generating content with no worry for the spelling consequences.

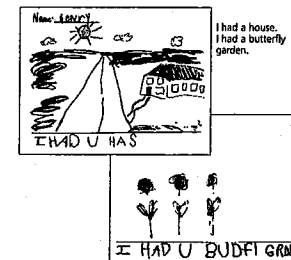


Fig. II-2 Henry



# Units of Study for Primary Writing

## Assessment Rubric

- unit-level assessment
- presents clearly specified goals
- assess student progress and your teaching

### Assessment Rubric for *Small Moments: Personal Narrative Writing*

Monitoring Children's Progress  
Recording Your Teaching

		1	2	3	4	5
Attitude	The child shows eagerness and confidence when asked to "write" small-moment narratives that each span several pages. She seems happy and confident at the prospect of writing personal narratives, even if the nature of her work may not yet be what we are hoping to see. That is, her narratives may not actually be narratives, but at least the child feels great about being one who does this sort of work.					
Planning	The child generates ideas for personal narrative writing without difficulty, showing a growing awareness that the episodes of her life make great material for writing. Ideally, she thinks about writing when she's not writing, pointing out that this episode or that one would make a good story if this doesn't yet happen, at least when we interact with the child, she is readily able to think of things that have happened in her life and to imagine turning these into stories. When nudged to do so (if not independently), she plans how her story will go by saying the text aloud (perhaps while touching one page and then the next as she says the story while turning the pages, or by "reading" the pictures).					
Independence	The child often generates a topic, draws pictures to accompany her story, and writes her name and some of the accompanying text (even if it is just a label) without needing a teacher or another adult to coax her along. She can and often does work on her writing for at least 20 minutes. She is able to access supplies, to store her writing, and to decide whether she's done with a piece or wants to continue to work on it without needing help from a teacher.					
Purpose	The child regards the writing workshop as a time to communicate meaning and, more specifically, to share stories. She uses any means at her disposal to capture a story onto the page, drawing and writing and telling the story. She may show a growing interest in sharing the work with others.					
Genre	The child can develop a narrative or retelling that contains at least two appropriately-sequenced events that readers can reconstruct (perhaps with help from oral commentary by the writer).					
Productivity	The child shows some effort to close narratives, even if it is simply a page that says, "And then I went home" or "That's all" or "Goodbye."					
Graphophonics	The child works productively every day in the writing workshop so that by the end of this unit she has written approximately 8-10 personal narratives, each involving several pages of pictures and text. The more skilled writer will write longer, longer texts than the less skilled writer. The child shows progress from the end of Unit 1 in her ability to write words as best she can. She knows that a writer breathes a stream of thought into words and isolates a word in order to write it, then says that word slowly, listening for the sounds and recording the sounds she hears. She knows at least a few sight words well and spells these with ease. The child may do any one of the following, but whatever she does, it represents an obvious step ahead from the preceding month: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The child makes writing-like marks that show a growing knowledge of concepts of print. They go left to right, top to bottom, contain alphabet letters, etc.</li> <li>The child labels items in the drawing, mostly using initial consonants. If the child hears a sound but doesn't know the letter that matches the sound, she either approximates as best she can or solicits help from a peer. The child may or may not write strings of letters on lines at the bottom of pages, but she generates and tells a rich oral story to accompany her drawing. With help from others, the child hears more sounds so her labels will contain more than a single letter.</li> <li>The child labels items with initial and, often, final or medial sounds. She incorporates a few known words (mom, me). With help, she can write a sentence under a picture (as well as continuing to write labels on her drawings.)</li> <li>The child can independently write a sentence under her picture. The letters are not random, but they may appear that way because various things (no spaces between words, limited sound-letter knowledge, few high frequency words) make the writing difficult to read. The child learns, with help, to leave spaces (or if need be, slashes) between words. The child learns, with help, to provide readers with more letters, so that her writing becomes easier to read.</li> <li>The child writes in a way that is conventional enough that the child and the teacher can often reread the text. The child rereads, with urging and help, while monitoring for one-to-one matching, revising to make the actual text more closely match the intended text.</li> <li>The child rereads her text without urging. She self-corrects as she does so.</li> <li>The child shows an increasing attention to conventions of print, such as end punctuation, correct spelling, word endings, appropriate use of upper- and lowercase letters.</li> </ul>					
Writing Process	The child plans for writing and drafts with independence. With teacher encouragement, the child is eager to revise, probably by inserting new detail into the drawing and/or the text. The child may learn she can reschedule pages that are in a letter-skitter order or take away pages that "don't go."					
Qualities of Good Writing Language	The writer shows some awareness of author's craft by employing strategies such as focus and sequence ("stretching out a small moment and making it big"), detail, and time cue words. The child tries to give her narrative a "good" ending. Ideally the written text reflects the lift of the child's oral or literary language. This may not happen yet. Across the day, if not in the writing, there are times when the child tells stories using story language.					
Reading	The child will be able to find and recognize "Small Moments" and "Many Moments" stories and use them to guide and structure her own writing.					

This rubric can also be found on the CD-ROM Resources for Primary Writing.

## Units of Study for Primary Writing

# Instructional Design / Features

- **boldface guidelines frame instructional steps**
- **running texts model teaching language**
- **Lucy's coaching commentary**



### THE MINILESSON

#### Connection

**Remind the class that they already saw how an author took a Small Moment and turned it into a story. Tell them that today, they can watch you do this.**

"Yesterday, we saw that Vera Williams decided to write about what happened when she saw her apartment was on fire. We noticed that she didn't tell about the whole day. She told about one little part of the day. She told about walking home from buying shoes, then turning the corner, then seeing the fire truck. Today, I'll show you how I write about Small Moments in my life because all of you will be doing that, too."

#### Teaching

**Write publicly, modeling whatever you want to highlight about the writing process. Show that you could have approached this writing with a broad topic in mind, but that, no, you instead zoom in on a more focused topic.**

"I could write about all the things I did with my dog Tucker yesterday. But no, I am going to zoom in on just how I gave Tucker a bath! Writers do that. We zoom in on just a small part."

**Model how writers envision their stories in their minds and sketch the stories, bit by bit, across pages.**

"So I'm remembering giving Tucker a shampoo."



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*brain turn. But, of course, the strategies I spotlight for kids aren't necessarily those that I actually use as I (as an adult) write. Instead I demonstrate and highlight strategies I see as within grasp of the kids.*

*Here I use a phrase over and over that I hope will become part of the writing vocabulary in the classroom. Writers "zoom in on Small Moments." I find it helps to make a funneling motion with my hands in to help children understand the term "zooming in."*

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# Units of Study for Primary Writing

## Instructional Design / Features

### Student writing samples

- highlight the transition from pictorial story telling to emergent writing
- accompanying translation reinforce student intentions

Call children together on the carpet. Tell them that a lot of children have asked you, "Is this a Small Moment?"

"Today a lot of you have come up to me and showed me your story, asking, 'Is this okay?' I think you meant, 'Is this a *Small Moment*?' Today I want to teach you how you can be a writing teacher for each other! When Sam brings me his story and says, 'Is this a Small Moment?' I listen and ask myself: Is it a *true story*? Is it about a *Small Moment*? Does it make sense?"

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"So if Sam asked you, 'What do you think? Is this a *Small Moment* story?' What could you say? Does it do these three things?"

James: "It is true and when he touched it, it is a *Small Moment*."

Tiffany: "But it's a different time, when he went home. Maybe you could leave that out."

"I loved that detail about the touch too. Now, let's listen to Nicholas's story and again, you will be a writing teachers. Ask yourself, 'Is it a true story? Is it about a *Small Moment*? Does it make sense?'" [Fig. II-1]

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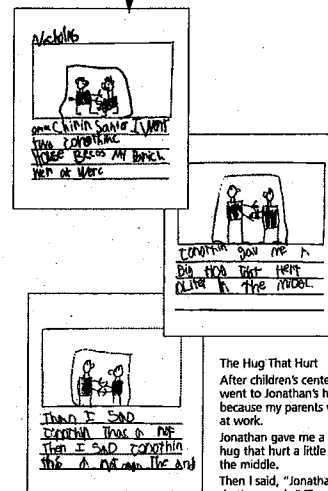


Fig. II-1 Nicholas

The Hug That Hurt  
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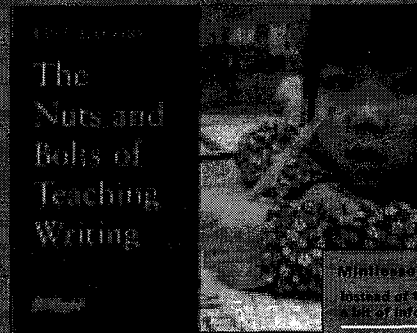


# Units of Study for Primary Writing

## Built-In Professional Support

### *The Nuts and Bolts of Teaching Writing*

- writing workshop rituals and structures
- writers' developmental stages
- tips for working with English language learners



#### Writing on Teaching: Information and a Tip

Instead of teaching only a lot of information . . . I try to teach strategies . . .

When I start topics (before their words)

Nonfiction texts contain certain features: table of contents, subtopics, chapters.

When you are spelling out a word and you come to the place where there are no more sounds, that's the end of the word. Leave a little space—a resting place—then go to the next word.

When writing nonfiction on a big topic, it helps to plan out the different subtopics you might address, and to list those in a table of contents that might look like this (show one). Then, inside any one chapter, it helps to plan out the different subtopics and to almost make little chapters—or subsections—inside that chapter.

When we write, we often think first of a very big topic (getting a dog, for example). Before we actually start writing, however, it helps to think, "What are the particular parts (or incidents) within that big topic?" After listing these, we often choose just one as the focused topic for our text (for example, getting a dog is like getting a new brother). Then every paragraph addresses that one focused idea.

Schedule 1	
8:30 - 9:00	Arrival, sign in, talk
9:00 - 9:45	Morning Meeting (topic, picture book or poems, shared reading of the day, schedule, phonemic awareness, alphabet work with names, etc.)
9:45 - 10:15	Writing Workshop (two-minute minilesson, forty-minute work time, hand signal by five-minute mid-workshop advice, and ten-minute share)
10:15 - 10:45	Choice (dramatic play, blocks, alphabet center, art)
10:45 - 11:15	Phonics (includes shared reading and interactive writing)
11:15 - 11:45	Reading Workshop (minilesson that includes shared reading or a mini-lesson, private reading, partner reading or conferencing—confirming, guiding, reading, and strategy lessons occur simultaneously)
11:45 - 12:30	Lunch & recess
12:30 - 1:00	Thematic studies (may include interactive writing, shared reading, or reading aloud)
1:00 - 1:40	Special (dance, drama, science, art)
1:40 - 2:30	Math (includes calendar work some people do not do at start of day)
2:30 - 3:00	Read-aloud and book talk

# Units of Study for Primary Writing

## Built-In Professional Support

### Resources for Primary Writing CD-ROM

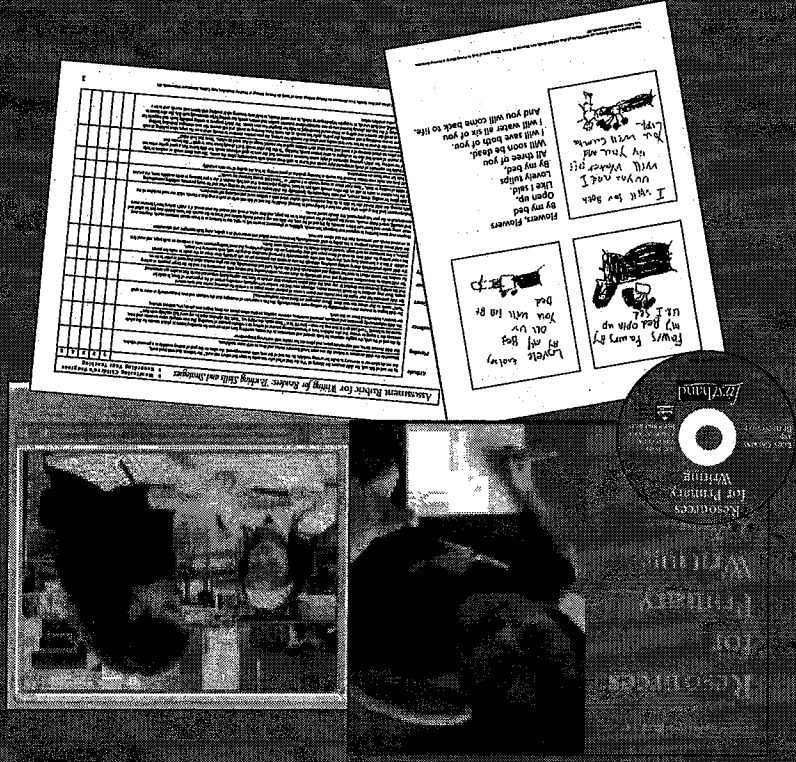
- video clips of

- co-authors teaching

- unit-by-unit print

- resources include

- reproducibles, charts
- and rubrics

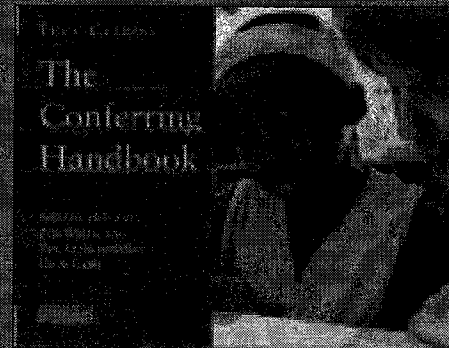


## Units of Study for Primary Writing

### Built-In Professional Support

#### ***The Conferring Handbook***

- 3 conferences per unit /  
21 fundamental one-to-one  
conferences
- 4-step plan:  
research, decide, teach, link
- includes prompts, exact  
language, and examples



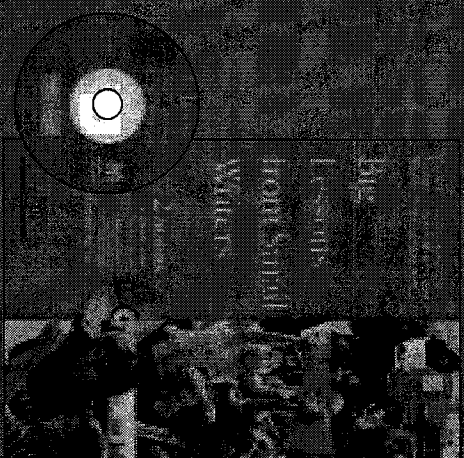


## Units of Study for Primary Writing

# Additional Professional Development

*à la carte options*

- DVD shows live from the classroom teaching
- seminars and workshops by Heinemann PD
- Teachers College affiliation



for more information visit  
[www.unitsofstudy.com](http://www.unitsofstudy.com)



Units of Study for Teaching Writing (K-2 and 3-5)  
**Developmental Differences**

**Grades K-2**

- **more one-to-one conferring**
- **Conferring Handbook**
- 21 fundamental conferences**



Units of Study for Teaching Writing (K-2 and 3-5)

## Developmental Differences

### Grades 3-5

- homework options
- new features focus on
  - assessment
  - mechanics
  - collaboration

guidelines for designing units of study