

Genre Study Routines

Narrative

Immersion/Planting the Seed (weeks one and two):

1. Teacher introduces the idea of narrative text structure
2. Teacher finds, sorts, and reads short touchstone narratives and examine their structures with the class
3. Students create a list of seed ideas in their writing notebooks, such as journeys, special events, and memories triggered by personal or family artifacts, or complete a memory wheel (a circle with at least four quadrants labeled with “a happy time,” “a sad time,” “an angry time,” “a frightened time,” “a first time,” or “a last time”) by including an illustration and associated caption in each quadrant
4. Teacher introduces genre focus—the personal narrative
5. Students read exemplary personal narratives from student-relevant materials such as *My Apron: A Story from My Childhood* (Eric Carle), *Letting Swift River Go* (Jane Yolen), *Always My Dad* (Sharon Wyeth), *Tree of Cranes* (Allen Say), *The House on Mango Street* (Sandra Cisneros), and *When I Was Your Age: Original Stories About Growing Up* (Amy Ehrlich)
6. Class creates chart listing key elements of a personal narrative

Planning/Growing the Seed (weeks three and four):

1. Students identify a seed idea which would permit them to draft a personal narrative like those examined
2. Students conduct partner interviews to identify potential readers’ interest and questions about the selected idea—record notes in writing notebook
3. Students make double-column entries in the writing notebook to record characters, settings, and events on one side and thoughts, feelings, actions, and dialogue associated with each on the other side
4. Students record responses to key questions in writing notebook:
 - a. How does this affect me now and do I really care about it?
 - b. What is something important about me my reader will learn?
 - c. What are my interesting beginning, middle, and end parts of my story?
 - d. What is my conflict or “hot spot” and how do I plan to make it dramatic?
5. Teacher introduces key phrases for narrative writing (e.g., the next day, later that night, eventually, after awhile, never before)
6. Teacher introduces, examines, and demonstrates how to use various leads for a personal narrative (e.g., a flashback, a snapshot, a dialogue exchange, internal monologue)
7. Students plan the paper using a planning sheet such as a timeline, flowchart, story board, or some other graphic organizer

Drafting/Growing the Seed (week five):

1. Students continue to plan using the planning sheet
2. Students flash-draft (quickly write) each part of the paper (i.e., the beginning, middle, and end) separately to avoid over-investment in the draft and a reluctance to revise (but expectations for a best first draft should be communicated)

Revising/Pruning & Grafting (weeks six and seven):

1. Teacher models and helps students identify and cut irrelevant information
2. Teacher models and helps students add additional details to "thin" parts (using carets or numbered notes)
3. Teacher models and helps students zoom in on the story's "hot spot" and flesh it out
4. Students revise a minimum of three times, first independently, then with a peer, and then with the teacher

Editing/Pruning & Grafting (week eight):

1. Teacher models and then students use an editing checklist
2. Students edit a minimum of two times, first independently and then with a peer
3. Students check spelling by reading the text aloud backwards

Publishing & Celebration/Garden Show (week nine):

1. Students decide on a format for the narrative, such as a picture book or class anthology

Expository

Immersion/Planting the Seed (weeks one and two):

1. Teacher differentiates narration and exposition
2. Teacher introduces expository text structure
3. Teacher finds, sorts, and reads short expository touchstone texts and examine their structures with the class
4. Students create an expert list (“What I Know About”) in their writing notebooks OR identify 3-4 guiding questions about a few topics of interest about which they have limited knowledge and a human information source to interview (interview questions can be drafted and responses recorded in the writing notebook)
5. Teacher introduce genre focus—the feature article (for younger students, a how-to book or all-about book may be a more suitable form)
6. Students reads exemplary feature articles from student-relevant materials such as *Ranger Rick*, *Time for Kids*, *Sports Illustrated for Kids*, *Children’s Digest*, and *National Geographic Kids*
7. Class creates chart listing key elements of a feature article

Planning/Growing the Seed (weeks three and four):

1. Students identify a seed idea (i.e., something at which they are an expert or a topic for investigation) which would permit them to draft a feature article like those examined
2. Students conduct partner interviews to identify potential readers’ interest and questions about the selected topic—record notes in writing notebook
3. Students create double-column entries in the writing notebook to record facts on one side and reflections, questions, and opinions about each fact on the other side
4. Students record responses to key questions in writing notebook:
 - a. How did you learn about this?
 - b. Why is this important to you?
 - c. Why do other people need to learn about this?
 - d. What are special things about this you want to share?
5. Teacher introduces key vocabulary for expository writing (e.g., first, next, then, finally, in conclusion, therefore, so, however, in contrast)
6. Teacher introduces, examines, and demonstrates how to use various leads for a feature article (e.g., a question, a mini-story, a quotation, an astonishing fact)
7. Students plan the paper using a planning sheet (see below)

Drafting/Growing the Seed (week five):

1. Students continue to plan using the planning sheet
2. Students flash-draft (quickly draft) each part of the paper separately to avoid over-investment in the draft and a reluctance to revise (but expectations for a best first draft should be communicated)

Revising/Pruning & Grafting (weeks six and seven):

1. Teacher models and helps students identify and cut irrelevant information
2. Teacher models and helps students add additional details to "thin" subtopics (using carets or numbered notes)
3. Teacher models and helps students zoom in on a unique or particularly important fact and flesh it out
4. Students incorporate basic feature article elements such as a title, subtitle, byline, subheadings, and quotations
5. Students revise a minimum of three times, first independently, then with a peer, and then with the teacher

Editing/Pruning & Grafting (week eight):

1. Teacher models and then students use an editing checklist
2. Students edit a minimum of two times, first independently and then with a peer
3. Students check spelling by reading the text aloud backwards

Publishing & Celebration/Garden Show (week nine):

1. Teacher models and then students add additional feature article elements such as specialized fonts and colors, zoom-in boxes and flash facts, and photos, illustrations, graphs, or diagrams with captions
2. Teacher models and then students use templates to format the article
3. Teacher models and then students cut and paste special effects with a word processor

Topic: _____ *Title:* _____
(Make it snappy and fun!)

Subtitle: _____
(In a few words, make it clear what the article is about)

Lead: _____

_____ (Use a quote, question, or mini-story)

Subtopics:

Subheadings:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Poetry

Immersion/Planting the Seed (week one):

1. Teacher introduces the idea of poetic text.
2. Teacher finds, sorts and reads a sampling of poems representing a variety of forms, language and moods. Poems should be read more than once for further understanding, to capture a feel for the language, and the physical attractiveness of the poem. Teacher and students enjoy and respond to aesthetic qualities of the poetry, then teacher examines their structures with the class.
3. Students create a list of seed ideas in their poetry notebooks, such as journeys, special events, small stories, and memories triggered by personal or family artifacts, or complete a memory wheel (a circle with at least four quadrants labeled with "a happy time," "a sad time," "an angry time," "a frightened time," "a first time," or "a last time") by including an illustration and associated caption in each quadrant. Students might also have an artifact box to include objects, photographs or art to trigger memories.
4. Teacher introduces genre focus—poetry. Teacher may build excitement by sharing that students will have an opportunity to write and perform their poems for a real audience.
5. Students read high quality poetry (for example, *Love That Dog* (Sharon Creech), *Poetry for Young People* (Langston Hughes), *Night in the Country* (Cynthia Rylant), *Joyful Noise* (Paul Fleishman), *Twelve Moons* (Mary Oliver), *I Never Saw Another Butterfly* (Hana Volavkova), *Heart to Heart* (Jan Greenberg) & *Cool Salsa* (Lori Carlson). Students should keep copies of their favorite model poems for inspiration for what to write about or ideas for craft.
6. Class creates a chart of key common elements of a poem.

Planning/Growing the Seed (week two):

1. Students identify a seed idea which would permit them to draft a poem, drawing on one or more of those examined.
2. Students conduct partner interviews to identify potential readers' interest and questions about the selected idea—record notes in poetry notebook.
3. Students make double-column entries in the poetry notebook to record person, animal, object, or place on one side and on the other side one or more sensory descriptions/images (sight, smell, touch, taste, sound), emotions, thoughts, actions, and/or quotations associated on the other side.
4. Students record responses to key questions such as the following in poetry notebook:
 - a. What experience do I want to convey in this poem?
 - b. What mood do I want to convey in this poem?
 - c. What are unique concrete nouns and vivid verbs that go with my poem?
 - d. How can I use words in new ways that draw on sight, smell, touch, taste, sound?

- e. Where could I make a really unique comparison?
 - f. What is my poetic surprise or “hot spot” and how do I plan to make it dramatic?
 - g. How can the sound and shape of my poem match my subject and mood?
1. Teacher introduces key features of poetry writing (See Poetry Toolbox)
 2. Teacher introduces, examines, and demonstrates how to use various features, returning to model poems as needed.
 3. Students plan the poem creating a graphic organizer in their poetry notebook or using one provided by the teacher such as a list, web, Venn diagram or some other graphic organizer.
 4. Students continue to plan using the planning sheet.
 5. Students flash-draft (quickly write) the poem.

Drafting/Growing the Seed (week three):

1. Students return to their seed ideas list in their poetry portfolio and repeat the process above with a second or third poem.
6. Invite local poets to the classroom to read/perform their poems. Have them share their sloppy copies and/or their suggestions for getting ideas, prewriting and revising.
7. Students decide on an audience for their poetry that will dictate their written and performative forms. Possibilities are shared by the teacher with students.
8. Students decide on a performative form for one of their poems, such as Poetry in the Park, a Poetry Café or a Poetry Slam.

Revising/Pruning & Grafting (weeks four and five):

1. Teacher models and helps students to revise for clarity and organization.
2. Teacher models and helps students revise language that focuses on original image and sound.
3. Teacher models and helps students zoom in on the poem’s surprise or “hot spot” and flesh it out.
4. Teacher models to help students revise line breaks and poem shape (for example, so strong words are at the beginning and/or end of the line).
5. Teacher models and helps students identify and cut any unnecessary words.
6. Students revise a minimum of three times, first independently, then with a peer, and then with the teacher. Students should revise based on teacher feedback and on feedback from peers in a face-to-face or online forum.

Editing/Pruning & Grafting (week six):

1. Teacher models and then students use an editing checklist.
2. Students edit a minimum of two times, first independently and then with a peer.
3. Students check spelling by reading the text aloud backwards.
4. Students assemble the poems and drafts they’ve written into a Poetry Portfolio. Students select one that is their best piece that they will perform at a poetry reading.

Publishing & Celebration/Garden Show (week seven and eight):

1. Students decide on a written form for three of their poems, such as a class anthology, Wiki, or website and begin publishing.
2. Students practice their reading or performance for one of their poems for a *Poetry in the Park*, a *Poetry Café* or a *Poetry Slam*.