

Teaching Students Feature Article Writing and Informational Reading

**A Sample Unit of Lessons
for Middle School Teachers**

**Jefferson County Public Schools
Version 2.0**

TEACHING STUDENTS TO UNDERSTAND INFORMATIONAL READING AND WRITE A FEATURE ARTICLE

This unit combines a group of lessons designed to teach students the skills and strategies involved in informational reading and writing a feature article. The unit was designed for middle school students, but lessons can easily be adapted for use with younger or older students.

Lessons vary in length: some will take 15 minutes or less; others will take several periods to complete. The length of the lesson will depend on what your students already know how to do and the depth at which you want to take the lesson. These lessons correlate to the Kentucky Core Content for Assessment for Middle School Informational Reading and Transactive Writing for Feature Articles.

In planning your unit, you will want to read through all of the lessons first to get an overall picture of the unit. Then, you may choose to eliminate some lessons and/or add lessons of your own to address the supporting skills most needed by your students. This unit is just one sample. There are many combinations of lessons that will make a successful unit.

The lessons do not depend on a particular textbook. Materials needed for each lesson are listed and include materials typically found in a middle school language arts classroom. The following lessons are included in the unit:

Lesson 1	Discovering the Seven Types of Feature Articles, Part A
Lesson 2	Vocabulary Building
Lesson 3	Discovering the Seven Types of Feature Articles, Part B
Lesson 4	Characteristics of a Feature Article Open Response Question
Lesson 5	Establishing the Significance of a Fact
Lesson 6	How-To Article - Topic Selection
Lesson 7	Active Reading Strategies
Lesson 8	Research Technique: Immersion Reading Activity
Lesson 9	Research Technique: KWL Chart
Lesson 10	Narrowing Your Topic
Lesson 11	Feature Article Organizer
Lesson 12	Writing an Engaging Lead
Lesson 13	Including Your Voice
Lesson 14	Writing an Effective Ending
Lesson 15	Eliminating the Dead Words
Lesson 16	Choosing a Title
Lesson 17	Publishing Your Work!
Lesson 18	Reflection
Appendix	Extensions/Accommodations for ECE and Other Diverse Learners

READ THIS PAGE BEFORE BEGINNING TO TEACH THIS UNIT

Before beginning this unit, it will be important for you to **collect a number of feature articles** to use as models with students. You can find appropriate feature articles in magazines and newspapers. Another excellent source for feature articles is the Article Unit in the High School English Core Content Guide, which can easily be accessed at <http://www.jefferson.k12.ky.us/corecontent>.

Visit a local bookstore that has a wide variety of magazines and collect samples of magazines about a variety of topics. You will find magazines written about nearly every topic that you can imagine. Ask your librarian for the titles of magazines to which the library subscribes and look in those magazines for sample articles. If your library does not subscribe to many magazines, you might suggest some titles. A rich resource for finding out about magazines is *Magazines for Kids and Teens* (Donald R. Stoll, editor. International Reading Association, 1997.) This book lists hundreds of magazines that not only publish articles of interest to students but also often publish students' writing.

Learn to read the newspaper with a pair of scissors in your hand. You will find many good examples of feature articles to use as models in the *Courier-Journal* and in other newspapers.

Try to find articles that demonstrate the skills that you will be teaching in this unit: focused and narrowed topic, engaging leads, use of research as idea development, evidence of voice, interesting language, an effective conclusion, and others. In addition, look for articles that make good use of text features such as titles, subheads, columns, pictures, text boxes, charts and graphs, font variety, and others. Students will be interested in trying out some of these text features in the article that they will write as part of this unit. Text features *are* important in helping the reader to get the message of the article; however, the most important part of the article is the content, not the appearance.

Building a good collection of feature articles before you begin this unit will help you and your students to have a more successful experience and experience a wider variety of texts.

UNIT: Informational Reading/How to Write a Feature Article

TOPIC: Discovering Seven Types of Feature Articles Part A, Lesson #1

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Student will select a feature article out of newspaper or magazine and decide what kind of article it is from the seven types listed.

CORE CONTENT:

RD-M-x.0.1 Identify an author's purpose in practical/workplace materials.

RD-M-x.0.5 Formulate questions to guide reading.

RD-M-x.0.9 Reflect on and evaluate what is read.

VOCABULARY: (found in Feature Articles handout)

anecdote - short, entertaining account of something happening

vignette - a short, delicate literary sketch

quote - exact words spoken by someone and set off by quotation marks

flashback - recalling something that has happened in the past

tables - an arrangement of related facts, figures, values, etc. usually in rows and columns

charts - a group of facts about something set up in the form of a diagram

graph - a diagram (curve - broken line - series of bars)

snapshots - written description of how something looks

sketches - drawings

foreshadowing - hints of what is to happen in the future

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:

- "Feature Article" Handout
- Newspapers/ Magazines
- Chart Paper
- Tape

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

1. For homework, each student cuts out a feature article of his or her choice from the newspaper or magazine. (If teacher receives daily newspaper, these can even be saved and distributed to each student as they leave class.)
2. As a part of the homework assignment, give students the "Feature Articles" handout and ask them to label their selected feature article with one of seven choices:
 - Human-Interest
 - Personality
 - How - To
 - The Best
 - Past Event
 - Informational

NOTE: There are more than seven types of feature articles. These are simply just the types that students will focus on in this unit.

3. In class, place sheets of chart paper labeled with the seven different types of feature articles on the walls around the room.
4. Each student will give a brief summary of his or her article aloud to the class. Then the student will give specific reasons for placing the article under one of the seven feature article types and place it there.
5. Teacher clarifies evidence by asking questions if the label is questionable. (As you will discover during this activity, many feature articles will have elements of more than one type of article. Explain to the students the labels are not meant to limit writing creativity but to help to establish focus for writing and reading.)
6. The chart paper and newspaper articles are left posted in the room for future reference.

EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS:

Students evaluate several models with the teacher before attempting to label the articles themselves. Students read articles that are appropriate for their reading level.

ENRICHMENT:

Students evaluate more articles that their peers have chosen from newspapers or magazines.

TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:

Students find articles on Internet newspapers or magazines.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:

Teacher evaluates if the article is placed in the right category before posting on chart paper.

Students compose a reflection in writer's notebook: "Explain the type of feature article that you enjoy reading the most."

FEATURE ARTICLES

A feature article is a creative article that deals with real events, issues, and trends. However, unlike straight news articles, it places emphasis on the people involved rather than on the facts of the news.

There are seven types of feature articles described on these pages. NOTE: Most feature articles have elements of more than one kind.

THE HUMAN-INTEREST FEATURE

- This is the most common type of feature article.
- This type typically reports on someone's success in spite of great odds.
- It may recall a tragic predicament.
- It may share a continuing struggle supported only by hope and faith.

THE PERSONALITY FEATURE

- The subject of the article may be famous or not so famous but has done something of interest to others.
- This type usually shows how a person gained recognition.
- The personality feature is very much like a character sketch.

“THE BEST” ARTICLES

- The *Courier-Journal* has a column that publishes reviews of the “best” products of all kinds.
- This type of article usually includes the writer's personal experiences with the product.
- It includes proof and examples that the product is the best of its kind.
- The article includes information about where to get the product and how much it costs.
- The article usually has a catchy title.

THE NEWS FEATURE

- This type of article brings a human-interest focus to breaking news.
- It adds personal involvement to what may otherwise be a distant, seemingly unimportant event.

THE HOW-TO FEATURE

- This article explains how to do something – usually a complex process that most people would not know how to do.
- The best how-to articles begin by telling the reader why it is important or beneficial for him or her to know how to do this.
- The article explains the steps of the process in enough detail so that another person can do this process.
- This article also includes a list of all of the materials needed to do this process.

THE PAST EVENTS FEATURE

- This article focuses on an historical event or historical celebration.
- The article typically includes research but is not like an encyclopedia report. The article serves as a human interest history lesson.
- This type of writing is usually puts a “human face” on history. In other words, it lets the reader know something about the people who were part of history.

THE INFORMATIONAL FEATURE

- This type of article shows insightful coverage of a topic.
- It gives detailed information focused on one aspect of a given topic.
- The article often refers to sources of research but is not like an encyclopedia report. Instead, the writer makes a personal connection to the subject and includes his/her voice.

Various Ways to Include Details in an Article:

Anecdotes	Examples/Non-examples
Vignettes	Tables/Graphs/Charts
Descriptions	Facts
Comparison	Contrast
Snapshots	Pictures/Drawings
Reasons	Quotations
Flashback	Foreshadowing

Types of Text Features:

Headings
Fonts
Subheadings
Bullets
Offsets
Text Boxes
Color Ink
Italics
Bold Font
Underlining
All Capital Letters

UNIT: Informational Reading/Writing a Feature Article

TOPIC: Vocabulary Building, Lesson #2

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will learn the importance of using context clues to decode unfamiliar words in a feature article. Students will create an individualized vocabulary list of new words learned during the feature article unit.

CORE CONTENT:

RD-M-x.03 Identify words that have multiple meanings and select the appropriate meaning for the context.

RD-M-4.0.14 Interpret the meaning of specialized vocabulary.

VOCABULARY: decode, context clues

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:

- Vocabulary Building Handout (attached)
- Transparency of vocabulary handout
- Feature Article for whole class to read
- Highlighter Pens
- Dictionary
- Overhead Projector

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

Select a feature article for the class to read in this activity. Make copies for the class.

Before Reading

1. Prior to reading, ask students the following question: "What are some strategies you use to determine the meaning of an unfamiliar word in a piece of writing?"
2. Explain to students that one strategy they can use is to look at the words surrounding the unfamiliar word to help them to determine the definition.
3. Give students a copy of both the "Vocabulary Building" handout and the feature article that you wish for them to read.
4. Model for the class how to complete the handout by choosing a word in the feature article that might be unfamiliar to students. Ask students to highlight the chosen word.
5. Using an overhead projector and a transparency of the vocabulary handout, show students how to write the new word in the first column on their handout.
6. Next ask students to look for clues from the words and the sentences surrounding the new word.
7. Ask students to write in the second column on their handout what they think the word means. Continue using the transparency as a model for students.

During Reading

8. Allow students to work on their own to read the article and to complete the vocabulary chart.

After Reading

9. The third column should be completed after students finish reading the entire article. Students can use a dictionary to complete the third column.
10. Explain to students that this activity models the strategies that good readers use in order to help comprehend the text and to continue reading.
11. Encourage students to use this "Vocabulary Building" handout throughout the feature article unit to create their own individualized vocabulary list. Also, students can refer to their vocabulary lists when writing their feature article.

EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS:

Allow visual learners to draw pictures on the vocabulary chart before writing a definition.

ENRICHMENT:

Encourage students to use their individualized vocabulary lists when drafting their own writing and reading other genres.

TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:

Create a class database of new vocabulary words. Use one field for words, one for definitions, and another for parts of speech.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:

Have students reflect in their writer's journal on the following:

Explain how using context clues helps you as a reader.

VOCABULARY BUILDING

	NEW WORD	I THINK IT MEANS	I KNOW IT MEANS
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			

UNIT: Informational Reading/How to Write a Feature Article

TOPIC: Discovering Seven Types of Feature Articles Part B, Lesson #3

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Student will categorize feature articles by placing them into one of seven types of articles.

CORE CONTENT:

RD-M-x.0.1 Identify an author's purpose in practical/workplace materials.

RD-M-x.0.5 Formulate questions to guide reading.

RD-M-x.0.9 Reflect on and evaluate what is read.

VOCABULARY: See Lesson #1

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:

- "Feature Article" Handout
- Post-it notes
- Eight examples of feature articles (possible sources- newspaper, magazines, Kentucky Marker Papers, the reading passages from KDE Released Open Response Reading Questions (not the answers), Internet, student writing, teacher writing)

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

Before this lesson, copy each of eight feature articles on different colored paper. Make enough copies of each article (8-10) so that you can make a folder of eight different articles for each small group of four students. Place one copy of each article in each group folder.

Post one of each article on the walls around the room or on the board.

***Note: These articles can be kept and used again for other lessons in this unit. Keep these articles for future reference!

Before Reading

1. Review lesson #1 on different types of feature articles by giving students 1 minute to talk to another student about what they remember about the different types. Then give students 1 minute to write what they remember. Use 1 more minute to question students about what they remember and have them share in the large group. This will activate the students' prior knowledge and get them prepared to think about the reading they will do.
2. Explain to students that in the reading they will do today, they will be looking for clues in order to draw conclusions about types of feature articles.

During Reading

3. Students move into groups of four and each group is given a folder (copied earlier by the teacher) with eight feature articles. Each student quickly selects two articles out of the folder to read.
4. Each student will read two articles and, on their sticky note write the **title**, the **type of feature** article, and **two reasons** (clues) that led the student to identify the type of feature

article as he/she did. The reasons given need to come directly from the feature article handout. If unsure about placing an article in a category, the student is permitted to ask for a second opinion from a fellow group member.

5. Students share their findings, along with reasons for selecting the type of feature article, with fellow group members.
6. Students post their sticky notes under the corresponding articles displayed on the wall or board. *(To avoid mass confusion, each group of four students goes in turn to post findings. Color-coding the copies can help the students quickly find their articles.)* When posting their findings, students are instructed to see if their findings match those of fellow classmates.
7. Discuss how the students' labels for the feature articles compare to one another. Allow students to do most of the talking with the teacher acting as an occasional coach in the discussion. Some articles have elements of two or more kinds of articles so both students can be correct. Have students defend why they made the choices they did. Again, the categories are not meant to limit the students reading and writing but to help give them focus.

EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS:

Students who need extra help can read the articles with a partner.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:

Students compare their findings with classmates.

Students write reflections in writing journal.

UNIT: Informational Reading/ Writing a Feature Article

TOPIC: Understanding the Characteristics of a Feature Article, Lesson #4

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will understand the characteristics of a feature article that is written for a specific audience and for a specific purpose.

CORE CONTENT:

RD-M-x.0.1 Identify an author's purpose in information materials.

RD-M-2.0.11 Use text features to understand a passage.

RD-M-2.0.13 Identify supporting details and explain their importance in a passage.

WR-M-1.4 Transactive Writing

VOCABULARY:

analyze -	to study or determine the nature and relationship of the parts
audience -	the intended reader
purpose -	the author's reason for writing the piece
lead -	located in the beginning, it should capture the reader's attention, introduce the topic or problem, and move smoothly into the rest of the piece
text features-	lists, charts, graphs, tables of contents, captions, diagrams, headings, subheadings

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:

- Chart paper
- Sticky notes
- Several models of feature articles (Possible Sources- newspaper, magazines, Kentucky Marker Papers, reading passages from KDE Released Open Response Reading Questions (not the answers), Internet)
- Handout - "Analyzing a Feature Article" (attached)

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

Before Reading

1. Divide students into small groups. Give each group one feature article to read.
2. Repeat the prior knowledge activity from lesson 2. Have students talk for 1 minute to another student about what they remember about feature articles. Next, have the student write for 1 minute. Third, have students share in the large group.

During Reading

3. Have the students use the Say Something strategy while they read their article. To do this strategy, they should decide as a small group how far they want to read for their first section. They should then stop and briefly discuss what characteristics of a feature article they have found in that section. They should then decide how much farther to read and stop and discuss again. Follow this pattern to the end of the article. The teacher may want to pre-determine stopping points.

After Reading

4. After reading the article, ask each group to complete the handout, "Analyzing a Feature Article."
5. Ask one student from each group to share their findings with the whole class.
6. Using chart paper, ask the whole class to help you develop the characteristics of a feature article.
7. Hang the chart paper on the wall for students to use as a resource as they begin to write their own feature articles.

EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS:

Carefully consider student abilities and learning styles when grouping students for cooperative learning.

ENRICHMENT:

Analyze other feature articles of interest for the characteristics of feature articles.

TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:

Using the Internet, ask students to locate and read feature articles on topics of interest. Complete the above assignment.

Have students to gather website addresses that include interesting feature articles.

Organize web addresses by subject matter in a classroom book for students to use for future research or writing assignments.

Use the Internet to find a variety of articles to identify characteristics of a feature article.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:

Ask students to find a feature article of interest to them and to individually analyze the article. Post student-found models in the classroom.

ANALYZING A FEATURE ARTICLE

Title of Article: _____

Author: _____

Source: _____

Audience
(Who does the author want to read the article?): _____

Purpose
(Why did the author write this article?): _____

List details from the article that help you to understand the purpose:

Examining the lead - Explain how the article tries to "hook" your interest:

Examining the text features - List any text features the author uses to help make the article more interesting or informative. (Examples - headings, lists, charts, graphs, diagrams, captions):

Examining the conclusion - Explain how the author brings the article to a conclusion:

INFORMATIONAL READING
Middle School

DEALING WITH BULLIES

CORE CONTENT ASSESSED:

RD-M-2.011 Use text features to understand a passage.

CONTEXT/BACKGROUND FOR THE QUESTION:

You are going to read a page from a booklet written by Jefferson County Public Schools titled *Middle School Survival Guide*. The page that you are going to read gives information about some ways to deal with bullies at school.

READING PASSAGE: “Dealing with Bullies” (attached)

INSTRUCTIONS:

Writers of informational text use a variety of text features to make the information easy for the reader to understand.

A. Identify two text features the author of “Dealing with Bullies” uses on this page.

B. Explain the purpose of each text feature that you have identified.

SCORING GUIDE:	4	Student identifies two text features used in the article and explains the purpose of each feature.
	3	Student identifies two text features used in the article but minimally explains the purpose.
	2	Student identifies one text feature and attempts to explain the purpose.
	1	Student identifies one text feature, but does not attempt to explain the purpose.

Examples to look for in the answer:

Headings – Each directs the specific reader to the information they will need.

Bulleted statements – These are a quick way of stating information and are easy to read.

Text Boxes – Highlights some information related to the topic of this page

Picture – is decorative, connotes a “jungle” setting that one might need to survive

DEALING WITH BULLIES



READING LIST:

DIGBY AND KATE
BY
BETTY BAKER

OLIVER BUTTON IS A SISSY
BY
TOMIE DE PAOLA

RUTHIE'S RUDE FRIENDS
BY
JEAN AND CLAUDIO MARZOLLO

WENDY AND THE BULLIES
BY
NANCY K. ROBINSON

Advice for Students

- Pay attention to your reactions. Often you will feel fear or anger when other kids pick on you. It is important to recognize your feelings as normal so you don't overreact. When dealing with bullies, the trick is not to get "rattled."
- Realize, first of all, that they are the ones with the problem, not you. People who like themselves don't need to make fun of others to feel OK.
- Walk away when you can. This is the best way to avoid a situation that can escalate into an intense argument or fight.
- Talk with your school guidance counselor or teacher. It is important to let someone know when you are having difficulty with any other student at school. They can sensitize other adults at school to be your allies before conflict arises.
- Talk to your parents. Parents can help you think through ways to avoid situations where you feel unsafe and can work together with your school to ensure your safety.
- Spend time in groups where you feel safe. Stay with friends when you walk in the halls, eat lunch, or go to your bus stop. It is more difficult for bullies to pick on you when you are in the security of a group of friends.

Advice for Parents

- Watch for signs of bullying:
 - Torn Clothing
 - Fear of going to school
 - Changes in behavior
 - Decline in grades
 - Loss of appetite
 - Moodiness
- Take an active role in your child's schooling and activities.
- Work on boosting your child's self-esteem.
- Talk to school administrators if you suspect a problem.
- Keep a written record of any episodes—what happened, where and when it happened, and who was involved.
- Never tell your child to "hit back." That not only can lead to more problems, it's a poor lesson in solving a dispute.

WHEN SOMEONE PUTS YOU DOWN

- Help yourself feel good by saying to yourself something like, "I like myself, and at least I don't have to stoop to saying mean things to others." Keep saying this over and over again.
- When other teens say bad things to you, you can say, "That's what you think, but at least I don't try to hurt other people's feelings."
- Practice saying these things to your parents so that you will get used to saying them.
- If the sentences here do not work for you, make up others. You should be able to say something to help yourself feel better when another student has said something mean to you.

UNIT: Informational Reading/ Writing a Feature Article

TOPIC: Establishing the Significance of a Fact, Lesson #5

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will recognize the difference between fact and opinion.

CORE CONTENT:

RD-M-3.0.14 Distinguish between fact and opinion.

WR-M-1.4 Transactive Writing

VOCABULARY: Fact, Opinion

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:

- "Feature Article" handout used in previous lesson
- "Fact/Opinion" Quiz
- Overhead projector and transparency of handouts
- Sentence Strips

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

Before Reading

1. Begin class by discussing with students the difference between factual statements and opinion statements. Explain to students that a factual statement can be verified or proven to be true. An opinion statement is a personal judgment or an expression of someone's beliefs or feelings. The word "should" can be a clue to identifying a statement of opinion.

Note: Middle school students often get confused about this apparently simple notion of fact and opinion. For example, the sentence "The moon is made of green cheese" is written as if it is a fact, but it is untrue. However, it can be proven to be *untrue*, so it is not a fact. Be prepared for questions of this nature.

2. Have students get out the "Feature Articles" handout used in previous lesson and pass out the "Fact/Opinion" quiz.

During Reading

3. Ask students to complete the quiz by using the "Feature Articles" handout as a resource.

After Reading

4. Using the overhead projector, go over the quiz in class with students. Allow students to discuss each statement, helping students to identify any words that indicate beliefs or feelings in the opinion statements and information that can be proven to be true in the factual statements.
5. Divide students into groups. Ask each group to create a factual statement and an opinion statement on sentence strips to be posted on the board.

6. Ask each group to post their fact and opinion statements on the chalkboard for other groups to categorize.
7. End class by asking students to reflect in their writer's journal. (See Assessing the Learning below.)

EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS:

Monitor the class carefully during the quiz activity. Provide individual assistance to any student who needs it.

ENRICHMENT:

Ask half of the class to make a collage of factual statements from magazine clippings. Ask the other half of the class to make a collage of opinion statements. Post the collages around the room for students to see a visual representation of fact/opinion concepts.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:

Ask students to answer the following question in their writer's journal:

Explain how understanding the difference between fact and opinion can help with writing a feature article.

Answers to Fact/Opinion Quiz

1. Fact
2. Opinion
3. Opinion
4. Fact
5. Fact
6. Opinion
7. Opinion
8. Opinion
9. Fact
10. Fact

Fact/Opinion Quiz

Based on what you have learned about feature articles, determine if each statement is a fact or opinion. (Hint: Remember a factual statement can be proven!)

- _____ Writers often use text features to help the reader understand new or important information.
- _____ Feature articles are hard to write.
- _____ Feature articles are the easiest transactive piece to write.
- _____ The Human Interest article sometimes reports success in spite of great odds.
- _____ An effective How-To feature article gives detailed steps.
- _____ The Best Article is the most fun feature article to write.
- _____ All feature articles should include a catchy title.
- _____ People who read the News feature article are “nerds.”
- _____ The main character of a Personality feature article may be unknown.
- _____ A vignette is one way to add detail to a feature article.

UNIT: Informational Reading/How to Write a Feature Article

TOPIC: Topic Selection, Lesson #6

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students brainstorm list of possible topics for articles.

CORE CONTENT: WR-M-1.4 Transactive Writing

VOCABULARY:

topic – subject

brainstorm - write down information as quickly as possible to generate ideas for writing

prewriting - organizing activities completed before writing first draft

graphic organizer - prewriting organizer (e.g., Venn diagram)

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:

- "Things I Know a Lot About - Things I Do Well" student handout
- "Things I Know a Lot About - Things I Do Well" transparency

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

1. Students are asked to think of topics they are informed about and understand. The teacher starts a comparison game by standing in front of a student desk and saying, "I bet I know more about filling out report cards than Sandy." Sandy stands and moves in front of another student's desk and says something like, "I bet I know more about volleyball than Michael." Michael stands and picks another topic and another student. This process can go on for around five minutes.
2. The teacher explains that everyone has unique interests and we can share our interests with others in many forms of writing. The article is a very good way to share an interest and to learn more about it. The informed writer shares with the less informed reader.
3. Teacher models the process of brainstorming by filling out the handout, "Things I Know a Lot About - Things I Do Well." Students brainstorm using the handout for up to ten minutes. While the students are brainstorming, the teacher walks around encouraging reluctant writers.
4. After completing a list of topics, students are asked to stand up and form two lines, facing each other. Each student is given two minutes or less to quickly read the list to his or her partner. The teacher should be walking around and listening to conversations, as well as keeping track of the time. Each partner is required to listen without comment while the list is being read, then the partner must pick one topic he or she would be most interested in learning more about.
5. At the end of the time, this process should be repeated again after the students step to the right and face a new partner. It works best if the students share with at least two different partners before switching roles and listening with two different partners. This process is

designed to help the students pick a topic that would be interesting to an audience of their peers.

EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS:

Students should brainstorm their topics out loud to a teacher or peer before writing.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:

Students write reflections in writing journal: "I know more about _____ than _____ because...."

Teacher's review of "Things I Know a Lot About - Things I Do Well" Handout

NOTE: Discourage students from writing “How-To” articles. Although you will be able to find many good examples of how-to articles in magazines and newspapers, students often do not write this type of article very effectively. If students are truly interested in pursuing this type of article, make sure that the bulk of the article sets a context for the reader, that is, lets the reader know why knowing how to do “this” will be helpful and/or important to him/her. Simply listing materials and the steps of the process is not enough for an article to achieve a proficient score. Encourage the student to explore more complex subjects such as “How to Make a Friend” or “How to Succeed in School” rather than a simple process such as a recipe or a dance step.

Things I Know a Lot About - Things I Do Well

A Hobby:	A Sport:
To Make Money:	To Help Others:
At School-For School:	Around the House:
Other:	

adapted from *Building the Foundation the WRITE WAY* by Suzanne Jackson, LWP XIX-2

UNIT: Informational Reading/ Writing a Feature Article

TOPIC: Active Reading Strategies, Lesson #7

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will strengthen comprehension skills by learning and practicing active reading strategies with an informational text.

CORE CONTENT:

RD-M-x.0.5 Formulate questions to guide reading.

RD-M-x.0.8 Make, confirm, and revise predictions about what is read.

RD-M-x.0.9 Reflect on and evaluate what is read.

RD-M-x.0.10 Connect information from a passage to students' lives and/or real world issues.

VOCABULARY: Active Reading Strategies - predict, visualize, connect, question, clarify, evaluate, monitor
Formulate, evaluate, confirm

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:

- "Strategies for Reading" Handout (attached)
- Copies of two feature articles for students to read (Note: Use feature article copies from Lesson #3.)
- Overhead Projector and transparencies of handouts
- Sticky notes

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

Before Reading

1. Begin class by asking the question, "What does it mean to be an active reader?"
2. Give students the handout, "Strategies for Reading."
3. Discuss each strategy with the class. Explain that active readers ask themselves questions and visualize or picture in their minds what they're reading. They make connections to their lives, the world, or another text. Also, they evaluate or form opinions about what they're reading.
4. Pass out the first feature article for students to read.

During Reading

5. Using the overhead, ask students to read the first article along with you while you model each of the active reading strategies for them. For example, write out predictions on the transparency in sections where you have predictions about the reading. Likewise, write on the article any connections or questions you might have while reading. Try to use each of the strategies at least once.
6. Pass out the second article and the sticky notes.

7. Ask students to read the second article by themselves.
8. While reading, students should practice being an active reader by writing on the sticky notes their thinking about the article. Sticky notes should be placed on top of the article where each thought occurs. For example, if a student reads the first line of the article and has a question, the question should be written on the sticky note and placed on top of the first line.
9. When students are finished reading the article, their page should be filled with sticky notes. This activity allows students to see a visual representation of their thoughts about the reading.
10. Students share with one other student their sticky notes.
11. Next, as a whole group, ask students to share their questions, reflections, connections, visualizations, or evaluations. This activity generates outstanding classroom discussion around a text.
12. Congratulate your students for being active readers while reading! Each time this strategy is practiced in class, it will become easier for students to use.

** Strategy adapted from the book *Strategies that Work* written by Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis.

EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS:

Allow students who have difficulty writing on the sticky notes to tape record their thoughts while reading.

Students who are struggling readers can work with a partner to complete the assignment.

ENRICHMENT:

Students can practice this strategy again after completing their feature article draft. Ask students to trade with another student and complete the above activities.

TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:

Use the articles located in on Internet to practice reading strategies.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:

Ask students to reflect in their writer's journal on the following questions:

- Why is it important to be an active reader while reading an informational text?
- Describe the active reading strategy that is the most difficult for you to use.
- Explain why this strategy is difficult for you.

STRATEGIES FOR READING

PREDICT

Active readers attempt to figure out what will happen next and how the text will end.

VISUALIZE

Active readers try to visualize the setting, characters, and events to help them to understand what's happening.

CONNECT

Active readers try to connect personally with what they're reading. Active readers look for similarities between the descriptions in the text and what they've experienced personally, heard about in the world, or read in another text.

QUESTION

Active readers ask questions about the text while they're reading.

CLARIFY

Active readers try to answer any questions they might have while reading by using context clues prior knowledge, rereading, or using other resources.

EVALUATE

Active readers develop opinions about what they're reading both during reading and after they've finished reading.

UNIT: Informational Reading/How to Write a Feature Article

TOPIC: Informational Reading/ Research Immersion, Lesson #8

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students are immersed in reading materials that are possible topics for feature articles.

CORE CONTENT:

RD-M-x.0.6 Scan to find key information.

RD-M-x.0.7 Skim to get general meaning of a passage.

RD-M-x.0.9 Reflect on and evaluate what is read.

RD-M-x.0.10 Connect information from a passage to students' lives and/or real world issues.

RD-M-x.0.11 Locate, evaluate, and apply information for a realistic purpose.

RD-M-x.0.13 Apply knowledge of organization patterns to understand a passage.

VOCABULARY:

sequence of information - how information is organized (e.g., paragraphs, numbers, etc.)

expert authority - one knowledgeable about a specific subject.

table of contents - list of chapter titles in the front of a non-fiction book

index - alphabetized list of subjects, usually in the back of a non-fiction book

Text-to-Text Connection - explanation of how one piece of writing is similar to another.

Text-to-Self Connection - explanation of how a piece of writing reminds a person of something that has happened in his/her life.

Text-to-World Connection - explanation of how something in a piece of writing is connected to world events, current or past.

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:

- 40 to 50 library books associated with science and social studies topics
- "Double Entry Reading Log" handout
- "Double Entry Reading Log" transparency
- overhead projector

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

Before Reading

1. Teacher explains the double entry reading log by modeling the process involved. The teacher pre-selects one of the library books and explains how the table of content and the index are helpful in locating interesting or specific information. The teacher writes a notable passage on the Double Entry Reading Log overhead transparency. The teacher should explain why the passage was selected and then write a TS (Text to Self), TT (Text to Text), or TW (Text to World) connection. (See *Strategies That Work* by Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis for more information on TS, TT, and TW.) These connections are difficult for many students to master at first and take a lot of practice and modeling. This reading activity could be assigned every day for a week to immerse students into new information.

2. After the teacher models the use of the Double Entry Reading Log, the students are allowed to choose a book from a group pre-selected by the teacher. (This process works best if a content-area teacher has teamed up with the reading or language arts teacher to complete the unit. Book titles should be associated with the appropriate subjects that are covered in the science and social studies core content for each grade level. Teachers can access books in the school library. Book collections can also be obtained from the Louisville Free Public Library. Call the library for more information.

During Reading

3. Each student reads and completes the reading log for thirty minutes. As the students fill out the Double Entry Reading Log, special attention should be given to carefully citing the quote's source with author and title.

After Reading

4. After reading for thirty minutes, each student is required to tell one quick fact (a sentence) he or she learned while reading.

***Note: To have a good feature article, the student must have research and notes to use as references while writing. Some teachers require their students to have a research folder used only for feature article information. Students can place their double entry reading logs, KWL charts, library research, and Internet research in the folder for reference when writing their feature articles. Some teachers require these folders to be left in the room, adding new research as it is completed. Students may even highlight ideas which they plan to paraphrase or quote in the body of the article. By requiring students to document the research process, teachers can more effectively prevent and monitor plagiarism during the writing process.

EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS:

Allow students who need to read with a partner to do so. Encourage students to verbalize their quick fact to a teacher or peer before having to say it out loud to the class.

ENRICHMENT:

Students read additional related books for homework.

TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:

Begin a database of books students may use for research on their own topic of interest.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:

Teacher reviews "Double Entry Reading Log," paying close attention to importance of quote and validity of TT, TS, and TW connection. An important part of this type of reading activity is having time for the students to share information with each other. Sharing promotes interest and excitement.

Double Entry Reading Log

Name _____ Topic _____ Date _____

Selection: _____

(Title of *Book, Magazine Article, Newspaper Article, or Internet Site.*)

Notable Quotes: Pick quotes that are informative and important.	Connection: TS - Text to Self TT-Text to Text TW -Text to World
---	---

UNIT: Informational Reading/Writing a Feature Article

TOPIC: Research and the Use of the K-W-L Chart, Lesson #9

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will make predictions and conclusions about their reading.

VOCABULARY: predictions, conclusions

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:

- K-W-L Chart
- overhead
- transparency with K-W-L chart
- library materials for research

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES:

1. Begin by demonstrating how you engage in nonfiction inquiry by using the K-W-L chart on the overhead.
2. Under the "K" of the chart, write and explain to the students all that you *know* of a topic that interests you. Under the "W" of the chart, write questions that you have about the topic that you *want* to answer. Tell the students that after you research your topic, you will complete the "L" from all that you *learned* on the topic.
3. Give each student a K-W-L chart and ask them to complete the "K" and the "W" of the chart for a topic for a feature article that they will write.
4. Take students to the library to research topics. Ask students to complete the "L" of the chart.

EXTENSIONS/ACCOMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS:

ECE/diverse learners may need a great deal of help with their library research. They must be taught how to find information in the library. Pair the student with another student to be research partners. Be sure to provide enough support to students who need it without doing the work for them.

ENRICHMENT:

Ask students to prepare to share one interesting fact about their topics.

TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:

Allow students to use the Internet to research their topics.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:

Ask students to complete an exit slip reflecting learned information. An exit slip is a written reflection completed by a student to explain what he/she learned or had difficulty with or a question about the day's lesson. It must be handed in before student exits room.

K-W-L Chart

What I know	What I want to know	What I learned

UNIT: Informational Reading/Writing a Feature Article

TOPIC: Narrowing Your Topic to Write a Feature Article, Lesson # 10

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will review research materials and select a topic appropriate for writing a feature article.

CORE CONTENT: WR-M-1.4 Transactive Writing

VOCABULARY: graphic organizers, topic

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:

- Student-completed KWL chart and Double Entry chart from lessons 9 and 10
- Student models of completed KWL and Double Entry charts--transparencies
- Overhead projector

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

1. Ask students to examine their graphic organizers completed from the research and reading immersion activities. Show student models on overhead.
2. Explain to students that the next step is to narrow their focus to one topic that is interesting enough to develop into a feature article. Based on their research, ask students to write three topics of interest to them. Under each topic, ask students to write three questions they still have about each topic. Model this activity on the overhead projector for students.
3. Ask students to examine each topic and set of questions. Students should talk with a partner about their topics and questions. Which ones sound the most interesting?
4. Students should then make a decision about what topic they would like to develop into a feature article.
5. Remind students to keep the questions developed in the above activity in mind as they begin to draft their feature article. The answers to these questions might be of interest to their reader as well.

EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS:

Ensure that students are using an organized process to choose topics.

TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:

Use one of the organizational features of a word processing program to outline/organize and expand topic ideas.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:

Conference with students to determine if topic selected is appropriate.

UNIT: Informational Reading/How to Write a Feature Article

TOPIC: Feature Article Organizer, Lesson #11

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students organize research for feature articles by completing four steps of "Feature Article Organizer."

CORE CONTENT:

WR - M - 1.4 Transactive Writing

VOCABULARY:

sequence of information - how information is organized (e.g., paragraphs, numbers, etc.)
expert authority - one knowledgeable about a specific subject.
anecdote - short, entertaining account of something happening
vignette - a short, delicate literary sketch
quote - exact words spoken by someone
flashback - recalling something that has happened in the past
tables - an arrangement of related facts, figures, values, etc. usually in rows and columns
charts - a group of facts about something set up in the form of a diagram
graph - a diagram (curve - broken line - series of bars)
snapshots - written description of how something looks
sketches - drawings
foreshadowing - hints of what is to happen in the future

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:

- Students bring Feature Article Research Folders
- "Feature Article Organizer" Handouts, Pages 1 - 4
- "Feature Article Organizer" Handouts, Pages 1 - 4, copied by teacher to overhead transparency

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

1. Teacher models how to fill out each page of "Feature Article Organizer" by completing information on overhead transparency. The teacher should complete each page as a model before students complete their own pages. **Note:** The completion time for these handouts will vary greatly for each student. It is good to let students work at their own pace during this process, but some students will need extra help in getting organized or staying focused.
2. Students add "Feature Article Organizer" handout to Feature Article Research Folders.
3. Give students several class periods during which they will draft their feature article. Soft music, comfortable chairs, and good lighting often help the writing mood. Do whatever you can to provide students with a comfortable, risk-free environment in which to write. Students may also need more time in the library to find plenty of information to support the main idea of the article.

EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS:

Some students will need extra help in getting organized and staying focused.

TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:

Use *Inspirations* software or other graphic organizer programs to organize information for article. Use a word processing program to draft the feature article.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:

Review the organizing handout. Do not let students begin to draft their feature article until you have approved their purpose statement. This will cut down on the possibility that students will spend a great deal of time writing about a topic that is not focused or otherwise inappropriate for a writing folder or portfolio.

Feature Article Organizer

Step One

List possible topics:
Topic/Idea Selected:
Why?

List things your audience <u>already</u> knows about your topic:	List what your audience <u>needs</u> to know about your idea/topic:
---	--

Focusing on what your audience needs to know, what is the focused purpose of your feature article?

Feature Article Organizer

Step Two

Purpose Statement: As a _____, I am
Writing a feature article about _____
to/for _____ because _____.
(audience) (purpose)

List ideas you have for possible sources of information regarding your topic:

List/cite sources where you found information about your topic:

Vocabulary important to my topic and audience:

Feature Article Organizer

Step Three

Purpose of my feature article:

Details

Think about *how* you want to share ideas/information with your reader. Listed are ways to include details in your article. (You may think of others.) Use this space to plan interesting ways you can get information to your audience.

Anecdotes
Vignettes
Quotes
Facts
Foreshadowing
Pictures
Flashback
Comparison/contrast
Reason/examples/non-examples
Tables/charts/graphs

*****Remember to DOCUMENT your sources!*****

Feature Article Organizer

Step Four

Organization and catching the Reader's Attention: Draw sketches of *how* you want your article to look on the page. Features such as **headlines, catchy titles, subheadings, bullets, bold print, fonts, color, offsets, etc.** can sometimes capture a reader's attention.

Before Drafting Your FEATURE ARTICLE:

- Have you focused on a purpose (the What/So What) for your article?
- Have you provided appropriate information for your intended audience/reader through the use of details that will support and develop your main idea?
- Have you documented where your information was found?

The First Draft: After you have gathered and thought about all this information, you might try to make a rough outline, list headings, use highlighters to organize your notes, draw webs, use *Inspiration* (organizer software) or do whatever works for you to give you a structure for organizing information.

Notes:

Adapted from Cathy Caudill, Kentucky Writing Program

UNIT: Informational Reading/Writing a Feature Article

TOPIC: Writing an Engaging Lead, Lesson #12

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will write an engaging lead that gives the reader some context or reason for reading piece.

CORE CONTENT:

WR-M-1.4 Transactive Writing

VOCABULARY: engaging, lead

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:

- 8 feature articles used in Lesson #3
- Folders with the 8 feature articles in each
- Sticky notes

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

1. Explain to students the importance of writing an engaging lead for the audience.
2. On chart paper, share the variety of ways writers engage readers with their leads by using either a direct statement, quotation, statistic, an anecdote, dialogue, facts, details, question, etc.
3. Post the feature articles around the room.
4. Arrange students into groups of four.
5. Supply each group with a folder of the 8 feature articles.
6. Have group members select 2 articles each.
7. Ask students to identify the type of lead used in each article. Write the title and type of lead on a sticky note.
8. Students will read the leads to the group and post the leads to articles posted around the room.
9. Have students, individually, generate new leads for their feature article drafts.
10. Students share leads with a partner or class.

EXTENSIONS/ACCOMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS:

Allow students who need the extra support to read with a partner.

TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS: Allow students to use a word processing program to create leads and play with ways to stress wording: italics, bold, font. Have students to consider word choices.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:

Respond to drafts of feature articles.

Different Types of Leads

It is very important to have an engaging lead to capture the attention of the reader into your piece. There are many different ways to grab a reader's attention:

1. Dialogue
2. A scene with a character engaged in an activity
3. A startling argument
4. A contrast
5. A generalization
6. A question
7. An intriguing detail
8. An anecdote
9. A quotation
10. A "face" for an issue or an event
11. A "what-if" or "might-have-been"
12. The effect (of a cause)

UNIT: Informational Reading/ Writing a Feature Article

TOPIC: Including Your Voice, Lesson #13

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will locate researched information and present their findings using individual voice.

CORE CONTENT: WR-M-1.4 Transactive Writing

VOCABULARY: individual voice

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:

- Encyclopedia entry on Tiger Woods "from *Tiger: A Biography of Tiger Woods*" by John Strege (story in adopted text book, *Literature Timeless Voices, Timeless Themes*)
- List of biographical questions

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

1. Read the first few paragraphs of "from *Tiger: A Biography of Tiger Woods*."
2. Next read the encyclopedia entry of Tiger.
3. Ask students to compare and contrast the details of the informative pieces. Write details the students notice on the board or chart.
4. Have students to work in pairs to interview each other about their lives for approximately 5-10 minutes using the list of biographical questions. Make them aware that they are biographers digging for interesting facts about their partners.
5. After pairs have collected facts, have them to identify the most telling detail and turn it into a lead. If needed, refer back to lead of Tiger's biography.
6. Ask students to share leads.
7. Discuss with class how boring the biographies would be if they began, " _____ was born in _____."
8. Have students review their drafts of feature articles to look for "encyclopedia-type" writing. They will need to revise their drafts to include their voice.

EXTENSIONS/ACCOMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS:

Allow students to audiotape their leads.

TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:

Students should use word processors to revise the drafts of their feature articles.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING: Respond to the drafts of the feature articles.

Adapted from: Lane, Barry. (1993) *After THE END: Teaching and Learning Creative Revision*.

Name of interviewer_____

Biographical Questions

1. What is your name?_____

2. What is the history of your name?_____

3. Tell me something about yourself that would surprise us.

4. If your parents, friends, or former teachers would introduce you, what would they say and why? _____

5. Are there any interesting events surrounding your birth?

6. A question I want to ask you...

UNIT: Informational Reading/ How to Write a Feature Article

TOPIC: Writing an Effective Ending, Lesson #14

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will learn about different types of effective endings and add an ending to their feature articles.

CORE CONTENT:

WR-M-1.4 Transactive Writing

VOCABULARY:

Replay of the Lead
Ending at the End
Restatement of Purpose
Play on Words
Quote
Shocker
Anecdote
Summary
Editorial Comment

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:

- Feature Article Copies, placed in folders (these were used previously in Lesson #3)
- Feature Article Copies posted in room (these were used previously in Lesson #3)
- Feature Article copied to overhead transparency with ending covered
- “Effective Endings” Handout
- “Effective Endings” Handout (copied by teacher to overhead transparency)

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

1. Teacher places “Effective Endings” transparency on the overhead and orally reviews the types of endings.
2. Students move into groups of four and each group is given a folder (copied earlier by teacher for Lesson #3) with eight feature articles. (To help organize the packets, the articles can be copied on eight different colors of paper.) Each student quickly selects two articles out of the folder to read.
3. Students use “Effective Endings” Handout to determine the type of ending in each of their two articles. The students write the title and the type of ending for each article on a sticky note and place it on the corresponding article. (Color-coding the copies can help the students quickly find their articles.) When posting their findings, students are instructed to see if their findings match those of fellow classmates. (To avoid mass confusion, each group of four students goes, in turn, to post finding.)

4. Have students write two different conclusions for their articles. They can then select one of the conclusions to revise as part of their article.

**EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE
LEARNERS:**

Students who need help reading the article should be paired with another student.

TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:

Students should use word processors to revise the drafts of their feature articles.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:

Respond to drafts of the feature articles.

UNIT: Informational Reading/Writing a Feature Article

TOPIC: Revision Strategy - Eliminating the "Dead" Words, Lesson #15

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will revise their feature article by removing all the "dead words" from their drafts.

CORE CONTENT:
WR-M-1.4 Transactive Writing

VOCABULARY: Revision, coherence

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:

- Chart paper
- Student model of feature article
- Highlighter pens
- Overhead projector
- Thesauri

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

1. Ask students the question, "What are dead words?" Discuss with students that dead words are words used in writing that are not colorful. Dead words don't paint a picture. Dead words make the writing uninteresting to read.
2. Have students generate a list of dead words on chart paper to hang around the room. Some examples of dead words are - said, good, bad, happy, ugly, was, were, is, etc.
3. Show students an example of a feature article on the overhead projector.
4. Model this revision strategy by asking students to help you look for dead words in the article. Underline on the transparency each dead word found in the article. Ask students to help you to change each underlined word to a more interesting or active word that paints a better picture and brings their writing alive.
5. Give each student a highlighter pen. Ask each student to highlight all the dead words in their feature article draft.
6. Next, ask students to go back and try to change the dead words in their drafts to clearer, more active words.
7. Show students how to use a thesaurus to find synonyms for underlined words.
8. At the conclusion of this activity, remind students it is important not to use dead words in their writing.

**EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE
LEARNERS:**

Some students may need more explicit instruction in how to use a thesaurus and choose better words.

TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:

Use a word processor to revise the drafts of their feature articles.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:

Respond to the drafts of the feature articles.

UNIT: Informational Reading / Writing a Feature Article

TOPIC: Choosing a Title, Lesson #16

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will reflect on and evaluate what is read to choose titles for articles.

CORE CONTENT:

RD-M-x.0.9 Reflect on and evaluate what is read.

WR-M-1.4 Transactive Writing

VOCABULARY: brainstorm, essence, captures

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:

- titles of feature articles
- examples of students' feature articles

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES:

1. Explain to students the importance of creating a title that captures the essence of the piece and creates the reader's attention.
2. Share a variety of titles with students and discuss aloud the information titles provide. For example, an article about computers may be titled "The Dangers of Computers," "The Long-term Effects of Computers," "How Dangerous Are Computers?"
3. Put students into pairs. Ask students to read partner's article. After student reads article, pairs begin to brainstorm titles. Every title that comes to mind should be written down.
4. After brainstorming, the author selects a title.
5. The second student gives his/her article to partner to read.
6. Pairs brainstorm for titles. All titles that come to mind should be written down.
7. Author selects a title.

TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:

Create titles using word processor or a drawing program playing with the size and font. Share titles with the class and have them to guess the topic of the article.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:

Observe student conversations around titles.

Adapted from: Muschla, Gary R. *Writing Workshop Survival Kit*. The Center for Applied Research in Education, 1993

Note:

By this lesson, your students should have a complete draft that has been revised. Now have students use the COPS strategy to edit their work:

C capitalization

O overall format

P punctuation

S spelling

When students have completed a final draft, they will be ready for the next lesson.

UNIT: Informational Reading/Writing a Feature Article

TOPIC: Publishing Student Work, Lesson #17

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will complete a feature article and will attempt to publish for a real world audience.

CORE CONTENT:

WR-M-1.4 Transactive Writing

VOCABULARY: publish, real world audience

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:

- “Publishing” handout
- Envelopes
- Stamps
- Publishing folder—should include several publishing ideas for students

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

- Have students look again at the folders of 8 feature articles that you have been using throughout this unit. Ask students to examine the article for examples of text features such as fonts, columns, pictures, charts, graphs, bullets, borders, shading, tables, and other features.
- Each student should determine how one or two text features might enhance the reading experience for the audience of the article. Caution students not to have too many distractions from the actual text of the article. Also caution them against using “weird” fonts. If they want to use a font that you do not approve of, tell them that they can only use it if they can find that font used in the text of a magazine or newspaper article. They probably won’t be able to do that.
- Schedule several days in the computer lab. Ask your School Technology Coordinator to assist you in teaching students how to insert text features into the text of their writing. (Many of your students will already know how to do this and will be able to assist other students in this task.)
- Students should prepare two copies of their completed feature article. One copy will be maintained in their writing folder after you have assessed it.
- The second copy can be used for sending to another audience. Prior to lesson, ask students to bring an envelope and stamp to class to use for mailing their feature article to an audience. Explain to students that the final step in the writing process is sharing/publishing their piece for an intended audience. Discuss with students that sharing their writing is a great way to celebrate all of their hard work.

- Share with students publishing opportunities by discussing the Publishing Folder. The Publishing Folder should include information on a variety of opportunities for students to enter contests, requirements, and addresses and web sites of publication possibilities. Another publishing opportunity is to create a classroom anthology of feature articles to share with other classrooms at your school or at other schools. Classroom anthologies are great to share with parents during conferences or other school visits.
- Ask students to look through the publishing folder and to make a decision on where they would like to send their writing pieces.
- Ask students to complete the Publishing Handout.
- Students wishing to mail their pieces should return to you their addressed envelope.
- As students have success with publishing, recognize the students school-wide. This provides motivation for others to try to publish their writing.

EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS:

Spend extra conferencing time with these students to make sure they are ready to publish.

TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:

Create a database of publishing sources, requirements, and addresses to contact the source.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:

Assessing the feature articles by using the Kentucky Holistic Scoring Guide for Writing.

PUBLISHING HANDOUT

I plan to submit my writing to _____.
Name of Publication

REQUIREMENTS ARE: _____
_____.

DATE

NAME

UNIT: Informational Reading/How to Write a Feature Article

TOPIC: Reflection, Lesson #18

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students reflect on writing process involved in writing a feature article.

CORE CONTENT:

WR-M-1.4 Transactive Writing

VOCABULARY:

reflection - thoughtful evaluation

purpose - reason, intention

process analysis - description of steps involved in an activity

audience - intended readers of written work

lead - opening paragraph

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:

"Feature Article...Reflection"

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

1. Students refer to their feature article and answer the questions on the reflection sheet. This activity should encourage students to evaluate their own writing.
2. The answers and vocabulary in this reflection can also be referred to when drafting the Letter to the Reviewer. The feature article and the reflection sheet should be saved in the writer's folder for future use.

Note: The Letter to the Reviewer is written by the student after all portfolio pieces have been completed in the spring. Reflections about each piece throughout the year will help a writer evaluate his/her growth as a writer when writing the Letter to the Reviewer. It is a good idea for reflections to be completed after the piece is drafted and set aside in the student's "working folder."

EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS:

Some students may need to talk about their reflections before writing.

ENRICHMENT:

Students use reflections to make improvements when revising "Feature Article" for portfolio.

Reflection handouts are also included for two specific types of articles published in the *Courier-Journal*: Kids Call ‘Em and The Best.

Send entries to: "The Best" or "Kids Call ‘Em"
 The Courier-Journal
 525 W. Broadway
 P.O. Box 740031
 Louisville, KY 40201-7431

TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:

Have students use a word processor to capture more detailed reflections.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:

Read all student reflections.

Feature Article....Reflection

Name _____ Period _____ Date _____

Directions: Please refer to your feature article and answer the following questions as honestly as possible.

1. I understood the difference between fact and opinion...

A. clearly B. somewhat C. not at all

2. Give a direct quote from your feature article of an opinion...

3. Give a direct quote from your feature article of a fact...

4. I understood the concept of "audience".... A. clearly B. somewhat C. not at all

5. My targeted audience was... _____

6. I included detail in my feature article by adding (Circle each used.)

anecdotes vignettes quotes snapshots examples/non-examples pictures
flashback facts tables/charts comparison/contrast
research foreshadowing reasons sketches graphs

7. What type of the lead did you choose? _____

8. My ending.... A. replays the lead B. ends at the end of the story
C. restates the purpose D. is a play on words E. is a quote F. is a
shocker
G. is an anecdote H. is a summary I. is an editorial comment

9. My feature article would fall under which category?

A. The Human-Interest Feature B. The Personality Feature
C. "The Best" Article D. The News Feature
E. The How-To Feature F. The Past-Events Feature

10. Writing my feature article was...

A. very challenging B. somewhat challenging C. time consuming

Kids Call' Em

Review for the Courier Journal Friday X- Tra Section

Movie, Video, Book, DVD, Game, CD, Entertainment for Kids

Name _____ Period _____ Date _____

Directions: Please refer to your column and answer the following questions as honestly as possible.

1. What did you pick to review? movie video book DVD game CD entertainment
2. What is the name of what you are reviewing? _____
3. I understood the concept of "audience".... A. clearly B. somewhat C. not at all
4. Who was your targeted audience? _____
5. My "lead" or first paragraph...
A. catches the reader's attention B. can use some work C. needs to be replaced totally
6. My ending....
A. ties together the whole article B. can use some work C. needs to be replaced totally
7. My review...
A. needs little revision for grammar and spelling errors
B. needs some revision for grammar and spelling errors
C. needs a lot of revision for grammar and spelling errors
8. My review...
A. is short and to the point
B. is a little long and needs to be shortened
C. is too long and needs to be shortened
9. My review...
A. should impact the reader's opinion and make him/her want to invest in this entertainment.
B. might make the reader think about investing in this entertainment.
C. will probably not make the reader invest in this form of entertainment .
10. Writing my review was... A. very challenging B. somewhat challenging C. easy

Extensions/Accommodations for ECE and other Diverse Learners

Students with disabilities may require additional accommodations.
Refer to IEP (Individual Education Plan)

Organize and Structure

- **Establish routines to insure that students have consistent opportunities to process information and to maintain an effective learning climate.**
- Activate prior knowledge with a written or verbal review of key concepts at the beginning of class.
- Present the agenda for the lesson and task expectations verbally and in written form.
- Establish well-defined classroom rules. Have students model and rehearse behavioral expectations.
- Set clear time limits. Use a timer to complete tasks.
- Utilize student's peak learning times to teach important lessons.
- Use verbal/nonverbal cues and frequent breaks to keep students focused.
- **Plan and organize classroom arrangement to minimize disruptions and enhance efficiency.**
- Allow adequate space for effective traffic patterns, furniture, and equipment.
- Arrange classroom to limit visual and auditory distractions.
- Provide preferential seating (near teacher, good view of board, special chair or desk) to increase attention and reduce distractions.
- Keep student's work area free of unnecessary materials.
- **Display and use visuals, posters, objects, models, and manipulatives to increase memory, comprehension and establish connections to core content. Examples include....**
- Mnemonic devices such as COPS (Capitalization, Organization, Punctuation, Spelling).
- A model of the final product before beginning an experiment, project, lab, etc.
- Posters of steps for specific learning strategies (open response, writing process, formulas).
- **Use varied student groupings to maximize opportunities for direct instruction and participation.**
- Use of one-on-one and small group instruction for students who require additional support.
- Carefully consider student abilities, learning styles, role models, type of assignment, etc., when grouping students for cooperative learning and with peer partners.
- Collaborate, co-teach, or consult with ECE, Comprehensive Teachers, etc.
- **Prior to instruction, design and organize content to strengthen storage and retrieval of information.**
- Design instruction that incorporates a multi-sensory approach (visual, auditory, tactile/kinesthetic) to insure that all learning styles are accommodated. Include demonstrations, simulations, hands-on activities, learning strategies, and mnemonic devices.
- Identify and focus on information critical for mastery. Determine the content students need to know (vs. what is nice to know). Organize instruction around the *big* ideas.
- Design an agenda showing exactly what the students will learn.
- Sequence presentation of content from easier to more difficult.

- Prepare study guides, a copy of class notes, or graphic organizers ahead of time. Allow some students to use partially completed copies during the lesson.
- Provide simplified versions of books and materials with similar content.
- Design specific management procedures to insure acquisition of content and task completion using...
- Planners, agendas, assignment sheets, homework/personal checklists, folders, notebooks, and/or parent notes.
- Written as well as verbal cues/prompts, color-coding, symbols, picture clues.

Instruct Explicitly

ÿ Present and pace explicit instruction to reinforce clear understanding of new concepts and make connections to prior learning.

- Teach, model and rehearse learning strategies pertaining to the content of the lesson including organizational guides, cooperative learning skills, and memory/mnemonic devices. (KWL, Venn Diagrams, SQRW = Survey Question, Read, Write, etc.).
- Introduce new concepts by clearly connecting them to prior knowledge using key vocabulary, chapter review questions, agenda, syllabus, etc. Present in both written and verbal form.
- Present assignments/directions in small steps/segments.
- Use short phrases, cue words, and signals to direct attention (my turn, your turn, eyes on me).
- Adjust the volume, tone, and speed of oral instruction.

ÿ Frequently monitor students to enhance memory, comprehension, and attention to content.

- Use frequent and varied questioning strategies. Target higher order thinking skills.
- Call on students by name. Restate student responses. Provide positive and corrective feedback.
- Use and model 'think aloud,' self-questioning, problem solving, and goal setting techniques.

Reduce

ÿ Condense main ideas and key concepts to avoid overload and allow for developmental mastery.

- Modify requirements of assignments based on information critical for mastery.
- Provide clear, visually uncluttered handouts/worksheets.
- Adapt assignment and test formats. Use alternate modes such as short answer, matching, drawing, true/false, and word banks.
- Break tasks into manageable segments. Adjust duration of instruction and independent work.
- Reduce redundancy and unnecessary practice.
- Use activities that require minimal writing. Avoid asking students to recopy work.
- Adjust amount/type of homework and coordinate assignments with other teachers.
- Provide credit for incremental learning.

Emphasize and Repeat

ÿ Use repeated practice/targeted cues to increase retention of essential concepts and to develop ability to monitor own learning.

- Provide frequent, but short, extra practice activities in small groups.
- Have student read/drill aloud to self or peer partner.
- Highlight text or use coding methods for key concepts.
- Use bound notebooks and/or learning logs to store vocabulary, facts, references, and formulas.
- Allow students guided practice and test taking strategies before assessments.
- Frequently restate concepts/directions using short phrases.
- Use computer activities, games, and precision teaching drills for practice activities instead of worksheets.

Motivate and Enable

ÿ Enhance opportunities for academic success to remediate faulty learning/thinking cycles and to reduce failure.

- Create unique learning activities including skills, posters, clay models, panoramas, dramatizations, etc. (see textbook manuals for alternative activities).
- Offer students choices of topics/projects and alternative methods to demonstrate knowledge (oral tests/presentations, illustrations, cooperative groups, etc.).
- Allow flexible timelines for assignment completion, homework, and testing with retakes.
- Consider the students learning styles when designing extent of involvement in a learning activity.
- Extend time for students to process ideas/concepts, which are presented in lectures/discussions.
- Use technology such as taped text, word processors, scanners, and audio feedback software.
- Provide spare material and supplies.
- Provide personal word lists/spelling aids for written assignments.
- Adjust grading procedures to reflect individual goals, only correct answers, and percent of completed work. Allow extra credit projects to bring up grades.

ÿ Enhance opportunities for behavioral success to reduce frustration and confusion.

- Increase positive comments and student interactions (make 3 positive statements for every one negative statement).
- Use positive and specific verbal/nonverbal praise. Provide immediate feedback.
- Review rules regularly. Provide varied rewards and consequences.
- Maintain close physical proximity to students especially during independent work sessions.
- Alert students several minutes before transitions occur.
- Use personal contracts and goal setting which match the student's needs, interests, and abilities.
- Teach self-monitoring skills using progress charts/reports. Gradually wean students from artificial incentives.
- Maintain regular communication with parents.

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