



## GRADE K LITERACY: GARDEN HELPERS

### UNIT OVERVIEW

This task is embedded in a unit that introduces students to informational texts as sources of information, or “teachers” that we can learn from. After spending time exploring nonfiction texts, through read alouds as well as collaborative and independent research, students will demonstrate their understanding by writing a book about what they’ve learned from a nonfiction read aloud. The unit length is approximately 3 weeks, depending on students’ incoming familiarity with nonfiction, and can be extended with enrichment activities.

### TASK DETAILS

**Task Name:** Garden Helpers (Something I learned from a book)

**Grade:** K

**Subject:** Literacy

**Depth of Knowledge:** 3

**Task Description:** This task asks students to write an informative/explanatory report demonstrating what they learned from an informational text. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the main idea of the text – not all bugs are bad – by retelling key details.

#### **Standards:**

**RI.K.1** With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

**RI.K.2** With prompting and support, identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.

**K.RI.10** Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.

**W.K.2** Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.

#### **Materials Needed:**

- Garden Helpers: <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/ngyoungexplorer/0909/readstory.html>
- “We Read a Book About” template



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The task and instructional supports in the following pages are designed to help educators understand and implement tasks that are embedded in Common Core-aligned curricula. While the focus for the 2011-2012 Instructional Expectations is on engaging students in Common Core-aligned culminating tasks, it is imperative that the tasks are embedded in units of study that are also aligned to the new standards. Rather than asking teachers to introduce a task into the semester without context, this work is intended to encourage analysis of student and teacher work to understand what alignment looks like. We have learned through the 2010-2011 Common Core pilots that beginning with rigorous assessments drives significant shifts in curriculum and pedagogy. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) support is included to ensure multiple entry points for all learners, including students with disabilities and English language learners.

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Acknowledgements: The unit outline was developed by Rebecca Odessey (CFN 109) with input from Curriculum Designers Alignment Review Team. The tasks were developed by the schools in the 2010-2011 NYC DOE Elementary School Performance Based Assessment Pilot, in collaboration with Exemplars, Inc. and Center for Assessment.



# GRADE **K** LITERACY: GARDEN HELPERS

## PERFORMANCE TASK

This section contains the student version of the final performance task and task administration guidelines for teachers.

 We read a book about \_\_\_\_\_.

This is what I learned.

\_\_\_\_\_

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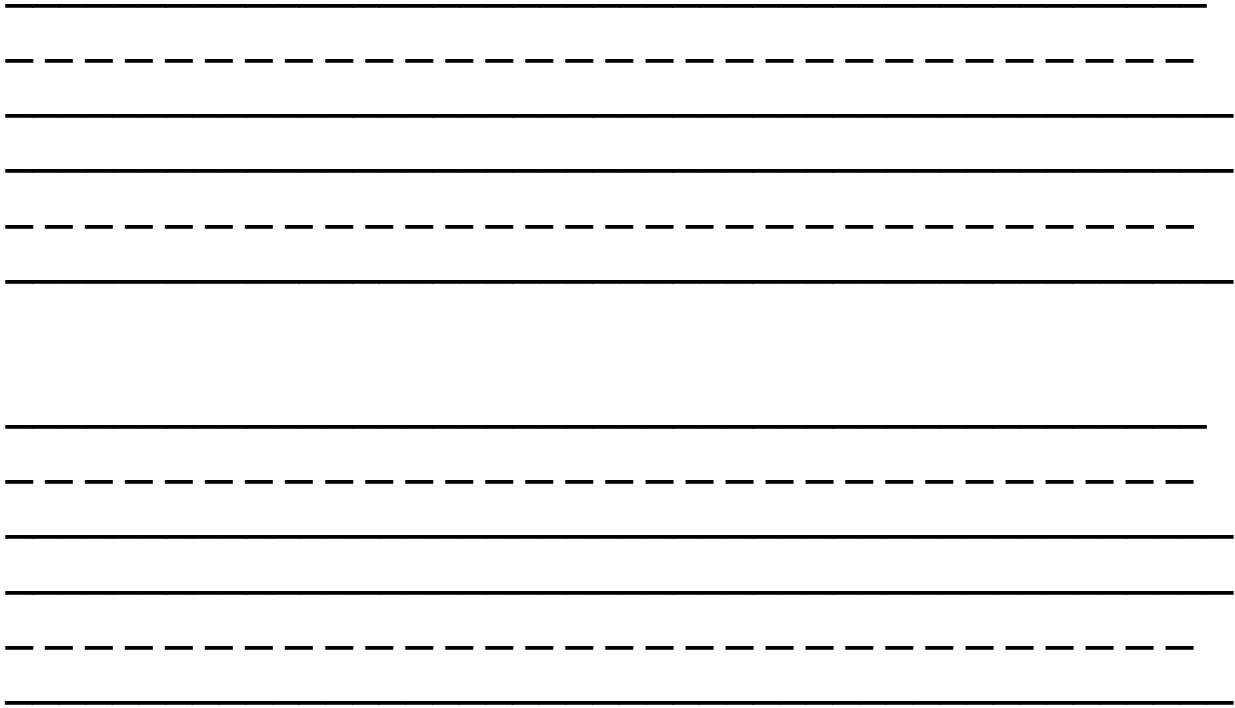
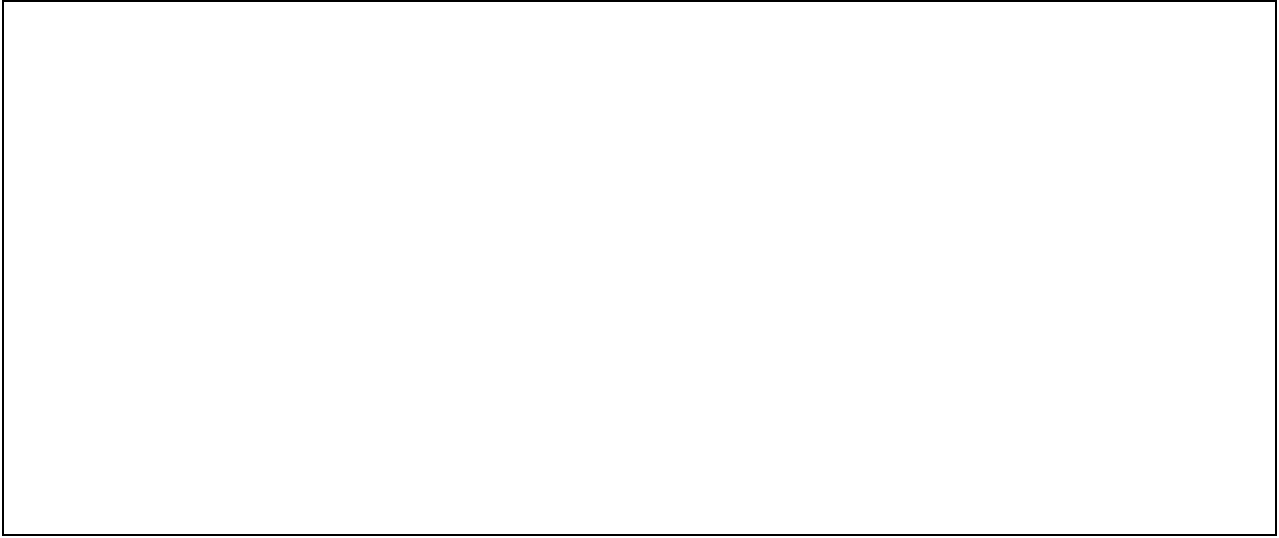
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\_\_\_\_\_

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## Name of Assessment Task: Something I Learned from a Book    Grade: K

### General Teacher Directions:

#### Day 1

- **Prewriting Activity:** With your class, brainstorm reasons why we read (e.g., for fun, to see the pictures, to learn about a topic, to learn how to make something, to get the news, to know where we are going). Ask “*what is the difference between a story book and book that teaches us something?*” (e.g., stories can be real or made up, but books that teach are about real things).
- **Comparing text types:** Hold up a few different classroom story books and informational texts one at a time and ask “*do you think this is a story book or a book that can teach us something? How do you know?*” After large-group answering that calls attention to features of texts (photo in informational text versus drawing in story, etc.), allow students to test their understanding of text types with a partner by finding a story book and teaching book in the classroom.

#### Day 2

- **Prewriting Activity - Introduce an informational text for group writing:** Hold up an informational text or an informational Big Book that you will read together. Ask “*do you think this is a story or a book that can teach us something? How do you know?*” After students answer, read the book together as you would in interactive group reading. When done reading, ask “*what did we learn?*” Scribe student responses in complete sentences on a large chart and then read each sentence aloud together: e.g., Susan learned that robins lay eggs in a nest. Nest can be made of grass and mud.

#### Day 3

- **Introduce an informational text for individual writing:** Hold up the informational text or Big Book of “**Garden Helpers.**” *National Geographic Young Explorers, September 2009.* Read this text together as you would in interactive group reading.
- Ask “*do you think this is a story or a book that can teach us something? How do you know?*” After students answer, read the text together. When done reading, ask, “*what did we learn?*” Allow students to generate ideas from the text such as:
  - Some bugs help your garden.
  - Ladybugs eat smaller bugs.
  - Spiders catch bugs in a web.
- Write some key words from student responses as a list, on the large chart: bugs, garden, ladybug, spider, web, etc. Read each word on the chart aloud together.

Leave the list up as students begin their writing. make the book/ Big Book available to students during the writing if they want to go back and check for a word and need help with their pictures.

- **Distribute copies of the writing prompt and read the prompt aloud.** “We read a book about \_\_\_\_\_. This is what I learned.” Ask “*what did we read a book about?*” (e.g., gardens, or bugs) Read the prompt again together with the students. Ask them where they should write the topic – bugs or gardens.
- “*Let’s think about what you learned from this book.*” Allow students to refer back to the lost of words. Say, “*you will draw and write a report about what you learned from this book. You can use the words on the chart to help you. And you can look again at the pages to help you remember what you learned.*”
- Circulate around the room as children draw and write. Scribe for ALL students using generic prompts to be sure all of their ideas are included. (See guidelines for allowable accommodations and sample scribing questions for writing).



GRADE **K** LITERACY: GARDEN HELPERS  
UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING (UDL)  
PRINCIPLES



## **Garden Helpers ELA/ Grade K Common Core Learning Standards/ Universal Design for Learning**

The goal of using Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) is to provide the highest academic standards to all of our students. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a set of principles that provides teachers with a structure to develop their instruction to meet the needs of a diversity of learners. UDL is a research-based framework that suggests each student learns in a unique manner. A one-size-fits-all approach is not effective to meet the diverse range of learners in our schools. By creating options for how instruction is presented, how students express their ideas, and how teachers can engage students in their learning, instruction can be customized and adjusted to meet individual student needs. In this manner, we can support our students to succeed in the CCLS.

Below are some ideas of how this Common Core Task is aligned with the three principles of UDL; providing options in representation, action/expression, and engagement. As UDL calls for multiple options, the possible list is endless. Please use this as a starting point. Think about your own group of students and assess whether these are options you can use.

**REPRESENTATION:** *The “what” of learning.* How does the task present information and content in different ways? How students gather facts and categorize what they see, hear, and read. How are they identifying letters, words, or an author's style?

*In this task, teachers can...*

- ✓ **Provide options for comprehension** by providing multiple entry points to the lesson and optional pathways through content by offering National Geographic’s Garden Helper’s on computer with embedded read aloud mode.

**ACTION/EXPRESSION:** *The “how” of learning.* How does the task differentiate the ways that students can express what they know? How do they plan and perform tasks? How do students organize and express their ideas?

*In this task, teachers can...*

- ✓ **Provide differentiated feedback to student writing by** using sticky notes, student conferencing groups, and immediate feedback on various literary stages of their information writing sample.

**ENGAGEMENT:** *The “why” of learning.* How does the task stimulate interest and motivation for learning? How do students get engaged? How are they challenged, excited, or interested?

*In this task, teachers can...*

- ✓ **Foster collaboration and community** by employing paired reading and writing of tasks, to provide constructive feedback for each others thinking and writing

Visit <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/CommonCoreLibrary/default.htm> to learn more information about UDL.



# GRADE **K** LITERACY: GARDEN HELPERS

## RUBRIC

## CCSS Writing Standard #2: Compose Informative/Explanatory Writing K-3

Students compose informational texts by organizing and conveying information and ideas accurately and effectively.

CCSS Language & Writing Criteria	Novice	Apprentice	Practitioner	Expert
<b>Purpose</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Context – topic, question(s) to be answered</li> <li>Focus/Controlling Idea</li> <li>Evidence of gathered information or understanding something about the topic</li> </ul>	Uses a combination of drawing, dictation, & writing (K) to compose  Attempts to identify a topic but lacks a focus or may have more than one topic or confusing topic as stated	Uses a combination of drawing, dictation, & writing (K) to compose  Has topic and attempts a focus/information, but focus may shift or not be relevant to the topic chosen	<i>Uses a combination of drawing, dictation, &amp; writing (K) to compose</i>  <i>Topic (context) and focus/controlling idea are clearly stated (gr K-3)</i>	Uses a combination of drawing, dictation, & writing (K) to compose  Explains something more about the topic OR a connection is made between topic & broader idea(s)  Clearly presents the topic and focus/controlling idea
<b>Organization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall coherence</li> <li>Appropriate organizational patterns</li> <li>Transitions connect ideas (e.g., compare-contrast, description, cause-effect)</li> <li>May have headings, numbering, bullets to group ideas</li> </ul>	Attempts introduction, body, and conclusion, but one or more parts are missing	Introduction, body, and conclusion are evident, but may lack clarity or coherence (e.g., attempts to connect ideas, but may not be logical or make sense)	<i>Has overall coherence (K-3); Provides a concluding statement or section (gr, 1, 2, 3)</i>  <i>Groups related ideas (gr3) that support the focus</i>  <i>Uses transitions to connect ideas (gr3)</i>	Intro, body, and conclusion support focus  Uses several transitions appropriately (e.g., because, since, and, but, also, for example, since) to connect or group ideas
<b>Details/Elaboration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Naming</li> <li>Describing, defining</li> <li>Explaining</li> <li>Comparing</li> <li>Examples, facts, citations</li> <li>Sensory and concrete details supporting topic</li> <li>Analogies</li> <li>Illustrations, graphics</li> </ul>	No details provided or attempts to add details to drawings or writing which may be random, inaccurate, or irrelevant	Some elaboration strategies are evident in drawings or writing (gr K-3), or with support/questioning from peers or adults (gr K -1)  Ideas may not be fully elaborated or details may be insufficient to support topic	<i>Some authentic details, definitions, facts, text evidence support focus</i>  <i>Adds labels or captions to illustration, drawing, visuals, charts/tables, or diagram to enhance details, facts, and ideas</i>	Has a depth of information; insightful  Elaborates using a variety of relevant details, definitions, examples, quotes, text evidence to support focus/concepts
<b>Voice and Tone</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledgeable person</li> <li>Vocabulary – Precise language</li> <li>Sentence structure</li> <li>Sentence variety</li> </ul>	Generally uses basic, incorrect, or below grade level vocabulary when dictating (K) or writing  Uses adult/peer feedback to revise	Vocabulary use has minor errors  Dictates, writes, and expands simple complete sentences  Uses adult/peer feedback to revise	<i>Produces complete simple (K), compound (g, 1- 3), complex (gr3) sentences</i>  <i>Appropriate use of vocabulary (nouns, plurals, verbs, pronouns, adjectives, adverb, content-specific)</i>  <i>Uses adult/peer feedback to revise</i>	Maintains voice/tone of knowledgeable person conveying information – knows when to use formal-informal language  Uses effective, precise vocabulary and variety of sentence structures
<b>Conventions of Standard English</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grammar</li> <li>Usage</li> <li>Mechanics (capitalization, punctuation, spelling)</li> </ul>	Edits with support from peers or adults (gr 2-3)  Uses below grade-level <u>basic</u> mechanics with frequent errors	Edits with support from peers or adults (gr 2-3)  Uses grade-appropriate <u>basic</u> mechanics and word use with some errors	<i>Edits with support /resources (gr 2-3)</i>  <i>Minor errors do not interfere with reader understanding (e.g., capitalization, punctuation; spelling)</i>	Edits with support /resources  Has few or no errors in grammar, word usage, or mechanics as appropriate to grade

**NOTE: Anchor papers illustrate how descriptors for each performance level are evidenced at each grade.**

Working Drafts of ELA rubrics for assessing CCSS writing standards --- © (2010) Karin Hess, National Center for Assessment [[khess@nceia.org](mailto:khess@nceia.org)] using several sources: CCSS for writing; *Learning Progressions Framework for ELA* (Hess, 2011); the VT analytic writing rubrics; Biggam & Iterly, *Literacy Profiles*; Hill, *Developmental Continuum*; *Exemplars Young Writers* rubrics; and input from NYC K-5 performance assessment pilot Assessment Development Leaders



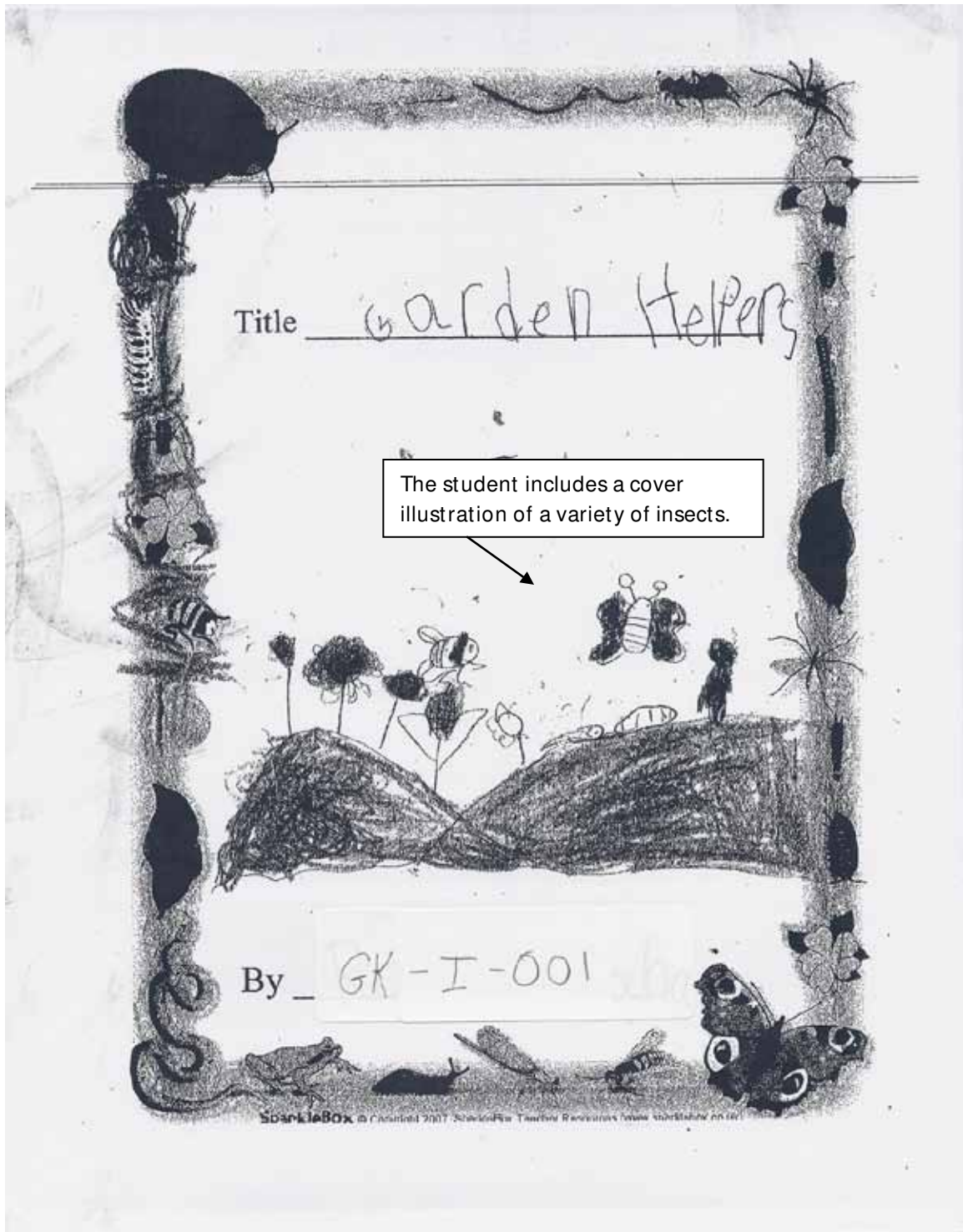
# GRADE K LITERACY: GARDEN HELPERS

## ANNOTATED STUDENT WORK

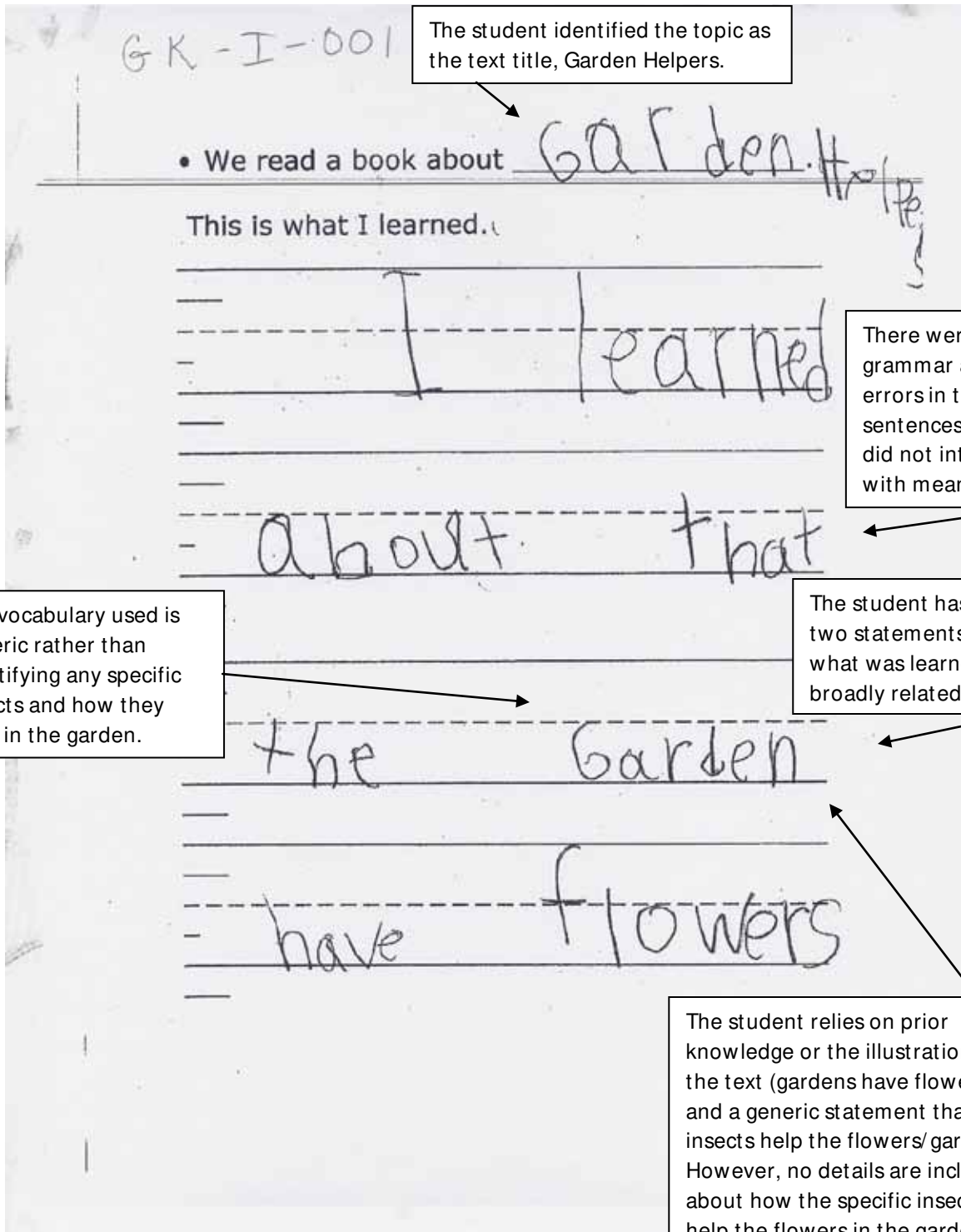
This section contains annotated student work at a range of score points, student summaries, and implications for instruction for each performance level. The annotated student work and student summaries demonstrate performance at different levels and show examples of student understandings and misunderstandings of the task that can be used with the implications for instruction to understand how to move students to the next performance level.

In piloting the assessment task, we were not able to get the full range of student work at all performance levels. The student work here only includes student work at the Novice and Apprentice levels. As we collect more student work, we will update this section to show student performance at all levels.

**K Literacy: Garden Helpers**  
**Annotated Student Work: Apprentice**



**K Literacy: Garden Helpers**  
**Annotated Student Work: Apprentice**



**K Literacy: Garden Helpers**  
**Annotated Student Work: Apprentice**

GK-I-001

The writing identifies that the student learned that insects help flowers in the garden, which is the central idea of the text.

The insect

help dem.

The student accurately spelled the majority of the words used and phonetic spelling for "them" ("dem").

## K Literacy: Garden Helpers

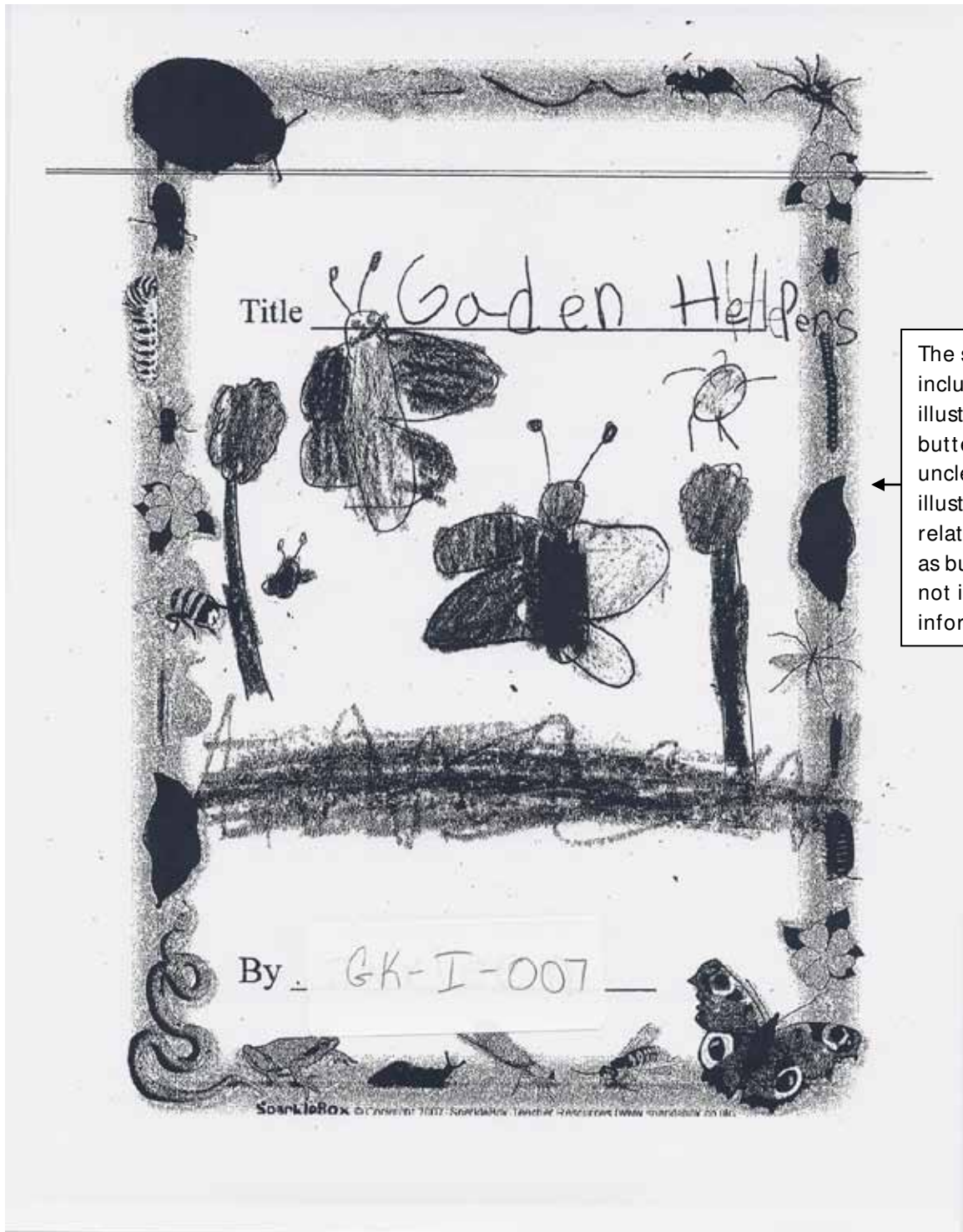
### Annotated Student Work: Student Apprentice

Annotations are based on analytical scoring, which means scoring each criterion separately. Analytical scoring supports the teacher in being able to focus feedback to students and target next steps for instruction. Analytical feedback for each criterion also helps students to see their areas of strength and where they need to make revisions. The writing analyzed through these annotations is indicative of a student *generally performing between an Apprentice and Novice level*.

CCSS Language & Writing	Evidence	Instructional next steps To meet CCR Standards, this student needs to:
<p><b>Purpose</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Context – topic, question(s) to be answered</li> <li>Focus/Controlling Idea</li> <li>Evidence of gathered information or understanding something about the topic</li> </ul>	<p><b>Score: Apprentice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student identified the topic as the text title, Garden Helpers.</li> <li>The writing identifies that the student learned that insects help flowers in the garden, which is the central idea of the text.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This student might benefit from re-reading the text several times to locate details to include that are relevant to the focus/controlling idea.</li> <li>The student may also benefit from understanding the difference between factual information from the text and information from their own thinking and/or from only pictures.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Organization</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall coherence</li> <li>Appropriate organizational patterns</li> <li>Transitions connect ideas (e.g., compare-contrast, description, cause-effect)</li> <li>May have headings, numbering, bullets to group ideas</li> </ul>	<p><b>Score: Apprentice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student has included two statements about what was learned that are broadly related to the text.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student may need greater scaffolding to learn to organize and expand information. This could be done by writing out parts of the sentence for the student (e.g., A _____ helps gardens because it _____; Something I learned was _____). Gradually, scaffolding is slowly removed to ensure that students are able to independently organize their ideas and details. This would be done with shorter and then longer pieces of writing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Details/Elaboration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Naming</li> <li>Describing, defining</li> <li>Explaining</li> <li>Comparing</li> <li>Examples, facts, citations</li> <li>Sensory and concrete details supporting topic</li> <li>Analogies</li> <li>Illustrations, graphics</li> </ul>	<p><b>Score: Novice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student includes a cover illustration of a variety of insects. Teacher scribing <u>should be used with all K students</u> to ask questions such as, “tell me about what you put on the cover of your report” or “what did you learn about that you want to tell others?”</li> <li>The student relies on prior knowledge or the illustrations in the text (gardens have flowers) and a generic statement that insects help the flowers/gardens). However, no details are included about how the specific insects help the flowers in the garden.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This student would benefit from understanding the purpose of details in informational text (e.g., how details help the reader make a picture in his mind) and how they are used when writing informational text (e.g., labeling illustrations, explaining ideas, etc.).</li> <li>Practice use of elaboration for ideas by adding more details or words that describe (colors, shapes, sizes, sounds, etc.).</li> <li>Locate mentor texts with labeled illustrations as examples for own writing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Voice and Tone</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledgeable person</li> <li>Vocabulary – Precise language</li> <li>Sentence structure</li> <li>Sentence variety</li> </ul>	<p><b>Score: Novice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student is able to compose simple sentences.</li> <li>The vocabulary used is generic rather than identifying any specific insects and how they help in the garden.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop sentences that include precise language and details in order to clarify understanding as well as to develop sentence structure. Assisting the student to develop sentences with at least one detail would create a stronger voice and tone for the informational writing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Conventions of Standard English</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grammar</li> <li>Usage</li> <li>Mechanics (capitalization, punctuation, spelling)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Score: Apprentice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student accurately spelled the majority of the words and used phonetic spelling for “them” (“dem”).</li> <li>The student used a capital letter for “I” at the beginning of a sentence; however, capitalization was inconsistent throughout</li> <li>The sentence lacks punctuation.</li> <li>There were some grammar and usage errors in the sentences, but they did not interfere with meaning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writing aloud with students and reinforcing grammar, the use of capital letters, and ending punctuation will help support the student’s use of appropriate mechanics.</li> </ul>

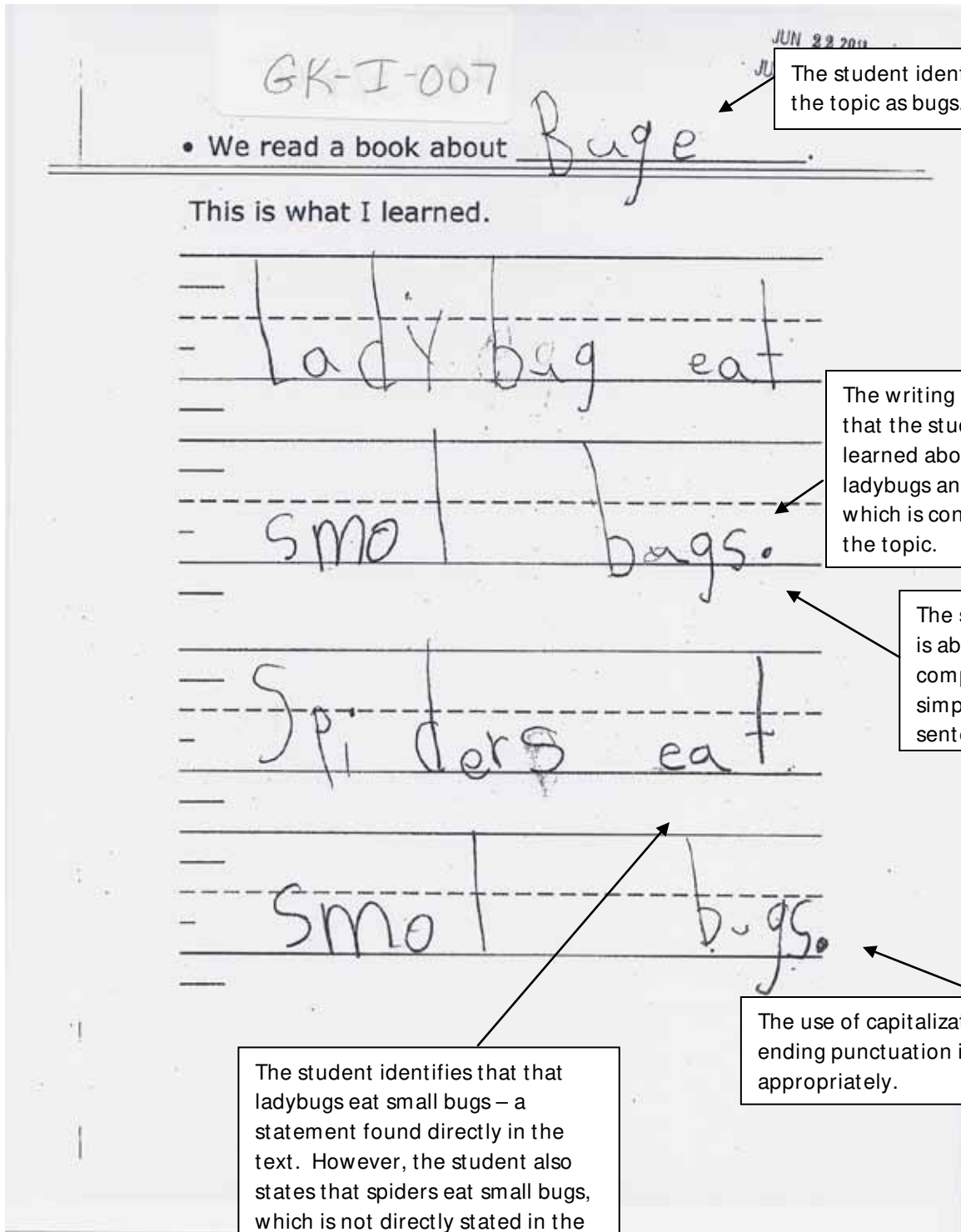


**K Literacy: Garden Helpers**  
**Annotated Student Work: Apprentice**



The student includes a cover illustration of butterflies. It is unclear how the illustration is related to the text as butterflies are not included in the information.

**K Literacy: Garden Helpers  
Annotated Student Work: Apprentice**



The student identified the topic as bugs.

The writing identifies that the student learned about ladybugs and spiders, which is connected to the topic.

The student is able to compose simple sentences.

The use of capitalization and ending punctuation is used appropriately.

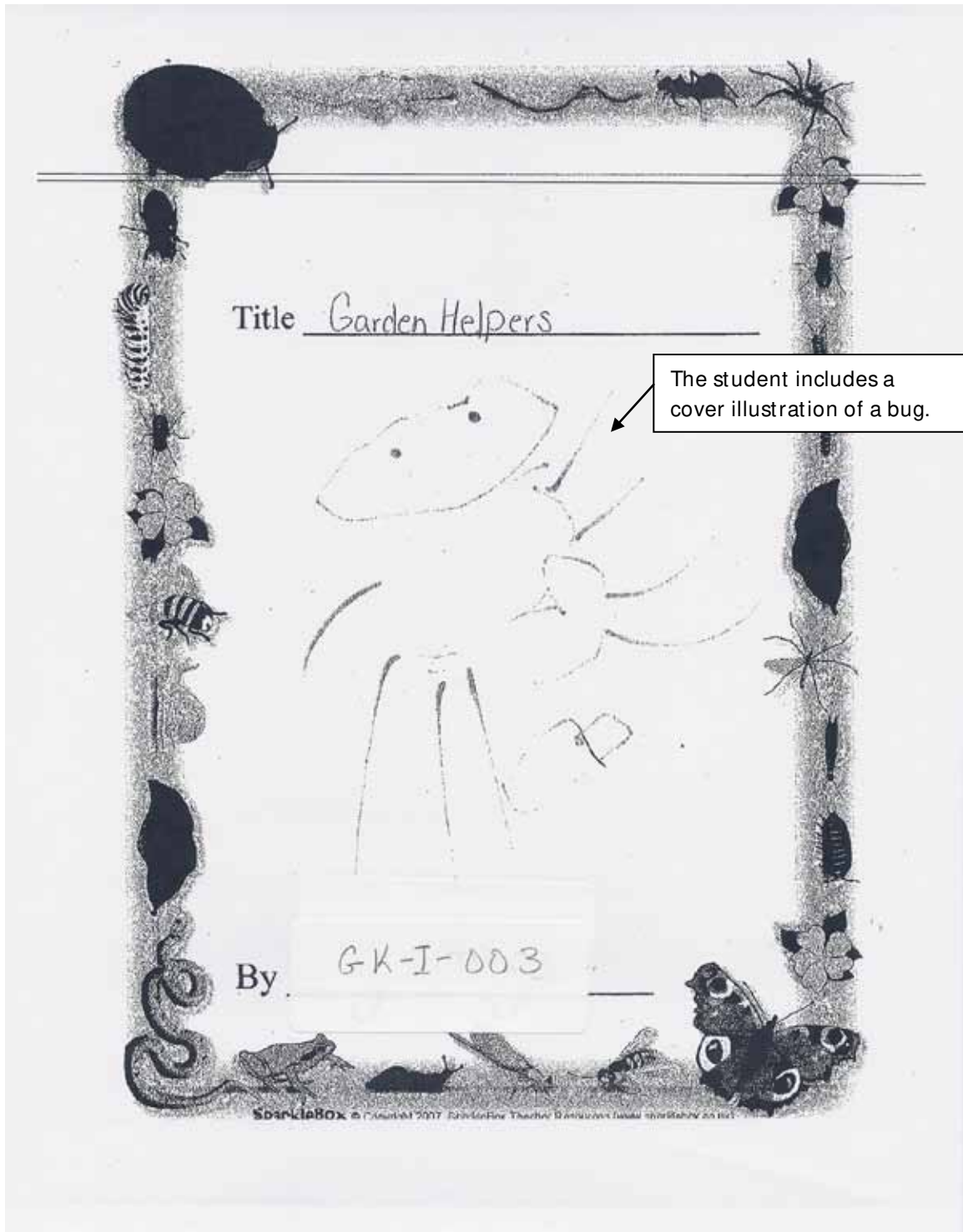
The student identifies that that ladybugs eat small bugs – a statement found directly in the text. However, the student also states that spiders eat small bugs, which is not directly stated in the text, but is inferred from the statement that a spiders catches bugs in its web.

## K Literacy: Garden Helpers Annotated Student Work: Apprentice

Annotations are based on analytical scoring, which means scoring each criterion separately. Analytical scoring supports the teacher in being able to focus feedback to students and target next steps for instruction. Analytical feedback for each criterion also helps students to see their areas of strength and where they need to make revisions. The writing analyzed through these annotations is indicative of a student generally performing at an Apprentice level.

CCSS Language & Writing	Evidence	Instructional next steps To meet CCR Standards, this student needs to:
<p><b>Purpose</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Context – topic, question(s) to be answered</li> <li>Focus/Controlling Idea</li> <li>Evidence of gathered information or understanding something about the topic</li> </ul>	<p><b>Score: Apprentice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student identified the topic as bugs.</li> <li>The writing identifies that the student learned about ladybugs and spiders, which is connected to the topic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This student might benefit from re-reading the text several times to locate additional details to include that are relevant to the focus/controlling idea and to state these details using his/her own words.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Organization</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall coherence</li> <li>Appropriate organizational patterns</li> <li>Transitions connect ideas (e.g., compare-contrast, description, cause-effect)</li> <li>May have headings, numbering, bullets to group ideas</li> </ul>	<p><b>Score: Apprentice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student identifies that that ladybugs eat small bugs – a statement found directly in the text. However, the student also states that spiders eat small bugs, which is not directly stated in the text, but is inferred from the statement that a spider catches bugs in its web.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student may need greater scaffolding to learn to organize and expand information. This could be done by writing out parts of the sentence for the student (e.g., A _____ helps gardens because it _____; Something I learned was _____). Gradually, scaffolding is slowly removed to ensure that students are able to independently organize their ideas and details. This would be done with shorter and then longer pieces of writing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Details/Elaboration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Naming</li> <li>Describing, defining</li> <li>Explaining</li> <li>Comparing</li> <li>Examples, facts, citations</li> <li>Sensory and concrete details supporting topic</li> <li>Analogies</li> <li>Illustrations, graphics</li> </ul>	<p><b>Score: Novice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student includes a cover illustration of butterflies. It is unclear how the illustration is related to the text as butterflies are not included in the information. Teacher scribing <u>should be used with all K students</u> to ask questions such as, “tell me about what you put on the cover of your report” or “what did you learn about butterflies that you want to tell others?”</li> <li>The student includes information from the text; however, the statements lack details about how eating small bugs is helpful for the garden (See next page for actual text).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This student would benefit from understanding the purpose of details in informational text (e.g., how details help the reader make a picture in his mind) and how they are used when writing informational text (e.g. labeling illustrations, explaining ideas, etc.).</li> <li>Practice use of elaboration for ideas by adding more details or words that describe (colors, shapes, sizes, sounds, etc.).</li> <li>Locate mentor texts with labeled illustrations as examples for student’s own writing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Voice and Tone</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledgeable person</li> <li>Vocabulary – Precise language</li> <li>Sentence structure</li> <li>Sentence variety</li> </ul>	<p><b>Score: Apprentice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student is able to compose simple sentences.</li> <li>Two bugs from the text are accurately identified /named to explain what the student learned.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop sentences that include precise language and details in order to clarify understanding as well as to develop sentence structure.</li> <li>Assisting the student to develop sentences with at least one detail would create a stronger voice and tone for the informational writing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Conventions of Standard English</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grammar</li> <li>Usage</li> <li>Mechanics (capitalization, punctuation, spelling)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Score: Apprentice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student uses accurate and phonetic spelling.</li> <li>The use of capitalization and ending punctuation is used appropriately.</li> <li>The use of noun-verb agreement is inconsistent. The first sentence states, “Ladybug eat ...”; and the second sentence states, “Spiders eat....”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writing aloud with students (dictating) and reinforcing the noun-verb agreement will help support the student’s grammar and usage. However, this example is for the most part grade appropriate.</li> </ul>

K Literacy: Garden Helpers  
Annotated Student Work: Novice



**K Literacy: Garden Helpers**  
**Annotated Student Work: Novice**

GK-I-003

• We read a book about \_\_\_\_\_  
This is what I learned.

Lady bugs

SPIDER

WORM

The written information is a list of the insects (details) that were identified in the text.

The organization is a list of insects without a statement of what was learned about these insects.

The vocabulary is from the text, but is presented as a list.

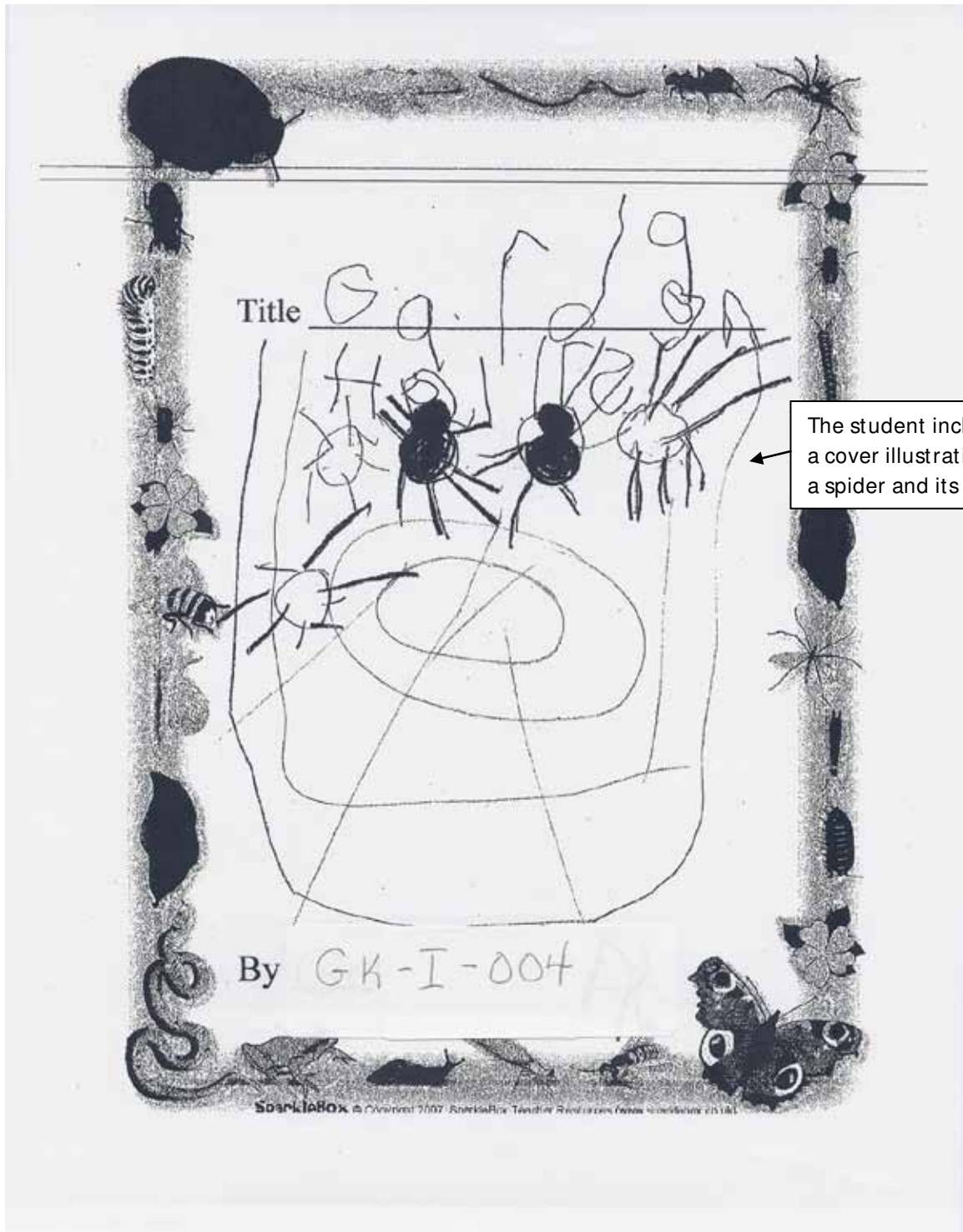
The student used accurate spelling for the list of bugs.

## K Literacy: Garden Helpers Annotated Student Work: Novice

Annotations are based on analytical scoring, which means scoring each criterion separately. Analytical scoring supports the teacher in being able to focus feedback to students and target next steps for instruction. Analytical feedback for each criterion also helps students to see their areas of strength and where they need to make revisions. The writing analyzed through these annotations is indicative of a student generally performing at a **Novice** level.

CCSS Language & Writing	Evidence	Instructional next steps To meet CCR Standards, this student needs to:
<p><b>Purpose</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Context – topic, question(s) to be answered</li> <li>Focus/Controlling Idea</li> <li>Evidence of gathered information or understanding something about the topic</li> </ul>	<p><b>Score: Novice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student did not identify the topic for the information presented.</li> <li>The written information is a list of the insects (details) that were identified in the text.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage students to orally dictate to a scribe. The scribe writes dictated sentences that can be reread to the student while the student follows along, thus reinforcing writing complete sentences with correct sentence structure.</li> <li>This student might benefit from re-reading the text several times with a partner to locate key ideas and details in order to figure out the focus/controlling idea.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Organization</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall coherence</li> <li>Appropriate organizational patterns</li> <li>Transitions connect ideas (e.g., compare-contrast, description, cause-effect)</li> <li>May have headings, numbering, bullets to group ideas</li> </ul>	<p><b>Score: Novice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The organization is a list of insects without a statement of what was learned about these insects. Teacher scribing <u>should be used with all K students</u> to ask questions such as, “what did you learn about ____ that you want to tell others?”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student may need greater scaffolding to learn to organize and expand information. This could be done by writing out parts of the sentence for the student (e.g., A ____ helps gardens because it ____; Something I learned was ____). Gradually, scaffolding is slowly removed to ensure that students are able to independently organize their ideas and details. This would be done with shorter and then longer pieces of writing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Details/Elaboration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Naming</li> <li>Describing, defining</li> <li>Explaining</li> <li>Comparing</li> <li>Examples, facts, citations</li> <li>Sensory and concrete details supporting topic</li> <li>Analogies</li> <li>Illustrations, graphics</li> </ul>	<p><b>Score: Novice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student includes a cover illustration of a bug.</li> <li>No details are added to the writing about the bugs, therefore it is unclear what was learned about them as garden helpers. Having the student dictate information while the teacher scribes would assist in knowing what the student learned from the text.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This student would benefit from understanding the purpose of details in informational text (e.g., how details help the reader make a picture in his mind) and how they are used when writing informational text (e.g., labeling illustrations, explaining ideas, etc.)</li> <li>Practice use of elaboration for ideas by adding more details or words that describe (colors, shapes, sizes, sounds, etc.).</li> <li>Locate mentor texts with labeled illustrations as examples for own writing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Voice and Tone</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledgeable person</li> <li>Vocabulary – Precise language</li> <li>Sentence structure</li> <li>Sentence variety</li> </ul>	<p><b>Score: Novice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is not enough information to determine that the student is able to use basic grammar and compose simple sentences. NOTE: Having the student’s words scribed would assist in learning about their use of sentence structure and grammar.</li> <li>The vocabulary is from the text, but is presented as a list.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop sentences that include precise language in order to clarify understanding as well as to develop sentence structure. Assisting the student to develop sentences with at least one detail would create a stronger voice and tone for the informational writing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Conventions of Standard English</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grammar</li> <li>Usage</li> <li>Mechanics (capitalization, punctuation, spelling)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Score: Novice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student used accurate spelling for the list of bugs.</li> <li>Since there is only a list of words, grammar and word usage are not able to be scored.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having the student copy dictated sentences would reinforce appropriate grammar, word usage, capitalization, punctuation and spelling.</li> </ul>

**K Literacy: Garden Helpers**  
**Annotated Student Work: Novice**



**K Literacy: Garden Helpers**  
**Annotated Student Work: Novice**

• We read a book about

GK-I-004

This is what I learned.

Spider

It eats bugs

It has 8 legs

Based on the student's writing, grammar, usage, and mechanics interfere with meaning.

Spiders walk on the web.  
Spiders are black.  
Spiders eat insects.

Only one statement, however, is related to the text (spiders eat insects), although the text states that the "spider catches bugs in its sticky web."

The writing scribed by the teacher identifies that the student learned about spiders, which is a garden helper connected to the text. However, most of the information relies on prior knowledge or illustrations (spider walks on the web and is black) rather than the information stated in the text.

Some vocabulary is from the text, however most vocabulary is from prior knowledge or observation of the pictures.



## K Literacy: Garden Helpers Annotated Student Work: Novice

Annotations are based on analytical scoring, which means scoring each criterion separately. Analytical scoring supports the teacher in being able to focus feedback to students and target next steps for instruction. Analytical feedback for each criterion also helps students to see their areas of strength and where they need to make revisions. The writing analyzed through these annotations is indicative of a student generally performing at a Novice level.

CCSS Language & Writing	Evidence	Instructional next steps To meet CCR Standards, this student needs to:
<b>Purpose</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Context – topic, question(s) to be answered</li> <li>Focus/Controlling Idea</li> <li>Evidence of gathered information or understanding something about the topic</li> </ul>	<b>Score: Novice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student wrote his name as the topic for the book read.</li> <li>The writing scribed by the teacher identifies that the student learned about spiders, which is a garden helper connected to the text. However, most of the information relies on prior knowledge or illustrations (spider walks on the web and is black) rather than the information stated in the text. <u>This is why teacher scribing is SO important to interpreting student knowledge.</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage students to orally dictate to a scribe. The scribe writes dictated sentences that can be re-read to the student while the student follows along, thus reinforcing writing complete sentences with correct sentence structure.</li> <li>This student might benefit from re-reading the text several times with a partner to locate details from the text to include that are relevant to the focus/controlling idea.</li> </ul>
<b>Organization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall coherence</li> <li>Appropriate organizational patterns</li> <li>Transitions connect ideas (e.g., compare-contrast, description, cause-effect)</li> <li>May have headings, numbering, bullets to group ideas</li> </ul>	<b>Score: Apprentice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The organization is a listing of statements that all focus on the spider.</li> <li>Only one statement, however, is related to the text (spiders eat insects), although the text states that the “spider catches bugs in its sticky web.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student may need greater scaffolding to learn to organize and expand information. This could be done by writing out parts of the sentence for the student (e.g., A _____ helps gardens because it _____; Something I learned was _____). Gradually, scaffolding is slowly removed to ensure that students are able to independently organize their ideas and details. This would be done with shorter and then longer pieces of writing.</li> </ul>
<b>Details/Elaboration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Naming</li> <li>Describing, defining</li> <li>Explaining</li> <li>Comparing</li> <li>Examples, facts, citations</li> <li>Sensory and concrete details supporting topic</li> <li>Analogies</li> <li>Illustrations, graphics</li> </ul>	<b>Score: Novice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student includes a cover illustration of a spider and its web.</li> <li>The student identifies that the spider eats insects, but lacks details on what was learned about how this helps a garden.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This student would benefit from understanding the purpose of details in informational text (e.g., how details help the reader make a picture in his mind) and how they are used when writing informational text (e.g., labeling illustrations, explaining ideas, etc.).</li> <li>Practice use of elaboration for ideas by adding more details or words that describe (colors, shapes, sizes, sounds, etc.).</li> <li>Locate mentor texts with labeled illustrations as examples for own writing.</li> </ul>
<b>Voice and Tone</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledgeable person</li> <li>Vocabulary – Precise language</li> <li>Sentence structure</li> <li>Sentence variety</li> </ul>	<b>Score: Novice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student is able to verbally use basic grammar to compose simple sentences. Having the student’s words dictated and scribed assists teachers in learning about their use of sentence structure and grammar.</li> <li>Some vocabulary is from the text, but most vocabulary is from prior knowledge or observation of the pictures. Note that application of prior knowledge is important to reading comprehension, but should not be the only means of students demonstrating what they have learned about a topic. Prior knowledge can be used to support elaborations about details in the texts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop sentences that include precise language in order to clarify understanding as well as to develop sentence structure. Assisting the student to develop sentences with at least one detail from the text would create a stronger voice and tone for the informational writing. Then students can add relevant prior knowledge to further explain what they know.</li> </ul>
<b>Conventions of Standard English</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grammar</li> </ul>	<b>Score: Novice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on the student’s writing, grammar,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modeling and scaffolding the writing of words in sentences may be beneficial for this student.</li> </ul>

## K Literacy: Garden Helpers

### Annotated Student Work: Novice

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Usage</li><li>• Mechanics (capitalization, punctuation, spelling)</li></ul>	usage, and mechanics interfere with meaning.	<p>After the student has dictated a sentence, the student could copy the dictated sentences onto a paper that has the appropriate lines to place his/her own words. For example,</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Spiders walk on the web .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This would reinforce one-to-one correspondence of words in a sentence and that each word is separated by a space.</li><li>• In addition, this student would benefit from continued reinforcement of beginning sounds and corresponding letters of each word.</li></ul>
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# GRADE **K** LITERACY: GARDEN HELPERS

## INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORTS

The instructional supports on the following pages include a unit outline with formative assessments and suggested learning activities. Teachers may use this unit outline as it is described, integrate parts of it into a currently existing curriculum unit, or use it as a model or checklist for a currently existing unit on a different topic.

# Unit Outline- Kindergarten Literacy

**INTRODUCTION:** This unit outline provides an example of how teachers may integrate performance tasks into a unit. *Teachers may (a) use this unit outline as it is described below; (b) integrate parts of it into a currently existing curriculum unit; or (c) use it as a model or checklist for a currently existing unit on a different topic.*

## Kindergarten Literacy: Learning from Books

### UNIT TOPIC AND LENGTH:

This unit introduces students to informational texts as sources of information, or “teachers” that we can learn from. Students will become familiar with features of nonfiction text, and develop comprehension skills for learning from information texts through focusing on the main topic and facts/ details. After spending time exploring nonfiction texts, through read alouds as well as collaborative and independent research, students will demonstrate their understanding by writing a book about what they’ve learned from a nonfiction read aloud. The unit length is approximately 3 weeks, depending on students’ incoming familiarity with nonfiction, and can be extended with enrichment activities.

### COMMON CORE LEARNING STANDARDS:

**K.RI.1** With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

**K.RI.10** Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.

**K.W.2** Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/ explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.

**K.SL.2** Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.

### BIG IDEAS/ ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS:

Informational books have unique features that help us to learn from them.  
Writers share information that they have learned from informational books through their writing.  
Thinking and talking about a text helps readers to understand

### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

How can text features help me navigate and understand the purpose of a text?  
How can I teach other people about information that I have read through my own writing?  
How do I think while reading in order to understand and respond?

<p>information that the author has shared in the text. Information can be found in a variety of sources.</p>	<p>How can I share what I learn from reading?</p>
<p><b>CONTENT:</b> <b>Reading: informational texts</b> Purpose Features Key details</p> <hr/> <p><b>Writing: informational texts</b> Format Expression Sequencing</p> <hr/> <p><b>Speaking and Listening</b> Topic focus Questioning and responding Description Explanation</p> <hr/> <p><b>Media Literacy and Sources</b> Digital storytelling</p> <hr/> <p><b>Vocabulary</b> Vocabulary appropriate to content</p>	<p><b>SKILLS:</b> <b>Reading: informational texts types</b> <b>Determine</b> the author's purpose for writing the text <b>Identify</b> the main ideas/ topics in the text <b>Identify</b> defining features of a text <b>Explore</b> a variety of text types <b>Identify</b> key details in a text</p> <hr/> <p><b>Writing: informational texts</b> <b>Compose</b> informative/ explanatory text with main ideas/ topics, supporting details, and explanation <b>Report</b> information learned from a text <b>Express</b> ideas in a clear and coherent form <b>Place</b> main ideas/ topics in a logic sequence to increase the readability of written text</p> <hr/> <p><b>Speaking and Listening</b> <b>Maintain</b> topic focus in responding to questions about the text <b>Pose</b> questions to others in an attempt to clarify the text <b>Respond</b> to questions asked by others to clarify the text <b>Listen</b> carefully and record information shared by others about the text for the purpose of forming and responding to questions about the text <b>Provide</b> accurate descriptions of information from a text to clarify the author's information about a topic. <b>Explain</b> information about a topic from the text in clear and understandable manner</p> <hr/> <p><b>Media Literacy</b></p>

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Interact</b> with text in a digital format</p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin: auto;"/> <p><b>Vocabulary</b>  <b>Demonstrate</b> knowledge of the content from the text by using key vocabulary</p>
<p><b>VOCABULARY/ KEY TERMS:</b></p> <p><b>Literacy:</b> purpose, key detail, topic, explanations, information/ fact, report, informational text, nonfiction</p> <p><b>Science:</b> bug, ladybug, garden, spider, web, praying mantis, worm, soil [from: “Garden Helpers.” <i>National Geographic Young Explorers</i>, September 2009.]</p>	
<p><b>ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE AND ACTIVITIES:</b></p> <p><b>INITIAL ASSESSMENT :</b></p> <p><b>Select</b> an expository text for read aloud that is appropriate for grade level and text complexity. (For more information on text complexity, see ELA Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards; available online at: <a href="http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards">http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards</a>)</p> <p><b>Prepare</b> for and read aloud text with particular attention to the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ <i>What has this text taught me? That is, what has this text been mostly about?</i></li> <li>§ <i>How does this part fit together with [cite earlier portion of text]?</i></li> <li>§ Notice text-specific vocabulary with which your students may be unfamiliar</li> </ul> <p><b>Observe</b> student responses and behavior throughout read aloud.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ You may wish to document your observations using Karin Hess’s “Systematic Observation Tool,” focusing on selected CCLS: K.R.1, K.R.10, K.SL.10, and K.W.2 as relevant.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT:</b></p> <p><b>Track and monitor progress</b> using Karin Hess’s “Systematic Observation Tool,” focusing on selected CCLS: K.R.1, K.R.10, K.SL.10, and K.W.2 as relevant.</p> <p>You may wish to integrate a Concept of Print and Genre assessment. (For a reference, see: “Literacy and the youngest learner: Best practices for educators of children from birth to five,” by Armistead, Duke, &amp; Moses.)</p> <p>You can also integrate an “on demand” expository writing piece.</p>	
<p><b>FINAL PERFORMANCE TASK:</b></p> <p>“Something I Learned from a Book” assessment task: three day activity with read aloud, shared writing, and shared reading, culminating in independent writing to report information learned. <i>See the task/task instructions for details.</i></p>	

## LEARNING PLAN & ACTIVITIES:

**Book sorting:** Informational texts teach us about different *topics*. Use this activity to reinforce the concept of *topic*. Some students may be ready to discuss (*key*) *details*.



### Part 1

- § With students gathered together, have each student select a book with which s/he is familiar, and lay out so it is visible to the whole class.
- § Tell students to look for a book (belonging to another student) similar to their own (This may be easiest done based only on the book cover). Have students explain why they believe this book is similar to their own. Place the two books side by side, and ask if any other students have books that fit with these. Be sure to explicitly identify the defining common characteristic. Repeat the process as needed (perhaps until all books are placed in different categories).
- § Repeat the activity, this time telling students that books will be grouped according to what their *topic*—what they are about.
- § Review and discuss categories, noting instances where books could be placed into more than one category.

### Part 2

- § Have students work with partners to sort books by topic. Provide students a selection of approximately ten books to sort.
- § When students finish sorting, they should explain their process and write about it (as they are able).
- § Additional practice: each student selects six books, and then is paired (at random) with another student. The partnership should sort their twelve books into at least three categories.
- § Observation: Listen to student conversation, and ask about their sorting process. Remind students to look beyond the cover to find out what the book is about, in order to sort by *topic*.
- § Presentation: Partnerships should share (with teacher or whole class) their final sorting criteria. They should also document this in writing, including the book titles, criteria, and reflection on their sorting process.

### Extensions

- § *Venn Diagram Interactive* from ReadWriteThink may be used for students to choose any two books from their selections, to compare and contrast:   
<http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/venn/index.html>
- § *Flood! Interactive Sorting Tool* from PBSKids has students click and sort books by topic:   
<http://pbskids.org/lions/games/flood.html>

**Thinking while reading:** Use these prompts to guide students' comprehension of informational texts.

- § Read aloud informational texts appropriate for grade level and text complexity. (Appendix B of the Common Core State Standards provides exemplars of grade-appropriate text complexity.)
- § Model “think alouds” and guide students in discussion during read alouds, focusing on the

following questions:

- § *What do we know so far?*
- § *What did we learn?*
- § *What else do you wonder about?*

**Exploring informational texts:** Use these activities to develop students’ fluency with using and learning from informational texts.

*Part 1*

- § Tell students that they will be reading texts with a lot of *information*. Have students work in partnerships (for books) or small groups (for websites) to explore informational texts. They should follow appropriate guidelines.
  - § *Books: Read with a partner. Talk about the information while you read. Look for interesting information. Don’t worry about reading the whole book. Change books when you want, but do more reading than looking for books.*
  - § *Websites: Work with a group. Explore one website. Look for interesting information. Talk with your group about information you find.*
- § Students may switch from books to websites (and vice versa) after an appropriate amount of time.
- § Bring students together to talk about what they have learned. After students have shared, involve the group in discussion using the following prompts:
  - § *What was the most interesting thing someone else found out? Is there any information related to information found by someone else? What is one fact someone found out that you never knew before?*
- § Develop a chart with students, “Things We Found Out.” Record *facts* shared by students (about 8-10 facts total), each in a different color marker. Have students review *information* when the chart is full, and keep posted for remaining sessions.

*Part 2*

- § As a whole group, review “Things We Found Out” chart. Begin “Questions We Have” chart.
- § Use the facts on the “Things We Found Out” chart as prompts for follow up questions. Review the facts, one at a time, and ask students if they have questions on this topic. Record questions on “Questions We Have” chart, and use the same color marker for the questions as for the fact that prompted them. Review both charts when finished.
- § Begin “Answers We Found” chart. Assign students to specific questions. Discuss how to find answers to questions, using books and websites.
- § Provide students appropriate books, or set up with AskKids website. Allow students to switch (from books to website or vice versa) after about 20 minutes. Give a recording sheet to each group of students assigned to a question. Encourage students to continue reading about a topic after they have answered their question, and record interesting facts.
- § After students complete their work, gather together for a whole class discussion reflecting on their *investigation* process, guided by the following questions:
  - § *What was hardest about finding answers? Was it easier to find the answer on the Internet or in a book?*
- § Review the three charts, and record students’ answers in colors corresponding to the facts and questions. Then review all charts, by fact (link to question, then answer).

*Part 3*



- § Develop a “Question and Answer” book, using information from the three charts from previous sessions. Each student (or partnership, as appropriate) will be responsible for one page, with one set of fact, question, answer.
- § The book may be designed as a “riddle book” as follows: fact and question on the top half of the page, and answer and illustration on the bottom half (this may also be done on two separate pages rather than two halves of the same page). In creating a class book, the top half of the sheet (fact and question) can be glued to the front of the page, with the bottom half (answer and illustration) on the back of the page. When the book is read aloud, fact and question are read first, so the reader or listener may guess the answer, as in a riddle.

*Extension*

- § Continue to allow students time to read from nonfiction materials and share information, in small groups or as a whole class.

**Technological supports for reading and writing:**

These supports scaffold literacy development, and can be used in place of “traditional” books and pencil/paper, in the activities above. In particular, struggling readers may be engaged by the enhanced features of online books; students who struggle with handwriting may better express themselves by typing; students who dislike drawing may produce more appropriate illustrations by selecting clipart.

- § **TumbleBooks** is an online “library” of books in a range of levels that can be read by or to students. Related activities are also offered. Available for free through the New York Public Library: [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org)
- § **BookFlix** organizes stories by topic; students can watch stories and read books. Available for free through the New York Public Library: [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org)
- § **Storybirds** are short, “art-inspired” books developed online to print or email: [www.storybird.com](http://www.storybird.com)
- § **StoryBuddy** is an iPad app that allows students to create picture books through typing, and illustrating through their own drawings or importing saved pictures. For more information: <http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/storybuddy/id390538762?mt=8#>
- § **ClickySticky** is an iPad app that creates illustrated scenes by selecting a background and adding “stickers.” These pictures can be imported into StoryBuddy to add text. For more information: <http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/clickysticky/id365850969?mt=8#>

**RESOURCES**

**Texts Used (fiction, non-fiction, on-line, media, etc...)**

*Instructional literature:*

Text for the final performance task

“Garden Helpers.” *National Geographic Young Explorers*, September 2009. Accessible online at: <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/ngyoungexplorer/0909/readstory.html>

Related resources

Informational texts for independent and shared reading, appropriate for grade level and text complexity. See “Technological Resources” for online book options, and “Professional Resources” for information on text complexity.

*Professional resources:*

Common Core State Standards, English Language Arts Appendices A and B; available online through the Common Core State Standards Initiative: <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards>

§ Text complexity description and research (Appendix A), and book exemplars (Appendix B)

“Systemic Observation” (Karin Hess)

§ Use in initial and formative assessments

Bennett-Armistead, V. S., Duke, N. K., & Moses, A. M. (2005). Literacy and the youngest learner: Best practices for educators of children from birth to five. New York: Scholastic.

§ Concepts in Print and Genre supplement for formative assessments

Moline, S. (1995). I see what you mean: Children at work with visual information.

Melbourne, Australia: Black Cockatoo Publishing.

§ Teaching visual texts; particularly relevant for working with text features in nonfiction books (maps, diagrams, time lines, graphs, tables, etc.)

### **Websites and Web-tools Used:**

Supports for reading and writing: *see Learning Plan & Activities for further explanation about use of each resource*

**TumbleBooks:** available for free through the New York Public Library: [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org)

**BookFlix:** available for free through the New York Public Library: [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org)

**Storybird:** [www.storybird.com](http://www.storybird.com)

**StoryBuddy iPad:** <http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/storybuddy/id390538762?mt=8#>

**ClickySticky iPad app:** <http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/clickysticky/id365850969?mt=8#>

### Related resources

National Geographic Explorer student magazine:

<http://magma.nationalgeographic.com/ngexplorer/>

§ Articles and activities to extend informational literacy and content learning

National Geographic Kids: <http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/>

§ Articles, photographs and videos (and more) to extend content learning; search for many relevant resources about bugs, gardens, etc.

World Almanac for Kids: <http://www.worldalmanacforkids.com/>

§ Subscriptions available for schools

AskKids: <http://www.askkids.com/>

§ Child-appropriate search engine

## Systematic Observation

### What is Systematic Observation?

Systematic observation is an assessment strategy used to document knowledge and skills of a group of students over a period of time, rather than assessing all students at the same time (on-demand). Generally this approach works well for areas that are difficult to assess with pencil and paper tests or when multiple opportunities are provided for students to demonstrate acquisition of skills and knowledge over time. Systematic observation captures the “missed opportunities” for collecting assessment data during an instructional activity and can document progress being made over time in meeting broader learning goals for the school year.

Data collection can be imbedded in the instructional activity, such as during a class or group discussion, or done during small group or individual conferences with students. Brief notations are made including the date, student name, and key quotes or comments related to the focus of the learning goal(s). In a single lesson or activity, only a few specific notations might be made by the observer; however, eventually all students will be documented several times in the same areas of focus. Ongoing data collection provides information for making instructional decisions and for making evidence-based decisions about student learning.

### How to Use the Systematic Observation Documentation Template

1. **Identify 2-3 areas you will consistently (systematically) be able to document over time (such as throughout a unit of study)** – Although you *could* observe many different areas, limit the number of areas you will document through observation to assure quality data collection and minimal instructional interruption as you make notes. Identify areas difficult to assess with pencil and paper assignments (e.g., open-ended discussion topics about text features or use of comprehension strategies).
2. **Do a quick “match” with areas selected for observation** – What standard/expectations are you assessing? What are some key components you’ll focus on? Make a few notes at the bottom of the page to help you remember, since you won’t ask for all of them in one lesson/activity. (For example, you might list the literary devices or text features that students will be asked about.)
3. **Make systematic notes** - Date notes with student names and enough information to guide further instruction and/or to make evidence-based judgments about student learning.
4. **Use systematic notes to make informed decisions** – Some notes will be used to individualize support and instruction for particular students, some notes will inform general ongoing instructional practices for the group or entire class, and some notes will be used collectively to generalize how much progress each student is making.

## Systematic Observation Documentation Template

**Task/Activity:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Group/Grade Level:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Remember to date student responses)

<hr/> <p>(CCSS)</p>	<hr/> <p>(CCSS)</p>
<hr/> <p>(CCSS)</p>	<p><b><i>OTHER COMMENTS &amp; OBSERVATIONS:</i></b></p>

<p><b>TEACHER NOTES: (Key ideas for observation)</b></p>
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*Sample Systematic Observation Documentation*

**Task/Activity:** Discussion in Literature Circle/Book Club – Poetry Unit    **Grade:** 3

<p><b><u>identify characteristics of types of text</u></b> (CCSS RL-5: refer to parts of stories...)</p> <p><i>3/17 Mandy: this poem is not rhyming like all the other ones- I sort of liked it cuz of that</i></p> <p><i>3/17 Aaron: I like this story-kind of poetry more than the rhyming kind</i></p> <p><i>3/19 Meg: The verses are shorter in this poem</i></p>	<p><b><u>identify literary devices</u></b> (CCSS RL- 4: distinguish literal from non-literal language)</p> <p><i>3/17 Sarah: The words help me make a picture in my mind of what’s happening</i></p> <p><i>3/19 Joseph: noticed rhyme scheme!</i></p> <p><i>3/20 Aaron: This part was cool- how they talked back and forth to each other – like in a play . Dialogue, right?</i></p>
<p><b><u>Participating in discussions, offering comments &amp; sup. evidence from text</u></b> (CCSS RL- 1: refer explicitly to the text...)</p> <p><i>3/20 Peter, Josie, Aaron, and Mandy: lots of participation, used text-based comments to support ideas</i></p> <p><i>3/21 Joseph: beginning to do so, needs scaffolding – can locate evidence when given supporting statement or can make supporting statement if given two or three evidence/references from text</i></p>	<p><b><i>OTHER COMMENTS &amp; OBSERVATIONS:</i></b></p> <p><i>3/20 Joseph- remembered to bring Readers Notebook!</i></p> <p><i>3/21 Aaron: may be interested in reading (or writing?) some plays?</i></p>

**TEACHER NOTES: (Key ideas for observation)**  
 Rhyme, rhyme scheme  
 Narrative and lyric poems  
 Imagery, dialogue



GRADE **K** LITERACY: GARDEN HELPERS  
SUPPORTS FOR ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE LEARNERS

**Grade K Literacy: Garden Helpers**

**Supports for English Language Learners – Sample**

**Pre-Reading Activities:**

**Modeling**

- Show students an example of the finished product, *Garden Helpers (Something I learned from a book)*. This will provide a big picture of the lessons and the learning expectations. Students will understand what they will be doing and what they are expected to produce after these lessons, both of which are crucial to the learning process.

**Build/Activate Background Knowledge**

- Use class graphic organizers during brainstorming activities in order to assist students in organizing ideas about the differences between a story book and a teaching book. A T-Chart, such as the one below, can be used.

Story Book	Teaching Book

- Encourage students to refer back to the T-chart and continue to add to the chart throughout the unit.
- Provide opportunities for students to relate, connect, and generate conversations in English and/or the native language to build oral proficiency.

**Print-Rich Environment**

- Provide visual representations to create a print-rich environment by posting pictures or photos of task-related realia with labels in the classroom. Students can always refer to them during instructional and independent learning time.

**Pre-Teach Vocabulary**

- Provide small group and individual activities to reinforce learning by creating flashcards for new/key vocabulary either on paper or in electronic form with visuals. Teachers should integrate students’ native languages when creating flashcards whenever necessary.

**During-Reading Activities:**

**Text /Print Connection**

- Be sure that the text is enlarged, in big-book format, or on an interactive screen in order to facilitate connection between the text (print) and the student learning.
- Provide students with opportunities to refer to the electronic version of the text, <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/ngyoungexplorer/0909/readstory.html> , which provides an embedded read-aloud option. This will allow ELLs to review newly acquired vocabulary, building upon listening skills, and reinforce concepts learned through the text.

**Language Support and Building Oral Proficiency**

- Provide students with sentence starters to build academic language and to facilitate conversations among them. The language in which sentence starters are introduced may vary for individual students, and teachers must strategically plan according to students’ English-proficiency levels. Sentence starters can be used during the book sorting activities. These may include:
  - I think ...
  - I agree because ...
  - I disagree because ...
- Give student partners a graphic organizer as shown below to complete the sorting activity (Part 2, p. 31). Graphic organizers should be altered according to student needs. For example, provide space for students to illustrate when they are unable to produce written or oral language.

<b>Topic 1:</b> _____	<b>Topic 2:</b> _____
<b>Book Title:</b> _____	<b>Book Title:</b> _____
<b>Book Title:</b> _____	<b>Book Title:</b> _____
<b>Book Title:</b> _____	<b>Book Title:</b> _____
<b>Reasons why we grouped these books together:</b> _____ _____ _____	<b>Reasons why we grouped these books together:</b> _____ _____ _____
<b>What we have learned:</b> _____ _____	



- Use “Turn and Talk” with a focus question during activities to build students’ oral language skills. For example, the focus question “What facts do you find most interesting?” can be used during the partner reading activity (Part 1, p. 32).
- Allow students to use tape/video recording devices in order to document their responses to activities, such as producing “Answers We Found” (Part 2, p. 32). Teachers can then transcribe student responses in order to assess student progress. Teachers can take this opportunity to work with students individually or in small groups to further develop oral language and presentation skills.
- Use “Think-Pair-Share” activities when asking students to infer. This may be used during the “riddle book” activity (Part 3, p. 33).
- Pair students strategically, as some ELL students can benefit from being paired with English-proficient students. Other ELL students may benefit from being paired with students with the same native language.
- Students can be homogeneously grouped by native languages. Students will still be grouped heterogeneously by ability level. Allow students to work on activities in the native language if necessary. Depending on the class setting, teacher may tell students they must submit the final product in English.
- Allow students to use their native languages during these activities to communicate and clarify unfamiliar concepts and meanings.
- Allow students to label and draw on Post-its® during the “exploring informational texts” activities (p. 32) in order to allow for inventive spelling and also to reinforce their note-taking skills. Model when students are unable to do so as well as when they cannot produce language orally.

### **Post-Reading Activities:**

- Encourage students to refer back to the book during the activity following the read-aloud. Students may use the illustrations to assist them in memorizing or recalling details and vocabulary.

### **General Considerations for Instruction:**

- Plan targeted instruction, and group students strategically according to their needs.
- Provide various activities by creating centers, and rotate them frequently.
- Record students’ responses and provide positive feedback while working in small groups or the whole group whenever is appropriate.
- Model languages consistently; repeat and reinforce as necessary.
- Allow students to illustrate what was transcribed by the teacher.
- Ask students to trace the words in the transcribed sentence.
- Provide additional reading materials around the same concept/theme in the child’s native language; such reading materials should also be culturally responsive.



## GRADE K LITERACY: GARDEN HELPERS

### SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

# GRADE K LITERACY: GARDEN HELPERS

## INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES USING UDL GUIDELINES

### **Foundational Information for Educators**

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework that acknowledges student differences and diversity in how they comprehend, navigate, and interact with the world, and thus, responds by flexibly adapting curriculum, instruction, and the environment to meet student needs. Critical to fulfilling this agenda is the aim to reduce or eliminate barriers and increase access to learning for all students. Within this framework, UDL empowers educators to meet students' distinct and diverse needs by establishing and using "flexible goals, methods, materials, and assessments" (CAST, 2011, p. 4). Supporting this approach, three, overarching principles—each based upon advanced knowledge in neuroscience—and supporting checkpoints serve as the essential context from which educators enhance student motivation, access to content, and expression of understanding.

The first principle suggests that information should be represented using multiple means of presentation. Accordingly, Principle I suggests that "learners differ in the ways that they perceive and comprehend information that is presented to them" (CAST, 2011, p. 5) and should therefore, have the opportunity to encounter the content imparted through varying auditory and visual modes. Principle II recommends that educators afford students the opportunity to act upon, respond to, and express what they know through varying modalities. Hence, students differ in their facility to strategically plan and plot a course for accessing and extrapolating meaningful knowledge from the curriculum, and thus "require a great deal of strategy, practice, and organization" (CAST, 2011, p. 5) in order to succeed. Finally, Principle III states that students differ in their levels of drive and affect for learning and that accounting for and addressing varying factors that contribute to these differences, increasing students' motivation to learn and self-regulation skills provides students with measures for gauging and facilitating learning.

The framers of UDL embrace the philosophy that all learners can become expert learners. Reflecting and illuminating each of the principles, the UDL framework maintains that expert learners are (a) resourceful and knowledgeable learners who bring considerable prior knowledge to new learning, and activate that prior knowledge to identify, organize, prioritize, and assimilate new information; (b) strategic and goal-directed and formulate plans for learning and devise effective strategies and tactics to optimize learning; and (c) purposeful and motivated, eager for new learning, and motivated by the mastery of learning itself (CAST, 2011, pp. 6-7). Recommendations, henceforth, related specifically to this grade 5 set of tasks, advance practical ways to operationalize UDL concepts for meeting the needs of all learners.

See the following links to learn more about UDL and how to flexibly tailor curriculum, instruction, materials, and methods to ensure learning for all students:

[www.cast.org](http://www.cast.org)

<http://www.udlcenter.org/aboutudl/udlguidelines>

## Day 1 - PREWRITING ACTIVITY

- **Offer ways of customizing the display of information.** Providing real texts that students can view, touch, and discuss is an optimal way for many students to engage with books. However, some students may benefit from viewing enlarged, colorful copies of pictured book covers, where viewing identified features may be easily highlighted for them.
- **Clarify vocabulary and symbols, as well as syntax and structure.** While most kindergarten children cannot decode text, through their experience with listening to stories and engaging with text via picture reading, many youngsters begin to make an association with the concept of written words representing spoken word. Before formally assessing students, it is important to provide students with the knowledge they need to succeed on assessments. Highlighting the key features of text and their definitions, especially when the image is available for viewing and discussing, ensures access for all students. Discuss terms, such as title, author, illustrator, characters, photograph, illustration, etc. Identifying key features using a visual image will begin to build young students' understanding about how books convey information and tell a story.
- **Activate or supply prior knowledge.** Assess students' experience with text. What have they noticed about books? What are some of the books they have read or someone has read to them? Activating prior knowledge heightens students' engagement and interest in a topic. For students with limited experience with text outside of the classroom, providing means for which students can build their knowledge is critical to ensuring access to learning.
- **Highlight patterns, critical features, big ideas, and relationships.** Teachers may use graphic organizer, photos, pictures, or videos to explore distinguishing features of text and the differences between books that tell stories and books that teach something. Several examples follow to demonstrate how images and graphic organizers can be used to increase students' access to topics and concepts.

**Samples follow.**

**Books that Tell a Story and Books that Teach Something**

**What Do They Have in Common?**

Books that Tell a Story	Books that Teach Something
	
	
	
	

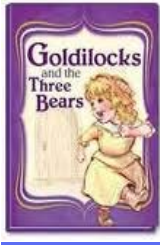

**Guess!**

Which books tell a story? Which books teach something?

What Do They Have in Common?



## Books that Tell or Teach

Books that tell a story	Books that teach something
	
•	•
•	•
•	•
•	•

**Highlight patterns, critical features, big ideas, and relationships.** Because external similarities between early learners’ fiction and nonfiction texts—stories that tell a story and stories that teach—are sometimes indistinguishable to non-readers, deciphering the distinctions may not be easily determined by kindergarten students. What may confuse an early learner from distinguishing a story that teaches from a story that tells a story is the common features used in some texts, such as, the use of characters to explain and demonstrate, and inclusion of animation or colorful illustrations rather than photographs. Devoting more time to nonfiction features that will be introduced and studied will yield more familiarity for young learners. Avoid introducing all features during the same lesson. Extend feature explorations and discussions over a course of several versus one or two days.

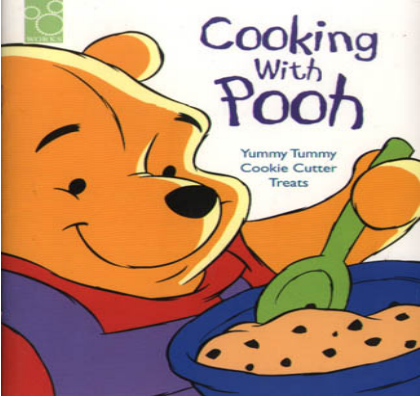
The following site posts a lesson plan outlining the introduction of fiction and non-fiction features for students in grades 1 and 2 students. Reviewing the teacher’s approach and list of key features adds a critical dimension to the time element necessary to consider when planning to introduce two, differing genres to early learners.

**Maximize transfer and generalization.** Learners should be able to apply their knowledge to other similar contexts. Fostering memorability of information involves exposing children to multiple experiences via the use of varying strategies.

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plan/finding-nonfiction-features>

**Examples of checklists for identifying features of books that teach, follow.**

**Does Your Book Have...**



Does Your Book Have	Like This One?	Show Where You See It
A Title	 <p>Cooking With Pooh Yummy Tummy Cookie Cutter Treats</p>	

**Does Your Book Have...**

Does Your Book Have	Like This One?	Show Where You See It
An Author  An Illustrator or A Photographer	 <p>Children Are No Match For Fire A fire safety story for the whole family Written by Carol Dean • Illustrations by Sandra Dunn</p>	



Does Your Book Have...

Does Your Book Have	Like These?		Show Where You See It
A Table of Contents			



Does Your Book Have...

Does Your Book Have	Like These?		Show Where You See It
Maps			



**Does Your Book Have...**

Does Your Book Have	Like This One?	Show Where You See It
An Inside View		

**Does Your Book Have...**

Does Your Book Have	Like These?		Show Where You See It
Close-ups			



**Does Your Book Have...**

Does Your Book Have	Like These?		Show Where You See It
<p><b>Pictures with Labels</b></p>			

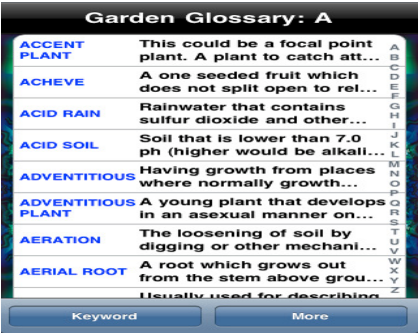
**Does Your Book Have...**

Does Your Book Have	Like These?		Show Where You See It
<p><b>Photographs</b></p>			

Does Your Book Have...

Does Your Book Have	Like These?	Show Where You See It
Comparisons	   	

Does Your Book Have...

Does Your Book Have	Like This One?	Show Where You See It
A Glossary		













## Day 2

***Pre-teach important vocabulary and concepts.*** Assess students' background knowledge related to key terms via questioning and discussion. Display words, along with corresponding pictures, ensuring to first, pronounce words, and then to allow students to repeat, orally. Also, after modeling how to do so, encourage students to use the words in sentences.

- ***Activate or supply prior knowledge, and offer ways of customizing the display of information.*** Determine relevant and requisite background knowledge students require for understanding text and concepts, and facilitate the introduction of this information graphically, visually, and through animation (videos). Model strategies good readers use for comprehending text by thinking aloud the process during the read-aloud and by engaging students in a text-based discussion. Encourage students to use new vocabulary and terms introduced in the text.
- ***Illustrate through multiple media.*** Using a pictorial template, think aloud the process for organizing ideas for writing. Discuss the approach, and incorporate students' input as you refer to the template and demonstrate initiating and completing the writing process.

**A sample writing process chart for early learners follows.**

## Sample Writing Process Chart

	<p>Think</p>	
	<p>Write</p>	
	<p>Think</p>	
	<p>Question</p>	
	<p>Write</p>	
	<p>Draw</p>	

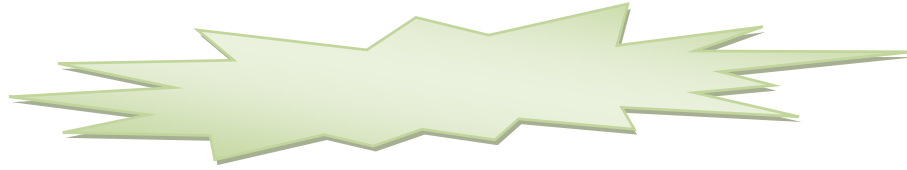
## Day 3

- **Activate prior knowledge and offer ways of customizing the display of information.** Determine relevant and requisite background knowledge students require for understanding text and concepts, and facilitate the introduction of this information graphically, visually, and through animation (videos). Remind students of their experience on the prior day with reading an information text. Ask them to recall and report what you did before you read the text (discussed their knowledge of terms and concepts). Model strategies good readers use for comprehending text by thinking aloud the process during the read-aloud and by engaging students in a text-based discussion. Encourage students to use new vocabulary and terms introduced in the text.
- **Pre-teach important vocabulary and concepts.** Assess students' background knowledge related to key terms via questioning and discussion. Build knowledge by displaying words, along with corresponding pictures, ensuring to first, pronounce words, and then encouraging students to repeat, orally. Also, after modeling how to do so, encourage students to use the words in sentences.
- **Clarify vocabulary.** Another vocabulary-building strategy includes charting high-frequency words, and referencing this list often when using terms. Read each word on the chart, aloud, and together with students. Display the list so students can refer to it during their writing exercise. Ensure availability and student access to the hardcopy and electronic version of the book, *Garden Helpers*, during the writing activity, should students want to review it for word check or to review illustrations.
- **Activate students' recognition, memory and retrieval knowledge.** Utilize a system that employs visual cues, such as a picture bank to stimulate students' memory and association centers within the brain to foster recall.
- **Offer options for auditory and visual information.** Provide options for accessing text by providing access to the National Geographic's Garden Helpers on computer with the embedded read aloud mode activated.  
<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/ngyoungexplorer/0909/readstory.html>







The video of a read aloud version of "Garden Helpers" is also available at WatchKnowLearn, a non-profit online site that provides short videos, and other media sorted into a Directory. (<http://www.watchknowlearn.org/>)

- **Illustrate through multiple media.** Using a pictorial template, think aloud the process for organizing ideas for writing. Before beginning and after teacher instruction of the writing task, ensure students comprehend the objective by asking students to tell what their report will explain. Ask students to recall and convey what the class did the day prior when writing the group report. Remind students and refer to chart (see example, above) that illustrates the process good writers use to organize ideas for writing.

**Sample word chart follows.**



## My Garden Words

<b>garden</b>		Gardens are places like a park that have areas of plants, trees, and grass that people can visit and walk around.
<b>pest</b>		Pests are insects or small animals which damage crops or food supplies.
<b>earthworm</b>		An earthworm is a kind of worm which lives in the ground.
<b>soil</b>		Soil is the substance on the surface of the earth in which plants grow.
<b>sticky spider</b>		A sticky substance can stick to other things. Sticky things are covered with a sticky substance.
<b>praying mantis</b>		A praying mantis is an insect with long back legs that jumps high into the air and makes a high vibrating sound.

Visit the following link to access definitions of terms, written specifically for children, and in language generally, easily understood by children.

**CoBuild** dictionary at <http://dictionary.reverso.net/english-cobuild/>

Enhance students' vocabulary development with an online on-line graphical dictionary. Visit the following site.





**Visuwords** at <http://www.visuwords.com>



**Sample high-frequency word list chart.**

HIGH FREQUENCY SIGHT WORDS			
a	all	and	are
can	in	its	of
on	so	some	the
this	when	you	your

**Sample Visual Cueing System: Picture Bank**

<b>WORD</b>	<b>PICTURE</b>
<b>web</b>	 A photograph of a spider with a striped abdomen and black and white legs, positioned in the center of its white web. The background is a soft-focus green leaf.
<b>earthworm</b>	 A photograph of a reddish-brown earthworm crawling through dark, moist soil. The worm is curved, showing its segmented body.
<b>bugs</b>	 A collage of four different insects: a brown ant on the left, a red ladybug with black spots in the center, a bumblebee on the right, and a brown spider on the far right. They are all on a green leaf.
<b>praying mantis</b>	 A photograph of a bright green praying mantis resting on a large green leaf. The mantis's long, thin legs and raptorial front arms are clearly visible.

- **Vary methods for response and navigation.** Some students may require more support with the task of writing letters on paper. Record students' words with a highlighter, on paper, and allow students to trace, with a pencil.

This is what I learned.



Ladybugs eat small bugs.

\_\_\_\_\_

-----

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

-----

\_\_\_\_\_

- **Increase mastery-oriented feedback.** Provide timely, constructive, and encouraging feedback in child-friendly language. Conference with students about their understanding and their written work. Acknowledge students' articulation of what they learned, and provide specific instructions for improving understanding and student product. Essentially, feedback can be offered in a variety of ways that offer both explicit and motivational communication. Include verbal, written, physical demonstration, and visual symbols, such as a smiley face to help students increase their proficiency.

**Build fluencies with graduated levels of support for practice and performance.** Consider alternative means for student expression of learning for students requiring more support with writing and recording ideas. Divide the students into small groups, or establish partnerships. Provide each student in each partnership or group with a cloze statement that includes a blank to be completed, or a question to be answered. Read the statement or question with students. Allow students to discuss and access the text, if necessary, to determine the appropriate response.

**Sample fill-in-the-blank, or cloze, statements:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ make soil rich and healthy.
2. A ladybug eats small \_\_\_\_\_.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ eats any bug it can catch.
4. A spider catches bugs in its sticky\_\_\_\_\_.

**Sample text-based questions:**

1. What did you learn about the praying mantis?
2. What did you learn about ladybugs?
3. What did you learn about spiders?
4. What did you learn about spiders?

## Days 4-8

- **Provide options for comprehension.** Repeat lessons and strategies, indicated, above, with other informational texts, providing scaffolded instruction and support by gradually moving students from group, to partner, to independent reading. Students will read texts at their independent reading level; therefore, all students may not the same texts, in future lessons.
- **Foster collaboration and community.** Employ paired activities to engage students in the process of reading, writing, and listening for both learning and enjoyment. Introduce and model the process of paired reading and writing through a structured process, such as TAG (see procedure, below). Additionally, display the procedures in the classroom.

### Additional resources:

Utilize CAST UDL Book Builder at <http://bookbuilder.cast.org/> to “create share, publish, and read digital books” (<http://bookbuilder.cast.org/>) focused on other science topics.

See National Geographic Little Kids at <http://kidsblogs.nationalgeographic.com/littlekids/> for science activities and interactive pages. The following page includes additional stories that include a speaking voice feature:

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/ngyoungexplorer/0909/readstory.html> for additional

Sample TAG posters follow.

# TAG

**T**ell one thing you liked about the story.



**A**sk one question.

**G**ive a suggestion.



# TAG

**Tell**

- one thing you liked about the story

**Ask**

- one question

**Give**

- one suggestion