

Eastern Illinois  
Writing Project

2008-2010

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Lesson Anthology

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## Creative Writing

### Amber Laquet - Creative Writing through Mysteries:

#### 1. Overview:

Using mysteries to teach creative writing

#### 2. Rationale: (subject area, concept, and audience)

This activity is used to teach students creative writing by using elements found in short mystery stories. By using the elements found in a mystery story, the students will develop their own individual mystery stories. It is to be used in an 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading/ language arts class during a mystery unit in which the students have been reading works by Agatha Christie (And Then There Were None), Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (Sherlock Holmes mystery—“The Speckled Band”), and Edgar Allan Poe—“The Black Cat” and “The Tell-Tale Heart”. The students will use the mystery stories as a jumping point to explore their creativity in writing within a loose format with which they can explore.

#### 3. Learning Objectives:

After understanding the plot elements of a mystery such as suspense, mood, tone (etc.), the students will be able to compose their own two-minute mystery using the criteria afore mentioned. The students will show their understanding of components of a mystery by written expression.

#### 4. Materials

##### ❖ Two-minute mysteries book

(If mystery book is unavailable—several websites have two-minute mysteries or “Who-done-its” available for free.

##### ❖ Narrative Rubric

##### ❖ Extension Activities

##### ❖ Previously read short stories to be read with unit:

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s “The Speckled Band”

Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Black Cat” and “The Tell-Tale Heart”

Agatha Christie’s And Then There Were None

#### 5. Activities/ Procedures

This activity will occur after the students have already been exposed to the key components of mystery and suspense.

- a. Students will listen to a two-minute mystery read to them out loud by the teacher.
- b. Students will write down any ideas that they have as to the solution of the mystery.
- c. The students will get into groups and try to decide what the best solution is and why
- d. The groups will give their solutions and how they received them.
- e. The teacher will reveal the correct solution to the mystery.
- f. The teacher will then go over some of the clues to the mystery, showing how key clues were given away that could foreshadow the solution.
- g. The teacher will then have the students stay in their groups and use key questions to determine what make up parts of a mystery such as tone, setting, mood etc...
- h. They will come up with a mystery and give examples as to what makes it a mystery and how the key components are explained.
- i. The students will share their ideas of what makes a good mystery with the teacher adding any that the students may miss.
- j. The teacher will pass out cards from the game "Clue"
- k. Each student will receive either a suspect, weapon, or location
- l. The students may get into groups or may sit individually to write on the topic they received (if in groups, all characters, weapons, and locations must be present in story)
- m. The students will have a few minutes at the end to share their mysteries and see if the students can find out "Who Done It".
- n. Extension assignments such as the RAFT project, as well as alternate assignments for students with disabilities, are available.
- o. The teacher will wrap up with alternate writing projects such as the RAFT mystery project.

6. **Evaluation:**

Teacher will evaluate writing with a rubric. Rubric is attached. This rubric can be modified to use with any narrative.

7. **Extension:**

Students will complete a project following the RAFT criteria set up by the teacher. The RAFT criteria are as follows: Role, Audience, Format, and Task. An example from an Anne Frank unit is attached.

- ❖ K-4: Listening skills for younger grades using mystery unit—listening for clues
- ❖ High School: Students can come up with more advanced creative writing, such as taking the characters from a mystery story, and transforming them into a comedy or different genre.
- ❖ For any age—Have students sit in a circle. One student will leave the room. This person will become the “detective”. One person from the circle will be chosen as the “culprit”. All members of the group will make up an alibi for the night of the crime. After the detective reenters the room, he or she will be told to get alibis from all of the members in the circle. Each suspect will reveal one at a time their alibis. Each will go twice. The culprit will be told to change their alibi, even slightly. After everyone reveals their alibis twice, the detective will need to make a decision on which suspect to arrest.

#### **8. Sources: (Helpful sites to use with “Mystery Unit”)**

<http://www.squidoo.com/minutemysteries>

[http://www.squidoo.com/fiveminutemysteries - module3433222](http://www.squidoo.com/fiveminutemysteries-module3433222) (use for Dinner theater mystery)

<http://www.mysterydigest.com/audio-mysteries/one-minute-audio-mysteries/>

<http://www.nhbungalow.com/class/mystery05/tr.html>

[http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson\\_view.asp?id=796](http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=796)

[http://www2.scholastic.com/content/collateral\\_resources/pdf/j/Jan%20IngredientsMystery.pdf](http://www2.scholastic.com/content/collateral_resources/pdf/j/Jan%20IngredientsMystery.pdf)

[http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson\\_images/lesson865/guide.pdf](http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson_images/lesson865/guide.pdf)

[http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson\\_view.asp?id=865](http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=865)

**Activity Page Questions:** <http://teacher.scholastic.com>



## **Elements of a Mystery**

*Be sure to include the following elements of a mystery in your short story:*

*When cooking up a mystery, authors use this tasty recipe.*

**Directions:** Check all of the ingredients found in the mystery you read.

### **CHARACTERS:**

**Suspects:** Characters believed to have possibly committed the crime

**Detective:** Character trying to solve the mystery

**Witnesses:** Characters who saw the crime being committed

### **SETTING:**

This is the location where the mystery takes place.

### **PLOT:**

*When reading a mystery, the story usually includes one of the following:*

A problem that needs to be solved

An event that cannot be explained

A secret

Something that is lost or missing

A crime that has been committed

**CLUES:**

Clues are hints that can help the reader and the detective solve the mystery. They can be things people say or do, or objects that are found that provide important information.

*(Check the box if the mystery you read had clues.)*

**RED HERRINGS:**

These are distractions or false clues that may lead the reader or the detective off track. Red herrings often make it more difficult to solve a mystery. *(Check the box if the mystery you read had a red herring.)*

**RECIPE FOR A MYSTERY:**

*Most mysteries are set up the same way. The structure of a mystery usually looks like this:*

**Beginning:** Characters are introduced and the reader learns about the problem

**Middle:** Detectives work to solve the mystery by interviewing suspects and gathering clues

**End:** The mystery is solved

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<sup>1</sup> \*worksheet found from the

[http://www2.scholastic.com/content/collateral\\_resources/pdf/j/Jan%20IngredientsMystery.pdf](http://www2.scholastic.com/content/collateral_resources/pdf/j/Jan%20IngredientsMystery.pdf)  
website

## **MYSTERY ELEMENTS WRITING GUIDE**

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### **MYSTERY GRAPHIC ORGANIZER.**

**Characters:**

**Setting:**

**Plot:**

**Clues:**

**Distractions:**



## **Structure:**

- Who will the characters be? Who are the suspects? Who is trying to solve the mystery?
- What do the characters look like?
- What do the characters do? What are their motives?
- Who has an alibi? Who doesn't?
- Where will the mystery take place?
- What is the problem, crime, or puzzle of the mystery? Where will it be introduced?
- What evidence will the investigator discover?
- How is the mystery solved?
- What are the clues to help the sleuth and reader solve the mystery?
- For each event, is there a clue?
- Do the clues help the reader predict the solution?
- What things will lead the investigator off the path?
- Do we learn about the mystery in the introduction? What characters do we meet here?
- What happens in the middle of the story? What clues are shared with the reader and the investigator?
- Does the conclusion reveal the answer to the mystery?

Introductory Paragraph Interest Catcher	10 Catches the reader's interest and is pertinent to the topic	8 Catches the readers interest or is pertinent to the topic	6 Interest is attempted but fails to relate to the topic	4 Interest is minimal and lacks relevance	0 No Interest Catcher is present
Characters	10 Characters are identified well in the first paragraph	8 Characters are identified but lack development	6 Characters are briefly identified	4 Characters are hinted in the introductory paragraph	0 No characters are identified
Setting	10 Setting is well identified in details	8 Setting is identified but lacks development	6 Setting is briefly identified	4 Setting is hinted in the introductory paragraph	0 No setting is identified
States main events	10 Main events are completely identified	8 Main events are identified but lack development	6 Main events are identified but are unclear	4 Some of the main events are identified	0 Event or person is not identified
<b>Body Paragraph</b> Focus	10 Event is clear and maintained throughout the paper, purpose is set clearly, reactions are effective	8 Minor errors are present	6 Some errors are present	4 Many errors are present	0 No focus is present

Elaboration	10 Episodes are developed, uses multiple strategies (points of view, reactions, dialogue, etc.), significant depth shown	8 Minor errors are present	6 Some errors are present	4 Many errors are present	0 Elaboration is insufficient
Interesting Words	5 Many adjectives and adverbs are added to add details and descriptions	4 Some adjectives and adverbs are used to add details and descriptions to create and image	3 Few adjectives and adverbs are present	2 Adjectives and Adverbs are sparsely used	0 No adjectives or adverbs are used
Plot	10 Contains a well developed plot including a conflict, rising action, climax and a resolution	8 Contains a plot with all the elements but lacks development	6 Contains a plot with minor errors in structure	4 Plot is present but lacks key parts	0 No plot is present
Voice	5 The essay includes 1 well developed staccato sentence and 2 extended	3 The staccato and metaphor sentences are attempted	1 One or more of the staccato and/or metaphors are missing	0 There are no extended metaphors in the body paragraphs	

	metaphors				
<b>Closing Paragraph</b>	10 Describes the significance of the event and provides a well developed closing	8 Describes the significance of the event and provides an closing	6 Some significance is present in the closing paragraph	4 Closing is present but lacks significance	0 No Closing is present
<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	10 Paper is well-developed, meaningful, and contains few spelling or grammar errors	8 Paper is well-developed but may lack meaningfulness or contain spelling and grammar errors	6 Paper lacks development or meaningfulness and contains errors in grammar and spelling	4 Paper lacks development, meaningfulness, and contains errors in grammar and spelling	0 Paper is either not present or unacceptable

Total /100

“Mystery”

Role	Audience	Format	Task
Newspaper Writer	Citizens in the community	Front page editorial for local newspaper	Inform the people about a crime that has just been committed in the area. Give details on any clues in the scene of the crime
Movie Critique	Potential viewers of mystery thrillers	Movie Critique addressed to the class	Watch a mystery “thriller” approved by the teacher. Give a movie critique using elements from the mystery genre. Rate the movie in “Star” format. 5 stars being the best and 1 star being the worst. Be able to defend your critique to a classroom of students.
Radio mystery show host	Devoted listeners to WHODUNIT Radio	Recorded audio broadcast	Record a mystery story using audio props, sound effects, and distinguishable voices for characters. Mystery should be at least 3 minutes in length when read.
Culprit of the Crime	Readers	You decide <b>(Ex. Diary, Journal, Newspaper articles, letter to the Government, etc...)</b>	Explain why you committed the crime/ or why you have been unjustly accused and deserve a pardon. Written document must be at least a page in length. Content must have some relevance to the story.

Rubric: RAFT Project

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Hour: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Description/ Creativity	10	8	6	4
	Uses descriptive elements in project. Elaborates on topic with details. Explains key concepts.	Minor errors in descriptive elements, elaboration, and key concepts.	Some errors in descriptive elements, elaboration, and key concepts.	Many errors in descriptive elements, elaboration, and key concepts.
Genre	10	8	6	4
	All facts used in project are accurate to the genre. At least 4 facts are integrated into project.	Uses 2-3 facts to add detail. Facts must be accurate to genre.	Uses 1-2 facts to add detail. Facts must be accurate to genre.	Uses some facts to add detail but facts are unclear or use incorrect genre.
Supported/ Length	10	8	6	4
	Project is appropriate length for task. All components are present.	Minor errors in appropriate length and components.	Some errors in appropriate length and components.	Many errors in appropriate length and components.
Audience Addressed	10	8	6	4
	Audience is appropriate for project and is consistent throughout project.	Minor errors in audience being appropriate and consistent throughout the project.	Some errors in audience being appropriate and consistent throughout the project.	Many errors in audience being appropriate and consistent throughout the project.

Overall Task /Role Completed	<p style="text-align: center;">10</p> <p>Task is completed and contains correct length, historical accuracy, audience, is detailed and creative.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">8</p> <p>Task contains minor errors in length, historical accuracy, audience, detail, or creativity.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">6</p> <p>Task contains some errors in length, historical accuracy, audience, detail, or creativity.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p>Task is incomplete and missing many components in length, historical accuracy, audience, detail, and creativity.</p>
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## **English**

### **Janet Kracht - "In the News"**

#### **Demonstration Agenda**

1. Explain Assignment
2. Explain Material – handouts for each section
3. Model the procedure on Publisher
4. Share student work
5. Group work time
6. Sharing of group projects
7. Wishes and Stars

#### **Part 1 – Purpose: Writing-Literature Connection**

##### Creating A Newsletter for a book using Publisher

The purpose of this project is to have students give a book review by identifying the elements of literature then using those elements as the basis for varied writing styles. Not to just reuse information to evaluate a book in the summary format, but to create something unique. Completion of this project requires students to comprehend, analyze, evaluate, and apply those thoughts using varied points of view for a diverse range of audiences.

#### **Part 2 – Steps of Instruction After Completion of Assigned Reading**

Using Newspapers to:

1. Select Newsletter Name – student’s name should be included as one of the editors
2. Identify parts of a newspaper by use of the index
3. Discuss purpose and required elements for each section

Discuss Project Requirements



1. **News Section** – 3 news articles

- \* Students need to identify situations in book that can be rewritten as news articles
- \* Requires the identification of the 5 W's – changing audience
- \* Changing audience and purpose by writing as an informative piece

2. **Lifestyles** – 2 articles

A. Summary of the sequel

- \* Use the element of literature to look beyond this novel to predict the future
- \* Require students to apply, analyze using elements of literature

B. Biography of Author

- \* Highlight author's achievements, family, etc.
- \* Informal research and compellation of facts

3. **Editorial Section** – book critique

- \* Use reader's response format to evaluate and support opinions

4. **Advertisements** – at least 3

- \* Review propaganda techniques
- \* Must be related to reading material in some way

5. **Optional Bonus Features** – try to relate to reading

- \* Puzzles – cut and paste or create: Suduko, Crossword, Word search ([puzzlemaker.com](http://puzzlemaker.com))
- \* Comics – cut and paste or create
- \* Sports – article or up-date
- \* Obituary

## **6. Must include**

- \* Index
- \* Graphics

### **Part 3 – Materials**

- 1 Assigned reading material
2. Newspapers
4. Review worksheets for:
  - a. Project requirements
  - b. Elements of literature
  - c. Explanation of different writing styles
  - d. Propaganda
5. Computers with Publisher and Internet access

### **Part 4 – Evaluation**

1. Checklist for meeting required elements
2. For composition
3. Specified writing style comments

### **Part 5 – Learning Objectives**

Students will:

- \* Apply reading strategies to improve understanding and fluency.
- \* Comprehend a broad range of reading materials.
- \* Demonstrate how literary elements and techniques are used to convey meaning.
- \* Read and interpret a variety of literary works

- \* Communicate ideas in writing to accomplish a variety of purposes.
- \* Write in required genres.
- \* Write for specified audiences.
- Use technology to enhance communication

### **Part 6 – Notes**

Can be used for:

1. Response to literature
2. Persuasive writing
3. Cross-Curricular projects
4. Individual Evaluation
5. Book study groups
6. Multi-book project by placing 3 or 4 students who have read different books by the same author/genre/theme together
7. Writing groups
8. In place of a unit evaluation
9. Other

This is definitely a Publish & Post project!

### **Part 7 – Feedback**

News Article

News articles focus on the important facts of the situation. The answer to the questions: who, what, when, where, why, and how should be easily recognizable in this piece of writing. It is presented with an objective voice in a matter of fact manner. Use these worksheets to help organize you article.

5 W's & H Worksheet

Event #\_:

**WHO** is the event about?

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**WHAT** happened?

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**WHERE** did it happen?

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**WHEN** did it happen?

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**WHY** did it happen?

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**HOW** did it happen?

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**Event # \_:**

**WHO** is the event about?

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**WHAT** happened?

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**WHERE** did it happen?

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**WHEN** did it happen?

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**WHY** did it happen?

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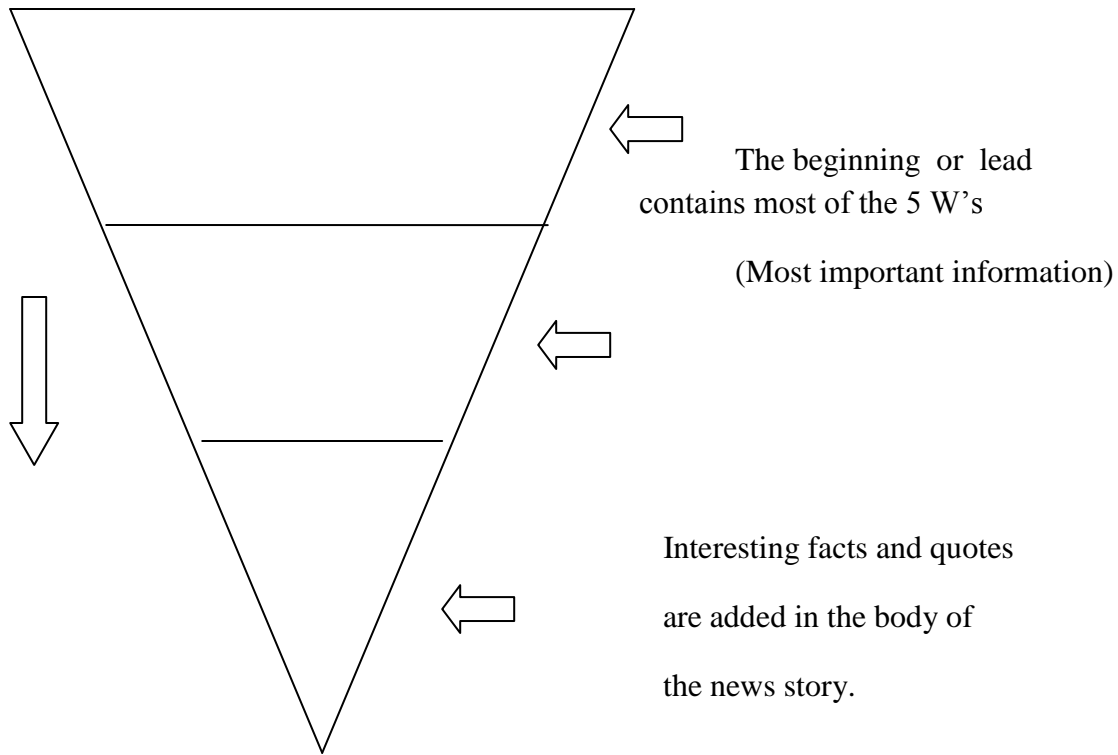
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**HOW** did it happen?

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News stories are usually written using the inverted pyramid style of writing. In this style, the most important information is found in the beginning or lead of the story. This includes most of the 5 W's (Who, What, Where, When, Why). Information such as supporting details and quotes are added in order of importance with the least important information being added at the end.



The least important details  
are added at the end or  
the bottom of the story.

There are 2 required articles for the Lifestyle section of your newsletter. The first is the sequel to the book you read. The second is a short biographical sketch of the author.

### **Sequel – The Book Blurb**

The sequel to the book must include the following literary elements.

1. Setting – time and place, when and where the story occurs
2. Character – Introduce me to the main characters – Use the elements of characterization we studied as a guide.
3. Conflict – Start developing the main conflict of the story. The premise of the story is based on this important or central problem.
4. Plot – Get the reader interested in the story – this is the teaser – just enough to wet their appetite for the rest of the story.
5. Set the mood – what do you want the reader feeling as they read?

This is a creative writing assignment. It is important to remember that it is the next step in the story of the main characters. You will need to use your skills for predicting and applying what happened in the original story to make the sequel work.

### **Author’s Biographical Sketch**

Feature the author of your book by discussion their:

1. Life
2. Accomplishments
3. Other published books
4. Their favorite genre
5. Personal life
6. Picture
7. Reason for writing – Why they write

This is to be written in paragraph form as an informative piece of writing. You must like the way they write help me to find out why – Get me to read their books, also.

## **The Editorial Section**

Your assignment for the editorial section is to complete a book critique. Use your reader's response format.

### Introductory Paragraph

Introduce the theme and one issue.

Include a scene from the story

Make sure you state the purpose for the editorial

### Body Paragraphs

Include something directly from the story

State reason for your opinion

Explain

Give personal connection to help strengthen the argument. May be from

Personal experience, another book or show, something that has

happened in society – a real world link

### Closing

Repeat opinion – refer to supporting examples – emphasize the why or why not in your recommendation of this story.



Thoughts to ponder while writing:

1. Theme
2. What did you learn while reading
3. Problems
4. If real how could society be affected
5. Solutions
6. Believable situations
7. Did the author suck you into the story
8. Could you relate to the characters in some way
9. Was the story one that worked
10. Were you pleased with the storyline/ending? How would you change it?

Remember!

1. Get the facts right.

Your review won't be taken seriously if you don't get your facts straight. Before you begin writing a review, make a list of the correct title, author, and specific details you remember.

2. Read critically

Usually you read a book for fun or entertainment. But since you are doing a review you will need to closer attention. How does it make you feel, can you visualize the scenes, does the story make sense?

3. Quickly write some opinions.

As you are experiencing what you are reviewing, keep your notebook and daily journaling handy. Write some quick opinions about what you are reading. When you have finished the reading, brainstorm some additional opinions. Look over all the opinions you wrote. Choose 2 that you think are the strongest or most important. Each of these opinions should make up a paragraph in the review.

4. Write a summary

A review always contains a short summary. A summary tells the plot of the story.

5. Write a strong opening

A good review needs a great opening. The opening paragraph of reviews contains something specific from the book. Don't give your opinion in the opening paragraph. Use the opening to grab the reader's attention.

6. Make a recommendation

An important part of the review is when you tell your reader how you feel about what you've read. One paragraph of your review should contain a recommendation from you about why someone should or shouldn't read this book. You need to give reasons and support them for your recommendation.

## **Final Novel Project – “In the News”**

### **Create a Newsletter**

#### **Project Requirements:**

**Select Newsletter Name** – student’s name should be included as one of the editors

News Section – 3 news articles

- \* Identify situations in book that can be rewritten as news articles
- \* Requires the identification of the 5 W’s – changing audience
- \* Change audience – this writing should be an informative piece

#### **Lifestyles – 2 articles**

A. Summary of the sequel

- \* Use the elements of literature to look beyond this novel to predict the future
- \* This is a creative writing assignment

B. Biography of Author

- \* Highlight author’s achievements, family, etc.
- \* Informal research and compellation of facts, cite sources if possible

#### **Editorial Section – book critique**

- \* Use reader’s response format to evaluate and support opinions

#### **Advertisements – at least 3**

- \* Review propaganda techniques
- \* Must be related to reading material in some way

### **Optional Bonus Features – try to relate to reading**

- \* Puzzles – cut and paste or create: Suduko, Crossword, Word search (puzzlemaker.com)
- \* Comics – cut and paste or create
- \* Sports – article or up-date
- \*Obituary

### **Must include**

- \* Index
- \* Graphics

### **Evaluation**

Checklist for meeting required elements

For composition

Specified writing style comments

## **“In the News”**

### *Demonstration Adaptations*

*\*please note that many of the suggestions could be used at any level.*

### *General Uses*

*Presentation for board members*

*For interdisciplinary units*

*General education writing*

*Cross-Curricular with team teaching partners*

*Weekly or monthly newsletters to parents*

### *College Level*

*Methods & Teaching Composition*

*Lit or integrated language arts*

### *High School*

*Independent project*

*Small Group*

*Large group – divide class into departments with criteria.*

*Each department has an editor*

*Work is brought together & published as a class newspaper*

*Freshmen or Introduction to journalism*

*AR replacement*

*Way to facilitate Lit circles*

*Interdisciplinary approach with America Studies,*

*a page for each groups area*

*Read a novel like Grapes of Wrath*

*History – Context*

*Math – Economics*

*Science – Dust Bowl*

*Arts – Murk/Photography*

*Literature – similar approach*

*Freshmen – use an intro to news writing with fiction*

*To teach propaganda techniques*

*Alternative to traditional essay*

*With a literature story from text*

*Sophomores - To Kill A Mockingbird final project*

*Book Tasting – final project instead of journaling*

*Freshmen: end of the short story project plus extension*

*Fall of the House of Usher review*

*In place of notes for short stories*

*Way to get book reviews for “Monday Reading Days”*

*Modify and shorten the assignments*

### *Middle School*

*Synopsis of Science/content area articles*

*Obituaries in Astronomy*

*Creating Ads to explain early science technology*

*Classroom newsletter where all kids must submit an article, comic, ad*

*In place of a book talk*

*Incorporate into journal writing*

*To inform parents on standards addressed and*

*Activities*

*For project on mystery unit*

*As a unit by breaking it into smaller pieces*

*Elementary School*

*Write book reviews*

*Relate experiences that they have encountered*

*With smartboard – draw picture or Kidpics and insert their pics*

*and word*

*Review Science and Social Studies lesson*

*Research topic: Indians, Holidays*

*Pick favorite AR book to add interest for next year's class*

*Use in differentiation groups to review stories and think deeper into the story*

*Students take turns writing newsletters to increase parents' interest*

*With a class read aloud book*

*Incorporate the news article format into the language arts class*

*Create advertisements*

*In a cooperative learning project with stories and activities*

*Parent/Child involvement – create with staff helper to introduce child*

*Group Projects to complete after reading books*

## Rebecca Miller - MSNBC Week in Pictures

### Materials

**Website:** <http://www.msnbc.msn.com>

For this activity the students will need to bring pencil and paper. We will use the internet and the television or SmartBoard. MSNBC Week in Pictures handout will be distributed to the students.

### LESSON DETAILS:

#### Target Audience - Subject Area

This activity can be used in any core subject 6th - 12th grade.

#### Objective

The purpose of this lesson is to increase public speaking skills, apply previous knowledge and logic to support opinions, to persuade other students to make a logical decision, and to express their ideas in a written form. The students chose the best picture of the week based on personal preference. The students will form groups or stand alone to form their arguments to persuade others their picture is best. The students will speak to persuade other students to join their group using logic and facts to support their statements. Through the debate, students will have an opportunity to change their mind if convinced that another picture is worthy of the vote. The students will write a persuasive essay on the picture of their choice and provide support for the decision they make.

#### Instruction

I will share with the students that MSNBC displays a certain number of pictures each week on their website from various places and activities going on around the world. The website is informative because it allows the students the opportunity to witness the events that affect our world. I will log on to MSNBC Week in Pictures and discuss the weekly pictures posted. During the discussion, the students will write their thoughts on the handout about each picture. After the pictures are discussed, the students will divide into groups or stand alone on the picture of their choice. Using the notes they have taken, the students will have five minutes to prepare a speech for debate purposes. The speech must answer questions such as: "Why is this picture the best of all?"; "Why is this picture important to you?"; "What emotions are portrayed in the picture?"; "If I was there...."; and, "Why should someone be persuaded to change groups?" Students will use logic and any background knowledge to convince their audience to



join their group. It is important that the students support their statements. Vague statements are not allowed. After the debate is closed, students are allowed to change groups if persuaded. After the debate, the students will refer to their handout. The students will write a persuasive essay for the picture they liked the best or the least providing support. The essay must be four full paragraphs including an opening with a strong thesis, two body paragraphs convincing the reader why their picture is the best or the worst, and a closing paragraph restating their ideas.

### **Conclusion**

After the debate, we vote online. If we have a tie, we ask the principal to make the final decision after listening to the students' summarized speeches. The students' papers are due at the end of the week.

### **Teacher Evaluation**

I will reflect upon the procedures and techniques I used for this lesson.

- What conditions contributed to the success or failure of this lesson?
- How did I assure the high quality of this lesson?
- How did I promote higher order thinking during this lesson?
- How did I enable diverse students to achieve mastery of the objective/s?
- What alternative strategies do I have at hand for diverse learners, special needs students including the gifted, second language students?
- How will I use this lesson to connect to tomorrow's curriculum?

### **Resources**

MSNBC Website located at <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/3842331/>.

Persuasive Essay Handout

**MSNBC Week in Pictures**

<b>Picture</b>	<b>Pros/Like</b>	<b>Cons/Dislike</b>
#1		
#2		
#3		
#4		
#5		

#6		
#7		
#8		
#9		
#10		

#11		
#12		
#13		

Using your notes, prepare a speech for debate purposes. The speech must answer questions such as:

"Why is this picture the best of all?"

"Why is this picture important to you?"

"What emotions are portrayed in the picture?"

"If I was there...."

"Why should someone be persuaded to change groups?"

Students **MUST** use logic and any background knowledge to convince the audience to join their group. It is important students support their statements. Vague statements are not allowed.

Extension:

Write a summary of the picture you liked the best or the least providing support. The summary must be four full paragraphs including an opening with a strong thesis, two body paragraphs convincing the reader why their picture is the best or the worst, and a closing paragraph restating their ideas.

The main aim of persuasive essay is to show that your argument is true. It attempts to convince the reader that your point of view is more legitimate than others. Once you have developed an argument, you should back it up with available evidence and examples.

The following steps will facilitate the process:

- You should express clearly and convincingly why you have chosen this position on the subject.
- Study your prospective audience. Try to find out whether your audience will agree with the argument, whether it accepts or disapproves of your position.
- All arguments in persuasive essay should be backed up with evidence.
- Plan your essay. Try to design your essay by figuring out the order in which you will present your evidence.

<http://www.bestessaytips.com>

**Patti Murphy - We're Off to See the Wizard**

**Overview:**

Students will do various types of writing activities as they complete a literary unit of study around *The Wizard of Oz* by L. Frank Baum in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade reading classroom.

**Rationale:**

My 7<sup>th</sup> grade students read *The Wizard of Oz* in reading class near the end of the year. Many of the students are familiar with the story from watching the movie, but very few have read the book. Often considered one of the first American fairy tales, it is a part of American culture.

The three activities shared in this demonstration are used at various times throughout our study of *The Wizard of Oz* and demonstrate three different types of writing for differing purposes.

**State Standards:**

State Goal 3: Write to communicate for a variety of purposes.

3.B. Compose well-organized and coherent writing for specific purposes and audiences.

3.C. Communicate ideas in writing to accomplish a variety of purposes.

**Scope:**

This unit is taught near the end of the school year but can be done at any time.

**Materials:**

- *The Wizard of Oz* books
- Directions for completion of the Character Wishes paragraph(s)
- Directions for completion of the ABC Summary and associated rubric
- Directions for completing the R.A.F.T. activity and associated rubric

**Activities/Procedures**

1. After reading through the section of *The Wizard of Oz* where Dorothy has met the Scarecrow, Tin Woodman, and Lion, students are asked to consider which trait they would most desire (heart, brains, courage, home). They are asked to rank each trait according to importance. Then they write a paragraph giving supporting reasons for their decisions. Upon completion of the paragraphs, students will be asked to assemble with others who chose the same trait as most important and share their reasons. Each group will share their reasons with the class.
2. ABC Summary – After completion of the book, students will be asked to create a summary of the story using an ABC format. We will demonstrate what this would look like using the fairy tale, *Cinderella*. Using student input, we will generate an ABC story that might begin as follows:

**A** long time ago in a far away land a young girl lived with her stepmother and two step sisters.

**B**ecause she was a beautiful girl, and her step sisters were rather plain, they treated her badly.

**C**inderella was the girl's name.

**D**ay and night Cinderella was given chores to do.

**E**ven though she was treated badly, Cinderella was a happy, kind young girl.

Upon completion of the model story, students may work in small groups or alone to create their own ABC summary.

3. We will review what happens to Dorothy's companions after she returns to Kansas. The Tin Woodman becomes the ruler of the Winkies, the Scarecrow becomes the ruler of the Emerald City, and the Lion becomes the King of the forest. The King of the winged monkeys is given the Golden Cap which ensures that they will never again be ruled by anyone else.

Students will then be asked to complete a R.A.F.T. writing assignment. They will choose one of the above mentioned characters and will complete a friendly letter to Dorothy from that character's perspective which informs her of how their lives have changed, what is going well or not so well, what they wish for, how they have changed, etc. Students will be given the parameters of the R.A.F.T. and be given time to complete the writing. This will require using information that they learned about these characters and the lands they will rule as well as some imagination.

### **Assessments:**

1. Character wishes paragraphs will be collected and given a grade for completion. Completion will consist of following directions and writing arguments supporting their choice in paragraph form. Partial completion results in partial credit.
2. ABC Summary rubric is attached.
3. R.A.F.T rubric is attached.

**Extensions:**

1. Upon completion of the book, students are given time to complete Final Activities which focus on literary elements of characters, plot, theme, irony, and perspective. They are also given activities of their choice to complete.
2. There are many writing possibilities throughout the book such as:
  - a. writing about friendship and what the diversity of friends can bring to a friendship
  - b. creating answers for which students have to write questions (The answer is ...)
  - c. keeping dialectical journals during reading
  - d. comparing and contrasting the book with the 1939 movie version
    - e. comparing different movie versions, such as the 1939 version and *The Wiz* or the Muppets version.
3. Students can research and write about the author and original illustrator, the Oz series of books, movie trivia and myths, or other topics of interest.
4. Complete an analysis of how Dorothy's experience follows the archetypal hero's journey and how it compares to that of Luke Skywalker in *Star Wars: A New Hope*. Older students could explore specific archetypes and determine which characters fit which archetypes.
5. In conjunction with other subject areas (requirements would vary depending on age of students):

Social studies – Create an Oz land of your own. Develop a map, form of government, motto, flag, national anthem, citizenry, businesses, etc.

Science – Create flora and fauna for your Oz land. What is their appearance, diet, characteristics, habitats, etc. What would the climate be like for your Oz land?



Math – Create a system of currency for your land and a budget. What governmental programs would you have (military, education, medicine, space research, transportation, etc.) and plan a budget accordingly. Will you tax your citizens? If so, explain for what and how much.

6. For older students, there are resources on line for possible political meanings. Some think it was a Populist fable for the late 1800s with the Scarecrow representing farmers, the Tin Woodsman representing the industrial workers and so on. This can be researched and discussed in a history framework.( [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/magazine/7933175.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/7933175.stm)) is one such site. There are others found just by searching for political implications of The Wizard of Oz.
7. For older students, the Dark Side of Oz syncs up the lyrics to Pink Floyd's *Dark Side of the Moon* with the 1939 movie. Specific directions are found on <http://www.everwonder.com/david/wizardofoz/>. Be aware of the lyrics before advising your students to try this.
8. Older students may also make a comparison to *The Wizard of Oz* and *The Odyssey*.
9. For younger students graphic organizers can be used to illustrate the differences and similarities of the book and the movie, pictures could be created to illustrate major characters and events in the book, or students could role play important situations of the book, or use puppets to recreate the story.
10. Groups of students can create a board game with a Wizard of Oz theme. Questions must be written that pertain to the book and movie and the design of the board must reflect the story in some way. Rules and directions must be clearly written.

## Resources:

Web sites for quotes from book and movie:

(<http://www.fiftiesweb.com/movies/wizard-of-oz.htm>)

([http://www.litquotes.com/quote\\_title\\_resp.php?TName=The%20Wonderful%20Wizard%20of%20Oz](http://www.litquotes.com/quote_title_resp.php?TName=The%20Wonderful%20Wizard%20of%20Oz))

Web sites for info comparing it to *Star Wars*:

(<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/1085/story.html>)

(<http://virtual.clemson.edu/groups/dial/oz/femoztax.html>)

Great site for character comparisons of *Wizard of Oz* and *Star Wars*, the roles they play, etc.

(<http://storymind.com/dramatica/archive/pdf/6.pdf>)

*Wizard of Oz* unit presentation by Diane Schindel, from which I got several initial ideas

<http://www.teachwithmovies.org> – sample learning guide to *The Wizard of Oz* (contains ideas for discussion questions for children ages 5 and up)

Culhan, Ruth & Amanda Wheeler. *Writing to Prompts in the Trait-Based Classroom: Literature Response*. Scholastic, 2003





### R.A.F.T. Activity

Role: Tin Woodman, Cowardly Lion, Scarecrow, King of the Winged Monkeys (choose one)

Audience: Dorothy

Format: friendly letter

Topic: update of events in the character's life

Strong Verb: inform

You are one of Dorothy's friends (choose one from the above list) from the Land of Oz. Your life has changed a lot since your adventure with Dorothy. You have some joys and some concerns.

Write a friendly letter to Dorothy. Inform her of what your life is like now, how you have changed from when you journeyed to the Emerald City, what you hope for, and other information she should know.

(Role)

(format)

(audience)

(Topic)

## R.A.F.T. Thinking Sheet

### 1. Role

What do I know about this role?

---

What special language might a person in this role use? \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Audience

What do I know about this audience? \_\_\_\_\_

What information does this audience need to know?

---

What voice would be most appropriate for this audience?

---

### 3. Format

What do I know about this format?

---

How are ideas typically organized in this format?

---

### 4. Topic

What do I know about this topic?

---

What details should I provide for my audience?

---

What questions should I answer for my audience?

---

Where can I go for more information if I need it?

---

R.A.F.T. Evaluation

3

2

1

R.A.F.T. thinking sheet is completed.	R.A.F.T. thinking sheet is nearly completed.	R.A.F.T. thinking sheet is only partially completed.
R.A.F.T. assignment is completed and follows all directions.	R.A.F.T. assignment is completed but does not follow all directions.	R.A.F.T. assignment is incomplete and does not follow all directions.
Facts and details are appropriate and accurate for the role and audience.	Facts and details are somewhat appropriate and accurate for the role and audience.	Facts and details are somewhat inaccurate or not appropriate for the role and audience.
Imagined information seems reasonable.	Imagined information is somewhat reasonable.	Imagined information is not reasonable.
Format is done correctly.	Format is done somewhat correctly.	Format is not correct.

Total points \_\_\_\_\_



## **Sarah Wendt - Third Grade Writing Program**

### **Overview:**

This demonstration will explain the writing process I will be using with my third grade class. This demonstration will show where students begin their year and the procedure to helping them become the best writers they can be. The demonstration will walk one through the first day in Mrs. Wendt's Third Grade Writing, to preparation for the ISAT test, and finishing out the year perfecting student's writing skills, in preparation for fourth grade.

### **Rationale:**

This activity will help student create and identify a pattern to the writing process. Students will have a better understanding of where to start once they have a writing topic.

### **Learning Goals:**

1. Students will become more confident in the writing process.
2. Students will have a better understanding of what is expected of them when they write.
3. Students will learn to combine tasks to make the writing process quicker for testing situations.
4. Students will be able to appropriately support their details with related information.

### **Preparation:**

The teacher will gather all of the correct copies and supplies students will need. They will pass them out as the students need them in the school year. Preparation will show in the Process as the year progresses.

**Materials:**

Folder	My Writing Growth	Poster of Writing Outline (2)
Pencils	Putting Your Ideas in Order	Glossary of Happy Endings / Good Beginnings
Markers	Writing Outline	Weasel Words
Loose-leaf	\$100 Words	Rubric

**Activities/Procedures:**

Beginning of the School Year

1. Students will be given a Folder. They will keep their handouts, and past writings in this folder.
  - a. Students can look back at mistakes they have made and how to fix them
  - b. In the folder students will find their My Writing Growth sheet
    - i. They can write themselves notes about changes they made and how it helped them
  - c. Students can also look back to get ideas on how to start writing
2. Students will receive the “Putting Your Ideas in Order” as one of their first lessons
  - a. The teacher will walk students through the paper and talk about all the “tips” and why they are important.
  - b. During lesson teacher might show one of her bad writings & students will fix it using the sheet
3. Talking about transition words
  - a. Teacher describe what a transition word is & why it is important
  - b. Again using teachers writing to show poor transitions & changing it with student help
4. Practicing the outline
  - a. Practice a few outlines as a class
  - b. Students will practice the outline for a few weeks
    - i. This teaches them the format to use for writing
    - ii. Helps with confidence with the outline & when it is taken away

Demonstrate doing an outline together – 30 minutes

1. Topic: Summer is a great time of year

Day 1 – 30 minutes

1. Student will receive a topic to focus on that morning (written on the board when they enter) or the week before.
2. Students will receive the Writing Outline to complete. Based on Four-Block but has been adapted.
  - a. outline focus on information, not on sentence structure or spelling.
  - b. do not have to do everything in order, however it is recommended. (This helps them adjust to the times they may not have the outline available.)
  - c. Students will fill out the Hook Sentence.
    - i. Purpose is to gain your readers attention.
    - ii. An exclamation, question, or a fact/quote that relates to the topic.
  - iii. See the Glossary of Good Beginnings/Happy Endings
  - d. Students will fill out the Topic Sentences.
    - i. Students will state the topic in sentence format.
  - e. Students will fill out the Combo Sentence.
    - i. Students choose the First and Second Details and combine them in a sentence format with “and” between them.
    - ii. The student will also write these details on the First and Second Detail lines.
  - f. Under the students First and Second Detail students will write some Supporting Details.
    - i. The amount will change throughout the year. This will allow for students to build their ability.
  - g. Students will then complete the Connecting Phrase.
    - i. This phrase should start wrapping up the topic or drawing a conclusion.
  - h. Students will then complete the Combo Sentence.
    - i. Like the beginning Combo Sentence, this should include the First and Second Details.
    - ii. This Combo Sentence should be stated slightly different than the first Combo Sentence.

### Day 2 – 30 minutes

1. Students finalize any parts of Writing Outline.
  - a. Include: filling in parts did not complete or anything want to change or “edit.”
2. students have partners sign their paper.
  - a. show the teacher that someone else thinks completed everything correctly.
  - b. Teacher set partners, group of 3 varying ability levels
  - c. To assist groups the teacher will have students with a rubric
  - d. The teacher will set up the partners at the beginning of the year. The teacher will try to create groups with varying ability levels. Groups will contain 3 students.
  - i. This guarantees that students have really looked over the other students’ work.

### Show us your Writing Outline! - 30 minutes

1. Topic: Reasons to write or Reasons I like to write
2. Show sample outline on poster

### Day 3 – 30 minutes

1. Students will take their outline and turn them into paragraphs, on a sheet of loose-leaf.
  - a. The page is marked to separate the paragraphs so students know when to start a new one.
  - b. The page also had “INDENT” typed in to remind students to indent at the beginning of the paragraph.
2. Students will complete their writing and check on their own for any mistakes they may have made.
  - a. All important information is included, spelling, punctuation...
  - b. Students will also have their partners sign off on their rough draft.
3. The teacher will then sign off on the rough draft.
  - a. Using the same rubric as the students

### Day 4 – 30 minutes

1. Once the teacher has approved the students rough draft they may write their final copy.

- a. The final copy will be written in cursive after students start to become comfortable
2. Incentives to complete your final draft
  - a. Type your essay
  - b. Hang it up for everyone to see
  - c. Illustrate your essay
  - d. Help another student
  - e. Fun writing options – put story to an illustration, partner write, journal...
  - f. Can change depending on your class each year

#### Later in the School Year

1. Students are giving the list of Weasel Words not to use, Thesaurus, and the list of \$100 Words.
  - a. Weasel Words:
  - b. This helps students become more interesting writers.
2. Glossary of Good Beginnings and Glossary of Happy Ending
  - a. List of ways to make writing more interesting
  - b. example of each
  - c. Teacher give students options to choose from for each writing
3. Preparing for ISAT
  - a. Students will receive the Writing Outline without the words.
  - b. This will prepare them to write without the “Safety Net” of the outline.
  - c. Closer to ISAT time students will not receive the outline at all and will use a plain piece of loose-leaf.

#### Are you smarter than a Third Grader? - Challenge Yourself – filler time

1. Topic: Reasons to attend the EIWP Writing Project at E.I.U.
2. Remember to consider: your rubric, readers interest, supporting your ideas, mechanics, and weasel words

**Assessment:**

Third Grade Writing Rubric

**Extensions:**

Since this is an overall view at our writing curriculum for the school year, there is not a way to extend individual activities. Activities are added and dropped during the year, due to need. For the purposes of this writing class participants will create extension activities which I will later distribute to the class.

**Sources:**

1. Gould, Evan Jay & Judith S. Four Square : The Total Writing Classroom
2. Gould, Evan Jay & Judith S. Four Square : Writing Method
3. Hostmeyer, Phyllis. Building Student Writing Rubrics. Through ROE#3. December 5, 2008
4. <http://www.liberty.k12.ga.us/jwalts/Writing%20rubrics%203.htm>

**My Writing Growth**

Topic I am working on	Mistake I noticed	How I grew as a writer
