Writing and the CCSS Narrative: Supporting All Student Authors

CABE 2016
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Objectives

- Writing a fictional narrative
- Using reading to support writing
- Infusing talk to support EL understanding
- Using graphic organizers to identify important ideas and to plan for better writing
CCSS=Integration of Language Domains to Extend & Support Thinking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Productive</th>
<th>Receptive</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>Listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What’s New With Narrative?

- Personal narrative
- The work of real authors
- Reading with an author’s eye, writing for readers
Starting with Research

- Good writers spend a lot of time researching their topic
- Create believable events and characters
- Write narratives based on informational reading from the previous month

Why?
- Familiarity (an EL support)
- Time
- Supports the concept that you can use and write from the information in a variety of ways and understand it more deeply for having done so
## Pacing Units of Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block</th>
<th>Reading/Content</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-1/2 weeks</td>
<td>RL/RI focus</td>
<td>Developing concise responses to reading questions W.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 weeks</td>
<td>RI focus</td>
<td>Informational essay W.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 weeks</td>
<td>RL focus</td>
<td>Fictional Narrative W.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Concise Responses:**
Restate the stem.
Respond and support response with 2 or more details (stated or not)
Explain how the details support the response.
But I always start the year with personal narrative
An Example

- By the end of September, students have read and learned a lot of information about a topic (listening & reading)
- They frequently discussed the information (speaking)
- The students have developed informational notes, short responses, and essays about the topic (writing)
- Next Unit: you can use the same information to write narratives
- They are also reading narratives, so I can make sure to select some whole class reading pieces that exemplify some of the writing qualities I want to target (e.g., historical fiction selections)
Getting Started with Informational Reading
Close Reading

- Read with a pencil in hand
- Read the text multiple times for different purposes
- Supports all readers in noticing new details that would be missed on a first read
- Students annotate the text and may take notes on a self-made graphic organizer (not on the first read)
- Students discuss the notes frequently
Close Reading Purposes

- What is it all about?—Gathering the facts and big ideas, simple inferences, connections, etc.
- How is it said?—Vocabulary, craft, structure, word choice, etc.
- What does it mean?—Inferential and evaluative comprehension, how does this author express this theme (vs. how other authors portray it)?
What about my ELs?

- Vocabulary
- Background knowledge
- Visuals
- Graphic organizers/Thinking Maps
- Frames & language to discuss (designated or integrated ELD support)
- Consider a small group **pre-teach** (integrated ELD support)
  - Research
ELD: Evaluate the language ELs will need to be able to use and understand

- When considering the standards of focus while discussing this text, what are some important things I want my students to notice and discuss?
- Example: What did the colonists want? Why were they unhappy? What was the problem? So what did the colonists do?
- So what language will my ELs need to use in the discussion?
Portable New Language + Familiar Content

- ____ wanted ___________________, but ____.  
  I ___________ to go to the movies ___________ my mom said no
  The children ___________ to play baseball ___________ it started to rain

- Rehearsal with familiar content means all the focus
  is on learning the new language

- Portable—The colonists wanted____, but____.

- Add on: ___ wanted ___, but ___, so ____.

Partner talk—
integrated ELD &
portable frames
“Reading with a Pencil”

► Students read the texts one time through (with students, break up the reading into segments as needed)

► Note anything that stands out—consider coding your reading
  ► ! An important idea
  ► ? I have a question/I’m not sure about this
  ► Make a note (e.g., a thought you have)

► Now it’s your turn to read source 1 and code your own reading
Discuss and Add to Notes

- Have students discuss what they noted and add notations based on what the partner said.
- If the text is dense enough to support extended discussion, have them spend 2 minutes with a partner, add to the notes, then find another partner and repeat.
- The teacher listens in and may ask a few students to share as well as volunteers.
- Your turn, discuss and add to your notes—45 seconds each.
Support ELs to Participate in the Discussion

- Post the portable frames
- Write the frames on cue cards, especially for emerging level ELs

_______ wanted_______, but _________, so ________________.
Informational Notes

- Students note pertinent details on a graphic organizer based on their reading and discussions.

- Blank Paper—top part

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important Events</th>
<th>People</th>
<th>Place/Time</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Note...(source #)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

- Good Habits: When making informational notes, add the source # or name in parentheses for later reference.

- Take a look at the source materials. Specifically, look at source 1 and quickly jot a few notes in each column based on the information in that “familiar” source.
Our informational unit just concluded. Set those notes aside for a few minutes as we turn to narrative.
What is Good Writing?

- Mentor text = picture of good writing
- Students can learn a lot from looking at all kinds of writing.
- Let’s take a look at a mentor student 1st draft—take 2 minutes to skim the draft.
  - Take note of places where the student does something well
- Share something you noted with a partner (30 seconds)
A Look at Beginnings...

- News about the three tall ships spread quickly. Faster still was the speed of which a spark of rebellion grew into a great storm of fire. My name is Robert Hyles and I was a part of the rebellion.

- Leo was the first one to spot the turtle, so he was the one who got to keep it. They had all been in the car, driving up Tyler Mountain to church, when Leo shouted, “There’s a turtle!” and everyone’s head jerked with the stop.

Partner share: what is effective about these beginnings?
Effective Description

- On the SBAC scoring, effective description shows not tells.
- Precise word choice
- Use of the source material to enhance the description
- Look at your mentor text and the following excerpts—what is effective about their description?
Patiently, he steeled himself for another failure, for having to begin all over again. But this time he seemed to be plowing through the barriers that had stopped him before.

Leo was ten years old when he found Charlie. He hadn’t many friends because he was slower than the rest. That was the way his father said it: “Slower than the rest.” Leo was slow in reading, slow in numbers, slow in understanding nearly everything that passed before him in a classroom.

Partner share: what is effective about this description? What effect does the use of repetition have in the 2nd example?
Effective Dialogue

- Effective dialogue helps to tell the story
- Variety of word choices rather than “said”
- Gives the reader insight into events and/or characters
Dialogue

“The Tea Act is allowing Great Britain to take over again,” muttered an angry, and very drunk sailor. “Soon they’ll send the cavalry to finish off the job...we must fight back.”

(Each member of Leo’s class was assigned to give a report...dealing with forests. So Leo brought Charlie.) “When somebody throws a match into a forest,” Leo began, “he is a murderer. He kills trees and birds and animals. Some animals, like deer, are fast runners and they might escape. But other animals”—he lifted the cover off the box—“have no hope. They are too slow. They will die.”

Partner share: what is effective about this dialogue?
What is Good Enough?

Once students have a picture of what is good enough, they can help develop a list (rubric) of what the elements of a good narrative are.

Some teachers give students the full rubric, but also consider posting the highest score’s expectations.

Color code the rubric and align it to the mentor text
- Green highlights the organizational structure
- Blue=engaging beginning
- Red=effective dialogue
- Purple=transitions appropriate to the form and context
- Etc.
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The piece is organized in a way that makes sense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The story has an engaging beginning that hooks the reader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The description shows, not tells</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The dialogue helps to tell the story.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The plot and setting are believable and easy to follow.</td>
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Engaging Beginning Examples

Description Examples
Once students know what is good enough, it’s time to take out the informational notes and help them move from information to fiction.
Translating the Notes for Narrative

Ask yourself, how does this information relate to narrative?—Add headings to the bottom boxes.

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<td>Intolerable acts (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1773 Tea Act (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 16, 1773</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>340 chests of tea dumped in harbor (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Characters</td>
<td>Setting</td>
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## Translating the Notes for Narrative

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<th>Characters</th>
<th>Setting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not happy about the British rule and taxes-plan to get ships to leave—dump tea</td>
<td>Self in story as bartender in tavern</td>
<td>December 1773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sons of Liberty</td>
<td>Boston tavern</td>
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Supporting ELs

- Translate the notes for narrative in small group integrated ELD sessions
- Practice dialogue and description as the focus of both integrated and designated ELD sessions
- Intermediate and above—small group to support independent writing
- Emerging/Beginning/Early Intermediate—small group writing
Once they have notes, writers can plan their writing. They need to know where they are going before they start writing. All too often, student writers jump into drafting before the story is fully developed in their minds.
The Work of Writers

- In an assessment, writers read, plan, and write.
- During instruction, writers read, plan, talk through ideas, and plan.
- They try out different styles to find the style that is just right.
Instruction

- Writers have notes and use those notes & plans to develop ideas
- Teachers plan whole class and small group follow up lessons based on their observations
  - I notice that many of you are really thinking about how to start your stories. Good writers sometimes look at how other writers start their stories to get ideas. (Then return to the exemplars and show students how to “try on” another author’s style.)

  Strong Beginnings
Trying on Someone Else’s Craft

- News about the three tall ships spread quickly. Faster still was the speed of which a spark of rebellion grew into a great storm of fire.

- Lift the language: News about King Tut’s injuries spread quickly. The young king was mortally wounded. We feared that our king would be lost.
Trying On Styles

- When reading with and to students, take note of lines, word choice, settings, dialogue, etc. that produce an effect on the reader.
- Share those observations with your readers and encourage them to do the same (reading like writers)
- They learn to try those strategies in their own writing.
  - Many of you have worked hard to tell your stories, but good writers use description to show what happened not just tell what happened, so today we will look at how authors use description to show...
Conferring

- Good writing teachers consistently confer with their young writers (1-1, small group).
- They note what their writers are doing well, what they are attempting to do, and where they are experiencing difficulty.
- During a writing conference, the teacher:
  - compliments attempts and things the student does well.
  - considers how to support the student’s attempts.
- Good writing teachers consider small group and whole group lessons.
Don’t Rush to Draft

- No one wants to write and copy over and over
- Try out various styles and strategies that can be applied on small parts of the story
- Exciting and fun to try different strategies
- Try many ideas with support, then identify the parts good enough for the draft
What About Conventions?

- Of course, conventions make the writing readable
- Content drives the event/setting
- Organization is important (4 SBAC)
- Elaboration is important (4 SBAC)
- Conventions (2 SBAC—1st draft type errors and compared to the volume of writing)
Conventions

- **Visuals**
- Jeff Anderson talks about examining strong sentences daily and identifying what the writer does well rather than looking at poor examples.
- Look at the sentence structure, word choices, punctuation, etc. (tools/strategies for effect)
- Could add errors AFTER the students know the exemplar, so the errors easy to discriminate and can be discussed
Conventions

- Hard to notice one’s own errors
- Use a gradual release of responsibility rather than wasting valuable instructional time on rules students know but don’t follow because they haven’t been held accountable:
  - One of these two words should begin with a capital, should be followed by a period, is misspelled...
  - One of these 3-4 words/5-6 words...
  - There is an error on this line, in this paragraph...
4 Week Plan

- Up to 2 weeks developing the first story, learn how to plan a story from notes, the teacher may create a model piece during the first few days along with the group rubric, to incorporate factual details into a fiction narrative. Translating notes, what is good enough, engaging beginnings, where to enter the action, description.

- Week 3, come up with another story using the same information but perhaps a different event or point of view. Description that shows not tells, dialogue that moves the action, revising for word choice.

- Final week, write a story in 3 days, spend two days on assessment on demand with one day for reading and noting and one day for planning and writing. RIGOR
Review

- Prepare young authors to write a narrative just like professional authors prepare: read, read, read
- Use pre-teach and small group along with portable frames, graphic organizers, and lots of talk to support ELs
- Teach young authors to read with a pencil, to notice beautiful and interesting language, and to notice how professional authors use different styles and strategies to narrate
- Develop a picture of what is good enough and define it with our young authors
- Expect planning and encourage students to try different styles and strategies before being allowed to draft
- By the end of a unit, write a piece in a day
Thank You

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