

# Suggested Mini-Lesson Topics

## Grade 3

Lessons are pulled from Grade Level Curriculum Snapshot. They represent concepts that are identified as D (develop) on the District Writing Curriculum. Each lesson could take a single or multiple days. Items in bold are ESSENTIAL LESSONS that all teachers in that grade level MUST TEACH. This is not a sequence. Mini Lessons should be taught in all areas of the Writing Process throughout the school year.

Teachers are encouraged to supplement this list with the specific needs of their writers.

### Prewrite (Ideas)

- Generates ideas from verbal prompt
- **Generates ideas from written prompt**
- **Considers purpose to inform**
- **Considers purpose to describe**
- **Considers audience (self, family, school, community, group/individual)**
- **Narrows topic with class--IDEAS**
- **Narrows topic independently--IDEAS**
- **Gathers information in Writer's Notebook (experiences, observations, references)**
- Creates and applies graphic organizers (maps, webs, etc. without teacher assistance)
- Makes lists to organize ideas
- Takes notes
- **Considers narrative genre (journal, story, personal)**
- **Considers narrative genre (friendly letter)**
- Considers creative genre (story, poems, songs, plays, etc.)
- **Considers expository genre (early nonfiction writing)**
- **Considers expository genre (nonfiction report: guided research)**

### Draft

- Connects prewrite process
- Creates text from ideas
- Develops text with purpose
- **Rereads while writing draft**
- **Uses genre in drafting**
  - Recognizes structure in genre
  - Applies general concept of genre to writing
  - Applies genre characteristics to writing

## Conference / Reflect

- **Model routine and expectations of conferencing and reflection**
- **Reads own work to improve writing**
- **Uses resources to improve writing (thesaurus, nonfiction books, reference materials, etc.)**
- **Shares writing with teacher to receive feedback to improve text**
  - Identifies area for feedback with teacher assistance
  - Considers and applies feedback for revision
- **Shares writing with peers to receive feedback to improve text**
  - Converses with peers about writing
  - Identifies area for feedback with peers
  - Evaluates and applies peer feedback for revision

## Revise (Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, Voice and Organization)

- **Adds text**
  - Adds text to elaborate on topic and ideas
  - Adds text to complete sentences
  - Adds drawings/graphics to enhance text
- **Subtracts text**
  - Subtracts text to focus on topic and ideas
  - Subtracts text to clarify on purpose or meaning
  - Subtracts text to improve sentence fluency
- **Organizes writing according to genre and purpose**
  - Recognizes that published text has a structure, genre, and purpose
  - Organizes text according to genre format with teacher assistance
- **Adds own personality to writing**
  - Attempts to include VOICE in writing
  - Revises in consideration of VOICE
- **Rewords text**
  - Considers WORD CHOICE in writing
  - Revises in consideration of WORD CHOICE
- **Adjusts word order for fluency**
  - Recognizes areas lacking FLUENCY in writing (with teacher assistance)
  - Adjusts word order, sentence structure, paragraphing, and organization to improve FLUENCY
- **Improves text by using resource materials**
  - Dictionary
  - Thesaurus
  - Reference materials
  - Technology (may be incorporated with IMC skills)

## Edit (Conventions)

See **GRADE LEVEL CONVENTION CHART** for editing expectations in previous grades

- **Utilizes grade level editing marks in text**
  - **Capitalization**
    - Holidays
    - Specific places
    - Cities, states, continents, oceans
    - Titles (books, people)
    - First word in a direct quotation

## Edit *continued* (Conventions)

- **Punctuation**
  - Periods in abbreviations and titles
  - Question marks
  - Exclamation points
  - Commas in dates
  - Commas in addresses (city and state)
  - Commas in direct address (Mary, will you open the door?)
  - Commas in a series
  - Commas in greetings and closings in friendly letter
  - Quotation marks in dialogue
  - Apostrophes to show possession
- Underlines titles of books, plays, and movies
- **Utilizes grade-level grammar in text**
  - Applies knowledge of verbs to text
  - Applies knowledge of verb tense (past, present, future)
  - Applies knowledge of subject-verb agreement to text
  - Applies knowledge of adjectives to text
  - Applies knowledge of pronouns to text
- **Applies correct spelling of grade level High Frequency Words (No Excuse Words) in text (P-11)**

## Publish

- Applies penmanship and/or word processing skills (cursive, word processing, presentation software)
- Provides adequate citations (may be incorporated with IMC skills and nonfiction report writing)
- Uses appropriate format (title, cover page, heading)
- **Assigns title appropriate to genre and text**
- Shares writing with intended audience (home, peers, community, school, etc)
- **Shares writing from grade level genre focus**
- **Attempts to utilize visual aides (illustrations, charts, tables, graphs) (may be incorporated with IMC skills)**

## Genre

- **Narrative—Nonfiction**
  - Writes personal experiences in basic narrative form (beginning, middle, end, characters, details)
  - **Writes personal experiences in narrative form**
  - **Writes in response/reflection to literature (no specified format)**
- Narrative---Creative/Expressive
  - Writes in personal journal/writer's notebook
- **Expository**
  - **Writes to describe observations**
  - **Writes to describe places and things**
  - **Writes to compare/contrast**
  - **Writes simple reports (from verbal/visual information)**
  - **Writes nonfiction report to inform—from single source independently**
  - **Writes nonfiction report to inform—from multiple sources**
- **Timed Writing**
  - Writes meaningful piece in 30 minutes---no prompt, chooses own genre
  - **Writes meaningful piece in 30 minutes—with prompt, chooses own genre**
  - **Writes in a given genre in specified time limit**
  - **Applies writing process in timed situation**

## Genre *continued*

### Assessment Response

- Writes in complete sentences in response to written questions
- Writes in paragraph format (topic sentence, supporting detail, closing sentence) in response to written question or prompt
- Manages time in assessment situation

## Craft

- Reads and rereads own writing as a reader
  - Reflects on own writing during the process
  - Makes changes based on reflection
  - Reflects on own writing after publishing (teacher guided and independently)
- Reads and rereads literature like a writer (recognizes craft and recognizes literature as published writing)
  - Understands that authors tailor writing to a specific audience and purpose
- Selects craft from an author and applies it in their own writing
  - Recognizes a “craft” in a piece of literature
- Uses vocabulary of a writer to name, discuss, and apply craft
  - Dialogue
  - Setting
  - Sequence of events (plot)
  - Title
  - Rhyme

## References

The following is a list of references you can use to find worthwhile min-lessons and/or activities to help you teach **THE WRITING PROCESS**. Remember Six Traits Lessons should be taught as part of the writing process...they should not be the focus of **ALL** mini-lessons. Many of these resources are available from your reading specialist or from your building's professional library.

*6 +1 Traits of Writing: The Complete Guide Grades 3 & Up* by Ruth Culham  
\*\*\*Contains Sample Student Writing to Assess

*Craft Lessons: Teaching Writing K-8* by Ralph Fletcher & JoAnn Portalupi

*Guiding Readers and Writers: Grades 3-6* by Fountas and Pinnell  
\*\*\*Excellent Resources

*Nonfiction Craft Lessons: Teaching Information Writing K-8* by Ralph Fletcher and JoAnn Portalupi

*Teaching the Qualities of Writing* by Ralph Fletcher & JoAnn Portalupi (KIT)  
\*\*\*Contains 112 mini-lessons and Teacher's Guide  
\*\*\*Excellent Resources

*Scaffolding Young Writers: A Writer's Workshop Approach* by Linda J. Dorn & Carla Soffos

*Wondrous Words: Writers and Writing in the Elementary Classroom* by Katie Wood Ray

*Writer's Workshop: Working Through the Hard Parts (and they're all hard parts)* by Katie Wood Ray

