

Assignment 2 – Development of a Teaching Unit Focused on the Writing Strand

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Assignment 2 – Development of a Teaching Unit Focused on the Writing Strand

Lesson #1: Heart Mapping to Find Writing Territories

Curriculum

Big Ideas: “Language and story can be a source of creativity and joy” and “Curiosity and wonder leads us to new discoveries about ourselves and the world around us”

Curricular Competencies: “Make connections between ideas from a variety of sources and prior knowledge to build understanding” and “Create stories and other texts to deepen awareness of self, family, and community”

Language Arts Elaboration: “Personal stories and experiences”, “Stories can be oral, written, or visual, and used to instruct, inspire, and entertain listeners and readers”, and “Stories can be oral, written, or visual, and used to instruct, inspire, and entertain listeners and readers”

Content: “Metacognitive Strategies”, “Writing processes”, “Legible handwriting”, and “Conventions”

Context: Grade Level - 3

Students have prior knowledge on how to participate respectfully in classroom discussions and engage with their ideas and the ideas of others. Students will also have prior knowledge of sentence and story structure to assist in their writing process.

Materials:

- Mentor Text: *The Best Story* by Eileen Spinelli - The character in this book goes on a journey to create the perfect story. The class will examine how the character's strongest story is created from personal experiences.
- Document Camera
- Projector Screen
- Heart map template
- ELA (English Language Arts) writing journal
- Pencil
- Eraser
- Dry Erase Markers
- Whiteboard

Hook: The mentor text, *The Best Story* by Eileen Spinelli, will be used to demonstrate how author's use writing territories to find inspiration for their stories. The main character was able to write her best story ever when she focused on her personal experiences. The heart map is a strategy used to develop different writing territories. After students create their heart map, they will use it to write a short story generated from one of their writing territories.

Purpose: *Welcome to our writing workshop folks! Just like the main character from the book it can be hard to start writing a story. Today we are going to create a heart map to use whenever we are creating stories. Sometimes we have too many ideas, or no ideas at all, so the heart map is a fun way to choose a topic from the things you love.*

Brainstorm: Mentor Text Discussion:

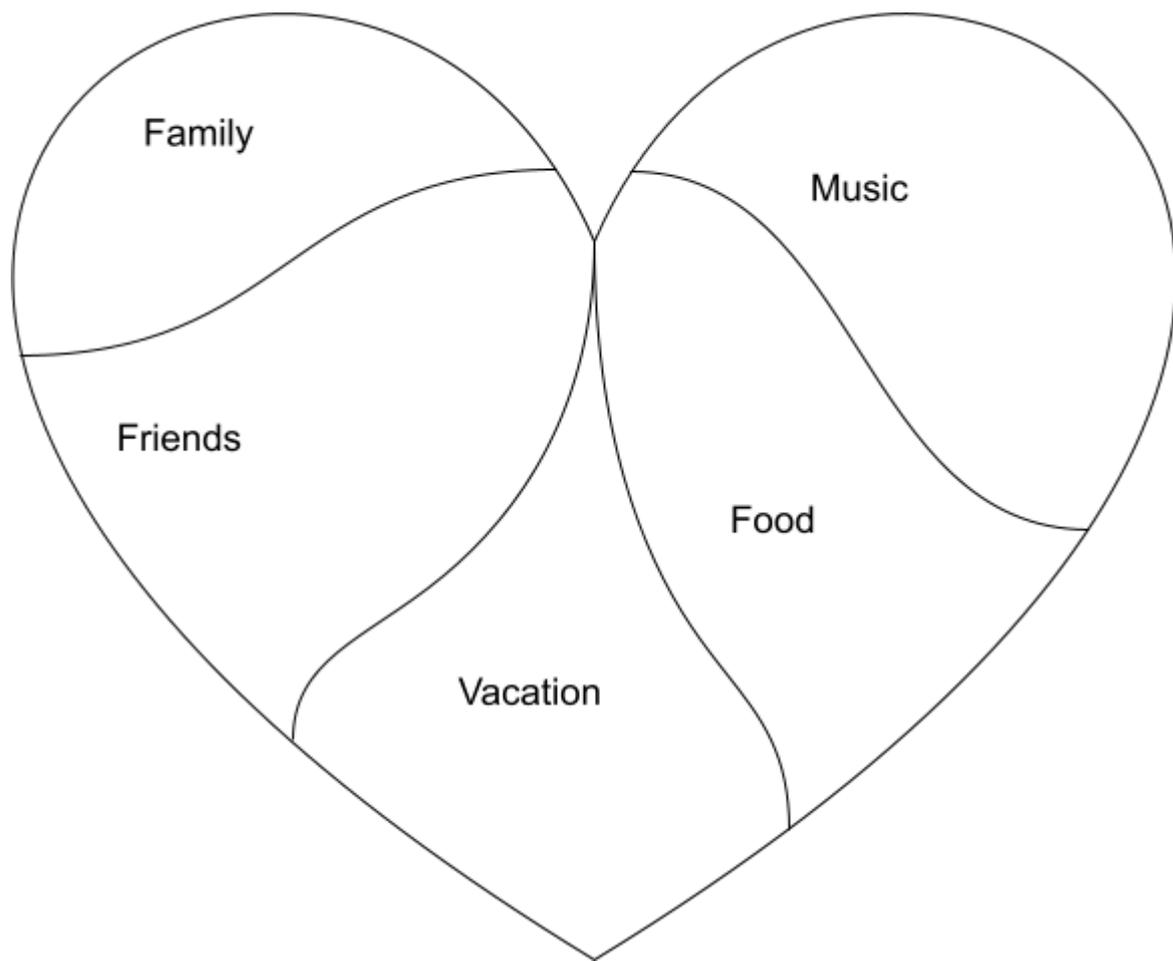
You will pose questions to prompt class discussion about the mentor text and record students' responses on the whiteboard. Question suggestions are:

- What were the different themes or ideas that the main character wrote about?
- What themes or ideas would you write about?

* Leave the student responses on the board for modelling *

Model: Use the responses provided by the students and make your own heart map on chart paper next to the board. As you fill in sections of your heart map explain why you are adding them; eg: I play the violin, so I added a space for music. Explain that each of these sections are called writing territories. Talk to the class as you choose a writing territory for a story. Walk them through the process as you remember a memory from a writing territory to write about. Through thinking aloud the students will be able to witness the process of creating a story from a writing territory. Then write your short story on the board to show the students as you work through the process.

Example of heart map:



Shared/Guided Writing: Students will learn how writing territories are developed through a class activity.

Class Activity:

Have the students suggest ideas for writing territories of their own and write them on the whiteboard. As you write the students' answers you will create different groups of similar suggestions (see Table below). Ask the students to think about why you might be grouping them that way, or if they can see anything in common with the words that are together.

Discuss with students how writing territories can contain more than one idea. Ask for a volunteer to pick a writing territory from the whiteboard and have them tell a short oral story to the class. After the class activity, give everyone a moment to think about a writing territory that is listed on the board. Then have them partner up to share an oral story with one another.

Table

(Pets)	(Food)
Cats	Pizza
Dogs	Cake
Fish	Popcorn
Worms	Sushi

Independent Writing: Hand out heart map templates to the students for the independent activity. Students can create their own sections for writing territories within the template. Once finished, students will pick one writing territory to expand on and write a short story in their ELA journal. Circulate the room, if a student is struggling prompt them with ideas; eg. weather, date, or people. This short story will be used for the next lesson.

Reflection: Reflection will start with a partner activity. Pairs will tell each other about the different territories within their heart maps. Ask them to talk about any similarities or differences they found. Then bring the class back together and ask what the students thought about making heart maps and if they think the maps are useful tools for their writer's kit.

Lesson #2 Focusing on a moment

Curriculum

Big Idea(s): “Stories can be understood from different perspectives” and “Using language in creative and playful ways helps us understand how language works”

Curricular Competencies: “Plan and create a variety of communication forms for different purposes and audiences” and “Communicate using sentences and most conventions of Canadian spelling, grammar, and punctuation”

Language Arts Elaboration: “Descriptive language, poetic language, figurative language, images, imagery, rhythm, rhyme, simile, alliteration” and “may include revising, editing, considering audience”

Content: “Literary elements and devices”, “Writing processes”, “Legible handwriting”, and “Conventions”

Context: Grade Level - 3

Students will elaborate on a moment from a short story they wrote in the previous lesson. They will know how to utilize the descriptive language handout to enhance the use language in their short story. Students must have prior knowledge on using a personal experience to write a story through recalling explicit details and memories. They must be able to write a story through organization of detail, time, and tone. Students will be familiar with adjectives, adverbs, and nouns.

Materials:

- Mentor Text: *Crab Moon* by Ruth Horowitz - The author focuses on a moment with the main character and his ability to overcome a fear. The author uses descriptive detail, emotion, and a question to show how the main character is feeling to the readers.

- Document Camera
- Projector Screen
- Short story from previous heart map lesson
- Descriptive language handout (See Table 2 for example)
- ELA Writing Journal
- Pencil
- Eraser
- Whiteboard
- Dry Erase Markers

Hook:

The mentor text, *Crab Moon* by Ruth Horowitz, will show the class when focusing on a moment the readers can place themselves within the scene. As demonstrated in *Crab Moon*, the author uses detail to show Daniel's emotions while he gains the courage to overcome a fear. Writing with detail slows down the moment allowing the reader to experience it with a character. Reviewing the short stories written from the previous lesson, students will pick a moment to focus on and add descriptive detail.

Purpose:

Have you ever read a story and felt that you were really there? Well, we can write stories just like that by focusing on a moment. Authors can pull us into their stories by adding details. We can make our readers feel that they are a part of our stories too by zooming in on the moment. Today we are going to use our short stories from last class and find a moment to focus on.

Brainstorm:

Mentor Text Discussion:

With the projector screen you will display the scene from the book when Daniel flips over the horseshoe crab and conquers his fear. As the class reads this moment, have them identify what emotions and actions are happening and record them on the whiteboard. While the students are answering, prompt them with questions to further their understanding. For example, if a student says Daniel is proud, why is he proud? Or, what action illustrates his pride? Then, have a class discussion about how they might have flipped over the horseshoe crab, and how they would feel while trying to help.

Model:

Start by telling the class you are going to draw a picture of a moment you will be focusing on. When you draw the picture on the whiteboard, take a moment to add details that you will incorporate into the descriptive sentences. Talk aloud throughout this process so students are able to hear your rationale. Then model to the students how to add detail to a sentence with nouns, adjectives, and adverbs (see example below).

Example:

I went swimming. (Add nouns) I went swimming at the lake with my friend Tom.

I went swimming. (Add adjectives) I was excited to go swimming. It was the perfect day.

I went swimming. (Add adverbs) My friend cheerfully chased me into the lake.

Shared/Guided Writing:

Students will work together on the “Show, Don’t Tell” class activity. The students will create descriptive sentences from the simple sentences.

Class Activity: Show, Don't Tell

You will write three examples on the whiteboard under 'Don't Tell'. The class will work together to create descriptive sentences under 'Show'.

Example:

<u>Dont' Tell</u>	<u>Show</u>
I ate a cupcake.	As I brought the cupcake to my mouth, I was already drooling.
I went swimming.	It was a hot summer's day, and the water was freezing cold. I jumped into the lake and swam all day.
I was happy.	I jumped for joy.

Class Movement Activity:

Have the students stand safely apart. You will demonstrate a simple movement, for example, kicking a ball. The students will then mimic that movement five times in slow motion, as they are doing this draw the movement on the whiteboard. Once the students are seated again have them develop a descriptive sentence or two using the picture.

Independent Writing:

Now students will pick a moment in their story to elaborate on, have them circle or highlight that moment. To help students recall their moment they will draw a picture with as much detail as they can remember. The drawing will inspire students to discover descriptive words to use in their new sentences. Additionally, if they are struggling the students can use the

descriptive language handout to assist their composition. Students will revise their short stories adding in the new descriptive sentences. This draft will be used for the next lesson.

Example of words to include in descriptive language handout:

Adjectives	Adverbs
Forgetful	Cheerfully
Glamorous	Slowly
Hilarious	Outside
Hungry	Behind
Jolly	Tomorrow
Juicy	Soon
Magical	Enormously
Magnificent	Almost
Messy	Frequently
Nervous	Never

Reflection:

You will write reflective prompts on the board for the students. The students will answer the questions in their ELA journal. Suggested prompts are:

- List multiple ways to detail a moment
- How does going into detail alter the story?
- How does the reader react to the detail?

Lesson #3 Choosing the right lead

Curriculum

Big Ideas: “Using language in creative and playful ways helps us understand how language works” and “Language and story can be a source of creativity and joy”

Curricular Competencies: “Create stories and other texts to deepen awareness of self, family, and community” and “Communicate using sentences and most conventions of Canadian spelling, grammar, and punctuation”

Language Arts Elaborations: “character, plot, setting, conflict, and theme” and “may include revising, editing, considering audience”

Content: “Elements of story”, “Writing processes”, “Legible handwriting”, and “Conventions”

Context: Grade Level - 3

The students' experience of writing a short story and using descriptive language will equip them with what they need to create a powerful lead. Students will draw from their prior knowledge of using mentor texts to help enhance their writing.

Materials:

- Mentor Text: *Too Many Tamales* By Gary Soto & Ed Martinez - This story details a strong lead sentence through setting. This book shows the setting through theme, time of day, time of year, and weather in a single sentence.

- Other Mentor Texts for strong lead inspirations: eg. *Owl Moon* by Jane Yolen and *Nana in the City* by Lauren Castillo
- Revised drafts of short stories
- ELA Journal
- Pencil
- Eraser
- Picture for activity 1
- Picture for activity 2
- Descriptive language handout (See Table 2 for example)
- Dry Erase Markers
- Whiteboard

Hook: This lesson will teach the students how to write a strong lead for stories. Read the beginning of *Too Many Tamales* by Gary Soto & Ed Martinez to show how the author uses setting to develop the narrative of the story. After reading the first page, mention how the author uses the literary device of setting (eg. weather, time of day, and time of year) to captivate the reader. Since this is only one way to start a story, have other mentor texts on hand for students to use as inspiration.

Purpose: *Remember, as writers we work on many different drafts before a story is finished. We all have stories written from a section of our heart maps ready to be revised. This lesson we will be working on how to start our story in an intriguing way, so anyone who reads the first line will want to read the whole story and find out what happens.*

Brainstorm 1: Pass out mentor texts to groups of three to four students and have them read the first line to analyze the lead sentence. Then, read the first line of *Too Many Tamales* to the class and discuss different ways a story can begin. Write all the ideas that students suggest on

the whiteboard. When students are finished offering ideas, as a class, choose which ones will work best for a strong lead, circle these ideas and remove the others. Keep the circled ideas on the whiteboard for students to refer to later in the lesson while they write their own lead sentence(s).

Model: Using the ideas on the whiteboard you will write a strong lead sentence. As you are writing, talk aloud to the class to show your process. Ensure to mention the writing strategy you use and why. Informing students you are using foreshadowing because the story has a surprise ending will help them make a connection between the lead and the plot. You can mention to the class that there are other writing strategies (eg. figurative language, dialogue, action, etc.) to use and refer students to mentor texts for examples.

Picture Activity 1:

With your computer connected to a projector screen show picture 1 to the class. For this activity you will model how to write a strong lead sentence again, but this time you will use the features in the picture to create the sentence.

Picture 1:



Kerry Pucsek, 2020.

Shared/Guided Writing:

Picture Activity 2:

Similar to picture activity 1, show the class picture 2 this time guiding them through making a strong lead sentence. Reminding them to think about which writing strategy they want to incorporate (eg. setting, simile, metaphor, creepy statement etc.).

Picture 2:



Carla Scott, 2021.

Brainstorm 2:

Next, in groups of three to four, students will tell each other the beginning of their stories to collaborate on which writing strategy would create a strong lead sentence(s). Students will note the suggestions in their ELA journals to refer back to when editing.

Independent Writing:

Have mentor texts accessible for students to use as inspiration to create a strong lead. Instruct students to write three new leads to their story and remind them to refer to the notes from

brainstorm 2. Once finished writing and editing the three sentences, have them pick the one they think is the strongest. Students will revise their short stories with the addition of their new lead.

Reflection:

Have the class regroup as a whole and discuss how their stories feel with the addition of a strong lead. This will be an open classroom discussion where you will pose one question at a time and students will respond. Suggested questions are:

- How does the new lead change your story? Explain.
- Did the ideas written on the whiteboard help enhance your lead? Why or Why not?
- Does your new lead introduce the story better? Explain.

References

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