



WOODRIDGE
SCHOOL DISTRICT 68

Common Core Writing Newsletter

2nd Grade Unit 1

Learning from the Masters: Improving Narrative Writing

This unit will help students to mine their lives for stories that matter and then to turn those stories into shapely narratives under the influence of finely crafted mentor texts. Two mentor texts, Owl Moon by Jane Yolen and Angela Johnson's The Leaving Morning, will be used throughout the unit.

About this Unit

The biggest goal of this unit is to teach students to be thoughtful writers—ones who write with purpose about topics that matter to them. Students will be taught ways to write so as to bring out meaning and evoke emotion.

The first set of lessons in the unit will focus on students mining small moment ideas from their everyday lives. Students will keep track of these moments in Tiny Topics notepads. The writers will be taught ways to stretch out and magnify their small moments, writing these with great attention to detail and to crafting powerful beginnings and endings.

In the next portion of the unit, students will examine the author's craft in their mentor texts. Students will try out the craft moves in their own writing to make it more powerful. As the unit progresses, the emphasis shifts to understanding why an author would use a particular craft move, and students will revise with that in mind, paying attention, too, to word choice and language.

The last grouping of lessons has two goals: first, students will work with increasing independence, transferring what they have learned from the lessons into their work. Second, students will devote careful attention to revision and editing, aiming to make their writing as clear and as powerful as it can be.

Additional Information

Students will participate in a writer's workshop during a daily, dedicated writing time. The daily workshop is set up so that students will be presented with a mini-lesson and then be sent off to write as the teacher confers with students both individually and in small groups.

Attached to this newsletter are a grade level specific checklist and an example of proficient student writing for this unit's genre of writing. Please contact your student's teacher should you have any further questions.