



WOODRIDGE
SCHOOL DISTRICT 68

Common Core Writing Newsletter

The Lens of History: Research Reports

There is a wonderful connection in this unit between writing and social studies. Although the topic used in the series is westward expansion, many teachers are tailoring the topic to their social studies curriculum. Students are seeing how writing connects to other curricular areas.

About this Unit

Students will begin the unit by writing a full draft of a research report, organizing information in subsections and using all they have already learned about informational writing. These are often called “flash drafts” because they are written quickly. Next teachers will lead students through a series of lessons on how to revise their draft by looking at it through various lenses. After several lessons that teach students to reconsider and revise their flash-draft, students write a new and improved draft of their research report. Their aim in this second draft is to use the revision approaches they’ve been taught throughout the unit.

In the second set of lessons students will write more focused research reports. Instead of writing “all about” the general topic used in the first set of lessons, students will write about a more specific aspect of that topic. Students will be taught to write reports with an attention to the qualities of good information writing, qualities aimed at delivering information and engaging readers. There is a focus on learning from other informational texts and then teaching others this information in engaging ways. Students will learn to use primary sources in their informational writing.

Additional Information

Students will continue to 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.