Grade 2 - Unit 2 Writing - Small Moments, Big Stories

Unit Focus

In *Small Moments, Big Stories*, students learn that strong stories come from meaningful moments in their own lives. Through explicit, systematic instruction, students develop narrative craft while strengthening foundational skills in encoding and composition. Using heart maps and mentor texts such as Jabari Jumps, students learn to turn broad topics into focused "small moment" stories. Teachers model how writers create engaging beginnings, stretch important moments with dialogue, precise description, action verbs, sensory details, and internal thoughts, and craft satisfying endings that leave a lasting impression on the reader. Students explicitly study how mentor authors use these craft moves and then immediately apply them to their own writing through oral rehearsal, sketching, drafting, revision, and partner collaboration.

Writing instruction is directly connected to foundational reading and encoding skills. Students apply taught phonics patterns, spelling conventions, punctuation, capitalization, and grade-level high-frequency words during authentic writing experiences, strengthening the relationship between sounds and letters while building automatic recall of spelling patterns. Grammar instruction is embedded throughout the unit with explicit lessons on complete sentences, punctuation, and capitalization that students immediately apply in their drafts. Teachers regularly analyze student writing to identify individual and small-group needs in both narrative technique and foundational skills, providing targeted whole-class instruction, small-group support, and corrective feedback throughout the writing process. Through mentor texts and collaborative discussion, students build confidence as writers while learning that writing is a meaningful form of communication, creativity, and self-expression

Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

Standard(s)

Common Core
English Language Arts: 2

- Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.3)
- With guidance and support from adults and peers, focus on a topic and strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.5)
- Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.W.2.8)
- Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.4)
- Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.6)
- Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion). (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.1.A)

Transfer

Students will be able to independently use their learning to...
T1 Use the cyclical writing process to produce and publish clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to a variety of audiences, purposes and messages.

Meaning

Understanding(s)	Essential Question(s)
Students will understand that... **U1** Sounds, letters, and patterns work together to support decoding and spelling of words. **U2** Writers make intentional choices using language conventions and the writing process to clearly communicate meaning as they grow and develop as authors.	*Students will keep considering...* **Q1** How do sounds, letters, and patterns work together to help me read and spell words? **Q2** How can I use the writing process to make choices that communicate my ideas clearly?

Acquisition of Knowledge and Skill

Knowledge	Skill(s)
Students will know... **K1** Topic selection from personal experience supports the development of focused narratives.	*Students will be skilled at...* **S1** Narrowing broad topics into focused "small moment" ideas using heart maps and personal experiences.

Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

• Build on others' talk in conversations by linking their comments to the remarks of others. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.1.B) • Form and use frequently occurring irregular plural nouns (e.g., feet, children, teeth, mice, fish). (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.2.1.B) • Form and use the past tense of frequently occurring irregular verbs (e.g., sat, hid, told). (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.2.1.D) • Use adjectives and adverbs, and choose between them depending on what is to be modified. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.2.1.E) • Produce, expand, and rearrange complete simple and compound sentences (e.g., The boy watched the movie; The little boy watched the movie; The action movie was watched by the little boy). (CCSS.ELALITERACY.L.2.1.F) • Capitalize holidays, product names, and geographic names. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L. 2.2.A) • Generalize learned spelling patterns when writing words (e.g., cage -> badge; boy -> boil). (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.2.2.D) • Consult reference materials, including beginning dictionaries, as needed to check and correct spellings. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L. 2.2.E) **Madison Public Schools Profile of a Graduate** • Product Creation: Effectively use a medium to communicate important information. (POG.3.2)	**K2** Story planning includes identifying who is in the story, where it takes place, what happens, and why it happens. **K3** Narrative beginnings introduce key story elements and may include hooks such as questions, dialogue, or sound effects to engage the reader. **K4** Hook strategies such as question, dialogue, and action create interest and encourage readers to continue reading. **K5** Descriptive language and sensory details help readers visualize and experience events rather than simply being told what happens. **K6** The revision processes strengthens writing by refining ideas, improving language, and adding meaningful detail. **K7** A narrative ending provides resolution by reflecting on experiences, showing change, or connecting back to the beginning of a story. **K8** Publishing and presentation allow writers to share finished work with an audience, using illustrations and oral reading to enhance meaning. **K9** Fundations: • Closed syllable exception; • Glued sounds; • Vowel Teams: oi, oy, oa, oe, ow, ou, oo, ue, ew; • Suffixes: s, es, ed, ing, er, est, ed, ful, ment, ness, less, able, en, ish; • Prefixes: mis, un, non, dis, and trans, au and aw; • forming plurals; • forming past and present; • reading and writing two syllable words; • compound words; • spelling of ic **K10** Grammar: • What is a Sentence? • Complete Subject & Complete Predicate • Simple Subject • Simple Predicate • Types of Sentences • Reviewing Sentence Types • Singular & Plural Nouns • Irregular Plural Nouns • Verb Tense	**S2** Orally rehearsing and planning a narrative using sketches, lists, or webs before drafting. **S3** Writing narrative beginnings that include hooks, setting, characters, and context. **S4** Generating and selecting effective hook sentences using different strategies. **S5** Revising narrative writing using "Show, Don't Tell" to add sensory details and strong verbs. **S6** Revising writing to improve clarity, word choice, and descriptive detail. **S7** Writing narrative endings that reflect feelings, lessons learned, memories, or connections to the future or beginning of the story. **S8** Publishing and presenting narrative writing through illustration, revision, and oral sharing. **S9** Applying conventions of standard English, including grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling, to communicate ideas clearly and effectively in writing.