



Grade 3 - Unit 3 Writing - Writing with Believable Characters and Problems

Unit Focus

In *Writing with Believable Characters and Problems*, students develop realistic fiction stories by creating believable characters, meaningful conflicts, and authentic life experiences. Through close study of mentor authors, students learn how writers use dialogue, descriptive detail, internal thinking, and character actions to build emotional depth and create stories that feel genuine and relatable. Students examine how characters' motivations, struggles, and responses to challenges shape plot development and contribute to character growth over time. Throughout the writing process, students create original realistic fiction pieces with clear narrative structure, including a beginning, rising action, climax, and resolution. As they refine their writing, students strengthen their ability to develop strong characters, elaborate story details, and craft satisfying endings that reflect both character change and meaningful themes.

Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

Standard(s)	Transfer	
Common Core English Language Arts: 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none">With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 13 above.) (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.4)With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.5)Establish a situation and introduce a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3.A)Use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3.B)Use temporal words and phrases to signal event order. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3.C)Provide a sense of closure. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3.D)Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.1.A)	<i>Students will be able to independently use their learning to...</i> 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)
	<i>Students will understand that...</i> U1 Realistic fiction writers create believable characters, problems, and events that help readers connect to stories and understand experiences and emotions. U2 Writers make intentional choices using language conventions and the writing process to clearly communicate meaning as they grow and develop as authors. U3 Sounds, letters, and patterns work together to support decoding and spelling of words.	<i>Students will keep considering...</i> Q1 How do writers create realistic fiction stories that readers can relate to and care about? Q2 How can I use the writing process to make choices that communicate my ideas clearly? Q3 How do sounds, letters, and patterns work together to help me read and spell words?
	Acquisition of Knowledge and Skill	
	Knowledge	Skill(s)
	<i>Students will know...</i> K1 Character development includes thoughts, feelings, actions, dialogue, and sensory details that help readers understand and care about characters. K2 Empathy in writing helps readers connect emotionally to characters and their experiences.	<i>Students will be skilled at...</i> S1 Developing believable characters readers care about through detailed descriptions, dialogue, actions, and internal thinking. S2 Writing scenes that reveal emotions and motivations through showing rather than telling.

Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

- 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.3.1.B)
- Ask questions to check understanding of information presented, stay on topic, and link their comments to the remarks of others. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.1.C)
- Explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.1.D)
- Use coordinating and subordinating conjunctions. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.1.H)
- Produce simple, compound, and complex sentences. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.1.I)
- Use commas and quotation marks in dialogue. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.2.C)
- Use conventional spelling for high-frequency and other studied words and for adding suffixes to base words (e.g., sitting, smiled, cries, happiness). (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.2.E)
- Use spelling patterns and generalizations (e.g., word families, position-based spellings, syllable patterns, ending rules, meaningful word parts) in writing words. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.2.F)
- Consult reference materials, including beginning dictionaries, as needed to check and correct spellings. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L. 3.2.G)

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- Product Creation: Effectively use a medium to communicate important information. (POG.3.2)

- K3** Realistic fiction problems connect to a character's traits, fears, wants, and experiences.
- K4** Narrative craft moves such as dialogue, sensory details, similes, and internal thinking make stories vivid and engaging.
- K5** Narrative structure includes a beginning, rising action, climax, resolution, and conclusion.
- K6** IADD (inner thinking, action, description, dialogue) craft moves help readers visualize and experience the story.
- K7** Dialogue and descriptive language reveal character traits and develop plot events.
- K8** Writers plan, draft, revise, and edit to improve their writing.
- K9** Sounds, letters, and spelling patterns work together to form words, supporting accurate reading and spelling.
- K10** Foundations:
- Identifying schwa
 - Reading and spelling words with a schwa in an unaccented syllable
 - -et spelling at the end of words such as "jacket"
 - Dictionary skills
 - Open-syllable review
 - y as a vowel: long /i/ and long / e/
 - Schwa in open syllables with a and i
 - Open-syllable exception
 - c: ce. ci. cy (reading)
 - Soft g: ge, gi, gy (reading)
 - Prefixes: con, dis, un, em, ex, in, im, il, ir, mis, non, sub, trans, de, e, pre, pro, re
 - Roots: dict, duct, fect, fract, ject, junct, lect, min, scrib, sist, spec, struct, tract
- K11** Grammar:
- Compound Sentences
 - Complex Sentences
 - Avoiding Run-on Sentences
 - Coordinating Conjunctions
 - Subordinating Conjunctions
 - Writing Quotations and Direct Quotations

- S3** Designing believable conflicts that help reveal character traits and move the story forward.
- S4** Applying craft techniques to elaborate and strengthen narrative writing
- S5** Organizing stories using plot structure including beginning, rising action, climax, resolution, and lesson.
- S6** Writing realistic dialogue and detailed descriptions that support character and plot development.
- S7** Writing narratives with clear sequence, descriptive details, and effective techniques using the writing process.
- S8** Decoding unfamiliar words and spelling words correctly using their knowledge of sounds, letters, and patterns.
- S9** Applying conventions of standard English, including grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling, to communicate ideas clearly and effectively in writing.
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