



Grade 3 - Unit 4 Writing - Fascinating Facts: How Nonfiction Authors Engage and Inform Readers

Unit Focus

In *Fascinating Facts: How Nonfiction Authors Engage and Inform Readers*, students develop informational writing that clearly communicates ideas about scientific topics, with a focus on animal adaptations and how living things survive and thrive in their environments. Building on knowledge gained through reading and discussion, students learn to organize facts and ideas using clear structures that include a main idea supported by relevant details. They study mentor texts to understand how authors use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and text features to explain complex information in an accessible way. Throughout the writing process, students create an informational piece for a real audience, strengthening their ability to explain scientific concepts clearly, use evidence from texts, and communicate ideas with purpose and clarity.

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, use technology to produce and publish writing (using keyboarding skills) as well as to interact and collaborate with others. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.6)Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.8)Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.2)Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.4)Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2.A)Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2.B)Use linking words and phrases (e.g., also, another, and, more, but) to connect ideas within categories of information. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2.C)Provide a concluding statement or section. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2.D)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)	<i>Students will be able to independently use their learning to...</i> T1 Evaluate the author's message, identify the author's purpose, and cite text evidence to support conclusions. T2 Research and identify credible resources to expand knowledge and understanding of a topic or issue. T3 Present information and ideas using appropriate grammar, spelling, and vocabulary to convey the message.	
	Meaning	
	Understanding(s)	Essential Question(s)
	<i>Students will understand that...</i> U1 Nonfiction texts are used to learn new information and to understand what the author wants to teach. U2 Sounds, letters, and patterns work together to support decoding and spelling of words. U3 Reading accurately, smoothly, and with expression helps readers focus on meaning and better understand the text. U4 Vocabulary knowledge supports making meaning from text and deepening understanding. U5 Writers make intentional choices using language conventions and the writing process to clearly communicate meaning as they grow and develop as authors.	<i>Students will keep considering...</i> Q1 How do readers use nonfiction books to learn new information and understand what the author wants to teach us? Q2 How do sounds, letters, and patterns work together to help me read and spell words? Q3 How does reading with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression support comprehension? Q4 How does learning new vocabulary help readers better understand what they read? Q5 How can I use the writing process to make choices that communicate my ideas clearly?

Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

- Explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.1.D)
- Explain the function of nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in general and their functions in particular sentences. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.1.A)
- Form and use regular and irregular verbs. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.1.D)
- Form and use the simple (e.g., I walked; I walk; I will walk) verb tenses. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.1.E)
- Form and use comparative and superlative adjectives and adverbs, and choose between them depending on what is to be modified. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.1.G)
- 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)

Madison Public Schools Profile of a Graduate

- Inquiry: Posing, pursuing, and refining significant questions to deepen understanding about a topic or issue. (POG.1.1)
- Analyzing: Examining information/data/ evidence from multiple sources to identify possible underlying assumptions, patterns, and relationships in order to make inferences. (POG.1.2)
- Product Creation: Effectively use a medium to communicate important information. (POG.3.2)

Acquisition of Knowledge and Skill

Knowledge

Students will know...

K1 The key differences between fiction and nonfiction genres.

K2 The purpose of nonfiction texts (to inform, explain, or teach).

K3 Nonfiction texts are intentionally organized by authors to help readers understand information.

K4 Nonfiction text features (table of contents, headings, captions, diagrams, glossary, index) and how they support comprehension.

K5 Nonfiction text structures (main idea and detail, sequence, cause and effect, compare and contrast, problem and solution).

K6 Main idea is what the text is mostly about and the supporting details are the facts, examples, or information in the text that explain, prove, or give more information about the main idea.

K7 Authors of nonfiction texts have a point of view about a topic that can be identified through the text.

K8 Authors may present information differently, even when writing about the same topic.

K9 A RAN chart promotes critical thinking about an author/text

K10 Sounds, letters, and spelling patterns work together to form words, supporting accurate reading and spelling.

K11 Reading with accuracy, fluency, and expression supports understanding of text.

K12 Vocabulary supports understanding of text and builds deeper meaning.

K13 Writers plan, draft, revise, and edit to improve their writing.

Skill(s)

Students will be skilled at...

S1 Distinguishing between fiction and nonfiction texts and explaining how they know.

S2 Analyzing how authors organize information and identifying the text structure used in a nonfiction text.

S3 Explaining how different text features help them locate information and learn new ideas.

S4 Explaining how the organization and structure of a text helps readers understand information.

S5 Identifying the main idea of a nonfiction text and selecting key details that support it.

S6 Identifying the author's point of view and supporting their thinking with evidence from the text.

S7 Distinguishing their own point of view from the author's point of view.

S8 Comparing and contrasting key ideas and details from two nonfiction texts on the same topic.

S9 Using a RAN chart to record what they know, what they learn, and what they wonder while reading nonfiction.

S10 Decoding unfamiliar words and spelling words correctly using their knowledge of sounds, letters, and patterns.

S11 Using known words, context clues, and new vocabulary to understand and make meaning from texts.

S12 Reading aloud with accuracy, smoothness, and expression to focus on comprehension.

Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

	<p>K14 Nonfiction writers support their claims and thinking with evidence from reliable sources</p> <p>K15 Foundations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pluralizing words ending in y and o • Y and suffix spelling rule • Final Stable Syllable • Consonant-le • tion/sion • Consonant-le/exception • Final syllable with schwa vs. consonant-le • Consonant-le/adding suffixes <p>K16 Grammar:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commonly Confused Words • Comparative and Superlative Adjectives • Comparative and Superlative Adverbs • Comparing with Adjectives and Adverbs • Present Tense Verbs and Past Tense Verbs • Future Tense Verbs • Irregular Verbs 	<p>S13 Applying conventions of standard English, including grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling, to communicate ideas clearly and effectively in writing.</p>
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