

INTRODUCTION TO THE UNIT DESIGN CURRICULUM

This curriculum is written for literacy coaches who have worked in the Noyce Foundation's Every Child a Reader and Writer initiative. The curriculum is intended for coaches (facilitators) to deliver to teachers who have a good understanding of Writing Workshop and who are interested in planning a unit of study in a structured, collaborative way. The curriculum refers to ECRW standards; however, facilitators should also be familiar with the California Standards in Reading, Writing, and Listening and Speaking and reference those standards which match the content being taught. This particular unit will allow teachers to produce an Informational unit of study and is written for second through fifth grade classrooms. There is a very wide range across those grades and the facilitators should differentiate accordingly.

Facilitators of this training are asked to use the curriculum as a roadmap for their planning. There are a variety of ways in which the curriculum could be used (i.e. with a grade level team at one site, with different teams from several sites in one district, with many teams from many districts, etc.). However, it is assumed that teachers will be working together with grade level colleagues. It is the facilitator's decision how to modify the timing and activities to best meet the needs of the audience.

The curriculum is based on the theory of backwards planning, which has teachers analyze standards and student work, and then plan instruction accordingly. The first part of the curriculum is intended to build teachers' knowledge of the genre and to model minilessons that may be taught as students become immersed in the genre. The second part of the curriculum walks teachers through the writing process. The facilitator gives the teachers information about the particular stage of the process, then models minilessons as the teachers work as writers, and finally allows teachers time to plan teaching points for their classroom. Possible minilesson ideas are written for facilitators to share with teachers and/or to use when modeling. Throughout the curriculum, "anticipated questions from participants" are posed to the facilitators. These questions are commonly asked in Writing Workshop trainings and are meant to serve as an opportunity for the facilitator to discuss predictable problems in implementation.

This curriculum is intended to be taught in a two-day session which includes time for teachers to begin planning a 4-5 week unit of study. Following this session, teachers complete unit planning, teach the unit, take reflective teaching notes, and collect student work throughout the unit. Then the group reconvenes for a half-day session of reflection and future planning. During this follow-up session, the facilitator should plan to co-teach with a teacher leader from the group who can model how she reflects on her teaching and uses student work to plan instruction.

The success of any Writing Workshop unit of study is in part dependent upon the teacher's ability to integrate a Reading Workshop. The facilitator should be prepared to discuss the variety of ways teachers can do this, depending on their reading program. The facilitator should also be prepared to differentiate minilesson ideas and Touchstone Books depending on the teachers' grade level(s) and student populations.

OVERVIEW

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| Activity 1 | |
| Purpose | Building community and giving an overview of Unit Design |
| Activity | Welcome, introductions and Unit Design overview |
| Approximate time | 10 minutes |
| Facilitators: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome participants. Depending on the audience, determine how much time should be spent building community among the table groups and in the room as a whole.• Highlight the importance of the interrelationships of reading and writing—what we do in writing connects to what we do in reading.• Explain that teachers will experience the Unit Design training as writers and then think, “What does this look like at my grade level?”• Explain that their reading work will contain:<ul style="list-style-type: none">--Activities to build on teacher understanding of genre--Activities to replicate in the classroom• Explain that their writing work will contain:<ul style="list-style-type: none">--Instruction~modeling~experiencing~planning• Describe structure of Unit Design days:<ul style="list-style-type: none">-2 days to plan the unit—plan big ideas here and the minilessons back at the site-Teachers teach the unit in their classrooms-Importance of reflecting on your teaching, collecting student work-Half-day to come together and reflect on the unit• Review handout: <i>Learning Outcomes</i> (see Informational 2-5 Appendix). |

IMMERSION IN THE INFORMATIONAL GENRE

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| Activity 2 | |
| Purpose Teachers will gain an understanding of immersion in Informational writing | |
| Activity Read Aloud and noticings chart | |
| Approximate time | 15 minutes |
| Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read aloud an Informational book that is appropriate for the grade level of your audience and that you will be referring to throughout the day• When choosing the book to model from, consider the following questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Is this topic something that upper elementary students can access?-Is the length of this book appropriate for the grade level(s) of my audience?-Does this book contain the kinds of writing and Informational features I want to discuss with students?• Suggest books to use for the read aloud: <u>Germs Are Not for Sharing</u>, by Elizabeth Verdick and <u>Chameleons Are Cool</u>, by Martin Jenkins (<i>see Informational 2-5 Appendix for typed texts</i>).• Have participants establish “learning partners” or “talk partners”—someone you will be turning and talking to throughout our time together.• Ask the participants to respond as readers and chart those responses. “This book makes me think about...”• Explain that this is what we do with students—read the book for pleasure first outside of Writing Workshop. | |

UNDERSTANDING THE GENRE

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| Activity 3 | |
| Purpose Teachers will learn about the essential elements of the Informational genre. | |
| Activity Review Informational genre elements. | |
| Approximate time | 10 minutes |
| Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review handout: <i>Elements Of Our Nonfiction Publications (see Informational 2-5 Appendix)</i>.• Discuss how each element becomes more complex as writers become more sophisticated. For example, Controlling Idea is something that experienced 4th and 5th graders can attempt, but is not something that 2nd and 3rd graders can fully comprehend.• Emphasize that this is part of the teacher’s work that is to be done <i>before</i> the unit begins; this is not an activity teachers would do with their classes. | |

IMMERSION IN THE INFORMATIONAL GENRE

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| Activity 4 | |
| Purpose Immersion in the Informational genre | |
| Activity Teachers will create another Noticings Chart | |
| Approximate time | 25 minutes |
| Facilitators | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reread <u>Chameleons are Cool</u> (or whatever book you decided to use for this training) and hand out typed text (<i>see Informational 2-5 Appendix</i>). • Based on the participant’s understanding of how to ‘read like a writer’, choose a way for them to respond to the text. Options are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As you listen to the book, jot down all of the facts you heard. • As you listen to the book, jot down all of your general noticings about how the text is written (see example of Chart A below). • In small groups, create a structured noticings chart about how the text is written, paying particular attention to the four elements we discussed in Activity 4 (see example of Chart B below). • Explain ways to modify this activity for students. | |

Sample Chart A

What do you notice about how this book is written?

| Chameleons Are Cool |
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Sample Chart B

What do you notice about how the author: portrayed a controlling idea, made the book engaging, conveyed research, organized facts?

| Chameleons Are Cool | | | |
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| Controlling Idea | Engaging | Research | Organizational Structure |
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BACKWARDS PLANNING A UNIT OF STUDY

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| Activity 5 | |
| Purpose Teachers will receive an overview of backwards planning. | |
| Activity Explanation of backwards planning | |
| Approximate time | 20 minutes* |
| Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review handout: <i>Process for Planning Informational Unit (see Informational 2-5 Appendix)</i>.• Review handout: <i>Unit Planning Grid (see Informational 2-5 Appendix)</i>.• Provide a visual that closely matches the Unit Planning Grid so that you can model how to use the grid (i.e. large butcher paper, erasable poster).• If possible, engage the participants in the planning conversation by asking them to bring their yearlong plans for Writing Workshop. Discuss with them the different units they are teaching, their school and district requirements, assessments, etc. The conversation will differ based on the number of people in the group and how many districts are represented.• Describe the planning grid and how it will be used throughout the Unit Design course as a way to document their planning. Teachers may want to write in the boxes, use post-its, etc. This is meant to be used as a helpful graphic organizer—not the “right way” to plan. | |
| *Depending on the amount of experience the participants have with Unit Design curriculum and backwards planning in general, decide how much information they need on the theory and practice of this kind of planning. | |

UNDERSTANDING THE GENRE

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| Activity 6 | |
| Purpose Teachers will gain an understanding of Informational writing in the larger context. | |
| Activity Discussion about the purpose of Informational writing | |
| Approximate time | 20 minutes |
| Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review handout: <i>What does Informational Writing look like in the world?</i> (see <i>Informational 2-5 Appendix</i>).• Review handout: <i>Common Myths About Informational Writing</i> (see <i>Informational 2-5 Appendix</i>).• Be prepared to discuss the concept of “opinions and thoughts” in an Informational text; it is quite common for older students to be confused and think that their Informational pieces should not have voice or contain their thoughts about their topic. | |

UNDERSTANDING THE INFORMATION GENRE

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| Activity 7 | |
| Purpose | Teachers will understand grade level expectations for Information writing. |
| Activity | Teachers will examine the ECRW Informational Standards |
| Approximate time | 5 minutes |
| Facilitators | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the four elements (Controlling Idea, Research, Engagement, Organizational Structure) of Informational writing.• Model how to identify each of the four elements of Informational.• Instruct participants to identify the elements in their own grade level standards.• Discuss as a whole group in order to clarify any questions that may arise (<i>see Informational 2-5 Appendix for ECRW Informational Standards</i>). |

UNDERSTANDING THE INFORMATIONAL GENRE

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| Activity 8 | |
| Purpose Teachers will understand grade level expectations for Informational writing. | |
| Activity Analyze examples of student writing. | |
| Approximate time | 20 minutes |
| Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refer to the ECRW Assessment Tools CD for a compilation of student writing and commentary as well as the collection of student writing you are familiar with in your own work. Choose pieces that are appropriate for your audience and that match what you are teaching.• Distribute student writing and commentary, if available.• Model how to analyze the student writing, asking yourself:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- What is the student doing well?- What evidence is there of the four elements we are focusing on?- What is the student attempting?• Instruct each grade level to read the student writing, asking themselves the same questions.• Guide participants through the commentary that accompanies the student work, if available.• Share noticings as a whole group. | |

CONTROLLING IDEA AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

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| Activity 9 | |
| Purpose Instruction on “Controlling Idea” and “Organizational Structure”. We know that student writing tends to lack these two elements; this is a predictable problem we can anticipate. | |
| Activity Give teachers instruction on these important elements. Choose one or more activities below and order them in a way that will engage the audience. | |
| Approximate time | 45 minutes |
| Facilitators <i>What writers say</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read aloud what authors say about Controlling Idea and Organizational Structure in the writing world (<i>see What a Writer Needs in Informational 2-5 Appendix</i>).• Discuss the definitions of Controlling Idea and Organizational Structure from Activities 4 and 6 in light of what Fletcher says about writing. <i>Children’s literature</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reread the Informational book you have chosen to work with.• Refer to the typed text (<i>see Informational 2-5 Appendix</i>).• Model how to highlight the text for facts and thoughts that support the Controlling Idea.• In addition, model how to highlight any other craft moves that the writer is making (i.e. comparisons, descriptive language, etc.).• Ask participants to continue their noticings with a partner. <i>Standards</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reference the ECRW Informational Standards (<i>see Informational 2-5 Appendix</i>).• Have participants find the descriptors that relate to Controlling Idea and Organizing Structure in their grade level.• Tell them to read the grades before and after their own to see how Controlling Idea and Organizing Structure develop throughout the grades. <i>Student work</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Show examples of student work.• Think aloud: what is the Controlling Idea? How did this student organize this piece?• Discuss what Controlling Idea and Organizational Structure look and sound like in student writing. | |

UNDERSTANDING THE INFORMATIONAL GENRE

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| Activity 10 | |
| Purpose Further define the Informational genre. | |
| Activity Teachers will define the genre they are teaching, identifying the standards they are emphasizing. | |
| Approximate time | 5 minutes |
| Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remind the participants of the ways in which you already immersed students in the Informational genre:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading <u>Chameleons are Cool</u>;• Creating a noticings chart;• Understanding the types of Informational writing out in the world;• Understanding the essential elements of Informational writing;• Examining Informational Standards;• Analyzing student writing.• Share the definition of the genre: <i>Informational writing is a short report written in an engaging and interesting way</i>• Explain that it is best to focus on two of the four essential elements. Ideally, this conversation happens at your school site after analyzing student writing. Explain that the focus of Controlling Idea and Organizational Structure was decided on for the purpose of this training and is based on student work analysis across the ECRW Initiative.• Discuss the process of defining a genre with students (in any genre study) and explain the advantages and disadvantages of constructing it together and presenting it to the class.• Emphasize that the purpose of the unit is to teach students how to write well, in an organized and engaging way about a topic students know about. Therefore, discuss the following concepts in more detail:<ul style="list-style-type: none">--In grades K-2, students should choose topics that they know a lot about. The “research” should not be based on reading texts to gather information--In grades 3-5, students should be researching their topics <i>outside</i> of Writing Workshop time--CA State Standards for reading, specifically the expectations for teaching research skills--Be prepared to lead a discussion about how to differentiate across the school—how different grades should plan to go deeper with different elements. For example: 2nd grade might tend to teach Organizing Structure and grouping related facts; 3rd grade might tend to teach Engagement and learning how to have a strong idea about a topic; 4th grade might tend to teach how to do Research around a Controlling Idea; 5th grade might tend to teach Researching and communicating a strong Controlling Idea | |

IMMERSION IN THE INFORMATIONAL GENRE

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| Activity 11 | |
| Purpose Teachers will understand how to choose books to use in the Informational unit of study. | |
| Activity Show teachers the process of sorting Informational books in order to choose ones to use in the reading time and in the Writing Workshop. | |
| Approximate time | 30 minutes |
| Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review handout: <i>When Gathering Touchstones ... (see Informational 2-5 Appendix)</i>.• Explain that this is work done outside of the Writing Workshop. Immersion begins in the reading time as students need to be able to identify and understand a concept before they can produce it. Immersion then continues throughout the unit as the teacher does read alouds and makes books available for students to read independently and use as mentor texts.• Model your process for book selection. In addition to summarizing the book, include strategies like: reading the back of the book, considering what you know about the author, examining the length of the text. If there is more than one facilitator, consider modeling this as a conversation to underscore the importance of collaboration in planning.• Model answering the questions on the handout.• Model a think aloud with a stack of books, making clear the four different piles of books you are making:<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. <u>Informational books that are good examples to use in the <i>reading time</i></u>: These are books that contain the elements of the genre you are teaching into, specifically Controlling Idea and Organizational Structure, but which may be more complex than the kind of writing that the students will do. Therefore, these books will not serve as mentor texts.2. <u>Informational books that are good examples of the <i>kind of writing</i> you can ask students to do</u>: Not only do these books contain the elements of Informational writing that you are teaching, but the length of the text and the complexity of the organizational structure are accessible models for students. These may be good mentor texts.3. <u>Informational books that will be good to use for students when they <i>research</i></u>: These are books that are easy for the students to read in order to gain information.4. <u>Informational books that are <i>not</i> good examples for this unit of study</u>: These books might be ones that you really enjoy reading, but they will most likely confuse the students. There may be too much or too little information given; it might be very dry to read, or too sing-songy, etc.• Give teachers a stack of books, or if they brought their own books, ask them to get them out. Give them time to read through the books with their grade level partner/team. Ask them to discuss the books and make piles similar to yours.• Hand out a list of Informational books that you would recommend for this unit of study (<i>see Informational 2-5 Appendix</i>). | |

READING PREPARATION IN AN INFORMATIONAL UNIT

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| Activity 12 | |
| Purpose Reflect on the learning they have done so far and to plan for their reading work. | |
| Activity Teachers will have time to meet with their grade level team and plan the big ideas for their reading work. | |
| Approximate time | 15 minutes |
| Facilitation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review handout: <i>Preparing for the Informational Unit of Study...</i> (see Informational 2-5 Appendix.)• Model how to use the planning grid. Think aloud the different reading strategies you might use (i.e. Interactive Read Aloud, Partner Reading, Shared Reading) and how you would choose Touchstones for your reading work. Teacher leaders could share reading lessons they have done throughout the year that lay the foundations for this unit. For teachers of upper elementary, some of the strategies listed above may be unfamiliar so be prepared to explain how these instructional strategies benefit our older students.• Clearly state your expectations for the teachers as they plan their reading time. Do you want them working together? Do you want them reading books? Do you want them to list possible minilessons for the reading work?• Anticipate any concerns around the following questions teachers may have*:<ul style="list-style-type: none">-When should we do Read Alouds and have discussions?-Should I do the reading work as Immersion in Writing Workshop or should I do it at the end of my previous unit or should I do it during reading time?-How does our adopted Language Arts curriculum fit into this? | |

At this point, it may be necessary to suggest concrete minilessons intended to be taught during the reading work. Below are possible teaching points:

- Readers read Informational books and discuss the difference between fiction and nonfiction texts.
- Readers notice and discuss the purpose of Informational texts (to teach the reader something).
- Readers read Informational books and discuss their elements (facts, organizational structure, pictures).
- Readers notice how authors use pictures and labels to convey information.
- Readers notice how authors include a table of contents to organize facts.

*Note to facilitator:

Throughout this course, teachers are given opportunities to take their learning and plan instruction. When that time is allotted, there are a series of questions listed in the curriculum typically asked by novice Writing Workshop teachers. The questions are listed for you as something to think about during your discussion and to remind you to prepare for as you plan your training. The answers to some of these questions are dependent on the specific needs of your audience.

The remainder of the Unit Design course will be spent planning the unit of study. Make the format of the rest of the training clear to the participants:

- Direct instruction on each component of the writing process, from Collecting to Publishing
- Opportunity for the teachers to experience the writing workshop (minilesson, work time, share)
- Grade level planning for that component

Speak to the importance of experiencing the process as writers and then as teachers; this allows us to understand what the students will be experiencing.

COLLECTING WRITING IDEAS

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| Activity 13 | |
| Purpose Teachers will gain an understanding of the <i>Collecting</i> part of the writing process. | |
| Activity Refer to the handout <i>Consolidating our Understanding of the Writing Process: Collecting</i> (see <i>Informational 2-5 Appendix</i>). | |
| Approximate time | 10 minutes |
| Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the definition of <i>Collecting</i>, emphasizing that students need to spend a lot of time writing their ideas, talking about their ideas, and living with an awareness that they are Informational writers. Remind teachers that students need to study where Informational writers get ideas and then try out similar strategies.• Connect the idea of <i>Collecting</i> in Informational to <i>Collecting</i> in Narrative. Just like Narrative writers get ideas from things they do everyday, Informational writers get ideas from their hobbies, places they are familiar with and people in their lives. We want to encourage students to write about things like playing soccer, a school topic that excites them, and places they have been, etc.• It might be tempting to skim over this part of the process, but that may result in students selecting topics that they are not fully invested in. | |

COLLECTING WRITING IDEAS

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| Activity 14 | |
| Purpose Teachers will experience the <i>Collecting</i> stage of the writing process. | |
| Activity Mini Writing Workshop: Remind teachers to work as writers now, not as teachers. | |
| Approximate time | 45 minutes |
| Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain that the <i>Collecting</i> stage consists of two kinds of minilessons for our older writers: minilessons that help students gather lots of possible ideas and minilessons that ask students to “try on” a few ideas prior to choosing one.• Model at least two minilessons by using your notebook (possibilities are below) choosing at least one minilesson that helps writers <i>generate</i> ideas and then at least one that helps writers “try on” different ideas. | |

Possible minilessons for how to *generate* many different kinds of ideas:

- Writers of Informational books write about things they know about.
- Writers of Informational books write about facts/topics that interest them after reading books and looking at pictures.
- Writers of Informational books talk to other writers about their topics.
- Writers of Informational books get ideas by jotting down fascinating facts they hear.
- Writers of Informational books get ideas from observations they make and find interesting.
- Writers of Informational books reread their Notebook to discover possible informational topics.
- Writers of Informational books write about things they wonder about.
- Writers of Informational books get ideas by thinking about:
 - places they go everyday
 - things they do everyday
 - what people in their lives do everyday
 - things they do in their free time
 - special places they have been

Possible minilessons for “*trying on*” different ideas:

- Writers of Informational books take a possible idea and write everything they know about that topic
- Writers of Informational books talk about their topic with a friend to discover what they know about the topic.
- Writers of Informational books reread what they know about a topic and ask themselves: “What more do I know about this particular fact?”.

COLLECTING

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| Activity 15 | |
| Purpose Reflect on the learning they have done so far and to plan for their teaching. | |
| Activity Teachers will have time to meet with their grade level team and plan the possible minilessons for <i>Collecting</i> . | |
| Approximate time | 20 minutes |
| Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Model how to use the planning grid by using post-its or a pencil so that teachers understand that these are possible minilesson ideas. They will be choosing which lessons to teach and when based on what they see their students doing in the unit.• Think aloud about the different opportunities students should have for collecting Informational writing ideas.• Revisit the handout you showed in Activity 13.• Remind teachers that their own writing is a powerful piece of their writing curriculum.• Anticipate any concerns around the following questions teachers may have:<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Should I assign topics to my students?-What if my students say they don't know a lot about anything...should I model how to write about everyday topics?-What if my students write about topics that I know they don't know anything about? | |

CHOOSING A TOPIC

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| Activity 16 | |
| Purpose | Teachers will gain an understanding of the <i>Choosing</i> part of the writing process. |
| Activity | Refer to the handout <i>Consolidating our Understanding of the Writing Process: Choosing a Topic</i> (see <i>Informational 2-5 Appendix</i>). |
| Approximate time | 5 minutes |
| Facilitators | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the definition of <i>Choosing a Topic</i>, emphasizing that students need to talk about their topic and what they know about it before choosing it.• Remind teachers that the quality of the final piece of writing will in part depend on how much the student knows and cares about the topic. |

CHOOSING A TOPIC

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| Activity 17 | |
| Purpose Teachers will experience the <i>Choosing</i> stage of the writing process. | |
| Activity Mini Writing Workshop: Remind teachers to work as writers now, not as teachers. | |
| Approximate time | 15 minutes |
| Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Model a minilesson: One way writers of Informational books choose their topic is to “try it on”. They think about a topic and ask themselves: “Do I know a lot about this topic? Do I care about this topic? Can I write about it? Could I find more information about this topic?”• Explain what “trying on a topic” means (like buying new shoes!). Model going through four topics on in your Notebook, asking yourself the questions to decide which topic you will write your book about. Give examples and non-examples as you model going through your notebook.• Give teachers time to quickly talk about their possible topic.• Once participants have chosen a topic, ask the teachers to share the topics they chose with the group or post a chart asking participants to write down their topic. This serves several purposes:<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Allows teachers to hear a variety of topics-Continues to build the community of writers-Allows for many different voices to be heard in the room-Holds each participant accountable to the task of choosing a topic• Explain that in the classroom, the students can do the same thing—write their topic on a post-it to place on the class chart, similarly to the one below: | |
| <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"><p>Our informational books are about...</p><ul style="list-style-type: none">• hurricanes• skateboarding• Mexico—then and now••</div> | |

CHOOSING A TOPIC

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| Activity 18 | |
| Purpose Reflect on the learning they have done so far and to plan for their teaching. | |
| Activity Teachers will have time to meet with their grade level team and plan the big ideas for <i>Choosing</i> . | |
| Approximate time | 15 minutes |
| Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Model how to use the planning grid. This would take no more than one day in a classroom and most teachers should be very used to this part of the writing process. Often, teachers will have students choose their idea during the first minilesson and then teach a second minilesson that helps them get started on the researching/developing stage of the writing process.• Remind participants about the importance of: reading their students' notebooks on an ongoing basis; talking to their students about their possible Informational topics outside of Writing Workshop; conducting small group conferences around predictable problems; connecting to Touchstone Books, and sharing student work as examples of what students can do.• Anticipate any concerns around the following questions teachers may have:<ul style="list-style-type: none">-What if a student chooses a topic that is too big? Too small?-What if a student chooses a topic and I don't think s/he will be able to find materials to research it?-What if a student wants to change his/her topic?-How can I prevent a student from choosing a "how-to" topic versus an "all about" topic? | |

END OF DAY 1

DEVELOPING/RESEARCHING THE TOPIC

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| Activity 19 | |
| Purpose Teachers will gain an understanding of the <i>Developing</i> part of the writing process. | |
| Activity Refer to the handout <i>Consolidating our Understanding of the Writing Process: Developing the Topic</i> (see <i>Informational 2-5 Appendix</i>). | |
| Approximate time | 10 minutes |
| Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell participants that this part of the writing process is when students do their researching. Review the important points of developing a topic, emphasizing the importance of spending time in this stage of the process and giving students many different strategies for developing their ideas.• Explain to participants that research looks very different in the primary (K-2) and in the upper (3-6) grades. A helpful resource may be the CA Reading and Writing Standards in order to be clear about the developmental expectations for research.• Remind participants about the importance of student talk in the Writing Workshop. Students should be taught and encouraged to talk to writing partners throughout the process...about their topics, their research, their plans, their drafts, etc.• Tell participants that usually the developing/researching in an Informational unit is done outside the Notebook, unlike Narrative. Options for where to house the research include, but are not limited to: notecards, binder paper, and graphic organizers. | |

DEVELOPING THE TOPIC

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| Activity 20 | |
| Purpose Teachers will experience the <i>Developing</i> stage of the writing process. | |
| Activity Mini Writing Workshop: Remind teachers to work as writers now, not as teachers. | |
| Approximate time | 30 minutes |
| Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Model at least two minilessons (possibilities are below). Authentic research is hard to do in this venue so this is a good opportunity to show teachers ways to research without using books.• Emphasize the expectations teachers should have around how much time is spent researching and what kinds of research are appropriate for student writers. Many times, students are overwhelmed with the amount of information they are asked to gather and lose sight of the purpose for the unit—to learn how to organize and report information in an interesting way. | |

Possible minilessons for developing the topic (*it is important to discuss with participants which lessons are appropriate for different grades*):

- Writers of Informational books create a plan for how they will research their topic (interviewing an expert, reading online, reading books, observing, etc.).
- Writers of Informational books focus their research into categories.
- Writers of Informational books write down everything they know about their topic.
- Writers of Informational books write down questions they have about their topic.
- Writers of Informational books write down facts as they read books.
- Writers of Informational books write down facts from pictures in books.
- Writers of Informational books interview adults who are experts on their topic.
- Writers of Informational books write down how their thoughts change based on the research they have done.
- Writers of Informational books consider how their thoughts about their topic connect to their Controlling Idea.
- Writers of Informational books paraphrase what they have read.
- Writers of Informational books elaborate on facts by adding supporting details, anecdotal evidence, and thoughts and opinions.
- Writers of Informational books connect their research to their Controlling Idea.

DEVELOPING THE TOPIC

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| Activity 21 | |
| Purpose Reflect on the learning they have done so far and to plan for their teaching. | |
| Activity Teachers will have time to meet with their grade level team and plan the big ideas for <i>Developing</i> . | |
| Approximate time | 15 minutes |
| Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Model how to use the planning grid.• Revisit the handout you showed in Activity 19.• Inform teachers that students can be successful researchers when they read informational books that are two reading levels below their independent level—therefore they need to be thoughtful about the resources they offer students.• Remind teachers that it is important to give students <u>concrete</u> ideas and examples about how to research their topic (see below for ideas). Teachers need to model using their notebooks and thinking aloud their process in order for students to understand how to do this work. Again, their own writer’s notebook and notetaking strategies are sources for minilesson ideas.• Anticipate any concerns around the following questions teachers may have:<ul style="list-style-type: none">-How many researching strategies should I teach my students?-What if my students are reading way below grade level? | |

Ways to gather resources for students:

- Send books home for parents to read to their children;
- Display posters around school asking for books on your students’ topics;
- Send a letter home asking families to loan books or their own knowledge to the class that are about the topics chosen;
- Check books out at the public library;
- Check books out of your school’s leveled book room and your school’s library;
- Ask your class’ upper grade buddies to read books to your students;
- Teach your students how to jot facts while watching a video;
- Provide internet websites that are trustworthy and at children’s reading levels;
- Teach students how to jot facts from pictures.

PLANNING THE DRAFT

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| Activity 22 | |
| Purpose | Teachers will gain an understanding of the <i>Planning</i> part of the writing process. |
| Activity | Refer to the handout <i>Consolidating our Understanding of the Writing Process: Planning</i> (see <i>Informational 2-5 Appendix</i>). |
| Approximate time | 5 minutes |
| Facilitators | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compare the concept of Controlling Idea to the concept of Significance in Narrative. Upper grade students who are attempting this concept need to be clear what their Controlling Idea is before they plan their draft so they understand how to thread it throughout.• Review Organizational Structure as an important Informational element.• Remind participants that Informational books take on many different structures (i.e. question and answer, ABC, narrative with facts, etc.). However, all Informational books contain: a lead with a controlling idea or a stated focus; a middle with facts and supporting details; and an end that restates the controlling idea/focus. These elements should be emphasized during the planning stage. |

PLANNING THE DRAFT

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| Activity 23 | |
| Purpose Teachers will experience the <i>Planning</i> stage of the writing process. | |
| Activity Mini Writing Workshop: Remind teachers to work as writers now, not as teachers. | |
| Approximate time | 10 minutes |
| Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Model a minilesson that helps the participants plan their own piece of writing. Possible minilesson ideas are below.• When modeling, refer to the Touchstone Books you used in the reading work, and think aloud about the facts and supporting details of your topic by asking yourself: “How can I support my controlling idea with my facts? How can I support each fact with details?”• Show teachers different examples of graphic organizers (<i>see Informational 2-5 Appendix</i>). It is important that participants understand that the purpose of a graphic organizer is to give students an opportunity to organize their big ideas in support of their Controlling Idea. | |

Possible minilessons when planning for a draft:

- Writers of Informational books plan by physically organizing their facts (i.e. moving notecards around, highlighting related facts, numbering facts).
- Writers of Informational books plan their drafts by listing their Controlling Idea, the facts they have to support their controlling idea, and matching the facts with supporting details.
- Writers of Informational books plan their drafts by finding a mentor text that will help them structure their pieces.

PLANNING THE DRAFT

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| Activity 24 | |
| Purpose | Reflect on the learning they have done so far and to plan for their teaching. |
| Activity | Teachers will have time to meet with their grade level team and plan the big ideas for <i>Planning</i> . |
| Approximate time | 15 minutes |
| Facilitators | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Model how to use the planning grid. Planning the draft usually takes one day.• Revisit the handout you showed in Activity 22.• Remind teachers that it is important to model <u>how to use</u> graphic organizers; they are intended to be a tool to help writers make their thinking clearer—they are not meant to be an obligatory ‘next step’. Often, upper grade students do not understand the connection between their graphic organizer and their draft.• A practical strategy to share with teachers is to have them group students based on their topics. For example, all of the students writing about sports should get together and look at sports books to discover the different headings other authors include.• Anticipate any concerns around the following questions teachers may have:<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Can’t I just have my students start drafting?-Should I meet in small groups to help students plan their drafts together?-How can I use mentor texts to help students structure their stories? |

DRAFTING

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| Activity 25 | |
| Purpose Teachers will review the <i>Drafting</i> part of the writing process. | |
| Activity Refer to the handout <i>Consolidating our Understanding of the Writing Process: Drafting</i> (see <i>Informational 2-5 Appendix</i>). | |
| Approximate time | 5 minutes |
| Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the standard guidelines for drafting that are listed on the handout <i>Consolidating our Understanding of the Writing Process: Drafting</i> (see <i>Informational 2-5 Appendix</i>). | |

DRAFTING

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| Activity 26 | |
| Purpose Teachers will experience the <i>Drafting</i> stage of the writing process. | |
| Activity Mini Writing Workshop: Remind teachers to work as writers now, not as teachers. | |
| Approximate time | 30 minutes |
| Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Model a minilesson that helps the participants plan their own piece of writing. Possible minilesson ideas are below.• Remind teachers that we want our students to see the <u>process</u> of moving from a plan to the draft. Teachers should be sure to model their thinking when they instruct their students in this stage of the writing process.• If time is limited, eliminate the Writing Workshop minilessons for drafting through publication. Instead, share minilesson ideas and student writing. However, it is important to tell teachers it is essential to continue modeling in their classrooms so that students see a final piece that the teacher writes. Ask teachers to share their drafting practices with their partner and hear that there are various ways to draft. | |

While on Day 1 of drafting in the classroom, we are teaching students the process of drafting, subsequent minilessons should be based on the teachers' concerns as s/he observes students in the drafting process. This is an opportunity for teachers to prevent students from going down the wrong path. Useful minilessons which support the drafting process are listed below.

- Writers of Informational books refer to their plans and graphic organizers as they draft.
- Writers of Informational books keep track of what they have included from their notes.
- Writers of Informational books reread as they draft, ensuring that their writing makes sense and that they have included everything they want to include.

REVISING

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| Activity 27 | |
| Purpose Teachers will gain an understanding of the <i>Revising</i> part of the writing process. Teachers will experience the <i>Revising</i> part of the writing process. | |
| Activity Refer to the handout <i>Consolidating our Understanding of the Writing Process: Revising</i> (see <i>Informational 2-5 Appendix</i>). | |
| Approximate time | 25 minutes |
| Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the standard guidelines for revising that are listed on the above mentioned handout.• Tell participants that a major part of revising is the consideration of details. In Narrative writing, details reveal the significance of the story; in Informational writing, details support the Controlling Idea.• If teachers will not be drafting during Unit Design, they will not be revising their own writing; however, they should have an opportunity to think about revision and to see possible minilessons modeled for them.• Model two possible revision minilessons. | |

Possible minilesson ideas for revising:

- Writers of Informational books revise their drafts to include lots of facts and to make it interesting to read.
- Writers of Informational books reread to ensure that their facts and details support their Controlling Idea.
- Writers of Informational books revise by using specialized vocabulary.
- Writers of Informational books revise by choosing words that make the piece more engaging (consider title, headings, etc.).
- Writers of Informational books revise by using a variety of anecdotes or examples to explain their facts.
- Writers of Informational books revise by making sure all of their facts are relevant and deleting those that are not.
- Writers of Informational books use topic sentences to let the reader know what the paragraph will be about.

DRAFTING AND REVISING

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| Activity 28 | |
| Purpose Reflect on the learning they have done so far and to plan for their teaching. | |
| Activity Teachers will have time to meet with their grade level team and plan the big ideas for <i>Drafting</i> and <i>Revising</i> . | |
| Approximate time | 15 minutes |
| Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Model how to use the planning grid and indicate approximately one week for drafting and revising.• Remind teachers that drafting, revising and editing are fluid processes and that, although they should explicitly teach each of those processes in separate minilessons, their students should also be encouraged to informally revise and edit as they draft.• Explain that in order to develop revision minilessons, teachers need to examine the student writing to determine what 1-2 revision strategies will benefit the majority of students.• Anticipate any concerns around the following questions teachers may have:<ul style="list-style-type: none">-How can I model the use of mentor texts during the revision process?-How can I effectively use writing partners during the revision stage? | |

EDITING

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| Activity 29 | |
| Purpose Teachers will gain an understanding of the <i>Editing</i> part of the writing process. Teachers will reflect on the learning they have done so far and to plan for their teaching. | |
| Activity Refer to the handout <i>Consolidating our Understanding of the Writing Process: Editing</i> (see <i>Informational 2-5 Appendix</i>). Teachers will have time to meet with their grade level team and plan the big ideas for <i>Editing</i> . | |
| Approximate time | 10 minutes |
| Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the standard guidelines for editing that are listed on the above mentioned handout.• Explain that teachers will not have an opportunity to practice editing during Unit Design.• Explain that the minilesson below should be taught during the editing stage, as it encourages independence and relies on the teaching that has been done during the Skills Block.• Model how to use the planning grid and indicate approximately 2 days for editing.• Emphasize the role of the skills block. It is important that teachers are clear that all the skills they need to teach cannot be taught in Writing Workshop alone. Writing Workshop provides an authentic opportunity for students to practice the skills they learn in their skills block.• One option is to have participants list, with their partners, all of the skills that their students will need to know in order to write an effective Informational piece (i.e. paragraphing, transitional phrases, capitalizing titles and headings, etc.). These are skills taught in the skills/grammar block and reinforced during the Editing process.• Anticipate any concerns around the following questions teachers may have:<ul style="list-style-type: none">-What role does peer editing play in Writing Workshop?-How much should the teacher edit? | |

It is imperative that teachers look closely at the student work to determine what editing strategy the majority of the class needs. This will also lead teachers to group students based on additional needs. A possible minilesson objective that is appropriate for all upper grade students is:

- One way writers edit their writing is to reread it and check for... *teachers would lead students to check for what has already been taught and/or emphasized in this unit (e.g. spaces between words, capital letters and periods, etc.).*

PUBLISHING, CELEBRATING, REFLECTING

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| Activity 30 | |
| Purpose Teachers will gain an understanding of the <i>Publishing, Celebrating and Reflecting</i> parts of the writing process. | |
| Activity Refer to the handout <i>Consolidating our Understanding of the Writing Process: Publishing, Celebrating and Reflecting</i> (see <i>Informational 2-5 Appendix</i>). | |
| Approximate time | 15 minutes |
| Facilitators <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Model how to use the planning grid and allow a short amount of time for publishing (depending on the grade level) and one day for both celebrating and reflecting. Below are minilesson ideas to share with the participants.• Address some of the “extras” we see during the publishing stage (i.e. About the Author and Dedication pages) and discuss how students could use mentor texts to make these more authentic.• Anticipate any concerns around the following questions teachers may have:<ul style="list-style-type: none">-How important is it to hold students accountable to a high standard of presentation?-How can we plan celebrations that feel authentic?-What are some open-ended questions we could ask that would give us a good assessment of what our students learned about themselves as writers? | |

Publishing (2-3 days, depending on the grade level):

- One way writers publish is to make an attractive cover for their books. (This is more of an art lesson than a writing lesson).
- One way writers get ready to present their book to an audience is by practicing how to read aloud with a partner.

Celebrating and Reflecting (1 day):

- One way writers celebrate their books is by sharing them with their parents/reading buddies/friends.
- One way writers become better writers is to reflect on what went well with writing their book and what they want to learn next as writers.

CLOSURE

| Approximate time | 10 minutes |
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| <p>Close the Unit Design course with some key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the handout from the beginning of the session: “<i>Process for Planning an Informational...</i>”• Remind the teachers of the hard work they put into their own writing and into their unit planning.• Review handout: <i>Reflection Sheet for Unit Design</i> (see <i>Informational 2-5 Appendix</i>) and discuss with the teachers the expectation that they will teach the unit and take notes on their teaching.• Explain what teachers should bring with them on Day 3:<ul style="list-style-type: none">-reflection notes-student writing from 3-5 students (depending on how long you plan to spend on this part) that represents each stage of the writing process-a list of Touchstone Books that they found useful in this unit• If possible, give the groups time to look at their calendars and find a few dates to meet to continue their planning.• If possible, choose a teacher leader to help co-present on Day 3. This should be a teacher who attended Days 1 and 2, has experience presenting to adults, and is willing to share her reflective notes and student work with the group on Day 3. | |