

TCRWP Unit 1-- 4th Gr: Arc of Story

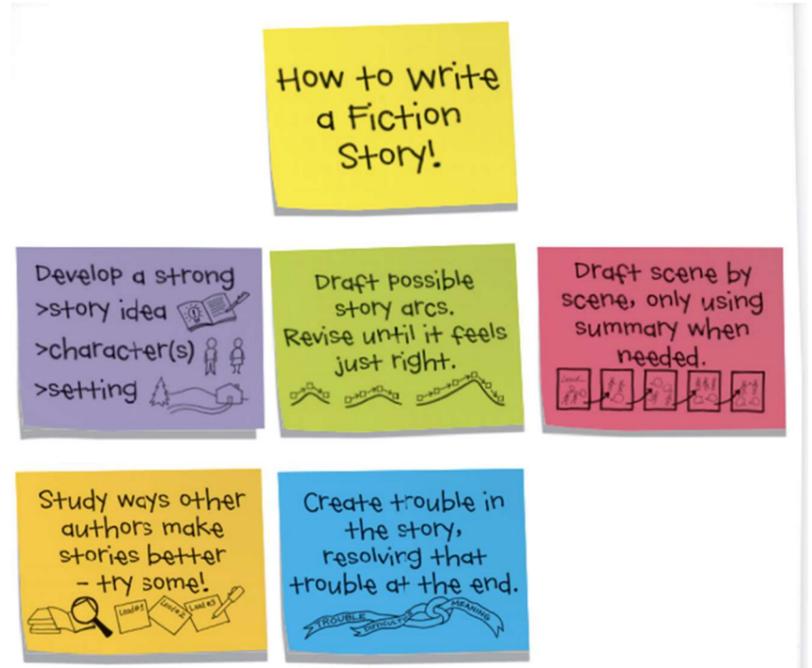
Big Ideas/Overview:

- This unit is designed to ignite your year with a passion and energy for writing. By starting with fiction, you are sending your 4th graders a very clear message: "You are a grown-up writer. You can start in a more sophisticated place."
- This is a unit on revision as much as it is about narrative or imagination.
- This unit will also help your writers learn that writers plan for stories so they are organized and developed and that writers develop characters on a deep level. They think about the characters traits, motivations, struggles, problems and solutions.

Skills/Standards

	Structure
Overall	I wrote the important part of an event bit by bit and took out unimportant parts.
Lead	I wrote a beginning in which I showed what was happening and where, getting readers into the world of the story.
Transitions	I showed how much time went by with words and phrases that mark time such as <i>just then</i> and <i>suddenly</i> (to show when things happened quickly) or <i>after a while</i> and <i>a little later</i> (to show when a little time passed).
Ending	I wrote an ending that connected to the beginning or the middle of the story. I used action, dialogue, or feeling to bring my story to a close.
Organization	I used paragraphs to separate the different parts or times of the story or to show when a new character was speaking.
	Development
Elaboration	I added more to the heart of my story, including not only actions and dialogue but also thought and feelings.
Craft	I showed <i>why</i> characters did what they did by including their thinking.
	I made some parts of the story go quickly, some slowly.
	I included precise and sometimes sensory details and used figurative language (simile, metaphor, personification) to bring my story to life.
	I used a storytelling voice and conveyed the emotion or tone of my story through description, phrases, dialogue, and thoughts.
	Language Conventions
Spelling	I used what I knew about word families and spelling rules to help me spell and edit. I used the word wall and dictionaries when needed.
Punctuation	When writing long, complex sentences, I used commas to make them clear and correct.

Charts



BEND I Creating and Developing Stories and Characters that Feel Real

You will want to teach them how to create story ideas, whether inspired by real life events that are fictionalized, or a more idealized narrative that matches the stories they wished existed in the world. You will model creating 2-3 sentence blurbs that roughly sketch out possible ideas.

You'll coach students to generate story blurbs that are quite realistic. It tends to pay off for kids to write about characters near their own age, places they've spent significant amounts of time, and problems they've experienced themselves

It also helps if students limit themselves to a small handful of well-developed characters, rather than writing about a cast of 15.

It is important to note that some students will confuse generating ideas with drafting. There is no drafting in this bend.

1. Imagining Stories from Ordinary Moments
2. Imagining Stories We Wish Existed in the World
3. Developing Believable Characters
4. Giving Characters Struggles and Motivations
5. Plotting with a Story Arc

BEND II Drafting and Revising with an Eye toward Believability

Students move from their notebook to drafting and revising. Before launching this bend it is helpful to set up drafting booklets. It is important to enthusiastically prod students along to draft their pieces quickly. As is mentioned elsewhere in this write-up, the longer young writers take to draft, the more likely they are to balk at revising.

It is important for students to know that this is a short story, with a few scenes. They should not be writing epic novels.

6. Show, Don't Tell: Planning and Writing Scenes
7. Feeling and Drafting the Heart of Your Story
8. Studying Published Texts to Write Leads
9. Orienting Readers with Setting
10. Writing Powerful Endings

BEND III Preparing for Publication with an Audience in Mind

This bend wraps up the children's first fiction piece of the year. Students will revise and edit in preparation for publishing, preparing their pieces for audiences through more focused drafting, deep revision work, and more.

11. Revision: Rereading with a Lens
12. Making a Space for Writing
13. Using Mentor Texts to Flesh Out Characters
14. Editing with Various Lenses
15. Publishing Anthologies: A Celebration

BEND IV Embarking on Independent Fiction Projects

This is our transference bend. Students have one successfully written short fiction story. It is important that students are taught some ways to keep their narrative muscles strong. One of the ways we can do this is through teaching students how to apply their newly honed fiction writing skills to independent fiction writing projects.

16. Launching Independent Fiction Projects
17. Planning and Drafting Stories with Agency
18. Mining the Connections between Reading and Writing Fiction
19. Focusing the Reader's Gaze
20. Choosing Punctuation for Effect
21. Surveying Your Work and Planning for the Future

TCRWP Unit 2 --4th Grade: Boxes and Bullets

Big Ideas/Overview:

- It is a foundational essay unit because it teaches students formal essay structure. It is foundational because it channels students to plan an essay with a strong claim backed by three parallel supports. It is foundational because it teaches students to provide a variety of evidence to back each of the supports (including micro-stories, lists, and quotes).

Skills/Standards

Structure	
Overall	I made a claim about a topic or a text and tried to support my reasons.
Lead	I wrote a few sentences to hook my readers, perhaps by asking a question, explaining why the topic mattered, telling a surprising fact, or giving background information.
	I stated my claim.
Transitions	I used words and phrases to glue parts of my piece together. I used phrases such as <i>for example</i> , <i>another example</i> , <i>one time</i> , and <i>for instance</i> to show when I was shifting from saying reasons to giving evidence and <i>in addition to</i> , <i>also</i> , and <i>another</i> to show when I wanted to make a new point.
Ending	I wrote an ending for my piece in which I restated and reflected on my claim, perhaps suggesting an action or response based on what I had written.
Organization	I separated sections of information using paragraphs.
Development	
Elaboration	I gave reasons to support my opinion. I chose the reasons to convince my readers.
	I included examples and information to support my reasons, perhaps from a text, my knowledge, or my life.
Craft	I made deliberate word choices to convince my readers, perhaps by emphasizing or repeating words that would make my readers feel emotions.
	If it felt right to do so, I chose precise details and facts to help make my points and used figurative language to draw the readers into my line of thought.
	I made choices about which evidence was best to include or not include to support my points.
	I used a convincing tone.
Language Conventions	
Spelling	I used what I know about word families and spelling rules to help me spell and edit. I used the word wall and dictionaries to help me when needed.
Punctuation	When writing long complex sentences, I used commas to make them clear and correct.
	I used periods to fix my run-on sentences.

Charts

Qualities of Good Freewriting

- Write freely, letting thoughts flow.
- Write long to make ideas stronger.
- Make comparisons to help readers understand.
- Don't cross stuff out.
- Repeat the big idea over and over, trying to get it right.
- Stay for a long time on one big idea.
- Go from big ideas to small examples and back.
- Come up with new ideas.
- Raise questions.

Strategies for Generating Essay Entries

- Take a subject that matters to you + list ideas related to your subject.
- Observe + then write.
- Let writing spark new thoughts.
- Reread earlier writing and ask questions about those entries.

Let's write an essay!

Write it *strong!* Write it *long!*

(Thesis statement) because (reason 1), (reason 2), and most of all, because (reason 3).

- One reason that (thesis statement) is that (reason 1). For example, (evidence a), (evidence b), and (evidence c).
- Another reason that (thesis statement) is that (reason 2). For example, (evidence a), (evidence b), and (evidence c).
- Although (thesis statement) because (reason 1) and because (reason 2), especially (thesis statement) because (reason 3). For example, (evidence a), (evidence b), and (evidence c).

BEND I Writing to Learn

A major goal of Bend I is for students to grasp the overall structure of a personal essay. Unit starts with *Essay Bootcamp*: a quick sense to feel what it's like to write a whole essay. Then, kids gather entries—Free writing about ideas about people, objects, events, and more. They end the bend by developing thesis statements. The thesis statements are “personal opinions”—“I like ice cream” or “My mom is a good teacher”

1. Essay Structure Boot Camp
2. Collecting Ideas as Essayists
3. Writing to Learn
4. Using Elaboration Prompts to Grow Ideas
5. Mining Our Writing
6. Boxes and Bullets: Framing Essays
7. Return to Boot Camp

BEND II Raising the Level of Essay Writing

In Bend II, students take the essay idea they rehearsed in Bend I, and continue developing, drafting, revising, and editing it for a mini-publication.

In this bend, students will move from writing notebooks to mini-booklets or mini-folders to gather evidence for their supports. Evidence might include micro-stories, quotes, lists, and the mini-folder or mini-booklet will serve as a place to store that evidence.

8. Composing and Sorting Mini-Stories
9. Creating Parallelism in Lists
10. Organizing for Drafting
11. Building a Cohesive Draft
12. Becoming Our Own Job Captains
13. Writing Introductions and Conclusions
14. Revising Our Work with Goals in Mind
15. Correcting Run-On Sentences and Sentence Fragments

BEND III Personal to Persuasive

In Bend III, students move from writing personal essays to persuasive essays. Especially key will be to make sure that students look for a bit of outside evidence to include in their essays to support each section of their piece. They do not need to do extensive research—just a few related outside facts and information will help their essay to feel more authoritative on the topic.

16. Moving from Personal to Persuasive
17. Inquiry into Persuasive Essay
18. Broader Evidence
19. Connecting Evidence, Reason, and Thesis
20. Getting Ready to Put Our Opinions into the World
21. Hey World, Listen Up!: Sharing Our Opinions Loudly and Proudly

TCRWP Unit 3-- 4th: Bringing History to Life

Big Ideas/Overview:

- This unit is best paired with the reading unit Reading History. These units support students in reading across nonfiction texts and using evidence from those texts as they write.
- Students will write informational texts on the American Revolution. In Bend I, they'll write an overview about the American Revolution, and draft chapters on one focused topic that you've already taught into within your content area instruction. After completing a small book in the first part of the unit, we recommend that students spend their writing workshop time writing to prepare for the debate in reading. In the last bend, students narrow in on a subtopic of their choice, creating a new book that draws on what they learned previously to draft, revise, and edit with more independence.

Skills/Standards

Information Writing Checklist

Grade 4	
Structure	
Overall	I taught readers different things about a subject. I put facts, details, quotes, and ideas into each part of my writing.
Lead	I hooked my readers by explaining why the subject mattered, telling a surprising fact, or giving a big picture. I let readers know that I would teach them different things about a subject.
Transitions	I used words in each section that help readers understand how one piece of information connected with others. If I wrote the section in sequence, I used words and phrases such as <i>before</i> , <i>later</i> , <i>next</i> , <i>then</i> , and <i>after</i> . If I organized the section in kinds or parts, I used words such as <i>another</i> , <i>also</i> , and <i>for example</i> .
Ending	I wrote an ending that reminded readers of my subject and may have suggested a follow-up action or left readers with a final insight. I added my thoughts, feelings, and questions about the subject at the end.
Organization	I grouped information into sections and used paragraphs and sometimes chapters to separate those sections. Each section had information that was mostly about the same thing. I may have used headings and subheadings.
Development	
Elaboration	I taught my readers different things about the subject. I chose those subtopics because they were important and interesting.
	I included different kinds of facts and details such as numbers, names, and examples.
	I got my information from talking to people, reading books, and from my own knowledge and observations.
	I made choices about organization. I might have used compare/contrast, cause/effect, or pro/con. I may have used diagrams, charts, headings, bold words, and definition boxes to help teach my readers.
Craft	I made deliberate word choices to teach my readers. I may have done this by using and repeating key words about my topic.
	When it felt right to do so, I chose interesting comparisons and used figurative language to clarify my points.
	I made choices about which information was best to include or not include.
	I used a teaching tone. To do so, I may have used phrases such as <i>that means . . .</i> , <i>what that really means is . . .</i> , and <i>let me explain . . .</i>

Charts:



BEND I Informational Books: Making a Conglomerate of Forms

Students will work to create informational writing that draws upon all that they've learned from previous units and highlights the fact that many informational texts are conglomerates, texts containing a mix of genres. After studying a mentor text to see how the text is organized, students move on to drafting chapters for their own American Revolution book. As the bend progresses, you will teach students how to incorporate other genres into their book – a chapter containing a small-moment historical fiction narrative and a chapter that includes an essay highlighting the importance of their subtopic.

1. Getting the Sense of Informational Books
2. Planning the Structure of Writing
3. Planning and Writing with Greater Independence
4. Teaching as a Way to Rehearse for Information Writing
5. Elaboration: The Details that Let People Picture What Happened Long Ago and Far Away
6. Bringing Information Alive: Stories Inside Nonfiction
7. Essays within Information Texts
8. Taking Stock and Setting Goals: A Letter to Teachers

BEND II Writing with Greater Independence

In this bend, students pick a new subtopic to write another information book about, this time with increased independence.

9. Writers Plan for Their Research
10. The Intense Mind-Work of Note-Taking
11. Drafting Is Like Tobogganing: First the Preparation, the Positioning... Then the Whoosh!
12. Developing a Logical Structure Using Introductions and Transitions
13. Text Features: Popping Out the Important Information
14. Quotations Accentuate Importance: Voices Chime In to Make a Point
15. Using All We Know to Craft Essay and Narrative Sections
16. The Other Side of the Story
17. Self-Assessment and Goal Setting: Taking on New Challenges

BEND III Building Ideas in Informational Writing

In this bend, students continue the work and topic of bend II.

18. Information Writing Gives Way to Idea Writing
19. Digging Deeper: Interpreting the Life Lessons that History Teaches
20. Using Confusions to Guide Research
21. Questions without a Ready Answer
22. Editing
23. A Final Celebration: An Expert Fair

TCRWP Unit 4--4th : Literary Essay

Big Ideas/Overview:

- This unit is designed so that students receive repeated practice writing arguments about texts. Their work with this progresses from straightforward to much more complex. At the start of the unit, students will write essays that defend character-based ideas about texts. Your instruction will, to a large extent, focus on helping children to write effective, well-organized literary essays with clear claims. They will need to carry forward all they learned in Boxes and Bullets and years' past: to state a clear claim, craft a solid organizational structure, support their claim with well-organized reasons and evidence, use transitional phrases to connect ideas within categories, and provide a conclusion that relates to their claim.
- Eventually you will ask students to progress to writing more complex, interpretative ideas and to write in ways that address a story's theme. They will interpret and analyze texts by reading them closely and by examining an author's words and phrases. As their thesis statements become more complex, so too will their supports grow more sophisticated.
- In the third bend of this unit, students will write comparatively, comparing and contrasting across multiple texts.

Skills/Standards

Structure	
Overall	I made a claim about a topic or a text and tried to support my reasons.
Lead	I wrote a few sentences to hook my readers, perhaps by asking a question, explaining why the topic mattered, telling a surprising fact, or giving background information.
	I stated my claim.
Transitions	I used words and phrases to glue parts of my piece together. I used phrases such as <i>for example</i> , <i>another example</i> , <i>one time</i> , and <i>for instance</i> to show when I was shifting from saying reasons to giving evidence and <i>in addition to</i> , <i>also</i> , and <i>another</i> to show when I wanted to make a new point.
Ending	I wrote an ending for my piece in which I restated and reflected on my claim, perhaps suggesting an action or response based on what I had written.
Organization	I separated sections of information using paragraphs.
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Elaboration	I gave reasons to support my opinion. I chose the reasons to convince my readers.
	I included examples and information to support my reasons, perhaps from a text, my knowledge, or my life.
Craft	I made deliberate word choices to convince my readers, perhaps by emphasizing or repeating words that would make my readers feel emotions.
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	I made choices about which evidence was best to include or not include to support my points.
	I used a convincing tone.
Language Conventions	
Spelling	I used what I know about word families and spelling rules to help me spell and edit. I used the word wall and dictionaries to help me when needed.
Punctuation	When writing long complex sentences, I used commas to make them clear and correct.
	I used periods to fix my run-on sentences.

Charts



BEND I Writing about Reading: Literary Essays

You will begin Bend I by inviting students to read closely and generate ideas about a text. On the first day, you will want to provide several short stories and picture books for kids to choose from.

It is helpful to teach kids that, when writing literary essays, they can support the idea not just with reasons, but with ways or times or parts.

Students develop a thesis about the character, collect evidence, and draft their essay.

1. Close Reading to Generate Ideas about a Text
2. Gathering Writing by Studying Characters
3. Elaborating on Written Ideas Using Prompts
4. Finding and Testing a Thesis
5. Using Stories as Evidence
6. Citing Textual Evidence
7. Using Lists as Evidence
8. Putting It All Together: Constructing

BEND II Raising the Quality of Literary Essays

Many teachers resist beginning Bend II because they feel that students' essays from Bend I still need work. We promise this will be the case! Very few master something new the first time around, and your kids will be no different. We have found time and again that the decision to focus on product over process is the wrong way to go. Spending another week asking students to tweak their first essays, changing this line and crossing out that word, has not proven successful. Instead, you'll help kids immensely by allowing them to set their first drafts aside and begin a second. Students will benefit from practicing writing essays multiple times. So, take note of what students struggled with most, plan for your small groups now, and forge ahead into Bend II.

Students go through the process again, developing a thesis about theme, collecting evidence, and drafting an essay.

9. Writing to Discover What a Story Is Really About
10. Adding Complexity to Our Ideas
11. Flash-Drafting Literary Essays
12. Beginnings and Endings
13. Using Descriptions of an Author's Craft as Evidence

BEND III Writing Compare-and-Contrast Essays

Bend III supports students in writing compare-and-contrast essays.

15. Building the Muscles to Compare and Contrast
16. Comparing and Contrasting Familiar Texts
17. Using Yesterday's Learning, Today and Always
18. Developing Distinct Lines of Thought
19. Exploring Commas
20. A Celebration

