Curriculum Unit Plan
Fourth Grade Grade: ELA Writing
Unit 5: Literary Essay

Overarching Question:
How do writers develop a literary essay by generating a thesis with support from a close reading and analysis of text?

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Questions to Focus Assessment and Instruction:
1. How do writers develop ideas for literary essays?
2. How can these ideas be crafted into thesis statements with support from textual analysis?
3. In what ways do writers use evidence to support their claims?
4. What can be learned from studying published literary essays?

Intellectual Processes:

Students who are College and Career Ready in Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening, and Language
- demonstrate independence.
- build strong content knowledge.
- respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline.
- comprehend as well as critique.
- value evidence.
- use technology and digital media strategically and capably.
- come to understand other perspectives and cultures.
Unit Abstract

Fourth grade writers build upon their knowledge of essays to write an opinion piece supporting a point of view from close reading and analysis of text. They examine published literary essays, noticing how they are crafted to convey the author's message. Students learn that in order to write a literary essay, they first need to read and experience a story as deeply as possible. They pay special attention to a character's traits, motivations, struggles, and changes in a story. Students write a thesis that is compelling and defensible and then provide reasons that are supported by facts and details from the story. They introduce the story, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer's purpose. Students may draw upon their experiences or the experiences of others to deepen their understanding of the text. They link their opinion and reasons and develop the supporting evidence into a cohesive whole. Then they provide a conclusion that is related to the opinion presented. Writers share their essays with an audience beyond the teacher and celebrate their growing accomplishments as writers.

Common Core State Standards

CCSS: ELA & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, & Technical Subjects K-5, CCSS: Grade 4, Writing
Text Types and Purposes
1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
   - W.4.1. Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
   - W.4.1a. Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer’s purpose.
   - W.4.1b. Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details.
   - W.4.1c. Link opinion and reasons using words and phrases (e.g., for instance, in order to, in addition).
   - W.4.1d. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.
Production and Distribution of Writing
4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

- W.4.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

- W.4.5. With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.

8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

- W.4.8. Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.

9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

- W.4.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- W.4.9a. Apply grade 4 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text [e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions].”)

Range of Writing
10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

- W.4.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Resources

Angelilo, Janet, Writing About Reading: From Book Talk to Literary Essays, Grades 3-8

Calkins, Lucy, Lucy Calkins Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5, Book 5, Literary Essays: Writing About Reading

Common Core State Standards for Grade 4 (Common Core State Standards Initiative)