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| **Grade 5**  **Unit Overview**  ***Shaping Texts: From Essay and Narrative to Memoir*** | |
| **Focus Teaching Points** | * Exploring the qualities of memoir * Uncovering issues and themes that surface repeatedly in writing * Noticing and trying out how authors shift between abstract and concrete ideas, between themes and stories, between big ideas and small moments * Writing with depth: letting literature influence writing * Drawing on previous strategies to develop seed ideas, devising new ones * Studying how other authors write with depth * Studying published texts to get ideas for structuring our writing; learning how to study other structures * Developing strategies for inspiring ourselves to do our best * Self-assessing, goal setting and creating action steps * Ensuring that narrative portions carry meaning * Editing for voice * Studying ourselves to develop new memoir ideas * Flash-drafting a second piece * Revising the expository portions of a memoir * Finding and including the most honest, true details * Rereading to revise * Using metaphors to convey big ideas * Listening to one’s own writing to choose the words, structures and punctuation that help convey the content, mood, tone and feeling of the piece * Celebrating |
| **Key CCSS Standards** | ***Writing Standards******(W)***   * *1, 1a-d, 3, 3a-d, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 9a-b, 10*   ***Language Standards (L)***   * *1, 1a-e, 2, 2a-e, 3, 3a-b* |
| **Bends in the Road** | * Generating ideas about our lives and finding depth in the moments we choose * Structuring, drafting and revising a memoir * Writing a second memoir |
| **Recommended Professional Resource(s) to Guide Instruction** | * *Shaping Texts: From Essay and Narrative to Memoir* from the *Units of Study in Opinion, Information and Narrative Writing, Grade 5* (2013) by Lucy Calkins and Alexandra Marron |
| **Recommended Anchor/Mentor Texts** | * “Quietly Struggling” found on [Heinemann](http://www.heinemann.com) and on the [Teaching Resources](http://ppsgrade5.weebly.com/teaching-resources16.html) page for the unit * “Eleven” from *Woman Hollering Creek* by Sandra Cisneros found on the [Teaching Resources](http://ppsgrade5.weebly.com/teaching-resources16.html) page for the unit and as a book accompanying the unit * Samples of student writing found on [Heinemann](http://www.heinemann.com) * Samples of your own teacher writing * *Knucklehead* by Jon Sczieska * *Marshfield Dreams* by Ralph Fletcher   + “Last Kiss” * *Little by Little* by Jean Little   + “Mr. Entwhistle” * *When I Was Your Age: Original Stories about Growing Up* by Amy Erlich   + “Everything Will Be Okay” * Excerpts of writing from *Mentor Author, Mentor Texts* by Ralph Fletcher |
| **Tips for the Unit** | * This unit brings together the art of memoir and the personal essay and provides an opportunity for children to write texts that say, “This is who I am.” This unit is not *only* about helping your 5th graders continue to grow as writers; it is also about helping them to grow as young people during a key time of transition. * We recommend you prepare for the unit by reading the “Welcome to the Unit” section on pages vi-ix. This introduction provides an overview of the unit, a summary of the bends in the road, and suggestions for assessment and getting ready. * Begin with a quick [on-demand assessment](http://ppsgrade5.weebly.com/assessment6.html) and/or review your students’ last narrative and/or essay writing completed perhaps as part of MCAS preparation to inform your instruction for the unit. * This writing unit presents many opportunities for children to notice and reflect on themes that emerge in their own lives. In this way, the unit is also connected to Reading Workshop. Themes exist and are developed in different ways across different books; the same can be said for themes that emerge across our students’ lives.   + A note of caution: while this unit encourages reflection, we can “open the door” for this kind of introspection, but we should be careful not to “push young writers through it.” (Ralph Fletcher). For example, as teachers we might imagine how particular events hold significance for our students, and we can prompt them to consider these ideas, but **it is okay** if our students come to different conclusions, even ones that may feel superficial to us. Through memoir, we are giving children a chance to reflect and find meaning, but we cannot force this on them.   + A meaningful memoir doesn’t have to be related to a serious topic. Some of the best memoirs are humorous (i.e. *Marshfield Dreams, Knucklehead*). We can encourage writing in this unit, especially for our boy writers, by not eliminating the topics about which they choose to write or the use of humor they may use as part of their writing. (Ralph Fletcher) * **Bend I:** Children begin the unit by using their notebooks to research their own lives. This “research stance” is an essential part of the unit as children generate entries and ideas but also *research and reflect on their own experiences*. Children will use the notebook to write “big” and “small”-- writing about large ideas or theories and then zooming in to write about one time when that idea was true. * **Bend II:** During this bend children research different memoir structures and learn about the variety of forms a memoir can take. Then, after a day of rehearsal and then flash-drafting, children revise their first drafts. Revision will focus on strengthening the expository and narrative portions of their writing, building on what your children already know about opinion and narrative writing.   + One of the challenges memoir writers face is moving from idea to storytelling in a manner that is quick and to the point. The unit helps children develop this flexibility.   + Children should use both the [Opinion/Argument Writing Checklists and the Narrative Writing Checklists](http://ppsgrade5.weebly.com/assessment6.html) for self-assessment and goal-setting. You will find these checklists on our Literacy Coach site as well as on [Heinemann](http://www.heinemann.com) under the “Writing Pathways” tab. * **Bend III:** During this bend, children will return to their notebooks to generate ideas and then will move through the cycle again (drafting, revising and editing) to write a second piece. |
| **Materials and Resources** | Each child:   * Writer’s Notebook (preferably hard bound composition book that students personalize) divided into sections, such as: *Writing Ideas* (for lists, blob ideas, theme ideas), *Try It* (for minilesson exercises), *Writing* (this section could be labeled by genre or unit to house all the entries students write in a particular unit and from which students can select ideas to draft longer outside the notebook * Writing folder for drafts and any reference materials (e.g. various memoir structures, author craft techniques, etc.)   Teacher:   * Writer’s Notebook for modeling * Teacher-generated writing for modeling   Anchor charts, co-constructed with students, that support brainstorming, generating ideas, drafting, revision, and editing strategies |
| **Assessment** | Since memoir combines elements of essay and narrative, the unit recommends conducting an [on-demand assessment for opinion (essay) writing](http://ppsgrade5.weebly.com/assessment6.html) at the start of the unit. |
| **Celebrations** | Since this unit is in many ways a time for reflection and a milestone as children prepare to transition to middle school, it is the perfect opportunity to invite family members for this Author’s Celebration. Suggestions on pages 155-156. |