# 5th Grade Writing

## Memoir

### Unit Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Fifth</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit Title</td>
<td>Memoir</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brief Description</td>
<td>In this unit, students will deepen their understanding of the writing cycle, learn the characteristics of memoir, and apply these characteristics to their own memoirs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time Frame</td>
<td>5 weeks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key Concepts/Themes</td>
<td>Students will craft a reflective piece of writing about a significant life experience.</td>
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</table>
| Classroom Routines | **Writing Aloud**
Teacher will want to model for students how a writer uses a variety of ways to collect in notebook, draft, revise, and edit through modeled writing on SmartBoard, overhead, or chart paper. Teacher will want to save these writings for further reference during the school year, so a dry erase board is probably not be the best place to model effective writing.  
“To be an effective teacher of writing, you need to be a writer,” has been said many times by Donald Graves. It is important for each teacher to keep a writer’s notebook with samples of collecting strategies on a variety of topics. The teacher’s notebook can be used for modeled writing as well. |
| Pace of Unit | Teachers will want to vary pace of unit based on student needs. If most students are returning students, teacher will be able to move more quickly through the unit by carefully selecting lessons. Some lessons may not need to be taught based on experiences of students. Some lessons may best serve the needs of students in small groups. |
| Lesson Selection | This is a proposal of a sequence of mini-lessons that build upon each other. In order for students to develop an understanding of the concepts presented, you will need to choose mini-lessons in an order that will scaffold their learning. If you have objective evidence that your students have developed a solid understanding of the early key teaching points, then you may move a little quicker. However, this would allow times when you could differentiate |
instruction and reteach skills/concepts previously taught within this unit. Pieces of literature referenced in this unit are examples. You need to select similar texts that will engage your students and offer an equal opportunity for learning.

**Writers’ Workshop routines:**
Mini lesson: Students should always come to the lesson prepared with writers’ notebook, and pencil. Teachers should also have a writer’s notebook to use for modeling throughout the unit.
Writing/Conferring: Students will work through the writing cycle together. The teacher will confer with students one-on-one, in pairs, or in small groups to address their needs. All work will be done in the writers’ notebook until the students reach the “selecting a seed” and then they will draft on loose paper.
Debriefing: Closure is needed at the end of the writing time. The students can discuss successes, application of the mini-lesson, or problem solve. Depending on the need, all students can debrief with partners, or the teacher can select certain students to debrief. Remember to keek published pieces throughout the year.

**Assessment Reflection:**
After the end of Unit Assessment has been administered and graded, it would be beneficial for the teacher to spend time reviewing the assessment deeply with the students. When reviewing, the teacher can model top point answers and how students could have achieved that score. Students could change, add, or correct their answers in a different color pen or pencil. Students should see this a time to learn from mistakes and reflect on how they could do better on the next assessment of this type. This would also be a time where teachers could refer to and utilize lessons from the test taking Units of Study.

**Grade Level Expectations**
- GLE 1A5- Follow a writing process to organize information in a graphic organizer and apply writing process to write effectively in various forms and types of writing.
- GLE 2B5- Use conventions of capitalization in written text: title and proper nouns.
- GLE 2C5- In composing text use commas in compound sentences and apostrophe in singular possessives.
- GLE 2D5- Use parts of speech correctly in written text: verb tense and adjective forms.
- GLE 2E5- In writing use: correct spelling of grade level frequently used words, spelling strategies and patterns, classroom resources and dictionary to verify spelling.
- GLE 2F5- In composing text: write compound sentences and identify and eliminate fragments in writing.
- GLE 3A5- Write personal narrative text that chronicles a sequence of events and focuses on the development of a single event.
| Enduring Understandings | Memoir follows a logical sequence telling a story from a personal perspective. Writers of memoir look back in time to make sense of a prior experience(s) and through the reflective process bring meaning to the memories in their writing. Effective writers:
- Use a graphic organizer in prewriting
- Generate a draft
- Revise
- Edit
- Independently publish
- use conventions to help their audience understand their writing. |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essential Questions</td>
<td>Why do effective writers use the writing cycle? Why are conventions necessary? How do writers use conventions to convey a message? How do writers structure memoir to enhance the audience’s experience? How do writers use reflection to make sense of prior experiences?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Vocabulary | **Unit Specific: For teacher information**

**Memoir**: a narrative composed from a personal experience that focuses on the significance of the relationship between the writer and another individual (or thing) and is supported by memories of specific experiences.

A memoir, as a literary genre, forms a sub-class of autobiography. Memoirs may appear less structured and less encompassing than formal autobiographical works. They are often about part of a life, and often a public part of one’s life, rather than one’s whole life, from youth to old age.

**Memoir** – “In a memoir, an author tries to say something important about himself or herself. The memoir says ‘This was the best moment of my childhood’ or ‘My love of music made me who I am today.’ Memoirs often contain one or more personal narratives, but they may be structured as lists rather than as stories. Always, they contain the element of reflection.” Calkins, p. v in *Small Moments: Personal Narrative Writing*.

**Personal Narrative** – “Personal narratives are chronological stories about one’s life: this happens, then this, then this. They contain characters (the central character will be the author), a plot (two or more events occur in a
sequence of time), and they take place in a setting. The plot usually involves a problem that is solved, a tension that is resolved, or something big that changes.” Calkins, p. v in Small Moments: Personal Narrative Writing.

Teacher Note: Incorporate these words in your daily oral mini lessons so children become familiar with the usage.

Other Incorporated Vocabulary: For Student Knowledge

**Audience**- The author’s awareness of audience: writing for a specific purpose with a specific reader or group of readers in mind

**Author’s purpose**- The author’s intent or reason for writing: to explain or inform, to entertain, to persuade

**Cause and effect**- The connection or relationship between a precipitating event or reason, and its effects or results (A cause makes something occur; an effect is the outcome of the cause.)

**Classroom resources**- Reference materials such as a dictionary, thesaurus, handbook, word wall, spellchecker, glossary, or technological tool

**Concluding sentences**- Closing/ending sentence; after all the details have been included in the body of the paragraph

**Conventions**- The norms of written text including spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and organization

**Draft**- Writing ideas in a rough, unpolished form; the preliminary version of a piece of writing

**Figurative language**- Language which makes use of certain literary devices or literary techniques often called “figures of speech” in which something other than the literal meaning is implied (simile, metaphor, personification)

**Fragment**- a word or phrase that does not express a complete thought

**Graphic organizer**- a visual device for organizing information around a concept, theme, or topic

**Main idea**- The words and phrases used in the story to locate the message of the text. (modified)

**Narrative**- Relates to a story or a personal essay using sensory details and imagery

**Personal Narrative**- see above definitions

**Post-reading skills**- strategies to reflect on the reading of one’s writing and integrate new information and concepts with previously learned understanding (modified)

**Purpose**- Writing to explain or inform, to entertain, or to persuade

**Reflect**- to think about and write or speak one’s views in response to a text or presentation

**Sensory details**- Details that appeal to the five senses and evoke images of how something looks, sounds, feels, tastes, or smells: sensory details may be literal or figurative

**Supporting details**- examples provided to describe, explain, or reinforce the main idea
**Knowledge and Skills**

**Students will know:**
- The characteristics of a memoir and how it differs from a personal narrative
- The choices of memoir structures
- How to use the writing cycle to continually grow and improve writing
- Why conventions are needed and how to use them properly

**Students will be able to:**
- Learn the characteristics of a memoir and how it differs from a personal narrative
- Use the writing cycle effectively throughout the unit
- Apply conventions throughout the writing cycle

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**Assessment and Scoring Guides**

**Performance tasks:**
- Conferencing
- Writers’ notebook – see scoring from launching unit
- Drafts of memoir
- Graphic organizers
- Editing checklists
- Share sessions

**Other evidence:**
- End of unit Map Like Assessment

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**Resources**

**Teacher Resources:**
- Thinking Through Genre by Heather Lattimer – pages 29-32
- Lessons for the Writer’s Notebook by Ralph Fletcher – N-7, N-11, and N-19
- Units of Study: Memoir: The Art of Writing Well by Lucy Calkins – Session I, II, X, XII and XIV
- Teaching Memoir by Katherine Bomer – pages 92-97
- Writing a Life by Katherine Bomer – pages 159-174
- Teaching the Qualities of Writing by Ralph Fletcher – N-11 and N-19
- A Writer’s Notebook by Ralph Fletcher
- Lessons that Change Writers by Nancie Atwell – Lesson 10, 13, 15, 57 and 62.

**Suggested Student Resources:**
- When I was Your Age: Volume One, all grades Memoir
Childtimes by Greenfield and Little, all grades Memoir
Saturdays and Teacakes by Lester Laminack, 2-3 Memoir
Grandfather’s Journey by Allen Say *Not available in all buildings
Short Cut by Donald Crews, all grades Necessary Books
Big Mama by Donald Crews, all grades Authors as Mentors
Owl Moon by Jane Yolen, all grades Necessary Books
My Grandmother’s Hair by Cynthia Rylant, *Not available in all buildings
The Relatives Came by Cynthia Rylant, K-1 Memoir
A Chair for my Mother by Vera B. Williams, all grades Necessary Books
When I Was Young in the Mountain by Cynthia Rylant, all grades Small Moments
Birthday Presents by Cynthia Rylant, *Not available in all buildings
Discovery of Solitude by Paul Auster, *Not available in all buildings
My Rotten Redheaded Older Brother by Patricia Polacco, 4-5 Memoir

Titles to Support Units of Study - located in each building
See Memoir: The Art of Writing Well
See Memoir – Grades 4-5

Teacher Notes
Teachers should remember the foundation of writer’s workshop. The mini-lessons included in the unit will help guide your writers throughout the process of writing memoir.

The emphasis on the specific skills addressed in the assessment will be left to the teacher’s discretion according to the students needs. Teachers should study the assessment before teaching this unit. Below are the skills highlighted on the assessment:

- Capitalization of proper nouns and sentence beginning
- Complete sentences
- Spelling
- Word usage
Teachers need to be aware of convention expectations listed in GLE for fifth grade. It is the teacher’s responsibility to ensure that all GLEs are covered throughout various units during school year.

It is suggested teachers keep a writer’s notebook of his/her own to use for modeling of writing and to be able to understand the actual strategies that students are asked to do. If the teacher is teaching a strategy, she should attempt to use the notebook herself in the days prior to the lesson. This will help the teacher think about difficulties the students may experience. In addition, it gives an example to share during the mini-lesson.

**Technology Notes:**
- Photo essay
- Power Point
- Reader’s Theater
- Websites (author)

**Differentiation Notes:**
Differentiation is naturally built in the workshop format and occurs daily through individual conferences with students. Also, students choose their own topics and develop it based on their own ability level.

Students that are struggling can be given a list of generated ideas to glue in their notebooks to draw upon when times are tough.

**Sample Calendar**
See attached.
# 5th Grade Writing

## Memoir

### Sample Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Immersion</td>
<td></td>
<td>Collection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Choosing a Seed</td>
<td></td>
<td>Developing a Seed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Developing a Seed</td>
<td>Planning</td>
<td></td>
<td>Drafting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
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<td>Revising</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Editing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Publish</td>
<td>Celebrate</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Revised July 2008
**Fifth Grade Writing**  
**Memoir**  
**Sample Lessons**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE MINI-LESSONS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION/TEACHER LANGUAGE TO CONSIDER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>IMMERSION</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Immersion, What is a Memoir? | Mini-lesson: Immersion, What is a Memoir?  
**Link:** “Today we are going to begin to talk about the genre of memoir and the characteristics that are unique to it. Today we will be reading examples and not writing.”  
**Teaching Points:** Teacher will gather all anchor texts for memoir from their building, including K-2, and 3-5 book tubs. The students will explore these books with partners in a “memoir tasting.” Children read selections of memoir discuss and determine commonalities. As a whole class, create an anchor chart. Students will copy anchor chart in their writer’s notebook. See attached chart.  
- Could this be a memoir? Why or why not?  
Teacher will model examples of text, illustrating memoirs and other genres. As a whole class, the students will use the anchor chart to discuss if these texts are memoirs.  
**Active engagement:**  
Students look at new memoirs and compare them to the criteria stated on the anchor chart created. Working with partners, the students will use post-it notes to mark parts of the texts that show the characteristics listed on the anchor chart. This reinforces the characteristics of a memoir. The students will share their findings.  
**Send Off:** As you read, be thinking about how the authors had to live to be able to write about their memories. |

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Revised July 2008
**Immersion**

**Link:** “Yesterday we began exploring memoir. Today we are going to continue our exploration and compare the authors’ memories to some of our own.” In the lesson, the class will start as a whole class, then the students will be asked to work independently. They will consider the events, consider the author’s experience, make notes of their understandings of the author’s events, and underline appropriate text evidence. They will see how their own events and experiences could be explored.

**Teaching Points:**
Lesson location: Thinking Through Genre by Lattimer, pgs 29, 32.

**COLLECTING**

**Collection: Writing From the Heart**

Point out use of commas and compound sentences

**Mini-lesson: Collection: Writing from the Heart**

**Link:** “Yesterday we tried to find connections between an author’s experience and our own. Today we will explore topics that you feel deeply about.” The best topics for writing are those things we feel most deeply about. Students will explore their inner lives if they think of the writer’s notebook as a friend in which they can truly confide” (Fletcher, 2005). You may choose “The Football Fight” included with the Fletcher lesson, or another wonderful heartfelt memoir “Mama Sewing” from Childtimes by Greenfield (pg. 142).

**Teaching Point:**
Lesson location: Lessons for the Writer’s Notebook by Ralph Fletcher “Writing From the Heart: N-7”
# Memoir: The Art of Writing Well

| **Point out good use of sequence** | will begin looking for topics that seem to surface again and again in our writing notebooks.” In this lesson, you will teach children that writers usually have several themes that surface in their writing again and again. Invite children to uncover these topics for themselves by rereading and sharing previous entries in their writer’s notebooks. The goal is for the students to find inspiration for their memoir piece from their writing in their notebooks. This lesson will focus on the “what” that is important in our lives. During this lesson, the reading of an anchor text will add a good example of what writers see as life topics. |
| **Collection: Uncovering Life Topics:** Why Are They Important? | Teaching Point: |
|  | Memoir: The Art of Writing Well, Book 6 in Lucy Calkin’s Units of Study, pgs. 1-6. Mini-lesson anchor text: Saturdays and Teacakes by Lester Laminack |
|  | Active engagement: The students will be collecting topics that matter to them in writers notebooks. Send Off: “As you write today, be thinking about what you may want to share with your partner or the group.” |
|  | Mini-lesson: Collection: Uncovering Life Topics Link: “Yesterday we created a list of events that are important in our lives. Today we are going to look at why those events are important.” Now that the students have lists of events they feel are important in their lives, they will look at why these events are important. The teacher can refer to the anchor text read the day before and explore the topic through the lens of why this event was meaningful to the author. Teaching Point: see |
|  | Memoir: The Art of Writing Well, Book 6 in Lucy Calkin’s Units of Study, pgs. 7-12. Wring a Life: Teaching Memoir by Katherine Bomer, pgs.92-97 Mini-lesson anchor text: Saturdays and Teacakes by Lester Laminack |
|  | Active engagement: Students will go back over their collection entries in their writer’s notebooks and add why these ideas are meaningful to them. Send Off: “As you think about your list today, try to concentrate on why these events are important to you.” |
| CHOOSING A SEED | Mini-lesson: The Structure of Reflection to Begin  
**Link:** “Yesterday we looked at the “why” our events were important. Today we will read a book and look at the way the author used reflection in his story.” The teacher will read the story “Scout’s Honor” and discuss how and why the author used reflection at the beginning of the book.  
**Teaching Point:** Some author’s will reflect at the beginning of their memoirs. Questions to consider:  
What is the author’s reflection?  
Why did the author choose to put it at the beginning?  
Could the author have changed the placement of the reflection? The middle? The end?  
How can this be a powerful writing technique?  
Mini-lesson anchor text: *When I was Your Age* Volume One, “Scout’s Honor” by Avi.  
**Active engagement:** The students will explore this strategy by selecting collected ideas and develop a reflection to begin their piece. They will write a paragraph or two in their writer’s notebook on each different idea they explore.  
**Possible Extensions:** Think about the movies and television shows you have watched. Do they incorporate reflection? How?  
**Send Off:** “Today as you write in your notebook, try to experiment with including reflection at the beginning of your piece of writing” |
|---|---|
| The Structure Of Reflection to Begin | The Structure of Reflection to End  
**Link:** “Yesterday we examined reflection at the beginning of a piece. Today we will read a text that has reflection at the end.” The teacher will read the story Grandfather’s Journey and discuss how the authors used reflection at the end of the text.  
**Teaching Point:** Some author’s will reflect at the end of their memoirs. Questions to consider:  
How is reflection different when it comes at the end?  
Why did the author use reflection at the end of the story?  
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### Zooming In: One Type of Memoir

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How does this format impact the reading of this book?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>How can this be a powerful writing technique?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini-lesson anchor text: Grandfather’s Journey by Allen Say.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Active engagement:</strong> Pass out copy and read aloud “Snowballs” (see attachments for a copy). Instruct the students to work with a partner to explore the reflection in the story. They should highlight reflective elements in the story and discuss the questions from the teaching point earlier in the lesson. Then discuss with their partners which of their collection ideas would work better with the reflective piece at the end. Why?</td>
<td><strong>Send Off:</strong> “As you begin working today, be thinking about how you could use reflection at the end of your piece of writing.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Mini-lesson: Zooming In: One Type of Memoir

**Link:** “Yesterday we examined reflection at the end of a memoir, today we are going to be exploring how a memoir can also include be several memories that are called snippets.” The teacher explains the difference between a story that includes many small moments and a story that has one small moment stretched out. Simple texts to model this with are Short Cut and Big Mamas, both by Donald Crews. Short Cut takes the span of about less than an hour; where as Big Mamas could take place over several days. The teacher can then think aloud, reread one of his/her stories that contains several small moments. He/she can then think aloud about how one small moment could be stretched out.

**Teaching Point:**
Session II – Writing Small About Big Topics in Memoir: The Art of Writing Well – Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5.

**Anchor texts:**
- Short Cut by Donald Crews.
- Big Mama by Donald Crews.
- Other possible texts:
  - Owl Moon by Jane Yule
  - My Grandmother’s Hair by Cynthia Rylant
  - The Relatives Came by Cynthia Rylant
### Memoir As Snippets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Chair for my Mother by Vera B. Williams</th>
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**Active engagement:** Students reread a selection from their notebook and talk/share with partner the small moments that could be pulled out.

**Send Off:** “As you work with your partner, be ready to share a snippet that can be pulled out of your writing.”

**Mini-lesson: Memoir as Snippets**

**Link:** “Yesterday we learned about snippets. Today we will examine how some snippets are linked together by a common theme.” Some memoirs are a collection of snippets that are tied together with a common thread of importance. An example of this is *When I Was Young in the Mountains*. The students would look at several snippets and determine the common thread that holds them together. Snippets can be explained to students as a clothes line, the poles are the beginning and end that tie the snippets together. The rope attaches the small moments to the beginning and end. The pages in the middle can go in any order.

**Teaching Point:**

Some memoirs do not zoom in but instead, take snippets of events that are linked together with a common importance. When might writers use this format?

- Ways texts are structured with snippets:
  - One Memory: Multiple scenes
  - Connected Memories Around a Person
  - Connected Memories Around an Object and/or Theme

**Student anchor text:** *When I Was Young in the Mountains* by Cynthia Rylant

**Active engagement:** The students will go to their collection ideas and see if any of them link together with a common theme. Students should look for the big ideas and feeling that have made them who they are. Once they find the big theme, they can list or draw the snippets or events from their lives that lead them to those feelings.

**Send Off:** “Today as you are working, concentrate on the order of important snippets in your life.”
### Snippets and Time

**Mini-lesson: Snippets and Time**  
**Link:** “Yesterday we looked at important snippets in your life. Today we will continue reading literature that has the snippet format.” The students will continue to read literature with the snippet format. They will see that order does not always follow a chronological format. They will learn to use the graphic organizer to think through the snippets of events. Any books using the snippet structure will work for the lesson.  
**Teaching Point:** see Teaching the Qualities of Writing by Ralph Fletcher, D-32

Student anchor text choices:  
- Birthday Presents by Cynthia Rylant  
- Invention of Solitude by Paul Auster

**Active engagement:** Use graphic organizer for students to develop their own ideas for memoirs using the snippet structure.  
**Send Off:** “Today as you read, notice that snippets do not always follow a chronological format.”

### NURTURING AND DEVELOPING A SEED IDEA

#### Developing a Seed: Stretching the Moment

**Mini-lesson: Developing a Seed: Stretching the Moment**  
**Link:** “Yesterday we continued to read literature containing snippets. Today we will concentrate on how to hook a reader by choosing the most important moment in a memoir and describing it in detail. This is sometimes called stretching a moment.” (Instructional Guide, NYC public schools).  
**Teaching Point:** How do writers stretch ideas?  
The teacher will refer back to Saturdays and Teacakes and reread. What did the author do to stretch the moment? Create a chart labeled “Some Ways Authors Stretch Moments” Some of the things to bring out are:
### Choosing and Developing a Seed Idea

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Describe light</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tell how things look</td>
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<tr>
<td>Include the things characters say (dialogue)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mention little things people do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add thoughts and feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Active engagement:** The students will read their collection of ideas and pick some to stretch out using the techniques mentioned above.

**Send Off:** “Today as you are working, try to stretch out a single moment in your writing.”

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**Mini-lesson: Choosing and Developing a Seed Idea**

**Link:** “Yesterday we created a chart about how author’s stretch moments. Today I will use my own notebook to model how I pick a seed idea and explore stretching out a moment from my life”. The author knows which idea to choose as their seed idea by seeing which topics they can easily stretch and reflect.

**Teaching Point:**

How do writers pick a seed idea?

See Lessons From The Writer’s Notebook by Ralph Fletcher “Starting a Seed Idea” N-11

**Questions to consider:**

- Why is this important to you?
- What ideas keep tugging at you?

**Active engagement:** Make a class chart of seed ideas. The students select a seed idea.

**Send Off:** “Today after you choose your seed, work on stretching that moment in your writing.”
**PLANNING**

**Planning a Draft**

**Mini-lesson: Planning a Draft**

*Link:* “Yesterday we made a chart of seed ideas and you watched me model how I stretched a seed idea. Today you will plan your memoir by thinking through the structure of your own story. You will create a graphic organizer using post-its.”

Attached is a sample “Freeze Frame” planner for “zoom in” memoirs. To plan for “snippet” memoirs, have the students get out post-it notes. They will write one snippet per note. They then arrange and rearrange the snippets to fit a sequence that makes sense to them. The students should then use additional post-it notes (possibly a different color) to write reflection. They can decide if they want this in the beginning, end, or throughout.

*Teaching Point:* see Lessons From The Writer’s Notebook by Ralph Fletcher “Making a Plan” N-19

*Active engagement:* The students will draft their plan for memoir.

*Send Off* “As you begin planning your memoir, use your post-its to sequence your story.”

**DRAFTING**

**Thoughts and Feelings**

**Mini-lesson: Thoughts and Feelings**

*Link:* “Yesterday we worked on sequencing your memoir with the help of post-its. Today you are adding thoughts and feelings to your memoirs.”

*Teaching Point:* see Lessons that Change Writers by Nancy Atwell, pg. 44.

*Active engagement:* As students draft, they will pay close attention to the thoughts and feelings they add to their memoirs.
### REVISING

#### Details

**Mini-lesson: Details**

**Link:** “Yesterday you worked on added thoughts and feelings to your memoir. Today we will focus on significant details, thinking about the characters in your memoir.”

**Teaching Point:**

Memoir: The Art of Writing Well for Units of Study by Lucy Calkins pgs. 129-135

**Active engagement:** see lesson

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#### Show Don’t Tell

**Mini-lesson: Show Don’t Tell**

**Link:** “Yesterday we focused on significant details. Today we will concentrate on the use of language to paint a picture of our story. We will try to help the reader visualize or have an emotional response to a specific part of the memoir”.

**Teaching Point:**

See Thinking Through Genre by Heather Lattimer

**Anchor text:**

When I Was Your Age, “Everything Will be Okay”, pg. 41.

**Active engagement:** Students can create a two-column chart in their writing notebooks. One column is “Lines from the Text” and “Sensory Images” from the modeled book and from their own stories.

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#### Revision

**Mini-lesson: Revision**

**Link:** “Yesterday we painted a picture with language to elicit an emotional response to our memoir. Today we will begin to revise our memoir and create a list of revision strategies.” (Instructional Guide: NYC Public School)

**Teaching Point:** We will begin by showing students our first draft on chart paper or
overhead. This draft should be basic and missing some things that can later be revised. We model two or three different changes and strategies for how to actually make our revisions. It is important to remember that whatever strategies we model, students are likely to use as they revise their own drafts over the next few days.

Some possibilities include:
- Rewriting parts that are confusing in the margin, on separate paper, or on spider legs (strips of paper taped to edges of draft.)
- Adding on to sections using an asterisk in places where we want to add more, and writing the new part on separate paper, or in our notebooks
- Taking away parts that are unnecessary, confusing, or don’t match the message
- Placing carats in places where we want to add a word, or where there is a word missing.

After modeling, we will want to collect the strategies on a chart for students to refer to as they revise. They may put these strategies in their writer’s notebooks.

**Mini-lesson: Revision**

*Link:* Lesson selected based on student needs.

“Yesterday we began to revise our memoirs. Today we will continue to do the same!”

**Resources for Revision Lessons:**
- Memoir, the Art of Writing Well, Units of Study by Lucy Calkins, pg. 159-165.
- Teaching the Qualities of Writing by Ralph Fletcher, P-13
- Writing a Life: Teaching Memoir by Catherine Bomer, pgs. 159-174

**Anchor Texts:**
- My Rotten Red Headed Older Brother by Polacco (internal thinking)

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**EDITING**

**Personalize the Editing Checklist**

**Mini-lesson: Personalizing the Editing Checklist**

*Link:* “For the past couple of days we have been revising our memoirs. As you finish this process, you will be ready to start editing. This will be different for each of you.”
There is a checklist available for you to use as a cue to see if you are ready to publish. See attachment for sample editing checklist.

**Teaching Point:**
Teaching the Qualities of Writing by Ralph Fletcher, P-12

**Active engagement:**
The students will use the checklist with their writing.

---

**Editing**

**Mini-Lesson: Editing**

**Link** “Today is a working day. You will continue to finish revising or editing as you need to. Focus lesson to the needs of the students.

**Resources for Editing Lessons:**
Teaching the Qualities of Writing by Ralph Fletcher, P-10,
Lessons that Change Writers by Nancie Atwell, pgs. 195-199, 223-224.
Memoir, the Art of Writing Well, Units of Study by Lucy Calkins, pg. 188-190.

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**Titles**

**Mini-lesson: Titles**

**Link**: “We have spent the past couple of days editing and revising. Today we will focus on the title for your memoir. We will brainstorm what makes a good title”.

**Teaching Point**: see
Lessons that Change Writers by Nancy Atwell, pgs. 53-55

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**Spell Check Cautions**

**Teacher’s Note: Spell checking should be used at the end of the editing process and**

**Mini-lesson: Spell Check Cautions**

**Link**: “Yesterday we brainstormed ideas for a good title for your memoir. Today we will think about spelling.” Project a writing sample that contains many spelling errors. Make sure the misspelled words have errors that spell check will find and those that will
**PUBLISHING**

**Appearance on Paper**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOT for students to learn how to spell words. Students should use strategies and classroom resources of spelling (dictionaries, etc.) throughout editing.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>not be noticed by the spellchecker. Have students discuss how these errors impact their understanding of the text. The students will locate the misspelled words (circle on Smartboard). Show the students how to use the spell check function and apply to the model text. Ask the following questions: Did spell checking fix the errors we found? Why weren’t all the errors corrected? How does a writer make sure that he has found all the errors and corrected them? What are the benefits of computer spell checking? What are the pitfalls of computer spell checking? <strong>Teaching Point:</strong> The students will learn the importance of using spell check and how to apply it properly to their writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Active engagement:</strong> Students will continue to publish memoir and use spell check when appropriate. <strong>Alternate Lesson:</strong> If students are hand printing their drafts, you may offer a strategy lesson regarding spelling in place of the computer lesson above. This could include circling tricky words to look up, or rereading some sentences backward to force the brain to pay attention to spelling instead of content.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Mini-lesson: Appearance on Paper**

**Link:** “We have talked about revising, editing, spelling, and good titles. Today we will talk about polishing your text for publication. We will be exploring a list of considerations for final copies.” **Teaching Point:** See Lessons that Change Writers by Nancy Atwell, pgs. 60-61
Anchor text illustrating the many options writer have when publishing. See attached excerpt from *My Rotten Red Headed Older Brother* by Polacco. 

**Active engagement:** Students will apply to their own writing.

**Send Off:**
“As you work today, consult the list of considerations to find one that fits your story best.”

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**CELEBRATION**

**Celebration and Reflection**

**Mini-lesson:** Celebration and Reflection

*Link:* “Yesterday we talked about different ways to publish your test. Today, you will reflect on your memoir and participate in a gallery walk.” Each student will put his memoir on his desk, including a large post-it note, index card or blank paper for classmates to write compliments during the walk. Set the mood of the event with soft music, lighting, and snacks. The students will leave their desks and sit at the desks of their classmates to read their work. They will compliment on the extra paper regarding the writing topic, techniques, language, etc.

**Teaching Point:** Celebrate and reflect on the hard work accomplished in this unit.

**Active engagement:** Gallery Walk

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**ASSESSMENT**

**Assessment** – see attached
### Characteristics Of A Memoir (listed by 7th grade students):

- a memory, a description of an event form the past
- written in the first person; told from one person’s point of view
- based on the truth
- reveals the feelings of the writer
- has a meaning; shows what the author learned from the experience
- focused on one event; about one point in the author’s life
- about the author’s experience more than about the event itself

### Questions to Ask Students During Immersion:

- What do these texts have in common
- What makes them memoir?
- What do you notice about who is narrating the story?
- Are they all told in first person?
- Why do you think that might be?
- What do you notice about the scope of the memoirs?
- How many days do they usually span?
- Why do you suppose it looks at such a short time period?
- What is the purpose of a memoir
- Why would someone sit down and write about an event in his/her own lives?
Freeze Frame Planning

Zoom in on your important moment. Sketch the details you see in your mind during that moment.

Zoom in on your senses from that moment. List what you were feeling, seeing, touching, tasting, and hearing during that moment.
Teacher Note: This is an optional teacher checklist as an example. If you would want to use this checklist, you would need to teach into how to use each of the editing blanks.

Name _____________________________

A Great Way to Edit 😊😊

_____ I have capital letters at the beginning of each sentence. I traced over them with my red pen.

_____ I have punctuation at the end of each sentence. I traced over them with my red pen. (, ! ?)

_____ I highlighted any words I don’t know how to spell in blue. I looked them up in the dictionary.

_____ I indented all my paragraphs. I drew an arrow with my red pen where each paragraph begins.

I asked 2 people to proofread my work

________________________________________

________________________________________

Signatures

I read my story out loud to a friend. I have complete sentences and my story makes sense.

________________________________________

Signature
Reflection

Name_____________________________ Date Completed________________________

Title of Piece ________________________________________________________________

After you complete your final conference, complete this reflection on a piece of paper to put into your portfolio. Please write a reflection using at least one paragraph. Here are some ideas that may help you start writing:

- I am proud of myself because…
- Next time, I would…
- I need to work on…
- A goal I have for my next piece is…
- One part of my story I really like is…
- My favorite part of my story is…
- I was frustrated when…
- I found it difficult to…
- One thing I’ve learned through this writing cycle is…
- The mini-lesson that helped me the most was…because…

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
Dear Families,

We are beginning our Memoir Unit in Writer’s Workshop. In this unit your child will be exposed to the genre of memoir which is different from narrative writing. In narrative writing, we write about a one time experience, like the day I went to the zoo. But with a memoir, that is more about a time that changed the way you think or feel because of an experience that you had. One example might be when a new baby comes into the family. Because of the reflective nature of this type of writing, we will be asking your child to think back on meaningful experiences of their lives. Your child will be bringing home his or her own writing notebook with beginnings of memoirs to share with you.

At home you can help your child by

- Sharing your memories
- Sharing photographs
- Talking together
- Remembering details such as color, specific places, times and people

As your child shares his or her notebook with you, this might be a time for you to reflect and share about your own experiences. If you are comfortable and would like to share in your child’s notebook, please feel free to do so, or maybe it is a time to start your own!

As always, thank you for your interest and support.

Sincerely,
Title: Memoir

End of Unit ‘Map-Like’ Writing Assessment

Grade Level: 5
Subject Area: Writing

Materials Needed for Assessment Completion:
- Copy of assessment – Part 1 – timed – multiple choice
- Copy of assessment – Part 2 – untimed – prompt
- Copy of Saturdays and Teacakes by Lester Laminack
- Pencil

Pre-Assessment Instructions:
- Students should be familiar with Saturdays and Teacakes by Lester Laminack prior to taking assessment.
- Students will have 22 minutes to complete Part 1 of the assessment.

Post Assessment Instruction:
- Assessments should be kept at school for data analysis, planning, and conferring purposes but should not be sent home.

Notes:
- Selected response items adapted from Spectrum Test Prep (2001)
Part 1

Read each sentence. Find the word that can take the place of the underlined word in the sentences below.

1. _________ was the best movie I’ve ever seen!
   O That were
   O That
   O Them
   O Those

2. Nicole _________ the science club soon.
   O will join
   O joined
   O join
   O joining

Read each sentence. Decide which part, if any, needs a capital letter. Fill in the circle under that part. If no capital letter is needed, fill in the circle under the word “None.”

3. Many people in my family live in florida.
   O

4. do you have any pets of your own?
   O

Revised July 2008
Read the sentence. Find the answer choice that shows the correct capitalization and punctuation for that part. If the underlined part is correct, fill in the circle next to ‘correct as is’.

5. “You will all have a chance to use the computer the teacher told the students.
   O computer”
   O computer
   O computer,”
   O Correct as is

6. You can go to the fair but your brother will have to go with you.
   O fair, but, your
   O fair, but your
   O fair but, your
   O Correct as is

Find the sentence that is written correctly and is a complete sentence.

7. O Art class once a week with students in another class.
   O Entering a painting in the show.
   O Drawing and painting enjoyed by many young people.
   O The pot you made is beautiful.

8. O The sidewalk is on Broad Street slippery.
   O On Broad Street is slippery the sidewalk.
   O The sidewalk on Broad Street is slippery.
   O The slippery sidewalk which is on Broad Street.
9. O We sat on the porch for an hour my uncle told us lots of stories.
   O The funniest story was the one about the dog and the ball.
   O My grandmother is over ninety years old we love to hear her family stories.
   O Judy wrote an essay for school it was about her family history.

10. O Who is today’s speaker?
    O pack only necessary clothing.
    O My mom said “put the vase on the table.”
    O The dog, will growl if you tease it.

Find the underlined part that is misspelled. If all the words are spelled correctly, mark the space under No mistake.

11. Kari’s family remained in northern Utah for a brief time. No mistake.
    O         O         O         O

12. This map will guide you to the national forest campground. No mistake.
    O         O         O         O         O

13. A highway in our area was closed because of an accident. No mistake.
    O         O         O         O         O         O

14. Will anyone be home to receive the package when it arrives? No mistake.
    O         O         O         O         O
Find the word or words that correctly complete each sentence.

15. The movie was _______________ than we thought it would be.
   O funny
   O funnier
   O funniest
   O most funny

16. Yours is the ___________ painting in the school.
   O pretty
   O prettily
   O prettiest
   O prettier

17. We were late for dinner ____________ the traffic was heavy.
   O because
   O after
   O so
   O although

18. The carpenter _____________ her work and put her tools away.
   O finishing
   O finish
   O finished
   O were finished
Choose the answer that best combines the underlined sentences.

19. The truck brought the furniture to our house. The truck was large.

O The large truck, which brought the furniture to our house.
O The truck was large that brought the furniture to our house.
O The truck brought the furniture to our house, and was large.
O The large truck brought the furniture to our house.

20. Arnie found a ball. The ball was red. He found it on the way to school.

O Finding a red ball, Arnie was on his way to school.
O Arnie found a red ball on the way to school.
O Arnie found a ball on the way to school that was red.
O The red ball that Arnie found on the way to school.
Part Two
Directions: Read the prompt in the box below.

The book *Saturdays and Teacakes*, tells a story about a grandparent who makes a difference in Lester’s life. Write a memoir about a time someone made a difference in your life.

Directions: Use the space below for your prewriting. This may be a web, a list or a graphic organizer.
Directions: Write the first draft of your story. Look back at your prompt and your prewriting as you are drafting.
Directions: Now you need to revise and edit your draft. Reread your draft and use the Writer’s Checklist below to make sure your draft includes all of the items on the Writer’s Checklist. You may make checks in the boxes after you have checked your paper for each item.

**Writer’s Checklist**

- [ ] My paper has a beginning, middle and end.
- [ ] My paper stays on the topic.
- [ ] My paper includes details and examples.
- [ ] My paper uses complete sentences.
- [ ] My paper includes correct punctuation, capitalization, grammar and spelling.
Directions: Now it is time to write your final copy of your piece. When you write your final copy, make sure you include any changes you made when you revised and edited your draft.
## Memoir Scoring Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic Selection</strong></td>
<td>Topic seems quite significant to the author’s life.</td>
<td>Topic seems significant to the author’s life.</td>
<td>Topic seems somewhat significant to the author’s life.</td>
<td>Author does not seem to be aware of the significance of the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>Memoir is clearly focused on a single, memorable moment with any additional text supporting that event OR the related vignettes are effectively connected to a central idea.</td>
<td>Memoir is mostly focused on a memorable moment OR vignettes are connected to one another.</td>
<td>Memoir has a central event, but other events are included that do not necessarily show its significance OR vignettes may appear to be listed without clear connection to a memory.</td>
<td>Memoir includes multiple events that are disconnected and do not reveal significance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Style and Technique</strong></td>
<td>Author consistently reveals the significance of the events through engaging details, compelling language, and a balance of action, thoughts, feelings and dialogue.</td>
<td>Author sometimes reveals the significance of the events through details, compelling language, and a balance of action, thoughts, feelings, and dialogue.</td>
<td>Author tells the significance of events through direct statements only.</td>
<td>No effort is made to reveal the significance of the events to the reader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reflection</strong></td>
<td>Author provides a detailed, focused reflection on the significance of the event/memory.</td>
<td>Author provides a loosely focused reflection that identifies the significance of the event/memory.</td>
<td>Author provides a reflection but not necessarily one which shows the significance of the event/memory.</td>
<td>Author does not provide a reflection on the significance of the event/memory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conventions</strong></td>
<td>No mistakes in spelling, grammar, or punctuation; neat and clean.</td>
<td>A few, minor mistakes that do not interfere with the reader’s ability to comprehend text; neat.</td>
<td>Many minor mistakes. Mechanics and presentation make text somewhat difficult to read.</td>
<td>Many and/or careless mistakes and sloppy presentation make text very difficult to read.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scoring Guide for Multiple Choice (1 point each)

1. That
2. will join
3. florida
4. Do
5. computer,”
6. fair, but your
7. The pot you made is beautiful.
8. The sidewalk on Broad Street is slippery.
9. The funniest story was the one about the dog and the ball.
10. Who is today’s speaker?
11. No mistake
12. guide
13. accident
14. receive
15. funnier
16. prettiest
17. because
18. finished
19. The large truck brought the furniture to our house.
20. Arnie found a red ball on the way to school.

Scoring Guide for Prompt Writing

Prompt: See attached District Scoring Guide (Grades 4-7)