*English Instructional Plan – Expository Writing: Grades 2-3*

**Primary Strand: Writing 2.10 3.8**

**Integrated Strand/s: Communication and Multimodal Literacies, Reading, Research**

**Essential Understanding:**

All students should:

* understand that writers use the writing process, including planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing (Grades 2 and 3)
* understand that written communication should be well-planned and clear to the reader. (Grade 2)
* understand how to plan and compose writing for a variety of purposes. (Grade 3)

**Essential Knowledge, Skills, and Processes:**

To be successful with this standard, students are expected to:

* Write informative/explanatory pieces that introduce the topic, use facts or opinions, and provide a concluding statement (Grade 2)
* Follow the organization of particular forms of writing for descriptive/expository (Grade 3)
  + introduce a topic and organize information in paragraph(s)
  + use facts, definitions, quotations, details, or other examples and information to develop the topic
  + use specific vocabulary to inform and explain the topic
  + provide a conclusion

**Primary SOL:**

2.10d) Use strategies for organization according to the type of writing

f) Elaborate writing by including supporting details.

3.8d) Use organizational strategies to structure writing according to type.

f) Write facts about a subject to support a main idea.

**Reinforced (Related Standard) SOL:**

2.8 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of nonfiction texts.

2.12 The student will conduct research by using available resources to gather information and answer questions to complete a research product.

3.6 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of nonfiction texts.

3.10 The student will demonstrate comprehension of information resources to research a topic and complete a research product.

**Academic Background/Language:**

The teacher will need to introduce the terms needed to write expository pieces of writing (explain, topic, and facts). Students should be encouraged to use the terms orally in classroom discussions. The teacher can model vocabulary while walking through the building (“Let me **explain** why the water fountain is….”) and/or the teacher can create anchor charts to help build students’ academic vocabulary background.

Sentence starters:

* One fact I learned was \_
* Let me explain my understanding by \_
* The big idea or topic is \_

## Materials

* One informational picture book with a focus on animals. Consider books such as *Creature Features* (Jenkins and Page), *Guess What is Growing Inside this Egg* (Posada), *Over and Under the Pond* (Messner & Neal), *What do you do with a Tail Like this?* (Jenkins and Page) *Eye to Eye* (Jenkins), or *Actual Size* (Jenkins)
* Chart Paper and Marker or Interactive White Board
* Animal Photograph

## Student/Teacher Actions: What should students be doing? What should teachers be doing?

1. The teacher shows a photograph of an animal and asks, “What questions do you have as you look at this image? What do you wonder?” Turn to a partner and share your thoughts. Teacher explains, “Sometimes we need to seek resources such as books and websites to help us learn more about a topic.”
2. The teacher states, “We read expository books to find out lots of important information. Today for our writing mini-lesson, we are going to explore a book about animals and seek to explain and describe our important findings. We will pretend to be scientists who find out interesting things and discover new facts (true information about a topic).
3. Conduct an interactive read aloud of a title such as *Creature Features* by Steve Jenkins and Robin Page. Teacher can revisit this book from earlier language arts instruction and spotlight a few key pages or introduce the text as a new read aloud (depending on time available for the mini-lesson). During the read aloud, the teacher can ask questions such as, “What was one fact you never knew about an animal? How do you know this fact is true? Can you make a connection to other animal texts we have studied?”
4. On a chart, create 2 columns. Column one will be titled, “Things we found” and column two is “More questions” Record a few student responses from the text.
5. Teacher picks animal to model writing a fact for students. Teacher should select an animal that the student is already know. For example, the teacher might select a squirrel and record a question and answer using the terms to “explain why.” Dear squirrel, why are your cheeks so full? You must be storing up lots of acorns and nuts for winter.
6. Students select an animal they know. At independent writing time, students can begin with a drawing. Next, they will ask a question to describe how the animal looks and then answer the question with a fact to explain why. The teacher states, “Off you go to your writing spots to give this type of expository writing a try.”
7. The teacher circulates during independent writing time and conferences with writers. The teacher will ask questions such as, “How is it going? What part of the writing process could I help you with? What is going well in your writing? Why?”
8. At the conclusion of independent writing, the teacher gains the students attention for sharing. Students turn to partners and shares a question and fact. The teacher reminds students that a fact is a true information and that we read and write using expository material to learn more about a topic.

**Assessment (Formative)**

* Teacher observes student interactions and responses to questions during the lesson and conferences with the student while recording anecdotal notes.
* If this piece of writing is developed further across additional lessons, the teacher may wish to use a teacher or student developed writing rubric to assess content.

**Reading** **Connections:**

* Making connections to other expository texts that have been read (Focus on comprehension strategies such as asking text questions or determining the main idea and supporting details).

**Extensions and Connections (for all students)**

* Students continue to write more facts about the animal selected.
* Students research a new animal and use books and websites to seek new information.
* Add a third section to the chart titled “Things we found out” and model recording responses. Students share the pen to help record.
* Make a booklet which contains a fact, question, and answer.
* The teacher brainstorms some different ways to describe facts or details using words and phrases that describe (for example, for instance, another way, in addition).
* Follow up with a mini-lesson on how to write an effective conclusion after elaborating a piece of writing.

**Strategies for Differentiation**

* Students are provided with an illustration of an animal and a fact or sentence starter to get them started.
* Students work with partners or in teams to create the writing product.
* Teacher creates more sample “question and fact” letters with students prior to independent writing time.
* Anchor chart or graphic organizer is created with students to build understanding of a topic and fact.