

Writing Guide for the
Read Side by Side Reading Program

3RD-6TH
GRADES

An Introduction to
Narrative & Expository Writing

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If this is your first time using this guide, you will want to read through this introduction carefully, as it provides information that you will find critical to your establishment of a successful language arts block! In this writing guide, two types of writing are presented:

1. Narrative writing:
 - personal narrative,
 - realistic fiction; and
 - historical/science fiction.

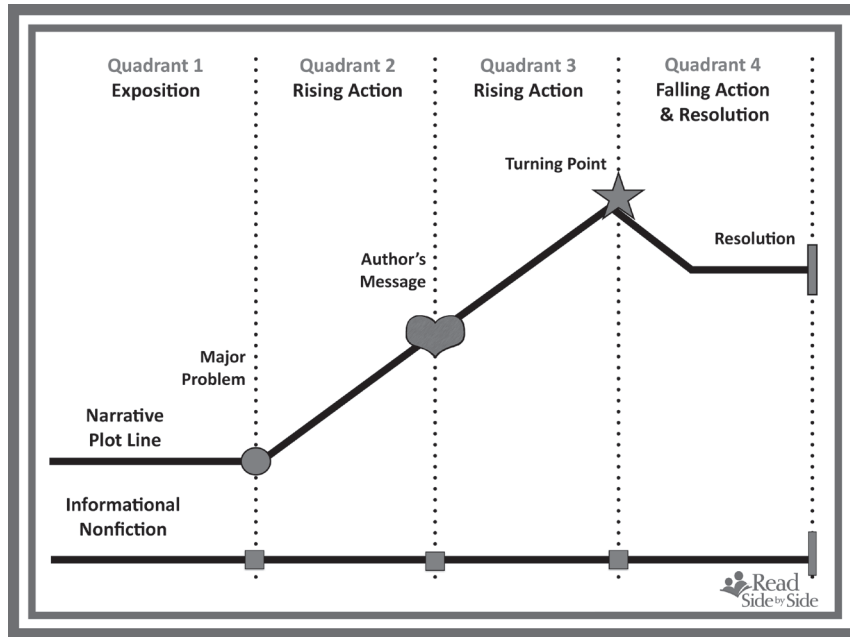
2. Expository writing:
 - expository essays,
 - persuasive essays; and
 - argumentative essays.

The Reading Writing Connection


Each writing unit has been written with the foundational belief that the best writers are readers. Therefore, units are written to help students make connections from the texts studied in the *Read Side by Side Reading Program* to the writing students will draft and publish during an extended writing time. Read-aloud texts will act as mentor texts for young authors and outside sources will be used as research and evidence for expository and persuasive writing.

Text Structure Approach

The text-structure approach taught in the *Read Side by Side Reading Program* (the collect-interpret-apply approach) is woven throughout each writing unit. In the narrative units, students will use the narrative plot line and the C. I. A. approach as a “plan of action” for drafting and revising their own writing. The method helps students break the sometimes-overwhelming task of writing a complete story into more manageable chunks. It guides the writer to include important story elements (characters, setting, conflict, tension, climax, turning point, and resolution). Students write one quadrant at a time, revising and editing each quadrant as they go.



Narrative and expository plot lines divided into quadrants.





Collect

1/4

- Character
- Setting
- Problems
- Important Events

Retell Summary






Interpret

2/4

- Key Repeated
-Words
-Phrases
- Author's Craft
- Author's Message/Theme

Line of Thinking






Interpret

3/4

- Evidence
- Turning Point
- Author's Message/Theme

Turning Point Writing





Apply

4/4

- Synthesize
- Evaluate

Synthesis Summary & Evaluation



The collect-interpret-apply (CIA) approach creates a "plan of action" for reading and writing.

Daily Schedule

When creating your language arts schedule, plan for three blocks of time: 1. read-aloud (45 minutes), 2. book clubs (45-minutes), and 3. writing (30-minutes). The three blocks work flexibly and together create 120-minutes for teaching language arts for grades 3-5. Blocks can be scheduled in any order and can be interrupted by other subject areas. For example, a teacher might choose to start the day with book clubs, teach writing after lunch, and finish the day with read-aloud.

For 6th grade teachers, I suggest at least a 75-minute minute block. Alternate teaching read-aloud and book clubs across the year (45-minutes) and add an additional time for extended writing (30-minutes).

Writing Block—30 minutes (2-4 days/week)

Instructional Days

15-minute whole-class mini-lesson

15-minute work time

Working Days

(Assignments can be done in class during the 30-minute block or assigned as homework.)

Instructional days begin with a whole-class lesson. Lessons will be 10-15 minutes in length, allowing a short time after the lesson for students to work on the assignment. While working, students will access the help of a writing partner as needed. It may be helpful to seat partners next to each other during the work time. If a student's writing partner is unable to help, both students raise their hand or sign up to conference with the teacher. (You may want to create a place for students to sign up on a whiteboard or sign-up sheet.) The teacher then confers with partnerships. This allows for greater efficiency of time and trains partners in how to help in the future.

Working days allow students to get started right away on writing projects. During the work time, students will continue to access a partner or the teacher for help as needed. If it is challenging to find time every day for writing, teachers might assign these work-projects as homework.

Scope and Sequence

Narrative and expository writing prompts match genres and topics students are being exposed to in reading. This allows teachers to use mentor texts to build background knowledge about a genre and subject, as well as expose students to the craft of writing.

A Staggered Start

I recommend creating a stagger between your read-aloud, book clubs, and the beginning of your writing unit. My suggestion is to wait to start book clubs until students have finished quadrant 1 of the read-aloud, and then wait to start the writing project until students have finished quadrant 1 of the book club books.

Weeks	1	2	3	4	5	6
Read-Aloud	Unit 1 Read - Aloud					
Book Clubs			Unit 1 Book Club			
Extended Writing				Unit 1 Extended Writing		

Each writing unit takes approximately 15 days to complete, from brainstorming and planning to sharing the published piece! Lessons in the units give students explicit instruction in the steps of the writing process, and the purpose and structure of narrative or expository writing. Some craft and grammar lessons will be incorporated as students revise and edit their writing. Teachers may want to supplement with additional craft, grammar, and spelling lessons between writing units.

Weeks	1	2	3	4	5	6
Read-Aloud	Unit 1 Read - Aloud					
Book Clubs			Unit 1 Book Club			
Extended Writing	<i>*Use this time to supplement with addition craft, grammar, and spelling lessons.</i>			Unit 1 Extended Writing		

Writing units follow a predictable schedule aligned to the steps in the writing process. This predictability makes it possible for teachers to substitute their own writing prompts in place of the ones I have suggested and build their own units using the provided template. Teachers should feel encouraged to match the content of writing assignments to other content areas as time allows!

Narrative schedule:

1. Brainstorm & Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make a list of story ideas.• Select a strong idea from the list.• Complete a <i>Narrative Writing Map</i>.• Write a blurb.• Design a cover.	Day 1-4
2. Draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write a draft using the 4-quadrant method.• Use descriptive language and details.• Use dialogue.• Use craft.	Days 5-8
3. Revise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use complete sentences.• Use language to show the passage of time.• Include details and elaboration.• Use precise language.• Use key vocabulary.	Days 9-10
4. Edit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attend to proper capitalization.• Attend to proper punctuation.• Attend to proper spelling.• Organize writing into paragraphs.	Day 11
5. Publish	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete a final product that is handwritten, typed, or other.	Days 12-13
6. Share	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share with a real audience.	Days 14-15

Expository schedule:

1. Brainstorm, Plan & Draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss the topic.• Plan using the <i>Quadrant Chart</i>.• Draft the introduction.• Draft a title.• Create a banner.	Day 1-4
2. Draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Draft the body paragraphs.• Draft the conclusion.• Use transition words.• Use strong language relating to the topic.	Days 5-8
3. Revise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use language to show cause and effect.• Stay focused on the topic.• Add details and evidence.• Use strong language relating to the topic.	Days 9-10
4. Edit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attend to proper capitalization.• Attend to proper punctuation.• Attend to proper spelling.• Organize writing into paragraphs.	Day 11
5. Publish	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete a final product that is handwritten, typed, or other.	Days 12-13
6. Share	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share with a real audience.	Days 14-15

Set Up for Success

In this section, I describe several ways in which you can facilitate the smoothest possible implementation of the lessons in each writing unit.

The Writing Notebook

The writing notebook is where students will keep reference materials, notes, drafts, and check-sheets utilized during each project. I recommend using either a ½” floppy binder, or a simple double-pocket folder.

Students can personalize their writer’s notebooks by adding clip art, magazine clippings, personal artwork, and stickers to the front and back covers. Cover the decorations with clear packing tape for durability.

Establish Partnerships

Each student will be matched with a partner whom he or she will go to for help during daily work time and meet with at the end of each quadrant of writing to obtain feedback, revision suggestions, and editing marks. I recommend pairing students who are close in writing level, rather than having a struggling writer paired with an above-grade-level writer. This might be the same partner used for read-aloud and/or book clubs. Note: If you have an uneven number of students, create one trio.

Assessment

Each unit provides a checklist for grading students’ published writing. All lessons and rubrics align to the Common Core State Standards (Common Core State Standards Initiative [CCSSI], 2010).

Units by Grade

3rd Grade

Unit	Mode & Genre	Mentor Text	Prompt
3.2	Personal Narrative Story	<i>The War with Grandpa</i>	Write a story about a conflict you had with someone and how that conflict was resolved.
3.3	Persuasive Essay	<i>Martin Luther King Jr.</i>	Persuade others to learn about the life of Martin Luther King Jr.
3.4	Expository Essay	<i>Glory Be</i>	Summarize what you have learned about the civil rights movement, segregation, and the events of Freedom summer.
3.5	Realistic Fiction Story	<i>Maniac Magee</i>	Write a story in which the main character accomplishes an amazing feat.

4th Grade

Unit	Mode & Genre	Mentor Text	Prompt
4.1	Realistic Fiction Story	<i>Shiloh</i>	Write a story about finding and rehoming a stray animal.
4.2	Fantasy Story	<i>The Castle in the Attic</i>	Write a story in which a fantastical character enters the real-world or a realistic character enters the fantastical world.
4.3	Historical Fiction Diary	<i>Streams to the River</i>	Write a series of 4 diary entries that tell one or more of the events of the Lewis and Clark expedition from the perspective of one of the members of the Corps of Discovery.
4.4	Argumentative Essay	<i>Children of the Gold Rush</i>	Do you believe the Yukon gold rush had a more positive or negative effect on the people and the environment? Make an evidence-based argument.
4.5	Expository Essay	<i>Aurora of the Yukon</i>	Summarize what you have learned about trains past, present, and future.

5th Grade

Unit	Mode & Genre	Mentor Text	Prompt
5.1	Realistic Fiction Story	<i>Earthquake Terror</i>	Write a story about surviving an earthquake.
5.2	Persuasive Essay	<i>Holes</i>	Persuade others to learn basic survival skills.
5.3	Historical Fiction	<i>Chains</i>	Write a series of 4 diary entries that tell about one or more events of the American Revolution from the perspective of a colonist.
5.4	Argumentative Essay	<i>Kids at Work</i>	Summarize what you have learned about the regulations regarding agricultural workers under the age of 18. Do you think these regulations should be changed? Make an evidence-based argument.
5.5	Science Fiction	<i>The City of Ember</i>	Write a story about the future in which one event or advancement has significantly altered our way of life.

6th Grade

Unit	Mode & Genre	Mentor Text	Prompt
6.1	Realistic Fiction Story	<i>The Westing Game</i>	Write a story in which a mystery is solved.
6.2	Expository Essay	<i>Children of the Dust Bowl</i>	Summarize what caused the movement of people from the Dust Bowl region between 1935 and 1940. What geographic and economic factors related to this movement of people? What challenges did these factors cause? How did the Okie's respond to these challenges? How can these past events inform the present?
6.3	Argumentative Essay	<i>Esperanza Rising</i>	What is culture? Can we belong to more than one culture? Make an evidence-based argument.