

Title of Unit	How to Write a Better Letter: Writing a Terrific Paragraph for a Friendly Letter
Student Teacher	Anne Crisler Fall 2011 Internship Placement I Jan Ingram's 2 nd Grade Class at Blossomwood Elementary School
Time Frame of Unit	September 19, 2011 to September 30, 2011

Alabama Course of Studies Standards for 2nd Grade

English & Language Arts (ELA)

8.) Organize sentences into a paragraph to address a topic or tell a story.

- Sorting information using graphic organizers
- Generating a topic sentence and a concluding sentence in a paragraph
- Drafting a written piece, including an introductory paragraph and a concluding paragraph
- Editing for spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and sentence variety
- Publishing final draft
- Using descriptive, narrative, and expository modes of writing

9.) Demonstrate correct use of question marks and capitalization of names, months, days of the week, and holidays in written expression.

- Using abbreviations, apostrophes in contractions, and apostrophes in possessives in writing
- Using commas in writing
Examples: dates, friendly letter greetings, physical address, items in a series
- Using exclamation points at the end of sentences to show emotion in writing.

10.) Use concrete nouns and action verbs in written communication.

- Examples: concrete nouns--teacher, beach, desk, dog
action verbs--run, eat
- Describing nouns using adjectives in writing
 - Substituting nouns with pronouns in writing
 - Using singular and plural nouns in writing

13.) Locate information in reference material using alphabetical order.

Examples: dictionary, textbook, nonfiction book, thesaurus

14.) Respond to various types of literature read aloud.

- Focusing attention on a speaker without interrupting
- Following multistep oral directions
- Interpreting presented information

Science 2nd Grade

6.) Identify characteristics of animals, including behavior, size, and body covering

11.) Identify basic components of our solar system, including the sun, planets, and Earth's moon.

Technology

6.) Identify uses of technology systems in daily living.

Email and sending a letter over the internet

10.) Design original works using digital tools.

Examples: tools-digital drawing tools, music software, word processing software, digital cameras.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

Students CAN:

- organize information using graphic organizers and lists.
- identify a main idea and supporting details.
- compose a five-sentence paragraph with a topic sentence, supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence.
- edit writings for spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.
- publish a final draft.
- properly use commas and capitalization, especially with proper nouns and in dates and addresses.
- create written work with concrete nouns and action verbs that adequately communicate the desired intent and information.
- accurately apply ending punctuation and commas in a series.
- locate information using reference books, such as a textbook, dictionary, and thesaurus.
- respond to and critically discuss literature read aloud.
- draw a picture that illustrates the ideas or information contained in their writings.
- summarize, explain, or describe content across the curriculum, such as science content or literary content consistent with the standards delineated under ALCoS.
- use computer technology to communicate and to design original works.

Start each mini-lesson by reading *Dear Teacher* by Amy Husband

Additional primary resources are BrainPop Jr. and ReadWriteThink.org

Monday, September 19

Morning Work

- ✚ Administer the pre-assessment.

Writing Instruction

- ✚ Gather students to the carpet and read the first three letters in *Dear Teacher*.
- ✚ Explain what we will be doing over the next 2 weeks.
- ✚ A letter with a paragraph about all the cool things you have been learning in second grade. The paragraph will have a minimum of 5 sentences.
- ✚ Design stationary.
- ✚ Create a drawing that correlates with the topic of the paragraph/letter.

- ✚ Referring to *Dear Teacher*, point out some components of letters, punctuation, and capitalization. Some of this will be a review for them. Some of it will be new.
- ✚ **Dear Teacher, ending punctuation nouns vs. proper nouns**
- ✚ Refer to the group writing sample we did a couple of weeks ago, where we wrote about the plants, animals, and people in the Blossomwood school neighborhood. We had a main idea for our first sentence, three sentences that had details to support the main idea, and a final sentence that wrapped-up the big idea about the main sentence.
- ✚ Create a sample for them to see and do it in letter form.
- ✚ Today's writing assignment: Write a list of some ideas you may want to put into your letter. Think about the list we made last week for our rescue dogs. A list can help us come up with ideas or Brainstorm.
- ✚ Post the writing prompts on the Elmo.
- ✚ Everyone will have a folder for their writing work, show them the folders.
- ✚ TAKE PICTURES OF THEM

Writing Center

Brainstorming ideas for your letter: MAKE A LIST

- ✚ To whom do you want to send this letter?
- ✚ What ideas could you put in your letter?
- ✚ What have you been doing in second grade?
- ✚ What subjects have you studied?
- ✚ What things have you learned?
- ✚ What activities have you done?
- ✚ What have you really liked doing?

Independent Practice

If you do not get everything done that you need to get done during morning writing time or during the Writing Center, get caught up during any down time that you might have. It is your responsibility to stay with it. You do not want to get behind.

Homework

- ✚ Take home provided notecards.
- ✚ Write your first and last name and your full address on the notecard
- ✚ Show them sample card and demonstrate.
- ✚ Have your parents help if you need them to

Tuesday, September 20

Morning Work

- ✚ This is our pull-out day, so there will be no morning work. Students will go to art class, library, and then computer lab before returning to the regular classroom.

Computer Time

- ✚ Have students log onto computers in lab and go to ReadWriteThink's Letter Generator at http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/letter_generator/
- ✚ See if I can access the internet on a whiteboard in computer lab.

- ✚ Have students go step by step through the process of creating a simple letter using the letter generator software.
- ✚ They will all create the same letter based upon an example I have created (see attached sample).
- ✚ As we progress through the steps of the letter, I will emphasize the components of a letter in terms of name, purpose, and placement on the page.
- ✚ The five basic components of a friendly letter are the following:
 - Heading – sender’s address in upper right-hand corner of page
 - Greeting – ex. “Dear John,” emphasize the placement of the greeting and the comma that follows the greeting
 - Body – this is the main part of the letter that tells what the letter is about.
 - Closing – ex. “sincerely” or “love”
 - Signature – your name.
- ✚ The simple one paragraph letter that they will write to Mrs. Ingram describes these components of a letter.
- ✚ When they are done, they are to email their letter to my email address.
- ✚ I will print them and we will place them in their Letter Writing Unit folders.

Independent Practice

- ✚ If there is time in the afternoon, show a BrainPopJr movie about writing a letter and addressing an envelope at <http://www.brainpopjr.com/readingandwriting/writing/sendingaletter/>
- ✚ See about the word wall, activities, and the Easy Quiz/Hard Quiz challenge

Homework

- ✚ Bring an envelope from home that was mailed to your house. It should not be anything personal and it should be empty. It is okay if it is junk mail.
- ✚ Make sure each child turned in notecard with his/her name and address

Wednesday, September 21

Morning Work

- ✚ Practice writing neatly using your D’Nealian Workbook
- ✚ Write a super sentence. (Handout is attached)

Writing Instruction

- ✚ Gather students to the carpet and read the next three letters in *Dear Teacher*.
- ✚ Discuss the 5 steps of writing:
 - Prewriting
 - Drafting
 - Revising
 - Editing
 - Publishing

- ✚ Graphic Organizer
- ✚ Have samples and model
- ✚ Emphasize the concept of a main idea and supporting details
- ✚ It is basically this method
 - topic sentence
 - three supporting sentences
 - concluding sentence that connects back to the topic sentence.
- ✚ Students should return to their desks to watch BrainPop Jr. movie on main idea and supporting details.
- ✚ Discuss movie and reiterate how Moby determined the main idea and supporting details.
- ✚ TELL STUDENTS: Work on taking the information from your list and developing your main sentence idea in your graphic organizer.
- ✚ Do not worry about spelling and punctuation at this point. But, write neatly so that you and I can understand the ideas you are trying to express.
- ✚ Students should return to their desks and begin on their graphic organizers.
- ✚ Teacher will walk around the room to monitor progress and offer assistance.

Writing Center

- ✚ Continue with developing sentence ideas in your graphic organizer.

Independent Practice

- ✚ Continue with today's writing assignments if you still need to work on them.

Homework

- ✚ No Homework!

Thursday, September 22

Morning Work

- ✚ Each student will complete the next Super Sentence activity.
- ✚ Early finishers may add a second, related sentence of their own creation.
- ✚ Students can share final products.

Writing Instruction

- ✚ Go to the rocking chair carpet
- ✚ Read the next two letters in *Dear Teacher*
- ✚ Review letter components, conventions of writing, and proper nouns
- ✚ Connect to week's reading story fantasy vs. realism
- ✚ Review letter components from pre-test sheet
- ✚ Praise work progress thus far
- ✚ Briefly review topic sentence, supporting detail sentences, and graphic organizer
- ✚ Return to seats and watch BrainPopJr on writing a paragraph
- ✚ Explain conferencing process in reading groups

Writing Center

- ✚ Continue to work on developing graphic organizers with topic sentence and supporting detail sentence concepts.
- ✚ Students will move into small reading groups early to allow for individualized conference during group time.
- ✚ Review topic sentences and supporting sentence ideas. Provide feedback, correction, and motivation to each student's writing efforts.

Independent Practice

- ✚ Continue with objectives and activities from writing center

Homework

- ✚ Pick a verb from your graphic organizer and find a different word that means the same thing from the thesaurus

NOTES FOR ME: Based upon formative assessment, i.e. reviewing what students have written thus far, encourage students to do more than just textbook explanation of butterfly life cycle. What have **they learned** in the process of studying this topic? What activities or projects have they done? Use Mrs. Keith's lesson from yesterday as an example.

Friday, September 23

Morning Work (Test day)

Writing Instruction

- ✚ Read the next couple of letters from *Dear Teacher*
- ✚ As letters are read, have students find punctuation, capitalization, commas in a series, etc. for review.
- ✚ Emphasize addresses on envelopes and display on ELMO envelopes brought in by students.
- ✚ Notice the format, capitalization, and punctuation of the address.
- ✚ Emphasize with students that the first line contains the person's name (proper nouns and capitalization).
- ✚ The second line contains the person's street or home address.
- ✚ The third line contains the city and state names and the zip code.
- ✚ Emphasize capitalization, the placement of commas, abbreviation of state, and purpose of the zip code (5-digit number)

Writing Center

- ✚ No writing center today due to testing

Independent Practice

- ✚ Students are to continue with their graphic organizers, if they are ready, move on to rough draft.

Homework

- ✚ None, it's Friday!

Monday, September 26

Morning Work

- ✚ Put students in pairs for Thesaurus game
- ✚ Go over what words they found.
- ✚ Use this as example of how students can use better, more descriptive and active words in their writing.

Writing Instruction

- ✚ Have students go to the carpet and read a couple of more letters from *Dear Teacher*
- ✚ Discuss note above about not writing something straight out of the textbook, but something they have done or learned.
- ✚ Have students write a group paragraph based upon earlier sample graphic organizer to see connection between graphic organizer content and rough draft.

Writing Center

- ✚ Students are to begin writing rough draft if they have not already done so.

Independent Practice

- ✚ Students are to continue with their rough drafts. I will assist individual students as needed.

Tuesday, September 27 **THIS IS OUR PULL OUT DAY**

Morning Work (no art today) & Independent practice

- ✚ Students are to work independently throughout the day. I will begin conferences with students on their rough drafts.
- ✚ In computer lab, students will watch BrainPop Jr. movies on letters and envelopes, proper nouns, capitalization, and punctuation. All movies together will take between 15-20 minutes. This is essentially a review for them.
- ✚ If there is time today, show students a sample of stationary that I have created. Let them know we will start this soon. If this is not done today, do it tomorrow.

Wednesday, September 28

Morning Work

- ✚ Using ELMO and ActiveBoard, review content for post-test. Call on students to respond, pair-share, and discuss possible answers with their groups.

Writing Instruction

- ✚ Go to carpet to read more letters from Dear Teacher
- ✚ Review as usual based upon the content of letters, and connect to post-test review from this morning.
- ✚ Discuss how students are doing with their writing and the writing process.
- ✚ Remind them about conferences and stationary design.
- ✚ Return to desk to watch and discuss BrainPop Jr. on commas in a series.

Writing Center

- ✚ Work on final draft and conferencing time.

Independent Practice

- ✚ Work on final draft

Thursday, September 29

(I believe someone from SPACE is coming today in the morning)

Morning Work

- ✚ Using ELMO and ActiveBoard, review content for post-test. Call on students to respond, pair-share, and discuss possible answers with their groups.
- ✚ If there is time, play match-up the puzzle pieces game.

Writing Instruction

- ✚ Use this time for writing and conferencing. For students who are ready, they can begin peer review

Writing Center

- ✚ Use this time for writing and conferencing. For students who are ready, they can begin peer review

Friday, September 30

THERE IS A FIELD TRIP ON THIS DAY IN THE MORNING AND OF COURSE THIS IS TEST DAY.

Notes: Nothing was done today except post-test review on the unit due to testing and the field trip to Huntsville High School for the play. I will have to finish up on Monday. They gave me a surprise party today.

Monday, October 1

Due to my losing some time toward my unit because of field trips, testing, a party, and SPACE assessments, Jan is letting me use all day today to finish up.

- ✚ Final review for post-test and administer post-test
- ✚ Complete final drafts and conference
- ✚ Have students select clipart, font, borders, colors, etc. for their stationary
- ✚ Students are to draw pictures
- ✚ I will type up and print final products over the upcoming Fall Break weekend.