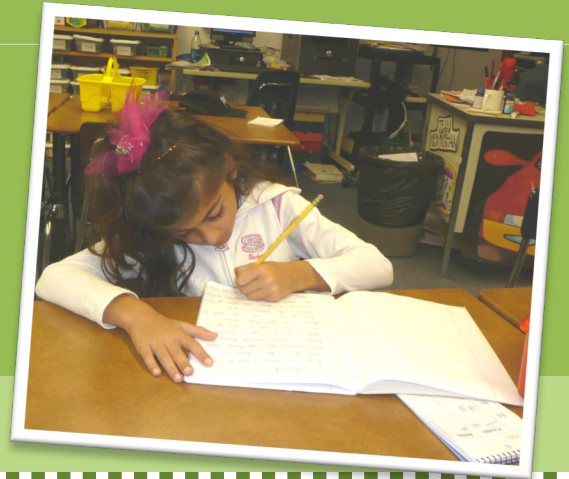


Writing Diverse Stories

In this unit, students will explore different text structures and try out those structures in their own writing.



Unit Overview

Part One Family stories

Students will learn to write stories that focus more on family members and habitual activities that developing plot, a characteristic of some Hispanic stories.

Part Two Many moments stories

Students will learn to write stories that use thematic links to tie together many moments into one story, a characteristic of some African American stories.

Part Three Poetic stories

Students will learn to write stories that sound like poems and leave information to be inferred by the reader, a characteristic of some Asian American stories.

About the unit

Over the course of this unit, students will come to understand that there are many different types of stories. This unit is based on the idea that our culture impacts how we tell stories. Students will learn several different narrative structures that reflect stories that may be told by Hispanic, African American and Asian American authors. They will be invited to use these different text structures as well as other characteristics of the authors' writing. This unit draws upon Lucy Calkin's *Units of Study for Primary Writing: A Yearlong Curriculum (K-2)* and *Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5*. It would work well as an additional unit in classrooms already using Lucy Calkin's *Units of Study*, but could be used in any classroom with a writing workshop.



Age/grade level

This unit is particularly well suited for students in grades 1 through 4, but could also be used with kindergarteners and fifth graders. Teachers should adapt the lessons to best meet the development of their students.

When to teach the unit

The unit should occur after students have been introduced to the structure and routines of writing workshop and learned how to write personal narrative stories. Ideally, this unit would come after units on poetry and using authors as mentors. Beyond these recommendations, this unit could fit anywhere within the year.

Length of the unit

Fifteen lessons are included in the unit with each lesson designed to take one day. The unit is designed to take about one month to complete. This is so that you can add lessons or spend more than one day on a new writing strategy according to the needs of your students.

Structure of the lessons

Each day, writing workshop should include a mini-lesson, time to write and confer, a mid-workshop teaching point and a sharing time after students have been writing (Calkins, 2003). Students need ample time to write because it takes time to get started and get into the flow of writing. They should have at least 30 to 45 minutes of time to write. This means the workshop will take about an hour each day. Think about how you can use your time wisely in other parts of the day to allot an hour for writing. In this unit, I will describe the mini-lessons in detail since this is where the bulk of your teaching will occur. The mini-lessons will begin with a link to something you have noticed the students doing or something they have learned before. Then, you teach a new skill or strategy which will often mean you will write in front of your students to model the skill or strategy. During this time, it is important to actively involve students in some manner. Asking students to turn and talk is one way to accomplish this active engagement. Finally, you will link the mini-lesson to what they will do when they write during the workshop. This structure is taken from Lucy Calkin's *Units of Study* (2003). You can refer to *The Nuts and Bolts of Teaching Writing* for more information on these structures. I will also provide some guidelines for assessment and differentiation. However, I will not provide specifics on conferring, mid-workshop teaching points or the sharing time, since these are particular to your students needs. Instead, I will provide some general recommendations here.

Conferring

At the beginning of the unit, you'll likely want to have shorter conferences with students so you can meet with most of the students in the first several days to get a sense of how all of your students are doing. Conferences are particularly productive when students lead the conference. This way, they learn independence rather than waiting to start writing until they have met with you. To do this, you can use open-ended questions to guide the conference such as: "What are you working on? How is it going? What do you plan to do next?" Within the answers to the questions, you can see if students are having a particular problem that you want to confer with them about. Also, make sure to notice and celebrate what they are doing well, especially if it relates to recent mini-lessons. You will want to make note of the students using mini-lesson strategies so that you can highlight them in mid-workshop teaching points or in the share at the end of the workshop. As you confer with students, it can be useful to use a checklist or some method of keeping notes so that you can see individual strengths and needs over time and get a sense of how your class is doing as a whole.

Mid-workshop teaching point

As you confer with students, look for something that you should highlight for the entire class. This could be related to the day's mini-lesson or a past mini-lesson. It could also refer to writing behavior or managing materials so that you reinforce good writing behaviors. This should only take one or two minutes.

Share

The share will often be a time for students to share what they have been writing during the workshop. It is especially helpful to choose students who have been doing something that relates to the day's mini-lesson. However, this could also be the time to introduce another writing skill or strategy that does not need an entire mini-lesson.

In each session, I have scripted out what I might say when delivering the mini-lessons. However, this does not mean that this is a scripted curriculum. The scripts I have provided are merely suggestions for you to use to craft your own mini-lessons. Just as we want children to write from their own experiences, you should be writing from your own experiences as well. So, while you may choose to use some of the mini-lessons exactly as they are, such as the ones based on mentor texts, you should also tailor other mini-lessons so that you are modeling authentic writing and meeting the needs of your students.

Session 1: Noticing a new text structure: A family story

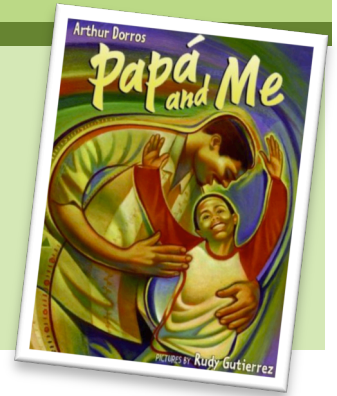
For the next five sessions, you will use the book *Papá and Me* by Arthur Dorros. Here are some other books that could also work for the lessons or be used as extensions if your students need more time with this story structure:

Ísla by Arthur Dorros

Tonight is Carnaval by Arthur Dorros

Family Pictures: Cuadros de familia by Carmen Lomas Garza

My Aunt Otilia's Spirits by Richard Garcia



In this lesson, you will introduce students to a different story structure that focuses on family members and habitual activities rather than one small moment, as you have asked them to do in the past. You should read aloud the story once before writing workshop, either as a part of reading workshop earlier in the day or the day before.

Mini-lesson

Connection: Tell students that in this next unit, they will learn how to write different types of stories.

“This year, you have learned that writers focus on one small moment and use that moment to write stories. Now, we’ll learn that authors don’t always just write about one small moment. Just like there are all types of different people in the world, there are all types of different stories. All of these stories can be wonderful stories to read.”

Teaching: Help students identify that *Papa and Me* is a family story that describes the boy’s father.

“This morning, we read this book by Arthur Dorros called *Papa and Me*. As I flip through the pages, I want you to think if this story was just about one small moment. What are some different moments you notice in the story?” Students turn and talk about the different events in the story. Ask a few students to share. “That’s right, the boy did lots of different things in the story. But, I notice that in all of the pages, he describes his father. This makes me think his father must be very important to him, so he decided to write a story about what he does with his father.”

Link: Suggest to students that they too could write stories about family members.

“So, if you’re starting a new story today, maybe you could think about someone who is really important to you and your story could be about what you do with that person. Or, you could look back through the stories you have written and see if you wrote about a family member. You could add more to that story about that family member.”

Assessment

At the beginning of the unit, you should try to check in with a lot of students through conferences to get a sense of where they are as a class. I have included an assessment checklist from *Authors as Mentors* (Calkins & Hartman, 2003) that could be used as you conference with students at the end of this unit. This way, you can keep track of students’ progress. Also, you may want to score them on the assessment rubric, also from *Authors as Mentors* (Calkins & Hartman, 2003) at the beginning, middle and end of this unit. The advantage of this checklist and rubric is that they focus on the writing process, rather than the writing product. This avoids unfairly judging students stories as poor because they do not have a European North American story structure of beginning, middle and end (McCabe, 1997).

Session 2: Trying a new text structure: Writing a family story

In this lesson, you will model writing a story that focuses on one or more family members as the students noticed in Papá and Me. If possible, write about someone other than your father. You should change the mini-lesson so that the story you write is authentic.

Mini-lesson

Connection: Remind students that yesterday they learned about a different text structure and tell them that today you will write a story with that text structure.

“Yesterday, we saw how Arthur Dorros wrote a story that was all about a little boy and what he does with his father. We learned that instead of just writing about one small moment, we can write about our family or people we care about. I even saw some of you writing stories about your family. Today, I am going to share with you a story I want to write about my family.”

Teaching: Model writing a story about a family member.

“Arthur Dorros’ book made me think that I could write a story about my family too. I want to make sure I include lots of details in the story to make it interesting, so I think I’ll write about something I used to do every year with my Grandma at Christmas. Every year, we would make sugar cookies. I think I can remember lots of details about this.” *This is where you will want to tailor the length, spelling, etc. to your students and their development. For example, you might only write a couple of sentences and write them all in front of your students if they are in first grade so that they can see how you go about spelling unfamiliar words and using punctuation and other writing skills. However, if your students are in upper elementary, you might only model writing the first few sentences or have it already written and share it with them.*

Link: Suggest to students that they might write a story about a family member, too.

“So today, just like yesterday, if you’re starting a new story, you might think about a family member you want to write about. Remember that you want to include details in your story so that the reader can really get to know the person you write about.”

Assessment

You’ll want to continue to conference with many students today to get a sense of where they are as a class. Use the checklist described in session one to keep track of how you spend your conferences and how students are progressing, especially in the attitude section. At this point, you’ll want to decide if students are ready to move on from studying the text structure to looking more deeply at Arthur Dorros’ craft. If so, then go ahead with session three. If not, you might use another text (see note at the beginning of session one) to provide another example of a family story. Alternately, you could model another story or highlight a student who has written a family story.

Session 3: Studying Arthur Dorros' writing: Present tense

Today you will return to *Papá and Me* to help students notice particular characteristics about his writing. You will record these observations in a chart that you will add to throughout the unit. This chart is introduced in *Authors as Mentors* (Calkins and Hartman, 2003).

Mini-lesson

Connection: Remind students that they have already used authors as mentors and that they can continue to do this.

“Writers, you have all tried to use some things in your own writing that you have noticed in books by famous authors. We can look at Arthur Dorros’ writing just like we did with author authors to see what we can add to our own writing.”

Teaching: Help students notice that he uses present tense.

“I’m going to re-read just the first couple pages of *Papá and Me* and I want you to think about when the story is happening.” *Read a few pages and elicit answers from students about when the story is taking place.*

“You’re right, it’s happening right now. I want you to turn and talk to a partner about why the story is happening right now.” *Guide the students to tell you that it makes the story interesting because it seems like it is actually happening or some other similar response. Ask the students to help you fill in your chart about what they noticed. I’ve included a sample below. However, you can change this based on their ideas or wording.*

Where?	What do you see?	Why is he doing this?	We call it...	Other books?
<i>Papa and Me</i>	Takes place now	Makes it exciting	Present tense	

Link: Suggest to students they might want to write in present tense too.

“So today we saw that Arthur Dorros uses verbs in the present tense like sing, call, flips and splashes. These verbs make the story exciting because it seems like its happening right now. You could write your story like it is happening right now just like Arthur Dorros.” *You might want to highlight students who use active, present tense verbs in either the mid-workshop teaching point or the share at the end of the workshop.*

Assessment

As you conference, notice which students are using the strategy you highlighted in the mini-lesson. You do not want to force students to use each strategy, but you want to notice when they do so that you can celebrate this and highlight it for the rest of the class, either during a mini-lesson, the mid-workshop teaching point or the share at the end of the workshop. Continue to use your assessment checklist. You may also want to keep some anecdotal notes in a notebook or on a clipboard so that you can have more information on how your students are doing. You can even use a page of sticky labels, writing each student’s notes on an individual label and then peeling them off and adding it to a separate piece of cardstock for each student. That way, you will have one piece of paper with all of your notes about a particular student. You can use this to inform your conferences with that student and share this information with parents.

Session 4: Studying Arthur Dorros' writing: Dialogue

Mini-lesson

Connection: Remind students that they can look at the same book for different writing ideas.

“Writers, it is really helpful to look at the same book a few time to try and notice lots of different things that the writer does. That way, we can try to add those things to our own writing.”

Teaching: Help students notice that he uses dialogue to show, not tell.

“I’m going to read a few more pages from *Papá and Me*, starting where we left off yesterday.” *Read a few pages, and then ask students to turn and talk about what they noticed. Help students notice that he uses dialogue.*

“That’s right, we get to hear exactly what his father says. This helps us get to know his father. But also, this is a good way that the author shows us what is happening, rather than just telling us about it. This is something we talked about at the beginning of the year and now we see that real authors do this too!”

Work with students to add to the chart from yesterday. I have included an example below, but it should reflect your students’ words.

Where?	What do you see?	Why is he doing this?	We call it...	Other books?
<i>Papá and Me</i>	Takes place now	Makes it exciting	Present tense	
<i>Papá and Me</i>	Characters are talking	Show, not tell	dialogue	

Link: Suggest to students they might want to add some dialogue to their stories.

“So if you are writing a story about a family member, you might want to go back and add some dialogue. You’ll want to think about what that person actually says when you write their words.”

Assessment

At this point, you have probably identified a few students who might need more help examining author’s craft. You might want to spend a bit more time in conferences with those students to gain information about how to help them progress.

Session 5: Writing like Arthur Dorros: Dialogue

Mini-lesson

Connection: Remind students that they can use what they have noticed in *Papá and Me* in their own writing.

“Writers, you have all noticed so many great things about Arthur Dorros’ writing in *Papá and Me*. All the things you have noticed are things you can use in your own writing.”

Teaching: Model adding dialogue to your story.

“I’m going to re-read my story that I wrote about making cookies with my Grandma every Christmas and see if I can add anything I have noticed in Arthur Dorros’ writing.” *Read your story, or part of your story if you teach upper elementary grades, and then ask students to turn and talk about what you could add.* “These are all wonderful ideas. I want to just start with one idea, so I think I’m going to go back and add some dialogue. When I do, I want to think about what my Grandma would actually say so that my readers can really get to know her. I’m going to add two little marks like this, these are called quotation marks, when I start writing what she says and then again when she finishes.” *Just like before, this modeling should be tailored to your students’ development and needs.*

Link: Suggest to students they might go back and add some dialogue to their stories.

“So today you could go back and add some dialogue to your story. Dialogue will help your story come alive and help your readers get to know your family. Remember to put quotation marks when someone starts talking and then again when they finish.”

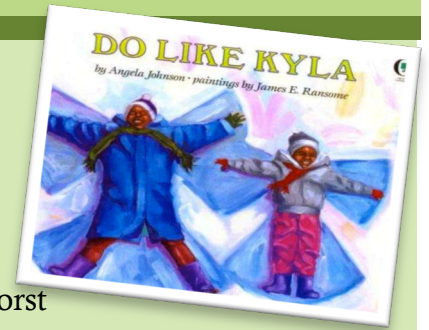
Assessment

Today is the last day of part one, so you will want to decide if you need to spend more time on particular strategies that you have highlighted. Use your assessment checklist and your anecdotal records to make this decision. You have a variety of options if your students need more time. You could add an additional mini-lesson on a particular strategy or use your mid-workshop teaching points during the next part of the unit to remind students about strategies. Alternately, you could pull a small group of students for an additional mini-lesson during writing time if only a few students need more time. You could also find students who are using the strategies and highlight them during mini-lessons or the share at the end of the workshop.

Session 6: Noticing a new text structure: Many moments stories

This lesson begins part two of the unit, where you will begin to focus on many moments stories that are thematically linked. You will begin this unit by examining the text structure in the book *Do Like Kyla* by Angela Johnson. Tomorrow, you will read a different book with this text structure. Here are some suggestions for other books that would work in this part of the unit:

Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day by Judith Viorst
When I Was Young in the Mountains by Cynthia Rylant
Joshua by the Sea by Angela Johnson



Today's mini-lesson is very similar to session one. As in that session, you will probably want to read this book aloud the previous day or before writing workshop begins. This mini-lesson is adapted from session nine in *Authors as Mentors*, so if you have already completed that unit, you could omit or change this session.

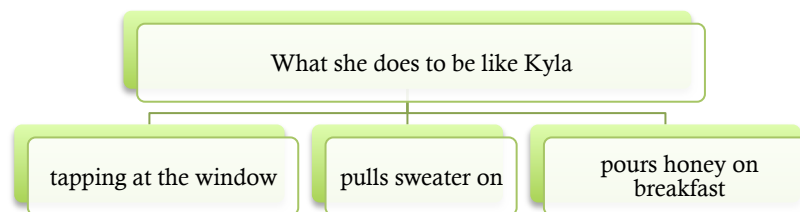
Mini-lesson

Connection: Remind students that they are learning how to write different types of stories.

“Writers, I saw so many wonderful stories that you wrote about your families. Last week we learned that sometimes writers write about family members or friends who are really important to them. Today, we are going to see a story that is about family, but it has something else that is different about it than a lot of the stories we have been writing.”

Teaching: Help students identify that *Do Like Kyla* is a many moments story.

“Yesterday we read this book by Angela Johnson called *Do Like Kyla*. We have learned that writers often focus on small moments when they write a story and give lots of details about one moment. I want you to think...was this a small moments story?” *Have students turn and talk about the story.* “You’re right, it wasn’t just about one small moment. So sometimes writers might write many moments stories. All the moments in the story are linked together in some way. Right now, we’re going to see how they are linked. Let’s think about the events in the story.” *Guide the students to identify story events and then the link that she is always trying to be like Kyla. Fill in the graphic organizer together by first listing the events in the small boxes and then identifying the link and writing it in the large box. I have included an example below.*



Link: Suggest to students that they too could write a many moments story.

“So, if you’re starting a new story today, you could write a many moments story like Angela Johnson.”

Assessment

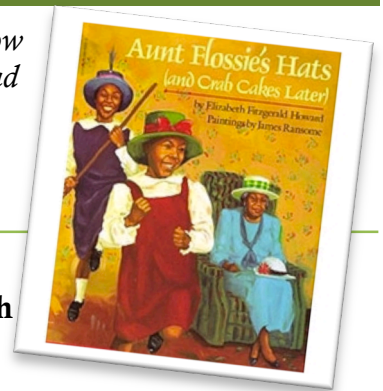
Since today is the first day of this part of the unit, use your conferences to get a sense of students’ understanding of the new text structure. Notice which students attempt to write many moments stories. Don’t expect that they have to write many moments stories today, but you’ll want to know who is so that you can highlight them in share. Also, notice who is still using strategies from part one.

Session 7: Noticing a new text structure: Many moments stories

This session will be very similar to the last session, but you will use a different book to show them that the thematic link can be many different things. If possible, you should have read the book prior to the mini-lesson.

Mini-lesson

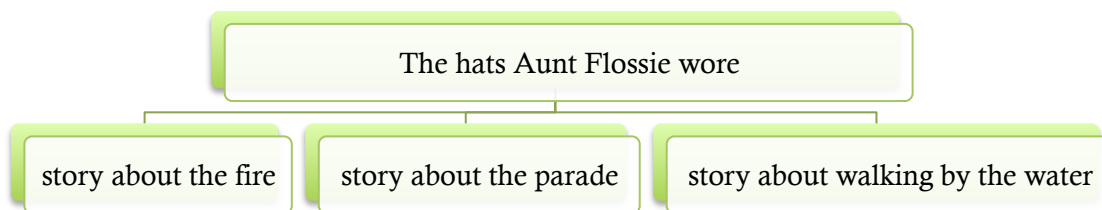
Connection: Remind students that yesterday they learned about a different text structure and tell them that today they are going to see another book with that same text structure.



“Yesterday we saw that *Do Like Kyla* was a many moments story. Some of you even wrote many moments stories during writing workshop yesterday. Today we are going to look at another book that is a many moments story.”

Teaching: Help students see that *Aunt Flossie's Hats* is also a many moments story.

“Yesterday during reading workshop we read this book by Elizabeth Fitzgerald Howard called *Aunt Flossie's Hats (and Crab Cakes Later)*. I want you to think, was this book a small moments story or a many moments story.” *Have students turn and talk. You can read them a few pages or show them the pictures if you think they will have trouble answering this question.* “That’s right, this story also had many moments. Aunt Flossie even told stories from the past. Today, we’re going to think about what connected all these stories just like we did yesterday with *Do Like Kyla*.” *Work with the students to fill out the same graphic organizer from yesterday, but about this book. I’ve included an example below.*



Link: Suggest to students that they might write a many moments story, too.

“So yesterday we saw that the moments were linked by the girl wanting to be like her sister. Today, Aunt Flossie told a bunch of different stories, but they were all connected because she was remembering the events by the hat she wore each time. You could write a many moments story today just like these two authors did (*show the two books*).”

Assessment

You might want to assess students on the rubric either today or tomorrow since you are about halfway through the unit. This could help you decide if you need to spend more time on particular strategies. You may even decide to insert a mini-lesson on a different aspect of the writing process depending on your students’ needs.

Session 8: Trying a new text structure: Many moments stories

In this session you will model writing a many moments story. I have included an example below, but you should choose a story from your own experience to make your writing authentic.

Mini-lesson

Connection: Remind students that they have noticed that writers write many moments stories and today you'll show them how to write a story like that.

“We have seen that sometimes writers write many moments stories instead of always writing small moments stories, like in *Do Like Kyle* and *Aunt Flossie's Hats*. Today, I'm going to write a many moments story.”

Teaching: Model writing a many moments story.

“So I know that in the many moments stories we read, all the moments were connected in some way. So, I want to think about a way I could link together several moments into one story. I used to do things like my sister, but I think that would be too much like Angela's story. I want mine to be different. Hmm... I go running out at the beautiful park, so I think I might link together different stories about when I was running at the park. I think I'll use the same graphic organizer to plan my stories that we used yesterday.”
You can fill in the same graphic organizer as you did in the previous two sessions. This might be enough for modeling, or you might choose to write a few sentences. You could save the writing until the next day. You'll want to choose how much you write and how you go about it based on your students' needs and developmental level, just like you did in session two.

Link: Suggest to students they might use the graphic organizer if they want to write a many moments story.

“I have put some graphic organizers that look just like the one that I used in the paper bins on your table. That way, if you want to start a many moments story today, you could use the graphic organizer to get started.”

Assessment

Deciding on a theme and linking together stories is a pretty difficult story structure to grasp. You will want to spend today getting a sense of which students are able to do that and which students are struggling. This could be a good time to pull a small group for a mini-lesson during writing time or add another session on this story structure. Here are some more books that are many moments stories:

Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day by Judith Viorst

When I Was Young in the Mountains by Cynthia Rylant

Joshua by the Sea by Angela Johnson

You might want to carry these books with you as you confer with students.

Session 9: Studying Angela Johnson’s writing: Comeback lines

Today you will add to the chart you started during session three. I have chosen to highlight a particular characteristic of Angela Johnson’s writing to highlight, but you could change this based on your students’ needs. Or, you could just see what your students notice and add their observations to the chart. If you used *Authors as Mentors*, you already highlighted Angela Johnson’s use of comeback lines in a different text, so you could just add this book as another example of that and put it in the “other books” section of the chart. But, if you did not teach the *Authors as Mentors* unit, you could add some mini-lessons (see sessions three and five in *Authors as Mentors*).

Mini-lesson

Connection: Tell students that today you will look back at the book *Do Like Kyla* to see what you can notice about Angela Johnson’s writing.

“Last week, we looked at Arthur Dorros’ writing to see what we could add to our own writing. Today, we are going to do the same thing with Angela Johnson’s writing in the book *Do Like Kyla*.”

Teaching: Help students notice Angela Johnson’s use of comeback lines.

“I’m going to re-read a few pages of the book *Do Like Kyla* and I want you to think about what you notice about Angela’s writing.” *Have students turn and talk about what they notice. You can choose to highlight something different or multiple characteristics, depending on your students’ responses and developmental level.* “That’s right. She uses the same line over and over again. It’s also the title of the book... *Do Like Kyla*. Sometimes she changes it a bit like when she says, ‘I do, just like Kyla’ or ‘I do like her’ but usually she says, ‘I do like Kyla.’ Why do you think she says this over and over again?” *Help students come to the conclusion that she is repeating the theme that links the different moments together.* “So, we’ve seen that it can help our reader understand our theme if we use the same line of text over and over again.” *Now you can work with students to add to the chart you started in part one.*

Where?	What do you see?	Why is he/she doing this?	We call it...	Other books?
<i>Papa and Me</i>	Takes place now	Makes it exciting	Present tense	
<i>Papa and Me</i>	Characters are talking	Show, not tell	dialogue	
<i>Do Like Kyla</i>	Same words repeat	Helps the reader see the theme	Comeback lines	

Link: Suggest to students that they too could use comeback lines.

“Today if you are working on a many moments story, you might add a comeback line so that your reader understands your theme.”

Assessment

Your conferences and assessment today will differ depending on if you taught the *Authors as Mentors* unit or not. If so, you might expect students to feel fairly confident with comeback lines and be using them in their writing. If not, you might wait until after tomorrow’s lesson to get a better sense of their use of comeback lines. Make sure you are continuing to use your checklist to decide if you need to insert other mini-lessons on different parts of the writing process.

Session 10: Writing like Angela Johnson: Comeback lines

In this session, you will model the characteristic of Angela’s writing that students noticed yesterday. Today can be adapted based on which characteristic you highlighted yesterday. Alternately, you could highlight a student who used that characteristic in your writing.

Mini-lesson

Connection: Tell students that today you will show them how you will add comeback lines to your story.

“Yesterday, we noticed that Angela Johnson used a comeback line in *Do Like Kyla* to help us understand the theme that linked her many moments together. I realized that I should maybe add a comeback line to my many moments story so that my readers can see the theme that links together all the many moments.”

Teaching: Help students notice Angela Johnson’s use of comeback lines.

“I know that I want my comeback line to be about my theme and I want it to sound right in my story. So, first, I’m going to think about my theme and what my comeback line should be and then I’m going to think about where I should add it to my story.” *The rest of this mini-lesson will depend on your many moments story that you wrote in session eight. Once again, you’ll want to decide how and how much you write based on your students’ needs. You might even have students turn and talk and see if they can think of various comeback lines for your story.*

Link: Remind students that they can use comeback lines.

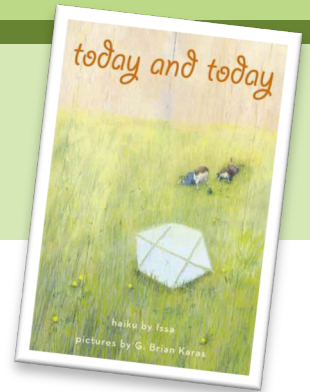
“Yesterday we saw Angela Johnson’s comeback line in *Do Like Kyla* and today I added a comeback line to my story. You could add a comeback line to your story too.”

Assessment

Today you will want to use your conference checklist and rubric to decide if students need more time with this part of the unit since the next session begins part three. You might decide that the whole class needs more time. If so, you could examine comeback lines in *Aunt Flossie’s Hats* or other books or spend more time modeling many moments stories. If only a few students need more time, you might pull them for a small-group mini-lesson during writing time. Also, think about how you can use the mid-workshop teaching point and the end of workshop share to keep reinforcing this part of the unit during the next part.

Session 11: Noticing a new text structure: Poetic stories

For the next three sessions, you will use the book *today and today* by Issa. This is a book written in haiku, a form of poetry that is very popular in Japan. You could use other books that are written as poems, but the constrained structure of haiku might help children get started writing poetic stories.



Ideally, you will want to read the book before the writing workshop. The book is divided into sections based on the seasons, so you might just want to choose one season to focus on in the writing workshop. I have chosen spring since this unit will likely occur during the spring.

Mini-lesson

Connection: Tell students that they will learn a new text structure.

“So far, we have seen that authors don’t only write small moments stories. They can write stories that focus on a family member, like *Papá and Me*, or stories that contain many moments, like *Do Like Kyla* and *Aunt Flossie’s Hats*. Now, we’re going to look at another kind of story authors might write. We’re going to look back at the story we read yesterday, *today and today* by Issa. He is a famous Japanese author of haiku, which is a type of poetry.”

Teaching: Go back and re-read one section of the story and help students notice that this story is a poem.

“I’m going to re-read the first part of the story about spring and I want you to think about what you notice about this story and what might be different than some other stories we have read.” *Have students turn and talk about what they notice.* “This book is written like a poem. You can tell because the sentences don’t sound like you would talk, they sound just a little bit different. Now, I said that Issa writes haiku, which is a type of poetry. Let’s look at the first page. There are three lines. That’s because all haikus are made of three lines. Now, haiku also has something special about each line. In the first line, there are five syllables, in the second line, there are seven syllables and in the fifth line, there are five syllables again. Let’s clap each line. So, why do you think Issa chose to tell this story as a collection of haiku, or poems?” *Have students turn and talk about why he chose this text structure.*

Link: Suggest to students that they too could use poems to write a story.

“Today, you could either write a new story and try to make it out of poems, remembering all the things we learned about poetry in our poetry unit. Or, you could go back to a story you have already written and try to write it again as a collection of poems.”

Assessment

This is a really difficult type of text structure to use. Students have to be very proficient with language to manipulate it into a poem. Haiku is especially difficult. Therefore, notice which students attempt to use poetry to write stories, but know that this may take awhile for students to do. Continue to use your assessment checklist and use the mid-workshop share, conferences and share time to spiral back to the strategies you taught in the first two parts of the unit.

Session 12: Trying a new text structure: Writing poetic stories

Today you will model writing a story as a poem. You might need to insert another mini-lesson on poetry if you have not done a whole unit on poetry before teaching this unit.

Mini-lesson

Connection: Tell students that today you will show them how you write a poetic story.

“Yesterday, we noticed that *today and today* is a collection of haiku, which is a type of poetry from Japan. Today, I am going to show you how I might write a story made up of poems.”

Teaching: Model writing a poetic story.

“So, first I want to think about what I want to write about. I noticed that *today and today* is also a many moments story, but I think I could also turn a small moments story into a poem. I also noticed that Issa’s poems did not rhyme, but they had a beautiful rhythm instead. He also left out words sometimes and chose his words really carefully other times to make it sound beautiful. I have been thinking about writing a story about when I learned to water ski, so I think I am going to focus on a small moments story. I think this would be a good story to make a poem because I could use lots of really descriptive words. Okay, I’m going to start with...” *Once again, you will choose how and how much you write depending on your students’ needs. You should also make sure you choose a topic from your own experience so that your writing is authentic.*

Link: Tell students that they too can write a poetic story.

“I remember all the wonderful poems you wrote during our poetry unit. So today, you could try turning a whole story into a poem. It could be a many moments story or a small moments story.”

Assessment

Notice what students choose to do when they write today. Make sure you note which students try writing poetic stories because you could highlight those students during the share. Also, you may want to read additional books that are written as poems since haiku is difficult to write and they may need more examples. For upper elementary students, you could even pair this part of the unit with reading aloud a chapter book written this way, such as *Home of the Brave* by Katherine Applegate or *Out of the Dust* by Karen Hesse.

Session 13: Studying Issa’s writing: Million-dollar words

Today’s mini-lesson will help students begin to revise their writing, which leads into the next few sessions where they will be preparing to publish and share their writing. You could choose a different characteristic of Issa’s writing or even focus on the illustrations, since students will soon be illustrating their own stories.

Mini-lesson

Connection: Remind students that they have looked closely at authors’ writing in the past and that they will do that again today.

“We have noticed lots of things that authors do when they write and we have used those things in our own writing. Today, we’re going to look more closely at Issa’s writing in *today and today* and see what we can notice.”

Teaching: Help students notice that Issa uses “million-dollar words.”

“I’m going to re-read the first part of the story and I want you to think about what you notice about his writing.” *Have students turn and talk about what they notice. If no one notices his word choice, you could highlight it or you could choose to highlight something that the students notice.* “I notice that he uses really specific and beautiful words like *miraculous* and *entangled*. He could have said that it was great to be in cherry blossom shadows, but he said, ‘miraculous to be in cherry blossom shadows!’ He could have said a kite got stuck in a tree, but he said, ‘a kite entangled in a gnarled tree.’ When he uses these specific words, I get a picture in my mind.” *Work with students to add to the chart you started in the first part of the unit. You could give good word choice any name students create or use “million-dollar words.”*

Where?	What do you see?	Why is he/she doing this?	We call it...	Other books?
<i>Papa and Me</i>	Takes place now	Makes it exciting	Present tense	
<i>Papa and Me</i>	Characters are talking	Show, not tell	dialogue	
<i>Do Like Kyla</i>	Same words repeat	Helps the reader see the theme	Comeback lines	
<i>today and today</i>	Specific words	Helps the reader get a picture in her mind	Million-dollar words	

Link: Tell students that they might go back to their writing and improve their words.

“Today, you might pick a story you think you want to publish and go back and see if you can change some of your words to million-dollar words.”

Assessment

This is the last session before students begin revising, editing a publishing one of the stories they wrote during the unit. Therefore, you may want to use your assessment rubric today to decide if students are ready to publish or if they need more time. If they need more time, you could choose to add some more mini-lessons where students see what they notice in Issa’s writing. Alternately, you could go back to strategies from part one or part two of the unit. Or, students may need more time with other areas of the writing process, so you could add some different mini-lessons based on their needs.

The last two sessions in this unit look a bit different because they will vary greatly depending on your students' needs and what you have done in writing workshop up until this point. I have outlined one day for students to edit and revise a story of their choice that they have produced during this unit and one day for an authors' celebration where they get to read their story. However, your students might need much more time to revise and edit. This is why the unit is designed to take a month, but only has fifteen sessions. Feel free to add sessions based on your students' needs.

Session 14: Fixing and fancying up our writing

You should model a new revising or editing strategy. You may choose to model several strategies over the course of several days. If you are using *Units of Study*, Lucy Calkins describes many different revising and editing strategies. The strategies you choose will depend on the grade level of your students and what you have taught thus far in writing workshop. I have included a few options below.

Revising strategies from *The Craft of Revision* (Calkins & Bleichman, 2003):

- Adding more information and details
- Deleting unnecessary information
- Revising leads
- Showing, not telling
- Revising endings

Editing strategies from *Writing for Readers: Teaching Skills and Strategies* (Calkins & Louis, 2003):

- Putting spaces between words
- Using a capital letter at the beginning of each sentence
- Using punctuation
- Checking spelling

Session 15: Celebrating writing diverse stories

Students will be more invested in writing throughout the unit when they learn that their writing will be shared with others. There are a variety of ways you can celebrate students and have them share their writing. However, asking each student to read their story in front of the whole class takes a very long time and is difficult for students to stay engaged. Here are some different options from *Units of Study*:

- Reading into the Circle: Students read their favorite part of their story to the whole class. Students sit in a circle and the reading goes around the circle. Then, students read their entire story to a small group (Calkins & Mermelstein, 2003).
- Reading Aloud for Visitors: Students read their story to a reading buddy or a visitor such as parent. The visitors can write a comment to the author in response (Calkins & Oxenhorn, 2003).
- Ceremonial Book Placement: Students add their books to the classroom library (Calkins & Pessah, 2003).
- Authors Board: Students add their pictures to an author bulletin board that also has pictures of famous authors.

A simple event can become a celebration by bringing in some punch and cookies, setting the mood with lighting, inviting guests and giving rounds of applause. Celebrations do not have to take a lot of time to plan and organize.

Assessment Checklist for Authors as Mentors

Monitoring Children's Progress
Recording Your Teaching

- T** - taught
- O** - must teach soon
- I** - saw evidence that writer can do
- X** - saw more evidence that writer can do

	Names																				
Attitude	Writer rereads exemplar texts, noticing craft techniques.																				
	Writer notices several instances in which the same craft technique has been used.																				
	Writer speculates why an author used a craft technique.																				
Planning	Writer approaches writing thinking not only about the topic but also about how to write well.																				
	Writer recognizes that she can make choices about form. Will this be a Small Moment narrative? A Many Moments narrative?																				
Purpose	Writer emulates craft techniques.																				
	Writer independently drafts, revises, learns from writers, and begins new pieces.																				
Independence	Writer recognizes qualities of good writing in his or her own and other writer's texts.																				
	Writer notices detail, strong leads, show-not-tell, repetition, beautiful language.																				
Genre	Writer increases stamina; texts are dramatically longer than beginning-of-the-year work.																				
	Writer writes in such a way that both teacher and child can reread her writing.																				
Productivity	Writer is a fearless and resourceful speller, using strategies to tackle difficult words.																				
	Writer cuts extraneous sections out of a piece.																				
Graphophonics	Writer rehearses for writing outside school and comes to the desk with an idea in mind.																				
	Writer reads the work of other authors and holds peer conferences in the service of writing.																				
Process	Writer initiates revision and is focused on the goals of revision, rather than just strategies.																				
	Writer chronicles external as well as internal life. Readers learn what a character not only does but also thinks, hopes for, and feels.																				
Qualities of Good Writing	Narratives often contain more than two sequential episodes.																				
	Writer uses literary language.																				
Language	Writer reads, rereads, and pores over selected exemplar texts, noticing what an author has done and speculating why the author may have used a method or technique.																				

Assessment Rubric for Authors as Mentors

Monitoring Children's Progress Recording Your Teaching

	1	2	3	4	5
Attitude	The child shows an eagerness to study the texts other authors have written, noticing techniques that author used. She is often enthusiastic about the prospect of trying to incorporate a technique another author has used into her own writing. That is, she has an "I, too, can do that!" attitude. Meanwhile, the child shows a growing interest in the craft of good writing and an attentiveness to thinking not only about what but also about how she writes.				
Planning	The child approaches a new piece of writing thinking not only about her subject but also about her craft. It is as if the stakes have risen and she has a new investment in writing well. Specifically the child knows she can write about one Small Moment or about Many Moments. With some reminding, she can approach writing with a consciousness not only of her topic but also of her form.				
Independence	The child can and, at least with encouragement, does study published literature asking, "What has this author done that I can point to and think about and emulate?" She may tend to see techniques that are rather obvious and that others have helped her see in other books (repetition, unusual punctuation, details), but still she is able to independently study the work of another author and to incorporate some of what she admires into her own writing. She chooses topics, drafts, and revises with independence and initiative.				
Genre	The child's narratives are longer and more developed, sometimes resulting in stories that contain more episodes and include more developed beginnings, endings, and characters. Sometimes the new proficiency will lead to growing pains and result in stories that are unfocused chains of events rather than nicely formed stories. The child's narratives incorporate more narrative techniques, including time markers, developed settings, dialogue, etc. The reader learns of a character's internal experience.				
Purpose	In addition to writing stories, the child writes lists or list-books. With help, she weighs which form best fits her subject.				
Productivity	The child approaches writing with a grand sense of purpose during this unit, as she becomes more invested in writing with literary quality and in writing in ways that please readers. She writes with hopes that an audience will admire the way she's written.				
Graphophonics	The child's writing is much more fluent, her stories dramatically longer, over the course of the year. If the child began the year writing a single sentence on a page and writing 2 pages a day, she may now write 5 sentences on a page and still write several pages each day. The paper on which the child writes will have changed to allow for much smaller drawings and to channel much more time toward writing. The child may write and revise 4 or 5 stories this month, each involving approximately 5 or 6 pages.				
Writing Process	The child incorporates what she knows about word endings, blends, high frequency words, etc., into a resourceful effort to tackle unfamiliar words. The child shows a willingness to write anything.				
Qualities of Good Writing	The child's writing process is more fluid as she independently moves between rehearsing for writing, planning, drafting, revising, and editing her work. The process of working on one text is more extended and more extensive. Often the child rehearses for writing outside school, coming to the desk with an idea in mind. The process of writing now involves not only writing and revision but also reading the work of another author and holding peer conferences in the service of writing. The child initiates revision, and her emphasis during revision is less on the strategies and more on the goals of revision.				
Language	This unit of study especially spotlights qualities of good writing. The child is more able to study a text, noticing that there are sections of the text she admires. She will become accustomed to reaching for the words to name what she sees that she admires in texts. That is, she'll generate vocabulary for talking about qualities of good writing, or at least use vocabulary that a peer or her teacher has generated.				
Reading	The qualities of good writing the child identifies may not be the most significant qualities, but the child will develop a new attentiveness to language, a new zeal for beautiful writing. This leads to more literary language and may also lead to writing that is overly decorative.				
	The child's writing incorporates more story language. Her words are less like oral language and more like written language.				
	The child reads, rereads, and pores over selected exemplar texts. She notices what an author has done, finds other instances of the same technique, and speculates why the author may have used this method or technique.				

Children's books used in the unit:

Dorros, A. (2008). *Papá and Me*. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers.

Howard, E.F. (1991). *Aunt Flossie's Hats (and Crab Cakes Later)*. New York, NY: Clarion Books.

Issa. (2007). *today and today*. New York, NY: Scholastic Press.

Johnson, A. (1990). *Do Like Kyla*. New York, NY: Orchard Books.

Curriculum materials and other references:

Calkins, L. (2003). *The Nuts and Bolts of Teaching Writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Calkins, L. & Bleichman, P. (2003). *The Craft of Revision*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Calkins, L. & Hartman, A. (2003). *Authors as Mentors*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Calkins, L. & Louis, N. (2003). *Writing for Readers: Teaching Skills and Strategies*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Calkins, L. & Neville, B. (2003). *Resources for Primary Writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Calkins, L. & Oxenhorn, A. (2003). *Small Moments: Personal Narrative Writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Calkins, L. & Pessah, L. (2003). *Nonfiction Writing: Procedures and Reports*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

McCabe, A. (1997). Cultural Background and Storytelling: A Review and Implications for Schooling. *The Elementary School Journal*, 97 (5), 453-473.

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