

Lesson 14: Performance Task: Drafting a Press Release



CCS Standards

- **W.4.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- **W.4.4:** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **W.4.5:** With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.



Daily Learning Target

- I can write a press release sharing the results of our class project. (W.4.2, W.4.4, W.4.5)

Ongoing Assessment

- Press release draft (W.4.2, W.4.4, W.4.5)

Agenda

1. Opening

- A. Reviewing Learning Target (5 minutes)

2. Work Time

- A. Determining Characteristics of the Format: Press Release (10 minutes)
- B. Language Dive: Model Press Release (10 minutes)
- C. Partner Writing: Drafting a Press Release (30 minutes)

3. Closing and Assessment

- A. Group Share: Press Release (5 minutes)

4. Homework

- A. Complete the Writing Thank You Notes II in your Unit 3 Homework.
- B. Complete the Language Dive Practice: Model Press Release in your Unit 3 Homework.
- C. Accountable Research Reading. Select a prompt and respond in the front of your independent reading journal.

Teaching Notes

Purpose of lesson and alignment to standards:

- In this lesson, students work in partners to draft a press release that describes how the class took action to make a difference in their community (W.4.2, W.4.4, W.4.5).
- In Work Time B, students participate in a Language Dive that guides them through the meaning of a sentence from the model press release. The focus of this Language Dive is on summarizing the class project and using prepositional phrases (L.4.1c). Students then apply their understanding of the meaning and structure of this sentence when drafting their press releases during Work Time B of this lesson, and when contributing ideas to a whole-class press release in Lesson 15. Refer to the Module 1 Appendix for additional information regarding a consistent Language Dive routine.
- Students focus on working to become effective learners on a characteristic of their choice as they work with a partner to draft a press release.

How this lesson builds on previous work:

- Students planned their press release in the previous lesson. In this lesson, they use their plan to write a draft.

Areas in which students may need additional support:

- Students may need support with drafting their press releases. Consider grouping students who may need additional support together for additional teacher guidance.

Assessment guidance:

- Consider using the Writing Process Checklist for Writing and Language Skills during the partner writing in Work Time C (see Module 1 Appendix).

Down the road:

- Students will refer to their draft and the Characteristics of Press Releases anchor chart in the next lesson as they write the class press release.

In advance:

- Pre-determine partners for drafting of the press release in Work Time C.
- Review Questions We Can Ask during a Language Dive anchor chart as needed (begun in Module 3, Unit 1, Lesson 5.)
- Preview the Language Dive Guide and consider how to invite conversation among students to address the questions and goals suggested under each sentence strip chunk (see supporting materials). Select from the questions and goals provided to best meet your students' needs.
- Post: Learning targets and applicable anchor charts (see materials list).

- Continue to use the technology tools recommended throughout Modules 1–3 to create anchor charts to share with families; to record students as they participate in discussions and protocols to review with students later and to share with families; and for students to listen to and annotate text, record ideas on note-catchers, and word-process writing.

Supporting English Language Learners

Supports guided in part by CA ELD Standards 4.I.A.4, 4.I.C.10, 4.I.C.11, 4.I.C.12, 4.II.A.1, 4.II.A.2, 4.II.B.3-5, 4.II.C.6, 4.II.C.7

Important points in the lesson itself

- The basic design of this lesson supports ELLs by building on work begun in the previous lesson, providing students with an opportunity to talk through each paragraph of a press release before beginning to write, and inviting students to participate in a whole-class Language Dive focused on helping them summarize their project for Paragraph 1.
- ELLs may find it challenging to determine the best way to organize the points in their press release, as well as to keep pace with the class when drafting their press releases in Work Time C. Consider working with a small group of students as they write and further scaffolding the writing as needed (see Meeting Students’ Needs).

Levels of support

For lighter support:

- During the Language Dive in Work Time B, challenge students to generate questions about the sentence before asking the prepared questions. (Example: “What questions can we ask about this sentence? Let’s see if we can answer them together.”)

For heavier support:

- To help students understand the purpose of formatting, and to emphasize the unique formatting of a press release, consider displaying texts with formatting that students are more familiar with during Opening B. For example, display a friendly letter, pointing out the address, date, salutation, etc.; and display a news article, pointing out the headline and byline. Explain that just as the formatting of these texts signals the type of texts they are, so does the formatting of a press release.

Universal Design for Learning

- **Multiple Means of Representation (MMR):** Continue to support comprehension by activating prior knowledge and scaffold connections for students.
- **Multiple Means of Action and Expression (MMAE):** Continue to support development of executive skills and strategies by offering scaffolds for students who are learning to set appropriate personal goals.
- **Multiple Means of Engagement (MME):** When students work with a partner, this is a good opportunity to foster community and support students to engage in positive collaboration. Before students share their thinking with classmates, discuss strategies for how to give a compliment or ask questions for further understanding.

Vocabulary

Key:

(L): Lesson-Specific Vocabulary

(T): Text-Specific Vocabulary

(W): Vocabulary Used in Writing

- press release, formatting (L)
- support, organization, make a difference, take action, impact (W)

Materials

- ✓ Performance Task anchor chart (begun in Unit 1, Lesson 1)
- ✓ Working to Become Effective Learners anchor chart (begun in Module 1)
- ✓ Model press release (from Lesson 13; one to display)
- ✓ Characteristics of Press Releases anchor chart (begun in Lesson 13; added to during Work Time A)
- ✓ Language Dive Guide: Model Press Release (for teacher reference)
 - Questions We Can Ask during a Language Dive anchor chart (begun in Module 3)
 - Language Dive Chunk Chart: Model Press Release (for teacher reference)
 - Language Dive Note-catcher: Model Press Release (one per student and one to display)
 - Language Dive Sentence Strip Chunks: Model Press Release (one to display)
- ✓ Press Release Planning note-catcher (from Lesson 13; one per student)
- ✓ Paper (lined; one piece per student)
- ✓ Domain-Specific Word Wall (begun in Unit 1, Lesson 1)

Opening

A. Reviewing Learning Target (5 minutes)

- Direct students' attention to the learning target and read it aloud:
“I can write a press release sharing the results of our class project.”
- Underline *press release*. Turn and Talk:
“What is a press release?” (writing that reports on an event that is provided to a news reader or the media)
“What is the purpose of a press release?” (to promote the organization that held the event or that the press release is about)
- Direct students' attention to the **Performance Task anchor chart** and remind them that they have been working toward writing a press release throughout the module.
- Tell students they are going to work with a partner to write a draft of a press release sharing the class project and its impact, and that in the next lesson they will use their individual drafts to write a class press release that will be shared with the local media.
- Focus students on the **Working to Become Effective Learners anchor chart** and invite them to read the habits of character on the chart to themselves. Tell students to choose a habit to focus on as they work today.

Meeting Students' Needs

- (Noticing Homonyms) Remind students that the words *press* and *release* have multiple meanings (example: *press* = [verb] to exert physical force on something; [noun] coverage in newspapers and magazines; *release*: [verb] to let go; (noun) the action of making a product available for general viewing) and invite them to explain how understanding the meaning of each individual word helps them understand the compound word *press release*.

Work Time

A. Determining Characteristics of the Format: Press Release (10 minutes)

- Display the **model press release** and remind students that they analyzed this text in the previous lesson in order to understand the structure and content of press releases.
- Remind students that a press release is an informational text. Point out that the model has some unique *formatting*, or the overall appearance and arrangement of the text, that they might not have seen before in the informational texts.
- Think-Pair-Share:
“What unique formatting do you notice in this press release?” (“FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE”; “ANYWHERE, New York (December 7, 2017)—”; “Contact” followed by contact information for the teacher; “END”)
“Why do you think a press release is formatted in this way?” (to signal the type of text it is)

- As students share what they notice, underline and circle them on the model. Capture student responses on the **Characteristics of Press Releases anchor chart**.
- Tell students that they should include these elements on their own press releases when they begin drafting.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For ELLs: (Noticing Formatting of Familiar Texts) Before inviting students to notice and annotate the formatting on the model press release, consider inviting them to do so with a type of text that is more familiar to them (see For heavier support).
- For students who may need additional support with comprehension: Provide individual copies of the press release for students to annotate during the discussion. (MMR)

Work Time

B. Language Dive: Model Press Release (10 minutes)

- Tell students they will now participate in a Language Dive using the format from Module 3.
- Focus students' attention on the **Questions We Can Ask during a Language Dive anchor chart** and remind them that they thought of their own questions to ask during a Language Dive.
- Think-Pair-Share:
 - ***“What is one question you can ask during a Language Dive?” (Responses will vary.)***
- Reread the heading and the first paragraph of the model press release.
- Focus on the sentence:
 - “The fourth-grade class at School 123 raised \$1,234 for UNICEF at their ‘Baked Goods for UNICEF’ bake sale.”
- Use the **Language Dive Guide: Model Press Release** and **Language Dive Chunk Chart: Model Press Release** to guide students through a Language Dive of the sentence. Distribute and display the **Language Dive Note-catcher: Model Press Release** and **Language Dive Sentence Strip Chunks: Model Press Release**.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For students who may need additional support with oral language and processing: Allow ample wait time after asking questions during the Language Dive. (MME, MMAE)

Work Time

C. Partner Writing: Drafting a Press Release (30 minutes)

- Invite students to retrieve their **Press Release Planning note-catcher** and remind them that they planned the key points of their press release in the previous lesson.
- Tell students that they will be writing a draft with a partner, and move them into pre-determined pairs.
- Direct students' attention to the Characteristics of Press Releases anchor chart. Tell them that before they begin writing, they will talk with their partner about what they will include in each part of their press release. Encourage students by reminding them, "If you can say it, you can write it!"
- Review the criteria on the anchor chart for Paragraph 1 of a press release. Turn and Talk:
 - "How will you begin your press release?" (Responses will vary.)*
 - Conversation Cue: "Do you agree or disagree with what your classmate said? Why?" (Responses will vary.)*
- Repeat with Paragraphs 2–4 and the conclusion.
- Distribute **paper** and tell students that even though they will be working with a partner, they should each complete a draft.
- Invite students to begin working. Remind them to refer to their planning note-catcher, the Characteristics of Press Releases anchor chart, and the **Domain-Specific Word Wall** as they work.
- Circulate to support students as they work. Ask questions to guide student thinking:
 - "What key point do you want to make about how the class made a difference?"*
 - "What evidence can you give to support your point?"*
 - "How does that evidence show how the class made a difference in the community?"*
- After 20 minutes, refocus students whole group. Use a checking for understanding technique (e.g., Red Light, Green Light or Thumb-O-Meter) for students to self-assess against the learning target and how well they demonstrated the habit from the Working to Become Effective Learners anchor chart they decided to focus on today.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with comprehension: (Reviewing Question Words) While reviewing the criteria for Paragraph 1, explicitly point out that the first paragraph answers the five W question words (Who, What, When, Where, Why). Invite students to answer each question as they turn and talk about how they will begin their press release, supporting them in summarizing their project and writing Paragraph 1. (MMR)
- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with planning: (Sharing Out as a Class) After students turn and talk with their partner about what they will include in each paragraph of the press release, invite them to share out as a class. This will provide additional time for students to process the structure of the press release before writing, and it will ensure that all groups are on the same page for when they combine their drafts into a class press release in the subsequent lesson. (MMAE)
- For students who may need additional support with auditory processing and sustained effort: Provide an index card with questions to guide student thinking as they work in pairs. (Example: "What key point do you want to make about how the class made a difference? What evidence can you give to support your point? How does that evidence show how the class made a difference in the community?") (MMR, MME)

Closing and Assessment

A. Group Share: Press Release (5 minutes)

- Tell students they are going to share a strong phrase or sentence from their draft that describes how the class made a difference in their community and that should be included in the class press release.
- Invite students to silently reread their drafts to identify a phrase or sentence that they want to share.
- Select volunteers to share out the sentence they identified.
- Tell students that for homework, they will write another thank you note to someone who helped the class in complete the project. As in Lesson 13, briefly discuss whom they might write this letter to.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with motivation: (Transparency) Invite students to explain how the sentence they chose describes the difference their project made in their community, ensuring it is transparent to all students. Provide a sentence frame for support. (Example: "This phrase/sentence describes how our class made a difference in our community because _____.") (MMR, MME)

Homework

A. Complete the Writing Thank You Notes II in your Unit 3 Homework.

B. Complete the Language Dive Practice: Model Press Release in your Unit 3 Homework.

C. Accountable Research Reading. Select a prompt and respond in the front of your independent reading journal.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with written expression: (Oral Response) Read aloud, discuss, and respond to your prompt orally with a partner, a family member, or a student from Grades 3 or 5, or record an audio response. (MMAE)