

## Lesson 10: Writing an Informative Paragraph: First Draft



### CCS Standards

- **RI.3.1:** Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
- **W.3.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- **W.3.2a:** Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension.
- **W.3.2b:** Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details.
- **W.3.2d:** Provide a concluding statement or section.
- **W.3.4:** With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.



### Daily Learning Targets

- I can write an effective focus statement for an informative paragraph about how where frogs live affects how they look and/or act. (W.3.2a)
- I can draft an informative paragraph about how where frogs live affects how they look and/or act. (RI.3.1, W.3.2, W.3.4)

### Ongoing Assessment

- “How Does Where a Frog Lives Affect How It Looks and/or Acts?” draft (RI.3.1, W.3.2, W.3.4)

### Agenda

#### 1. Opening

- A. Engaging the Writer: KWEL Chart: Frogs (5 minutes)
- B. Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minutes)

#### 2. Work Time

- A. Writing an Effective Focus Statement (10 minutes)
- B. Independent Practice: Drafting an Informational Paragraph (30 minutes)

#### 3. Closing and Assessment

- A. Sharing Paragraphs (10 minutes)

#### 4. Homework

- A. Accountable Research Reading. Select a prompt to respond to in the front of your independent reading journal.

## Teaching Notes

### Purpose of lesson and alignment to standards:

- In this lesson, students independently write a focus statement and draft an informative paragraph, using evidence they collected through research, to answer the question: How does where a frog lives affect how it looks and/or acts? (RI.3.1, W.3.2)
- In this unit, the habit of character focus is working to contribute to a better world. The characteristic they are reminded of in this lesson is: use my strengths as they share their drafts in small groups.
- The research reading that students complete for homework will help build both their vocabulary and knowledge pertaining to frogs and specifically how frogs look and act according to where they live. By participating in this volume of reading over a span of time, students will develop a wide base of knowledge about the world and the words that help describe and make sense of it.
- Students who finish quickly or require an extension could include information and evidence from independent research reading in their informative paragraph.

### How it builds on previous work:

- Students continue to add to the KWEL Chart: Frogs.
- Students have been researching the answer to the question throughout the latter half of the unit. In this lesson, they use their research notes to draft their informative paragraphs.
- Continue to use Goals 1-3 Conversation Cues to promote productive and equitable conversation.

### Areas where students may need additional support:

- Some students may need additional support translating their ideas into writing.

### Assessment Guidance:

- Consider using the Grade 3 Observational Checklist for Writing and Language Skills to informally assess student writing from this lesson.
- Consider using the time that students are writing independently to check on their independent reading journals and vocabulary logs.

### Down the road:

- In Lesson 11, students revise their informative paragraphs based on peer feedback.
- For the End of Unit 2 Assessment in Lesson 12, students will independently write an informative paragraph. Over the course of the unit, students have been gradually released to write their own paragraphs. In this lesson, they write independently, with an opportunity to orally process with a partner before writing.

### In advance:

- Prepare Grade 3 Observational Checklist for Writing and Language Skills (for teacher reference).
- Post: Learning targets.

- Opening A: Students complete their KWEL chart using word processing software or online document tools such as Google Docs.
- Opening A, Work Time B: Students complete their KWEL chart and draft in a word processing document, for example a Google Doc using Speech to Text facilities activated on devices, or using an app or software like Dictation.io (<https://dictation.io/speech>)
- Work Time B: Students draft their informative paragraphs using word processing software or online document tools such as Google Docs.

### Supporting English Language Learners

Supports guided in part by CA ELD Standards 3.I.C.10, 3.II.A.1.

#### Important points in the lesson itself

- The basic design of this lesson supports ELLs to prepare to write independently on the End of Unit 2 Assessment, as they pay close attention to the Informative Writing Checklist to gauge the success of their writing and their peers’.
- ELLs may find it challenging to retain both content knowledge and information about writing structure as they progress through this lesson. Both can be difficult to comprehend and retain in a new language. Remain clear about when the class is discussing content and when the class is discussing structure. For example, the writing prompt contains the word *affect*, and in this lesson, students consider how to write an *effective* focus statement. If time allows, discuss the difference between these two words with the class.

#### Levels of support

*For lighter support:*

- Invite students to notice the question words in the writing prompt (as embedded questions) and compare them to other ways that questions are used (as true questions).
- Encourage students to continue to self-monitor any language errors they noticed during the previous lesson and make corrections.

*For heavier support:*

- The writing prompt contains some embedded questions (question words such as *where* and *how* phrased within statements) that are key to comprehending its meaning. Included in the Meeting Students’ Needs column, there are a series of questions to help clarify the meaning. However, additional instruction on this structure would further support students in successfully interpreting the prompt.
- As students begin to draft their focus statements, there is a lot of prior knowledge they must engage. To scaffold their independent work, consider labeling or color coding the class model paragraph about polliwogs with each key part of an informative writing piece (focus statement, facts, definitions, details, conclusion) and leave it visible as students are working independently so they can use it as a reference for structure.

### Universal Design for Learning

- **Multiple Means of Representation (MMR):** In this lesson, various anchor charts are displayed for student reference. Provide copies of these anchor charts in advance so they can maintain focus, sketch, or take notes about their thinking, and access important information as they work independently. Additionally, consider providing individual copies of anchor charts to students who may benefit from this option for perception.
- **Multiple Means of Action and Expression (MMAE):** In this lesson, support students as they work on writing effective focus statements: Model by demonstrating how to write a focus statement that answers simple, high-interest questions such as: “What are the good things about living where you live?” or “How does having a sibling impact your life?”
- **Multiple Means of Engagement (MME):** While holding high expectations is important, be aware that sometimes these expectations can raise student anxiety. Emphasize the importance of process and effort by discussing how even when you try your best, you may make a mistake and that is okay because it is an opportunity to learn and use that knowledge the next time.

### Vocabulary

#### Key:

(L): Lesson-Specific Vocabulary

(T): Text-Specific Vocabulary

(W): Vocabulary Used in Writing

- effective, focus statement, informative paragraph (L)

### Materials

- ✓ Freaky Frog research notebook (from Lesson 1; one per student)
  - KWEL Chart: Frogs (page 1 of Freaky Frog research notebook)
  - Frog Adaptations Research note-catcher (page 4 of Freaky Frog research notebook)
- ✓ Frog Adaptations writing prompt (from Lesson 8; one per student)
- ✓ Frog Adaptations Research note-catcher (answers, for teacher reference)
- ✓ Informative Writing Checklist (from Lesson 3; one per student and one to display)
- ✓ *Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures* (one per student and one to display)
- ✓ “Why Do Polliwogs Wiggle?” class draft (from Lesson 3; one to display)
- ✓ Lined paper (one piece per student)
- ✓ Domain-Specific Word Wall (started in Unit 1, Lesson 1)
- ✓ “How Does Where a Frog Lives Affect How It Looks and/or Acts?” draft (example, for teacher reference)
- ✓ Working to Contribute to a Better World anchor chart (from Unit 1, Lesson 1)

## Opening

### A. Engaging the Writer: KWEL Chart: Frogs (5 minutes)

- Invite students to take out their **Freaky Frogs research notebooks** and turn to their **KWEL Chart: Frogs** on page 1.
- Remind them what each letter represents.
- Invite students to record any new learning or questions from the past couple of lessons on their KWEL Chart: Frogs (e.g., they may want to record something from their Frog Adaptations Research note-catcher from Lesson 9).

### Meeting Students' Needs

- For students who may need help organizing ideas for written expression: Write sentence frames in advance on the KWEL chart for Opening A. If students need to work on asking questions, have them focus on the W column, providing sentence frames to guide their work. If students need to work on referring explicitly to a text, have them focus on the L column, providing sentence frames to guide their work. (MMAE)
- For ELLs: Students who need heavier support may be hesitant to share their questions and thoughts. Provide sufficient wait time and assist students in verbalizing their ideas.

## Opening

### B. Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minutes)

- Direct students' attention to the posted learning targets and ask for a volunteer to read the first learning target aloud:  
***"I can write an effective focus statement for an informative paragraph about how where frogs live affects how they look and/or act."***
- Underline the word *effective*. Ask students to discuss with a partner and cold call students to share out:  
***"What does effective mean?" (successful; you get the results you want/need)***
- Underline the words *focus statement*. Ask students to discuss with a partner and cold call students to share out:  
***"What is a focus statement?" (A focus statement is a sentence in the beginning that states or tells the focus, or main idea, of the writing. The focus statement usually answers the research or focus question.)***
- Select a volunteer to read the second learning target aloud:  
***"I can draft an informative paragraph about how where frogs live affects how they look and/or act."***
- Underline the words *informative paragraph*. Ask students to discuss with a partner and cold call students to share their responses with the whole group:  
***"What is an informative paragraph? What is the purpose of an informative paragraph?" (An informative paragraph informs the reader of something.)***

- Invite students to take out their **Frog Adaptations writing prompt** and select a volunteer to read it aloud for the group. Invite students to suggest where they are on the steps at the bottom of the writing prompt. (ready to write the focus statement and draft their paragraph)
- Remind students of their audience. Other students in grades 3 and 4 will read their Freaky Frog book, and this paragraph will be included in that book.

### Meeting Students' Needs

- For ELLs and students who may benefit from visual supports: Provide the opportunity to draw or sketch definitions, act them out, or list synonyms for key terms in the learning targets, such as *effective*, *focus statement*, *informative paragraph*, *affect*, and *draft*. (MMR)
- For students who may need additional support with fluency: Invite them to practice reading the Frog Adaptations writing prompt in advance and then call on them to read aloud to the class during this lesson. Giving these students an opportunity for public success will build their confidence and internal motivation. (MMAE)
- For ELLs: Ask: "I see the word *how* in the focus statement. Does that mean it is a question?" (No; the verb *do* is not used, so in this case, *how* means "the ways that.") "What about *where*?" (It means "the place" because it is not a question.) "Can somebody rephrase the focus statement, replacing *how* and *where* for their meanings?" (I can draft an informative paragraph about the ways that the place where frogs live affects how they look and/or act.)
- For ELLs: Ask: "What does *inform* mean?" (to teach someone something he or she did not know)
- For ELLs: Practice the pronunciation of the word *informative*. Clap out the syllables and note the stressed syllable: in-FORM-a-tive. Note the position of the tongue and shape of the mouth.

### Work Time

#### A. Writing an Effective Focus Statement (10 minutes)

- Invite students to take out their Freaky Frog research notebook and to turn to the **Frog Adaptations Research note-catcher**.
- Remind students that they added to this note-catcher in the previous two lessons.
- Focus students on the research question at the top of the note-catcher and read it aloud.
- Ask students to Think-Pair-Share:  
*"Read through the research you collected on your note-catcher. How might you answer this question in a short, concise sentence?" Refer to the Frog Adaptations Research note-catcher (answers, for teacher reference).*
- If productive, cue students to listen carefully and seek to understand:  
*"Who can tell us what your classmate said in your own words?" (Responses will vary.)*
- Remind students that their focus statement will be a short, concise sentence that answers the research question but does not include too much detail.



- Focus students on the space provided underneath the research question and ask them to write their focus statement.
- Circulate to support students.

### Meeting Students' Needs

- For students who may need help organizing ideas for written expression: Write sentence frames in advance on the Frog Adaptations Research note-catcher for Work Time A. Also consider highlighting or underlining important phrases students may need for their focus statement on their Frog Adaptations Research note-catcher. (MMAE)
- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with strategy development: Model and think aloud developing a focus statement based on notes from a sample note-catcher. Example: "Hmm, it looks like I have a lot of information about a tree frog in my note-catcher. I see what color it is and what size it is. What is the most important thing about a tree frog for this question? Yes, it lives in the forest. Good, so I can say, 'The tree frog's body helps it live in a forest.'" (MMAE)

## Work Time

### B. Independent Practice: Drafting an Informational Paragraph (30 minutes)

- Refocus whole group. Invite students to take out their **Informative Writing Checklists** and *Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures*. Display the checklist and remind them that they have worked with this checklist in Module 1 and earlier in this unit. Remind students that it is meant to guide their writing.
- Select volunteers to read the criteria aloud.
- Focus students on the **"Why Do Polliwogs Wiggle" class draft**. Invite them to discuss with an elbow partner and select volunteers to share out:  
*"What evidence can you see of each of the criteria in this paragraph?" (Responses will vary.)*
- If productive, cue students with a challenge:  
*"Can you figure out why we looked for evidence of the criteria in this paragraph?" I'll give you time to think and discuss with a partner." (to analyze a model before they begin writing)*
- Remind students that they have written an informative paragraph as a class in Lesson 3, and now they are going to write their own informative paragraph using their research compiled since then.
- Pair students. Explain that it is a good idea to say their ideas aloud to their partner before they write so they can work together to make their ideas stronger. Remind students to use the **domain-specific word wall** as they write.
- Distribute **lined paper** and invite students to write on every other line so they have room for revisions.
- Circulate to support students. Use the **"How Does Where a Frog Lives Affect How It Looks and/or Acts?" draft (example, for teacher reference)** to guide students.

- Consider using this time to review their independent reading journals and vocabulary logs.
- Invite students to record 'Y' for 'Yes' and the date in the final column of their Informative Writing Checklist if they feel the criteria marked on their checklists have been achieved in their writing in this lesson.

### Meeting Students' Needs

- For students who may need additional support with fluency: Invite them to practice reading the bullet points on the Informative Writing Checklist in advance and then call on them to read aloud to the class during this lesson. Giving these students an opportunity for public success will build their confidence and internal motivation. (MMAE)
- For students who may need additional support analyzing writing: Consider physically connecting phrases in the "Why Do Polliwogs Wiggle" class draft to specific criteria on the Informative Writing Checklist (this can be done by underlining the phrase and writing which criterion the phrase is meeting or actually connecting the two documents and drawing lines or arrows to connect the model writing with the criteria). (MMR, MMAE)
- For ELLs: Model self-correction based on the checklist. Find something in the "Why Do Polliwogs Wiggle" paragraph that can be improved and model using the checklist to identify it. Ask students for suggestions as to how to improve it. Example: "This says 'develop a topic with facts, definitions and details,' but I see a word here that I don't know the meaning of. What can I add? Yes, a definition!" Call on an intermediate-proficiency ELL to help add the improvement to the draft.
- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with writing fluency: Suggest drawing quick sketches on the Informative Writing Checklist to help them remember what each item means. Example: "We compared facts, definitions and details to a tree, so I'm going to draw a tree next to W3.2b on my checklist to help me remember what it is." (MMAE)

## Closing and Assessment

### A. Sharing Paragraphs (10 minutes)

- Refocus whole group.
- Invite pairs to join another pair to make a group of four.
- Post and read the following directions:
  1. Number yourselves 1 to 4.
  2. Student #1 reads his/her paragraph aloud.
  3. While student #1 is reading, the other group members listen and review the criteria on the Informative Writing Checklist.
  4. After student #1 is finished, the other group members each provide a star using the criteria on the checklist.
  5. Repeat with students #2–4.



- Focus students on the **Working to Contribute to a Better World anchor chart**, specifically using my strengths. Remind students that as they will be working in small groups to share, they will need to use their strengths to help give feedback to their partners.
- Invite students to begin sharing, circulating to support students as they work.
- Focus students on the learning targets. Read each one aloud, pausing after each to use a checking for understanding protocol for students to reflect on their comfort level with or show how close they are to meeting each target. Make note of students who may need additional support with each of the learning targets moving forward.
- Repeat, inviting students to self-assess against how well they used their strengths in this lesson.

### Meeting Students' Needs

- For students who may need additional support analyzing writing: Consider limiting the number of criteria they need to review while their peers are reading their informative paragraphs. (MMAE)
- For ELLs: Consider a brief Fishbowl for the sharing process. Have a group of students rehearse the process in front of the class so that all students are clear about what to expect.

## Homework

---

**A. Accountable Research Reading. Select a prompt to respond to in the front of your independent reading journal.**

### Meeting Students' Needs

- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with reading and writing: Refer to the suggested homework support in Lesson 1. (MMAE)