Lesson 8: Writing Informational Texts: Revising for Conventions and Word Choice

🏅 CCS Standards

- **W.3.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

- **W.3.2c:** Use linking words and phrases (e.g., *also, another, and, more, but*) to connect ideas within categories of information.

- **W.3.4:** With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

- **W.3.5:** With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.

- **W.3.6:** With guidance and support from adults, use technology to produce and publish writing (using keyboarding skills) as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

- **W.3.10:** Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

- **L.3.1:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

- **L.3.6:** Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal spatial and temporal relationships (e.g., *After dinner that night we went looking for them*).

🚩 Daily Learning Targets

- I can use linking words and phrases to connect ideas in my writing. (W.3.2c, W.3.4, W.3.5)

- I can strategically include precise vocabulary in my informative essay about my freaky frog. (W.3.4, W.3.5, L.3.6)

Ongoing Assessment

- Informative Essay about a Freaky Frog draft revised for linking words and phrases, domain-specific and academic vocabulary and conventions (W.3.2c, W.3.4, W.3.5, W.3.6, W.3.10, L.3.1, L.3.6)

1. **Opening**

   A. Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minutes)

2. **Work Time**

   A. Mini Lesson: Linking Words and Phrases (15 minutes)

   B. Revising Word Choice (15 minutes)

   C. Editing for Conventions (15 minutes)

3. **Closing and Assessment**

   A. Small Group Share (10 minutes)

4. **Homework**

   A. Select one or more of the Linking Words and Phrases Practices from your Homework Resources to complete.

   B. Bring from home, the library, or the research reading selection a favorite book (in any language) with a cover design that you find eye-catching and inspirational for the next lesson.

   C. 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 work in pairs to revise their Informative Essay about a Freaky Frog to add linking words and phrases (W.3.2c) and appropriate domain-specific and academic vocabulary (L.3.6). They also revise for conventions such as capitalization, spelling, and punctuation (W.3.5).

- This lesson is designed to address W.3.6. If access to the necessary technology is not available, students will need a copy of their completed Mid-Unit 3 Assessment, as well as highlighters or colored pencils to mark where to revise their writing.

- In this unit, the habit of character focus is contributing to a better world. The characteristic students are reminded of in this lesson is: taking care of and improving our shared spaces and the environment as they work to revise their writing on class computers.

- The research reading that students complete for homework helps them to build both their vocabulary and knowledge pertaining to frogs and specifically frog adaptations. 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 have the opportunity to practice their fluency in this lesson by following along and reading silently as the teacher reads the model essay aloud in Work Times A, B, and C.

- Students who finish quickly or require an extension could create two proof paragraphs: one about behavioral adaptations and one about physical adaptations.

How it builds on previous work:

- In this lesson, students begin revising the informative writing about a freaky frog they have worked on throughout Unit 3.

- Continue to use Goals 1-3 Conversation Cues to promote productive and equitable conversation.

Areas where students may need additional support:

- Students may require support adding appropriate academic and domain-specific vocabulary strategically, as they may be likely to add words for the sake of it to meet the learning target.

Assessment Guidance:

- Consider reviewing student work after the lesson to ensure they are on track to complete the End of Unit 3 Assessment in Lesson 10. If students need additional time, consider allowing them to spend more time working on their writing with specific teacher guidance before the assessment.

- Consider using the Writing: Writing Process Checklist to informally assess the writing process throughout Work Times A, B, and C.

- Consider using the Reading: Foundational Skills Informal Assessment: Reading Fluency Checklist to gather reading fluency data from students' reading aloud their informative essays in Closing and Assessment A.

Down the road:

- In Lesson 10, students will finish revising their informative essays for the End of Unit 3 Assessment. They will require feedback from their Mid-Unit 3 assessment for the End of Unit 3 Assessment.

In advance:

- Prepare any necessary informal checklists.
- Post: Learning targets.

Technology & Multimedia

- Work Times A, B, and C: Students are using word-processing tools to write their informative essays. See the Unit 3 Overview for suggested word-processing tools. Students could write their final draft straight into an online book using sites like https://www.mystorybook.com or http://www.flipsnack.com.

Supporting English Language Learners

Supports guided in part by CA ELD Standards 3.I.A.1, 3.I.A.2, 3.I.A.3, 3.I.B.8, 3.I.C.12, 3.II.A.2, 3.II.C.6.

Important points in the lesson itself

■ The basic design of this lesson supports ELLs by focusing on linking language, which they can use first, as learners to understand the English clause and phrase system, and second, as writers to provide helpful signaling to readers.

■ ELLs may find linking language challenging. Students review 16 linking words and phrases in this lesson. ELLs may not have learned or may not remember the meaning of most of them. Consider lightening the load for ELLs by highlighting the most frequently used linking phrases or those that will be most useful in student texts (e.g., *and*, *but*). You might also provide time for ELLs to use a paper or online dictionary to translate the words.

Levels of support

For lighter support:

■ Invite students to identify and use varied linking language to create a cohesive narrative. For example, if students tend to rely on *So*, encourage them to experiment with alternatives such as *as you can see, therefore*, and *it seems clear that* to add greater nuance and variation to their writing.

■ Ask students to explain and demonstrate the difference between linking words such as *also* and *another*.

■ Invite students to work as the expert in home language groups with students who need heavier support. The expert can explain how to use key English linking language such as *and, also, another*, and *so* in contrast with the usage in the home language. Provide the expert with simple sentences to link as a demonstration for other students.

For heavier support:

■ ELLs need to know when linking words such as *and* and *but* are used as coordinating conjunctions to connect two independent clauses. Therefore, they have to know what an independent clause is, which means they also need to understand how to identify a subject with a verb. Be explicit about these grammar terms (or use equivalent terms, such as *complete thought* for *independent clause*). This information may be new and possibly overwhelming for students. Reassure them and encourage them simply to do their best, emphasizing that learning these terms and concepts will help them become clear writers over time.

■ Not all languages require a subject and a verb to form an independent clause. However, nearly all languages use coordinating conjunctions to connect ideas. Use these facts as a departure point for talking with ELLs about English.

■ Give students practice identifying independent clauses and their parts. Have them highlight the independent clauses in a paragraph of their complex texts. Have them underline the subjects and write "S," underline verbs and write "V," and circle coordinating conjunctions and write "CC."

■ Before the lesson, consider highlighting one or two examples of effective writing and one or two examples for improvement in each area of linking (blue highlighting), word choice (green), and conventions (orange) in ELL texts.

■ Remove the transition words from a copy of "Transparent Wonder" and allow ELLs to add the correct transition word back into the blanks.

Universal Design for Learning

- **Multiple Means of Representation (MMR):** Continue to support comprehension by activating prior knowledge and scaffold connections for students. Continue to provide visual display of questions and student responses on chart or board during discussions.
- **Multiple Means of Action and Expression (MMAE):** Giving feedback to peers is a skill that takes practice. Consider modeling expectations for this skill in advance and offering sentence frames for students to use that are friendly and helpful. Additionally, students may benefit from seeing their peers do it well during a Fishbowl.
- **Multiple Means of Engagement (MME):** Because students will revise with support from a partner, it will be important to check in and conference with those who need writing support after the lesson to ensure they were able to successfully revise for word choice and conventions.

Vocabulary

Key:

(L): Lesson-Specific Vocabulary

(T): Text-Specific Vocabulary

(W): Vocabulary Used in Writing

- strategically, precise (L)
- physical, behavioral, adaptations, deters (W)

Materials

- ☑ Poison Dart Frog Model (from Lesson 2; one for display)
- ☑ Poison Dart Frog Model: Lesson 8 (one for display)
- ☑ Informative Writing Checklist (from Lesson 3; one per student)
- ☑ Linking Words and Phrases (from Module 1; one per student and one for display; see supporting materials)
- ☑ Blue, green, and orange highlighters (optional; one of each color per pair)
- ☑ Informative Essay about a Freaky Frog (one per student)
- ☑ Working to Contribute to a Better World anchor chart (from Unit 1, Lesson 1)
- ☑ Vocabulary log (from Module 1; one per student)

Opening

A. Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minutes)

- Focus students on the learning targets. Select a volunteer to read the first two learning targets aloud:

  "I can use linking words and phrases to connect ideas in my writing."

  "I can strategically include precise vocabulary in my informative essay about my freaky frog."

- Underline the word *strategically* in the second learning target. Ask students to discuss with an elbow partner and select a volunteer to share out:

  "Which word can you see in the word strategically?" (strategy)

  "What is the translation of strategy in our home languages?" (Kauśala in Bengali)

  "What is a strategy? When might you have a strategy?" (a plan to help you be successful at something; when you play a game to help you win)

  "So what might strategically mean?" (following a plan to do something effectively)

- Explain to students that rather than randomly adding vocabulary words, they are going to do it strategically—where it is needed most to make their writing better.

- Underline the word *precise* and ask students to discuss with an elbow partner, and then cold call students to share out:

  "What does precise mean?" (very accurate and careful)

  "Where might you find precise vocabulary about frogs and your freaky frog in particular?" (domain-specific and academic word walls and research notebook glossaries)

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 learning targets, such as *linking words and phrases*, *connect ideas*, *strategically*, *include*, and *precise vocabulary*. (MMR)

- For ELLs: Mini Language Dive. Ask students about the meaning of the chunks of the learning target: "I can use linking words and phrases to connect ideas in my writing." Write and display student responses next to the chunks. Examples:

- "What are words? What are phrases? What is the difference between words and phrases?" (phrases are groups of words that go together)

- "What does linking mean? What is the translation in our home languages?" (connect; join two things together; Rinku in Japanese)

- "What is a linking word or phrase? (a word or phrase that connects one word, sentence, or idea to another)

- "What's an example of a linking word or phrase from 'Transparent Wonder?'" (also, but, and)

- "What's a good linking word to complete this sentence? The trees are covered with clouds _____ the frogs' skin stays wet." (and, so)

- "Why are linking words and phrases important?" (to make writing clearer, help the reader go easily from one idea to the next, and explain how one idea makes sense with the next idea)

Work Time

A. Mini Lesson: Linking Words and Phrases (15 minutes)

- Display the **Poison Dart Frog Model**. Read it aloud and invite students to follow along, reading silently in their heads.

- Tell students that you were able to get hold of the draft version of the Poison Dart Frog Model. Display the **Poison Dart Frog Model: Lesson 8**.

- Read it aloud.

- Ask students to discuss with their partner and cold call students to share out:

  "What do you notice about the flow of the writing compared to the finished text?" (It reads like a choppy list of facts. It doesn't flow very well. Students may also point out the conventions issues at this stage, but explain that you will come back to those later in the lesson.)

- If productive, cue students to expand the conversation by giving an example:

  "Can you give an example?" (Responses will vary.)

- Focus students back on the Poison Dart Frog Model. How did the author make it flow better in the final version? (used linking words to improve the transitions between facts)

- Invite students to retrieve their **Informative Writing Checklist**.

- Focus students on the W.3.2c criteria and invite a student to read it aloud.

- Remind students of the linking words and phrases work they did in Module 1.

- Display and invite students to retrieve the **Linking Words and Phrases** handout from Module 1.

- Select students to read the words and phrases aloud.

- Pair students up and distribute **blue, green, and orange highlighters**, if necessary.

- Post these directions:

  1. Choose one of your informative essays to read together.

  2. Together, discuss and highlight in blue any places where linking words and phrases would improve the flow of the writing and would help to create a transition between paragraphs.

  3. Add in linking words and phrases.

  4. Reread the text to check that it flows more smoothly.

  5. Repeat with the next informative essay.

- Invite students to access the word-processing tool on their computer to open their **Informative Essay about a Freaky Frog**. Remind students that they are using the computer to draft and publish their writing.

- Focus students on the **Working to Contribute to a Better World anchor chart**, specifically taking care of shared spaces. Remind students that as they draft on the computers, they will need to take care of how they are using these shared tools.

- Invite them to follow the posted directions to add linking words and phrases where appropriate.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For students who may need additional support with editing: Strategically pair students for editing by matching those strong in conventions with those who need support. (MMAE, MME)

- For students who may need additional support with comprehension: Provide individual copies of the Poison Dart Frog Model: Lesson 8 with linking words penciled in to draw attention to them. (MMR)

- For ELLs: Help students focus by first identifying the errors that interfere most with comprehension (e.g., word order, subject omission, run-on sentences).

- For ELLs: Pair students with a partner who has more advanced or native language proficiency. The partner with greater language proficiency can serve as a model, identifying smooth and awkward transitions in the ELL text and suggesting appropriate linking words, for example. ELLs can also learn by discussing the transition language the more proficient speaker used effectively. Provide sentence frames to facilitate such discussions. Examples:

- "Where is my writing choppy?"

- "Why did you use this linking phrase?"

- "Consider adding the linking word _____ here."

- "I think you should use the linking phrase _____ here."

- "I like the linking phrase _____ you used here. It makes the writing sound smooth."

- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with comprehension: As students add linking language, ask them to draw a line between the two ideas connected by the linking language. (MMR)

Work Time

B. Revising Word Choice (15 minutes)

- Refocus whole group. Focus students on the L.3.6 criteria on the Informative Writing Checklist and invite a student to read it aloud.

- Remind students that throughout the module, they have been collecting academic vocabulary and domain-specific vocabulary on the word walls and in their **Vocabulary Logs**.

- Explain that they are going to review and revise their informative writing to strategically incorporate appropriate vocabulary. Ask students to discuss with their partner and select volunteers to share out:

  "Why do we want to be using the words we have collected through reading in our informative writing?" (so that writing is clearly well-researched and sounds clear, correct, and precise)

- If productive, cue students with a challenge:

  "Can you figure out why it is important to revise word choice strategically? I'll give you time to think and discuss with a partner." (to ensure that the writing is as effective as possible; if words are dropped in without much planning or thought, it probably won't make sense)

- Reread the Poison Dart Frog Model: Lesson 8 aloud and then compare it to the Poison Dart Frog Model.

- Ask students to discuss with their partner and then cold call students to share out:

  "Which precise words has the author chosen to strategically add here? How do they change the way the writing sounds?" (physical, behavioral, adaptations, deters)

- Check student understanding on the meaning of those words.

■ If productive, cue students with a challenge:

*"What if the author had used the word changes **instead of** adaptations? I'll give you time to think and discuss with a partner." (The meaning would be less precise and clear because changes is more general and can apply to many contexts.)*

■ Post these directions:

1. Choose one of your informative essays to read together.

2. Together, discuss and highlight in green any places where words could be added or changed.

3. Revise word choice using words from the domain-specific and academic word walls and from Vocabulary Logs.

4. Repeat with the next informative essay.

■ Invite students to work with their partner to revise their text.

Meeting Students' Needs

■ For students who may need additional support with auditory processing needs: Consider posting discussion questions or giving them to these students before the discussion. (MMR)

■ For ELLs and students who may need additional support with planning for writing: If students struggle to identify words that could be replaced with more precise words, invite them to start by identifying academic and domain-specific vocabulary that is already in the writing. (MMAE)

■ For ELLs: As students interact, jot down common samples of effective word choice. Also jot down one or two common problems with word choice. Share each of these with the class, allowing students to take pride in the effective communication and correct the errors. (It's not necessary to identify who communicated well or who made errors. However, you might wish to pull the student aside to make it clear.) Examples: *transparent* (instead of *invisible*); *moist* (instead of *wet* in some cases); *tadpoles* (instead of *baby frogs*); *lay* (instead of *put*, *have*, *make*, or *do*, for instance)

Work Time

C. Editing for Conventions (15 minutes)

■ Refocus whole group. Focus students on the L.3.2 criteria on the Informative Writing Checklist and invite a student to read it aloud for the whole group.

■ Reread the first paragraph of the Poison Dart Frog Model: Lesson 8 aloud for the class again. Invite students to compare the spelling, capitalization, and punctuation to the first paragraph of the final Poison Dart Frog Model.

■ Post these directions:

1. Choose one of your informative essays to read together.

2. Together highlight in orange any capitalization, punctuation, or spelling errors.

3. Revise the errors.

4. Repeat with the next informative essay.

■ Invite students to work with their partner to revise their text.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For students who may need additional support with reading fluency: Invite them to practice reading the criteria 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, MME)

- For students who may need additional support with writing fluency: Consider highlighting or circling errors in conventions on their texts in advance. (MMR, MMAE)

- For ELLs: Focus students on errors in convention that impede communication. Highlight these errors for students and invite them to fix them.

Closing and Assessment

A. Small Group Share (10 minutes)

- Tell students they will finish their revisions of their informative essays in the Lesson 10 for the End of Unit 3 Assessment.

- Invite pairs to form groups of four and ask students to each read their newly revised and edited informative essay aloud for their small group.

- 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 took care of shared spaces in this lesson.

- 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 ELLs and students who may need additional support with sustained effort: Reassure students if their edited versions are still somewhat confusing. Say: "Do your best. Don't worry about the problems right now. Be proud of what you wrote and read what you have." (MME)

Homework

A. Select one or more of the Linking Words and Phrases Practices from Homework Resources to complete.

B. Bring from home, the library, or the research reading selection a favorite book (in any language) with a cover design that you find eye-catching and inspirational for the next lesson.

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

Meeting Students' Needs

- For ELLs: To provide heavier support, consider focusing students on one paragraph of the Linking Words and Phrases I homework.

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