

Writing, Grades 2-3

Introduction

This course focuses on young students' progression through the different aspects of the writing process, from their introduction to the basic concepts to learning about writing's many purposes and forms.* Consider this course's content within the context of the **Open Court Reading** or **SRA Imagine It!** classroom, in which students are learning to make connections between reading and writing.

Using the genre of realistic fiction, students will learn to express their ideas in narrative writing. From choosing a topic through final presentation, students will progress through the different aspects of the writing process (prewriting/planning, writing/drafting, revising, proofreading, and publishing). They will consider their topics, establish a situation, develop experiences, write drafts, revise, edit, and publish their stories. They will share their ideas and give each other feedback. They will experience the pleasures of writing and learn how exciting, challenging, and rewarding it can be.

For users of **SRA Imagine It!**, a variety of resources, including the writing transparencies, graphic organizers, and writing samples, are available digitally on the [eSuite](#). These can be used and displayed on individual computers and interactive whiteboards. The student activity pages for writing in **SRA Imagine It!** are located in the **Skills Practice** workbooks.

Teaching Example 1

In Teaching Example 1, Sugey Lizarraga begins the week's writing assignment by introducing realistic stories. Using the writing process as her underlying structure, Ms. Lizarraga guides her students through the process as they apply it to writing realistic fiction.

After introducing students to examples of realistic stories, she ensures that they understand what a realistic story is by working as a class to read and discuss the **Language Arts Handbook** pages on realistic stories. Then Ms. Lizarraga and her students brainstorm who and what they might want to write about. Later, students will choose a specific person, event, or topic.

Introduction and Brainstorming

Prewriting is the process by which writers develop an idea and plan their approach for a writing assignment. Brainstorming, or coming up with ideas, is the first step in the prewriting process. In this lesson, students already know they will be writing a realistic story; often, though, deciding on the genre is part of preplanning and prewriting that goes into good writing.

To lead her students through the brainstorming phase of their writing, Ms. Lizarraga:

- Prompts each student to suggest someone or something to write about.
- Helps students consider what they might say about each of these suggested topics.
- Reviews their choices.
- Helps them narrow their choices down to one writing topic.

As her students create their lists of potential topics, Ms. Lizarraga circulates around the room, providing support and encouragement, and helps her students clarify their ideas. Although these processes can be time-consuming,

brainstorming and planning are valuable exercises that allow students to begin articulating, defining, and organizing their ideas.

Teaching Example 2

Teaching Example 2 continues the prewriting phase of this writing project. Using the *Writer's Workbook* or the *Skills Practice* books in *SRA Imagine It!* as a tool and a guide, Ms. Lizarraga and her students work together to plan their writing. Using a story map helps them organize their thinking, Ms. Lizarraga guides the students by modeling what she would need to put down for her realistic story about a boy who will make a totem pole.

After modeling this step for the students, they take time to think about what they will write. Following the discussion, the students use their *Writer's Workbooks* to help them complete their planning. Ms. Lizarraga circulates around the room, monitoring their progress, and helps them complete their story maps.

Prewriting/Planning

Young, inexperienced writers often want to jump right in and start writing. Experienced writers, however, have learned the benefits of planning. In the planning phase, writers think about their topics and assess the kinds of information they will need to include in their writing. They also think about the genre they will work within and their intended audience.

Approaching writing in a patient and systematic manner allows writers to approach their writing with direction and intent. They know what information they have and what they still need. They understand the structure of their chosen genre, and they know their audience's tastes. The knowledge they gain by planning makes writing flow more smoothly and keeps writers on track.

In this course, realistic fiction is the designated genre. The students must choose a subject and ensure that they have enough information to write a short realistic story. Since the goal of the lesson is to teach students about writing realistic stories, most of the instruction revolves around learning the basic structure and components of narrative writing.

Teaching Example 3

In Teaching Example 3, the students will write the first draft of their realistic stories. Before they begin to write, Ms. Lizarraga discusses sentence elaboration with her students. By helping them see how they can expand and develop basic sentences, she encourages them to write rich, complex, and interesting sentences that include descriptive details.

After clarifying the writing assignment, Ms. Lizarraga has her students refer to the story maps they worked on in their *Writer's Workbook*. As the students write, Ms. Lizarraga circulates around the room offering encouragement and suggestions.

Finally, the students present their work, and Ms. Lizarraga and the other students offer feedback.

Writing the First Draft

At this point, the writer has developed a plan and has an idea of what he or she wants to write. Students should write as much as they can about their subjects, knowing that this is a draft and that their ideas and their stories are still subject to change and revision. In this phase of the process, writers should focus on putting all their ideas on paper; they should not worry about grammatical or literary conventions or correctness.

Teaching Example 4

In Teaching Example 4, the students revise their first drafts. Ms. Lizarraga begins this phase of the writing process by discussing the purpose and goals of revising and by acknowledging that making revisions is a difficult but necessary task.

The students use a checklist as a tool to help them focus on different aspects of their stories. In addition, they participate in collaborative conversations with partners, providing feedback on each other's stories and helping each other with revisions. As her students review and revise their stories, Ms. Lizarraga circulates and conferences with individual students.

Revising

It has been said that there is no good writing, just good editing. The purpose of the revision process is to make sure that writers have expressed their ideas clearly and completely. Inexperienced writers are often resistant to making revisions. They simply don't want to go back and rewrite: they might claim that they believe they got it right on the first try. By approaching what they have written as a reader, rather than as a writer, even new writers can often recognize the strengths and weaknesses of their own work and make changes in their own writing.

Teaching Example 5

Editing and Publishing

Teaching Example 5 addresses the last two phases in the writing process: editing and publishing. Ms. Lizarraga begins this phase with a discussion of the purpose of editing. She then leads a lesson in which the students will proofread a short passage together; throughout the exercise, Ms. Lizarraga monitors her students' proofreading skills and assesses their understanding of what the editing process involves. The students correct their stories, rewrite them, and then share the stories with each other.

Please note: Ms. Lizarraga is a third grade teacher and therefore, is using Level 3 of *Open Court Reading*. Although the content is different, the instructional methods used in this course can be easily applied to the writing lessons in Level 2.

* See the Program Appendix.