



**Unit of Study:**  
*Discovering the Artistry of  
Literary Nonfiction:  
Texts that Teach with Style*

Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District  
Elementary Language Arts Department, Grade 2

*Discovering the Artistry of Literary Nonfiction:*

*Texts that Teach with Style*

*For Second-Grade*

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## *Unit Overview*

The purpose of this unit is to help students gain a better understanding of literary nonfiction in the form of biographies and autobiographies. This unit mirrors the fiction unit in some ways, as you deal with the literary aspects of literary nonfiction. This unit also draws on the nonfiction unit, as you determine the factual information provided throughout the story, as well as navigating the nonfiction text features that are often present in this genre. As you teach the lessons in the unit, you might choose to actually use the anchor charts you created with your class during the fiction and nonfiction units to visually bridge the three units.

During this time of year, second grade students are becoming stronger readers. The appearance of their texts is beginning to change. Many students are making the leap to chapter books, and more complex picture books. It will be important for you to share a variety of biographies and autobiographies with students during your minilessons and read-alouds. You will want to share some that are written in picture book format. You will also want to share some that are written in short chapter books. Both types of books will provide students with different opportunities to navigate texts.

When conferring with students, you will want to check for understanding, but also for word work and text strategies. You will want to reinforce using contextual clues, and text features to figure out unknown words. You will also want to make sure students understand the structure of a chapter book, and how the story develops throughout the chapters. Another aspect of this genre that is sometimes developmentally challenging for second graders is the impact the setting has on the story. It is sometimes difficult for second graders to place themselves in another time, and understand the impact of this time on decisions that are made. As you confer with your readers, you will want to help them strengthen this type of understanding.

Several of the lessons will ask you to use a graphic organizer with the class. Because this is the first time these students will see these organizers, you will not want to ask them to use them on their own. Once you have introduced a graphic organizer in a minilesson format, you would then use the same organizer within a small group setting. You would be the one filling out the organizer, using ideas that the students share. (If you have each student write the same thing on their organizers in a small group, you will find that it is **very time consuming**.) Once the students have worked with you in a small group to fill out the graphic organizer, it would then be appropriate to ask them to try it on their own. You will want to confer with them while they are doing this, to clarify any misunderstandings.

During this three week unit, there is no mention of book clubs. Please be aware that this is a great opportunity for book clubs, if you so choose. If you decide to have book clubs, they would be similar to the ones in the nonfiction unit. You would want to encourage conversations around the main character, and the choices that character makes. In your book bags, you would want to include both literary nonfiction, but then also some nonfiction books that provide background information. For example, if the students are reading about a football player, you might include nonfiction books about football.

This unit provides a great opportunity to reinforce skills that have been taught previously. When reading the lessons, please keep the needs of your class in mind. You will want to build on their strengths, and fill in any gaps students may have.

## LESSONS INCLUDED IN THE UNIT OF STUDY:

The following is a list of lessons that are included in the *Discovering the Artistry of Literary Nonfiction: Texts that Teach with Style* unit. Each lesson has been assigned a number that correlates to a number found in the upper right corner of each lesson card, which signifies a suggested sequence or progression of the lessons.

After analyzing the grade level expectations, district curriculum, and student needs, teachers should customize the mini-lessons for their students. The mini-lessons are based upon the grade-level expectations found in the English Language Arts and Reading TEKS objectives.

<b>Lesson Title</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
<b>1 Distinguishing Literary Nonfiction from Expository Nonfiction</b>	<i>Thoughtful readers identify the genre that they are reading.</i>
<b>2 Using What We Know About Fiction to Read Literary Nonfiction</b>	<i>Thoughtful readers know that stories follow a plot line and a predictable story structure.</i>
<b>3 Reading Literary Nonfiction as Stories with Characters</b>	<i>Thoughtful readers identify the subject (main character) of their literary nonfiction text, and follow their subject through the subject's struggles until the subject achieves his/her goal.</i>
<b>4 Analyzing Main Characters in Literary Nonfiction</b>	<i>Thoughtful readers learn about a subject's life by analyzing the decisions he/she makes, the relationships he/she has, and how the subject tries to resolve his/her problems.</i>
<b>5 Visualizing the Impact the Setting Has on the Main Character</b>	<i>Thoughtful readers think about how the time and place of a story impacts the person the story is about.</i>
<b>6 Understanding How Interactions with Other People Impacts Choices</b>	<i>Thoughtful readers think about the interactions the subject has with others in the story, and then determine how these interactions impact choices the subject makes.</i>
<b>7 Using Timelines, Titles, and Captions to Determine Importance</b>	<i>Thoughtful readers use information in timelines, titles, and captions to determine which information is most important in a biography.</i>
<b>8 Locating Facts and Opinions in Literary Nonfiction</b>	<i>Thoughtful readers can determine the difference between facts and opinions.</i>
<b>9 Distinguish the Main Idea From the Topic</b>	<i>Thoughtful readers are able to identify main ideas, and distinguish them from the topic.</i>
<b>10 Determining the Order of Events in Literary Nonfiction</b>	<i>Thoughtful readers determine the order of events in literary nonfiction.</i>

<b>11 Determining the Author's Purpose in Writing About the Person</b>	<i>Thoughtful readers think about why the author chose to write about the person they are reading about.</i>
<b>12 Determining the Author's Message from the Text</b>	<i>Thoughtful readers try to figure out the author's message.</i>
<b>13 Life Lessons – What Have You Learned?</b>	<i>Thoughtful readers share what they have learned from books with others.</i>
<b>14 Literary Nonfiction Celebration</b>	<i>Thoughtful readers celebrate!</i>

**Materials:**

- A combination of nonfiction books, biographies, and autobiographies. You will want to include picture books, as well as chapter books.
- Anchor Chart – Literary Nonfiction/Expository Nonfiction
- Baskets of biographies and autobiographies for each table group to read during independent reading – be sure to keep in mind the reading abilities at each table, so you can provide appropriately leveled books.

**Note:** After today’s minilesson, you might choose to have the students reorganize your classroom library. You might want to include a tub for literary nonfiction.

**Purpose:** Thoughtful readers identify the genre that they are reading.

**TEKS:** 2.10A, Fig. 19A

**Connection:**

- connect today’s work with our ongoing work
- explicitly state my teaching point

Explain to students that today is a very exciting day! Today you are going to begin your new unit on literary nonfiction. Let students know that this unit will be filled with new learning, as well as revisiting the things you have learned in the past.

**Teach:**

- restate my teaching point
- tell a personal or class story linked to teaching point
- think aloud & point out things for students to notice

Show students a stack of nonfiction books, biographies and autobiographies. Don’t tell them the genres of the books. Tell the students that you want to sort these books in order to put them in the classroom library.

*Class, I want to sort these books, so that I can put them in our classroom library. There are just so many ways I*

*can sort them, I’m not sure what I want to do. I could sort them by topic – snakes, lizard, people, history, etc. I could also sort them by level of difficulty. I could even sort them by picture book, or chapter book. I think, though, that I want to sort the books by genre. In one pile, I want to put “all about” books, or our expository texts. In the other pile, I want to put all of the true stories, or our literary nonfiction texts. Let me begin...*

Model looking through each book and determining which pile it should go in. Be sure to express your reasoning for placing each book in the pile that you did.

**Active Engagement:**

- involve students by asking them to turn and talk
- listen, observe, and coach active involvement
- share an example of what you heard or observed

After you have placed a few books in each pile, let the students know that you want them to help you out. Show them a book, and ask them to discuss with their partner which pile they think the book belongs in. Remind the students that they should give good reasons for the placement of the book. Be sure to listen in on their conversations.

Repeat this process with a couple of more books.

**Teach:**

- restate my teaching point
- tell a personal or class story linked to teaching point
- think aloud & point out things for students to notice

Show the students your anchor chart.

Types of Nonfiction Texts	
Literary Nonfiction	Expository Nonfiction

Tell students that you were listening to their conversations, and there were a few things that stood out to you when determining which category each book belonged in. Begin to record the identifying factors.

Types of Nonfiction Texts	
Literary Nonfiction	Expository Nonfiction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• based on factual events, or places</li> <li>• looks like a fiction book</li> <li>• uses storytelling approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lists of facts</li> <li>• each page/section is about a topic</li> <li>• has section headings</li> </ul>

**Link:**

- restate the teaching point
- explain how the learning can be used in the future

Let students know that you have provided literary nonfiction books at each table for them to read during independent reading. As they read, they should be thinking about why the book is considered a literary nonfiction book.

**Possible Conference Questions:**

- How’s it going?
- How did you figure out what \_\_\_ meant? (Using context clues and text features)
- How does this chapter build on the last chapter?
- How do you know that this is a literary nonfiction book?

**Possible Things to Make Note of:**

Record items that will guide you in choosing your Strategy Groups.

- Are students reading picture books or chapter books?
- Can the student determine the meaning of unknown words?
- Do student understand what makes these books literary nonfiction?

**Teaching Share Time:**

- restate the teaching point
- share examples of what you heard or observed

Tell students that you were excited to see all of the great reading going on today. Review with them what makes a book a literary nonfiction book. Add any additional items to the anchor chart, if necessary.



**Materials:**

- A literary nonfiction picture book
- Any anchor charts you may have created during the fiction unit in preparing to read fiction – plot lines, story maps, definitions of story elements, character maps, etc.

**Note:** The structure of this lesson will depend on the anchor charts you have from past lessons. It may be that you just review concepts here, or it may be that you have to recreate some of the anchor charts.

This lesson is written as if you were using the plot line graphic organizer. (See Appendix)

**Purpose:** *Thoughtful readers know that stories follow a plot line and a predictable story structure.*

**TEKS:** 2.14C, Fig. 19E

**Connection:**

- *connect today's work with our ongoing work*
- *explicitly state my teaching point*

*Class, reading literary nonfiction can be very exciting. It is a little like fiction, and a little like nonfiction. It has the facts of nonfiction, but is written like a story. Today, we are going to learn how we can use everything we know about reading fiction to read literary nonfiction.*

**Teach:**

- *restate my teaching point*
- *tell a personal or class story linked to teaching point*
- *think aloud & point out things for students to notice*

Revisit the anchor chart from lesson LNF1. Restate that biographies and autobiographies are written like stories. Tell students that that is what makes these books so interesting to read. The storytelling structure of literary nonfiction makes learning about the past more interesting.

Show the class your literary nonfiction book that you have chosen to share today. Show them your anchor chart of a plot line. Remind the class that fiction books follow a plot line, and that many of them follow a predictable pattern.

*Remember, class, that stories follow a predictable plot line. Often times, at the beginning of the story, we are introduced to the main character, and the setting is revealed. Then, we learn about the problem the character faces. The story typically takes us through the character's attempts to resolve the problem, and then finally the character does find a resolution. As I read our literary nonfiction book today, I will record the events and story elements on our chart.*

As you read the story, record the setting, characters, problem, events, and resolution.

**Active Engagement:**

- *involve students by asking them to turn and talk*
- *listen, observe, and coach active involvement*
- *share an example of what you heard or observed*

Ask the students to turn and talk to their partner about some of the ways they noticed that literary nonfiction is like fiction. Listen in on their conversations. You might choose to record some of the things you heard on the anchor chart you started yesterday (Literary NF/Expository NF).

**Link:**

- *restate the teaching point*
- *explain how the learning can be used in the future*

Tell students that you want them to approach their literary nonfiction books as if they were fictional stories. Remind them that they should look for characters, the setting and the problem. They should create movies in their minds as they are reading.

**Possible Conference Questions:**

- How's it going?
- How did you figure out what \_\_\_ meant? (Using context clues and text features)
- How does this chapter build on the last chapter?
- Tell me about the character in this story.
- Tell me about the setting in your story.
- What is the problem in your story?
- How do you think the character will solve the problem?
- Tell me about the movie you see in your mind while you read.

**Possible Things to Make Note of:**

Record items that will guide you in choosing your Strategy Groups.

- Are students reading picture books or chapter books?
- Can the student determine the meaning of unknown words?
- Are students creating mental movies as they read?
- Can students identify and explain the story elements in their book?

**Teaching Share Time:**

- *restate the teaching point*
- *share examples of what you heard or observed*

Gather students to share some of the good things you saw today. Let them know that you are excited about everything they remembered about reading fiction. Tell them how proud you are of all of their work.

**Materials:**

- A literary nonfiction picture book with an intriguing subject.
- Character Analysis Web (See Appendix). You can either enlarge this on an anchor chart, post it on your SMART Board or project it with your document camera.

**Note:** You will use the graphic organizer from today’s lesson during tomorrow’s lesson, as well.

**Purpose:** *Thoughtful readers identify the subject (main character) of their literary nonfiction text, and follow their subject through the subject’s struggles until the subject achieves his/her goal.*

**TEKS:** 2.9B, Fig. 19D, Fig. 19F

**Connection:**

- connect today’s work with our ongoing work
- explicitly state my teaching point

*Class, I want to congratulate you on the work you have done so far in our Literary Nonfiction unit. We talked about how literary nonfiction books are similar in many ways to our fictional stories. Today, we are going to take a closer look at the main characters – or subjects – in our literary nonfiction stories.*

**Teach:**

- restate my teaching point
- tell a personal or class story linked to teaching point
- think aloud & point out things for students to notice

*When reading literary nonfiction, we have to remember that the main character is a real person. That is why we will refer to him or her as the subject of our book. The events that take place in the life of the subject are events that really happened. This is the difference between a story, and a biography. A story includes things that might happen, and biographies are stories that really did happen.*

*One of the reasons we read a biography or autobiography*

*is to learn more about the person the book is about. We want to keep an eye out for clues as we read about the subject to better learn what kind of person they are.*

*Today, we will be using our character analysis web to help us. As I read, I am going to record things that I learn about the subject. These things will help me better understand who this person is.*

Begin reading your book. In the center of the web, you will record the subject’s name. As you read, record hints the author gives as to the type of person the character is – events, interactions, thoughts, etc. (In tomorrow’s lesson, you will better analyze what these hints tell you about the person).

**Active Engagement:**

- involve students by asking them to turn and talk
- listen, observe, and coach active involvement
- share an example of what you heard or observed

Read another portion of the book to your class, and then ask them to turn and talk to their partner about another item they think should be added to the web. Listen in on their conversations. Record a couple of the things you heard on the character analysis web.

**Link:**

- restate the teaching point
- explain how the learning can be used in the future

Tell students that, as they read today, they should be thinking about their subject, and the things that are happening in their subject’s life. These events and actions will better help them understand who their person is or was.

**Possible Conference Questions:**

- How’s it going?
- How did you figure out what \_\_\_ meant? (Using context clues and text features)
- How does this chapter build on the last chapter?
- Tell me about your subject.

- What types of things have happened so far in your book?
- What are some things your subject has done?
- What do you think will happen next?

**Possible Things to Make Note of:**

Record items that will guide you in choosing your Strategy Groups.

- Are students reading picture books or chapter books?
- Can the student determine the meaning of unknown words?
- Do the students pick out the important things about the subject?
- Do any of the students start to formulate impressions of the subject based on information they are reading?

**Teaching Share Time:**

- restate the teaching point
- share examples of what you heard or observed

Gather students to share some of the great things you saw today. Remind them that subjects in literary nonfiction books are like characters in story books. We have to learn who they are through their actions and reactions. You might ask a few students to share one thing they learned about their subject.

**Materials:**

- The same picture book that you used for lesson LNF3.
- The graphic organizer you began in LNF3
- Sticky Notes

**Purpose:** *Thoughtful readers learn about a subject's life by analyzing the decisions he/she makes, the relationships he/she has, and how the subject tries to resolve his/her problems.*

**TEKS:** 2.9B, 2.14B, Fig. 19 B, Fig. 19 F

**Connection:**

- *connect today's work with our ongoing work*
- *explicitly state my teaching point*

Congratulate your class on all of the hard work they have done in the literary nonfiction unit. Let them know that you are impressed with their understanding of the story elements, and how they relate to literary nonfiction. Let the students know that today's lesson is going to require some strong inferring skills. Tell the class that they will have to think back to when they learned how to analyze characters in fiction. These are the same skills you will be using today.

**Teach:**

- *restate my teaching point*
- *tell a personal or class story linked to teaching point*
- *think aloud & point out things for students to notice*

*Class, today we are going to have to think back to when we learned how to analyze characters in our fiction stories. As we read these stories, we had to determine what type of character we were reading about. We thought about the people in their lives, and how they interacted with them. We also looked at the events that occurred in the character's life, and how he or she handled the problems. Today, we are going to do these very same things with our subjects to determine what type of people they are/were.*

*First, we should review the difference between feelings and traits. Remember that feelings are short-lived. Traits, however, are who the person is. They are constant – at least until an event makes the character change. (You might choose to share some of the items from the Appendix that address character traits and feelings.)*

Pull out the graphic organizer that you began in lesson LNF3. In the circles surrounding the subject, you have recorded different events that occurred within the story. Today, you are going to use those events to better understand the subject.

Read aloud one of the things you wrote in the surrounding circles. Talk to the students about what this event helps you to understand about the subject. Model making an inference about what type of person the subject is. Record the character trait along the line that connects the character to the event.

Repeat this with another event or item that you recorded. Be sure to model your thinking throughout this process. You will want the students to understand that it is the events and interactions in the subject's life that help us understand what type of person he/she is/was.

**Active Engagement:**

- *involve students by asking them to turn and talk*
- *listen, observe, and coach active involvement*
- *share an example of what you heard or observed*

Ask the students to turn and talk to their partner about another circle on the web. Ask them to think about what this event, action, or reaction tells them about the subject. Listen in on their conversations.

**Link:**

- *restate the teaching point*
- *explain how the learning can be used in the future*

Tell students that as they read, they might want to use their sticky notes to record some character traits their subjects have. They will need to base their decisions on actual facts within the book. They will then make inferences based on what they know.

**Possible Conference Questions:**

- *How's it going?*
- *How did you figure out what \_\_\_ meant? (Using context clues and text features)*
- *How does this chapter build on the last chapter?*
- *Tell me about the subject in your book. What type of person is he/she?*
- *What type of people are in your subject's life? How do these people impact your subject?*

**Possible Things to Make Note of:**

Record items that will guide you in choosing your Strategy Groups.

- *Are students reading picture books or chapter books?*
- *Can the student determine the meaning of unknown words?*
- *Are students thinking deeply about their subjects?*
- *Are they able to make inferences about their subject's traits?*

**Teaching Share Time:**

- *restate the teaching point*
- *share examples of what you heard or observed*

Gather your students together to share with some of the great things you saw happening today. Share a couple of things you learned about the people they were reading about. Explain how things that happened in these people's lives helped you and the reader better understand what type of person the subject was.



## Minilesson: *Visualizing the Impact the Setting Has on the Main Character*

LNF5

### Materials:

- A literary nonfiction book in which the setting is explained in detail. This book should be about a person in history, so that the class can visual the setting as different from their own. You do not have to read the entire book. You might just share the part in which the setting is explained.
- Chart paper

### Note:

**Purpose:** *Thoughtful readers think about how the time and place of a story impacts the person the story is about.*

### TEKS: 2.

### Connection:

- *connect today's work with our ongoing work*
- *explicitly state my teaching point*

*Class, I would like to congratulate you on all of your hard work so far in our literary nonfiction unit! You have been working hard to understand the people we are reading about, and who they were. Today we are going to talk about the impact the setting had on the people in our books. Many of the people we read about lived in the past. In order to fully understand who the person is, and what makes them make the choices they do, we have to visualize the time and place that they lived in.*

### Teach:

- *restate my teaching point*
- *tell a personal or class story linked to teaching point*
- *think aloud & point out things for students to notice*

Take a moment to show the students the book you will be reading aloud. Set the stage by providing a little bit of background on your book and your character. Explain to the class that the setting is very important to the events of the story.

Read the portion of the book aloud that describes the setting. On your chart paper, write "setting" at the top. Below that, make a column for "time", and a column for "place". Record some items from the section that you read under the appropriate column. Model thinking out loud about the setting. Tell the students about the image you are seeing in your mind. If your book has pictures, be sure to show the class how you use the pictures to help strengthen your image.

Now, take a moment to explain a little bit about the person that you are reading about. Explain to the students the impact the setting has on the person – Was technology available? Were there vehicles? Was there a war going on? Explain how the times and rules of the society had an impact on the life of the subject.

### Active Engagement:

- *involve students by asking them to turn and talk*
- *listen, observe, and coach active involvement*
- *share an example of what you heard or observed*

Ask students to turn and talk about one aspect of the setting that might have influenced some of the decisions the subjects was faced make. Listen in on their conversations. After a couple of minutes, share some of the things that you heard.

### Link:

- *restate the teaching point*
- *explain how the learning can be used in the future*

Tell students, that as they read literary nonfiction, they will need to visualize the setting of the story. They will need to imagine the rules of the time, and the impact this might have on the person they are reading about. Explain to them, that this will help them better understand their subject, and the life they lead.

### Possible Conference Questions:

- How's it going?
- How did you figure out what \_\_\_ meant? (Using context clues and text features)
- How does this chapter build on the last chapter?
- Tell me about the setting. How is it different from now? How is it the same?
- How do you think the setting impacted the person you are reading about? Did the setting contribute to any of the decisions he/she made?

### Possible Things to Make Note of:

Record items that will guide you in choosing your Strategy Groups.

- Are students reading picture books or chapter books?
- Can the student determine the meaning of unknown words?
- Are students able to visualize the setting?
- Do students understand the impact the setting has/had on the subject?

### Teaching Share Time:

- *restate the teaching point*
- *share examples of what you heard or observed*

Gather students to share some of the great things you heard. Give examples of instances where visualizing the setting helped the reader better understand the subject. Congratulate students on their hard work today.

**Materials:**

- A literary nonfiction book in which the subject interacts with others. You do not have to read the entire book, but can select the part in which the interactions reveal an impact on the choices the subject chose to make. A sample text would be *Thank You Mr. Falker*, in which Patricia Pollaco’s interactions with others impact her choice to become an author and illustrator. (It might be helpful if you have already read the book, and can just focus on the portion with the interactions.)
- Relationship Graphic Organizer (See Appendix)

**Note:** Putting yourself in the character’s “shoes” is challenging for a second grader. The idea behind this lesson is to have the students better understand that interactions with other people often drive the decisions we make.

**Purpose:** *Thoughtful readers think about the interactions the subject has with others in the story, and then determine how these interactions impact choices the subject makes.*

**TEKS:** 2.9B, 2.14B, Fig. 19 D, Fig. 19 F

**Connection:**

- connect today’s work with our ongoing work
- explicitly state my teaching point

*Class, I would like to congratulate you on all of your hard work so far in our literary nonfiction unit. Today’s lesson deals with understanding why people make the choices in life that they do. We are going to be detectives today, and try to find clues that help us better understand the people we are reading about.*

**Teach:**

- restate my teaching point
- tell a personal or class story linked to teaching point
- think aloud & point out things for students to notice

Show the class a book that you have shared with

them recently. Tell them that, for today’s lesson, you are going to look a little closer at a few of the events that happened in this book.

Share an interaction that the subject had with another person. Think out loud about how this interaction might have made the subject feel. Remind students that we can think about how it would have made us feel, but we also have to think about the type of people we are reading about, and what *their* reactions would have been. Then, think out loud about how the other person might have felt. Record these thoughts on the Relationship Graphic Organizer.

Repeat this same procedure with a second interaction that these two people had. Think out loud about how the interaction made both people feel.

**Active Engagement:**

- involve students by asking them to turn and talk
- listen, observe, and coach active involvement
- share an example of what you heard or observed

Share a third interaction between the same two people. Ask them to think out loud about how this interaction might have made these people feel. Listen in on their conversations. Record what you heard on the graphic organizer.

Explain to students that these interactions, when combined, resulted in the subject making a choice. Sometimes the choices are good ones, and sometimes they are not. Record the choice the subject made on the graphic organizer.

Tell students that thoughtful readers think about why subjects make the choices they do. Often times, these choices are made due to the interactions the subject has with others in his/her own life.

**Link:**

- restate the teaching point
- explain how the learning can be used in the future

As students read today, they should be thinking about the interactions that the subject has with others. They should also think about how these interactions might be the driving force in some of the decisions the subject makes.

**Possible Conference Questions:**

- How’s it going?
- How did you figure out what \_\_\_ meant? (Using context clues and text features)
- How does this chapter build on the last chapter?
- Why did the subject choose to do \_\_\_?
- What type of relationship does the subject have with \_\_\_?

**Possible Things to Make Note of:**

Record items that will guide you in choosing your

- Are students reading picture books or chapter books?
- Can the student determine the meaning of unknown words?
- Do the students understand the relationships the subject has, and how these relationships impact choices he/she makes?

**Teaching Share Time:**

- restate the teaching point
- share examples of what you heard or observed

Gather students together. Share some of the great things that you heard today.

**Materials:**

- A biography that contains timelines, titles, and/or captions.
- Chart paper

**Note:** This lesson is based on Lesson 4 from the *Discovering the Artistry of Literary Nonfiction* unit for grades 3-5.

**Purpose:** *Thoughtful readers use information in timelines, titles, and captions to determine which information is most important in a biography.*

**TEKS:** 2.13A, 2.14B, 2.14D

**Connection:**

- *connect today's work with our ongoing work*
- *explicitly state my teaching point*

Congratulate students on their continued hard work in the understanding of literary nonfiction. Inform students that today's lesson will teach them how to use common nonfiction text features to uncover the most important ideas in the text.

**Teach:**

- *restate my teaching point*
- *tell a personal or class story linked to teaching point*
- *think aloud & point out things for students to notice*

Explain to students that authors of biographies conduct a considerable amount of research prior to writing their piece. When they write biographies, authors organize information in ways that they think will be interesting to read. The information the author chooses to share is information that they feel is most important in the life of the subject. Not every little detail about the subject's life is included in the biography. Once the author has selected important information to include in the biography, there are still a lot of dates and facts that make their way into the writing. Thoughtful readers know that it is impossible to remember every piece of

information that is included in a text. Thoughtful readers make decisions about what is most important in the text so that they are sure to focus on remembering the parts that are most important. Author's sometimes help the reader figure out what's most important by including extra support that goes along with the regular words on the page. Oftentimes, the author will include timelines and pictures with captions to enhance this information. They will also use chapter titles to prepare the reader so that reader knows what they are going to learn about. Thoughtful readers can use the text features that the author provides to help determine which information in the biography is most important. Before reading a biography, thoughtful readers should look at the text features that the author provides, and begin thinking about the important ideas that the author wants to share.

Show the students a familiar biography. Show the title, or the title of a particular chapter. Explain that the author uses the title to give the reader clues about the important information in the text. Think aloud about the title.

*What does the title help you know about the subject of the biography? Does it give you any hints about the subject's life that might be important to the author?*

Next, share a photograph that the author has included in the text (Note: the photograph should come from the same chapter). Read the caption to the students. Think aloud about important information gleaned from the caption, relating it back to the subject's challenges or obstacles, where appropriate. Think aloud about how information in the title and in the caption may be related.

**Active Engagement:**

- *involve students by asking them to turn and talk*
- *listen, observe, and coach active involvement*
- *share an example of what you heard or observed*

Display another picture with a caption or a timeline embedded within the text. Have the students turn

and talk with their partner about the particular text feature. Encourage partnerships to think about how all of the text features combine to help them better understand what the author thinks is most important in the subject's life. Share examples of some of the things you overheard.

**Link:**

- *restate the teaching point*
- *explain how the learning can be used in the future*

Explain to the students that nonfiction text features help readers determine important information the author may be trying to share throughout the text of the biography. As the students read today, they should think about how the text features in their book help them determine which information is most important.

**Possible Conference Questions:**

- How's it going?
- How did you figure out what \_\_\_ meant? (Using context clues and text features)
- How do the text features help you understand what is important in your text?
- 

**Possible Things to Make Note of:**

Record items that will guide you in choosing your Strategy Groups.

- Are students reading picture books or chapter books?
- Can the student determine the meaning of unknown words?
- Are the students able to use the text features to help them determine importance?

**Teaching Share Time:**

- *restate the teaching point*
- *share examples of what you heard or observed*

Gather students together. Share an example or two of instances in which classmates used text features to determine importance.

**Materials:**

- A literary nonfiction book that has both facts and opinions in it. You will want to find a section that includes both. You will want to make sure the students can see the text as you are reading it.
- Opinion Signal Words (see appendix)
- Chart paper

**Note:** Lower level books will be limited on the number of opinions they have. This will be an opportunity for you to show students reading all levels of books that some books do have opinions in them. As students progress in their reading, you will need to re-address this lesson in a small group to provide support.

**Purpose:** *Thoughtful readers can determine the difference between facts and opinions.*

**TEKS:** 2.14B

**Connection:**

- connect today's work with our ongoing work
- explicitly state my teaching point

Congratulate students on all of their hard work so far in this unit. Explain to students that biographies are an author's account of someone's life. The author collects what he/she believes to be the most important facts about the subject's life, and then tells the story in a way that that is interesting and engaging. Sometimes the author will include some opinions when sharing the factual information. Thoughtful readers determine if information shared is fact or opinion.

**Teach:**

- restate my teaching point
- tell a personal or class story linked to teaching point
- think aloud & point out things for students to notice

Tell students that sometimes when you share a story with a friend, you include all the facts, but

you also include some of your own opinions. Take a moment to share an example of this.

*Yesterday I went to my favorite restaurant. This restaurant has the best food in the whole city! As I sat down, the waiter came over to take my order. I ordered a hamburger. It took about fifteen minutes for the waiter to bring my burger out. I immediately devoured the whole thing. It was absolutely delicious! When I was done, I paid my bill and left.*

On your chart paper, write the words fact and opinion on a t-chart. On the fact side, list the facts from your story. On the opinion side, list the opinions in your story. Explain to the class that your story was true, but it also included your opinions.

Let students know that biographies are the same as your story. The author includes the facts, but might choose to add some opinions, as well.

Show the students the Opinion Signal Words page. Explain that these types of words signal an opinion. Thoughtful readers look for these words when reading biographies.

Share the portion of the biography you selected. Read the selection aloud. Choose a sentence. Model thinking aloud about whether it is a fact, or an opinion statement. Be sure to include why you think this.

**Active Engagement:**

- involve students by asking them to turn and talk
- listen, observe, and coach active involvement
- share an example of what you heard or observed

Share another couple of sentences from the selection. Ask the students to turn and talk with their partners about whether they are facts or opinions. Listen in on their conversations. Share what you heard with the class.

**Link:**

- restate the teaching point
- explain how the learning can be used in the future

Tell students that you want them to be critical readers today. You want them to think about whether statements are facts or opinions. It is important to know the difference, so you can separate the facts from the author's opinions, and create your own opinions.

**Possible Conference Questions:**

- How's it going?
- How did you figure out what \_\_\_ meant? (Using context clues and text features)
- How does this chapter build on the last chapter?
- Is this statement a fact or an opinion?
- Why do you think the author has this opinion?
- Why do you think the author included these facts?

**Possible Things to Make Note of:**

Record items that will guide you in choosing your Strategy Groups.

- Are students reading picture books or chapter books?
- Can the student determine the meaning of unknown words?
- Can the student distinguish between a fact and an opinion?
- Can the student explain why the author included information, whether it be fact or opinion?

**Teaching Share Time:**

- restate the teaching point
- share examples of what you heard or observed

Gather the students. Share some of the things you heard today. Congratulate students on their hard work.



**Materials:**

- A literary nonfiction book. You will want to locate a page in which there is an overall topic, and then multiple main ideas. Depending on your class, you can either choose a book that has a main section on a topic, and then subsections broken up into main ideas. You could also choose a chapter book in which the chapter has a topic, and then the paragraphs are broken up into main ideas. It is up to you and the needs of your class.
- Topic, Main Idea, and Supporting Details Graphic Organizer (see Appendix )

**Purpose:** *Thoughtful readers are able to identify main ideas, and distinguish them from the topic.*

**TEKS:** 2.14A, 2.14B, Fig. 19 D

**Connection:**

- *connect today's work with our ongoing work*
- *explicitly state my teaching point*

Congratulate students on all of their hard work so far in this unit. Remind students that over the past few days, they have been locating facts, determining their importance within the text, and distinguishing them from opinions. Ask students to think back to the nonfiction unit, in which you learned about boxes and bullets. Remind them that the boxes are main ideas, and the bullets are supporting details. Tell students that, today, you are going to talk about boxes and bullets in literary nonfiction, as well as overall topics.

**Teach:**

- *restate my teaching point*
- *tell a personal or class story linked to teaching point*
- *think aloud & point out things for students to notice*

Tell students that everything they have been learning for the last week is going to help them better understand today's lesson. Let students know that it is important that they understand the

difference between a topic and a main idea. Share with students that a topic is what the whole selection is about. Maybe it is about the subject's childhood, or their time in school. The topic can then be broken up into main ideas. For example, you might be reading a book in which the topic of a section is the childhood of a subject. From there, the author could include multiple paragraphs – family, school, friends, etc. Each of these paragraphs would have a main idea, and supporting details.

Show students the Topic, Main Idea, and Supporting Details graphic organizer. Show them the boxes and bullets. Remind them that, for today's lesson, a box is the main idea of a paragraph. (Remember that in the upper grades, students are expected to be able to identify the main idea of multiple paragraphs, so we don't want to give the impression that a main idea can only be for one paragraph.) Remind students that the bullets are the supporting details. In the previous unit, we counted the bullets off on our fingers as we retold what we had read.

Explain to students that, when you put all of the boxes and bullets together, along with the topic, you get a clear understanding of what the author is sharing.

Read a section of a familiar literary nonfiction book to the students. For a couple of the paragraphs, model identifying the main ideas and supporting details.

**Active Engagement:**

- *involve students by asking them to turn and talk*
- *listen, observe, and coach active involvement*
- *share an example of what you heard or observed*

Reread another paragraph, and ask students to turn and talk with their partner about what they think the main idea and supporting details are. Listen in on their conversations. Record the main idea and supporting details on the graphic organizer.

Model thinking out loud about all of the main ideas. Tell students, that each of these main ideas are linked. All of them are about one topic. Share with the students the topic of the selection. Record the topic on the graphic organizer.

**Link:**

- *restate the teaching point*
- *explain how the learning can be used in the future*

Tell students that thinking about how the author organizes his/her information helps them to better understand what the author is sharing with them. As they read, they should think about how ideas are related within a paragraph, as well as a selection.

**Possible Conference Questions:**

- How's it going?
- How did you figure out what \_\_\_ meant? (Using context clues and text features)
- How does this chapter build on the last chapter?
- Can you break this paragraph into boxes and bullets?
- How are all of these paragraphs related?
- What is the topic of this selection?

**Possible Things to Make Note of:**

Record items that will guide you in choosing your Strategy Groups.

- Are students reading picture books or chapter books?
- Can the student determine the meaning of unknown words?
- Are students able to identify topics, main ideas, and supporting details?

**Teaching Share Time:**

- *restate the teaching point*
- *share examples of what you heard or observed*

Gather students together. Congratulate them on all of their hard work. Share some of the great things you heard today, as well as some of the discussions you might have had.

**Materials:**

- A familiar literary nonfiction book in which there are events that can be recorded on a timeline. You might want to choose a fairly straightforward book for this lesson that follows a simple timeline, as these are the types of books the majority of the class may be reading. If you have students reading in higher levels, you might pull them in a small group and share samples of flashbacks, or events told out of order.
- Chart paper with a blank timeline drawn on it.

**Note:** This lesson comes from the Literary Nonfiction unit for grades 3-5 (LNF11).

**Purpose:** *Thoughtful readers determine the order of events in literary nonfiction.*

**TEKS:** 2.14B, 2.14C, Fig. 19 E

**Connection:**

- *connect today's work with our ongoing work*
- *explicitly state my teaching point*

Congratulate students on all of their hard work so far in this unit. Remind students, that as they read, they will be identifying the topic of the selection, and then locating the main idea(s). As they do this, they should also be thinking about the order that the events in the story occur. Remind them that events in real life occur in a particular order. When writing a biography, however, it is up to the author to determine what order he/she wants to present the events in. At times, the author what happened in the order that is the most engaging or exciting to the reader. Thoughtful readers piece together the events from the subject's life to determine the order in which they actually happened.

**Teach:**

- *restate my teaching point*
- *tell a personal or class story linked to teaching point*

- *think aloud & point out things for students to notice*
- Explain to students that, in most of the books that they are reading, the events will be told in order. Let them know that it is important, though, that they monitor the events, so that they can piece together the life of the subject.

Share with students the beginning portion of a familiar literary nonfiction text. Think aloud about the first event in the subject's life that is mentioned in the text. Place this event on a timeline that you have drawn on chart paper. Explain to students that this is the first event of the subject's life that you learn about in the biography. It is not necessarily the first event that happened in the subject's life.

Read the next portion of the text to the students. Stop when you come to the next event in the subject's life. Think aloud about where to place this event on the timeline. Add it to the timeline in the appropriate place, explaining to the students how you know that this new event actually happened before or after the previous event.

**Active Engagement:**

- *involve students by asking them to turn and talk*
- *listen, observe, and coach active involvement*
- *share an example of what you heard or observed*

Continue reading a few small portions of the biography to the students. Highlight major events in the subject's life. After reading about each event, have the students turn and talk where on the timeline the event belongs. Have them predict why they think the author chose to put the events in that order. Listen in on students' conversations with one another so you can add the event to the timeline in a place that reflects the group consensus. Make sure to share the reasoning that you overheard from students as to why the event belongs in that particular location on the timeline.

**Link:**

- *restate the teaching point*

- *explain how the learning can be used in the future*

Explain to students that authors make decisions based on what they think will increase the interest and impact of the sequence of events in literary nonfiction. Today, during independent reading, students should be thinking about the order of events as they occur in the biography.

**Possible Conference Questions:**

- How's it going?
- How did you figure out what \_\_\_ meant? (Using context clues and text features)
- How does this chapter build on the last chapter?
- What are some of the major events that have occurred in your book?
- Tell me the order of some of the things that happened. Why do you think the author wrote this book in this order?

**Possible Things to Make Note of:**

Record items that will guide you in choosing your Strategy Groups.

- Are students reading picture books or chapter books?
- Can the student determine the meaning of unknown words?
- Are students able to identify major events to record on a timeline?
- Can students relay the events in chronological order?

**Teaching Share Time:**

- *restate the teaching point*
- *share examples of what you heard or observed*

Gather students to share some of the things that you have heard. Tell them about some of the events you learned about, and the order in which they were told in the biography. Share the reasoning behind why the author might have done this.

**Materials:**

- Some familiar literary nonfiction books, in which it is fairly evident why the author chose to write about the people.
- Anchor Chart – Reasons Why Authors Choose to Write About People

**Note:** Today's lesson will plant a seed for a lesson students will be learning next year, and in the following years. As students get older, they will be asked to think about the author's intent when writing a book, and how the author might have put a particular spin on events and interactions for their own purposes. Students will be asked to think about factual events, and to weigh them with the story part of literary nonfiction in order to see how heavily the author influences our understanding of the life of the subject.

**Purpose:** *Thoughtful readers think about why the author chose to write about the person they are reading about.*

**TEKS:** 2.3C, 2.13A, Fig. 19 A, Fig. 19 B, Fig. 19 D

**Connection:**

- *connect today's work with our ongoing work*
- *explicitly state my teaching point*

Congratulate students on all of their hard work so far in this unit. Tell students that today's lesson is a very important one. Today, you will be trying to determine why the authors of our books chose to write about the people they did.

**Teach:**

- *restate my teaching point*
- *tell a personal or class story linked to teaching point*
- *think aloud & point out things for students to notice*

Tell students that, while reading literary nonfiction, you always ask yourself, "Why did the author think this story was worth telling?" Explain that there are several reasons why authors choose to write the

books they do. When it comes to biographies, though, we have to wonder why the author chose "that person."

Show students a few of the books that you have been reading aloud during this unit. Take one of the books, and think out loud about the story. Remember some of the things the author shared, and the way in which the author shared them. Then, think out loud about why the author might have chosen to write this particular book about this particular person. It might be that the person was an important figure in history (a president, a leader, someone that made a change in the world). It might also be that the person had a great story of achievement, or that they overcame a terrible disaster or event. Record the reason on your anchor chart.

Repeat this process with another book. You might choose a book that has a different purpose for being written. Record this purpose on the anchor chart.

**Active Engagement:**

- *involve students by asking them to turn and talk*
- *listen, observe, and coach active involvement*
- *share an example of what you heard or observed*

Share another book with students that you have read. Ask them to turn and talk with their partners about why they think the author chose to write about the subject. Listen in on their conversations. Record the general consensus on the anchor chart.

**Link:**

- *restate the teaching point*
- *explain how the learning can be used in the future*

Tell students that thoughtful readers think about why their book was written. They consider the reasons behind why the author thought the book was worth writing, and why the author thought others would want to read about the life of the subject.

**Possible Conference Questions:**

- How's it going?
- How did you figure out what \_\_\_ meant? (Using context clues and text features)
- How does this chapter build on the last chapter?
- Why did the author choose to write about this person?
- Do you think the author chose a good person to write about? Why?
- (For more advanced readers.) Could you tell if the author admired the person, or if the author disapproved of choices the subject made?

**Possible Things to Make Note of:**

Record items that will guide you in choosing your Strategy Groups.

- Are students reading picture books or chapter books?
- Can the student determine the meaning of unknown words?
- Do students understand the author's purpose for writing about the subject?

**Teaching Share Time:**

- *restate the teaching point*
- *share examples of what you heard or observed*

Tell students that you were excited to see all of the great reading going on today. Share a couple of things that you overheard today, and some of the discussions that you had.

**Materials:**

- A familiar literary nonfiction book.
- Anchor Chart – Author's Messages

**Note:** If you use truisms in your writing units (Gretchen Bernabie), this would be a nice time to draw a parallel. You could explain that authors of literary nonfiction, just like the students in your class, try to teach readers a lesson.

**Purpose:** *Thoughtful readers try to figure out the author's message.*

**TEKS:** 2.3C, 2.13A, Fig. 19 A, Fig. 19 D, Fig. 19 F

**Connection:**

- *connect today's work with our ongoing work*
- *explicitly state my teaching point*

Congratulate the class on all of their hard work so far in this unit. Tell them that today's lesson is about discovering the author's message in the books that you are reading. Remind them that yesterday, you talked about why authors chose to write about the people they did. Explain that an author chooses a subject for a particular reason, and that reason often times ends up teaching us lesson in life.

**Teach:**

- *restate my teaching point*
- *tell a personal or class story linked to teaching point*
- *think aloud & point out things for students to notice*

Show students a familiar literary nonfiction book that you have read. It may be on from the previous day's lesson, so that you can tie the 2 ideas together. Talk to students about why the author chose to write about the subject. Then, tell them that, as you read this book, you found yourself learning a lesson from the things that you learned.

On your anchor chart, write, "This event should never be forgotten because..." Below that, write, "I

learned..." And finally, below that, write, "The choices I make in my life will be different now, knowing..."

Tell students that readers think about these types of things after reading literary nonfiction books. Talk about the book you have chosen for today. Explain to the students how the book makes you think about one of the statements. Share your thoughts.

**Active Engagement:**

- *involve students by asking them to turn and talk*
- *listen, observe, and coach active involvement*
- *share an example of what you heard or observed*

Show students another book. Ask them to think about how the book impacted their life. Ask them to think about which statement they could complete after having heard this book. Tell students to turn and share their thoughts with their partner. Listen in on their conversations. Share some of the thoughts you overhear.

**Link:**

- *restate the teaching point*
- *explain how the learning can be used in the future*

Tell students that you want them to approach their literary nonfiction books as if they were textbooks about to teach them a lesson. Ask them to think about why the author chose to write about the person, and what the author wanted this person's life to teach you.

**Possible Conference Questions:**

- How's it going?
- How did you figure out what \_\_\_ meant? (Using context clues and text features)
- Why did the author choose to write about your subject?
- What have you learned from your book? Will you do anything different in the future, based on what you have learned?
- Does this book make you think differently about the event?

**Possible Things to Make Note of:**

Record items that will guide you in choosing your Strategy Groups.

- Are students reading picture books or chapter books?
- Can the student determine the meaning of unknown words?
- Are students creating mental movies as they read?
- Are students thinking deeply about the books they are reading?
- Are students learning from the lives and events of the past?

**Teaching Share Time:**

- *restate the teaching point*
- *share examples of what you heard or observed*

Gather students to share some of the good things you saw today. Let them know that you are excited about the things they were learning.

**Materials:**

- Each student will need one literary nonfiction book – preferably one of their favorites.
- The students will create a product to share during tomorrow's celebration. This product can be a simple sheet of paper with the information handwritten on it. It can also be completed on the computer, or in a variety of formats (poem, song, commercial, etc.)

**Purpose:** *Thoughtful readers share what they have learned from books with others.*

**TEKS:** 2.3C, 2.13A, Fig. 19 A, Fig. 19 D, Fig. 19 F

**Connection:**

- *connect today's work with our ongoing work*
- *explicitly state my teaching point*

*Class, I want to congratulate you on the work you have done in our literary nonfiction unit! Today, we will be getting ready for tomorrow's celebration of literary nonfiction. We will take what we have learned about this genre, and use the word "I" to share one of your favorite literary nonfiction books.*

**Teach:**

- *restate my teaching point*
- *tell a personal or class story linked to teaching point*
- *think aloud & point out things for students to notice*

Tell students that they will be working with one book today. Their goal will be to share this book with the class tomorrow. They will have 1 to 2 minutes to share why they think the author wrote this book, and what they learned from it. They might also share how this book changed the way they will do things in the future.

The remainder of this lesson is up to you, as the teacher. You will want to model what your expectations are. You will also want to let the students know that this activity is not meant to be a

major production. It is a simple celebration of literary nonfiction. The key concepts you will want them to focus on are the reason the author chose the subject, and the lesson that was learned from the life of the subject.

**Active Engagement:**

- *involve students by asking them to turn and talk*
- *listen, observe, and coach active involvement*
- *share an example of what you heard or observed*

Ask students to turn and talk with their partner about what they are going to share. Listen in on their conversations and make sure the students understand the objective.

**Link:**

- *restate the teaching point*
- *explain how the learning can be used in the future*

Remind students of what they are to do today. Let them know you will be coming around to help them.

**Possible Conference Questions:**

- *How's it going?*
- *What book are you going to share? Who is your book about? What did you learn from this book?*

**Teaching Share Time:**

- *restate the teaching point*
- *share examples of what you heard or observed*

Gather students to share some of the great things you saw today. Let them know that you are excited about tomorrow!

**Materials:**

- You might choose to make a rubric for today's lesson. You can go to [rubistar.4teachers.org/](http://rubistar.4teachers.org/) if you need help creating a rubric. Some of the things you might consider scoring could be:
  - Listens to others
  - Stayed on task
  - Tells the class why the author chose the subject
  - Tells the class the lesson he/she learned
  - Speaks clearly

If you have a large class, and don't want to take the time for each of the students to share, you can partner students up, and have them share with each other.

**Purpose:** *Thoughtful readers celebrate!*

**TEKS:** 2.3C, 2.13A, Fig. 19 A, Fig. 19 D, Fig. 19 F

Congratulate the students on the completion of the literary nonfiction unit! Let them know that you are excited to hear what they learned from their favorite books. Restate the guidelines that you would like them to follow for today's activity.

\*\* Each student should only take 1 to 2 minutes to share. This activity should not take any longer than the reading workshop block. \*\*