SPI Project Planning Template:
A Publication Unit Plan
A Unit Plan Overview

Publication Project Title:

1.) Project Summary: What is the purpose or motivation for this project? What are the essential questions driving this project?

A memoir is a focused memory about a particular time in one’s life. It is a reflective piece, in that the author is older, more mature, and writing about the event with more understanding. **Authors of memoirs share not only their experience but also their feelings and perspectives on the particular event** (Kittle, 2008; Lattimer, 2003). Because “the most successful learning strategies are ones that involve each student personally” (National Middle School Association, 2010, p. 16), memoir is a natural fit for middle grades students. Writing memoirs is one way for students to “make sense of their lives and the world around them” (NMSA, 2010, p. 21). As writers of memoirs, students reflect on life experiences and their significance. Lattimer (2003) explains, “teaching students to write memoirs builds on their natural self-interest while simultaneously nurturing habits of disciplined introspection and purposeful writing” (p. 25). Memoir writing can be engaging and motivating because students write about an important moment in their lives. Memoirs also allow teachers a glimpse into their students’ lives, learning about their meaningful relationships and experiences.

(Source: [https://www.amle.org/BrowsebyTopic/WhatsNew/WNDet/TabId/270/ArtMID/888/ArticleID/274/Unit-of-Study-Approach-for-CCSS-Writing.aspx](https://www.amle.org/BrowsebyTopic/WhatsNew/WNDet/TabId/270/ArtMID/888/ArticleID/274/Unit-of-Study-Approach-for-CCSS-Writing.aspx))

**Essential Questions:**

- How does my experience contribute to my writing?
- How do memoirs serve to connect us to one another?

**Enduring Understandings:**

- There is space for my voice in my writing, and my experiences matter.
- Through reading memoirs in our classroom, I begin to understand others’ perspectives, as well as build empathy for people different than me.

**2.) Learning Goals (Objectives, Enduring Understandings, “I Can Statements”):** What are my overall goals for the unit?

*Students will be able to . . .*

- Define the meaning of memoir
- Identify the defining characteristics of memoirs from selected texts (meaningful events, dialogue, interesting introduction and conclusion, rapid pace, point of view, incorporation of descriptive language)
- Apply and implement defining characteristics of memoirs into their own original memoir
- Reflect on and evaluate different meaningful events in their lives
- Share their memoirs with students in their grade to build a community of readers and writers

### 3.) Common Core Standards Alignment: What are the Key Standards aligned with the unit? (see prompts below -- check all that directly apply)

#### READING:
- □ R.1 – Specific Details
- □ R.2 – Central Ideas & Themes
- □ R.3 – **Analyze events/ideas**
- □ R.4 – **Interpret words/phrases**
- □ R.5 – **Analyze structure**
- □ R.6 – **Asses point of view**
- □ R.7 – Evaluate multi-media
- □ R.8 – Evaluate argument in texts
- □ R.9 – Analyze 2+ perspectives
- □ R.10 – **Read Complex Texts**

#### WRITING:
- □ W.1 – Write Arguments
- □ W.2 – Write Information
- □ W.3 – **Write Narrative**
- □ W.4 – Audience/Purpose
- □ W.5 – **Edit, Revise, Publish**
- □ W.6 – **Use technology**
- □ W.7 – Conduct research
- □ W.8 – Gather relevant info
- □ W.9 – **Draw evidence from text**
- □ W.10 – Write routinely over time

#### LISTENING/SPEAKING:
- □ SL.1 – Wide ranging conversations
- □ SL.2 – Integrate/Evaluate info.
- □ SL.3 – **Evaluate Point of View/bias**
- □ SL.4 – Present information
- □ SL.5 – Use technology to present
- □ SL.6 – Adapt speech to context

#### LANGUAGE:
- □ L.1 – Grammar conventions
- □ L.2 – Punctuation & Spelling
- □ L.3 – Language in new contexts
- □ L.4 – Identify meaning of words
- □ L.5 – **Figurative Language**
- □ L.6 – Academic/Content vocabulary

### 4.) Publication: How will students demonstrate they have met the expectations of the Unit?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Intended Audience</th>
<th>Detailed Traits of the Genre</th>
<th>Publication Assignment Requirements: (length, depth, use of evidence/research, etc)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will write a memoir on a ‘critical event’ that they would like to reflect on, process, and share with the class.</td>
<td>Students will share their works with students in their grade to build a community of readers and writers, as well as to build empathy across the middle school for one another.</td>
<td>A memoir is a focused memory about a particular time in one’s life. As writers of memoirs, students reflect on life experiences and their significance. Students will examine a moment in time from their life; write a detailed of that account with the lens of a new understanding of that story as they make meaning of what happened, and why it was</td>
<td>The memoirs will be at least 5 paragraphs. They will include: - an interesting introduction and conclusion - as well as descriptive language (language that sets a scene in the reader’s mind for place) - internal dialogue showing what the author was thinking - consideration of another persons’ point of view - the description of WHY</td>
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<td>5.) <strong>Scaffolding Topic:</strong></td>
<td>What are the individual pieces of information in this unit, and how can I break it down? (facts, vocabulary, key ideas)</td>
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<td>6.) <strong>Scaffolding the Genre:</strong></td>
<td>What are ALL of the specific attributes of the genre that students need to experience (through observation, modeling, and inquiry), in order to succeed on the final product?</td>
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<td>Discussion of why ‘self’ and ‘voice’ is important in writing</td>
<td>Examine and breakdown memoirs by using examples from unit texts.</td>
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<td>Discussion of how writing connects us to other perspectives and builds empathy</td>
<td>Identify the unique qualities of memoirs and how artists use this form to express their ideas / creativity.</td>
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<td>Explore the ways writing memoirs can be inspiring and empowering.</td>
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<th>7.) <strong>Learning Activities:</strong></th>
<th>What various instructional activities will facilitate learning the topic and the genre? (ex: journals, stations, reading logs, etc)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Setting the stage: Define Memoir; 6 word memoir activity</td>
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<td>- Question Generation:</td>
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<td>- What story repeatedly gets told about you at family gatherings or holidays? What is your earliest memory? What is the most important thing that has ever happened to you? What is the worst thing that has ever happened to you? What is something you’ll never forget?</td>
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<td>- Telling Board Activity (Deciding if the event you are talking about has enough information)</td>
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<td>- Immersion with texts: Facing Memory: <em>Student Memoirs from Bosnia; Guys Write for Guys Read;</em> select chapters from <em>My Thirteenth Winter</em>; possible podcast</td>
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<td>- Mini lessons: Dialogue, Introduction/ Conclusion, Descriptive Language, Point Of View</td>
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<th>8.) <strong>Timeline:</strong></th>
<th>How long should this unit(s) last? (Use the Calendar) Days with Students</th>
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<tr>
<td>Spring Semester:</td>
<td>January to April 11, after-school sessions.</td>
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