

# SPI Project Planning Template: A Publication Unit Plan

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## A Unit Plan Overview

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### 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.ame.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.

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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)

<p><b>READING:</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> R.1 – Specific Details <input type="checkbox"/> R.2 – Central Ideas & Themes <input type="checkbox"/> R.3 – <b>Analyze events/ideas</b> <input type="checkbox"/> R.4 – <b>Interpret words/phrases</b> <input type="checkbox"/> R.5 – <b>Analyze structure</b> <input type="checkbox"/> R.6 – <b>Asses point of view</b> <input type="checkbox"/> R.7 – Evaluate multi-media <input type="checkbox"/> R.8 – Evaluate argument in texts <input type="checkbox"/> R.9 – Analyze 2+ perspectives <input type="checkbox"/> R.10 – Read Complex Texts	<p><b>WRITING:</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> W.1 – Write Arguments <input type="checkbox"/> W.2 – Write Information <input type="checkbox"/> W.3 – <b>Write Narrative</b> <input type="checkbox"/> W.4 – <b>Audience/Purpose</b> <input type="checkbox"/> W. 5 – <b>Edit, Revise, Publish</b> <input type="checkbox"/> W.6 – <b>Use technology</b> <input type="checkbox"/> W.7 – Conduct research <input type="checkbox"/> W.8 – Gather relevant info <input type="checkbox"/> W.9 – <b>Draw evidence from text</b> <input type="checkbox"/> W.10 – Write routinely over time	<p><b>LISTENING/SPEAKING:</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> SL.1 – Wide ranging conversations <input type="checkbox"/> SL.2 – <b>Integrate/Evaluate info.</b> <input type="checkbox"/> SL.3 – <b>Evaluate Point of View/bias</b> <input type="checkbox"/> SL.4 – Present information <input type="checkbox"/> SL.5 – Use technology to present <input type="checkbox"/> SL.6 – Adapt speech to context	<p><b>LANGUAGE:</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> L.1 – Grammar conventions <input type="checkbox"/> L.2 – Punctuation & Spelling <input type="checkbox"/> L.3 – Language in new contexts <input type="checkbox"/> L.4 – Identify meaning of words <input type="checkbox"/> L.5 – <b>Figurative Language</b> <input type="checkbox"/> L.6 – Academic/Content vocabulary
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**4.) Publication:** How will students demonstrate they have met the expectations of the Unit?

Topic	Intended Audience	Detailed Traits of the Genre	Publication Assignment Requirements: (length, depth, use of evidence/research, etc)
<p>Students will write a memoir on a 'critical event' that they would like to reflect on, process, and share with the class.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>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</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- examine a moment in time from their life</li> <li>- 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</li> </ul>	<p>The memoirs will be at least 5 paragraphs. They will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- an interesting introduction and conclusion</li> <li>- as well as descriptive language (language that sets a scene in the reader's mind for place)</li> <li>- internal dialogue showing what the author was thinking</li> <li>- consideration of another persons' point of view</li> <li>- the description of WHY</li> </ul>

		significant to them.	event that was meaningful to the student.
5.) <b>Scaffolding Topic:</b> What are the individual pieces of information in this unit, and how can I break it down? (facts, vocabulary, key ideas)			
Discussion of why 'self' and 'voice' is important in writing			
Discussion of how writing connects us to other perspectives and builds empathy			
		6.) <b>Scaffolding the Genre:</b> 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?	
		Examine and breakdown memoirs by using examples from unit texts.	
		Identify the unique qualities of memoirs and how artists use this form to express their ideas / creativity.	
		Explore the ways writing memoirs can be inspiring and empowering.	
7.) <b>Learning Activities:</b> What various instructional activities will facilitate learning the topic and the genre? (ex: journals, stations, reading logs, etc)			

- Setting the stage: Define Memoir; 6 word memoir activity
- Question Generation:
  - o 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?
- Telling Board Activity (Deciding if the event you are talking about has enough information)
- Immersion with texts: Facing Memory: *Student Memoirs from Bosnia*; *Guys Write for Guys Read*; select chapters from *My Thirteenth Winter*; possible podcast
- Mini lessons: Dialogue, Introduction/ Conclusion, Descriptive Language, Point Of View)
- Checking your Memoir: NPR story analysis: <http://www.npr.org/2011/07/13/137822505/start-your-memoir-project-with-a-relatable-story>

8.) **Timeline:** How long should this unit(s) last? (Use the Calendar) Days with Students

Spring Semester: January to April. 11, after-school sessions.