

Character Based Literacy Program Write Ahead
Falling Leaves, Day 1

Name: _____
Date: _____

Teach a mini-Lesson using *Write Ahead* pg. 159

Read: pg. 159 Biographical Writing

Student Activity: Answer the following questions about biographical writing.

1. What is a biography? What do you write about in a biography?

2. What is the difference between an autobiography and a biography?

3. If you were writing a biography, who would you choose to write about? Why would you choose this person?

4. Do you think it is important to write a biography about someone who is interesting? Why or why not?

5. Do you think it is better to write about someone you know very well, or is it better to write about someone you don't know very well?

6. Is a biography fiction or nonfiction? What is the difference between these two?

7. What do you think you might learn from writing a biography?

Character Based Literacy Program Write Ahead
Falling Leaves, Day 2

Name: _____
Date: _____

Teach a mini-Lesson using *Write Ahead* pg. 160-161

Read: pg. 160-161 Sample Biographical Essay

Student Activity: Answer the following questions about the sample biographical essay.

1. What is a biographical essay?

2. Who is the subject of Frances Kuhn's biographical essay? How do you know?

3. How does the author begin their biography? Do you think that this is an effective beginning? _____

4. Is it clear who this biography is about? Do you think that is important?

5. Why do you think the author includes the exact words of her biographical subject? _____

6. Why do you think the author chose this subject for a biography?

7. Why is it important to include specific details about the subject of your biography?

Character Based Literacy Program Write Ahead
Falling Leaves, Day 3

Name: _____
Date: _____

Teach a mini-Lesson using *Write Ahead* pg. 160-161

Read: pg. 160-161 Sample Biographical Essay

Student Activity: Answer the following questions about the sample biographical essay.

1. How does the author end their biography?

2. After reading the sample biographical essay, do you feel like you understand why the author chose their particular subject? Why do you think the author chose their subject? _____

3. Do you think this sample biography did a good job in teaching you about the subject of the biography? _____

4. How did the author gather information about her subject?

5. Why do you think the author admires her subject? Is this explained by the biography? _____

6. Do you think it is possible to write a biographical essay without being able to interview someone? What might be another way to gain information about a subject? _____

Character Based Literacy Program Write Ahead
Falling Leaves, Day 4

Name: _____
Date: _____

Teach a mini-Lesson using *Write Ahead* pg. 162

Read: pg. 162 Writing Guidelines, Prewriting

Student Activity: Answer the following questions about writing guidelines for a biography.

1. Why is it important to choose a subject for your biography who interests you?

2. What are the three basic choices you have in choosing a subject for a biography?

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

Student Activity: Answer the following questions about gathering details for a biography.

1. For each biographical subject, give the possible sources for gathering information:

- a. A biography about your father: _____

- b. A biography about Brad Pitt: _____

- c. A biography about your basketball coach: _____

- d. A biography about your favorite teacher: _____

- e. A biography about your sister: _____

Character Based Literacy Program Write Ahead
Falling Leaves, Day 5

Name: _____
Date: _____

Teach a mini-Lesson using *Write Ahead* pg. 163

Read: pg. 163 Writing Guidelines, Writing

Student Activity: Answer the following questions about writing biographical essays.

1. Do you need to include all of the details that you have gathered for your biographical essay?

2. Why is it important to follow writing guidelines for your biographical essay?

3. Imagine you are writing a biographical essay about your mother or father. List a few important details about them that you would want to include in a biographical essay.

4. How should you organize your biographical essay? What are the parts that you need to have?
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
5. What should you include in the beginning part of your essay?

6. What should you include in the middle part of your essay?

7. What should you include in the ending part of your essay?

Character Based Literacy Program Write Ahead
Falling Leaves, Day 7

Name: _____
Date: _____

Teach a mini-Lesson using *Write Ahead* pg. 164

Read: pg. 164 Writing Guidelines, Revising

Student Activity: Use the reading to revise the biographical essay. Work with a partner to revise one another's essays. Use the revising guidelines to evaluate your partner's essay.

1. Read the revising guidelines and then reread your partner's first draft of their biographical essay.
2. Did the biography leave out any important details about the subject? Does it feel like anything is missing?

3. Is the opening clear? Does it present the biographical subject to the reader?

4. Are all of the details in the middle part of the essay important to the focus of the essay? Should anything be removed?

5. Does the ending clearly demonstrate the importance of the biographical subject? Do you feel like you have learned something about by reading this biographical essay?

Character Based Literacy Program Write Ahead
Falling Leaves, Day 8

Name: _____
Date: _____

Teach a mini-Lesson using *Write Ahead* pg. 164

Read: pg. 164 Writing Guidelines, Editing

Student Activity: Working with a partner, exchange biographical essays. Use the guidelines providing for editing to make corrections to your partner's work.

1. Read your partner's biographical essay, checking for grammar and spelling mistakes.
2. Are the sentences smooth? What could your partner do to make their sentences better? _____

Student Activity: After discussing with your partner the changes that should be made to your biographical essay, rewrite your essay. This will be your final draft. Make sure to proofread your final biographical essay as well.

Character Based Literacy Program Write Ahead
Falling Leaves, Day 9

Name: _____
Date: _____

Teach a mini-Lesson using *Write Ahead* pg. 165

Read: pg. 165 A Closer Look at Biographical Writing, Planning Tips

Student Activity: Answer questions about planning tips for biographical writing.

1. When should you consult several sources for a biography?

2. Why should you plan your interview? What might happen if you don't plan your interview?

3. Why should you check that all of your facts are accurate? Why does it matter? Why can't you just make things up?

4. Why should you use more than one source? Do all sources have the same information?

5. How important is planning in your writing? Why is it important to have a plan before you start writing?

Character Based Literacy Program Write Ahead
Falling Leaves, Day 10

Name: _____
Date: _____

Teach a mini-Lesson using *Write Ahead* pg. 165

Read: pg. 165 A Closer Look at Biographical Writing, Writing Tips

Student Activity: Answer the following questions about writing tips.

1. What is background information? Why should you include background information in your biographical essay?

2. If you were writing a biographical essay about your best friend, what background information would you include?

3. What is a transition word? Give examples of transition words:

4. What is a summary?

5. Why is it important to summarize less important details about your biographical subject?

6. Read the sample biography on pages 160 and 161. Briefly summarize the key details about the biographical subject.

Character Based Literacy Program Write Ahead
Falling Leaves, Day 11

Name: _____
Date: _____

Teach a mini-Lesson using *Write Ahead* pg. 166

Read: pg. 166 Sample Phase Biography

Student Activity: Read the Sample Phase Biography and answer the following questions.

1. What is a phase biography?

2. In a phase biography, what should you include in the beginning?

3. Imagine you are writing a phase biography about one of the characters in *Falling Leaves*. Choose one character and pick one event in their life to write a phase biography about. Use the rest of the page and write a brief phase biography, making sure to include a beginning, middle, and an end.

Character Based Literacy Program Write Ahead
Falling Leaves, Day 12

Name: _____
Date: _____

Teach a mini-Lesson using *Write Ahead* pg. 173

Read: pg. 173 Writing News Stories

Student Activity: Answer the following questions about writing news stories.

1. What is news?

2. Where are some places that you can find news stories?

3. What are the three basic reporting skills necessary for writing news stories?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

4. Why do you think that gathering facts and details is so important to writing news stories?

5. Can you think about any news stories that you have read or heard about lately?
Where did you find them? What were they about?

Character Based Literacy Program Write Ahead
Falling Leaves, Day 13

Name: _____
Date: _____

Teach a mini-Lesson using *Write Ahead* pg. 174

Read: pg. 174 Sample News Story

Student Activity: Answer the following questions about the sample news story.

1. What is the topic of this news story?

2. What do you learn from the title of the news story?

Student Activity: Read this sample news story.

A former San Jose City Council intern will perform 50 hours of community service after pleading guilty to a reduced charge of hacking into a city e-mail system last fall. Eric Hernandez, 18, pleaded guilty this morning after Superior Court Judge Jerome Nadler granted a defense motion to reduce the charge from a felony to a misdemeanor. Nadler said he granted the motion based on the young man's lack of a prior criminal record and the circumstances of the offense. Hernandez, who had interned for Councilman Sam Liccardo last summer, admitted to police earlier this year that he made unauthorized use of a password to troll through city e-mail accounts from his home computer, looking for political dirt to spread about his former boss's girlfriend. Police reported that Hernandez broke into the account of city staffer Jessica Garcia-Kohl more than 100 times. The intrusions were discovered after an e-mail from the mayor's chief of staff, asking council members to limit the number of staffers who gathered in a private room behind the council chambers, was leaked to a local political blog, sanjoserevealed.com. Hernandez, who was arrested and spent a day in jail before posting bail last month, faced up to three years in prison for the felony charge of unlawfully taking, copying and using computer data.

1. Who is the main subject of this news story?

2. What are some of the details included in this news story?

Character Based Literacy Program Write Ahead
Falling Leaves, Day 14

Name: _____
Date: _____

Teach a mini-Lesson using *Write Ahead* pg. 175

Read: pg. 175 Writing Guidelines\

Student Activity: Answer the following questions about the writing guidelines for news stories.

1. What is the job of the headline in a news story?

2. How should you organize your news story? How do you know what information to include?

3. Write headlines for the following summaries of news stories.

- a. The boy went to the zoo. While he was there a few monkeys escaped and took the boy away from his parents. The monkeys kept the boy for a few hours before the zookeepers were able to bring him back to his parents.

Headline: _____

- b. Yesterday a plane was forced to make an emergency landing in an open field in Ohio. All of the passengers survived, but many were injured in the bumpy landing. Upon inspection, it was revealed that the plane did not have enough fuel to reach it's final destination in California.

Headline: _____

- c. Tomorrow is the election for the President of the United States. This election is expected to be very close. Both the Republican and Democratic candidates have support throughout the United States. It should be a very interesting day.

Headline: _____

4. Reread the sample news story on page 174. Do you think that this is a good news article? Why or why not?

Character Based Literacy Program Write Ahead
Falling Leaves, Day 15

Name: _____

Date: _____

Teach a mini-Lesson using *Write Ahead* pg. 175

Read: pg. 175 Writing Guidelines, Prewriting

Student Activity: Answer the following questions about prewriting for news stories.

1. Why are topics so important to news stories?

2. Match the factors in deciding news stories with their definitions.

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| a. Importance | Readers want to know what is happening now and what is going to happen. For the most part, old news is no news. |
| b. Local News | Will this news be of value to your readers? |
| c. Importance | Readers enjoy stories about people. Would you rather read a story about a recent rock concert, or a story about the musicians that play in the group? |
| d. Human Interest | The best news usually takes place close to home. For students, that means school and community news. |

3. Read the following headlines. Determine which are newsworthy and which are not by circling the headlines that are newsworthy.
- a. Woman Goes to Grocery Store
 - b. Boys Win Soccer Tournament
 - c. Students Attend Class
 - d. School Reopens After Fire
 - e. School Wins National Award
 - f. Family Buys New Car

Character Based Literacy Program Write Ahead
Falling Leaves, Day 16

Name: _____
Date: _____

Teach a mini-Lesson using *Write Ahead* pg. 176

Read: pg. 176 Writing Guidelines, Gathering Details

Student Activity: Answer the following questions about writing news stories.

1. Where should you look to collect information for a news story?

2. What are the 5 W's that you should make sure to include in your news story?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

3. Read the following news story and create a 5 W's chart with information from the story.

On April 9 at about 7:40 p.m. police pulled over Carl Smith of San Jose, California for minor speeding. During the search of Smith and his vehicle, police say they found \$900 in \$10 and \$20 bills. On an ordinary traffic stop, police found a lot of counterfeit money in the driver's possession, and also found links to where the money was made. Smith was arrested and booked at San Jose City Jail and was held on \$10,000 bond. He was later transferred to Santa Clara County Jail. A later investigation led police to a residence where it was believed the fake bills were being produced, according to police. Working with the Secret Service, police served a search warrant on the residence. The District Attorney has requested charges be filed against the resident of the home for possessing a counterfeiting device.

5 W's Chart:

Character Based Literacy Program Write Ahead
Falling Leaves, Day 17

Name: _____
Date: _____

Teach a mini-Lesson using *Write Ahead* pg. 176

Read: pg. 176 Writing Guidelines, Gathering Details

Student Activity: Answer the following questions about writing news stories.

1. Imagine that you are interviewing a friend about what they did last weekend. Prepare a list of questions that you would ask your friend

2. Why is it important to take notes during an interview? What happens if you don't have notes?

3. Why should you make sure to be polite to the person you are interviewing?

4. Imagine that you are writing a news story on a baseball game. Who would you want to interview? What kinds of questions would you ask them? Make a list of people that you might interview for your news story and then make a list of questions you would ask them.

Character Based Literacy Program Write Ahead
Falling Leaves, Day 18

Name: _____
Date: _____

Teach a mini-Lesson using *Write Ahead* pg. 177

Read: pg. 176 Writing the First Draft

Student Activity: Answer the following questions about writing the first draft of a new story.

1. What is a lead paragraph? _____

2. Imagine that you are writing a news story about one of the characters or events from *Falling Leaves*. Write a lead paragraph for that news story.

3. What should you include in the rest of your news story? Do you need to include all of the details of the story in the lead paragraph?

4. Why might it be useful to use quotes in your news story? What could quotes add to your story? _____

5. Imagine that you are writing a news story about one of the events in *Falling Leaves*. Gather details and write a first draft of your news article, including a lead paragraph. _____

Character Based Literacy Program Write Ahead Name: _____
Falling Leaves, Day 19 Date: _____

Date: _____

Teach a mini-Lesson using *Write Ahead* pg. 177

Read: pg. 176 Revising, improving your writing.

Student Activity: Answer the following questions about revising news stories.

1. Use the following checklist in order to revise the first draft of the news story that you wrote yesterday.
 - _____ Does the lead paragraph cover the key points about the story and gain my readers' interest?
 - _____ In the remaining part, have I included the information that "fills in" the rest of the story?
 - _____ Is the information in the story clearly stated and effectively organized?
 - _____ Is the story written objectively—meaning that I haven't included any of my own thoughts and feelings?
2. Based on the checklist, revise your news story. Make the connections necessary to satisfy all of the points on the checklist. Make sure that your news story includes all of the necessary details.

Revised News Story:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on the right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

Character Based Literacy Program Write Ahead
Falling Leaves, Day 20

Name: _____
Date: _____

Teach a mini-Lesson using *Write Ahead* pg. 178

Read: pg. 176 Editing, Checking for Style and Correctness.

Student Activity: Answer the following questions about revising news stories.

1. Why should you edit your news story after you revise it?

2. What are the things you should check for when editing for style and grammar?

3. Read the following news story and edit the story for style and correctness. Make sure to look at grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Olympic Torch Protests

The torch never made it to its announced route, and the raucous protests that were expected never happened. Nearly 10,000 people gathered along the Embarcadero waterfront Wednesday in San Francisco. Some were there to protest China's policies toward Tibet. Others showed up to support China as it prepares to host the 2008 Summer Olympics. What connected them all is that they were there for the Olympic Torch Relay? Yet protesters and spectators alike all left the waterfront unhappy.

The Olympic torch was making its only North American appearance, in San Francisco. Groups there protesting clashed with police, Chinese Olympic security forces, and the torch runners themselves.

The decision to change the route came after demonstrators flooded the streets around the original relay route. They also refused police orders to stay behind barricades.

Groups of protesters began pushing and shoving each other, and one group broke the windows on a bus, according to the San Francisco police chief. The adjustments prevented most people from seeing the Olympic torch. But the relay committee still called the event a success.