Georgia Performance Standards Framework for Unit 1 - 8th Grade

Grade: 8  
Topic: Author’s Purpose  
Instructional unit: Research Process/Narrative Writing Techniques

The task:  
Beyond the main idea of an effective piece of memoir writing is the reason an author chooses to tell his or her story. This reason is what makes the story important; consequently, the “so what?” When students identify the “so what,” they are identifying the purpose of the piece.

The teacher will take the model from the lesson on Research Writing/Narrative Techniques and model how to elicit author purpose and work as a group towards understanding purpose. Students will return to their same groups as the previous day, and they will work to identify the author’s purpose in the memoir on which they had worked as a group from the previous lesson.

Often, writers will explicitly state their message at the end of the memoir; however, sometimes the message is more subtle and is woven throughout. For example, if the memoir is about a grandmother, then the student needs to address what seems to be important about the grandmother for the author. A memoir without a message lacks closure, like a cake without icing (a simile the student will understand).

Differentiation:  
* The students will be provided the memoir on tape.  
* The students will be provided key terms and questions to identify the purpose of the writing.

Focus Standard:  
**ELA8R1** The student demonstrates comprehension and shows evidence of a warranted and responsible explanation of a variety of literary and informational texts.  
For literary texts, the student identifies the characteristics of various genres and produces evidence of reading that:  
e. Evaluates recurring or similar themes across a variety of selections, distinguishing theme from topic.

Circumstances of the assignment/Notes to the Teachers:  
This activity is completed after the introduction to memoirs. Be sure to do a brief review of elements from the day before to refresh students.