The following instructional plan is part of a GaDOE collection of Unit Frameworks, Performance Tasks, examples of Student Work, and Teacher Commentary. Many more GaDOE approved instructional plans are available by using the Search Standards feature located on GeorgiaStandards.Org.

Georgia Performance Standards Framework for Unit 1-8th Grade

Grade: 8
Topic: Analyzing Elements of a Memoir

Instructional unit: Exploring Georgia Authors
Contributed By: Leeann Cornett, Angie Markham, Kathy Wood, Candy Alexander, Stephanie O’Sako
The task:

So that students will understand the characteristics and purpose of a memoir, the teacher will choose multiple picture books that exhibit the qualities of a memoir. Prior to reading, the teacher will provide the students with a handout that lists the qualities of an effective memoir and review what each element is. Depending on length of memoir chosen, teacher would read orally the memoir once or twice, with the second time focusing on finding the qualities from the handout. During the second reading, the teacher will encourage students to recognize/notice the elements of the memoir on their own.

After the process has been modeled, students move into groups and analyze a memoir on their own, using a graphic organizer that asks them to identify the elements of the effective memoir.

Modifications:
1. Provide the material on a text reader
2. Provide a graphic organizer with prompts in each section
3. Provide a handout that includes the elements

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:
   a. Identifies the difference between the concepts of theme in a literary work and author’s purpose in an expository text.
   b. Compares and contrasts genre characteristics from two or more selections of literature.

Circumstances of the assignment/Notes to the Teachers:

This activity should be performed as an introduction to memoirs.

Some suggestions for effective memoirs are, but not limited to:
All the Places to Love – Patricia McLachlan
An Angel for Solomon Singer – Cynthia Rylant
Fireflies – Julie Brinckloe
Midnight in the Mountains – Julie Lawson
My Mama Had a Dancing Heart – Libba Moore Gray
Roxaboxen – Barbara Conny
Tar Beach – Faith Ringold
The Memory Box – Mary Bahr
When the Relatives Came – Cynthia Rylant
When I Was Young in the Mountains – Cynthia Rylant
Thank You Mr. Falker – Patricia Polacco
Chicken Sunday – Patricia Polacco
A Memoir...

- Focuses on a person, place or thing (animal) which has a particular significance in the writer's life
- Has a particular focus, an element which receives the most emphasis
- Recreates for the reader incidents shared with the person, in the place or with the “thing (such as animal)”
- Reveals the writer’s knowledge of and feelings about the person, place or thing (animal)
- Shares new insights gained in recalling the significance of the person, place or thing (animal)
- Makes the person, place or thing (animal) come alive for the reader