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 Task for English Language Arts – GRADE 3

Grade: Third
Title: Character Development Learning

Task Annotation:

This learning activity is an instructional task for the third grade narrative writing unit. An instructional task is a task that teachers give students to complete within a unit of study. This helps the teacher to gauge the students' level of understanding of the genre before the unit of study is completed and before the students complete an entire narrative composition. This instructional/learning task should help the teacher make further instructional decisions within the unit of study. The purpose of the narrative genre is to tell a story either real or imaginative. Discuss with students that stories should have characters. Their character(s) should face a problem and their reader should get to know the character(s) through the actions and words of the characters. For this learning/instructional task, students will develop their character(s) through their actions and words. They may use the following graphic organizer to help guide them in the development of their character(s).

* Please note that the following lessons for the instructional task are not to be followed as a script. They are examples of lessons teachers might want to use.

Focus Standard:

ELA3W1 The student demonstrates competency in the writing process. The student

f. Begins to use specific sensory details (e.g., strong verbs, adjectives) to enhance descriptive effect.
g. Begins to develop characters through action and dialogue.
h. Begins to use descriptive adjectives and verbs to communicate setting, character, and plot.

The Task: Lesson 1:

One of the elements of the third grade narrative standard is to begin developing characters through action and dialogue. The teacher could draw out the "character chart" (like the one attached) on chart paper. The teacher might read a fiction picture book that has a strong character. The teacher could then fill out a character chart about the character in the book. The teacher explains to the students that narratives have characters and that the characters have a problem that matches the type of character the author created. For example, if a problem in the story is a boat is sinking, then the author may have created a character that cannot swim. A discussion could be held about how the author did this in the book the teacher chose to read. (The teacher could also use a piece of student work to demonstrate this after reading the book if a piece of exemplary student work is accessible.) During writing time, the students will have a copy of the "character chart" graphic organizer. They will talk with a partner about their plans for a character in their story. Then they will begin filling out the graphic organizer with the character for their story in mind. During share time, students will share what their thoughts are for their character.
Lesson 2:
In this lesson, the teacher could use the "character chart" from lesson one and create a character in his/her own narrative. The teacher might think aloud his/her thought process as the character for the story is created. During writing time, the students will continue to work on creating their characters for their narratives using the graphic organizer "character chart." Students that have created believable characters will share what they have done and their thought processes during share time.

Lesson 3:
(The teacher might use a lesson like the following from the book Mechanically Inclined by Jeff Anderson)
The teacher could hold a discussion about how authors develop characters by using dialogue (character conversations) and adding character actions to the sentences that contain the dialogue. This shows the reader how the characters are acting while they are speaking and gives the reader insight into getting to know the character. The teacher might put a quote like the following on the overhead, board, or chart paper: "Loena, Violeta, could you find it in your hearts to join the rest of us?" she asked, calling us by our Spanish-class names, hitting just the right note of sarcasm. (from the book Cuba by Nancy Osa)
A discussion could be held about what this quote tells the reader about the teacher? For example, this might open up into discussion about how the teacher is their Spanish teacher, and she is sarcastic.

The teacher could then post other examples of dialogue with added action like the following:
"Yes, Father," Hassan would mumble, looking down at his feet.  
"You don't know what it means?" I said, grinning.  
"What is it, Amir?" Baba said, reclining on the sofa and lacing his hands behind his head.  
(Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini)
(The teacher could use quotes from books that serve the same purpose in place of these quotes if desired.)
Again, the teacher opens the floor for class discussion on what they notice about the writing and the characters. Students should notice how writers can really reveal or show their characters by describing or narrating how they talk and move. As an added bonus, students should also be paying careful attention to the use of punctuation in these sentences. The teacher could point out the punctuation to the students, so they have a good model of how punctuation should be used in sentences such as these. During writing time, students add dialogue to their characters and try to add action with it mimicking the examples they saw in this lesson. Students who have successfully implemented dialogue and action sentences to show or reveal their characters will share with the class.

Lesson 4:
Today, the teacher could model adding dialogue with action to his/her story. The teacher might explain that dialogue should sound like real people talking. The teacher could give an example that no exposition should be used in dialogue such as, "I'm in my bedroom, combing my shiny blond hair." That doesn't sound like what people would really say. Writers need to choose their characters' words carefully, and characters should say enough to move the story, not just one line of dialogue for a couple of pages. They need more than that. Also, although we need to add action to our dialogue, we also don't need to overdo it. The teacher might model adding dialogue to his/her story, so it makes the characters in the story seem real. Students are to revise their dialogue and action tags in their pieces to make sure their characters seem real. Students who have done a good job with this will share during share time.
Character Chart

Title of Story: ________________________________________

My Character: ________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facts about my character:</th>
<th>My character’s actions:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My character’s conversations:</th>
<th>My character’s thoughts:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Differentiation of Instruction

Readiness
The visual scaffolds such as those from Jeff Anderson’s *Mechanically Inclined* and other graphic organizers will support most students at various levels as the charts remain posted in the classroom. There are a few additional supports that could be helpful.

1. **Color-code** dialogue punctuation on the chart or on individual copies for students to keep in their writing folder.

2. **Highlight or write words in color** that are actually spoken within the complete sentence so that students are very clear that only words said "aloud" are within the quotation marks. **Highlight or write the tag** in another color.

3. **Provide a personal editing sheet** that begins with common reminders for all students such as capitalizing beginning words and proper nouns, ending with an end mark (period for statements and commands, question mark for a question, etc.), and spelling. As you work with each student or in small groups you can add individual reminders as needed by each student. See **Student Interests: Personal Editing Sheet**.

4. **A Word List** for the word *said* with multiple synonyms should be developed and posted within the classroom (personal copies could also be distributed). An excellent resource for coming up with synonyms for *said* is *How the Fisherman Tricked the Genie* by Christopher Sunami. There are over 20 other ways of saying *said*!!

5. **Provide guidance** with matching an appropriate "tag" to a sentence. For example, provide the student(s) with a sentence containing dialogue and have the student(s) match an appropriate tag (also provided) on a worksheet or a cut and paste task.

6. **Start with a model** and have students add a tag only. This would be an extension of the suggestion above (#5). Also, reverse the procedure and have the students match a good synonym of *said* to a sentence with a tag already provided. This would encourage students to not over use one or two words and to think carefully how powerful word choice can be.
Learning Profile

**Auditory Learners** are those students who gain most of their information through sound. They are usually easy to discern because they talk to themselves as they work. When they independently read, they will read out loud. They want the directions repeated or will repeat them back to the teacher to clarify. Auditory learners may benefit from a listening center, from reading partners, and stories being read aloud by the teacher or other adults. They also need directions or instructions to be repeated and backed up by a visual example or model.

**Visual Learners** are those students who want to see everything. They benefit from demonstrations, models, graphic organizers, pictures, and other representation. They will want to show the teacher what they mean rather than say it. In reading and writing, they prefer picture books as they gain the story through both the words and pictures. They may need to express some parts of their initial narratives or literature responses in pictures. This can be phased out as the student develops more competent skills. Some students are picture dependent, and the teacher may have to cover the picture to direct the focus to the narrative prose itself.

**Kinesthetic Learners** are those students who learn through the use of their bodies and through touch, such as the manipulation of objects and physically using their bodies. For example, these learners might benefit from manipulating their arms to learn the concepts of “horizontal, vertical, and oblique.” In learning the elements of a narrative, a teacher might provide a small set of stairs so students can “step” on the rising action events, reach the climax, and step down to the solution. To learn the concept of an opening and closing, have the student introduce themselves to a peer, tell a brief version of their narrative, and then close the conversation.

**Learners** with developmental delays can learn but at their own pace. They will benefit from the many strategies that are successful with other students. They tend to be fairly literal, concrete, and are usually slow at gaining reading and writing skills at proficient levels. Implicit comprehension will be a struggle for them. Listening centers, peer readers, writing partners, and concrete examples and models are some ways to support these students. These students can become easily frustrated and often have a difficult time expressing their emotions, needs, or dislikes. Modeling how to express these requirements can be done through the Sentence Frames. For example, on a sentence strip a sentence can be written such as, “I feel mad because __________________,” or “I like to __________________.”

**Learners** with sensory issues are exceptionally sensitive to touch, light, sound, smells, and movement. They can often “hear” fluorescent light bulbs buzz, see the constant flickering of the computer screen, and will cover their ears with loud

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noises and clapping. Some students do not want to be touched or to touch objects. Others will not like perfumes, colognes, or hairspray odors. But there is hope by being creative and patient. A large umbrella suspended from the ceiling can block harsh light. Have the student face away from computer screens and reassure them when or if they react. Touch sensitive students may need to write with a marker as it requires less pressure to hold and press down to write. A slantboard may also assist students as it requires them to apply a certain amount of pressure. Their writing is often illegible and may require some hand over hand assistance. The best resource for these types of issues is an occupational therapist. Most systems have one or contract for services through a local facility. Touch sensitive students can also benefit from writing with their fingers in sand, uncooked rice, or uncooked beans such as peas or pinto beans.

**Learners** with symptoms of inattentiveness have difficulty sustaining focus on a task, being very easily distracted, wants help before applying themselves to a task, and/or “daydream.” Many also exhibit excessive motor activity: out of seat, blurts out, wants to be first, first volunteers for anything, acts impulsively, and/or talks continually. Some students, girls more so than boys, will be very quiet and are often overlooked as they are off thinking of other things, causing no disruption, nor demanding teacher attention. By providing a “safe space” in the classroom where a student can move to better focus, cool off, or just to move is helpful. Also, many of the strategies that are successful with visual and kinesthetic learners are useful with these students as well.

**Learners** with limited English experience are obviously going to be anywhere along the spectrum of proficiency of English mastery. Be mindful that each culture has its own way of showing respect toward adults and in responding to redirection or criticism. Many cultures do not look adults in the eye as it is a sign of disrespect. Some cultures need to “save face” when being corrected or redirected. Utilize your system’s resources to find out about the students you are responsible for, and do your own research for facts and information. For students who have recently been immersed in English (less than one year), they will need significant supports within the classroom: picture dictionaries, workbooks at 1st or 2nd grade levels for English skill, spelling, and grammar (sentence structure). They will need visual representation for grade level vocabulary and key words in content areas. **Note:** There are several sites online available for translating to facilitate home-school communication such as Alta Vista. You simply type in what you need to say and then choose the language you need it to be translated to.
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Student Interest

Teachers: copy and paste to a word document.

Name: _______________________________ Date ____________

Personal Editing Sheet

C Capital letters
• Beginning of sentences
• Names of people, places, and products (Dr. Pepper)
• Months, holidays, weekdays, streets, cities, and states

. Periods for telling sentences and commands
? Question Mark for asking sentences
! Exclamation Point for strong feelings
, Comma
• Lists: red, blue, and green
• Conjunctions: We went to the mall, and I bought a birthday gift for my friend.

, “C __________________.” for quotations
Comma, quotes, capital, end mark, quotes. (Read like a mantra!)

‘s to show possession or that something belongs together
• singular: mom’s car, teacher’s desk, or dog’s leash

Things I have to remember: