Georgia Performance Standards Task for English Language Arts – GRADE 3

Grade: Third
Title: Organizational Structure 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 a problem/conflict and that this is the foundation of the structure of the narrative. For this learning/instructional task, students will use either a story map or plot line in order to organize their writing. They should use one of these graphic organizers to plan their narratives and then use this information within their narratives.

* Please note that these lessons for this instructional task are not to be followed as a script. These lessons are example teachers may want to use or adapt within this unit.

Focus Standard:

ELA3W1 The student demonstrates competency in the writing process. The student
  a. Captures a reader’s interest by setting a purpose and developing a point of view.
  b. Begins to select a focus and an organizational pattern based on purpose, genre, expectations, audience, and length.
  c. Writes text of a length appropriate to address the topic or tell the story.
  d. Uses organizational patterns for conveying information (e.g., chronological order, cause and effect, similarity and difference, questions and answers).
  e. Begins to use specific sensory details (e.g., strong verbs, adjectives) to enhance descriptive effect.
  f. Begins to develop characters through action and dialogue.
  g. Begins to use descriptive adjectives and verbs to communicate setting, character, and plot.
  h. Prewrites to generate ideas, develops a rough draft, rereads to revise, and edits to correct.

The Task:

Lesson 1:
One of the third grade narrative standard elements is: "Begins to select a focus and an organizational pattern based on purpose, genre, expectations, audience, and length." The teacher could spend the next few days focusing on just that element. The teacher might also explain to students that all writing has an organizational pattern. For narratives, the structure is a story structure with a problem and solution. The teacher might explain that the narrative genre means a story. Students should also know that the word genre means a type of writing. The teacher will read a picture story book to students. The teacher then could model for students how to fill out a story map about the book. The teacher explains to students that
all narratives have a story structure. The teacher explains that students need to look through their writer's notebooks and decide which of their entries lend themselves to a story structure. They will need to pick one of these to write a narrative about. During writing time, students can create a three column chart in their writer's notebook. The columns might say: Idea From My Notebook, Why It Will or Won't Work, What If...? If the topics in the notebooks don't have a problem, this is a good time for the students to realize that and create one. The teacher might model this for the students before sending them to write. The teacher will have discussed with the students that in the story he/she read something big happened - a problem. This will determine whether or not the piece will work. During writing time, students will take the time to go through their entries in their writer's notebooks and then they will create the three column chart with two or three of the topics they want to write about. They have already been writing, so they can include the pieces they have already started or they can look at a different entry. During share time, students will share their three column charts.

Lesson 2:
The teacher will remind students of the story that was read yesterday and the story map that was completed about the story. The teacher will also remind students of the three column chart he/she modeled for the students with his/her own writing topics to determine which will best lend itself to writing a narrative. The teacher could then model choosing the one he/she wants to write a narrative about and thinks will be the best for the narrative writing structure. The teacher models filling out his/her plan for the narrative--thinking aloud while filling in the information on the story map. The teacher will explain that as he/she is writing his/her narrative this story map will be the guide to keep the story focused and organized. During writing time, the students will make their plans for their narratives using the story map. They will understand that this is their plan so it will be completed before they get deep into writing their narratives. They may want to write some before they fill in the story map so they can get their creative writing juices flowing. During share time, students that have successfully filled out parts or all of the graphic organizers will share and tell their thinking process.

Lesson 3:
The teacher may discuss with students how they have been using a story map to organize their writing, but another way to organize a story would be to use a plot line. Show students plot line graphic organizer like the one attached. The teacher might tell students the story,"The Boy Who Cried Wolf," since most students are familiar with that story. While telling the story, the teacher fills out a plot line on the story. The teacher then could read a story picture book and, as a class, solicit help from students to discuss the plot line of the picture book. The teacher really needs to focus on the major event/problem or climax of the book read. Explain to the students that their stories should have a major problem and that would be the climax. Then show students the events that lead up to the climax in the story. Students need to have a major event/problem or climax in their story and at least two events leading up to the climax. They may have more events if they want, but caution them about having too many rising action events. During work time have students write down their climax or major event and at least two events leading up to the climax. They may discuss this with partners, and the teacher should be walking around doing mini conferences with students while they are working. The teacher may even continue the focused lesson with a small group of students who need further scaffolding before sending them to work. During share time, a couple of students who have come up with a good problem and two or three events leading up to it should share.
Lesson 4:
The teacher might remind students about the plot line they discussed the previous day. The teacher could then model filling out a plot line on his/her own writing (in the same way that he/she had modeled filling out a story map on earlier in the week). The teacher might explain that even though this is the same piece of writing/story, it can be planned out using either graphic organizer. Some students may find it easier to use one over the other in planning their writing. During work time, students will complete a plot line on their narratives/stories. This should help them stay focused and keep in mind the events leading up to their major event/problem (climax). The teacher again may need to conduct a differentiated, small group lesson for those who are still struggling. Then it is imperative that the teacher conduct mini conferences with students to make sure they are on the right track. During share time, a couple of students who have successfully filled out a plot line on their stories/narratives will share and tell their thought process.

Lesson 5:
The teacher could wrap up by explaining that over the last few days the class has been learning about the organizational pattern of narratives in the narrative standard. They have learned that stories or narratives have a problem and solution structure. The teacher could explain that the class will be learning more about the narrative standard as they get into learning about the other elements and that they will be developing the areas of their narratives through revision to make them stronger. However, the class now has a good start and a plan. In other words, they have a good framework and plan for their stories. Also, over the next few days, the teacher might want to assess the students to see if their narratives match their plans. This could be done through conferences. The teacher may want to show the students the rubric he/she will be using to do this and give the students a copy of the rubric so they can assess themselves. During writing time, students work on writing their narratives/stories and using their plans (graphic organizers) to guide them. For share time, students who have a strong foundation of a story/narrative will share their work.

In order to teach this instructional task, the teacher will need to have several good story picture books to read to students. These picture books need to have the story structure of problem and solution. EXAMPLES of good authors include, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO, Patricia Polacco, Eve Bunting, and Kevin Henkes. They will need chart paper to chart out the different graphic organizers and place these completed charts up in the room where students can access them when they need them. They will also need hard copies of each graphic organizer to give to each student. If available, the teacher may want to use a piece of student work that meets standard from a previous year to show how a student their age did what he/she wants them to do. The teacher could use an overhead for this and could give the students a hard copy to put in their writer's notebooks. The teacher will need to have the standard posted and have a way to differentiate the element being worked on right now. All students should have a writer's notebook and they should also have a drafting folder where they keep the piece they are currently developing. The teacher needs to have some method of keeping records of student conferences.
Differentiation of Instruction

Readiness
The strategies suggested here may benefit students with a variety of challenges.

1. Listening Center with books on tape, either purchased or teacher created, support learners who need to hear stories several times to gain comprehension, build vocabulary, and differentiate the elements of a narrative.

2. Graphic Organizers can be with visually scaffolding by adding icons that represent the different spaces on the organizer. For example, an icon for people could be placed next to the space for "Characters" or the icons of a clock and building could represent "Time and Place" for the setting. See Attachment: Graphic Organizers.

3. Parallel Story Map or Plot Line would benefit students who need a model from which to create their own product. For example, on one side of a paper a familiar story could be mapped out or plotted with blank spaces to be completed by the student on the opposite side. Another example would be a story web with filled in spaces with a familiar story and blank spaces right underneath for the student to fill in. See Attachment: Graphic Organizers.

4. Vocabulary Support can be employed by using a strategy called LINC. Give the student a list of vocabulary words in a vertical column with four additional columns to be used in the following order by the student: 2nd - a reminder word to assist the student in remembering the targeted vocabulary; 3rd - a picture or visual representation of the meaning; and 4th - a sentence using the word in standard English (may need editing by peer or teacher). See Attachment: Graphic Organizers.

5. Sentence Strips with a complete sentence written without capitals and punctuation are provided by the teacher along with additional pieces: a period, a comma, a question mark, an exclamation point, and all the capital letters. The student would lay the smaller pieces on to the sentence strip correctly. Have the student rewrite the corrected sentence for additional practice. See Attachment: Graphic Organizers.

6. Sentence Frames are sentence starters on a strip or on paper written by the teacher. A sentence might be, "I feel happy because __________." Help the student read the sentence by pointing to each word as spoken. Have the student complete the sentence verbally or with a picture. This is particularly important to support students with significant language challenges, such as non-English speakers and special education needs in the areas of expressing feelings, wants/needs, and likes or dislikes.
7. **Backward Design** is a strategy where intense scaffolding is provided at first, and then as the student accomplishes the ending steps in a procedure, the teacher backs off one step at a time so that the student is doing more and more of the task.

Example:
- "I feel sad because I wanted to _________________."
- "I feel sad because I _____________________."
- "I feel sad _______________________."
- "I feel _____________________________."

**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 the listening center, from reading partners, and stories being read aloud by the teacher or other adult. 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 up” 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 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. However, many students function quite well in a general classroom and often are very good in some subjects or skills.

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 criticism or correction. 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 systems resources to find out about the students you are responsible for and do your own research for facts and information.

For students who have just recently been immersed in English (less than 6 months), they will need significant supports within the classroom: picture dictionaries, workbooks at 1st and 2nd grade levels for English skills, spelling, and grammar (sentence structure). They will need visual representation of grade level vocabulary and key words in content areas.

As students become more proficient, they will be able to participate and learn in the framework of the general curriculum. However, sentence structure and grammar usage, both oral and written, will continue to have inconsistencies for many years.

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.

Student Interest

Students in the 3rd grade are still very concrete thinkers just on the cusp of being able to truly imply meaning from reading texts and in content areas. They generally enjoy and learn more from hands-on activities, tasks that allow different products other than a worksheet or written report, and activities that allow drama, such as skits, plays, music, and art.

There are several resources available to differentiate learning for students. A couple of examples that allow for a variety of products are "tic-tac-toe" assignment sheets where nine tasks are outlined on a grid of nine squares. Each student is to complete three of the assignments in some configuration set by the teacher: any three, three in a row, or one in each row or column. Another example with the same concept of allowing students a choice in a product or products is a "cube." The teacher can create a paper cube with a differentiated task on each of the six sides and have the students choose 1, 2, or 3 tasks. Some tasks in both of these examples can be allowed to be done with a partner or a small group of 3 or 4.

Allow students at this age to follow their interests to teach them skills in reading, writing, and research for science and social studies. For example, allow each student to choose a topic for a research project in science, a visual presentation in social studies, or a skit to act out a different ending to a book the class is
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reading together. As the GPS has such an emphasis on writing in various genres, then students can be allowed to choose topics and interests in which to research, share information, and present creative visuals as a natural outcome.

An interest inventory at the beginning of the year would be a great way for the teacher to have an idea as to what is currently popular and/or important to the students of his/her class.