Instructional/Learning Activity Task Template:

Overview

Unit Title: Informational / Nonfiction

Annotation
Paragraphs are an organizational tool. Paragraphs make writing “easy on the reader’s eye” and help writers clearly express what they think and feel. Students need to know how to organize information in paragraphs.

This instructional task is based upon the suggested informational / nonfiction book Owls by Gail Gibbons; however, other high quality books could be substituted as well.

Students will learn the purpose and process of summarizing information in paragraph form. Students will practice this skill by using previously written facts/information from classroom research to create summaries in paragraph form.

Grade, Subject, Topic, Author(s):
3rd Grade, Informational / Nonfiction (Making Outstanding Paragraphs- MOP)
Shannon Bryant and Jennifer Wynn, Houston County

Special Notes to Teacher: This session of the instructional task will take approximately 30-45 minutes. Content may be taught over a series of days, most likely two class periods. The text Owls by Gail Gibbons should have been read to the students prior to this task. (Note: Other high quality information/nonfiction texts may be substituted.) Students may use previously written nonfiction / informational sentences from prior research. Sample tasks demonstrating how to find and document fragments of facts and transform fragmented factual information into complete and coherent sentences may be found underneath the writing unit Informational/Nonfiction under the following title: Fact Fragment Finders & Superhero Structured Sentences.

Sentences and sample paragraphs used for this lesson will be attached; however, other sentences and sample paragraph could be substituted as well.

MOP (Making Outstanding Paragraphs) is an acronym used in this lesson as a quick reference for students. This acronym helps the student to create a mental image of “cleaning up” written information in order to make it more appealing to the reader.

It may be beneficial for the teacher to have an auditory cue, such as a bell or a timer, to aid in class transitions for this instructional task. This will assist with organization, noise control, and classroom clean-up.
Georgia Performance Standards Framework for English Language Arts – GRADE 3

Standards

Focus Standard/Element(s):
ELA3R3-The student uses a variety of strategies to gain meaning from grade-level text. The student:
g. Summarizes text content.

Complementary Standard/Element(s):
ELA3C1-The student demonstrates understanding of the rules of the English Language, realizing that usage involves the appropriate application of conventions and grammar in both written and spoken formats. The student:
e. Speaks and writes in complete and coherent sentences.
j. Uses resources to research and share information about a topic.

ELA3R2-The student acquires and uses grade-level words to communicate effectively. The student:
j. Identifies and infers main idea and supporting details.

Learning Goals

Essential Question(s):
● What are good habits effective readers and writers?
● How is nonfiction writing organized?
● How can I express my knowledge about a topic to the reader?
● How do I better engage the reader through the use of paragraphs?

Knowledge:
● Readers and writers good habits.
● Paragraphs are an organization tool.
● Nonfiction information should be expressed in writing that is clear and concise.
● Reading and writing should engage the reader.

Skills:
● Students will collect and analyze information applicable to the topic.
● Students will learn and practice the skill of writing effective paragraphs.
● Students will understand that each paragraph has its own topic or central idea.
● Students will organize, synthesize, and paraphrase/summarize information.
● Students will engage the reader.
Balanced Assessment for Task

Assessment Method/Type:

Teacher Observation:

- For example, teachers will monitor and facilitate the class’ generation of MOP (Making Outstanding Paragraphs), as well as record student responses during class discussions of the text during both the text opener and after a teacher read aloud of Owls by Gail Gibbons. (See attached Teacher Observation Checklist- Summarizing Information in Paragraph Form).

Student-Generated Products:

- Specifically, completed Student Understanding Rubric: MOP (Making Outstanding Paragraphs).

Description/Directions for Assessment:

- Teacher Observation Checklist (Summarizing Information in Paragraph Form) - Teacher will monitor and facilitate student progress to ensure comprehension and application. (See attached.)

- Student Understanding Rubric (Making Outstanding Paragraphs) - Along with multiple student products and ongoing teacher observations, students should be encouraged to monitor their own progress and level of understanding. The attached rubric may be used by students in an effort to encourage such self-reflection. (See attachment.)

Student Work Samples (optional): N/A

Procedures, Directions, and Resources

Procedures/Directions (Detailed Steps) with Approximate Duration of Each Step:
This instructional task will take approximately 30-45 minutes and will guide the instructor in the teaching of ELA3R3 within the Informational/Nonfiction English Language Arts Unit.

Task (30-45 minutes)
Note: Content may be taught over a series of days, most likely two class periods.

Opening:
Teacher will ask the students to name some things that are used for cleaning a house. Students should think, then pair and share their responses to this question. Teacher will state to the students, “Today we are going to do some cleaning up. We will use ‘MOP’ to clean up our writings from a previously read nonfiction/information text.” Teacher will inform students that MOP (Making Outstanding Paragraphs) allows the reader to understand information better because it (1) provides a break, (2) is organized, (3) is easy on the reader’s eye, and (4) provides the readers with a clear understanding about the subject matter being discussed. It helps writers be clear and concise about what they think and feel.

Worktime:
Georgia Performance Standards Framework for English Language Arts – GRADE 3

Teacher will introduce students to the concept of paragraphs. Teacher will model how to make paragraphs using previously generated sentences by the class, using the book Owls by Gail Gibbons. (Note: Other high quality books could be substituted as well.) Teacher will emphasize the importance of rewriting research using one’s own words. Teacher will model how to construct complete and coherent sentences from the passages on pages 5-7 (from suggested text Owls by Gail Gibbons) into paragraphs. Teacher will complete the following steps.

1. Remind students that this is nonfiction information.
2. Re-read aloud the sentences (written in students’ own words) from the text Owls by Gail Gibbons, one sentence at a time.
3. Teacher will emphasize the importance of indenting each new paragraph. Teacher will make up a sound effect to indicate that it is time to indent and start a new paragraph. For this task, students will mimic “the sound of a swishing mop”.
4. After reading each sentence, teacher will model how to write a topic sentence- the first sentence of a paragraph that informs the reader about the topic.
5. Teacher will follow by modeling how to write paragraphs, using previously written sentences. (Teacher can model using LCD projector, overhead projector, or chart paper.)
6. After modeling how to make complete and coherent sentences into a paragraph, teacher will state, “Now, you will go and MOP up your own nonfiction/information sentences and make outstanding paragraphs.”
7. Using the nonfiction animal fact sentences created from the nonfiction/information tasks Fact Fragment Finders & Superhero Structured Sentences, students will practice making outstanding paragraphs using previously written sentences.
   (Note: Students can use other constructed sentences from nonfiction/informational texts for this task. As an alternative or supplemental activity, students may use sentences from the text Owls by Gail Gibbons or any other group of factual sentences.)

Closing:
In closing, students will be asked to share 3 examples of what makes a good paragraph. Closing discussion questions may include, “Why is writing in paragraph form important for the reader? Why is writing in paragraph form important for the writer?”

Resources, Materials, and Equipment:

Materials and Equipment:
- Suggested text (Owls by Gail Gibbons, or another high-quality nonfiction/information book)
- Chart Paper or Overhead Projector or LCD Projector
- Notebook Paper
Georgia Performance Standards Framework for English Language Arts – GRADE 3

- Pencils / Markers
- Construction Paper
- Nonfiction animal fact sentences created from the nonfiction/information tasks *Fact Fragment Finders & Superhero Structured Sentences* or other nonfiction fact sentences created from a quality nonfiction/information book
- Teacher prepared paragraph created from the nonfiction/information task *Superhero Structured Sentences* or another prepared paragraph created from a quality nonfiction/information book
- Scoring Rubrics (Teacher and Student)

**Alternative Nonfiction Texts:**
The following are other recommended informational/nonfiction books to also use in this lesson.
- *From Slave Ship to Freedom Road* by Julius Lester
- *I live in Tokyo* by Mauri Takabayashi
- *Milk Makers* by Gail Gibbons
- *Wolves* by Seymour Simon
- *Sharks* by Seymour Simon
- *Bones: Our Skeletal System* by Seymour Simon

**Resources:**
The following web sites are very useful and may be used throughout the course of this study.
- [http://www.eduplace.com/tales/](http://www.eduplace.com/tales/) (Mad-libs which focus students’ attention on specific parts of speech as they fill in a self-selected story.)
- [http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/words/writing/paragraphs/game.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/words/writing/paragraphs/game.shtml) (Students will rearrange pictures to tell a story.)

**Differentiation for Content, Procedures, Process, and/or Learning Environment:**

**Remediation:**
- Students may work in small groups with the teacher for additional instruction on how to make paragraphs. Teachers may assist students in using construction paper and markers to make a reminder flipchart. This flipchart will serve as a quick reference for students about how to take nonfiction/information sentences and make outstanding paragraphs.

**Enrichment/Extensions:**
- Students will design a vacation spot pamphlet using Microsoft Publisher or Power Point. Students will write 2 to 3 paragraphs containing nonfiction/information about the selected vacation spot. Students will incorporate at least 2 clip art pictures and 2 advertising slogans.
- Students will make a children’s magazine using paragraphs which contain nonfiction/informational facts about topics such as wildlife, famous kid inventors, etc. Students will distribute completed magazines to the class for them to read and evaluate the articles.
Sentences from Fact Fragment Notes

Sentence from note 1: Owls are nocturnal and are called raptors.

Sentence from note 2: Raptors are classified as birds of prey.

Sentence from note 3: They are fierce hunters that eat meat.

Sentence from note 4: In order to catch their prey, owls use their very sharp talons.

Sentence from note 5: Did you know that there are over 140 kinds of owls that live on every continent except Antarctica?

Sentence from note 6: Out of all the owls that exist, the Elf Owl is the smallest at 5 inches long.

Sentence from note 7: Yet, the Great Gray Owl towers over the Elf owl.

Sentence from note 8: The Great Gray Owl is 33 inches long.
Teacher Observation Checklist

**M O P (Making Outstanding Paragraphs)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Names</th>
<th>Provides the reader with a clear understanding of the topic.</th>
<th>Uses complete and logical sentences using facts/information.</th>
<th>Organizes information in paragraph form.</th>
<th>Indents for each new paragraph.</th>
<th>Writes a clear and concise topic sentence.</th>
<th>Exhibits the use of Making Outstanding Paragraphs.</th>
<th>Additional anecdotal comments:</th>
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Owls

Have you heard of a bird that glides and plummets beneath the stars? Owls are nocturnal birds called raptors. Raptors are classified as birds of prey. They are fierce hunters that eat meat. In order to catch their prey, owls use their very sharp talons.

Did you know that there are over 140 kinds of owls that live on every continent except Antarctica? Of all the owls that exist, the Elf Owl is the smallest at only 5 inches long. Yet, the Great Gray Owl towers over the Elf Owl. The Great Gray Owl is 33 inches long. I would agree with most scientists that there are many interesting owls that dwell in the world.