



EXPEDITIONARY  
LEARNING

# **Grade 3: Module 2B: Unit 3: Lesson 4**

## **Writing the Informative Paragraphs: Incorporating Research into Our Writing**



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**Long-Term Targets Addressed (Based on NYSP12 ELA CCLS)**

I can produce writing that is appropriate to task and purpose (with support). (W.3.4)  
I can write an informative/explanatory text. (W.3.2)  
I can group supporting facts together about a topic in an informative/explanatory text using both text and illustrations. (W.3.2a)  
I can use the writing process to plan, revise, and edit my writing (with support). (W.3.5)  
I can sort evidence into provided categories. (W.3.8)  
I can compare how people use language when they write versus when they talk. (L.3.3b)

**Supporting Learning Targets**

- I can practice for the performance task by writing about Japan (with support).
- I can plan my writing for my informative paragraphs by completing a Paragraph Writing graphic organizer.
- I can identify additional criteria for a strong research-based letter.

**Ongoing Assessment**

- France Model: Informative Paragraphs recording form
- Students' informative draft paragraphs



Agenda	Teaching Notes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Opening<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Engaging the Writer: Unpacking the Learning Targets (5 minutes)</li></ol></li><li>2. Work Time<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Examining the Informative Paragraphs (15 minutes)</li><li>B. Mini Lesson: Crafting an Informative Paragraph Using Modeling and Think-aloud (20 minutes)</li><li>C. Independent Practice: Planning and Drafting an Informative Paragraph Using the Paragraph Writing Graphic Organizer (10 minutes)</li></ol></li><li>3. Closing and Assessment<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Criteria for a Quality Research-Based Letter: Expanding the Criteria List (10 minutes)</li></ol></li><li>4. Homework<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Begin reading your independent reading book for this module. Choose a text from the Recommended Texts list.</li></ol></li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• As in previous lessons, students first look at the model letter about France and then apply their learning during guided practice writing about Japan. Lessons 4 and 5 provide time for students to draft the body paragraphs for the Japan letter. This lesson provides heavier scaffolding in preparing to write, and Lesson 5 provides more time for students to work independently on drafting. Work that is not completed in Lesson 4 can continue into Lesson 5.</li><li>• In Work Time B, a think-aloud is meant to model an authentic writing experience: you truly craft a paragraph about kanji (from Japan), in real time, in front of students. When creating the think aloud paragraph, be sure to include places which can be revised in the second half of the unit for adjectives and simple and compound sentences. There is a sample paragraph included in this lesson's supporting materials for your reference. Note, however that you will create a similar paragraph "live," rather than just handing out this completed paragraph.</li><li>• The paragraph that you write should be typed and distributed in either Lesson 5 or 6, since students will need a copy of the paragraph that you write paragraph in Lesson 6. Since students are working on drafting the informative body paragraphs, this would be an optimal time to also introduce the Show the Rule strategy so that students may incorporate the rule into their writing.</li><li>• Homework for this lesson involves independent reading. See the Unit 3 overview for details; be sure that independent reading is "launched" before this lesson.</li><li>• Note the anchor chart Criteria for Quality Research-Based Letter is updated and added to in this lesson. Be sure students have access to the most current anchor chart and that it contains all the necessary components.</li><li>• In advance:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Prepare the think-aloud for Work Time B. Consider using the Think-aloud for Work Time B provided in the supporting materials.</li><li>– Post: Learning targets, the Criteria for a Quality Research-Based Letter anchor chart.</li></ul></li></ul>



Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
informative, criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Performance Task Model: Writing about France (from Lesson 1)</li><li>• Analyzing the Anchor chart 2: Informative Body Paragraphs (begun in Lesson 1)</li><li>• Topic Decision recording form (from Lesson 3; one per student)</li><li>• Paragraph Writing graphic organizer (one per student and one to display)</li><li>• Kanji paragraph</li><li>• Paragraph Writing graphic organizer (kanji paragraph, for teacher reference)</li><li>• Think-aloud for Work Time B (for teacher reference)</li><li>• Criteria for a Quality Research-Based Letter anchor chart (begun in Lesson 2)</li><li>• Criteria for a Quality Research-Based Letter anchor chart (for teacher reference)</li><li>• Books for independent reading (see Unit 3 overview and Unit 3 Recommended Texts lists)</li></ul>

Opening	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Engaging the Writer: Unpacking the Learning Targets (5 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Direct students' attention to the learning targets and read the first two aloud:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* "I can practice for the performance task by writing about Japan (with support)."</li><li>* "I can plan my writing for my informative paragraphs by completing a Paragraph Writing graphic organizer."</li></ul></li><li>• Ask:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* "Based on these targets, what will you be working on today as writers? What is new about today's learning?"</li></ul></li><li>• Cold call students to share out.</li><li>• Remind them that in their journeys as letter writers, they have looked at a model letter about France to help them picture what their final product will look like. They also used the letter to think about how to craft an engaging opening (in Lesson 2).</li><li>• Yesterday, they made decisions about what they wanted to write about for the body of the letter. Today, they will look again at the France letter to see how to draft the informative paragraphs that make up the body of the letter.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider having a visual of the writing process posted for students to refer to.</li></ul>



Work Time	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Examining the Informative Paragraphs (15 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask students to locate their <b>Performance Task Model: Writing about France</b>.</li><li>• Direct students' attention to the <b>Analyzing the Anchor chart 2: Informative Body Paragraphs</b>. Remind students that in Lesson 1, they looked at the model letter of France and thinking about each part of the letter. Today they will be focusing on the informative body paragraphs.</li><li>• Invite students to read along silently in their heads as you read the actual paragraph from the France letter, and students' responses on Anchor Chart 2 from Lesson 1.</li><li>• After reading, inform students that you want to be sure they noticed everything they should to help them with their writing. Pose the following questions to students. Tell students that you will ask a question, allow them time to discuss with a partner, and then you will cold call for responses:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* "What do we notice about the paragraphs?"</li><li>* "What do we notice about the sentences?"</li><li>* "What do we notice about the words in the paragraph?"</li><li>* "What do we notice about the capitalization, spelling, and punctuation?"</li></ul></li><li>• As students share, record new responses on Anchor Chart 2: Informative Body Paragraphs. Be sure answers include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– The paragraphs have many sentences (9 or 10 sentences).</li><li>– Each paragraph has a topic sentence, detail sentences, and an ending sentence.</li><li>– Each paragraph has a topic.</li><li>– The sentences are long.</li><li>– There are several details in each paragraph.</li><li>– The detail sentences contain accurate facts from research.</li><li>– A lot of adjectives are used.</li><li>– There is sentence variety—they don't all start the same or sound the same.</li><li>– The sentences all make sense.</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strategic partnerships will support ELLs. Students may respond in their native language.</li><li>• Reading aloud the model letter will support struggling readers so they can focus on the writing structure.</li><li>• After recording student ideas, ask the class to reread what was recorded aloud with you. This will support students in knowing what was written so all of them can access it later.</li></ul>



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– There is good control of spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.</li><li>– Sometimes the sentences end with exclamation points or question marks.</li><li>• Congratulate students on their keen observations. Leave this anchor chart on display for the remainder of the lesson.</li></ul>	
<p><b>B. Mini Lesson: Crafting an Informative Paragraph Using Modeling and Think-aloud (20 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Remind students that in the previous lesson, they reviewed information from their Exploring Culture (Customs) and Exploring Culture (Traditions) recording forms. Then, using those recording forms, they chose two topics for their informative paragraphs.</li><li>• Use a think-aloud to model how to take a topic listed on the <b>Topic Decision recording form</b> and prepare to write about it using the <b>Paragraph Writing graphic organizer</b>.</li><li>• Display the Paragraph Writing graphic organizer. Students need to be able to see it during the think-aloud.</li><li>• Remind students that when they examined the informative paragraphs in the France model letter, they noticed that each followed the standard paragraph format: topic sentence, detail sentences, ending sentence. The Paragraph Writing graphic organizer will guide them through this format in the drafting of their own paragraphs.</li><li>• Conduct the think-aloud by modeling how to craft the <b>kanji paragraph</b> using the <b>Paragraph Writing graphic organizer (answers, for teacher reference)</b>. Consider using the <b>Think-aloud for Work Time B</b> as a guide (see the supporting materials)</li><li>• Review by thinking aloud about what is recorded on the organizer.</li><li>• After the paragraph is complete, read the finished paragraph aloud to the class. Ask the class to whisper-read it with you.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Incorporate frequent turn and talks to increase student engagement during modeling.</li></ul>



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>C. Independent Practice: Planning and Drafting an Informative Paragraphs Using the Paragraph Writing Graphic Organizer (10 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask students to turn and talk:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “What steps did you notice me taking during the mini lesson?”</li></ul></li><li>• Invite volunteers to share out. Ensure that students understand how to expand their topic into a paragraph, using the proper paragraph format.</li><li>• Ask them to take their materials and return to their seats.</li><li>• Give students 10 minutes to use one of their topic choices from the Topic Decision recording form and complete the Paragraph Writing graphic organizer.</li><li>• As they finish, let them know that they should start drafting their paragraph. Tell them they will have time to continue writing their drafts in the next lesson.</li><li>• Circulate and assist as necessary.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pull an invitational group for students who need additional support in organizing ideas to write.</li></ul>



Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Criteria for a Quality Research-Based Letter: Expanding the Criteria List (10 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Display the <b>Criteria for a Quality Research-Based Letter anchor chart</b> from Lesson 2.</li><li>• Review with students what the criteria list contains so far.</li><li>• Direct students' attention to the final learning target and ask for a volunteer to read it aloud:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* "I can identify additional criteria for a strong research-based letter."</li></ul></li><li>• Underline the word <i>criteria</i>. Remind students that criteria are qualities or characteristics.</li><li>• Continue by saying something like:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* "We started this anchor chart in Lesson 2. Think of our work today with the informative paragraphs. Based on the work we've done so far, what criteria can we add to our anchor chart?"</li></ul></li><li>• Cold call students to share out. Refer the <b>Criteria for a Quality Research-Based Letter anchor chart (for teacher reference)</b> for additional criteria that should be highlighted during this discussion.</li><li>• As ideas come forth, add them to the Criteria for a Quality Research-Based Letter anchor chart.</li><li>• Remind students that they will continue to add to this criteria list throughout the unit.</li><li>• Either during the lesson or at some other point in the school day, be sure students have <b>books for independent reading</b>.</li></ul>	
Homework	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Begin reading your independent reading book for this unit.</li></ul>	





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## Supporting Materials



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Paragraph Writing Accordion Graphic Organizer

Name:

Date:

Topic:

Detail:

Explain:

Detail:

Explain:

Conclusion:



Paragraph Writing Graphic Organizer  
(Kanji Paragraph, for Teacher Reference)

Topic:  
**kanji**

Detail:  
**part of the Japanese language**

- Explain:
- **characters that represent words or part of a word**
  - **thousands of kanji characters**
  - **2,000 are part of people's everyday speaking**

Detail:  
**learned in school**

- Explain:
- **1,000 characters taught to students in grade school**
  - **1,000 more learned by the end of middle school**

Conclusion:  
**important custom in Japan**



Think-aloud for Work Time B

**Teacher Directions:** Adapt this think aloud to suit your own personality and style.

*I really like the idea of having one of my informative paragraphs be about kanji writing. I think this topic would work well in a new Magic Tree House story set in present-day Japan. On my Topic Decision recording form, I wrote down page 17. I am going to read that page again.”*

(Open to page 17 and pause for a few moments as if reading.)

*“On the France Model: Informative Paragraphs anchor chart, we wrote that each of these informative paragraphs must follow the proper format for a paragraph. I’ve got my Paragraph Writing graphic organizer. I’ve used this organizer several times this year. I’m going to write ‘kanji’ on the topic box at the top.”*

(Write on the anchor chart.)

*“In the text it says kanji characters are part of the Japanese language—that 2,000 of the kanji characters are part of daily use. That makes using kanji a custom. I’m going to write ‘part of Japanese language’ in my first detail box.”*

(Write on the anchor chart.)

*“In the explanation box for that detail, I’m going to write how kanji are characters that represent a word or part of a word; that there are thousands of kanji characters; and that 2,000 characters are used in daily language.”*

(Record all three ideas.)

*“For my second detail, I’m going to write how Japanese students learn to write kanji characters in school.”*

(Record that detail.)

*“In the explanation box for that detail, I’m going to include how schoolchildren learn 1,000 kanji in grade school ...”*

(Record.)



Think-aloud for Work Time B

*“... and 1,000 more by the end of middle school.”*

(Record.)

*“To conclude my paragraph, I’m going to make the point of noting that writing and using kanji is an important custom in Japan.”*

(Record.)



Criteria for a Quality Research-Based Letter Anchor Chart  
(For Teacher Reference)

- Has an opening paragraph that explains the reason for the letter

**Includes a clear and inviting introduction that states the topic and purpose for writing**

- Sounds like it's for Mary Pope Osborne

**Demonstrates an understanding of audience**

- There are two paragraphs with information. Each paragraph has a topic. There are lots of specific details in each paragraph.

**Includes two informative paragraphs: one detailed paragraph about each aspect of culture chosen**

- Each paragraph has a topic sentence, followed by detail sentences, followed by an ending sentence.

**Has body paragraphs that each contain a clear topic sentence, supporting details, and a concluding statement**

- The information in the paragraphs is accurate and has been gathered from research.

**Uses accurate facts, definitions, and details from the research to explain each aspect of culture**



Kanji Informative Paragraph  
(for Teacher Reference)

**Kanji is a part of Japan's culture in the past and in the present. Kanji is a written part of the Japanese culture. It is made up of characters, which are symbols, and the characters represent whole words or just parts of a word. Japanese children first learn to write Kanji in school. They learn 1,000 in grade school, and that increases to 2,000 when they leave middle school. Kanji is an important custom in Japan that was used in the past and is used in the present.**