



EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 4: Module 2B: Unit 2: Lesson 8

Writing Informational Texts: Crafting Introductions



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Long-Term Target Addressed (Based on NYSP12 ELA CCLS)	
I can introduce a topic clearly. (W.4.2a)	
Supporting Learning Targets	Ongoing Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can write an introduction paragraph for my informative piece that describes my expert group animal, its habitat, and its predators.• I can write a focus statement that answers the focus question and tells the topic of my writing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Draft of introduction paragraph



Agenda	Teaching Notes
<ol style="list-style-type: none">Opening<ol style="list-style-type: none">Engaging the Writer and Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minutes)Work Time<ol style="list-style-type: none">Criteria for Introductions (5 minutes)Examining Models of Introductions (15 minutes)Guided Practice: Writing a Focus Statement (10 minutes)Drafting an Introduction Paragraph (20 minutes)Closing and Assessment<ol style="list-style-type: none">Share (5 minutes)Homework<ol style="list-style-type: none">Finish the introduction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In this lesson, students begin drafting the informative page for their performance task. This lesson focuses on drafting the introduction paragraph.Students follow along as the teacher reads aloud the introductions from two texts from Units 1 and 2: the “Award-Winning Survival Skills” article and the section “Poisonous Prey” from <i>Animal Behavior: Animal Defenses</i>. Then they discuss how these authors crafted effective introductions, and these points are recorded on the Effective Introductions anchor chart. A copy of each introduction is posted next to its corresponding points. Students will refer to these models as they craft their own introductory paragraphs in Work Time D.After examining these models, students move on to craft focus statements for their informative pages. A focus statement is similar to a topic sentence in that it states the main idea of the writing. It also answers the focus question in a succinct way. Be sure to remind students that a focus statement is short and to the point and does not go into detail answering the focus question.Students end Work Time by using their Informative Page Planning graphic organizers to write a draft of their introduction paragraphs.Then, students take time in the Closing to read their introductions aloud to a partner who is not in their expert group and receive feedback. The purpose of this is to share with someone who is unfamiliar with the expert group animal and therefore more likely to notice information that may be unclear or missing from the introduction paragraph.In advance:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Create and post the Effective Introductions anchor chart (see the supporting materials).Review the Informative Page Directions. Although students read through these directions in Lesson 7, being familiar with them yourself will help you more effectively support students as they write their introductions and focus statements in this lesson.Post: Learning targets.



Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
introduction, focus statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Effective Introductions anchor chart (new; teacher-created; see supporting materials)• Document camera• “Award-Winning Survival Skills” (from Unit 1, Lesson 2; one per student and paragraphs 1-3 to display)• Equity sticks• <i>Animal Behavior: Animal Defenses</i> (book; from Unit 1; one per student and one to display)• <i>Animal Behavior: Animal Defenses</i> (one to display; specifically the very first paragraph)• Informative Page Planning graphic organizer (from Lesson 7; one per student and one to display)• Millipede informative piece draft (for teacher reference)• Lined paper (several pieces per student)• Informative Page Directions (from Lesson 7; one per student and one to display)



Opening	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Engaging the Writer and Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask students if they've ever picked up a book or some other piece of writing and read a few sentences, then decided to put it down.• Acknowledge that most readers have done this. Readers don't want to waste their time reading something that doesn't interest them. Most readers decide if a piece of writing is going to be interesting by reading the beginning of it. That's why beginnings are so important.• Review the steps of the writing process by asking:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* "What steps do writers go through when writing a text?"• Listen for students to explain that writers plan, draft, revise, edit, and publish their writing. Ask:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* "Where are we in the writing process for writing our informative pieces?"• Listen for students to say that they have researched and planned their pieces.• Direct their attention to the learning targets and ask for volunteers to read them:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* "I can write an introduction paragraph for my informative piece that describes my expert group animal, its habitat, and its predators."* "I can write a focus statement that answers the focus question and tells the topic of my writing."• Ask students if they are unfamiliar with any of the words in the learning targets. They might identify these words:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– <i>introduction</i> – opening, beginning– <i>focus statement</i> – answers the focus question, tells the topic of the piece• Write the synonym above the targeted word(s) in the learning targets and ask two more students to reread the targets.• Ask students to show you a thumbs-up if they understand what they will be learning today, a thumbs-sideways if they need some more clarification, and a thumbs-down if they still don't know. Clarify as necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussing and clarifying the language of learning targets helps build academic vocabulary.



Work Time	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Criteria for Introductions (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain that in narratives we call the beginning of a piece “the beginning,” but in informational writing we call the beginning an “introduction.” It’s similar but just has different purposes and audiences. Explain that in all writing, the author needs to make sure his or her piece begins in a way that is appropriate for the audience, grabs the reader’s attention, and makes them want to read more.• Explain that an effective introduction has three pieces. Refer to the posted Effective Introductions anchor chart. Ask students to read the anchor chart silently to themselves:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Catches the reader’s attention: hooks a reader into wanting to read more– Provides context—necessary background information—so that the reader can understand the information in the piece– Is appropriate to purpose and audience: the writer thinks carefully about who will be reading this piece and why when deciding what information and words to use• Check for understanding by having students put their hands on their heads if they understand what these mean or hands on their shoulders if they somewhat understand but need some clarification. Clarify as needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Putting copies of anchor charts in students’ research folders will give them personal access to important information as they work independently.



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>B. Examining Models of Introductions (15 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Ask students to take out their own copy of “Award-Winning Survival Skills.” Use a document camera to display paragraphs 1-3.Remind them that they should be familiar with the content of this article because they read it in Unit 1 when they were learning to determine the main idea and in Unit 2 to gather research about their expert group animal. (<i>Note: If you feel that your students need to review the content of this text before proceeding with this lesson, briefly read the text aloud as they follow along.</i>)Read the first three paragraphs aloud as students follow along. Ask students to think about how the author designed the introduction so that it gave the reader important information and grabbed the reader’s attention about the topic.Once you’ve finished reading, ask students to turn and talk:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* “How did the author design the introduction so it grabbed the reader’s attention and gave important information?”Use equity sticks to cold call one or two students. Listen for responses like: “The author started by giving examples of animal defense mechanisms,” “She started by asking a question to get the reader curious about the answer,” and “She ended with a sentence that explained what a reader can learn about when reading the article.”Point to the Effective Introductions anchor chart and document students’ observations by writing the following in the left-hand column of the anchor chart:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Introduction #1:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Begins by asking a questionGives examples of animal defense mechanismsEnds with a sentence that explains what the reader will learn aboutPost a copy of the introduction paragraphs in the right-hand column. Students will refer to these model examples as they draft their own introductions in Work Time D.Display the Animal Behavior: Animal Defenses and open to “Poisonous Prey” on page 56. Ask students to get out their copies of the text and open to page 56. Focus students on the first paragraph on page 56.Again, remind the students that they should be familiar with the content of this text because they read it in Unit 1 (Lesson 5) when they did a guided close read of this section. (<i>Note: If you feel that your students need to review the content of this text before proceeding with this lesson, briefly read the text aloud as they follow along.</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Throughout this unit and Unit 3, students read and use mentor texts. Mentor texts are model texts, written by real authors, that students examine to see strong examples of writing craft. In this unit, students analyze various examples of informational texts. For more information on the use of mentor texts, read <i>Study Driven</i> by Katie Wood Ray.



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask the students to turn to a shoulder partner and read the first paragraph aloud together. After they've read it, ask them to discuss how they think this section begins. Is it the same as the introduction from "Award-Winning Survival Skills"? Is it different?• Invite partnerships to find another partnership to share their thinking. Once the foursome has a collective understanding of how the introduction was designed to grab the attention, ask them all to raise their hands so that they form a silent "tepee" of hands.• When all groups have their hands up, ask one person from each group to share. Listen for responses like: "This one started by describing how poisonous animals use their poison" or "The author ended the paragraph with a sentence that made the reader interested in reading more about how animals use their poison."• Document their observations on the chart by writing in the left-hand column:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Introduction #2:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Begins by describing the topic• Hooks the reader in the last sentence• Post a copy of the first paragraph on page 56 <i>Animal Behavior: Animal Defenses</i> in the right-hand column.	



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>C. Guided Practice: Writing a Focus Statement and Introduction (10 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell students that one thing both of the example introductions had in common was ending with a sentence that stated the topic of the article or section of text. Explain that this is called the thesis or focus statement.• Invite students to take out their Informative Page Planning graphic organizer and display the millipede model started in Lesson 7. Point out the focus question at the top of the graphic organizer and cold call a student to read it aloud:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* “How does my expert group animal use its body and behaviors to help it survive?”• Explain that a focus statement is brief and to the point, and answers the focus question.• Rephrase the focus question so it is specific to the millipede and invite students to Think-Pair-Share. Ask:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* “How does the millipede use its body and behaviors to help it survive?”• Cold call a few students to share out. Listen for responses like: “The millipede has many ways of protecting itself” or “The millipede protects itself by rolling into a ball and using poison.” As students share out, write their examples on the board.• Choose one example focus statement from the student-generated list and write it on the millipede Informative Page Planning graphic organizer in the Focus Statement box.• Invite students to Ink-Pair-Share a focus statement for their own piece, writing the focus statement in the appropriate box on their Informative Page Planning graphic organizer. Give them 5 minutes to do so, circulating and supporting as needed. Look for students writing focus statements that answer the focus question for their expert group animal.• Ask students to help you draft the introduction of the millipede informative piece. Ask:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* “What should we refer to while drafting our introductions?”• Listen for responses like: “our planning graphic organizer” or “the introduction part of our graphic organizer.”• Invite students to turn and talk to a partner. Ask them to reread the millipede Informative Page Planning graphic organizer together. Ask:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* “Think about your ideas: What will be described in the introduction?”• Use equity sticks to call on students to share what they talked about with their partner. Listen for responses like: “what the millipede looks like, where it lives, and its predators.”• If necessary, explain that the focus statement will also be included in the introduction.	



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drawing from the ideas students shared, craft and write a sentence that introduces the topic and describes the millipede. (See millipede informative piece draft in the supporting materials). Continue this process to write the rest of the introduction paragraph.• Invite students to chorally read the finished introduction about the millipede.	
<p>D. Drafting an Introduction Paragraph (20 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distribute lined paper and tell students that they are about to complete a draft of their introduction paragraph for their informative page. Remind them that since it is a first draft, it does not have to be perfect.• Students should reference the criteria for an introduction on the Informative Page Directions and be encouraged to refer frequently to the Effective Introductions anchor chart when drafting.• Remind them that when they write a draft, they should skip lines so they have room to make revisions and edits later in the writing process.• Give students 20 minutes to write their introductory paragraphs. Circulate and support them as needed. Be sure to confer with students whom you observed struggling with planning their writing in Lesson 7. Help them focus on getting their ideas down on paper as opposed to worrying about spelling or grammar. Remind them that they will edit their writing toward the end of the writing process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• During independent work, the teacher can support students with special needs or ELLs as needed. Just be sure to let them, too, struggle with the task, as successful completion after considerable effort builds both stamina and confidence.



Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Share (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invite students to find a partner from a different expert group.• Ask them to read their introduction aloud to their partner. While one partner reads his or her introduction aloud, the other partner should listen for the required information (physical description of the animal, its habitat, and its predators) and the focus statement, providing feedback on whether anything is missing from the introduction. Then, the partners should repeat, switching roles.• Explain that, for homework, students should finish drafting their introductions or adding any missing information based on their partner's feedback.	
Homework	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finish your introduction.	



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Supporting Materials



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Effective Introductions Anchor Chart

Teacher directions: Write the following on chart paper to create this anchor chart.

Effective Introductions

- **Catches the reader's attention**—hooks a reader into wanting to read more
- **Makes the reader want to read more**—necessary background information—so that the reader can understand the information in the piece
- **Is appropriate to purpose and audience**—the writer thinks carefully about who will be reading this piece and why when deciding what information and words to use

How the Introduction Is Effective	Example Text



Millipede Informative Piece Draft
(For Teacher Reference)

Teacher directions: This is a sample of what may be created with students during Work Time C. This model will be added to in subsequent lessons; there are conventions mistakes in it intentionally that will be used to model editing in Lesson 11.

The millipede is a relative of the centipede. they have twenty to one hundred body segments, and too pairs of legs on each segment. Millipedes like to be in damp areas. In the wild, they live on moist forest floors. Some millipedes live in our houses! They like to live in bathrooms and basements because they're damp. Millipedes aren't fast. They roll into balls and eat leaves or decayin vegetation. Their main predators are ants, toads, and mice. To protect themselves from predators, millipedes have two main defense mechanisms. When they're near a predator, they might roll into a ball or ooze poison.