

**WR.2**  
**INFORMATIVE**

**Lesson 3 Informative Writing Prompt Analysis**

**Introduction**

In this lesson, students are introduced to the unit’s informative writing prompt: According to the texts provided, what effects did the Great Depression have on people who lived through it? As the first step in the writing process, students analyze the prompt to determine the writing task for this unit. Students also discuss how the purpose and audience influence their understanding of the task. Student learning is assessed via completion of the WR.2 Lesson 3 Prompt Analysis Exit Slip, in which students explain in their own words what the prompt requires of them. Students then transition to reading and analyzing the article “The New Deal,” which briefly describes some of President Roosevelt’s New Deal programs.

For homework, students read and annotate the entirety of “Digging In” by Robert J. Hastings. Students mark a passage that caught their attention and explain briefly in writing why. Students also mark two surprising or interesting facts and record a question raised by their reading.

① Based on students’ familiarity with informational texts and informative writing, this lesson may extend beyond one class period.

**Standards**

Assessed Standard(s)	
W.9-10.5	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
Addressed Standard(s)	
W.9-10.9.b	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.  b. Apply <i>grades 9–10 Reading standards</i> to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning”).

## Assessment

Assessment(s)
<p>Student learning is assessed via completion of the WR.2 Lesson 3 Prompt Analysis Exit Slip. Students respond to the following prompt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In your own words, explain what the prompt requires you to do and consider how purpose and audience influence your task.</li> </ul> <p> Refer to the Model WR.2 Lesson 3 Prompt Analysis Exit Slip at the end of the lesson.</p>
High Performance Response(s)
<p>A High Performance Response should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain what the prompt requires (e.g., The prompt requires me to use the information from the given sources to identify and explain how the Great Depression affected people during that time period. I need to learn about different effects of the Great Depression.).</li> <li>Explain how the purpose and audience influence the task (e.g., I must clearly convey accurate information about the effects of the Great Depression to enrich my teacher’s and classmates’ understanding of the topic. Because my audience is also familiar with the same information, I need to support my claim with accurate subtopics and develop my subtopics with interesting evidence.).</li> </ul>

## Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>unprecedented (adj.) – never before known or experienced</li> <li>predecessor (n.) – a person who had a job or position before someone else</li> <li>sought (v.) – searched for (someone or something)</li> <li>carte blanche (n.) – permission to do something in any way you choose to do it</li> <li>rubber-stamped (v.) – gave approval automatically or without consideration</li> <li>expedite (v.) – speed up the progress of</li> <li>subsidized (v.) – helped someone or something pay for the costs of (something)</li> <li>foreclosure (n.) – the act of taking back property because the money owed for the property has not been paid</li> </ul>
Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None.</li> </ul>

Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• catastrophic (adj.) – of the nature of a terrible disaster</li> <li>• weather (v.) – deal with or experience (something dangerous or unpleasant) without being harmed or damaged too much</li> <li>• Congress (n.) – the national lawmaking body of the U.S., consisting of the Senate, or upper house, and the House of Representatives, or lower house, as a continuous institution</li> <li>• bills (n.) – written descriptions of new laws that are being suggested and that the lawmakers of a country, state, etc., must vote to accept before they become law</li> <li>• banning (v.) – saying that something cannot be used or done</li> <li>• bankruptcy (n.) – a condition of financial failure caused by not having the money that you need to pay your debts</li> <li>• immeasurably (adv.) – acting in a way that is very great in size or amount</li> </ul>

## Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
<b>Standards &amp; Text:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standards: W.9-10.5, W.9-10.9.b</li> <li>• Text: “The New Deal”</li> </ul>	
<b>Learning Sequence:</b>	
1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda	1. 5%
2. Homework Accountability	2. 20%
3. Analysis of the Prompt	3. 25%
4. Prompt Analysis Exit Slip	4. 10%
5. Reading and Discussion	5. 35%
6. Closing	6. 5%

## Materials

- Copies of the WR.2 Lesson 3 Prompt Analysis Exit Slip for each student
- Copies of “The New Deal” for each student

- Copies of “Digging In” from *Nickel’s Worth of Skim Milk: A Boy’s View of the Great Depression* by Robert J. Hastings for each student

① Consider numbering the paragraphs of “The New Deal” and “Digging In” before the lesson.

## Learning Sequence

How to Use the Learning Sequence	
Symbol	Type of Text & Interpretation of the Symbol
10%	Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.
no symbol	Plain text indicates teacher action.
	<b>Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.</b>
	<i>Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.</i>
▶	Indicates student action(s).
☞	Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.
①	Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.

### Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

5%

Begin by reviewing the agenda. In this lesson, students are introduced to the unit’s informative writing prompt. As the first step in the writing process, students analyze the prompt to determine the writing task for this unit. Students also discuss how the purpose and audience influence their understanding of the task, which they demonstrate on the WR.2 Lesson 3 Prompt Analysis Exit Slip. Students then transition to reading and analyzing the article “The New Deal,” which describes some of President Roosevelt’s New Deal programs. Before discussing the article, students briefly consider the purpose of annotating the articles in this unit.

- ▶ Students look at the agenda.

### Activity 2: Homework Accountability

20%

Instruct students to take out their responses to the first part of the previous lesson’s homework assignment. (Respond briefly in writing to the following question: What might have been the prompt for the informative writing model “A Brief History of Photography”? Give three reasons to support your answer.)

Instruct students to form pairs or small groups to discuss their responses.

- ☞ Student responses may include:

- The prompt might have asked the writer to explain the history of photography.
- This prompt seems appropriate, because the writer’s topic is the history of photography, and he describes photography’s presence in everyday life in both his introduction and his conclusion. Also, the writer’s claim is that the history of photography “is a story of humans discovering how to use light to draw and preserve images of the world around them” (par. 1), which indicates that the rest of the paper is about this “story.” Each of the writer’s subtopics describes a significant point in time of photography’s history.

Post or project the actual prompt for the model “A Brief History of Photography”:

- Choose an invention. Explain the history of that invention and why it continues to be important today.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion about whether “A Brief History of Photography” fulfilled the prompt.

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Instruct students to take out their responses to the second part of the previous lesson’s homework assignment. (Use online resources to conduct a brief search into the Great Depression. Record three facts you learned about the Great Depression.)

Instruct student pairs or groups to share and discuss the facts they learned about the Great Depression.

🗨 Student responses may include:

- The Great Depression was a worldwide economic crisis that began in the United States when the stock market crashed on October 29, 1929, a date known as Black Tuesday.
- As people lost confidence in the economy, they demanded that their banks give them their deposits in cash. This caused tens of thousands of banks to fail, which meant investors and regular people lost their savings, further worsening the crisis.
- During the Great Depression millions of people lost their jobs and became poor. During the worst periods of the Great Depression, more than 20% of Americans were unemployed. People struggled to get enough food for their families. Unemployment also caused many people to become homeless.
- Farmers also struggled during the Great Depression, because crop prices fell, so they could not stay in business.
- Herbert Hoover was president at the beginning of the Great Depression, and he believed that the government should not be involved in the economy or provide relief for Americans.
- When Franklin Delano Roosevelt came into office, he initiated the “New Deal,” which was a number of programs created to provide relief and help end the economic crisis.
- The Great Depression lasted until 1939 when World War II began.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student findings to ensure that the class has a shared, basic understanding of the Great Depression.

### Activity 3: Analysis of the Prompt

25%

Explain that in this unit, students craft an informative paper that addresses a prompt, just like the informative writing models they analyzed in Lessons 1 and 2.

Display or distribute the prompt below for this unit’s informative paper. Explain that in the following lessons in this unit, students will plan, draft, and revise an informative paper to address the following prompt:

**According to the texts provided, what effects did the Great Depression have on people who lived through it?**

Instruct students to Think, Pair, Share on the following questions, taking notes about their thinking as necessary. Students may use a notebook or piece of paper to record their notes to be used later in the unit.

**What are your initial reactions to this prompt? What are your initial thoughts and questions about the effects of the Great Depression on the people who lived through it?**

🗨 Student responses will vary.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses. Explain that throughout the unit, students have many opportunities to share their thoughts, reactions, and questions about the prompt’s topic. They also have opportunities to answer their questions as they read and discuss articles related to the prompt’s topic.

Explain to students that analyzing the prompt is the first step in the writing process. Understanding what the prompt requires them to do, or their *task*, allows students to plan their next steps and ensure that they address the prompt appropriately and completely.

Instruct students to Turn-and-Talk about the following question:

**Reread the prompt and define the *task* in your own words.**

🗨 The task is to use the information from the given sources to identify and explain how the Great Depression affected people during that time period.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** If necessary, explain to students that a prompt informs students of their *task*. Provide students with the following definition: the *task* is the work they must do in order to respond to the prompt.

▶ Students write the definition of *task* in the appropriate section of their vocabulary journals.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

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Explain to students that once they have read the prompt and noted their initial reactions, they should analyze the prompt in more detail to ensure that they fully understand what the prompt requires them to do in their paper.

Post or project the questions below. Instruct students to Turn-and-Talk about the following questions, referring to the prompt as necessary:

**Describe the claim the prompt requires you to make. What information will your subtopics convey?**

- 🗨️ The prompt requires me to make a claim about how the Great Depression affected the people who lived through it. Each of my subtopics will be about one of the effects of the Great Depression.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle with this question, consider asking the following questions:

**What is the topic presented in this prompt?**

- 🗨️ The topic of the prompt is how the Great Depression affected the people who lived during that time.

**On which aspect of the Great Depression does the prompt require you to focus?**

- 🗨️ Because the prompt specifies “effects ... on people,” my writing should focus on what people alive during that time experienced rather than on how the Depression caused significant and long-lasting economic and political changes.

**The prompt says, “According to the texts provided” Why is this phrase important? How does this phrase influence the way you will write your paper?**

- 🗨️ This phrase is important, because it indicates that my paper should be based on the texts provided to me. For this assignment, I should not use information from other sources.

**What is the purpose of informative writing? How will you apply this purpose to this assignment?**

- 🗨️ The purpose of informative writing is to provide readers with a greater comprehension of a concept by conveying information accurately. In this assignment, I must ensure that my claim is accurate and that I clearly explain each of my subtopics, using detailed evidence to develop each subtopic.

① If necessary, remind students that they learned the meaning of *purpose* and the purpose of informative writing in Lesson 1.

**What information would be helpful for you to know in order to address this prompt? How might you use this information in your paper?**

🗨 Student responses may include:

- Knowing about what the given texts say about what happened during the Great Depression would be helpful. I could use this information in my introduction to set up the topic of the paper.
- Learning how the Great Depression influenced people’s lives is essential. I will use this information to determine each of my subtopics and as evidence to develop my subtopics.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

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Explain to students that knowledge of the audience also influences the way they execute their task and attempt to fulfill their purpose. Inform students that the audience for their informative paper is composed of their teacher and classmates. Ask students to Think, Pair, Share about the following question:

**How does awareness of the audience influence your understanding of the task and purpose?**

🗨 Student responses may include:

- Because my teacher and classmates are familiar with the topic, I should try to make an interesting, but still accurate, claim about the topic.
- My teacher and classmates will have the same information about the topic as I do, so I should use specific and detailed evidence to provide my audience with a greater comprehension of the topic.
- My teacher and classmates expect a well-written paper, so to ensure that my audience understands my ideas and considers them seriously, I must write a formal paper with correct English.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

① Students learn how to take their audience’s knowledge into account when revising their informative papers in Lesson B.

## Activity 4: Prompt Analysis Exit Slip

10%

Inform students that the assessment for this lesson requires students to explain the prompt in their own words and consider how purpose and audience influence their task. Distribute a copy of the WR.2 Lesson 3 Prompt Analysis Exit Slip to each student. Instruct students to independently complete the WR.2 Lesson 3 Prompt Analysis Exit Slip.

- See the High Performance Response and the Model WR.2 Lesson 3 Prompt Analysis Exit Slip for sample student responses.
- ① Consider informing students that this exit slip constitutes their statements of purpose for their informative papers. Explain to students that they will return to this statement throughout the writing process to ensure they keep in mind their task, purpose, and audience. Students may store these statements in a folder or writing portfolio.

## Activity 5: Reading and Discussion

35%

- ① The following activity addresses the expectations of W.9-10.9.b.

Explain that students will read several articles that relate to the topic of the prompt in order to build their knowledge on the informative writing topic and collect evidence for their subtopics. Explain that in the remainder of this lesson, students read one of these articles and briefly discuss initial reactions before examining the article more deeply in the following lesson. Remind students to annotate the articles as they read. Discuss the purpose of annotating articles by asking the following question:

### After analyzing the prompt, why might annotating the articles in this unit be useful?

- Student responses may include:

Annotating these articles helps students:

- Understand each author’s topic, subtopics, and evidence
- Focus on the information they need to build their knowledge on the informative paper topic
- Record their thinking on the informative paper topic, like how they might group together different effects of the Great Depression
- Keep track of the evidence they may want to include when they write their own papers

Explain to students that annotating the articles in this unit will help them analyze the topic and prepare to write their own informative papers. Annotating the articles helps students see patterns in their notes on the topic and guide them in determining what to write and how to organize their writing.

Instruct students to form pairs or small groups. Distribute a copy of “The New Deal” to each student.

Provide students with the following definitions: *unprecedented* means “never before known or experienced,” *predecessor* means “a person who had a job or position before someone else,” *sought* means “searched for (someone or something),” *carte blanche* means “permission to do something in any way you choose to do it,” *rubber-stamped* means “gave approval automatically or without consideration,” *expedite* means “speed up the progress of,” *subsidized* means “helped someone or something pay for the costs of (something),” and *foreclosure* means “the act of taking back property because the money owed for the property has not been paid.”

- ① Students may be familiar with these words. Consider asking students to volunteer the definitions before providing them to the class.
  - ▶ Students write the definitions of *unprecedented*, *predecessor*, *sought*, *carte blanche*, *rubber-stamped*, *expedite*, *subsidized*, and *foreclosure* on their copies of the text or in the appropriate section of their vocabulary journals.
- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definitions: *catastrophic* means “of the nature of a terrible disaster,” *weather* means “deal with or experience (something dangerous or unpleasant) without being harmed or damaged too much,” *Congress* means “the national lawmaking body of the U.S., consisting of the Senate, or upper house, and the House of Representatives, or lower house, as a continuous institution,” *bills* means “written descriptions of new laws that are being suggested and that the lawmakers of a country, state, etc., must vote to accept before they become law,” *banning* means “saying that something cannot be used or done,” *bankruptcy* means “a condition of financial failure caused by not having the money that you need to pay your debts,” and *immeasurably* means “acting in a way that is very great in size or amount.”
  - ▶ Students write the definitions of *catastrophic*, *weather*, *Congress*, *bills*, *banning*, *bankruptcy*, and *immeasurably* on their copies of the text or in the appropriate section of their vocabulary journals.
- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** If necessary to support comprehension and fluency, consider using a masterful reading of the article for the lesson.

Instruct students to read “The New Deal.” Instruct students to annotate the article for items they find interesting and engaging, such as an unusual word choice, beautiful phrase, illuminating analysis, or surprising fact.

After students read and annotate the article, post or project the following set of questions for students to discuss before sharing out with the class. Instruct students to annotate the article for important information related to this unit’s writing prompt as they discuss each question, remembering to include short notes or labels to record their thinking.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** If the skill of annotation is new or challenging to students, consider posting or projecting the text and asking student volunteers to share their annotations for important information related to this unit’s writing prompt. Consider posting or projecting the volunteered annotations.

**What are your initial reactions to the information in this article? Did you find any of the information surprising?**

🗨 Student responses will vary but should demonstrate an engagement with the article and topic.

**What is the topic of this article?**

🗨 This article is about some of the programs in President Roosevelt’s New Deal.

**How does the information in this article influence your thoughts about the topic of the Great Depression’s effects on the people who lived through it?**

🗨 Student responses may include:

- This article describes how Roosevelt and the government responded to the crisis of the Great Depression. Some of the information in the article, such as the number of people who were put to work through the government’s programs, demonstrates how large a problem the Great Depression was for the people who lived through it.
- The article shows how the government’s response was able to improve the lives of people during the Great Depression, and how the effects of the Great Depression probably would have been worse without Roosevelt’s response.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses. Inform students that in the next lesson, they have the opportunity to analyze and discuss this article more deeply.

## Activity 6: Closing

5%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to read and annotate the entirety of “Digging In” by Robert J. Hastings (from “The closing of Old West Side Mine” to “your daddy always has a little dab of money put back somewhere...”). Instruct students to mark a passage that caught their attention and explain briefly in writing why. Additionally, instruct students to mark two surprising or interesting facts and record a question raised by their reading.

- ▶ Students follow along.

## Homework

Read and annotate the entirety of “Digging In” by Robert J. Hastings (from “The closing of Old West Side Mine” to “your daddy always has a little dab of money put back somewhere...”). Mark a passage that caught your attention and explain briefly in writing why. Additionally, mark two surprising or interesting facts and record a question raised by your reading.

### WR.2 Lesson 3 Prompt Analysis Exit Slip

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Class:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
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**Directions:** In your own words, explain what the prompt requires you to do and consider how purpose and audience influence your task.

<b>Writing Prompt:</b>	<b>According to the texts provided, what effects did the Great Depression have on people who lived through it?</b>
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**Explanation of the prompt in your own words:**

## Model WR.2 Lesson 3 Prompt Analysis Exit Slip

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Class:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
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**Directions:** In your own words, explain what the prompt requires you to do and consider how purpose and audience influence your task.

<b>Writing Prompt:</b>	<b>According to the texts provided, what effects did the Great Depression have on people who lived through it?</b>
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**Explanation of the prompt in your own words:**

The prompt requires me to use the information from the given sources to identify and explain how the Great Depression affected people during that time period. I need to learn about different effects of the Great Depression. I must clearly convey accurate information about the effects of the Great Depression to enrich my teacher’s and classmates’ understanding of the topic. Because my audience is also familiar with the same information, I need to support my claim with accurate subtopics and develop my subtopics with interesting evidence.