

Unit 3: Using Writing to Inform

Common Core State Standards addressed: W.3.2, W.3.4, W.3.7, W.3.8, W.3.10, L.3.1



Guiding Questions and Big Ideas

What do experts do?

- *Experts use reading, viewing, and listening to gather and organize information from a variety of sources.*
- *Experts share information through writing and speaking.*

How do frogs survive?

- *Content: Animals have unique adaptations that help them to survive in various environments.*

What will your child be doing at school?

In this unit, students complete their Freaky Frog book by writing an informative three-paragraph essay about a chosen “freaky” frog and creating a trading card of their chosen frog.

They begin by researching a frog with a “freaky” adaptation, chosen from three options: the water-holding frog, the glass frog, and the Amazon horned frog.

As part of the writing process, students analyze a model about the poison dart frog and use this to generate criteria for the different sections of an effective informative essay. Throughout the unit, students work on the essay, referring to this model and criteria to plan and write an introduction providing some background information about their freaky frog, two proof paragraphs about the unique adaptations it has and how those adaptations help it to survive, and a conclusion restating the adaptation and why this adaptation makes their frog interesting. Through mini lessons and peer critique, students revise their writing.

At the end of the unit, students create a trading card of their freaky frog with a scoring system to be used in a card game and compile all of their writing from the module to create a book.

The Language standard that students will focus on in this unit (L.3.1) requires them to:

- Form and use regular and irregular verbs in the simple verb tenses (past, present, and future—see information on the next pages).
- Use simple, compound, and complex sentences (see information on the next page).

Verb Tense

A verb is a word that describes an action or state of being. We use different forms of a verb to show when an action happened. This is called *verb tense*. There are three simple verb tenses: past, present, and future.

Verb Tense	Present Tense	Past Tense	Future Tense
What is it?	a form of a verb that shows something is happening now or state of being in the present time	a form of a verb that shows something happened in the past or a state of being in the past	a form of a verb that shows something will happen or a state of being in the future
Examples:	The frog jumps high. We warn them. They have frogs.	The frog jumped high. We warned them. They had frogs.	The frog will jump high. We will warn them. They will have frogs.

Simple, Compound, and Complex Sentences

Simple Sentences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Contain one independent clause An independent clause is one complete thought that makes sense on its own. Example: The frog was hungry.
Compound Sentences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Contain two or more independent clauses in one sentenceTwo clauses are joined together by a comma and a linking word. This linking word is called a coordinating conjunction (underlined in the example). Example: The frog was red, <u>so</u> the bird left the frog alone. <i>Examples of coordinating conjunctions: and, but, so, for, yet</i>
Complex Sentences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Contain one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses in one sentence. A dependent clause doesn't make sense on its own. It needs to be joined with an independent clause to make sense.Begin with a subordinating conjunction (underlined in the example). Example: <u>Because</u> of its red skin, the frog survived another day. <i>Examples of subordinating conjunctions: while, since, when, because, although</i>

How can you support your child at home?

- Talk to your child about the chosen freaky frog and its unique adaptations.
- Talk to your child about his or her essay and the elements of an effective informative text.
- Read narrative and informational books about frogs.
- Watch television documentaries about frogs.

Unit 3: Homework

In Lessons 1–6, homework focuses on practicing the skills learned in lessons as students write their informative essays: QuickWrites to practice informative writing techniques and forming and using verbs in different verb tenses.

In Lessons 7–12, homework focuses on linking words and phrases and simple, compound, and complex sentences.

Research reading: Your child is expected to independently research the topic by reading topic-related books of his or her choice for approximately 20 minutes **each day**, and then respond to a prompt in the **front** of the independent reading journal. These are usually books your child will bring home from school; however, they may be topic-related books chosen by the child at the public or home library. Prompts for Independent Reading can be found in the homework materials provided.

Choice reading: If your child would also like to independently read and respond to a book of free choice, he or she may use the **back** of the independent reading journal. Prompts for Independent Reading can be found in the homework materials provided.

Homework Resources (for Families)

Lesson	Lesson Content	Homework Practice	Due In	Anticipated Date*
1	Students choose and begin research on their selected freaky frog.	1. Conversation about the selected frog using the provided prompts 2. Research reading and answering prompt	1. No deliverables for this homework. This is an opportunity for you to talk to your child about his or her learning. 2. Teacher will check independent reading journals strategically.	
2	Students continue researching their selected frog, specifically the adaptations of the frog.	1. Reread Poison Dart Frog Model for gist. 2. Research reading and answering prompt	1. Lesson 3 2. Teacher will check independent reading journals strategically.	
3	Students begin an in-depth study of verbs and verb tense. They also analyze an exemplar essay and begin planning the introduction paragraph for their essay.	1. Informative QuickWrite 2. Research reading and answering prompt	1. Lesson 6 2. Teacher will check independent reading journals strategically.	
4	Students continue their study of verbs and verb tense. They also draft their introduction paragraph.	1. Verbs I 2. Research reading and answering prompt	1. Lesson 6 2. Teacher will check independent reading journals strategically.	
5	Students continue their study of verbs and verb tense. They also analyze an exemplar essay, plan the proof paragraphs for their essay, and draft the first proof paragraph.	1. Verbs II 2. Research reading and answering prompt	1. Lesson 6 2. Teacher will check independent reading journals strategically.	
6	Students demonstrate their learning by taking the Mid-Unit 3 Assessment. They also analyze an exemplar essay and begin planning the conclusion paragraph for their essay.	1. Informative QuickWrite 2. Research reading and answering prompt	1. Lesson 7 2. Teacher will check independent reading journals strategically.	
7	Students draft a conclusion for their essay and create a contents page for their Freaky Frog book.	1. Research reading and answering prompt	1. Teacher will check independent reading journals strategically	
8	Students revise their essay for linking words and phrases, word choice, and conventions.	1. Linking words and phrases practice 2. Bring from home, the library, or the research reading selection a favorite book (in any language) with a cover design that you find eye-catching and inspirational. 3. Research reading and answering prompt	1. Lesson 10 2. Lesson 9 3. Teacher will check independent reading journals strategically.	
9	Students design a front and back cover for their Freaky Frog book, including writing a blurb.	1. Linking words and phrases practice 2. Research reading and answering prompt	1. Lesson 10 2. Teacher will check independent reading journals strategically.	

Adaptations and the Wide World of Frogs

Lesson	Lesson Content	Homework Practice	Due In	Anticipated Date*
10	Students learn about simple, compound, and complex sentences, and then revise their essay, incorporating teacher feedback.	1. Simple, compound, and complex sentence practice 2. Research reading and answering prompt	1. Lesson 12 2. Teacher will check independent reading journals strategically.	
11	Students plan their trading card.	1. Simple, compound, and complex sentence practice 2. Research reading and answering prompt	1. Lesson 12 2. Teacher will check independent reading journals strategically.	
12	Students finish trading cards, compile Freaky Frog book and play trading card game.	None	None	N/A

Questions to Prompt Conversation

- What does your frog look like?
- What is its habitat?
- What are its predators and prey?
- What are your frog's unique adaptations?
- How do those adaptations help it to survive?

Independent Reading

Directions: Remember to record responses to **research reading in the front** of your independent reading journal, and responses to **choice reading in the back**. Try to choose a different prompt each time.

Record any new vocabulary in your vocabulary log. Remember, academic vocabulary is recorded in the front and domain-specific vocabulary (words about the topic) is recorded in the back. Mark vocabulary found during independent reading with a symbol—for example, an asterisk (*).

Record:

- Date
- Title and author of your reading book
- Pages you have read
- Prompt
- Response

Example:

Date: 04/08/2015

Book Title and Author: *Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures* by DK Publishing

Pages Read: 22–25

Prompt: What questions do you have about frogs or frog adaptations after reading?

Response: Why is the poison dart frog such bright colors?

Consider using the following independent reading prompts*:

- What text features and or search tools did you use to locate information in your text?
- Choose two sentences or paragraphs and describe the connection between them, for example comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence.
- What is the main idea of the text? What are some of the key details and how do they support the main idea?
- What do the illustrations (photographs, maps) tell you? How do they help you to understand the words?
- What questions do you now have after reading? What would you like to learn more about? Why?
- What are the most important facts you learned from reading?
- What is the most interesting fact you learned today? Why?
- How does what you read today connect to something you have learned in lessons?
- Choose one new word from your reading today and analyze it on a vocabulary square:

Definition in your own words	Synonyms (words that mean the same)
Words with the same affix or root	Sketch

*Some of the prompts will not be appropriate for the text students are reading. Invite students to choose a prompt that works for the text they have just read.

Homework Resources

Informative QuickWrite Prompts

Directions: Choose a prompt to respond to. For each response, be sure to use the informative writing techniques discussed in class and choose facts, definitions, and details to explain your thinking. Try to choose a different prompt each time.

- Describe your frog's habitat. Where does it live? What is the climate like? What other kinds of animals live there? What kinds of plants grow there?
- Describe how your frog's adaptations help it to survive.
- Tell about a typical day in your frog's life.

Verbs I**Name:** _____ **Date:** _____

1. **Read the sentences below. For each sentence, circle the subject and underline the verb (L.3.1a).**

Water-holding frogs have wide heads and thick bodies.

Amazon horned frogs live in ponds of the Amazon rain forest.

Glass frogs lay their eggs on the underside of a leaf.

2. **Read the sentences below. For each sentence, tell whether it is written in the present or past tense. Explain what in the sentence makes you think so (L.3.1e).**

When the glass frog eggs hatched, they dropped right into the water.

present tense

past tense

The Amazon horned frog hides under leaves and waits for its prey.

present tense

past tense

Verbs II

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. **Complete the sentence with the verb in the past tense (L.3.1d, L.3.1e).**

The water-holding frog _____ underground to escape the heat and sun.

(dig)

The Amazon horned frog _____ under leaves and

(hide)

_____ its prey.

(watch)

The glass frog _____ from a plant to a rock.

(jump)

2. **Complete the sentence with the verb in the future tense (L.3.1e).**

The water-holding frog _____ underground to escape the heat and sun.

(dig)

The Amazon horned frog _____ under leaves and

(hide)

_____ its prey.

(watch)

The glass frog _____ from a plant to a rock.

(jump)

Linking Words and Phrases I**(W.3.2c)****Name:** _____ **Date:** _____

Directions: Reread your expert frog text. Record the linking words and phrases you find in the chart below and then answer the question at the bottom of the page. You may find linking words and phrases that are different from those listed on your Linking Words and Phrases chart. Add new linking words and phrases to your chart to continue to build that list.

Time order words and phrases	Words and phrases that connect ideas

Question: Do you notice more time order words and phrases or more words and phrases that connect ideas? Why do you think this is?

Linking Words and Phrases II

(W.3.2c)

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Directions: List the linking words and phrases you find in your research reading text today. Record the words in the chart below and then answer the question at the bottom of the page. You may find linking words and phrases that are different from those listed on your Linking Words and Phrases chart. Add new linking words and phrases to your chart to continue to build that list.

Time order words and phrases	Words and phrases that connect ideas

Question: Do you notice more time order words and phrases or more words and phrases that connect ideas? Why do you think this is?

Simple, Compound, and Complex Sentences I**(L.3.1i)****Name:** _____ **Date:** _____

Directions: Circle whether each of the following sentences is simple, compound, or complex. Underline coordinating conjunctions in red and subordinating conjunctions in blue.

1. The water-holding frog lives in the dry deserts of Australia.
Simple/Compound/Complex
2. Except for the warts spread over the body, their skin is smooth to the touch.
Simple/Compound/Complex
3. The glass frog's transparent color is an amazing adaptation that helps it to stay safe because it helps the frog stay almost invisible to anything that would want to eat it.
Simple/Compound/Complex
4. When the ground starts to dry up, the water-holding frog uses its webbed feet to dig.
Simple/Compound/Complex
5. Female Amazon horned frogs are mostly tan to make it easier to hide, but the male frogs are many different shades of green.
Simple/Compound/Complex
6. Glass frogs live in the rain forest in countries like Costa Rica.
Simple/Compound/Complex
7. When its prey comes by, the Amazon horned frog springs out and catches it.
Simple/Compound/Complex

Simple, Compound, and Complex Sentences II

(L.3.1i)

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Directions: Revise the sentences below to make them into compound or complex sentences.

1. The glass frog's transparent color is an amazing adaptation that helps it to stay safe. It helps the frogs stay almost invisible to anything that would want to eat them.

2. Amazingly, they swallow what they eat whole. That means they take only one big gulp to eat their prey.

3. Glass frogs are always some shade of green on the top of their body. It makes the frog very hard to see when it is sitting on a green leaf.

4. Water-holding frogs are usually gray, dark brown, or green. They have a white belly.

5. Amazon horned frogs live in ponds of the Amazon rain forest. The Amazon rain forest is in South America.

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