Grade 5: Module 2A: Unit 3: Lesson 3

Writing Narratives from First Person Point of View: Imagining Meg Lowman's Rainforest Journal

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

I can write informative/explanatory texts that convey ideas and information clearly. (W.5.2)
I can write narrative texts about real or imagined experiences or events. (W.5.3)
I can explain what a text says using quotes from the texts (RI.5.1)

Supporting Learning Targets

- I can write a field journal entry from Meg Lowman's point of view.
- I can use specific language and vocabulary to describe a photograph of the rainforest.
- I can use sensory details to enhance the descriptions in my rainforest field journal.
- I can find information in *The Most Beautiful Roof in the World* to incorporate into a rainforest field journal entry.

Opening

A. Homework Review (10 mins)

- share field cover journals with your group and explain why you chose the pictures you did to decorate them
- Pair up and turn to the page you completed in lesson 2. Read your partner's entry paying attention to precise language and sensory detail

B. Introducing Learning Targets (5 mins)

I can write a field journal entry from Meg Lowman's point of view.

- Today you will be pretending that you are Meg Lowman and you will be describing the things that she might see in the rainforest.

Remember the work you did on point of view when you studied *Esperanza Rising*.

Different people see things differently depending on their points of view or perspective.

We will also do work to meet the other 3 learning targets during the lesson as you meet the first target. You will be studying a picture from *The Most Beautiful Roof in the World*, revisit the text that goes with the picture, and use sensory details and specific language and vocabulary from the text to write a field journal entry.

Wo

A.

Op

Meg clips her Jumars into some extending cable so she can go higher and get closer to the ant gardens. She wants to observe a mature one that fairly bristles with plant life. Meg counts at least six different kinds of seedling plants here, ranging from orchids to cacti. A *Peperomia* plant forms its base. The ant gardens are magnets for epiphytic growth. Epiphytes, unlike vines or lianas, usually start growing from the canopy down. They need the tree for support. They root on the bark or soil found on the tree. They often begin when a bird excretes a seed from overhead, or as in this case, when the ants themselves drag in bits of plant materials. The bits take root, the seeds sprout. The little ant farmers tend them night and day, and in return they feed off the glucose and proteins that the plants contain in their succaries, the sugary deposits made by the plants' metabolic processes. Scientists think that the ant gardens themselves may be of benefit to more than just the ants, that these gardens help the tree itself by allowing it to capture more solar energy and to trap atmospheric nutrients that might slip off a bare trunk.

In this section of the book, Meg has climbed up to the third platform in the canopy.

Remember, *The Most Beautiful Roof in the World* was not written by Meg Lowman, it was written by an author named Kathryn Lasky. She wrote the book about Meg, not about herself, so her writing refers to Meg by name, or as “she”; there is no “I” sentence in this book.

In a journal, however, the author writes in the *first person*.

Today we are going to rewrite parts of this book as if it were a field journal.

To do this, I want you to pretend that you are Meg Lowman exploring the rainforest and this is what you are seeing.

Focus on the photograph:

?

B. Adding Text-Based Information to the Rainforest Field Journal Entry (10 mins)

We can use the background information that we gather by reading the text to add to our field journal entry.

Meg clips her Jumars into some extending cable so she can go higher and get closer to the ant gardens. She wants to observe a mature one that fairly bristles with plant life. Meg counts at least six different kinds of seedling plants here, ranging from orchids to cacti. A *Peperomia* plant forms its base. The ant gardens are magnets for epiphytic growth. Epiphytes, unlike vines or lianas, usually start growing from the canopy down. They need the tree for support. They root on the bark or soil found on the tree. They often begin when a bird excretes a seed from overhead, or as in this case, when the ants themselves drag in bits of plant materials. The bits take root, the seeds sprout. The little ant farmers tend them night and day, and in return they feed off the glucose and proteins that the plants contain in their succaries, the sugary deposits made by the plants' metabolic processes. Scientists think that the ant gardens themselves may be of benefit to more than just the ants, that these gardens help the tree itself by allowing it to capture more solar energy and to trap atmospheric nutrients that might slip off a bare trunk.

Think of the vocabulary work you've done throughout this module.

You know a lot of specific science terms that Meg might put in her field journal.

As I read the rest of the page aloud, you should listen for details and scientific vocabulary that could be added to the journal entry.

(pause after 3rd sentence)

Turn and talk with a partner about new details from the text that you might add to the class's field journal entry.

(finish page)

Are there any new ideas based on having read the text.

C. Independent Practice: Creating a Rainforest Field Journal Entry (20 mins)

Now, you get to create your own rain forest journal excerpt.

You must:

- Observe silently
- Use first person “I”. Write as if you are Meg Lowman
- Draw a quick sketch
- Label the sketch
- Include a clear and precise description of what you see, feel, and hear.

(10 mins)

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There are many such interlocking relationships within the rainforest, and ants often play a major role. Sometimes epiphytic growth can become too much and literally strangle a tree. The bull-horn acacia tree has a very effective defense against epiphytic growth. With its hollow stems it cannot tolerate the stranglehold of many epiphytes. Therefore, it has become the home for a special breed of ants that live in its stems and protect it fiercely. Whenever the tree is even slightly disturbed, the ants charge out of a pinhole on the thorn and attack. In return they feast on the sugar in the tree.

Other ants visit the canopy but live underground in great fungus factories. The leafcutter ants do their farming in reverse, trudging up to the canopy day and night to cut dime-size disks. They then hoist the pieces overhead and carry them back down to underground chambered caverns. In the dark damp maze of tunnels and caves, the leaves begin to grow mold and fungi, which in turn feed the ants. The long, silent lines of tiny, quivering green disks move across the rainforest floor. If you peer closely, you notice that on each disk rides an even smaller ant. This one protects the carrier ant from attacks by deadly micro wasps. For lateral protection alongside the column march lines of larger soldier ants. Each leaf disk, no bigger than a dime and only a fraction of a gram in weight, must get to the fungus factory. Once there, other ants will check the leaves to see if they are right for the kind of fungus the ants are producing. If they are not, the disks are discarded and the ants must turn around and climb one hundred or more feet (thirty meters) into the canopy again in search of the right kind of leaf.

Closing and Assessment

A. Reflecting on the Learning Targets (5 mins)

(pass out highlighters-yellow and green)

Find in your rainforest field journal entry a place where you included clear and descriptive language and highlight it in yellow.

Find a place where you enhanced your journal entry with information from the text and highlight that in green.

Share one of your examples with a partner.

Learning Target Mastery

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Homework

- Complete a page in your nature journal. You may do this by going outside or by looking out the window at home. If this is not possible, use one of the photographs in *The Most Beautiful Roof in the World* and pretend you are Meg Lowman looking at what is in the photograph. Be sure to include the date at the top, to use text and pictures, and to be as detailed and specific as possible.