

A stylized, layered landscape illustration. The foreground features rolling green hills with dark brown soil patches. On the left, there is a green tree, a purple flower, and an orange flower. A small red bird is flying in the sky above the tree. The background consists of light blue and white wavy bands representing the sky.

Unit 1

Personal Narratives



LESSON AT A GLANCE

	Grouping	Time	Materials
Writing (35 min.)			
Brainstorm Memories	Independent	5 min.	<input type="checkbox"/> Activity Page 1.1 <input type="checkbox"/> Colored pens
Parts of a Paragraph	Whole Group	10 min.	
Writing a Memory Paragraph	Independent	20 min.	
Speaking and Listening (15 min.)			
Defining Personal Narratives	Whole Group	15 min.	<input type="checkbox"/> Activity Page 1.2
Reading (20 min.)			
Read and Discuss Six-Word Memories	Whole Group	20 min.	<input type="checkbox"/> Activity Page 1.3
Writing (20 min.)			
Memory Paragraph: Six-Word Memory	Independent	20 min.	<input type="checkbox"/> Activity Page 1.4

Lesson 1

Common Core Standard: Target Skill: Inference/Conclusions 4. RI.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

W.4.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

SL. 4.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

W.4.9 Draw relevant evidence from grade-appropriate literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, or research.

Objective: I can explain what a text says explicitly and use examples in the text to make an inference. (six-word memories)

I can engage in a discussion with classmates to define personal narratives.

I can write a paragraph about a memory of school. I can also write six-word memories based on my paragraph.

VOCABULARY

Literary Vocabulary

personal narrative, n. a piece of nonfiction writing told in the first person by someone who was involved in the events being described

fiction, adj. a made-up story

nonfiction, adj. a true story

first person, adj. told from the narrator's perspective; "I" is the narrator

Writing

(35m. Total)

W.4.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

Objective: I can write a paragraph about a memory of school.

Brainstorm Memories

(5 min.)

- In this unit...
 - We will read true stories written by the people who experienced them.
 - These authors use writing to share their most interesting, important, exciting, or fun memories.

YOU will also write true stories about things you've experienced!

(I am **VERY** interested in your experiences so think of me as your audience for writing, but I may share it with the class.)

Activity Page 1.1

10 min.

1. Let's read the directions.

2. Let's have someone read the description of a good paragraph in section 2 on our activity page.

A Memory Paragraph

In this activity you will write a paragraph describing a school memory. It could be exciting, funny, scary, or surprising, but it must be true.

1. Start by brainstorming some school memories on the following lines. Try to write at least five different ideas. Then circle the one you want to write about.

2. What makes a good paragraph?

Writers often organize good paragraphs using a common set of guidelines. First, writers include a topic sentence to introduce the topic or main idea of the paragraph. The topic sentence tells what the paragraph will be about. Next, writers include supporting sentences to explain the topic or main idea. Writers usually include at least three to five sentences to give the reader supporting details and facts about the topic or main idea. Including interesting facts and details helps make the paragraph informative and interesting to read. It is important that the sentences stick to the topic. Finally, writers end the paragraph with a concluding sentence, or their final thought about the topic or main idea. Using these guidelines can be helpful to writing a clear and informative paragraph.



Let's name the three sections of a good paragraph. (I'll write them as you say them.)

1.

2.

3.

You will use this model throughout the unit.

Let's write a paragraph about the 1st day of 4th grade together.

Now that we've written our paragraph, let's highlight the parts of the paragraph.

Writing a Memory Paragraph

(10 min to write, 10 min to share)

- 3. Write a paragraph that includes:
 - A. Topic Sentence: Start with a sentence introducing the memory.
 - B. Supporting Sentences: Describe what happened, how you felt, how people reacted, and any other interesting details you remember.
 - C. Concluding Sentence: End your paragraph by explaining why the memory is important.

Do your best with spelling and punctuation—it is OK if you need to guess. This is a rough draft. Just make sure it is an interesting, true story.

Let's Evaluate

- Underline in different colors your topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence.
- Now, let's share some of our writings with each other! Listen for any similarities and differences!

Let's look at how they are alike and different! (I'll write them as you tell me.)

Speaking and Listening

(15 min.)

- *SL. 4.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.*

Objective: I can engage in a discussion with classmates to define personal narratives.

Personal Narrative – Let's Think

- What do you think when you hear the word *personal*?
- What do you think when you hear the word *narrative*?
- How might you combine these two ideas to define *personal narrative*?

Personal Narrative

- A piece of nonfiction writing told in the first person by someone who is involved in the events being described. (Let's copy this at the top of Activity Page 1.2)
- Vocabulary to discuss:
 - Fiction – a made up story
 - Nonfiction – a true story
 - First person – told from the narrator's perspective; "I"

On Activity Page 1.2

- Let's write the 3 things that make an essay a personal narrative.
- What do you think?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

Check for Understanding

- What about some other genres of writing? Do they qualify to be personal narratives?
 - Diary
 - Biography
 - Newspaper article
 - Encyclopedia article

Reading

(20 min.)

- *W.4.9 Draw relevant evidence from grade-appropriate literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, or research.*
- *4. RI.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.*

Objective: I can explain what a text says explicitly and use examples in the text to make an inference.

(six-word memories)

Read & Discuss six-word memories

- Turn to Activity Page 1.3
- Reading Six-Word Memories

The “six-word memory” challenges writers to share a true story, just like your paragraph from Activity 1.1, but using very few words. With only six-words, narrators must be very careful **to pick words that do a lot of work.**

Let's read the first two memories together.

1. Snow angels, loving family, hot chocolate.

2. Snow falling, teeth chattering, keep warm.

- Let's think:
 - Is the narrator a child or an adult?
 - What pictures do you have in your mind when you read the memory?
 - What is the same about these memories? How do you know?
 - Do you think the narrators have the same feelings about winter?

Show or Tell Writing

- Telling is saying something directly.
 - Example: "It was winter."
- Showing provides examples or recreates a scene that provides clues to draw conclusions.
 - Example: "The icicles hung like crystals from the tree branch."

Telling is more direct, but showing is usually more interesting.

Practice: Six Word Memories

3. Swallowed tooth. Morning, dollar on stomach.

Let's think:

- Do you think the narrator is showing or telling?
- What is the narrator's memory? If she wanted to "tell" the memory, how would she do that?
- What else can you conclude about the narrator in this story?

We must choose our words well when we write!

Practice: Six-Word Memories

4. High swings. Chain slacks. Bloodied knees.

5. Wheels spin. Pedals slip. Hello gravel.

Let's Think:

- What happens in both of those stories?
- How do you know?
- What is the difference between choosing "Bloodied knees" and "hello gravel" to tell us that the narrator fell down?

Check for Understanding

4. High swings. Chain slacks. Bloodied knees.

5. Wheels spin. Pedals slip. Hello gravel.

Use the memories above. Write each in a complete sentence based on the conclusions we made.

Writing

(20 min.)

- W.4.9 Draw relevant evidence from grade-appropriate literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, or research.

Objective: I can write six-word memories based on my previously written paragraph.

Activity Page 1.4 Writing Six-Word Memories

- You will write your own six-word memory! Remember, choose words carefully.
- Let's read the directions.

Writing Six-Word Memories

Flip back to Activity Page 1.1 and circle the most important words in the paragraph. When choosing your words, think about what is most important in the memory. Also think about what words are most specific, or create the most immediate and interesting picture in your head. There may be a few more than six, but no more than ten. Write them below:

Now choose the six words from that list that can make a six-word memory that makes sense.

Six-word memory:

1. What facts, events, and details did you include from your longer paragraph?



Checklist:

1. What facts, events, and details did you include from your longer paragraph?
2. Why did you choose to include these facts, events, and details?
3. What did you leave out? Why did you choose to leave it out?
4. What do you think a reader will be able to infer from your six-word memory?

Share!

- *Let's read a few six-word memories out loud.*
- *What can we infer from each?*
- *How do we know?*

Check for Understanding

- Tell me one of your sentences that your six-word memory was based on.

Reflection

- *What did you learn today?*