



5TH GRADE

VOLUME 5.3

Historical Fiction Writing Unit for *Chains*

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Welcome to the 5.3 Historical Fiction Writing Unit for *Chains*!

If this is your first time using this guide, you will want to read through this introduction carefully, as it provides information that you will find critical to your establishment of a successful language arts block!

This historical fiction writing unit is meant to be taught in conjunction with the *Read Side by Side Reading Program*, Unit 5.3, *Chains*. The book *Chains* will be used as a mentor text to build students' background knowledge and expose students to the craft of writing.

This unit takes approximately 15 days to complete, from brainstorming and planning to sharing the published piece! Lessons in this unit give students explicit instruction in the steps of the writing process and the structure of narrative writing. Some craft and grammar lessons will be incorporated as students revise and edit their writing. You may want to supplement with additional craft, grammar, and spelling lessons between writing units.

Prior to starting the unit, you will want to consider how students will publish and share their writing. Here are a few suggestions:

- illustrated book,
- chapter book,
- handwritten book;
- audio book.

Students might read their story to their own classmates, visit another classroom, or make their writing available for others to read in the classroom, library or other public location.

After students have had the opportunity to publish their writing, assess their work using the checklist for grading a historical diary provided at the end of the unit.

Schedule

To complete this unit, you will need to set aside 30-minutes for writing, 2-4 times a week.

Instructional days begin with a whole-class lesson. Lessons will be 10-15 minutes in length, allowing a short time after the lesson for students to work on the assignment. While working, students will access the help of a writing partner as needed. It may be helpful to seat partners next to each other during the work time. The teacher then confers with partnerships as needed.

Working days allow students to get started right away on writing projects. During the work time, students will continue to access a partner or the teacher for help as needed. If it is challenging to find time every day for writing, teachers might assign these work-projects as homework.

Narrative schedule:

1. Brainstorm & Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make a list of story ideas.• Select a strong idea from the list.• Complete a <i>Narrative Writing Map</i>.• Write a blurb.• Design a cover.	Day 1-4
2. Draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write a draft using the 4-quadrant method.	Days 5-8
3. Revise & Edit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Show the passage of time.• Use figurative language (simile/metaphor).• Include historical language.	Days 9-11
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Edit and revise using a checklist.	Day 12
4. Publish & Share	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete a final product that is handwritten, typed, or other.• Share with a real audience.	Days 13-15

Day 1: Brainstorm Ideas & Plan

Lesson Goals: Brainstorm several ideas for writing and select one to write about. Begin to plan a piece of writing using the *Narrative Writing Map 1*.

Materials:

Narrative Writing Map 1

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* A historical fiction story tells a fictional story with fictional characters. The story is believable and is based on real people and real events from history. A historical fiction diary is written in the first person.
2. The book *Chains* tells a fictional story using fictional characters and is set in a historical context. The story is told in the first person.

Laurie Halse Anderson bases her story about the American Revolution on real people and events from history. To write the book, she studied primary documents; immediate, first-hand accounts of the events of the time-period. A diary is an example of a primary document.

Laurie Halse Anderson uses the structure of a diary to organize the story of Isabel's life. Each chapter represents a day, and each day is presented chronologically. (Rather than a written diary, the book is Isabel's internal diary, which is appropriate since Isabel was to some degree illiterate). This diary-like format allows the reader to see the events from the perspective of Isabel. Through her interior monologue, the reader learns her thoughts and feelings.

3. *Introduce the writing prompt:*
Write a series of four diary entries that tell about one or more events of the American Revolution from the perspective of a patriot or loyalist living in New York in 1776.
4. *Brainstorm:* Model brainstorming 2-3 events you could write about from the time-period of the American Revolution. Examples might include the following:
 - Statue of King George III is taken down by a mob of Patriots (July 1776).
 - British troops arrive in New York Harbor (August 1776).
 - Lead is removed from the homes to be made into bullets for the Patriot army.
 - New York Fire (September 21, 1776).
5. *Brainstorm:* Model brainstorming a character that could be writing in a diary about these events. You could write the diary from the perspective of one of the characters in the book *Chains*. Or you can make up your own fictional character. Examples might include:
 - Businessman
 - Housewife
 - Child
 - Servant

- Slave
 - Soldier
6. *Select:* Model selecting one big event from your list and choosing a character to write about this big event. The story should include the events leading up to the big event and events that happened because of the big event (cause and effect). Model selecting a character that would have strong feelings about this event or offer a unique perspective.
7. *Plan:* Model filling out *Narrative Writing Map 1* for the story you will be writing, saving the last section (question/prediction) for Day 3. Demonstrate how to think about and jot notes about the:
- main character,
 - secondary characters,
 - setting (time, place, and circumstance); and
 - problem/conflict.

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time brainstorm ideas, select an idea, and fill-out *Narrative Writing Map 1*. Then, give time for partners to share their writing plan and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my story idea?
- What might I do to improve my story idea?

(Title)

Main Character			
Secondary Character(s)			
Setting	<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Circumstance</u>
Problem/ Conflict			
Question / Prediction			

Day 2: Plan

Lesson Goals: Continue to plan a piece of writing using the *Narrative Writing Map 2*.

Materials:

Narrative Writing Map 2

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Tell students they will now be planning for the events of their story. They will write their story in four-quadrants. Each quadrant will be a diary entry.

Time is an important part of planning your diary entries. Diary entries can be written daily or can have gaps in time where no diary entry is written. When planning your diary entries, label each quadrant with the date of the diary entry. If the entry will be about a real event in history, make sure to get the date right (Example: New York Fire, Sept. 21, 1776).

2. *Plan:* Model planning quadrant 1 of your story using *Narrative Writing Map 2*.
 - How does the problem start?
3. *Plan:* Model planning quadrant 2 of your story using *Narrative Writing Map 2*.
 - How does the problem continue?
 - How does the main character feel?
4. *Plan:* Model planning quadrant 3 of your story using *Narrative Writing Map 2*.
 - What causes the main character to change? How does the main character change?
5. *Plan:* Model planning quadrant 4 of your story using *Narrative Writing Map 2*.
 - How is the problem resolved?
 - What does the main character learn?

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to fill-out *Narrative Writing Map 2* for their own story. Then, give time for partners to share their writing plan and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my story?
- What might I do to improve my story?

NARRATIVE WRITING MAP 2

Q1	How does the problem start? <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Q2	How does the problem continue? How does the main character feel? <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Q3	What causes the main character to change? How does the main character change? <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Q4	How is the problem resolved? What does the main character learn? <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Day 3: Plan

Lesson Goals: Continue to plan a piece of writing by writing a blurb.

Materials:

Narrative Writing Map 1

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Tell students they will be writing a blurb for their story. Remind them that the blurb does not give away how the story will end. The blurb usually ends with a question so that the person reading the blurb will want to read the story. The blurb for the book *Chains* asks, “If an entire nation could seek its freedom, why not a girl?”
2. *Plan:* Model writing a question to use in the blurb of your own story.

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to finish filling-out *Narrative Writing Map 1* and then write the blurb for their own story about conflict. Then, give time for partners to share their blurb and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my blurb?
- What might I do to improve my blurb?

Day 4: Plan

Lesson Goals: Continue to plan a piece of writing by making a cover.

Materials:

Blank paper and art materials for designing a cover or illustration software.

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Tell students that they will be designing the cover of their book. Every book cover begins with a great title. Share tips for writing a good title:
 - It should provide a clue about the conflict in the story.
 - It should be relatively short.
 - It should get the reader interested.
 - It should put a picture in the reader's mind.
2. *Plan:* Model writing a title for your own story.

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to create a cover for their book. Then, give time for partners to share their covers and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my cover?
- What might I do to improve my cover?

Day 5: Draft, Quadrant 1

Lesson Goals: Begin drafting a piece of writing.

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Tell students they will now be drafting quadrant 1 of their story.
2. *Draft:* Model writing quadrant 1 of your story (diary entry #1). Demonstrate how to write in the structure of a diary:
 - Include the date: Day of the week, month, date, and year.
 - Jump right into the description or start with the words “Dear Diary”.
 - Limit the use of dialogue.

3. *Draft:* Model including details about the:

- Characters
- Setting
- Conflict

Model using descriptive language and details to help the reader picture the characters and the setting in their mind.

TIP: Share with students that an appropriate length for a diary entry is about 1 page, handwritten. (Each quadrant should be about the same length so that the full story is about 4 pages.) To help keep students organized, it may work best to have students use a new sheet of paper for each quadrant, even using different colors of lined paper if available.

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to draft quadrant 1 of their book. Then, give time for partners to share writing and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my story?
- What might I do to improve my story?

Day 6-8: Draft, Quadrants 2-4

Lesson Goals: Continue drafting a piece of writing.

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Tell students that they will now be drafting quadrants 2-4 of their story.
2. *Draft:* Model writing quadrant 2 of your story (diary entry #2). Demonstrate how to include details about the:
 - Conflict
 - The main character's actions, words, and feelings.Model using descriptive language and details to help the reader feel how the main character is feeling.
3. *Draft:* Model writing quadrant 3 of your story (diary entry #3). Demonstrate how to include details about the:
 - Conflict
 - Change in the main characterModel using descriptive language and details to help the reader understand that the main character is changing.
4. *Draft:* Model writing quadrant 4 of your story (diary entry #4). Demonstrate how to include details about the:
 - Resolution
 - Author's messageModel using descriptive language and details to help the reader understand how the story ends and a lesson is learned.

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to continue drafting their own stories. Then, give time for partners to share their writing and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my story?
- What might I do to improve my story?

Day 9: Revise, Transitions to Show the Passage of Time

Lesson Goals: Reread a piece of writing and make revisions.

Materials: *Passage of Time List*

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Tell students that they will now be revising their stories to make them easy to read and enjoy.

Diary entries are written to describe events of a person's day. For this reason, diary entries will start with a date. While some diaries show daily entries, others have large gaps in time. Authors use description at the beginning of diary entries to communicate time and the passage of time.

2. *Read* the examples of transitions to show the passage of time from the *Passage of Time List*. For each category, encourage the students to write one or two transitions of their own.

Discuss: How do these transitions communicate the passage of time?

3. *Revise:* Model adding transitions to the beginning of each diary entry to better show the passage of time.

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to revise their own stories to include transitions that show the passage of time. Then, give time for partners to share their dialogue and receive feedback.

- What do you like about the way I used transitions in my story?
- What might I do to improve it?

PASSAGE OF TIME LIST

Morning	Mid-Day	Evening
<p>Early morning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Just before the sun came up...</i> • <i>I woke up to the sound of...</i> • <i>When I awoke...</i> • <i>I woke at ___ o'clock...</i> • <i>When morning came...</i> 	<p>Noon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>When I had finished my morning chores...</i> • <i>By mid-day...</i> • <i>At noon...</i> • <i>During the mid-day meal...</i> 	<p>Evening:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>At evening prayer...</i> • <i>Just before supper time...</i> • <i>___ interrupted the evening meal...</i> • <i>When all the plates had been cleared...</i>
<p>Morning...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>During breakfast...</i> • <i>While walking to school...</i> • <i>In the morning...</i> • <i>When I was dressed...</i> 	<p>Late afternoon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In the afternoon...</i> • <i>After the mid-day meal...</i> • <i>At tea-time...</i> 	<p>Night:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Before bed...</i> • <i>When everyone had retired for the night...</i> • <i>When the moon...</i> • <i>My nighttime prayer...</i> • <i>That night I dreamed...</i>
<p>A few days passing:</p>	<p>A few weeks passing:</p>	<p>A new season:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The past few days have been...</i> • <i>It took ___ days...</i> • <i>On the third morning...</i> • <i>Day after day...</i> • <i>___ days later...</i> • <i>I waited ___ days...</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The past few weeks have been...</i> • <i>It took ___ weeks...</i> • <i>By the third week...</i> • <i>Week after week...</i> • <i>___ weeks later...</i> • <i>I waited ___ weeks...</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The weather has turned from ___ to ___...</i> • <i>The sun sets/rises earlier now...</i> • <i>In anticipation of (holiday)...</i> • <i>On (holiday) day...</i>

Day 10: Revise, Figures of Speech

Lesson Goals: Reread a piece of writing and add figurative language.

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Tell students that they will now be revising and editing their stories to make them easy to read and enjoy.

Today we are going to add figures of speech to our stories. Figures of speech are the use of nonliteral words or phrases to describe something.

A **simile** is a figure of speech that compares two things using the words *like* or *as*. In the book *Chains*, Laurie Halse Anderson uses **similes** when she writes:

Like:

- Mr. Robert's mouth tightened *like* a rope pulled taught. P. 4
- My insides went cold, *like* I'd swallowed water straight from a deep, dark well. P. 10
- I thought Mama would shatter *like* a bowl when it falls off a table. P. 11
- Poppa fought *like* a lion when they came for him. P. 11

As:

- The room was crowded with table and chairs and as many people *as* church on Easter Sunday. P. 14
- The buckles on his books were as big as my fist. P. 19
- Lockton stared at her *as* if she had grown a second head. P. 22

A **metaphor** is a figure of speech that describes an object or action in a non-literal way. In the book *Chains*, Laurie Halse Anderson uses **metaphor** when she writes:

- The cold inside me snaked down to my feet and up around my neck. P. 10
- There was lion's blood on the ground. P. 11
- Everything in the world was froze in ice for near two years after that. P. 12

2. *Revise:* Model revising your own writing to include figures of speech.

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to revise their own stories by adding figures of speech. Then, give time for partners to share these examples of figures of speech.

- What do you like about the way I used figures of speech in my story?
- What might I do to improve it?

Day 11: Edit & Revise: Historical Language

Lesson Goals: Reread a piece of writing and make revisions.

Materials:

Historical Language List 1 & 2

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Tell students they will now be revising and editing their stories to make them easy to read and enjoy.

Today we are going to add historical language to our stories. A historical language is a form of language that is attested to the past and has evolved into a more modern form.

In the book *Chains*, Laurie Halse Anderson historical language to make her story believable.

2. *Read* historical language list 1 & 2. Point out that the modern words are in alphabetical order, making it easier to find words to replace with historical words in your writing.
3. *Revise:* Model looking for modern words in your writing and replacing those words with historical words. Also model highlighting words from the list that could be used in your own historical story and revising your story to include them.

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to revise their own stories to include historical language. Then, give time for partners to share their stories and receive feedback.

- How did I use historical language in my story?
- What might I do to improve it?

HISTORICAL LANGUAGE LIST 1

Words:	
Modern	Historical
Across	Athwart
Ask	Inquire
Anxious	In a lather
Bag	Satchel
Bathroom	Privy
Bedspread	Coverlett
Because	'Cause
Between	Betwixt
Boy	Lad
Box	Crate
Car	Wagon / Carriage
Cat	Mouser
Catastrophe	Calamity
Confused	Confuddled
Curtains	Drapes
Dawdle	Tarry
Dinner	Supper / Sup
Fancy clothes	Finery
Fireplace	Hearth
Get	Fetch
Great	Handsome
Grocery Store	Market
Group	Company
Grumble at	Scold
Idea	Notion
Lantern	Flashlight / Lamp
Living Room	Parlor
Man, Mr.	Fellow, Gentleman, Sir, Master
Money	Currency
Package	Parcel
Pants	Breeches
People	Folks
Restaurant / Bar	Tavern
Riffle	Musket

Right	Proper
Should	Ought to
Skirt	Petticoat
Stew	Pottage
Streetlight	Streetlamp
Stupid	Dull-witted
Unfriendly	Surly
Unwell	Poorly
Weird	Peculiar
While	Whilst
Woman, Mrs.	Madame, missus, ma'am, Mistress

HISTORICAL LANGUAGE LIST 2

Phrases / Expressions:	
Modern	Historical
Are not	Ain't
Blamed for.	Tarred and feathered for.
Congratulations!	Huzzah!
Doesn't matter.	Don't matter.
Excuse me.	Begging your pardon. / Pardon me.
Getting ready to...	Fixing to...
Goodbye.	Fare thee well.
Go on and on about.	Natter on.
Hey!	Ho there!
Hi, how are you?	Good morrow.
Hurry!	Make haste!
Hurry up!	Hop to!
I beg your pardon.	How impolite.
I'm sorry.	My apologies.
In this area.	Hereabouts.
It is.	T'is.
I will.	I shall.
Of course.	Certainly.
Pay attention.	Take heed.
Right away.	Straightaway.
Take care of.	Tend to.

Day 12: Edit and Revise

Lesson Goals: Reread a piece of writing and make edits and revisions.

Materials:

Editing and Revision Checklist

Instructional Procedures:

4. *Introduction:* Tell students that they will now be editing and revising their persuasive writing pieces to make them easy to read as well as convincing.

5. *Edit:* Model rereading your writing and marking edits as you go:
 - Capitals
 - Punctuation
 - Spelling
 - ParagraphingAs you make editing marks, discuss the changes you will make and how they will help the reader understand the piece of writing better. Give students time to reread their writing and record editing marks.

6. *Revise:* Model rereading your writing and marking revisions as you go:
 - Complete sentences
 - Transition words
 - Figures of Speech
 - Details and elaboration to help the reader visualize
 - Key vocabulary

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to their edit and revise their writing. Then, give time for partners to share their writing and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my writing?
- What might I do to improve my writing?

Editing Checklist:

- _____ Sentences start with a capital letter.
- _____ I used capital letters for proper nouns.
- _____ I have punctuation at the end of each sentence.
- _____ I checked my words for spelling.
- _____ I indented paragraphs.

Revision Checklist:

- _____ I started with an introduction that is clear.
- _____ I ended with a conclusion that is clear.
- _____ I used transition words at the beginning of paragraphs.
- _____ I used language to show how one event may have caused another event.
- _____ Sentences make sense.
- _____ Sentences stay focused on the topic.
- _____ I added details and elaboration that are important to the topic.
- _____ I used key vocabulary.

Day 13-15: Publish & Share

Lesson Goals: Publish a piece of writing.

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Tell students they will now be preparing their piece of writing for others to read. This is called publishing.
2. *Discuss:* how stories will be published—handwritten, typed, or other. Let them know when and how their stories will be shared with the class.

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to publish their writing and share their writing with an audience.

Ideas for publishing:

- illustrated book,
- chapter book,
- handwritten book; and
- audio book.

Ideas for sharing:

- read stories aloud to classmates,
- read stories aloud to another class,
- make stories available for others to read (in the classroom, library, or other); and
- take stories home to share with family.

An **author's chair** is a fun classroom tradition. It is a decorated chair in which an author sits to share his/her writing. Teachers can paint a wooden chair or have each new class decorate a pillowcase to go over the back of a chair. This quickly transform a standard classroom chair into something special for young authors.

Checklist for Assessing a Narrative Story

<p>Cover _____/6</p>	<p>____ Has a title that is short. ____ The title puts a picture in the reader's mind.</p> <p>____ Includes a blurb that talks briefly about the story. ____ The blurb entices the reader to read the book.</p> <p>____ The cover gives the reader a clue about the story. ____ The cover gets the reader interested.</p>
<p>Exposition ____/6</p>	<p>Characters ____ Introduces more than one character. ____ Gives important details about each character. ____ Is written in the first or third person.</p> <p>Setting ____ Establishes a setting: time and place. ____ Gives important details about the setting.</p> <p>Problem ____ Introduces a problem/conflict.</p>
<p>Rising Action ____/8</p>	<p>Text Structure ____ Presents a logical series of events that result from the conflict. ____ Events build toward a climax. ____ The events reveal the author's central message or theme.</p> <p>Craft ____ Includes the development of a main character. ____ Includes dialogue and/or interior monologue. ____ Uses language to show the passage of time. ____ Uses descriptive language. ____ Includes elaboration and/or alliteration.</p>
<p>Falling Action & Resolution ____/3</p>	<p>____ The problem is resolved. ____ The character has changed or learned something. ____ The ending is satisfying to the reader.</p>
<p>Revision and Editing ____/5</p>	<p>____ Writing is edited for spelling. ____ Writing is edited for grammar. ____ Writing is edited for punctuation. ____ Writing shows evidence of revision. ____ Published writing is polished.</p>
<p>Collaboration & Effort ____/4</p>	<p>____ Worked well with a partner. ____ Respectfully gave feedback to a partner. ____ Respectfully received feedback from a partner. ____ Showed good effort and persistence.</p>
<p>Total: ____/32</p>	<p>Comments:</p>

Ashes Over New York

Blurb: An enslaved man living in New York in 1776 keeps a secret diary. He writes of rumors, fear, and the terrible fire that consumes the city. As people talk about freedom and liberty, he must decide whether to hope for his own freedom.

September 15, 1776

Dear Diary,

As always happens I's up before dawn to tend to my duties. These be hard times in New York. Red-coat soldiers march the streets. I hear their boots striking the stones like drums. The harbor is crowded with ships that stand tall and dark against the sky. They say the British hold the city now the rebels run off.

I hear people whispering the words "freedom" and "liberty". They say the King promises freedom to slaves who leave their rebel masters. That promise burns in me like a hot coal.

I must be careful 'cause talk of liberty can bring trouble. I keep my face low and my thoughts about that notion to myself.

September 20, 1776

Dear Diary,

For several days, fear has been moving through the city faster than a horse at full gallop. Some say the rebels mean to fight. Others say the slaves plan treason.

I know nothing of such things. I know only my work.

People watch each other with sharp eyes. Even slaves are looked upon with suspicion.

I carry water, chop wood, and keep my head down. I think of my ancestors, who endured worse than this. Their memory gives me strength.

The wind blows strong from the west and whistles through the streets like a warning.

September 21, 1776

Dear Diary,

I shall never forget the flames that destroyed the city. They started small then grew tall like the masts on the ships. The wind pushed the flames forward burning the houses that stand close together.

The crack of burning wood sounded like musket shots. Smoke poured through the air, thick and black. Ash fell like gray snow upon our heads.

My master shouted for me to help carry trunks from the house and I ran to help. The heat pressed against me.

Some people cried out in fear and others prayed. Soldiers formed lines with buckets of water to fight the flames.

I wondered why the church bell didn't ring.

In the morning, the city looked like a battlefield after cannon fire. I trembled, not knowing whether this was providence or punishment.

September 24, 1776

It has been several days since the fire burned.

The British say rebels set the blaze. Others whisper that slaves conspired in it. Some have been taken away for questioning.

I speak little. I trust no one with my thoughts. A man must think of self-preservation.

The streets smell of ash and burnt timber. Smoke hangs low in the air like fog.

Some slaves have joined the British soldiers, hoping for freedom. Others stay, fearing what might come. I feel pulled between hope and fear.

I do not know what my fate shall be. My ancestors endured chains and crossing seas. I can endure this.