Elementary English and Language Arts Instructional Unit - Lesson 4

Table of Contents

1. Objectives
2. Essential Questions
3. Lesson Vocabulary
4. Materials
5. Lesson 4 | Introduction
   5.1 Activate Previous Knowledge
   5.2 Definitions
   5.3 Additional Considerations for Emerging Readers
   5.4 Additional Considerations for Emerging Communicators
   5.5 Establish Goals/Objectives for the Lesson
6. Lesson 4 | Body
   6.1 Direct Instruction and/or Facilitation of the Lesson Activity(ies)
   6.2 Additional Considerations for Emerging Readers
   6.3 Additional Considerations for Emerging Communicators
7. Lesson 4 | Practice
   7.1 Additional Considerations for Emerging Readers
   7.2 Additional Considerations for Emerging Communicators
8. Lesson 4 | Closure
   8.1 Revisit/Review Lesson and Objectives
   8.2 Additional Considerations for Emerging Readers
   8.3 Additional Considerations for Emerging Communicators
9. Lesson 4 | Exit Assessment
   9.1 Additional Considerations for Emerging Readers
   9.2 Additional Considerations for Emerging Communicators
10. Lesson 4 | Resources
1. Objectives

- Students will determine the importance of information in the text.
  - Common Core State Standards: RI.3.1, RI.3.2, RI.4.1, and RI.4.2
- Students will use supporting evidence to analyze the author’s purpose.
  - Common Core State Standards: RI.3.2, RI.3.6, RI.3.9, RI.4.2, RI.4.3, and RI.4.6
- Students will write evidence from the text and sort it into theme/not theme.
  - Core Content Connectors: (3.WI.13)

2. Essential Questions

- What is the author’s purpose?
- How does the author’s purpose help the reader to determine what is important?

3. Lesson Vocabulary

**Author’s Purpose**: the reason an author decides to write about a specific topic

Review vocabulary from previous lessons

4. Materials

- Chapter 8, Our School from the book, *Children of the Dust Bowl*
- Theme strips
- T-chart labeled theme and not theme
- Sticky notes
5. Lesson 4 | Introduction

5.1 Activate Previous Knowledge

1. Display a chart that is titled, "The Author's Purpose". Review the definition of author's purpose. Invite a student to write one reason why an author writes a text, (to persuade, to inform, to entertain). Have a different student add a characteristic of the purpose (i.e. sway thinking, give facts, tell a story). Have another student write the title of a text that meets the purpose (i.e. commercials, Children of the Dust Bowl, Saturdays and Teacakes). Repeat the process until all 3 purposes have been identified.

2. Review the large group graphic organizer where the main idea and supporting details are listed. Reread the answers. Ask students: 1) What is the author's purpose for writing Children of the Dust Bowl? (to inform) 2) Why do you think Jerry Stanley wrote this book? (to inform the reader about how the teachers and the Okies built their own school. Remember students have only been exposed to Chapter 8 of the text. However, the teacher provided background knowledge for the whole book. It may be necessary to remind students of the context in which the book was written.

5.2 Definitions

Author's Purpose: the reason an author decides to write about a specific topic
5.3 Additional Considerations for Emerging Readers

1. Provide a personal copy of the chart being completed on the board by the whole class. This is a 3-column T-chart with 3 rows. The columns are labeled "Author's Purpose", "Characteristic", and "Text Example." The rows are not labeled. It looks like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author's Purpose</th>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Text Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provide the 3-column T-chart in the most appropriate accommodated format which has previously been provided for the student in other activities. These might include color coded rows or columns, digital format, supplemented with symbol-based text, etc.

As the class fills in the chart, have the student complete his or her personal chart by:

- Writing in the answers.
- Cutting and pasting (or Velcro® tape attaching or using sticky notes with responses written on them) in the answers.
- Verbalizing the responses for a partner (peer or adult) to scribe.
- Completing the organizer digitally.

If the student is chosen to answer a question, he or she can answer using the preferred mode of communication. This might be pre-planned.
2. During the large group review, provide the main idea/supporting details graphic organizer completed in Lesson 3, Practice, step 2. for the student to use in answering questions. Provide choices in accommodated format(s) for the student to select from in order to answer the teacher's questions. Pre-plan a question and answer for the student.

Model 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author's Purpose</th>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Text Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persuade</td>
<td>Inform</td>
<td>Entertain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sway thinking</td>
<td>Give facts</td>
<td>Tell a story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercials</td>
<td>Children of the Dust Bowl</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturdays and Teacakes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commercials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Word Bank

- Inform
- Sway thinking
- Give facts
- Entertain
- Persuade
- Tell a story
- Commercials

Model 1 caption: Students may benefit from having the option of filling in a personal version of the 3-column T-chart while a large version is filled in by the class together.
5.4 Additional Considerations for Emerging Communicators

1. Provide a personal copy of the chart being completed on the board by the whole class. This is a 3-column T-chart with 3 rows. The columns are labeled "Author's Purpose", "Characteristic", and "Text Example." The rows are not labeled. It looks like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author's Purpose</th>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Text Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provide the 3-column T-chart in the most appropriate accommodated format which has previously been provided for the student in other activities. These might include color coded rows or columns, texturally outlined with glue/yarn/puffy paint/etc., digital format, 3-dimensional format, supplemented with symbol-based text, supplemented with textures, etc.

As the class fills in the chart, have the student complete his or her personal chart by:

- Cutting and pasting (or Velcro® tape attaching) in the answers.
- Sorting answers into a 3-dimensional graphic organizer such as the basket/container system described previously.
- Completing the organizer digitally.

If the student is chosen to answer a question, he or she can answer using the preferred mode of communication. This might be pre-planned and/or pre-recorded into a voice-output device which the student can activate.
2. During the large group review, provide the main idea/supporting details graphic organizer completed in Lesson 3, Practice, step 2. for the student to use in answering questions. Provide choices in accommodated format(s) for the student to select from in order to answer the teacher’s questions. Pre-plan a question and answer for the student.

Model 2

Model 2 caption: If a student’s preferred communication tool is an eye-gaze board, they may use one to sort the word bank terms into the categories of Persuade, Inform, and Entertain. Graphic resources with permission from Mayer-Johnson Dynavox
5.5 Establish Goals/Objectives for the Lesson

Inform students: "Today we have identified the author’s purpose was to inform the reader about how the teachers and the Okies built their own school. We are going to examine the text to identify the possible themes/messages. Then we will find supporting details to justify our conclusions."

6. Lesson 4 | Body

6.1 Direct Instruction and/or Facilitation of the Lesson Activity(ies)

1. Remind students that authors write to persuade, inform, or entertain but most texts have a deeper message.

2. Explain to students that we will use the same theme strips from Saturdays and Teacakes to complete the sentence: The theme in this book is ________. Display the strips listing the possible themes: childhood memories, bravery, relationships, family traditions, farm life, historical events, friendship, or coming of age.

3. In the same small group from the prior lesson, students discuss which theme would relate to the text and sorts them accordingly.

4. As a large group, sort the strips into two categories: theme or not theme. Discuss student rationales.

| Theme | Not Theme |
6.2 Additional Considerations for Emerging Readers

1. Provide the same accommodated materials regarding author’s purpose as in Lesson 2, Introduction, step 1.

   **Accommodations from Lesson 2, Introduction, step 1**

   As the teacher reviews the definition of author’s purpose, provide a personal copy of the definition with symbol-based text. Provide symbol-based text versions of the three reasons why an author writes a text and the characteristics of each. Provide a 3-column T-chart with the columns labeled (in symbol-based text) persuade, inform, and entertain. Before this activity, copy the covers of the familiar books the teacher will be asking about and reduce their size to about 2-inch square. Have the student sort the "book covers" into the correct category of author’s purpose as a result of the ongoing class discussion. The student could show his or her T-chart to respond to the teacher’s questions or pre-plan a specific question and answer that the student can give.

2. Provide the same accommodated materials regarding the possible themes as in Lesson 2, Body, steps 3 and 4.

   **Accommodations from Lesson 2, Body, steps 3 and 4**

   3. Provide the theme/not theme strips in accommodated formats (symbol-based, etc.) to the student for use as the teacher delivers the information.

   4. As the students discuss and sort the themes and not themes: Provide the themes in a symbol-based format (icons, pictures, concrete tactile representations /real, with supplemental textures, etc.).
• Provide the student with a 2-column T-chart that might be outlined or have the background with colors and textures. The theme and not theme columns could be supplemented with other icons such as a happy face/frowny face, yes/no, etc. respectively.

• Have the student sort the themes by:
  ○ Placing the theme/not theme strips into the correct categories.
  ○ Indicating by AAC or AT which category they should be placed in.

3. Follow the same instructional procedure as in Lesson 2, Body, step 4.

   **Instructional procedure from Lesson 2, Body, step 4**
   In small groups of 3 to 4 students, students discuss which theme would relate to the text and sorts them.

4. Follow the same instructional procedure as in Lesson 2, Body, step 5.

   **Instructional procedure from Lesson 2, Body, step 5**
   As a large group, sort the strips into two categories: theme, not theme. Discuss student rationales.

**Model 3**
6.3 Additional Considerations for Emerging Communicators

1. Provide the same accommodated materials regarding author's purpose as in Lesson 2, Introduction, step 1.

**Accommodations from Lesson 2, Practice, step 1**

As the teacher reviews the definition of author's purpose, provide a personal copy of the definition with symbol-based text. Provide symbol-based text versions of the three reasons why an author writes a text and the characteristics of each. Provide a 3-column T-chart with the columns labeled (in symbol-based test) persuade, inform, and entertain. Before this activity, copy the covers of the familiar books the teacher will be asking about and reduce their size to about 2-inch square. Have the student sort the "book covers" into the correct category of author's purpose as a result of the ongoing class discussion. The student could show his or her T-chart to respond to the teacher's questions or pre-plan a specific question and answer that the student can give.

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Model 3 caption: Have students indicate which terms are themes or are not themes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bravery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childhood memories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coming of age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical events</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stamp an X over the themes that do not fit the theme for *Children of the Dust Bowl.*
2. Provide the same accommodated materials regarding the possible themes as in Lesson 2, Body, steps 3 and 4.

   **Accommodations from Lesson 2, Body, steps 3 and 4**

   3. Provide the theme/not theme strips in accommodated formats (symbol-based, etc.) to the student for use as the teacher delivers the information. As the students discuss and sort the themes and not themes:

      Provide the themes in a symbol-based format (icons, pictures, concrete tactile representations /real, with supplemental textures, etc.).

      Provide the student with a 2-column T-chart that might be outlined or have the background with colors and textures. Another option would be to have the T-chart represented by two boxes or other containers. The theme and not theme columns could be supplemented with other icons such as a happy face/frowny face, yes/no, etc. respectively.

      Have the student sort the themes by:

      - Placing the theme/not theme strips into the correct categories.
      - Indicating by AAC or AT which category they should be placed in.
      - The questions to facilitate the student’s responses could be asked in two ways:
        - The student could be asked, "Does the possible theme go here or here?" and the student would indicate which category through his or her preferred mode of communication.
        - The student could be presented with the possible themes and asked, "Does this belong here?" to which the student would answer "yes" or "no" through his or her preferred mode of communication.

   4. The student should participate in the large group activity using the same processes as in step 4 of the lesson 2 body.

3. Follow the same instructional procedure as in Lesson 2, Body, step 4.

   **Instructional Procedures from Lesson 2, Body, step 4**

   In small groups of 3 to 4 students, students discuss which theme would relate to the text and sorts them.

4. Follow the same instructional procedure as in Lesson 2, Body, step 5.

   **Instructional Procedures from Lesson 2, Body, step 5**

   As a large group, sort the strips into two categories: theme, not theme. Discuss student rationales.
Model 4 caption: Students may sort strips of paper or symbol cards with terms on them into "Yes" and "No" containers, if they represent a theme of the story or not. Graphic resources with permission from Mayer-Johnson Dynavox

7. Lesson 4 | Practice

1. Students work with their small group using Chapter 8: Our school from Children of the Dust Bowl. Students will mark the passages in the text that support the theme(s) they have chosen. Students write the supporting details their group has chosen on the sticky notes. (One detail per sticky note will work best for the upcoming sorting activity)

2. Students return to the large group. They should continue sitting with their small group partners. Each small group will present two supporting details and place it
next to the theme strip it supports. The group will explain why they chose the
details and why it supports a particular theme.

7.1 Additional Considerations for
Emerging Readers

1. Provide the information and accommodations for Chapter 8: Our School from
Children of the Dust Bowl in the same format as in Lesson 2, Practice, step 1.

   **Accommodations from Lesson 2, Practice, step 1**
   
   Provide the student with sticky notes pre-marked with symbols representing the themes
   chosen. For example, if the theme of Family Traditions were previously indicated with an icon of
   family, the student would be provided with several sticky notes pre-marked with that icon.
   Sticky notes for the other chosen themes would be provided in the same manner. As the
   student and his or her partner reread the text (provided for the student with all of the
   appropriate accommodations) and identify pages containing key details, allow the student to
   place the appropriate theme sticky note on the appropriate page and have the partner write
   down the key detail or terminology.

2. Use the same instructional procedures as in Lesson 2, Practice, steps 2 and 3.

   **Instructional Procedures from Lesson 2, Practice, steps 2 and 3**

   2. Students come back to the large group setting. The individual small groups will take turns
   placing their sticky notes next to the theme it supports. Each group will explain why they chose
   the detail and why it supports a particular theme. You may find that the details students have
   chosen can support several of the listed themes.

   3. Read aloud or ask several students to read aloud the theme and its supporting details from
   the sticky notes.
Model 5 caption: Students may use sticky-notes that are pre-marked with symbols they have already associated with themes from the text.

### 7.2 Additional Considerations for Emerging Communicators

1. Provide the information and accommodations for Chapter 8: Our School from *Children of the Dust Bowl* in the same format as in Lesson 2, Practice, step 1.

**Accommodations from Lesson 2, Practice, step 1**

Provide the student with sticky notes pre-marked with symbols representing the themes chosen. For example, if the theme of Family Traditions were previously indicated with an icon of family, the student would be provided with several sticky notes pre-marked with that icon.
Sticky notes for the other chosen themes would be provided in the same manner. As the student and his or her partner reread the text (provided for the student with all of the appropriate accommodations) and identify pages containing key details, allow the student to place the appropriate theme sticky note on the appropriate page and have the partner write down the key detail or terminology.

2. Use the same instructional procedures as in Lesson 2, Practice, steps 2 and 3.

   Instructional Procedures from Lesson 2, Practice, steps 2 and 3

   2. Students come back to the large group setting. The individual small groups will take turns placing their sticky notes next to the theme it supports. Each group will explain why they chose the detail and why it supports a particular theme. You may find that the details students have chosen can support several of the listed themes.

   3. Read aloud or ask several students to read aloud the theme and its supporting details from the sticky notes.
Model 6 caption: Students may choose which sticky note relates to the indicated theme.

*Graphic resources with permission from Mayer-Johnson Dynavox*

### 8. Lesson 4 | Closure

#### 8.1 Revisit/Review Lesson and Objectives

Read aloud the themes and the supporting details listed on the sticky notes.

Discuss: Are the supporting details next to the theme that it best supports? (yes or no) If students answer no, ask: Which supporting detail would you move? Why? (varied answers) Discuss rationale with the large group and make appropriate changes.
8.2 Additional Considerations for Emerging Readers

During the large group activity, provide access to all the accommodated materials that have been developed and used regarding themes and supporting details. Allow the student to answer questions using his or her preferred mode of communication. Pre-plan information for the student to contribute.

8.3 Additional Considerations for Emerging Communicators

During the large group activity, provide access to all the accommodated materials that have been developed and used regarding themes and supporting details. Allow the student to answer questions using his or her preferred mode of communication. Pre-plan information for the student to contribute.

9. Lesson 4 | Exit Assessment

Exit slip: What is the theme you feel best meets the author's intent? Why?

(All are acceptable answers: childhood memories, relationships, friendship, coming of age, historical events, farm life)

It’s at the teacher’s discretion on whether students have acceptably justified their theme choice.
9.1 Additional Considerations for Emerging Readers

Allow the student to choose the theme and his or her rationale from several choices (correct answer and from one to three plausible but not correct choices with the number depending upon the discrimination ability of the student).

Note: Because this is an assessment activity and not instructional like the other activities in this lesson, all of the themes and rationales must be plausible (even though only one is the most appropriate). Here you are trying to assess the student’s ability to determine the theme and give a rationale for the choice. Providing distractors that are clearly not linked to the text would not give information to verify the student’s achievement of the learning objective.
Model 7 caption: Some students may need their exit slips to use symbol-based text.

*Graphic resources with permission from Mayer-Johnson Dynavox*

### 9.2 Additional Considerations for Emerging Communicators

Allow the student to choose the theme and his or her rationale from several choices (correct answer and one to three plausible but not correct choices with the number depending upon the discrimination ability of the student). Note: Because this is an assessment activity and not instructional like the other activities in this lesson, all of the themes and rationales must be plausible (even though
only one is the most appropriate). Here you are trying to assess the student's ability to determine the theme and give a rationale for the choice. Providing distractors that are clearly not linked to the text would not give information to verify the student's achievement of the learning objective.

Model 8

Model 8 caption: Students may benefit from having physical representations of the text, such as a pencil representing school and a real leaf representing gardening.

10. Lesson 4 | Resources

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Project Officer: Susan Weigert

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