
RESEARCH- BASED WRITING **WRITING** **LESSONS**

- 14 daily, detailed lessons
- Slides to display
- Anchor chart examples
- Bonus lesson ideas



INTRODUCTION:

- This month we will dive into nonfiction writing with a research-based project. I like to use this as our first try at informational writing, because this type of unit is so engaging. The students really become immersed in their research and writing.
- This unit is generally about 4 weeks long in my first-grade classroom as we go slow and publish a longer, more detailed book than we have in the past. Be sure to look at the “I Can...” statements for this unit to see a bullet point of each lesson I would teach in this unit.
- Many of the lessons included in this unit are ones that would take longer than a day to complete. This is because students will need to research the facts, brainstorm, then write.

The core lessons included in this informative writing unit are:

1. What is research?
2. What do we want to learn about?
3. We can create a cover page
4. We can classify our animals
5. We can make a diagram
6. We can identify where our animal lives
7. We can identify what our animal eats
8. We can share fun facts about our animal
9. How to writing
10. Caption Action
11. Table of Contents
12. Meet the Author
13. Editing
14. Publishing

All anchor chart examples and printables are linked and included within this document.

I've also included the following **bonus mini-lesson ideas** in case your students need more explicit lessons on any of these:

- Other pages to add
- Research Sites
- Catch up days
- Parent letter



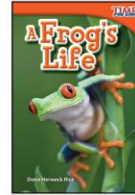
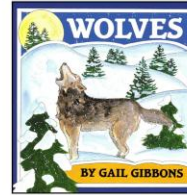
SLIDES:



We can write
**RESEARCH
BOOKS!**

LESSON 3

Take a look at these book covers.
What do you notice?



Have students turn and talk about what they notice about these covers.
These are good models for how we want to create our own covers.

LET'S LEARN: animal classifications

LESSON 4

Mammal	- Usually have hair or fur - Give birth to babies (not eggs) - Mothers feed babies milk	
Reptile	- Live in water and on land - Cold-blooded - Lay eggs on land	
Bird	- Have beaks, wings, feathers, and two legs - They lay eggs	
Amphibian	- Live in water or on land - Lay eggs in water	
Fish	- Live in water - Have fins instead of legs and gills instead of lungs - Lay eggs in water	
Insect	- Have six legs and three body parts - Some have wings - Lay eggs	

Go over each of the classifications above. As you read them, have students think about which category they think their animal falls in.

LET'S LEARN: animal habitats

LESSON 6



Describe what each habitat looks like and give some examples of animals that live in each one.

My Turn:

LESSON 7

- Let's find what my animal eats and plan out our writing to include:
 - A topic sentence
 - At least 2 facts.
 - A closing
- When your plan is done, you will copy your 4 sentences over to a page with an illustration to match.

My animal eats:
Topic sentence clearly identifies what your animal eats in a sentence.

Frogs eat bugs and insects.

Fact 1 shows a fact about your animal eating.
Frogs have really large eyes on the top of their heads so they don't need to hunt for food. They can wait and look around until a bug comes close to them.

Fact 2 shows a fact about your animal eating.
Frogs have long sticky tongues they use to help them catch their food.

Closing sentence restates your topic sentence in a different way.
As long as frogs live near insects, they have plenty of food to eat.

Model the steps above and show how to add this information to the planning page.
When our planning sheet is complete, students will copy this over to a writing page with a picture to match.

LET'S LEARN: animal traits

LESSON 5

Animals have different physical characteristics that help them survive. Take a look at the animals below. What trait do they all have that helps them survive?



LET'S LEARN: captions

LESSON 10



When frogs are born, they don't look like adult frogs. They are called tadpoles.

Captions are words near a photograph or illustration that give the reader more information.

WHAT IS RESEARCH?

PREVIEW:

- Today, students will be introduced to research-based writing. Students will identify different aspects of nonfiction writing and explore different nonfiction books.

MINI LESSON:**We will understand what research-based writing is.**

As students come over to the rug, remind them of the types of writing we've worked through and published so far this year. Let them know that today, we will begin a new writing project where we will write informative books based on what we've learned about a topic.

Ask students to explain the differences between nonfiction and fiction books based on what they've learned/read so far this year. Explain that when we write our informative books, they will be based on facts we learn. We aren't sharing stories about our lives or our opinion, but instead, we will share true facts about a topic.

Show them the steps we will be taking throughout this project [on this anchor chart](#).

Use a mentor text like *Frogs* by Gail Gibbons. We are using any of Gail Gibbons' informative texts for this unit to show how an informative book teaches us facts about a topic. I like to explain that when Gail Gibbons probably knows a lot about frogs, she has written many informative books about them. She probably knows a lot about frogs, she has written many informative books about them. She probably knows a lot about frogs, she has written many informative books about them. She must do her research (search and find information about each topic) before she shares it with others. Read a few of the pages aloud and point out some of the facts Gail Gibbons teaches us in the book. You can record them on this [fact-finding sheet](#) to model what students will be doing during IW. [Teacher example here.](#)

Let students know that today, during independent writing time, they will be exploring different nonfiction books and seeing what facts they learn while reading. They will use their own fact-finding sheets to record what they've learned.

INDEPENDENT WRITING:

Students will spend this time exploring nonfiction books (you can use Epic to share books with students or even read your own book aloud to students) and writing some facts they find interesting on their fact-finding sheets. This exploration will help them become more familiar with the way authors write nonfiction books.

CLOSING:

Have students share out some facts they've learned from the books they've read. I also like to ask if students saw any similarities about the books they read today. Even though they teach us about different topics, were they set up in a similar way at all?

RESEARCH-BASED WRITING:

we will write an informative book to teach others what we've learned about a topic.

STEP 1:

pick a topic

STEP 2:

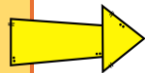
find information
about the topic

STEP 3:

organize the
information

STEP 4:

share the
information with
others

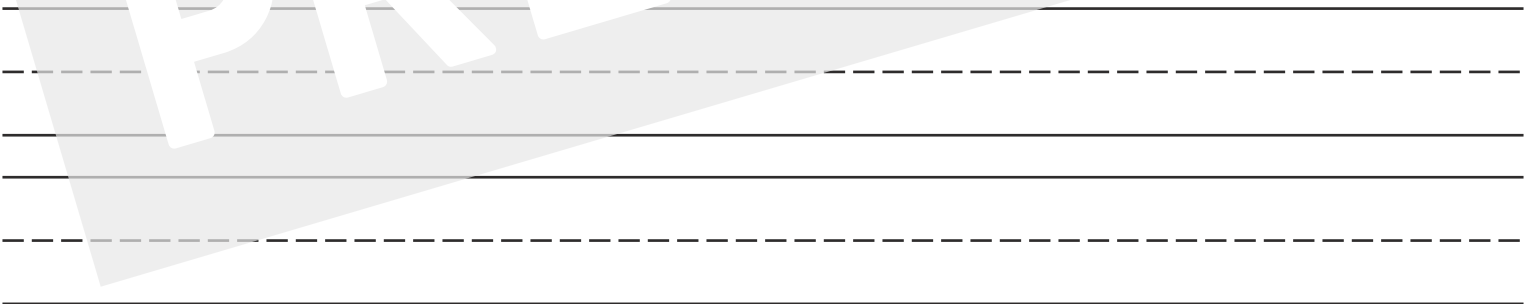


Habitat

Draw a picture of your animal's habitat



How would you describe their habitat?



Where in the World does your animal live?



My animal eats:

Topic sentence: state exactly what your animal eats in a sentence.

Fact 1: share a fact about your animal eating.

Fact 2: share a fact about your animal eating.

Closing sentence: restate your topic sentence in a different way.

make your own: HABITATS & CLAY ANIMALS!

One fun way to extend this project is to create habitats and clay animals. At the end of the slides, you'll find three slides I use when teaching students to make their own habitats. With the right supplies, this becomes a pretty simple project and students can be as creative as they'd like! Below I include the links for supplies I use when doing this. (I like to create a wish list for parents on Amazon.) Be aware – this is messy, but fun! Just assemble the boxes, be sure to have Elmer's Glue and hot glue gun handy and have fun!

SUPPLIES:

- Habitat boxes
- Examples of habitat supplies (1)
- Examples of habitat supplies (2)

Take a look at some **habitats** from last year:



Think: how can you make yours unique and realistic?