

Digging Deep Wells For Writing Curriculum: How We Know What We Know About Writing

By Katie Wood Ray

Our own writing experiences.

Teachers of writing can examine the stories of their own experiences with writing in order to develop curriculum for teaching the process of writing and how to live a writing life. As we study our own experiences, we are trying to find out what kinds of things writers do and how they go about doing them, and what kinds of things writers think about and why they think about them. We need to make sure we have experience with everything we'll be teaching: each part of the writing process (including keeping a writer's notebook), strategies for drafting and crafting and revising, any genre we'll be asking students to write during the year.

“Voices” of professional writers.

Teachers of writing look for interviews and articles and books where professional writers “talk” about how they get their writing done. We are listening for any comments that give us insight into any aspect of the writing process and any information on writing in specific genres. We are also interested in how these professionals live their writing lives and support on-going publication. Just as when we study our own writing experiences, we are trying to find out what kinds of things writers do and how they go about doing them, and what kinds of things writers think about and why they think about them. The internet has become a wonderful resource for getting in touch with professional writers and letting their voices inform our teaching. Also, go to the “how to” section of bookstores and find books about *how to write* that are written by professional writers.

Well-crafted texts.

Basically anything we want to know about texts, about the writing itself, we find in well-crafted texts: punctuation, sentence structures, text structures, ways to use words well, paragraphing, etc. We also find out how specific genres are written by collecting stacks of examples of well-crafted texts in the genre. As teachers of writing we know our first job is always to collect the texts we'll need to study virtually any issue of the *products* of writing. We always ask ourselves, “What will my students be reading to support their learning about this?”

Books by other teachers of writing.

Where would we be if we couldn't stand on the shoulders of Ralph Fletcher, Nancie Atwell, Barry Lane . . .? Books written by other teachers of writing are often excellent curriculum resources as they share the content of specific mini lessons and ideas for inquiries that generate thoughtful curriculum.

Our student's writing.

We have lots of demonstrations of “what kinds of things writers do and how they do them” going on all around us in our writing workshops. We can learn new curricular possibilities by watching our students very closely. If we ask our students what they think about and why they do things as they write, we open up even more avenues for learning more about the process of writing, in addition to helping them become articulate about their processes.

From *The Writing Workshop: Working Through the Hard Parts (And They're All Hard Parts)*,
By Katie Wood Ray with writers' voices by Lester Laminack, 2001, NCTE

Why Understanding Genre is So Important for Teachers of Writing

By Katie Wood Ray

Being aware of all the different kinds of writing people do in newspapers, magazines, picture books, poetry anthologies, collections, and on the internet is critical for teachers of writing.

Any time a class isn't involved in genre study, teachers need to listen to students' ideas for topics and their reason for wanting to write about those topics, then make recommendations for kinds of writing students might try.

The more kinds of writing teachers know about in the world of writing, the more possibilities they can help students explore.

Teachers of writing should save examples of the different kinds of writing they see in the world so they can show these examples to students. This will help students have *vision* for what's possible.

Choice, such a critical factor in motivating writers to complete projects, is greatly expanded when students see many options for the kinds of things they could make with writing.

Adapted from *Study Driven: A Framework for Planning Units of Study in the Writing Workshop*
by Katie Wood Ray 2006 Heinemann

Categories from *What a Writer Needs* by Ralph Fletcher with Descriptions Adapted by Karen Antikajian

Essential are mentors, a way to overcome writer’s block, and a love of words. Categories of writer’s craft are:

1. Specificity	Write small (topic, details)—not global. Write about one experience at Disneyland, not the whole day—or the whole trip.
2. Creating a Character	The character should be shown through his or her thoughts, feelings, actions, and dialogue as well as that of the other characters. Don’t tell how she feels— show the results.
3. Voice	“[Writing with voice] has that fluency, rhythm, and liveliness that exist in the speech of most people when they are enjoying a conversation. . . . Writing with real voice has the power to make you pay attention and understand—the words go deep.” Peter Elbow
4. Beginnings	It is important to explore various leads. Make a chart of some possibilities. Ask students to experiment with at least three before deciding on one.
5. Endings	Some questions to ask about the ending: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it satisfy or surprise the reader? • Does it make sense? • Does it reflect the beginning or the changes that have occurred?
6. Tension	In a narrative piece (personal or fictional), there should be a high point or a building of tension before the resolution or conclusion. The problem needs to be attempted several times (and get worse) before it is solved.
7. A Sense of Place	Set the scene through description, from a character’s thoughts, words, or actions, or by what is happening. It doesn’t have to be done all at once. Clues can be given as the writing unfolds.
8. A Playfulness with Time	Learning to zip through the insignificant, omit the unimportant, and expand the significant is paramount for good writing. Other strategies for playing with time are starting in the middle, foreshadowing, and flashbacks.
9. Unforgettable Language	Writers love words, play with words, and choose words carefully depending on the topic, genre, audience, and purpose. Specific nouns and strong verbs are recommended with adjectives and adverbs used sparingly.
10. Significant Subject	To do his or her best writing, a writer needs a significant subject—one that the writer feels passionate about or invested in—of his or her own choice. What is significant for one person may mean very little to another.

10 Things Every Writer Needs to Know

By Jeff Anderson

Chapter Titles

1. Motion: Motivation
2. Models: Mentor Texts
3. Focus: Narrowing Scope
4. Detail: Concrete and Necessary
5. Form: Organizing and Structuring Ideas
6. Frames: Intros and Conclusions
7. Cohesion: Unifying the Whole
8. Energy: Rhythm and Style
9. Words: Drafting proper diction
10. Clutter: Deleting the Extraneous

To one degree or another, all ten things are essential to writing. *10 Things Every Writer Needs to Know* discerns, in digestible chunks, what makes writing work, whether it's fiction or nonfiction, a brochure or a literary analysis, or any task a writer tackles.

We can, for a time, put the ten things every writer needs to know into discrete categories, which will help students access concepts and patterns of success. However, the lines between the ten things every writer needs to know will always be blurred.

These things writers need to know come alive through models found in literature and discussions grounded in inquiry. We don't get lost in abstract labels. Powerful literature starts the conversation. In one piece of good writing many of the ten things may surface.

What Writing Isn't:

1. Writing isn't in a kit
2. Writing isn't test preparation

What Writing Is:

1. Writing is a transaction between the writer and the reader
2. Writing is a skill that can be learned
3. Writing ignites a passion
4. Writing is freedom and power

7 Tips to Consider When Providing Feedback and Assessment to Writers:

1. Read through the entire piece of writing before marking.
2. As you read student writing, scour for what is right and effective.
3. Inform—don't overwhelm.
4. Positive comments should outweigh negative comments by a minimum of 2 to 1.
5. Inform parents and students early about how you'll provide feedback.
6. Use the information you gather as you read students' writing to plan mini-lessons and small-group work.
7. Students need to be part of the assessment.

Jeff Anderson’s Writing Recommendations

From *10 Things Every Writer Needs to Know*

Adapted by Karen Antikajian

with references to *What a Writer Needs* by Ralph Fletcher

1. Use the Scientific Method to Study Models (Fletcher: Mentors)

To kick off the study of models as a path to successful writing, I share an excerpt from Bill Nye the Science Guy’s book, *Big Blast of Science*. Nye’s definition of the scientific method reminds us that through inquiry we can figure out how anything works, including writing.

Science starts with a question. Here are some underlying questions writers might ask as they look at model texts.

- What do writers do?
- How do writers use the ten things every writer needs to know (motion, models, focus, detail, form, frames, cohesion, energy, words, or clutter) to make their writing strong?
- What patterns of success do we see across texts?
- What’s working well? What’s not working?
- How is this like or different from other texts we’ve read?
- What techniques can we try in our own writing?

After the observing and questioning, scientists build hypotheses, and then test them or experiment with them to see whether what they predict is true. With writers, the experiment is emulating another writer and observing its effect on readers.

The Scientific Method of Learning to Write from Models	
The Scientific Method	The Scientific Method for Studying Models
Observe	Notice
Question	Interact
Hypothesize	Name
Test	Experiment
Conclude	Reflect

2. Can Fiction Be a Model for Nonfiction?

Some in our profession think there are two kinds of writing—fiction and nonfiction. While that is true (nonfiction), I think the oversimplification is the root of a lot of false or made-up teaching (fiction).

Fiction and nonfiction can serve as models for any writing task. It’s an oversimplification to say it doesn’t matter at all, but the truth is, well-received nonfiction, for the most part, uses the elements of fiction to make it compelling: real settings, actual characters, factual conflicts.

3. Narrow the Focus (Fletcher: Specificity)

a. A Slice of the Pizza

Everything about your dog is represented by a whole pizza. Writing a “slice of the pizza” would be one part of the topic such as “the day we adopted my dog.”

- b. Hayakawa's Ladder of Abstraction
Use details, examples, and specific nouns from level one.

Levels of Abstractions

Level Four: Abstractions Examples: life, beauty, love, time, success, power, happiness, faith, hope, charity, evil, good.
Level Three: Noun classes: broad group names with little specification. Examples: People, men, women, young people, everybody, nobody, industry, we, goals, things, television.
Level Two: Noun categories: more definite groups. Examples: teen-agers, middle-class, clothing industry, parents, college campus, newborn child, TV comedies, house plants.
Level One: Specific, identifiable nouns. Examples: Levi 501 jeans, my blue, three bedroom house on Hollis Street, <i>In Living Color</i> , Bud commercials, African violets, Tina's newborn sister, Mina.

Sample Abstraction Ladders:			
Level Four	society	human endeavors	economy
Level Three	most people	industries	farm assets
Level Two	spoiled child	cosmetic company	cattle
Level One	my sister, Tracy	Max Factor, Inc.	Bessie, the cow

(*based on the work of Hayakawa's ladder of abstractions)

- 4. Compare and Contrast Organization and Structure of Texts**
Nonfiction can tell a story and entertain. Fiction can use facts and inform.
Determine point of view.
- 5. Frame your writing with a lead and a conclusion.** (Fletcher: Beginnings and Endings)
Connect your lead and conclusion (Fletcher: Beginning and Ending Relationships)
- 6. Words** (Fletcher: Unforgettable Language and Specificity)
Enhance your writing with accurate, specific, and concrete words.
Name names with showing nouns.
Punch up prose with vivid verbs.
Words color my world with tone and mood.
Finesse fresh figurative language.
Comparisons and contrasts help writers and readers understand.
Adjectives have their place. Adjectives have gotten a bad rap. An adjective in and of itself isn't bad. Like everything else, moderation is key. Adjectives modify or enhance nouns, but if a specific noun can do the work, let it.
- 7. Clutter: Deleting the Extraneous** (Fletcher: A Playfulness with Time)
Stop thinking that *more* is always *better*.

SOME WAYS TO SPICE UP INFORMATIONAL WRITING

By Karen Antikajian

1. Talk to the reader.
2. Ask questions.
3. Start with and/or include fascinating facts.
4. Add exclamations about things that surprised you or will surprise your reader.
5. Make lively comparisons with figurative language (simile, metaphor)
6. Use specific details to give a clear picture.
7. Use strong verbs.
8. Set the scene.
9. Add illustrations with labels or captions to show size, details, or comparisons.
10. Use close-up illustrations to show size, details, or comparisons.
11. Add emphasis by using a very short sentence, sentence fragment, or word.
12. Relate the ending to the beginning.
13. Use a series of 3's for organization and sentence fluency.
14. Use humor to make a point.
15. Make objects come alive with personification.
16. Use poetic language to give information.
17. Give examples to help your reader understand the information.
18. Write with two layers of text (one more narrative and the other more factual).
19. Combine fiction and facts.
20. Highlight some factual information in a sidebar or box.
21. Tell the story of a group through one example.
22. Use opposites or patterns for emphasis.
23. Include onomatopoeia to add interest and information.
24. Include a personal observation or comment.
25. Include yourself and/or the reader in writing directions or a "how-to" piece.

SOME WAYS TO SPICE UP INFORMATIONAL WRITING WITH MENTOR TEXT SUGGESTIONS

By Karen Antikajian

(Note: Books marked with an asterisk have examples on the PowerPoint presentation)

How Important Are Mentor Texts?

- * All teaching-writing professionals advocate using mentor texts (models) with students.
- * Some texts should be experienced in their entirety to help students become familiar with the genre and language.
- * Others should be pulled apart and investigated closely to help students examine and understand the craft.

Listed below are craft examples for some ways to spice up informational writing. Many of these craft elements are used in all kinds of writing. Good writing is good writing—regardless of genre.

1. Talk to the reader.

a. **Shark in the Sea* by Joanne Ryder, illustrated by Michael Rothman

b. *Surprising Sharks* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by James Croft

You're swimming in the warm blue sea. What's the one word that turns your dream into a nightmare? What's the one word that makes you think of a giant man-eating killer?

c. *The Heart* by Seymour Simon

Make a fist. This is about the size of your heart. Sixty to one hundred times every minute your heart muscles squeeze together and push blood around your body through tubes called blood vessels.

Try squeezing a rubber ball with your hand. Squeeze it hard once a second. Your hand will get tired in a minute or two. Yet your heart beats every second of every day. In one year, your heart beats more than thirty million times. In an average lifetime, a heart will beat over 2,000,000,000 (two thousand million) times.

2. Ask questions.

a. "Beavers" by third-grader Lucas Carlson

My brother and I once went to feed the ducks. Among the ducks we saw a beaver. We did not know if beavers were harmful to humans, so I went home and decided to look at a book called *Beavers* and found a lot of interesting facts.

Beavers live in families like humans. A beaver family is called a colony. Beavers mate each year in January or February. Since we are now in February, most of the beavers are probably mating right now at this minute.

Some beavers live in Europe and Asia but most in Canada and the U.S. Beavers have big, very, very sharp teeth that they use to cut wood. Every time they cut wood they also sharpen their teeth. Scientists call these kind of animals that have razor sharp teeth rodents. Rodents are porcupines, rats, and squirrels, among many others of those wonderful creatures.

A typical beaver family has about ten members of its family—mother and father, one-year-olds (called yearlings), and kits. At two years of age, the young beavers are ready to move out and explore the wilderness. The young beavers might travel far before they settle down. Most young beavers pick a spot within 10 kilometers (6 miles) of their parents' place.

Kits learn many things by copying their parents or older brother or sisters. One important lesson the kits must learn is to stay away from danger. Both beaver parents are quick to help a crying kit.

I still don't know if beavers are harmful to humans. But I surely learned a lot more about beavers.

- b. **How to Talk to Your Dog* by Jean Craighead George, illustrated by Sue Truesdell
- c. *Surprising Sharks* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by James Croft
After all, who would expect a shark to have built-in fairy lights . . . or blow up like a party balloon . . . lie on the sea floor like a scrap of old carpet . . . or look like tools from a monster’s tool kit?

3. Start with and/or include fascinating facts.

- a. *Big Blue Whale* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Nick Maland
Yet the blue whale may not be as lonely as it seems. Because sometimes it makes a hum—a hum so low that it can travel for thousands of miles through the seas to reach other blue whales.
- b. **Ice Bear* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Gary Blythe
- c. *The Brain* by Seymour Simon
Axons are thinner than the thinnest hair, but some axons reach from the spinal cord to the feet.

4. Add exclamations about things that surprised you or will surprise your reader.

- a. **A Seed is Sleepy* by Dianna Hutts Aston, illustrated by Sylvia Long
- b. *Ice Bear* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Gary Blythe
Cautiously, they’ll try each other’s strength.
Then? **Play!**
- c. *White Owl, Barn Owl* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Michael Foreman
And then one spring night, just as the sky went pink, a pale face looked out of our box
An owl!
A white owl!
A barn owl!

5. Make lively comparisons with figurative language (simile, metaphor)

- a. *Big Blue Whale* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Nick Maland
Reach out and touch the blue whale’s skin. It’s springy and smooth like a hard-boiled egg, and it’s as slippery as wet soap.
Look into its eye. It’s as big as a teacup and as dark as the deep sea. Just behind the eye is a hold as small as the end of a pencil. The hole is one of the blue whale’s ears—sticking-out ears would get in the way when the whale is swimming.
- b. *Ice Bear* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Gary Blythe
POLAR BEAR is a great hunter. It outweighs two lions and makes a tiger look small. A single paw would fill this page—and shred the paper with its claws.
- c. **One Tiny Turtle* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Jane Chapman

6. Use specific details to give a clear picture.

- a. **A Butterfly is Patient* by Dianna Hutts Aston, illustrated by Sylvia Long
- b. *How to Talk to Your Dog* by Jean Craighead George, illustrated by Sue Truesdell
Dogs can tell you wonderful things by tracking with their noses. They show you where the rabbit and deer went. They can tell you a groundhog is in his hole.
- c. *Shark in the Sea* by Joanne Ryder, illustrated by Michael Rothman
You are swimming near an island where tall rocks rise above cool waters and creatures rest along the barren shore. Sea lions bark loudly, louder than the crashing sea that races toward them wave after wave.
Along another cove elephant seals hug the sandy spots till the tide rises, stealing the beach, forcing them to slip from safety into the sea.

7. Use strong verbs.

- a. *Bat Loves the Night* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Sarah Fox-Davies
Then a fat moth takes flight below her.
Bat plunges, fast as blinking, and grabs it in her open mouth.
But the moth's pearly scales are moon-dust slippery. It slithers from between her teeth.
Bat dives, nets it with a wing tip, scoops it to her mouth.
- b. **Mosquito Bite* by Alexandra Siy & Dennis Kunkel
- c. *Volcano: The Eruption and Healing of Mount St. Helens* by Patricia Lauber
The avalanche tore open the mountain. A scalding blast shot sideways out of the opening. It was a blast of steam, from water heated by rising magma.

8. Set the scene.

- a. *One Tiny Turtle* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Jane Chapman
Far, far out to sea, land is only a memory, and empty sky touches the water. Just beneath the surface is a tangle of weed and driftwood where tiny creatures cling. This is the nursery of a sea turtle.
- b. **Shark in the Sea* by Joanne Ryder, illustrated by Michael Rothman
- c. *The Barn Owls* by Tony Johnston, illustrated by Deborah Kogan Ray
The barn has stood in the wheat field one hundred years at least. Owls have slept there all day long and dozed in the scent of wheat. Sometimes by day an owl awakes to a shadow—or nothing at all—and leaves the barn through a bale of light and glides to the top of an oak and calls.

9. Add illustrations with labels or captions to show size, details, or comparisons.

- a. *A Seed is Sleepy* by Sylvia Hutts Aston, illustrated by Sylvia Long
- b. **Surprising Sharks* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by James Croft
- c. *Volcano: The Eruption and Healing of Mount St. Helens* by Patricia Lauber

10. Use close-up illustrations to show size, details, or comparisons.

- a. **A Seed is Sleepy* by Sylvia Hutts Aston, illustrated by Sylvia Long
- b. *Ice Bear* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Gary Blythe
- c. *Mosquito Bite* by Alexandra Siy & Dennis Kunkel
- d. *Surprising Sharks* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by James Croft



11. Add emphasis by using a very short sentence, sentence fragment, or word (sometimes as it's own paragraph).

- a. **A Seed is Sleepy* by Sylvia Hutts Aston, illustrated by Sylvia Long
- b. *Ice Bear* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Gary Blythe
Nothing stops POLAR BEAR.
- c. **White Owl, Barn Owl* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Michael Foreman
We were patient lots of times!

12. Relate the ending to the beginning.

- a. **Big Blue Whale* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Nick Maland
- b. *Hoops* by Robert Burleigh, illustrated by Stephen T. Johnson
Beginning: Ending:
Hoops. Hoops.
The game. The game.
Feel it. Feel it.
- c. *Ice Bear* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Gary Blythe
Beginning: Our people, the Inuit, call it NANUK. White bear, ice bear, sea bear, others say. It's a bear, all right, but not like any other! It's a POLAR BEAR, made for our frozen world!
Ending: We Inuit, we watch NANUK, as we first watched when the Earth seemed new and POLAR BEAR showed us how to love the Arctic—how to hide from blizzards in a house of snow, how to hunt for seals with patience and with speed, how to live in starlit day and sunlit night.

13. Use a series of 3's for organization and sentence fluency.

- a. *A Seed is Sleepy* by Sylvia Hutts Aston, illustrated by Sylvia Long
It is there, tucked inside its flower, on its cone, or beneath the soil.
- b. *Ice Bear* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Gary Blythe
We Inuit, we watch NANUK, as we first watched when the Earth seemed new and POLAR BEAR showed us how to love the Arctic—how to hide from blizzards in a house of snow, how to hunt for seals with patience and with speed, how to live in starlit day and sunlit night.
- c. *One Tiny Turtle* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Jane Chapman
In the dark, claws and beaks and grabbing paws miss only one young turtle.
- d. **The Barn Owls* by Tony Johnston, illustrated by Deborah Kogan Ray

14. Use humor to make a point.

- a. *How to Get a Gorilla Out of Your Bathtub* by John Hall, illustrated by Stephen Gilpin
Oh dear, dear . . . I can see you are going to need a lot of help.
- b. **How to Teach a Slug to Read* by Susan Pearson, illustrated by David Slonim
- c. *Surprising Sharks* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by James Croft
If you were a shark swimming in the lovely blue sea, the last word you'd want to hear would be . . . **HUMAN!**

15. Make objects come alive with personification.

- a. **Skyscraper* by Lynn Curlee
- b. *Comets, Meteors, and Asteroids* by Seymour Simon
Comets, meteors, and asteroids are voyagers from space.
- c. *Volcanoes* by Seymour Simon
In March 1980 Mount St. Helens awakened from its long sleep.

16. Use poetic language to give information.

- a. **One Giant Leap* by Robert Burleigh, illustrated by Mike Wimmer
- b. *Home Run* by Robert Burleigh, illustrated by Mike Wimmer
He trots with short steps.
Across the loose dirt of the infield.
Over the soft hardness of the bases beneath his spiked shoes.
Under the roar of cheering voices that falls on him like warm rain.
- c. *The Barn Owls* by Tony Johnston, illustrated by Deborah Kogan Ray
Where owls hunted, spiders spun to hold the barn to earth.
Where owls hunted, long snakes sunned and split their skins like chaff and left.
And bees bummed their hymn of wheat.

17. Give examples to help your reader understand the information.

- a. *How to Talk to Your Dog* by Jean Craighead George, illustrated by Sue Truesdell
What is this dog talk? It is sound: whimpers, growls, sniffs, barks, and howls. It is visual: tail wags, ear twists, eye movements, and other body language. It is chemical: odors and taste. It is physical contact: the touch of a friend or the whack of an enemy.
- b. **If You Find a Rock* by Peggy Christian, photos by Barbara Hirsch Lember
- c. *The Brain* by Seymour Simon
Each hemisphere controls the muscles of the opposite side of the body. In most people, one side becomes more developed than the other side. If you usually kick with your right foot and point with your right hand, then your left hemisphere is in control. But if you usually use your left foot and left hand, your right hemisphere is dominant.

18. Write with two layers of text (one more narrative and the other more factual).

- a. *Alaska's Three Bears* by Shelley Gill, illustrated by Shannon Cartwright
(Fictional story of the three bears [polar, brown, black] with facts in smaller text.)
- b. *Big Blue Whale* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Nick Maland
(Information about whales told to the reader with more facts in smaller text.)
- c. **Home Run* by Robert Burleigh, illustrated by Mike Wimmer
- d. *Surprising Sharks* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by James Croft
(Information about sharks told to the reader with more facts in smaller text.)

19. Combine fiction and facts.

- a. **Alaska's Three Bears* by Shelley Gill, illustrated by Shannon Cartwright
- b. *Bat Loves the Night* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Sarah Fox-Davies
(Fictional narrative of a mother bat's nighttime journey with facts in smaller text.)
- c. *Mosquito Bite* by Alexandra Siy & Dennis Kunkel
(Fictional account of a children's game of hide-and-seek that includes a mosquito seeking a source of blood and then trying to hide from predators along with facts and close ups of mosquitos.)
- d. *White Owl, Barn Owl* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Michael Foreman
(Fictional narrative of a young girl and grandfather with facts in smaller text.)

20. Highlight some factual information in a sidebar or box.

- a. **Alaska's Three Bears* by Shelley Gill, illustrated by Shannon Cartwright
- b. *Mosquito Bite* by Alexandra Siy & Dennis Kunkel (close-up labeled photos)
- c. "The Challenge of the Iditarod" by third-grader Jacob Svendsen

You may like snow and ice but think twice before **you** plunge into icy cold water like death. Joe Redington Sr. did just that! Joe often dreamed of starting a sled dog race but when he asked people they said it couldn't be done. He had to stay with the idea. How? The Iditarod is a more than 1,049 mile race stretching from Anchorage to Nome. On one of the races a moose broke some of Joe's ribs and he had to be scratched. In this sentence, "scratched" means to be taken out.

Another milestone in the race is the first woman to win, Libby Riddles. Susan Butcher had had a good chance until a moose blocked her path. Suddenly the moose charged at her dogs. She felt in her bag—there was no rifle—only her axe. She grabbed for it and ran out to the moose. She felt sorry for the moose. It was skinny and probably didn't have a lot to eat. But nevertheless she had to save her dogs. She started hitting it with the axe. Finally the skinny moose went away, but left many dogs wounded and some dead. Meanwhile Libby Riddles was coming closer to her destiny, the finish.

You have to take good care of your dogs if you go on the Iditarod. You also have to feed the dogs a lot of whatever you put in front of them. For instance butter, fish heads, lamb chops, and a lot more. You have to train them, too. When a husky cub that just has its eyes open gets a leash or a harness on, it starts pulling. It's just in their genes.

You have to have the right kind of dogs to run the Iditarod. The right kind of lead dog should be smart, strong, and courageous. To give the lead dog a treat, let another dog be lead and let the lead dog be wheel. Your dog would not let you put it in the sled. They want to race, to run, and to win. "Wheel" is the closest to the sled.

21. Tell the story of a group through one example.

- a. **Bat Loves the Night* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Sarah Fox-Davies
- b. *Ice Bear* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Gary Blythe
Its ears sit close to its head, neatly out of cutting winds, and its feet are furred for warmth and grip. So POLAR BEAR stays warm no matter what. It will sleep away a blizzard in a drift, and wash in snow.
- c. *One Tiny Turtle* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Jane Chapman
She's a baby, so her shell is soft as old leather. Just a little fish bite could rip it open. But the turtle is safe in her world of weed and snaps her beak on tiny crabs and shrimps.

22. Use opposites or patterns for emphasis.

- a. *Home Run* by Robert Burleigh, illustrated by Mike Wimmer
Then it is as it should be. Smooth as silk. Easy as air on the face. Right as falling water.
- b. *One Giant Leap* by Robert Burleigh, illustrated by Mike Wimmer
They pause to gaze out:
An endless, mysterious wasteland,
Whose distant hills are as sharply outlined as nearby stones.
No water. No wind. No sound.
No life at all.
Unbelievable!
- c. **The Barn Owls* by Tony Johnston, illustrated by Deborah Kogan Ray

23. Include onomatopoeia to add interest and information.

- a. **Big Blue Whale* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Nick Maland
- b. *One Giant Leap* by Robert Burleigh, illustrated by Mike Wimmer
At first—a frightening pause. What is happening?
Then bang! Whoosh! Zoom!
It feels as if the floor is coming up at them.
The *Eagle's* top half rises like a fast-moving elevator.
Its engine leaves a trail of wide, white light.
Its engine leaves a trail of wide, white light.
The *Eagle* soars skyward, silently, faster and faster:
Fifty miles up. Almost a mile a second!
Aldrin glances sideways. Nods and grins.
Into moon orbit. On our way.
- c. *White Owl, Barn Owl* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Michael Foreman
The owl flew straight to the box and went inside.
Hisssssss, snorrre, twitter, twitter, hisss. Snoorrrre.
The weirdest noises came from Grandpa's box.

24. Make a personal observation or comment.

- a. “Beavers” by third-grader Lucas Carlson (see #2)
- b. **How to Get a Gorilla Out of Your Bathtub* by John Hall, illustrated by Stephen Gilpin
- c. *How to Talk to Your Dog* by Jean Craighead George, illustrated by Sue Truesdell
You will look at your dog and take him for a walk or toss him a Frisbee. Such are the rewards of talk and love.

25. Include yourself and/or the reader in writing directions or a “how-to” piece.

- a. *If You Find a Rock* by Peggy Christian, photos by Barbara Hirsch Lember

If you find a rock— a rock that’s not a skipping rock, or a chalk rock, or a resting rock, or a wishing rock— that’s not a splashing rock, or a sifting rock, or a worry rock, or a hiding rock— that’s not even a climbing rock, or a crossing rock, or a fossil rock, or a walking rock,	but you like it anyway, because it reminds you of a place, or a feeling, or someone important— then you have found a memory rock, and sometimes those are the best rocks of all.
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- b. *How to Teach a Slug to Read* by Susan Pearson, illustrated by David Slonim
Books will teach him how to play slug soccer.
Books will show him slugs in other lands.
Books will show him the whole wide world.
And all because YOU taught your slug to read!
- c. **How to Get a Gorilla Out of Your Bathtub* by John Hall, illustrated by Stephen Gilpin

Tips for noticing and using author craft:

- Introduce one technique or craft at a time.
- Give students plenty of examples, especially if there are various ways of using the craft.
- Ask students to try to incorporate the craft in their current piece of writing or a previous draft.
- If this isn’t possible because of the kind of writing, ask student to write a short paragraph using the craft.
- Share students’ examples (with their permission).
- Continue to review the craft and notice it in other situations.
- Teach students to notice the author’s craft when reading (to read like a writer).
- Post examples from published and student work.

To download the accompanying PowerPoint presentation: www.oregonread.org/Informational_Writing.ppt

Two Ways of Reading

Read Like a Reader

When we “read like a reader” we notice **WHAT** the writer is saying. We try to understand what the text is all about. As we read fiction, we pay attention to things like the characters, the setting and the plot. We work to follow the action in the story to see how it gets resolved.

When we read non-fiction, we look for the main ideas and the points that support them. We pay attention to the writer’s point of view and evaluate whether that point of view is legitimate. We summarize the ideas in the text and rank them in importance.

A proficient reader:

- Asks questions as they read;
- Predicts what is going to happen next;
- Infers things that the author is communicating but that are not actually written in the text;
- Connects what they are reading to what they already know, to other things they have read, and to experiences that they or others have had;
- Experiences emotions such as fear, sadness, and joy tied to parts of the text;
- Evaluates whether the text is accurate, biased, engaging, useful, etc.;
- Summarizes important ideas in the text; and
- Evaluates the overall effect the writer has had.

Read Like a Writer

When we “read like a writer” we notice **HOW** the writer is putting specific words on the page. Instead of focusing on *what* the writer is saying, we focus on *how* the writer is saying it. Specifically, we look at the techniques the writer uses to get his or her message across and how those techniques affect us as we experience the text. We call what the author does to construct text the “author’s craft.”

A proficient reader like a writer:

- Notices the author’s word choices and interprets how these choices appeal to senses and suggest mood;
- Notices the way the author pulls the reader in, creates transitions, controls pacing, and writes the ending;
- Distinguishes how the author establishes mood demonstrates passion and writes with voice;
- Notes the author’s use of figurative language and other kinds of language to create mood, purpose, or meaning;
- Explores the author’s syntax; that is, how she orders and relates words to each other in sentences and paragraphs, how she varies sentences (type and length), and how she uses punctuation for effect;
- Notices how the author supplies specific details.
- Attends to how the author creates tension in the plot, the mood, between characters, and within a character;
- Notices and names techniques the author uses to create characters and settings, explain topics or engage the reader.

Name _____ Date _____

Selection(s) _____ Author _____

WHAT I NOTICED				
What do I see this author doing?	Why does the author do this? What job does it do for the reader?	What can we call it?	How could I try this in my writing?	Try an imitation here:

Adapted from *Cracking Open the Author's Craft* by Lester L. Laminack

NOTICING LANGUAGE

Name(s) _____ Date _____

Passage from _____ Author _____

Specific words	
Expressions	
Comparisons (similes/metaphors)	
Use of senses: see, hear, smell, taste, touch, feel (emotion)	
Actions	
Other figurative language – alliteration, allusion, onomatopoeia, personification, hyperbole	
Word play Double meanings	
Patterns Repetition	
Sentences (You can shorten to just the important part)	
Other	

Use the back of the page if you need more space to write. Make sure you list the category.

Read Like a Writer

(How Does the Writer Satisfy the Reader and/or Accomplish a Purpose?)

Name: _____

Date: _____

Passage: <i>Commander Toad in Space</i> by Jane Yolen	What you notice about:	Write your notes here:
<p>Long ships fly between the stars. Outside each porthole worlds wink off and on. There is one ship, one mighty ship, long and green, that goes across the skies.</p> <p>The captain of this ship is brave and bright, bright and brave. There is no one quite like him in all the fleet. His name is COMMANDER TOAD. His ship is the <i>Star Warts</i>. Its mission: to go where no spaceship has gone before. To find planets. To explore galaxies. To bring a little bit of Earth out to the alien stars.</p> <p>What is it that now shines on the screen with a strange and shimmering light? A brand-new world. Commander Toad speaks: “We will land and look around this brand-new world.</p> <p>Jake Skyjumper, you will stay on board. You others, come with me.” They get into their special suits and buckle on their special guns. “Just in case,” says Commander Toad. Lieutenant Lily smiles. She is the best shot in the whole crew.</p> <p>They step aboard the little sky skimmer that will take them from the mother ship down to the planet below.</p> <p>“Wait!” I is young Jake jumping toward them. I have just checked this planet with our computer. The computer tells me the planet is made up of water. There is nowhere to land.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">* * *</p> <p>The sky skimmer leaves the mother ship. It floats down light as milkweed fluff, noiseless as a feather in the wind. It hovers over the watery world.</p>	Word Choice (words, phrases, sentences – strong verbs)	
	Beginning (Lead), Transition, or Ending. (questions or noticings)	
	Figurative Lang: (simile, metaphor, alliteration, allusion, onomatopoeia, personification, etc.	
	Syntax: (sentence construction: type, length, patterns, rhythm, punctuation)	
	Techniques Used to Reveal Character(s)	
	Techniques Used to Indicate Setting	
	Other specific details: (nouns, use of senses)	

Read Like a Writer (Fiction)

(How Does the Writer Satisfy the Reader and/or Accomplish a Purpose?)

Name: _____

Date: _____

Passage: <i>Because of Winn-Dixie</i> by Kate DiCamillo	What you notice about:	Write your notes here:
<p>My name is India Opal Buloni, and last summer my daddy, the preacher, sent me to the store for a box of macaroni-and-cheese, some white rice, and two tomatoes and I came back with a dog. This is what happened: I walked into the produce section of the Winn-Dixie grocery store to pick out my two tomatoes and I almost bumped right into the store manager. He was standing there all red-faced, screaming and waving his arms around.</p> <p>“Who let a dog in here?” he kept on shouting. “Who let a dirty dog in here?”</p> <p>At first, I didn’t see a dog. There were just a lot of vegetables rolling around on the floor, tomatoes and onions and green peppers. And there was what seemed like a whole army of Winn-Dixie employees running around waving their arms just the same way the store manager was waving his.</p> <p>And then the dog came running around the corner. He was a big dog. And ugly. And he looked like he was having a real good time. His tongue was hanging out and he was wagging his tail. He skidded to a stop and smiled right at me. I had never before in my life seen a dog smile, but that is what he did. He pulled back his lips and showed me all his teeth. Then he wagged his tail so hard that he knocked some oranges off a display, and they went rolling everywhere, mixing in with the tomatoes and onions and green peppers.</p> <p>The manager screamed, “Somebody grab that dog!”</p>	Word Choice (words, phrases, sentences – strong verbs)	
	Beginning (Lead), Transition, or Ending. (questions or noticings)	
	Figurative Lang: (simile, metaphor, alliteration, allusion, onomatopoeia, personification, etc.)	
	Syntax: (sentence construction: type, length, patterns, rhythm, punctuation)	
	Techniques Used to Reveal Character(s)	
	Techniques Used to Indicate Setting	
	Other specific details: (nouns, use of senses)	

Name _____ Date _____

Directions: Read the sentences below. Think about the pattern. Now see if you can write about something or someone. It doesn't have to be a color. It can be a pet, a person, or something else. If you write about a thing and give it feelings, then you are using a writing technique called personification.

Blue was a quiet color. He enjoyed looking up at the sky, floating on the waves, and on days he felt daring . . . splashing in rain puddles.

Pattern:

_____ was a _____ . S/he enjoyed

_____ ,

_____ ,

and _____ . . .

_____ .

Example sentences from the first pages of *One* by Kathryn Otoshi, Publishers Group West, 2008.
978-09723946-4-2

Specific Examples of the Use of 3's and Parallel Structure

from *Library Lion* by Michelle Knudsen

1. . . . a lion **came** to the library.
He **walked** right past the circulation desk
and (**went**) up into the stacks. (third different with verb implied)
2. Lion wandered all around the library.
 - a. He **sniffed** the card catalog.
 - b. He **rubbed** his head against the new book collection
 - c. Then he **padded** over to the story corner and went to sleep. (third longer, more detail)
3. He walked around the neighborhood.
 - a. He **looked** under cars.
 - b. He **looked** behind bushes.
 - c. He **looked** in *backyards* and *trash cans* and *tree houses*. (third with series of 3's embedded with use of compound words)

As a class, try imitating the examples above. This is a recommended technique for practicing sentence structure. For instance the class might come up with something like:

1. The principal **came** into the classroom.
She **walked** right past the students' desks
and **went** up to the front of the room.
2. A dog wandered into the classroom one day.
 - a. He **sniffed** the lunch box container
 - b. He **rubbed** against the students' legs
 - c. Then he **padded** over to the story rug and curled up.
3. Billy lost his pencil.
 - a. He **looked** in his desk
 - b. He **looked** on the floor.
 - c. He **looked** in his *school box* and *notebook* and *classroom*.
(searched could be substituted for looked)

Find similar examples in other books. First ask what the students notice about the examples. Then imitate as a class. Later on let pairs of students try to imitate and when they have had practice, have them practice individually. Compare different authors' styles.

Name _____

Name _____

MORE INVITATIONS TO NOTICE AND IMITATE*

ADAPTED FROM *MECHANICALLY INCLINED* BY JEFF ANDERSON

Read the following sentences and think about how the author wrote them. What do you notice? How does they start? Are similar things repeated? If so, how many times? Are some things main ideas and other supporting details? Are some parts conclusions?

*The Lion looked at the children. He looked at the story lady. He looked at the closed books.
Then he roared very loud."*

*Soon the lion began doing things without being asked. He dusted the encyclopedias. He licked the envelopes. He let
small children stand on his back to reach books on the highest shelves.
Then he curled up in the story corner to wait for story hour to begin.*

*He walked around the neighborhood.
He looked under cars. He looked behind bushes. He looked in backyards and trash cans and tree houses.
Finally he circled all the way back to the library.
(from *Library Lion* by Michelle Knudsen)*

INVITATION TO IMITATE

Now write your own sentences that are similar to one of the patterns above from the book *Library Lion*.

Examples:

Marcy looked at the other children. She looked at the funny clown. She looked at the colorful decorations. Then she laughed with delight.

Soon the students began doing things without being asked. They came into the room quietly. They got to work right away. They turned their completed assignments in so the teacher could correct them. Then they curled up in library corner with good books to read until it was time to go home.

Tommy opened his eyes and walked around the yard.

He looked under fences. He looked behind trees

He looked in doorways and store rooms and dog houses.

Finally he circled back to the hide-and-seek base.

Boss of the Plains

“Out West there were clear skies, roaming buffalo, and the promise of adventure.”

Boss of the Plains: The Hat That Won the West by Laurie Carlson, Illustrated by Holly Meade

Invitation to Notice:

What do you notice about that sentence?

Two imitation examples:

In the Community Garden there were green shoots, wiggling worms, and the promise of sustenance.

At the Springfield Public Library there were open books, whispering children, and the promise of knowledge.

—Antikajian

Invitation to Imitate:

_____ there were _____, _____ ing
_____, and the promise of _____.

Try another one:

Imitation Practice

“When Gregory tired of working and whistling, he picked up his cat, climbed into a canoe, and paddled off down the lake.”

—*All I See* by Cynthia Rylant, Illustrated by Peter Catalanotto

Invitation to Notice:

What do you notice about that sentence?

Two imitation examples:

When Karen tired of weeding and pruning, she picked up her bucket, dumped the contents into the wheelbarrow, and headed for the compost pile.

When Anne tired of sight-reading and scales, she closed the music, turned off the piano light, and walked back into the kitchen.

—Antikajian

Invitation to Imitate:

When _____ tired of _____ing and _____ing,

(s)he _____, _____,

and _____.

Try some more:

AUTHOR'S CRAFT ELEMENTS

Alliteration	The repetition of initial consonant sounds used especially in poetry to emphasize and link words as well as to create pleasing, musical sounds. Example: And sings a solitary song That whistles in the wind. — <i>Lucy Gray</i> by William Wordsworth)
Allusion	A reference to a well-known person, place, event, literary work, or work of art to enrich the reading experience by adding meaning. Example: Martin Luther King, Jr., alluded to the Gettysburg Address in starting his "I Have a Dream" speech by saying ' Five score years ago... '; his hearers were immediately reminded of Abraham Lincoln's "Four score and seven years ago", which opened the Gettysburg Address
Assonance	The repetition of vowel sounds within words used especially in poetry to emphasize and link words as well as to create pleasing, musical sounds. Example: Poetry is old, ancient, goes back far. It is among the oldest of living things. So old it is that no man knows how and why the first poems came. —Carl Sandburg, <i>Early Moon</i>
Character Development	Techniques a writer uses to create and develop a character by what: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • he/she does or says, • other characters say about him/her, or how they react to him/her, • the author reveals directly or through a narrator.
Colloquial Language	The writer uses informal language and slang words or phrases popular to a style or region to communicate narrator's natural manner of speaking. Example: Waz up? Jeez!
Colon [:]	A colon is sometimes used artfully by a writer to show that something big is about to happen or to focus strong emphasis on the following thought.
Commentary dashes	A writer offsets thoughts, commentary, or added information within a sentence by using dashes (can add voice to the piece; sometimes used like an aside) Example: She headed home—lickity split—to find her mom.
Dialect	Speech that reflects pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar typical of a geographical region Example: "Ain't nothing; to worry 'bout."
Ellipses [. . .]	Ellipses are used to denote an interruption, a transition of thought or time, or to create a lengthened pause in a sentence Example: He nodded, then nodded again . . . and then slowly began to snore.
Figurative Language	Language that has meaning beyond the literal meaning is called figurative language or "figures of speech." Examples: similes, metaphors, hyperbole, personification
Flashback	The writer interrupts the chronological (time) order to present something that occurred before the beginning of the story.
Foreshadowing	Important hints that an author drops to prepare the reader for what is to come, and help the reader anticipate the outcome.
Humor	The writer incorporates into a literary or informative work language that makes the character and/or situations seem funny, amusing, or ludicrous.
Hyperbole	When the author purposefully exaggerates for emphasis or humor. Example: The bag weighed a ton!

Idiom	An idiom is a fixed, distinctive, and often colorful expression whose meaning cannot be understood from the combined meanings of its individual words. Example: With his stories, he put everyone in stitches.
Imagery	When the writer uses words or phrases that appeal to the reader’s senses. Example: The taste of that first defeat was bitter indeed.
Items in list or series	The writer lists a series of items (usually listed in sets of three) to support or enhance meaning of the text. Example: He drank a quart of Tabasco sauce a day, flossed his teeth with barbed wire, and kept a rattlesnake in his bedroll to cool his feet at night. — <i>The Toughest Cowboy</i> by John Frank
Italics	A writer will sometimes use italic letters to set off characters’ thoughts or to show emphasis in thought, action, or emotion. Example: Alexander’s mom was <i>really</i> mad.
Intentional Fragments	Sometimes a writer purposefully uses a sentence fragment to create an effect within the text to deliver an emotional “punch” in story—sometimes humorous, sarcastic, or devastating. Example: So long ago. So long. But still it haunts me. — <i>Water for Elephants</i> by Sara Gruen).
Intentional Run-ons	The writer purposefully uses a run-on sentence (a sentence that has at least two parts, either one of which can stand by itself and have not been properly connected) to create an effect within the text. Example: This computer doesn't make sense to me, it came without a manual.
Irony	A technique that involves surprising, interesting, or amusing contradictions or contrasts. Verbal irony occurs when words are used to suggest the opposite of their usual meaning. An irony of situation is when an event occurs that directly contradicts expectations. Example: Today was a very cold and bitter day, as cold and bitter as a cup of hot chocolate, if the cup of hot chocolate had vinegar added to it and were placed in a refrigerator for several hours. — <i>The Unauthorized Autobiography of Lemony Snicket</i> by Lemony Snicket [a.k.a. Daniel Handler].
Metaphor	A metaphor is a comparison of two things essentially different but with some commonalities; A metaphor does not use the words “like” or “as,” and the comparison is usually implied. Example: Her smile was ice.
Onomatopoeia	When a writer uses words that imitate sounds. Examples: <i>hiss, buzz, swish, screech, and crunch.</i> He heard the crack of the bat.
Oxymoron	A deliberate combination of seemingly contradictory words (plastic silverware) or a statement with two parts which seem contradictory. Examples: a wise fool, the sound of silence, or Hamlet’s saying, “I must be cruel only to be kind.”
Palindrome	A word, phrase, number or other sequence of units that can be read the same way in either direction (the adjustment of punctuation and spaces between words is generally permitted). Example: A man, a plan, a canal—Panama.
Parallel Structure:	Parallel structure is the repetition of a chosen grammatical form within a sentence to show that two or more ideas have the same level of importance. Example: He wanted three things out of college: to learn a skill, to make good friends, and to learn about life.
Parenthetical	When a writer frames a sentence or phrase with parentheses to comment directly to the reader.

Expressions	Example: Everything as you well know (having lived in this world long enough to have figured out a thing or two for yourself), cannot be sweetness and light. — <i>The Tale of Despereaux</i> by Kate DiCamillo.
Personification	When a writer gives human qualities to an animal, object, or idea. Example: On her birthday Father Time visited her again. Example: The wind exhaled.
Point of View	The perspective from which the story is told. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First-person: narrator is a character in the story; uses “I,” “we,” etc. • Second-person: Not used as often as first-person or third-person, the reader becomes the character with the use of “you.” • Third-person: narrator outside the story; uses “he,” “she,” “they” • Third-person limited: narrator tells only what one character perceives • Third-person omniscient: narrator can see into the minds of all characters.
Pun	A deliberate confusion of words based upon similarity of sound (waist/waste). Example: There weren’t any worms on Noah’s Ark because worms come in apples not in pears. (pairs)
Repetition:	When a writer repeats details, words, phrases to create an effect on the reader.
Rephrasing/ Restating:	When a word or phrase is written again in a different form to create an impact of the thought or to further explain. Example: “Plumbean has popped his cork, flipped his wig, blown his stack, and dropped his stopper.” — <i>The Big Orange Splot</i> by Daniel Manus Pinkwater).
Rhythm:	The writer chooses words carefully in regards to the stress of syllables so they contribute to the overall rhythm and flow of sentences—often ending a piece with a one-syllable word or a word with a final stressed syllable to indicate closure. Example: A lark flew to the top of a six-foot blade of grass and sang as sweetly as a panpipe. The buffalo are back. — <i>The Buffalo Are Back</i> by Jean Craighead George
Simile	A comparison of two things using the words “like” or, “as” and the comparison is explicit or obvious. Example: Her smile was as cold as ice.
Single-sentence Paragraphs	A single sentence is separated from other paragraphs to create an effect.
Specific Nouns	The writer uses specific nouns to create imagery. Example: ’54 Chevy (instead of car)
Vivid Verbs	The writer chooses powerful verbs to create emotion or imagery. Example: Chaos—candy butchers vaulting over counters, workmen staggering out from under tent flaps, roustabouts racing headlong across the lot. — <i>Water for Elephants</i> by Sara Gruen).
White Space	The writer utilizes lack of words on the page to create white space for a dramatic pause or to denote transition in time or scenes.

Writers Craft: Literary Devices/Figurative Language with examples from *Freak the Mighty* by Rodman Philbrick

Allusion: a reference to another literary work or familiar event

p. 115 – Max watching his father sleep: “**I think about that story where the giant falls asleep and is tied up by little people.**” (an allusion to *Gulliver’s Travels*)

Alliteration: repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning or within words

p. 153 – “**I can check in on Freak and be back before breakfast.**”

Flashback: a scene showing events that happened at an earlier time which hints to the present situation.

p. 129 – “. . . I’m four years old again, peeking out from behind the bedroom door and then running to bang my little fists at him while the light fades from her eyes.”

Foreshadowing: hints a writer gives as to what will happen later in the story

p. 62 – Max about Loretta: **Which, as it turns out, is almost true. The real deal is that she’s a damsel that causes distress. Which we find out the very next day.**”

Idiom: an expression that cannot be understood from the literal meaning of the words

p. 102 – Kenny Kane to Max “**You really are a chip off the old block.**”

Imagery: details that appeal to at least one of the five senses—creating images and pictures in your mind

p. 153 - “**The sun is coming out over the millpond and there’s this spooky mist on the water. You can hear all the frogs making a racket under the lily pads . . .**”

Hyperbole: extreme exaggeration used to increase the effect of a statement or phrase

p. 139 – “**I’ve got my fingernails chewed down to the second knuckle.**”

Metaphor: a comparison between two unlike objects

p. 44 - “**If you saw me laying on the beach you’d say, hey why’s that albino walrus wearing sunglasses?**”

p. 44 - “**Get out of bed you lazy beast! There are maidens to rescue and dragons to slay!**”

Onomatopoeia: a word that makes a sound which conveys its meaning

p. 153 - “. . . mosquitoes *whizzing* by . . .”

Personification: giving human characteristics to a non-living object

p. 38 – in the millpond: “. . . the mud is still sucking me down.”

Simile: a comparison between two unlike objects using *like*, *as*, or *than*

p. 158 – “**I felt like I was a balloon and someone had let the air out of me.**”

Source: Kelly Philbeck, Co-Director of the ECU Writing Project: NCTE Presentation 2007