

AMHERST PUBLIC SCHOOLS
3rd GRADE ELEMENTS OF QUALITY WRITING

	FOCUS	STRUCTURE	ELABORATION	STYLE	CONVENTIONS
Curriculum Units:	<p>Communicates meaning of chosen topic effectively.</p> <p><i>*What is the main idea?</i></p> <p><i>*Is there a better way to tell this story?</i></p> <p><i>*What is the most important part to tell and have I added enough details to tell it?</i></p>	<p>Consistently uses learned genre structures to guide organization and meaning</p> <p><i>*Are my ideas grouped by topics?</i></p> <p><i>*How can I use what I know about the features of the genre to organize this piece?</i></p> <p><i>*How can I use mentor texts to get ideas for how to organize my piece of writing?</i></p>	<p>Extends or enhances topic with details.</p> <p><i>*Have I included enough details so my reader can make a mini movie in his/her mind?</i></p> <p><i>*Have I added details that focus on the most important part?</i></p> <p><i>*Do the details I have included move the story along?</i></p>	<p>Conveys an attitude toward the reader and topic through language, tone, and genre.</p> <p><i>*Do I know who will read or hear my writing?</i></p> <p><i>*What are the best words to get the meaning across and interest my reader?</i></p> <p><i>*Have I shown or told something about my thoughts, feelings, or ways of talking in my writing?</i></p>	<p>Uses grade level appropriate spelling, and writing mechanics that allow others to move through the text easily.</p> <p><i>*Have I clearly shown where my sentences begin and end with beginning capitalization and ending punctuation?</i></p> <p><i>*Can others read my handwriting and understand my spelling?</i></p> <p><i>*Did I follow the rules for using capital letters?</i></p>
<p>UNIT 1:</p> <p>Launching Writing Workshop</p> <p>Participates in routines of Writing Workshop with a supportive community of writers.</p> <p>Studies mentor texts to learn how writers craft writing.</p>	<p>Explores narrative writing to identify text elements and craft techniques that can be used in personal writing.</p> <p>Uses strategies to generate ideas for personal true story: -thinks of person, place or object -thinks of special time or small moment with that person, place or object -lists entries in phrase or sentence form in writer’s notebook</p>	<p>Revises timeline to organize story and add details.</p> <p>Identifies the important part or the heart of the story.</p> <p>Experiments writing leads: -small action -dialogue -setting</p>	<p>Uses strategies to lengthen the text: -visualizes to see more -tells story orally to others -draws pictures to help provide detail to events -includes true, exact details -adds sensory details</p> <p>Zooms in and stretches out the heart of the story in a step by step fashion.</p>	<p>Practices writing the story using the same words that were used to tell it: -“...and then...” -“...I said...” -“I went...”</p> <p>Uses language that engages the audience: parents, family, classmates.</p> <p>Adds personal feelings to story to allow the voice of the writer to emerge.</p>	<p>Spells known words consistently.</p> <p>Uses the right and the left margins to align writing.</p> <p>Uses capitalization at beginning of sentences. Uses period for ending a sentence: when a thought or an action ends.</p> <p>Capitalizes the word I at all times.</p>

AMHERST PUBLIC SCHOOLS
3rd GRADE ELEMENTS OF QUALITY WRITING

	FOCUS	STRUCTURE	ELABORATION	STYLE	CONVENTIONS
<p>Uses Writer’s Notebook to gather ideas and experiment with crafting writing.</p> <p>Produces baseline writing for assessment.</p>	<p>Narrows focus of story by selecting a small episode to tell about rather than telling the whole event. (seed idea)</p> <p>Rehearses story by sketching it across the pages of writer’s notebook.</p> <p>Begins to rehearse for the writing through oral story-telling and by making a time line of the event.</p> <p>Builds stamina by increasing: -time spent on writing - volume of writing -concentration during writing</p> <p>Organizes writing materials: -folders - journals - notebooks</p>	<p>Story-tells small moment story by: -making a movie in mind -using dialogue -telling events in sequence</p> <p>Uses mentor text as a model when experimenting with leads, endings, and story line.</p> <p>Experiments with story endings: -actions -dialogue -reflection</p> <p>Knows to start another piece when writing is done.</p> <p>Refers to strategy charts to remember the steps taken when following an unfamiliar strategy.</p> <p>Keeps track of drafts and revisions.</p> <p>Dates all writing to see growth over time.</p>	<p>Uses craft of show-don’t tell to describe a scene rather than telling what is going on in the scene.</p> <p>Drafts and revises small cohesive sections in order to develop the longer story.</p> <p>Rereads and revises writing to: - generate more ideas -choose leads and endings</p> <p>Adds internal and external parts of the story: -internal; inside thoughts of characters -external; outside details for character description, setting and events</p> <p>Responds to conferring questions and suggestions by revising writing.</p> <p>Selects and inserts answers to questions posed by peers and teachers.</p>	<p>Chooses precise vocabulary and eliminates general or broad words.</p> <p>Adds title to story.</p> <p>Reveals personal likes and dislikes.</p>	<p>Uses word wall to help with spelling of high frequency words.</p> <p>Uses phonetic knowledge and analogy to spell words that are unknown.</p> <p>Forms letters correctly and writes legibly.</p>

AMHERST PUBLIC SCHOOLS
3rd GRADE ELEMENTS OF QUALITY WRITING

	FOCUS	STRUCTURE	ELABORATION	STYLE	CONVENTIONS
<p>UNIT 2:</p> <p>Personal Narrative</p> <p>Vignettes</p> <p>Small moment Stories</p> <p>Friendly Letters</p>	<p>Reads narrative texts and: -identifies the feelings elicited by the writing -envision the specific detail to create a scene in the mind -experiments with some techniques that the author has used</p> <p>Uses mentor texts to: observe how writers: -narrow the focus of the story -use punctuation creatively</p> <p>Continues to practice using strategies for finding meaningful personal stories: -people, places, or things that matter -first and last times -small event with big emotion</p> <p>Selects one entry from among several generated and uses it as the topic for writing. Narrows topic to write a small moment story (episode lasting around 20 minutes in real life).</p>	<p>Uses graphic organizers to break story into sections: -story boards -timelines -beginning, middle, end</p> <p>Uses timeline with dots to delineate detail.</p> <p>Adds detail to the timeline, by making a new timeline off of one dot on the original timeline: -adds smaller step by step details to the new timeline to expand the action of the one dot on the original timeline</p> <p>Understands stories have a problem that needs to be solved and includes that problem and the solution in the writing. Tells the story in a step by step sequence to aid in clarity and completeness.</p> <p>Continues to experiment with writing different leads that hook the reader: -dialogue - action - setting</p>	<p>Draws sketches or uses graphic organizers to elicit additional details.</p> <p>Zooms in on three important moments: -before the main moment -on the super important moment -to reflect on the main moment</p> <p>Includes dialogue and thoughts of characters. Uses the five senses to show rather than tell the character’s feelings.</p> <p>Tells the internal story by describing what was going on inside the character, or the writer’s heart or mind.</p> <p>Builds suspense or imagery of a small moment by using step by step sensory detail.</p> <p>Adds details that show the setting so the reader can see where the story takes place.</p>	<p>Continues to match language choices with purpose: including self-discovery, communication with peers and formal publication.</p> <p>Writes in first person narrative.</p> <p>Uses oral storytelling to find personal or ‘talking’ voice.</p> <p>Attempts writing true story by adding strong emotions.</p> <p>Chooses descriptive language to convey the heart of the story.</p> <p>Makes decision about sentence length: -short sentences to slow action and build suspense -longer sentences to speed up the pace of action</p> <p>Tells a specific small moment about an event to convey a meaningful story.</p>	<p>Increases use of conventional spelling for grade level words.</p> <p>Capitalizes proper nouns.</p> <p>Adds ending punctuation: -question mark -exclamation mark</p> <p>Begins to use a new paragraph when -a new person talks -there is a new setting -the time changes</p> <p>Uses quotation marks to offset dialogue.</p> <p>Begins to use commas to separate a list.</p> <p>Experiments with composing compound sentences by adding conjunctions.</p> <p>Revises and edits paper with clarity and conventions in mind.</p>

AMHERST PUBLIC SCHOOLS
3rd GRADE ELEMENTS OF QUALITY WRITING

	FOCUS	STRUCTURE	ELABORATION	STYLE	CONVENTIONS
	<p>Uses questions to gain focus: -<i>Why is this important?</i> -<i>What do I want to tell my reader about this?</i> -<i>What is the important part?</i></p> <p>Identifies audience.</p>	<p>Uses transitional words and experiments with using them to direct the reader along: -One day... -First, next, then, finally -Suddenly -Since then</p> <p>Experiments with writing different endings: -hope for future -feeling to reflect -specific thought or dialogue -final important action</p> <p>Free writes draft in one sitting: -uses separate paper, not writing notebook -makes choice about paper -puts each part of the timeline on a separate page</p>	<p>Experiments with the use of lists: -adding three details to explain or describe -using a repeated phrase to emphasize details</p> <p>Practices revision methods using: -cut and tape -inserting revisions on sticky notes -dictating to a teacher or skilled transcriber -tape recorders</p>	<p>Imitates the craft of using font and punctuation for specific purposes: -ellipses to add suspense -bold typeface for emphasis -exclamation mark for excitement</p>	
<p>UNIT 3:</p> <p>Fiction</p> <p>Fables/Folktales</p> <p>Short Stories</p>	<p>Uses mentor texts to gain ideas for plots, characters, settings and story structure.</p> <p>Grows story ideas that stem from previous writing or personal life.</p>	<p>Discusses and uses mentor text to understand story elements and the way authors use words to adhere the story parts: -character -setting -problem -climax -resolution</p>	<p>Develops character by giving them: -dialogue and ways of talking -physical traits -gestures, movements -attitudes towards others -internal worries -thoughts/inside story</p>	<p>Experiments with writing in the first and third person to find the most powerful voice for the story.</p> <p>Uses dialogue effectively to express character's personality or to move the plot forward.</p>	<p>Uses a variety of sentence structures: -prepositional phrases -compound sentences</p> <p>Uses quotation marks to set off dialogue.</p>

AMHERST PUBLIC SCHOOLS
3rd GRADE ELEMENTS OF QUALITY WRITING

	FOCUS	STRUCTURE	ELABORATION	STYLE	CONVENTIONS
	<p>Invents characters, both main and minor, with their: -motivations -likes and dislikes, fears, beliefs -physical traits -struggles</p> <p>Creates setting that includes time and place.</p> <p>Uses oral storytelling voice to tell and retell two to three small moment stories using dialogue, and small action.</p> <p>Asks <i>What If?</i> to find an interesting problem in the story and add intrigue and interest.</p> <p>Identifies a problem to be resolved by the character in the story.</p> <p>Identifies the message of the story.</p>	<p>Uses a 2 column chart to develop the external and internal features of the characters and make sure that they cohere.</p> <p>Uses graphic organizers to plan: -story boards and maps -Story Grammar Marker -character map</p> <p>Identifies solution of the problem.</p> <p>Experiments with using writer's craft to create various types of leads: -small action close to important part of story -dialogue -sound</p> <p>Begins to understand how the middle of the story: -shows character motives -introduces obstacles -contains a series of actions that builds in tension -shows characters facing and resolving a problem</p> <p>Experiments with writing endings that: -tie up the loose ends -reveal a lesson learned</p>	<p>Practices using <i>show don't tell</i> to portray character's traits through action and dialogue.</p> <p>Reveals story through dialogue and description.</p> <p>Avoids general descriptors by replacing with precise words.</p> <p>Uses relevant detail to show setting: -the big feeling of the setting (time, place, whether) -the little details that are important elements in the story action or problem</p> <p>Stretches time in order to build the climax of the story: -adds scenes that show a problem that gets worse and worse -harder and harder -more complicated</p> <p>Crafts an ending that reveals: -character change over time -a moral -the message of the story</p>	<p>Experiments with writing in the style of a specific author or folk tradition.</p> <p>Replaces common, overused words with more vibrant language, e.g., exclaimed versus said.</p> <p>Uses transitional phrases to move text along.</p> <p>Practices varying sentence structure and length: -compound sentences -eliminate run-on -super short sentences -prepositional phrases -compound sentences -interjections</p>	<p>Uses conventional and unconventional punctuation for specific emphasis.</p> <p>Indents the first line of each paragraph.</p> <p>Changes paragraph with each change of speaker.</p> <p>Begins to understand verb forms and rereads drafts for: -proper verb form -verb tense agreement</p>

AMHERST PUBLIC SCHOOLS
3rd GRADE ELEMENTS OF QUALITY WRITING

	FOCUS	STRUCTURE	ELABORATION	STYLE	CONVENTIONS
--	-------	-----------	-------------	-------	-------------

		<p>Experiments with balancing dialogue & narrative.</p>			
<p>UNIT 4:</p> <p>Writing About Reading</p> <p>Open Response</p> <p>Content Area Response</p>	<p>Reads to enjoy and understand text(s).</p> <p>Understands, highlights, and restates the important parts of the ‘question’ or assignment.</p> <p>Draws upon connections made with self, text, or the world while reading in order to formulate response to literature.</p> <p>Creates essential questions to guide the search for the information necessary to answer the question.</p> <p>Learns to create graphic organizers to aid in: -thinking about and understanding the question -selecting and including appropriate information</p> <p>Identifies the important ideas and supporting details in the text.</p>	<p>Practices making explicit reference to the question in a written response.</p> <p>Begins to create a one to two sentence statement or assertion that relates to the general question.</p> <p>Learns to write topic sentences to express a main idea.</p> <p>Begins to understand how to write topic sentences that are not overlapping.</p> <p>Learns how to include sentences that provide supporting details for each main idea.</p> <p>Begins to understand how to develop a paragraph by using pocket folders to physically manipulate topic sentences and supporting details.</p> <p>Includes labeled drawings, graphs, and charts as needed.</p>	<p>Uses notes or highlights from the reading to choose the most relevant, interesting, and supportive details.</p> <p>Learns to add sentences that contain specific details to support the main assertion or statement.</p> <p>Supports assertion or opinion: -small vignette -fact -quote -interpretation or explanation</p> <p>Tells not only how something is important, but why it is important.</p> <p>Uses words to extend thinking: -because -so that -this is why</p>	<p>Attempts to use writer’s craft techniques to make the response appealing: -interesting lead -sensory descriptions -explicit word choice -memorable ending</p> <p>Includes interpretation of the text with: -formulated questions -speculations -explanations</p>	<p>Proofreads for spelling accuracy, punctuation and capitalization.</p> <p>Uses complete sentences.</p> <p>Learns to put quotations around exact words from the text.</p>

AMHERST PUBLIC SCHOOLS
3rd GRADE ELEMENTS OF QUALITY WRITING

	FOCUS	STRUCTURE	ELABORATION	STYLE	CONVENTIONS
	<p>Highlights the parts of the text to be used in planning the response.</p> <p>Generates questions to provide a focus for a response to literature.</p> <p>Applies information from one context to another, i.e., takes the moral from a fable or folktale and writes about how that applies to one's life</p>	<p>Recounts information in chronological/sequential order.</p> <p>Experiments with writing a concluding sentence that sums up and possibly adds insight to the main idea stated in the beginning.</p> <p>Reconsiders the question in order to select additional information or delete information that is not needed.</p>	<p>Compares parts of story to identify: -problem/solution -cause/effect -character development over time</p> <p>Uses words to show sequence, or organization: -first, next, last -at first, later -finally</p> <p>Explores personal connections in order to extend thinking and written response: -text to self -text to world -text to text</p> <p>Proofreads and revises to be sure that the question is answered, the ideas are clear, and there is enough evidence.</p>		
<p>UNIT 5:</p> <p>Nonfiction</p> <p>Report or Information Book</p>	<p>Explores a variety of nonfiction texts and identifies purposes for specific features: -text features -graphic features</p>	<p>Refers to mentor texts and approximates standard formats for organizing text by making decisions about which text features to include:: -captions -labels -tables of contents</p>	<p>Includes answers to <i>How</i> and <i>Why</i>- questions to guide inclusion of specific content to inform reader.</p>	<p>Uses concise language that informs.</p> <p>Practices use of well-chosen adjectives.</p> <p>Uses more than one adjective at a time.</p>	<p>Uses standard spelling, capitalization, beginning and ending punctuation in the final draft.</p> <p>Places commas to separate a list of adjectives.</p>

AMHERST PUBLIC SCHOOLS
3rd GRADE ELEMENTS OF QUALITY WRITING

	FOCUS	STRUCTURE	ELABORATION	STYLE	CONVENTIONS
Book Review Content-based Report Directions Biography	<p>Reads broadly from nonfiction books, magazines, articles.</p> <p>Chooses one topic and explores personal knowledge using: -K-W-L Chart -graphic organizers -questions</p> <p>Generates authentic questions about the topic.</p> <p>Applies comprehension strategies while reading from variety of sources.</p> <p>Finds and records answers to some of own questions through research.</p> <p>Discerns the difference between facts and opinions in research and writing.</p> <p>Selects and records other relevant information to include in writing project.</p> <p>Discusses understandings with peers.</p> <p>Establishes categories for inquiry.</p>	<p>-chapter headings -key words -glossary and index -greetings and salutations -headlines</p> <p>Creates a graphic organizer or pocket system to: -maintain organization -assist categorization -guide the process</p> <p>Uses notes to paraphrase information.</p> <p>Introduces the topic in a way that engages and informs the reader: -small moment story -question -interesting fact</p> <p>Develops a body that includes: -separate paragraphs for each category with topic sentence -explanation -description -important facts -interesting details</p> <p>Uses some transitional words and phrases to move from one main idea and paragraph to another.</p>	<p>Supports and enhances general ideas and concepts with: -important, specific details -sensory descriptions -facts -quote -statistics or data</p> <p>Attempts to use comparison when explaining something.</p> <p>Selects and uses a true small moment story that helps explain or support an idea being made.</p> <p>Creates or uses a visual representation of information: -photo -illustration -graph -chart</p> <p>Grows thinking by using conversational prompts: -This is important because... -The reason for this is... -I used to think...but now...</p>	<p>Chooses various sentence types and styles: -short for quick facts -long for descriptions -exclamatory for interesting information -compound using one conjunction to connect short, related sentences</p> <p>Uses an appropriate tone for chosen audience: -personable -informal -formal</p> <p>Holds readers interest by using sentences that engage the reader: -posing a question -creating an image -presenting an amazing fact</p> <p>Conveys voice and personal interest in the topic by including: -thoughts or feeling on topic -reflection on prior knowledge -an unusual comparison</p>	<p>Indents for indicating paragraphs.</p> <p>Punctuates properly to quote a source.</p> <p>Uses parentheses or a clause set off by commas to define a vocabulary word embedded in the text.</p> <p>Includes basic bibliographic information -title -author -page numbers of quotes -copyright</p> <p>Uses paragraph structure: -topic sentence -supporting detail -closing sentence</p>

AMHERST PUBLIC SCHOOLS
3rd GRADE ELEMENTS OF QUALITY WRITING

	FOCUS	STRUCTURE	ELABORATION	STYLE	CONVENTIONS
	<p>Identifies a purpose for writing: -to inform -to dispel misconceptions -to show the value of a topic</p> <p>Identifies and expresses the main idea for the nonfiction writing orally to peers.</p> <p>Attempts to write a main idea statement.</p> <p>Identifies three supporting topics.</p>	<p><i>-For example</i> <i>-However</i> <i>-Another way...</i></p> <p>Experiments with writing conclusions: -to restate the main purpose or idea -conveying a deeper understanding.</p> <p>Uses standard format to outline content: -letter -report -news article</p>	<p>Includes key vocabulary in writing and adds “reader-friendly” definitions.</p> <p>Uses feedback from readers to guide revision or addition.</p>	<p>Writes an informal conclusion which shares a personal response to the research topic: -a thought or a feeling, -a hope -a question</p> <p>Writes a formal conclusion which summarizes or restates information accompanied by a slightly new slant or insight.</p>	
<p>UNIT 6: Poetry</p>	<p>Listens to, reads, and analyzes poetry from a wide variety of poets, themes and styles.</p> <p>Returns to mentor poems to help guide personal experimentation.</p> <p>Becomes familiar with poetic craft and the effect on the reader: -rhythm -rhyme -alliteration</p>	<p>Experiments with writing in different poetic forms: -free verse - patterns -syllable patterns (Haiku) -prescribed poetic forms (cinquain, diamante, etc.)</p> <p>Explores a variety of poetic features: -repetition -alliteration</p> <p>Experiments with paper size and lay out to arrange poem: -stanzas/verses -white space -line breaks</p>	<p>Uses precise words to show an idea or feeling. Uses repetition of same word for effect.</p> <p>Adds a list of three things or a repeated phrase that is list-like to create images in a setting or describe something.</p> <p>Finds what is similar about two different things and experiments with writing similes and personifications.</p>	<p>Makes choices regarding the use of structural elements, and other modes of emphasis: -font: bold, size, color -capitals -onomatopoeia -alliteration</p> <p>Uses precise, vivid and economical word choice.</p> <p>Experiments with layout in order to establish specific emphasis and oral patterns of fluency or rhythm.</p>	<p>Shows understanding of the differences between prose and poetry.</p> <p>Organizes writing on the page using shape, white space, line breaks, stanzas.</p> <p>Experiments with hyperbole and onomatopoeia.</p> <p>Uses or chooses not to use punctuation and capitalization for effect.</p> <p>Counts syllables for some prescribed poetic forms.</p>

AMHERST PUBLIC SCHOOLS
3rd GRADE ELEMENTS OF QUALITY WRITING

	FOCUS	STRUCTURE	ELABORATION	STYLE	CONVENTIONS
--	--------------	------------------	--------------------	--------------	--------------------

	<p>Understands the importance of: -specific word choice -visual imagery -sensory language</p> <p>Experiments with using strategies to develop personally meaningful ideas: -observes things or others closely -finds similarity in things that are different -recalls times with strong feelings -responds to poetry</p> <p>Finds a small topic with a strong feeling to write about.</p>	<p>Uses craft from mentor texts to serve as models for writing.</p>	<p>Creates a comparison that stretches out across more than one line.</p> <p>Use similes and personification to create a mood, evoke a feeling or insight, or convey vivid imagery using formats such as: <i>-I am a __ when I feel __.</i> <i>-The __ is like __.</i></p> <p>Attempts to convey a bigger idea through the use of metaphor using examples from mentor texts and the format: <i>___ is ___.</i></p> <p>Creates sensory images, emotions and surprising ideas.</p>	<p>Conveys tone: -reflection -awe -humor</p> <p>Chooses strong verbs to energize poem.</p> <p>Experiments with poetic voice: -speaks with a strong feeling -speaks directly to the subject -speaks lyrically</p> <p>Conveys images in new and interesting ways.</p> <p>Uses homonyms and homophones to play on words.</p>	<p>Uses correct spelling.</p>
--	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------