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NaNoWriMo Young Writers Program

Lower Elementary (K-2) Curriculum

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Introduction

“Let’s play dress up! Let’s pretend that I’m a pirate and you’re a cowboy! This chair is a rocket ship, and I’m going to the moon!”

Elementary school students are constantly using their imaginations to amuse themselves, and as their teacher during NaNoWriMo, your job is to help them harness that vast torrent of creativity and encourage them to put it down on paper.

Easy, right?

As a matter of fact, in some ways, it is! It may even be easier than teaching novel-writing to teenagers, because at this age, your kids are often fearless.

This is a time in their lives when encouragement can really shape their futures in regards to writing. The younger they are when they discover that writing can actually be fun, the more likely they are to like writing when they get older. Giving your students a chance to write an actual “novel,” and to actually have fun doing it, can affect the way they write and how they feel about writing for the rest of their lives.

If you are teaching the lower elementary grade levels, your students’ limited experience with writing may make NaNoWriMo a challenge. How do you teach someone to “write creatively” when they are just learning to write? There are many things you can do with the lower grades. The first is to focus first on *storytelling*, as opposed to strictly writing. Encourage your students to tell their stories through words (written and spoken) *and* pictures.

Also, don’t stress the word count. Having a whole class word-count goal is one way to take pressure off. If you do decide to write towards a whole-class goal, make sure you teach your kids how to count words. (For K–1 students, this can be a great reminder to put spaces between words!) With students who are writing by hand, it’s helpful to have students count the words they have written after every session. Have the students record their total number of words on the bottom of each page so they don’t lose track. You can even add a little “word count” box at the end of each writing page. But again, don’t focus too much on the word count; instead, remind your kids how exciting it is that they are writing novels!

Also, don’t feel like you have to teach your students about every element of writing a novel. It will be a huge accomplishment if you just teach your kids that a novel is a long story with at least one continuous character! Young kids have short attention spans; if they can stay interested in their novels for an entire month, you have done a great job. Short mini-lessons throughout November can help keep kids on track and excited about writing their novels.

If it seems overwhelming to have your students write novels individually, or if you don’t have much time to devote to noveling, you may want to collaboratively tell a story as a class. If you have the time and equipment, you can record your story sessions and then make transcriptions after class.

Though this may be a challenging month, it will also be a triumphant one. Expect the unexpected! If you look at the shelves in the bookstore, each author is so very different than the next. Should we expect any less of our kids?

So how do you make it all happen? Follow the steps in How Does NaNoWriMo Work for Educators?, check out all the resources we provide, and use the following lessons however you like. Remember that even though students do all their writing in November, you should begin working in October to be sure your kids are fully prepared.

Common Core Fulfillments

The Young Writers Program believes that NaNoWriMo, in addition to being totally fun, can easily fit into a rigorous course of study. In 2009, we adapted all of our lessons to California's state English Language Arts standards. The response to this development was great: more teachers were able to incorporate the program, and more administrators were able to see how effective it can be.

In 2010, the YWP again adapted its materials, this time to the new national Common Core Standards. Adopted by 42 states, the District of Columbia, and four territories, the Common Core provides clear, effective touchstones for English content learning. We like that it can be used and understood by our educators across the country.

At the top of each lower elementary school lesson, you will find a list of the standards that the lesson fulfills. You can also download a detailed chart of the Common Core fulfillments for the entire curriculum.

Young Novelist Workbooks

We know that writing an entire novel is a daunting task, so we've put together grade-aligned Young Novelist Workbooks to guide you and your students throughout the entire process, from coming up with a great idea to designing a cover for their finished book. The activities inside will help students create well-developed characters, build settings, and hatch plots, plus keep them motivated throughout the month. Many of the lesson plans below reference specific workbook activities in their "Materials" section. Note: the page numbers mentioned correspond to the actual numbers written on the bottom of the workbook pages, not the pages of the PDF file.

Lesson Plan 1: Introducing NaNo and Novels

Supports Common Core Standards for English Language Arts:

- **Kindergarten**: Reading: 5. Recognize common types of texts (e.g., storybooks, poems).
- **Grade 1**: Reading: 5. Distinguish major categories of writing from each other (e.g., stories and poems), drawing on a wide reading of a range of text types.

Total Lesson Time: 40 minutes

Objectives: By the end of this lesson, SWBAT (students will be able to):

1. Explain what makes a novel different from other common types of texts.
2. Explain the NaNoWriMo project and basic mission.
3. Commit to and get excited about participating in NaNoWriMo.

Materials:

- "KWL" (Know, Want to Know, Learned) chart on the board, transparency, or flipchart paper; explained in Step Two.
- A big pile of novels (include any novels you have read with your class).
- Markers, crayons, colored pencils.

Step One: Explore Novels! *15 minutes*

Put the pile of novels on the floor or on desks for kids to explore. Tell the students that they will learn about novels, or chapter books. (Note: for the first few days, use the word "novel" along with "chapter book" so students understand that they mean the same thing.) Tell the students that they should look through the novels you have put out and think about what makes a novel a novel.

Step Two: What Is a Novel, Anyway? *15 minutes*

Make a KWL (Know, Want to Know, Learned) chart. Ask students what they already "know" about novels. Remind them of features they may have noticed when looking through books.

Make sure students are clear about the following things:

- All novels have chapters.
- All novels are fiction (made-up).
- All novels have characters.
- All novels tell stories.

After about 5 minutes in that column, move to the "Want to Know" column and take student questions and concerns. Answer any questions immediately. Do not fill in the "Learned" column yet. Come back to this at the end of November.

Step Three: What Is NaNoWriMo, Anyway? *10 minutes*

Tell the students that they will be writing their very own novels in the month of November.

Introduce NaNoWriMo as a challenge that your class is going to be a part of. The challenge is to write an entire novel in one month! Explain to your students that novels usually take much longer to write, but that they are going to be speedy, creative, amazingly efficient writers. Get your kids pumped up and excited about this challenge. The more excited you are, the more excited they will be. Stress how impressive and cool it will be to become a novelist. Take any questions that your students might have about this challenge. If you have a NaNoWriMo poster, show this to the kids, too. Explain how people are doing this novel-writing challenge all over the world!

Lesson Plan 2: Great Book, Gross Book

Supports Common Core Standards for English Language Arts:

- **Grade 2**: Reading: 5. Refer to core elements of stories, plays, and myths, including characters, settings, and plots, when writing or speaking about a specific text.

Total Lesson Time: 40 minutes

Objectives: By the end of this lesson, SWBAT (students will be able to):

1. Identify what they think are aspects of good and bad novels.
2. Identify which of those good aspects they want to incorporate into their novels, and which of those bad aspects they want to avoid writing into their novels.

Materials:

- Three large pieces of butcher paper or oversized Post-it Notes.
- Markers.
- The "Great Book, Gross Book" worksheet from the Young Novelist Workbook; one for each student. It is also found on page 8 of the Young Novelist workbook.
- Paper.

Step One: Great Food, Gross Food *5 minutes*

Engage students in a few rounds of thumbs up/thumbs down about some common meals or food items. You could say, "When I say zucchini, you put your thumb up if you think it's great, or your thumb down if you think it's gross." You might want to make sure students know not to be respectful if someone disagrees with them. Like the expression, “Don’t yuck my yum.”

Some possible food items to list are:

- pizza
- popcorn
- tomato juice
- broccoli
- ice cream
- grilled cheese
- boiled spinach
- apples
- fried worm sandwiches!

Step Two: Introduce Great Book, Gross Book *1–2 minutes*

Say, "As you can see from the game we just played, sometimes we agree on what makes food good and what makes it gross, and sometimes we disagree. The same is true for stories and books! We all have very different opinions about what makes one book great and another one boring. Before we begin learning how to write a novel, we are each going to decide what things we love to read about and what things we don’t. You will have more fun writing about the things you think are great, and less fun writing about things you think are boring. And since this is going to be your novel, you should be having fun while you write!"

Step Three: Make Great and Gross Lists as a Class *15 minutes*

1. Create three lists on butcher paper (or large Post-its): one labeled "Books We Have Read"; the second labeled "Great"; and the third labeled "Gross." Tape these lists up at the front of the class so that they are visible to all students.

2. Ask, "What are some of the books we have read together this year?" Allow students a few minutes to recall the titles. Encourage kids to include picture books and novels/chapter books you have read in class and to briefly retell main elements of each story, including important characters and plot events, as needed to refresh one another's memories. Write these books on the first list, "Books We Have Read This Year."

3. Then help your students brainstorm items for the "Great" list. To start off, you might ask your students what made these books exciting or funny. This is a really broad question, and answers may range from the vague ("funny characters") to the specific ("cream-filled donuts" or "talking dogs"). All of these items are great for the list, but it may help to concentrate on writing down the broader elements, thus making the list more accessible to all the students in your class. You can help guide students. For example, if a student says "ninjas," you might want to write down "action." Let students know that they will have a chance in just a moment to make their own list where they can put down all their specific likes and dislikes.

4. Then say, "Now let's make a list of things about the books we have read that we didn't like. We'll call these things 'gross,' which will be our code word for 'things we didn't think were that great.' Of course, we'll all have different ideas about what those things might be, and that's okay! Getting lots of different opinions is a good thing!" Remind students to be respectful and not to "yuck someone else's yum." Have students brainstorm items for the "Gross" list. Again, allow students to be as specific or wide-ranging as they like, but it might help to focus on the latter. If someone says "mean grandmothers," you can choose to write "mean characters," and so on.

5. Once you've finished your lists, tape them up in a prominent place in your classroom and do not take them down until December 1. These lists will serve as reminders to students of the elements they might want to include in their novels, and those elements that they might want to leave out. (The list of books will come in handy in future lesson plans if you need to remind students of some of the books you have read together.)

Note: If you are writing a collaborative novel, move on to Step Five! If not, read on.

Step Four: Practice on Their Own *15 minutes*

1. **For grades K-1**, hand out a blank piece of paper to each student. On the paper, have students draw/write things they might find in great books. If you would like, students can also draw/write things they might find in gross books on the back of their papers. Remind students that ideas can come from their imaginations, other books they have read, or they might just fall out of the sky!

2. For older students, hand out the "Great Book, Gross Book" worksheet. In the spaces provided, have students write the title and author of three books they have read and liked. Let

students know that it's okay to list some of the books you've all read as a class, or books they have read on their own. Then, have them fill in the "Great" and "Gross" portions of the worksheet. Remind them to try and list things that are both general and specific. Walk around the room and help any students who might be experiencing blocks.

Step Five: Closing It Up *1 minute*

Close by saying, "This activity is an important step before we start our novels. We now know what things we like to read about and what things put us to sleep. It's super-important for us to know these things, because we'll have a lot more fun writing about the things we think are great, and a lot less fun writing about the things we think are not so great. We'll keep these lists close by us in November as we write our novels. You can also use this list in November to get ideas for your novel. If you like books with wizards, maybe you should think about writing a book with wizards and magic. If you don't like books about monsters, then maybe you should make sure that none of your characters are monsters. After all, the things you like to read about are exactly the things you're going to be good at writing about! Tomorrow, we'll start creating characters for our novels."

Lesson Plan 3: Creating Main Characters

Supports Common Core Standards for English Language Arts:

- **Kindergarten**: Reading: 3. Identify characters, settings, and key events in a story.
- **Grade 1**: Reading: 3. Describe characters, settings, and key events in a story. Writing: 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic).
- **Grade 2**: Reading: 5. Refer to core elements of stories, plays, and myths, including characters, settings, and plots, when writing or speaking about a specific text. Writing: 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic).

Total Lesson Time: 50 minutes

Objectives: By the end of this lesson, SWBAT:

1. Identify the main character in a novel.
2. Create a main character as a class as part of a shared writing project.
3. Create their own main characters.

Materials:

- Two to three large sheets of butcher paper or oversized, unlined Post-it Notes.
- Copies of the "Create Awesome Characters/Main Character Worksheet"; one for each student. This can be found on page 11 of the Young Novelist Workbook.
- Markers, crayons, and/or colored pencils.

Note: Today, part of class time will be dedicated to creating a main character together as a group, which will entail creating a large drawing. If you are feeling especially artsy, then put on your drawing hat! You might also think about asking a guest artist to join the class. Is there someone from the art department who might be available to help your class for the day? Do you have a friend who is an illustrator/artist?

Step One: All About You *5 minutes*

Have students talk about themselves. Ask them the following questions:

- What do you look like?
- What do you do for fun?
- Where do you live, and what is it like there?
- What annoys you the most?

Go through each question as a class and ask students to answer using as many details as possible. Call on a few students for each question.

Step Two: Introduce Main Characters *10 minutes*

1. Say, "Today, we are going to begin creating characters for our novels. Just like you and me, characters in books have likes and dislikes, homes, friends, and family. They have things they love to do in their free time and things that make them wish they were getting their teeth pulled instead."

2. Place the list of books you have read as a class (from the "Great Book, Gross Book" lesson plan) at the front of the room, making sure it is visible to all students. (If you did not do the "Great Book, Gross Book" lesson plan, take a few moments and, together, make a list of the novels/chapter books and picture books that you have read together as a class, or that are familiar to all of your students. Write these titles on the board.)

3. Say, "Let's go down the list and name the most important character in each of these books. Who had the starring role? Who was the book all about?"

Write these characters' names near the titles on the list. Say, "The most important character in a book—the character with the starring role—is called the *main character*. Novels are about a main character's adventure to make his or her dreams come true."

Step Three: Create a Main Character as a Class *10 minutes*

1. Hang two large sheets of butcher paper at the front of the room: one for jotting down character information, the other for drawing the character. Label the first piece of paper "Information about our main character." (Note: If you have brought in a special guest artist, introduce them to the class and explain that he or she will be drawing the character that you are about to create together!)

"Okay, first off, is our main character going to be a person or an animal?" Write the students' answer (reached by consensus) on the "Information" piece of butcher paper.

"Is our character a boy or a girl?" Write the answer on the Information sheet.

"How old is our character?" Write the answer on the Information sheet.

2. On the second sheet of butcher paper, draw a visual of the main character you are creating (or have the visiting artist draw it).

"What color hair does our main character have?" Draw the hair on your character.

"Is there anything weird or unusual about our main character's appearance?" (An obvious scar? Three eyes? A unicorn horn? etc.) Draw these aspects on your character.

"What is our character's favorite outfit? What is our main character wearing?" Draw the clothes on your character.

3. Once you have a visual, take a few moments to answer some extra questions about your main character. Write the answers to these questions on the Information sheet:

- Where does our main character live?
- What does our main character do for fun?
- What makes our main character happy after a bad day?
- Does our main character have any special skills or talents? Any super powers?

Note: If you are writing a collaborative novel and there is still time left in class, answer more of the Bonus questions on the "Main Character Worksheet" and some of the Super Bonus

questions as well. If there is no time, congratulate your students on a job well done! You can always answer more questions as a class on the following day.

Step Four: Students Create Their Own Main Characters *20 minutes*

1. Hand out copies of the Main Character worksheet and supplies to draw and color with.

2. **For K-1 students**, have them fill out just the drawing page (page 14 of the workbook). Tell them their character must be different from the one created in class. Remind them to use as much detail as possible—What color is their main character's hair? What kind of clothes does he or she wear? Is he or she carrying anything? What is the expression on his or her face? etc. Students can write details around the pictures of their characters or can dictate information to an adult.

3. **For grade 2**, or for kids getting help with dictation, have them answer questions 1–5 on the worksheet.

Step Five: Share *5 minutes*

1. Have students share their drawings with the class. Students should also mention their main character's name and what kind of a creature he or she is (a person, an animal, a talking lampshade, etc.).

2. Have students hang their drawings around the room.

Lesson Plan 4: Creating Supporting Characters

Supports Common Core Standards for English Language Arts:

- **Kindergarten**: Reading: 3. Identify characters, settings, and key events in a story.
- **Grade 1**: Reading: 3. Describe characters, settings, and key events in a story. Writing: 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic).
- **Grade 2**: Reading: 5. Refer to core elements of stories, plays, and myths, including characters, settings, and plots, when writing or speaking about a specific text. Writing: 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic).

Total Lesson Time: 60 minutes

Objectives: By the end of this lesson, SWBAT:

1. Identify supporting characters in novels.
2. Create a supporting character as a class as part of a shared writing project.
3. Create their own supporting characters.

Materials:

- Two to three large sheets of butcher paper or oversized, unlined Post-it Notes.
- Copies of the "Supporting Character" worksheet; one for each student. This can be found on page 22 of the Young Novelist Workbook.
- Markers, crayons, and/or colored pencils.

Note: Today, part of class time will be dedicated to creating a supporting character together as a group, which will entail creating a large drawing. If you are feeling especially artsy, then put on your drawing hat! You might also think about asking a guest artist to join the class. Is there someone from the art department who might be available to help your class for the day? Do you have a friend who is an illustrator/artist?

Step One: A Good Friend *5 minutes*

Have students think about one of their good friends, whether a classmate, family member, or pet hamster. Ask them the following questions:

- How did you first meet your friend?
- What does he or she look like?
- What do you two do together for fun?
- Where does he or she live and what is it like there?

Go through each question as a class and ask students to answer using as many details as possible. Call on a few students for each question.

Step Two: Introduce Supporting Characters *10 minutes*

1. Introduce supporting characters. Say, "Today, we are going to create supporting characters for our novels. Just like you and I, main characters have friends. The supporting character is

kind of like a sidekick or a best friend for the main character. The supporting character's job is to help the main character during their adventure. Let's make a list of some of the supporting characters in the novels we have read."

2. Place the list of books you have read as a class (from the "Great Book, Gross Book" lesson plan) at the front of the room, making sure it is visible to all students. (If you did not do the "Great Book, Gross Book" lesson plan, use the list of books you made.) Have students name the supporting character from the books you have read. If it is hard for students to remember, look through the books together to refresh their memories.

Step Three: Create a Supporting Character as a Class *20 minutes*

1. Say, "Now let's all work together to invent a supporting character for the main character we created yesterday!" Hang the main character drawing you made yesterday at the front of the room. Next, hang two large sheets of butcher paper at the front of the room: one for jotting down character information, the other for drawing the character. Label the first piece of paper "Information about our supporting character." (Note: If you have brought in a special guest artist, introduce them to the class and explain that he or she will be drawing the character that you are about to create together!)

Then say, "Okay, first off, is our supporting character going to be a person or an animal?" Write the students' answer (reached by consensus) on the "Information" piece of butcher paper.

"Is our character a boy or a girl?" Write the answer on the Information sheet.

"How old is our character?" Write the answer on the Information sheet.

2. On the second sheet of butcher paper, draw a visual of the supporting character you're creating (or have the visiting artist draw it).

"What color hair does our supporting character have?" Draw the hair on your character.

"Is there anything weird or unusual about our supporting character's appearance?" (An obvious scar? Three eyes? A unicorn horn? etc.) Draw these aspects on your character.

"What is our character's favorite outfit? What is our supporting character wearing?" Draw the clothes on your character.

3. Once you have a visual, take a few moments to answer some extra questions about your supporting character. Paraphrase the answers to these questions on the Information sheet:

- Where does our supporting character live?
- What does our supporting character do for fun?
- What makes our supporting character happy after a bad day?
- Does our supporting character have any special skills or talents? Any super powers that will be useful in helping out our main character?
- How does our supporting character know our main character? Is this person a friend? A family member? How did they meet?

Note: If you are writing a collaborative novel and there is still time left in class, answer more of the "Bonus" questions on the worksheet and some of the "Super Bonus" questions. If there is no time, congratulate your students on a job well done! You can always answer more questions as a class on the following day.

Step Four: Students Create Their Own Supporting Characters *20 minutes*

1. Hand out copies of the "Supporting Character" worksheet and supplies to draw and color with.

2. **For K–1 students**, have them fill out just the drawing page (page 14 of the workbook). Tell them their character must be different from the one created in class. Remind them to use as much detail as possible—What color is their main character's hair? What kind of clothes does he or she wear? Is he or she carrying anything? What is the expression on his or her face? etc. Students can write details around the pictures of their character or can dictate information to an adult.

3. **For grade 2**, or for kids getting help with dictation, have them answer questions 1–6 on the worksheet.

Step Five: Share *5 minutes*

1. Have students share their drawings with the class. Students should also mention their supporting character's name and what kind of creature he or she is (a person, flying toaster, etc.).

2. Have students hang their drawings up around the room.

Lesson Plan 5: Creating Villains

Supports Common Core Standards for English Language Arts:

- **Kindergarten**: Reading: 3. Identify characters, settings, and key events in a story.
- **Grade 1**: Reading: 3. Describe characters, settings, and key events in a story. Writing: 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic).
- **Grade 2**: Reading: 5. Refer to core elements of stories, plays, and myths, including characters, settings, and plots, when writing or speaking about a specific text. Writing: 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic).

Total Lesson Time: 50 minutes

Objectives: By the end of this lesson, SWBAT:

1. Identify villains in novels.
2. Create a villain as a class as part of a shared writing project.
3. Create their own villains.

Materials:

- 2–3 large sheets of butcher paper or oversized, unlined Post-it Notes.
- Copies of the "Villain Worksheet"; one for each student. This can be found on page 32 of the Young Novelist Workbook.
- Blank white paper.
- Markers, crayons, and/or colored pencils.

Note: Today, part of class time will be dedicated to creating a villain together as a group, which will entail creating a large drawing. If you are feeling especially artsy, then put on your drawing hat! You might also think about asking a guest artist to join the class. Is there someone from the art department who might be available to help your class for the day?

Note about age-appropriateness: Young kids may have difficulty with the idea of villains. They may only be able to think of villains as over-the-top "bad guys" and they may not be able to grasp the villain's role as the character who tries to make it impossible for the main character to make his or her dreams a reality. If this idea is not inspiring to your students or too difficult to grasp, feel free to skip or modify this lesson as you see fit.

Step One: Memorable Bad Guys (And Gals!) *5 minutes*

Ask students the following questions: "Of all the books you have read or movies you have seen, who is the 'bad guy' (or girl!) that you remember most? What made them so bad and so memorable?" Call on a few students to share their responses.

Step Two: Introduce Villains *10 minutes*

1. Tell students that bad guys (or girls) in books and movies are called villains. Ask your students if they know what a villain does in a story or movie.

Answer: The villain will do anything to stand in the main character's way and keep him or her from achieving his or her dream! It is okay if your students don't get this, but if they do, congratulate them!

2. Then put the list of books you have read as a class (from the "Great Book, Gross Book" lesson plan) at the front of the room, making sure it is visible to all students. (If you did not do the "Great Book, Gross Book" lesson plan, use the list of books you made.) Ask your students to name some of the villains in each of these books. Ask, "Who stood in the main character's way? Who tried to keep the main character from getting what they wanted?" This may be hard for students to understand, so model how to answer as needed.

Step Three: Create a Villain as a Class *15 minutes*

1. Say, "Now let's all work together to create a villain as a class!" Hang two large sheets of butcher paper at the front of the room: one for jotting down character information, the other for drawing the character. Label the first piece of paper "Information about our villain." (Note: If you have brought in a special guest artist, introduce them to the class and explain that he or she will be drawing the character that you are about to create together!)

Then ask, "Okay, first off, is our villain going to be a person or an animal?" Write the students' answer (reached by consensus) on the "Information" piece of butcher paper.

"Is our villain a boy or a girl?" Write the answer on the Information sheet.
"How old is our villain?" Write the answer on the Information sheet.

2. On the second sheet of butcher paper, draw a visual of the villain you are creating (or have the visiting artist draw it).

"What color hair does our villain have?" Draw the hair on your villain.

"Is there anything weird or unusual about our villain's appearance?" (An obvious scar? Three eyes? etc.). Draw these aspects on your villain.

"What is our villain's favorite outfit? What is our villain wearing?" Draw the clothes on your villain.

3. Once you have a visual, take a few moments to answer some extra questions about your villain. Write the answers to these questions on the Information sheet:

- Where does our villain live?
- What does our villain do for fun?
- What makes our villain happy after a bad day?
- Does our villain have any weaknesses? What would be a good way to defeat our villain?

Note: If you are writing a collaborative novel and there is still time left in class, answer more of the "Bonus" questions on the worksheet and some of the "Super Bonus" questions. If there is no time, congratulate your students on a job well done! You can always answer more questions as a class on the following day.

Step Four: Students Create a Villain on their Own *15 minutes*

1. Hand out a piece of blank white paper to each student. Have students draw their villains. Remind them to use as much detail as possible—What color is their villain's hair? What kind of clothes does he or she wear? Is he or she carrying anything? What is the expression on his or her face? etc.

2. Have students add information about their villains around their drawings or on another piece of paper. For older students, have them fill out the questions 1–6 on the "Villain Worksheet."

Step Five: Share *5 minutes*

1. Have students share their drawings with the class. Students should also mention their villain's name and what kind of creature/being their villain is.

2. Have students hang their drawings around the room.

3. (Optional) For homework, assign the "Bonus" and "Super Bonus" questions on the "Villain Worksheet."

Lesson Plan 6: Making Up Your Story

Supports Common Core Standards for English Language Arts:

- **Kindergarten**: Reading: 3. Identify characters, settings, and key events in a story. Writing: 3. Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order that they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.
- **Grade 1**: Reading: 3. Describe characters, settings, and key events in a story. Writing: 3. Write narratives in which they include at least two or more appropriately sequenced events, use time cue words to signal event order, and provide some details and a sense of closure; 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic).
- **Grade 2**: Reading: 3. Describe how characters in a story respond to key events and conflicts; 5. Refer to core elements of stories, plays, and myths, including characters, settings, and plots, when writing or speaking about a specific text. Writing: 3. Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or series of events, use temporal words and phrases to signal event order, include details to tell what the narrator did, thought, and felt, and provide closure; 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic).

Total Lesson Time: 40 minutes

Objectives: By the end of this lesson, SWBAT:

1. Understand the basic elements that make up a story.
2. Continue to develop the characters in their own novels.
3. Begin to develop the storyline, including one or more important events, for their own novels.

Materials:

- "Great Book, Gross Book" list.
- Pencils, crayons, markers.
- Blank white paper for each student.
- **For older/more advanced students**: a copy of the "Make Up Your Story" worksheet for each student. This can be found on page 42 of the Young Novelist Workbook.

Step One: Think/Pair/Share *5 minutes*

Have students think about this prompt for 1 minute: "The one thing I want more than anything else in the entire world is..." Then have your students pair up and share their answers to the prompt. Give each pair about 5 minutes to share with each other.

Step Two: Introduce the Elements of Story *10 minutes*

1. Ask a few students to share what they want more than anything with the class.

Say, "We have spent the last few days figuring out *who* our characters are. Now we are going to figure out *what they are going to do* in our novels. Just like you and me, characters have hopes and dreams. Most stories are about the adventures that a main character has on the way to making his or her dreams come true. Whether the goal is to become the king of a secret world, or to be the first person to land on Jupiter, the journey is never easy. Your main character will encounter many obstacles along the way, and this is a good thing. These obstacles are what

make a story exciting!"

2. Bring out the list of books from the "Great Book, Gross Book" lesson or create a list of books that you have read as a class. Pick a few of the books and discuss the main character in each one. Ask your students to remind you who the main character is in each book, and then ask them what that main character wants more than anything in the world. Ask them if the main character went on an adventure and what they were looking for or going after. The answers to this question may vary, and that is okay. This question may be tricky for young students to grasp, so model how to answer. For example, in the book *Holes*, Stanley Yelnats wants all kinds of things. He wants to not be made fun of in school, he wants to prove that he is cool to the kids at the camp, he wants his dad to succeed at inventing something worthwhile, and eventually, he wants to dig up the treasure.

Step Three: Students Create Their Own Stories *20 minutes*

Note: If you're writing a collaborative story, create a story as a class using a blank "Make Up Your Story" worksheet transparency.

1. Ask your students to think about the main character of their novel. Ask, "What does your main character want more than anything in the whole world?" Call on a few students to share their answers.

2. Tell the students that today they get to decide what will happen in their novels. Once they have decided what their main characters want, ask students to think about what will get in their main characters' way. If this is too complex for your students to understand, simply ask them what their novels will be about.

3. Pass out blank white paper to each student. On the paper, have students draw a picture of what their novel will be about. Encourage them to add words as necessary. Remind students to keep thinking about what their main characters want more than anything in the world, how they can get what they want, and what might get in their main characters' way.

4. (Optional) For older students, pass out a "Make Up Your Story" worksheet to each student. You may also want to have them take out their character worksheets to use as a reference.

Step Five: Share *5 minutes*

1. If you have time, go around the room and have students share what their novel will be about.

2. (Optional) "Assign Make Up Your Story" worksheet as homework, if not completed in class.

Lesson Plan 7: The Elements of Plot – Part One

Supports Common Core Standards for English Language Arts:

- **Kindergarten**: Reading: 3. Identify characters, settings, and key events in a story. Writing: 3. Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order that they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.
- **Grade 1**: Reading: 3. Describe characters, settings, and key events in a story. Writing: 3. Write narratives in which they include at least two or more appropriately sequenced events, use time cue words to signal event order, and provide some details and a sense of closure; 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic).
- **Grade 2**: Reading: 5. Refer to core elements of stories, plays, and myths, including characters, settings, and plots, when writing or speaking about a specific text. Writing: 3. Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or series of events, use temporal words and phrases to signal event order, include details to tell what the narrator did, thought, and felt, and provide closure; 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic).

Total Lesson Time: 40 minutes

Objectives: By the end of this lesson, SWBAT:

1. Understand that all novels have plots.
2. Understand that all plots include a big event (climax).
3. Identify and understand the exciting event and big event (climax) sections of the Plot Rollercoaster.

Materials:

- Transparency/slide projected image or a poster of an actual rollercoaster.
- Transparency of the blank Plot Rollercoaster found on page 61 of the Young Novelist Workbook.
- Several books that your class has read together.
- Blank white paper.

Step One: The Fun of Rollercoasters *5 minutes*

1. Take a look at a projected picture or poster of a rollercoaster as a class. Ask, “What makes it fun? Would it be as fun if all the dips were the same? What if the biggest drop came at the beginning? What if there were no dips and it was just a straight line?" Give your students time to answer these questions as you ask them.

2. Then ask, "What does this have to do with novels?" They may not know, so you may need to say, "Well, a good novel is like a good rollercoaster. You know all about your characters and a little about your story. Now you have to figure out how your story will actually happen, and that will look like a big hill on a rollercoaster.”

3. Switch the picture of the real rollercoaster for the transparency of the blank Plot Rollercoaster.

Step Two: Plotting the Plot Rollercoaster *15 minutes*

1. Take out several of the books you have read as a class. Say, “Every novel has a big event. The big event is what the whole novel leads up to. The big event in a book is when you think, ‘Uh-oh, what’s going to happen?!’ Novelists call the big event of a book the climax.” Go through each book you have read and ask students what the big event/climax in each book was.

2. Try to get students to think about when the climax/big event takes place. Ask them “Is the big event the first thing that happens in a book? What happens at the beginning of the book?” Refer to the Plot Rollercoaster and talk about how the beginning of the book introduces the characters, the exciting event sets the stage for the big event, the rising action leads up to the climax, and the falling action leads up to the end of the book. You can mention all of these terms to students, but focus on the big event/climax at the very top of the rollercoaster. The goal here is to get students to realize every book has a big event, and that the big event happens towards the middle/end of the book.

Step Three: Plotting *20 minutes*

Tell students they will have time to work on their plots. Have students think about what the big event/climax in their novel will be. Hand out a piece of blank white paper to each student. Instruct students to draw a picture of the big event of their novels. A big event should be a time when readers think, “Uh-Oh, what’s going to happen?!” Remind them to include their characters in this scene!

Lesson Plan 8: The Elements of Plot – Part Two

Supports Common Core Standards for English Language Arts:

- **Kindergarten**: Reading: 3. Identify characters, settings, and key events in a story. Writing: 3. Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order that they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.
- **Grade 1**: Reading: 3. Describe characters, settings, and key events in a story. Writing: 3. Write narratives in which they include at least two or more appropriately sequenced events, use time cue words to signal event order, and provide some details and a sense of closure; 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic).
- **Grade 2**: Reading: 5. Refer to core elements of stories, plays, and myths, including characters, settings, and plots, when writing or speaking about a specific text. Writing: 3. Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or series of events, use temporal words and phrases to signal event order, include details to tell what the narrator did, thought, and felt, and provide closure; 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic).

Total Lesson Time: 50 minutes

Objectives: By the end of this lesson, SWBAT:

1. Identify and understand the big event/climax of the "Plot Rollercoaster."
2. Identify and understand the endings of books they have read.
3. Create the rest of a plot for their own novels.

Materials:

- *Spongebob Squarepants* or another cartoon clip, preferably one that includes a clear climax and falling action. Equipment to play it on.
- Blank "Plot Rollercoaster" transparency from the previous lesson.
- Blank white paper.
- The pictures of big events the students drew during the previous lesson, "Elements of Plot – Part One."

Step One: Spot the Plot *10 minutes*

1. Tell students they are about to watch the last few minutes of a *Spongebob Squarepants* cartoon. Tell them what has already happened in the episode. If they say they've seen it, tell them it will help them spot the climax.

2. Ask students to share what they thought after watching the clip. Ask them to spot the "Uh oh—what's going to happen?!" moment—the most exciting part of the cartoon—by using examples from the cartoon.

Step Two: Endings *10 minutes*

1. Say, "What happened after the big event in the Spongebob cartoon?" Call on a few students to share their answers. Tell students that the end of a story comes shortly after the big event.

2. Refer to the list of books you have read as a class. Pick out a few books and ask students to think about the big events and endings of those books. Ask questions like, “Who won the battle? What happens in the very end? Is it a happy ending? Sad ending? Does the bad guy get defeated?"

Step Three: Finishing Up Their Plots *25 minutes*

1. Hand out the big events that each student drew in the previous lesson. Ask students, “Do these big events happen at the beginning of novels?” Remind students that climaxes usually take place between the middle and the end of a novel.

2. Hand out a piece of blank white paper to each student. Demonstrate how to fold the paper into three equal vertical sections. Label (or have the students label) the top of these sections “Beginning,” “Middle,” and “End.”

3. Have the students think about what is going to happen in each part of their novels. Students may then use the paper to draw/write the rest of their plots. Tell the class that even though climaxes usually happen between the middle and the end of a novel, they may draw their big event in the middle section. In the beginning section, students should be thinking about how their characters will arrive at the big event. In the ending section, students should be thinking about how their characters recover or come out of the big event and how things work out in the end.

Step Three: Share! *5 minutes*

Have as many students as possible describe their plots. Either pre-select the sharers, make everyone share a bit, or only ask the eager students to share.

Lesson Plan 9: Setting

Supports Common Core Standards for English Language Arts:

- **Kindergarten**: Reading: 3. Identify characters, settings, and key events in a story.
- **Grade 1**: Reading: 3. Describe characters, settings, and key events in a story. Writing: 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic).
- **Grade 2**: Reading: 5. Refer to core elements of stories, plays, and myths, including characters, settings, and plots, when writing or speaking about a specific text. Writing: 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic).

Total Lesson Time: 50 minutes

Objectives: By the end of this lesson, SWBAT:

1. Create settings for their novels, both large settings like the characters' town, planet, or universe, and small settings like their characters' bedrooms.

Materials:

- One "Map Your Setting" worksheet for each student. This can be found on page 62 of the Young Novelist Workbook.
- Blank white paper.
- Markers, crayons, and/or colored pencils.

Step One: Introduce Mapping Your Setting *15 minutes*

1. Congratulate your kids on creating their plots. Let them know that the hardest part of planning for November is over, and that today they will draw some cool settings for their novel. Then ask, "Can anyone tell me what the word 'setting' means?"

Answer: *Where* a novel takes place.

2. Explain, "Most stories have more than one setting. There is the main setting, which is a city, a town, a country, or a planet." Ask your students to name a few large settings from some of the books and stories you've read as a class.

3. Then explain, "In addition to the main setting, novels also have a lot of smaller settings. These include characters' houses, where the characters hang out after school, or where some important events in the novel take place." Ask students to describe some smaller settings in the books you've read.

4. Go around the room and ask students a little bit about their plots and where they take place. Ask them about the large settings and the smaller settings. If someone is having trouble thinking of settings, have the other students suggest some that fit well with their story. For example, if some students say their story is about a kid just like them, suggest that they set the story in a house like theirs and to refer to the writing prompt they did as the beginning of class for inspiration. If, on the other hand, as student is writing about a group of scientists that have to battle aliens for control of the universe, a great main setting might be a space station on the moon, or NASA headquarters in Florida, etc.

Step Three: Map and Draw Settings *25 minutes*

1. Hand out the "Map Your Setting" worksheets along with markers, crayons, and/or colored pencils. Use the worksheets starting at page 63—drawing a planet/universe, drawing the main character's house and bedroom, and drawing a supporting character's house and bedroom. Show students each of the boxes provided for drawing their settings in. Be sure to point out that there is a box for the main setting (city, town, planet, etc.), and then other boxes for the smaller settings (main character's house, supporting character's bedroom, etc.).

2. For the remainder of class time, have students draw the various settings for their novels. Remind them to refer to the activity they did in the beginning of the class along with their Plot Plans (Beginning/Middle/End pictures).

Note: If you are working on a collaborative novel, you can, as a class, go through the worksheet together and brainstorm the various settings for your novel. Write these on the board. Then, have your students draw the settings. When they are all done, go around the room and have each student share his or her drawings with the class.

Step Five: Closing It Up *5 minutes*

Have students hang up for display *both* their Plot Plans (Beginning/Middle/End pictures) and their "Map Your Setting" worksheets. Make sure each student's Plot Plans and Maps are side-by-side.

Lesson Plan 10: Writing Dialogue

Supports Common Core Standards for English Language Arts:

- **Grade 1**: Reading: 6. Identify who is speaking at various points in a story, myth, fable, or narrative poem. Writing: 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic).
- **Grade 2**: Writing: 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic).

Total Lesson Time: 40 minutes

Objectives: By the end of this lesson, SWBAT:

1. Identify dialogue in a novel.
2. Understand that dialogue is what happens when two or more characters talk to one another.
3. Understand that dialogue is set apart from the rest of the text in a novel with quotation marks.

Materials:

- Copies of the "How To Write Really Good Dialogue" worksheet, one for each student. This can be found on page 69 of the Young Novelist Workbook.
- Familiar story books or chapter books that include dialogue.
- One "Comic Strip Worksheet" for each student.
- Crayons, markers, and/or colored pencils.

Step One: What Is Dialogue? *10 minutes*

1. Ask, “What is dialogue anyway?” If students have enough ideas, create a definition as a class. Otherwise, tell students the following definition and write it on the board:

Definition: Dialogue is what happens when two or more characters talk to one another. The exact words they speak are put between quotation marks.

2. Say, “When authors write dialogue they use quotation marks. Quotation marks show when a character starts and stops talking.” Write "quotation marks" on the board along with a few example sentences using quotation marks.

Step Two: Dialogue Hunt! *10 minutes*

1. Take out one of the books you have read as a class. Model how to skim through the book and look for dialogue. Say, “Quotations marks are a clue that you can use to spot where dialogue takes place in novels. Today we’re going to try to spot the dialogue in some of our books.”

2. Pass out books to your students and have them go on a “dialogue hunt.” When students find dialogue, they can raise their hand and read it (or you can read it) to the class. Have students explain who is speaking in each section of dialogue and how they know.

Step Three: Practice Writing Dialogue *20 minutes*

1. Hand out a "Blank Comic Strip" worksheet to each student. Say, "In comic strips, authors write dialogue by using speech bubbles."

2. Say, "Today, your job is to write dialogue for comic strips. Try to write dialogue by using speech bubbles to show when your characters are talking. The comic strip will star your main character and his sidekick/supporting character." It might be helpful to create an example of a filled-in comic strip you can show your class before they begin, and to suggest a conversation topic (e.g., "Have your characters talk about their favorite foods."). Make sure your students put quotation marks around the dialogue, and instruct them to write words before drawing speech bubbles to ensure that the bubbles will fit the words they write. Walk around the room and help anyone that seems stuck. *Note: For younger kids, or if you are writing a collaborative novel, have students dictate dialogue to you so you can write it out on the board.*

3. Hand out supplies for drawing and coloring, and encourage students to color their characters and the background of their comic strips in after they finish writing their dialogue.

4. Ask a few kids to read their strips aloud in front of the class.

Lesson Plan 11: Beginnings

Supports Common Core Standards for English Language Arts:

- **Kindergarten**: Writing: 3. Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order that they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.
- **Grade 1**: Writing: 3. Write narratives in which they include at least two or more appropriately sequenced events, use time cue words to signal event order, and provide some details and a sense of closure; 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic).
- **Grade 2**: Writing: 3. Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or series of events, use temporal words and phrases to signal event order, include details to tell what the narrator did, thought, and felt, and provide closure; 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic)

Total Lesson Time: 50 minutes

Objectives: By the end of this lesson, SWBAT:

1. Write the first few sentences of their novels.
2. Begin their month-long noveling adventure!

Materials:

- Copies of the "Start at the Beginning" worksheet; one for each student. This can be found on page 86 of the Young Novelist Workbook.
- The time is here! Students will need their noveling notebooks/paper and pens.

Step One: Excited or Nervous? *5 minutes*

1. Going around the room, have students answer the following questions out loud: "It's November 1! What part of noveling are you most excited about? What part of noveling are you most nervous about?"

2. Address your students' concerns as they come up. Be encouraging. Remind them that hundreds of thousands of kids, teens, and adults are writing along with them. Plus, they are totally ahead of the game. Most people who start NaNoWriMo have no idea what they are writing about, and your students have characters, plots, settings, and more.

Step Two: Introduce the Beginning *5 minutes*

1. Say, "Here it is, the first day of November, and we're ready to start our novels. You may be wondering: 'Where do I start?' Well, at the beginning, of course!"

2. Then say, "Before you begin writing your own first sentences, we're going to read some other first sentences in order to get an idea of all of the options we have. First sentences can be several things: they can be funny, scary, sad, magical (filled with fantasy like *Harry Potter*), or realistic (about things that happen in your everyday life)." Write all these terms on the board and ask your students to come up with example of books that fit into each category. Point out that some books are both funny and realistic, or both magical and scary.

Step Three: Practice as a Class *5 minutes*

1. Hand out the "Beginnings" worksheet, one for each student. For young kids, post one copy at the front of the room and gather students on the rug.

2. Together, read over the first three example sentences. As a class, decide what these sentences are (funny, scary, sad, magical, or realistic). Briefly explain the difference between “magical” and “realistic” sentences or stories.

3. For the remaining example sentences, read the sentence aloud and give students a few moments to think about which boxes apply. Remind students that we can check as many boxes as they think apply. Check the appropriate boxes as a class.

Step Four: Practice Completing Sentences *10 minutes*

1. Say, "Now it's our turn to try writing a few first sentences." The next section of the worksheet contains sentences that need finishing. Have the class think about ways to complete each of the sentences. Call on a few students to share their ideas and fill in the sentences on the worksheet as they speak.

2. When students have finished completing the sentences, ask them the last question on the worksheet: "What kind of novel do you think yours is going to be?" Allow students a moment to decide and to share which boxes apply to their own novel.

Step Five: Practice on Their Own *Remaining class time: 25 minutes*

Have students get their papers ready or crack the spines on their noveling journals and start writing. They can write for the remaining class time.

Note: If you're writing a collaborative novel, work together to come up with a first line that works for your novel and then work as a class to start on your classroom novel, whether you are transcribing the book on your computer or in a classroom noveling notebook.

How to Keep Your Kids Writing During November!

If you've taught all the lesson plans up to this point, your students have some cool characters, a plot with a beginning, middle, and end, some fun settings, and the know-how to write dialogue. At this point, your kids are probably anxious to get started, but before you and your students dive headfirst into your month-long, seat-of-your-pants noveling adventure, we would like to pass along some tips that we've gathered from experienced NaNoWriMo teachers to help you and your kids avoid Noveling Burnout.

Noveling Burnout usually happens around Week Two or Week Three, but can sometimes come as early as *Day* Two or *Day* Three. After the initial excitement of writing a novel wears off, the sudden realization that writing a novel isn't as easy as expected creeps up on kids like a lion on a sleeping zebra. At one point in November, each and every one of your students will show symptoms of Noveling Burnout, but the trick is not to let it overtake them. Here are some tips to help keep both spirits and word-counts high!

Be Dramatic.

The more dramatic you are right from the get-go about National Novel Writing Month, the longer that sense of noveling excitement will linger with your students. Throw a Kick-Off Party to get their spirits going early! Be sure you've filled out your progress chart, attached all the "Imagination Activated" buttons, and are ready to chart some progress with your NaNoWriMo stickers.

If the progress chart isn't dramatic enough, do what one teacher did and make a wall-sized chart. If that's still not enough, do what another teacher did and put a gigantic banner on the outside of your classroom with updated daily word-count totals painted on it in bright red paint. This is especially great if more than one classroom at your school is participating. Competition can be a great motivator.

Take Advantage of NaNoWriMo's Online Resources.

Our regular pep talks, from well-known YA authors, inspire even the most burned-out of students and teachers. You can either read them out loud to your class or, if you have time, print out copies, stuff them into envelopes, and put them on your students' desks before they arrive in the morning! (You can always write your own, too!)

Utilize your Virtual Classroom. You can easily forge noveling connections beyond the school day. Post funny announcements and interesting links; start exciting discussions in your dedicated forum; send encouraging messages... Whatever you do, make sure it's getting your students excited.

Your little ones may be too young to take advantage of the full writer community. But if you or a parent can browse the site with them, they will get a new sense of how big the NaNoWriMo YWP writing world really is, and in turn, how cool it is to be a part of it.

Challenge students to use the "Word Sprints" or "Writing Prompt" buttons at the bottom of their

noveling page if they get stuck. Great for addressing writer's block, lack of motivation, and focus issues.

Bring in the Muse.

When spirits are really low, it's time to treat your students like the authors that they are. Some teachers call it "bringing in the muse," some call it "bribery," but all of them say that it works wonders. Give out small prizes to kids who reach certain word-count goals or earn different badges. Let them sit on the floor while they write. Guide them on a walk around campus to give their aching eyes and hands a rest. Reward them in any way you can to make sure that they know how proud you are of them!

Okay, back to teaching. The following lesson plans are designed to keep your kids writing throughout November. We hope that they inspire plot twists, develop characters, and most importantly, help raise those word-counts.

Lesson Plan 12: Writing With All Your Senses (Five Mini-Lessons)

Supports Common Core Standards for English Language Arts:

- **Grade 1**: Writing: 3. Write narratives in which they include at least two or more appropriately sequenced events, use time cue words to signal event order, and provide some details and a sense of closure; 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic)
- **Grade 2**: Writing: 3. Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or series of events, use temporal words and phrases to signal event order, include details to tell what the narrator did, thought, and felt, and provide closure; 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic)

Objectives: By the end of these lessons, SWBAT:

1. Identify and describe each of the five senses.
2. Use their five senses to incorporate details into their novels.

Materials:

- One large piece of butcher paper or oversized, unlined Post-it Notes.
- Five colorful markers.
- One black marker.
- Your students' novels!
- A variety of different-feeling materials (sandpaper, silk, wool, clay, etc), drinks, and snacks for "Day Three: Touch."

Note: These lessons should be done in the beginning of November, after your students have started their novels. Though they all appear in this lesson plan, these are meant to be five mini-lessons that are done over the course of five days.

Day One: Smell

Total Lesson Time: 40 Minutes

Step One: Sense of Smell *5 minutes*

Ask your students: “What is your favorite smell? What does it remind you of?” Take a few answers from different students.

Step Two: Introduce Writing With All Your Senses *5 minutes*

1. Say, “Authors add details to their writing to make their stories more interesting. Over the next week we are going to use our five senses to help us add details to our novels. Can you name the five senses?”

Answer: Smell, Taste, Touch, Sight, Hearing.

2. Then say, “Writing with all of your senses means keeping your eyes and ears and nose and mouth and fingers alert, ready to add more detail using your senses.” Ask a few students to share the good smells and bad smells they wrote about at the beginning of class. Point out that

smell is often forgotten about when writing, but it is a really important sense. Smell is one of our strongest senses, and triggers memory more than any of the other senses.

Step Three: Practice as a Class *10 minutes*

1. Write this sentence on the butcher paper: *Gary is eating an ice cream sundae.*

2. Ask the class **"What does Gary's sundae smell like?"**

3. Using a colorful marker, write the word "Smell" on the butcher paper and add a few of your students' descriptions of Gary's sundae underneath.

4. Using a black marker, write a few complete sentences that include many of the ideas from the brainstorm session.

Ideas: "Gary loves the sweet, delicious smell of hot fudge. It reminds him of trips to the beach when he was little. He and his friends used to get hot fudge sundaes and watch the waves roll in."

Step Four: Practice on Their Own *20 minutes*

Students can spend the rest of class time working on their novels. Remind them to add sensory details (particularly using their sense of smell) as they write!

Note: If you are writing a collaborative novel, be sure to add sensory details as you continue writing.

Day Two: Taste

Total Lesson Time: 35 minutes

Step One: Sense of Taste *5 minutes*

Ask your students: "What is your favorite taste? What does it remind you of?" Take a few answers from different students.

Step Two: Practice as a Class *10 minutes*

1. Take out the butcher paper where you have written sensory details about Gary's sundae.

2. Ask the class **"What does Gary's sundae taste like?"**

Example Ideas: Delicious, chocolate and strawberry, mouth-watering, etc. (There are no right or wrong answers. As long as students are thinking with their mouths, so to speak.)

3. Using a colorful marker, write the word "Taste" on the butcher paper and add a few of your students' descriptions of Gary's sundae underneath.

4. Using a black marker, write a few more sentences that include many of the ideas from the brainstorm session. For example: *"Gary is eating an ice cream sundae. It's made with sweet, creamy chocolate and strawberry ice cream."*

Step Four: Practice on their Own *20 minutes*

Students can spend the rest of class time working on their novels. Remind them to add sensory details (particularly using their sense of taste) as they write!

Day Three: Touch

Total Lesson Time: 35 minutes

Step One: Sense of Touch *5 minutes*

1. Write a list of feeling-based descriptive words on the board like hot, cold, soft, rough, smooth, mushy, etc. Go through the list and ask your students what items in the world are cold, hot, soft, rough, smooth, mushy, etc. Explain that you can feel things with more than just your hands, for instance with your feet, and that you can feel hot and cold and mushy with your mouth too!

2. Bring in a variety of different materials (sandpaper, silk, wool, clay, etc). Pass the materials around to different students and have the students describe how each material feels. If possible, bring in a snack or a drink and have the students talk about how it feels in their mouths.

Step Two: Practice As a Class *10 minutes*

1. Take out the butcher paper where you have written sensory details about Gary's sundae.

2. Ask the class **"What does Gary's sundae feel like?"**

3. Using a colorful marker, write the word "Touch" on the butcher paper and add a few of your students' descriptions of Gary's sundae underneath.

4. Using a black marker, write a small paragraph that includes many of the ideas from the brainstorm session.

Ideas: "The sundae is so cold it freezes the top of Gary's mouth and gives him a brain freeze." Continue the paragraph on the board with students' ideas.

Step Four: Practice on Their Own *20 minutes*

Students can spend the rest of class time working on their novels. Remind them to add sensory details (particularly using their sense of touch) as they write!

Day Four: Sight

Total Lesson Time: 35 minutes

Step One: Sense of Sight *5 minutes*

Ask your students: “What is something you see in the classroom?” Ask students to point out things they see in the classroom and describe what color they are, the size and shape of the object, and anything else about the item that they would like to add.

Step Two: Practice as a Class *10 minutes*

1. Take out the butcher paper where you have written sensory details about Gary’s sundae.

2. Ask the class **“What does Gary's sundae look like?”**

3. Using a colorful marker, write the word “Sight” on the butcher paper and add a few of your students’ descriptions of Gary’s sundae underneath. Remind them to describe the size, shape, and colors of the sundae.

4. Using a black marker, write a small paragraph that includes many of the ideas from the brainstorm session.

Ideas: “His sundae is as big as the table and covered with blue, purple, and yellow sprinkles. It looks like a hot fudge volcano!” etc. Continue the paragraph on the board.

Step Four: Practice on Their Own *20 minutes*

Students can spend the rest of class time working on their novels. Remind them to add sensory details (particularly using their sense of sight) as they write!

Day Five: Hearing/Sound

Total Lesson Time: 35 minutes

Step One: Sense of Hearing *5 minutes*

Ask your students to close their eyes and listen to the sounds they hear (birds outside, cars passing by, students in other classrooms, etc). After a couple minutes, call on a few students to talk about the sounds they heard while their eyes were shut. Explain that there are *always* sounds, and that adding descriptions of sounds is another way to add interesting detail to novels.

Step Two: Practice as a Class *10 minutes*

1. Take out the butcher paper where you have written sensory details about Gary’s sundae.

2. “Okay, now for the real challenge: hearing. There probably isn’t a sound to Gary’s sundae, but maybe there’s a sound in the room? What can you hear in your imagination that we could add to our description?”

3. Using a colorful marker, write the word “Hearing” on the butcher paper and add a few of your students’ descriptions of Gary’s sundae underneath.

4. Using a black marker, write a couple sentences including many of the ideas from the brainstorm session.

Ideas: “It's Gary's birthday party and he hears his friends laughing and talking all around him. He hears his dog whining to get some of his sundae, etc."

Step Four: Practice on Their Own *20 minutes*

Students can spend the rest of class time working on their novels. Remind them to add sensory details (particularly using their sense of hearing) as they write!

Lesson Plan 13: Character Interviews on NaNo-TV

Total Lesson Time: 50 minutes

Objective: By the end of this lesson, students will have:

1. A better understanding of their characters by “stepping into their characters’ shoes.”

Note: Kids love to pretend, and this lesson is a great opportunity to allow your students to put on their acting hats! Students will create paper dolls for their main character, supporting character, and villain (or pick and choose which characters to focus on). We’ve created three interviews for your students' characters, under the premise that students’ characters have been invited to be interviewed on TV. However, if your students are very young, they can simply reenact scenes from their novel using paper dolls. This lesson can be spread over multiple days, and they don’t have to be consecutive. If you can get your hands on a video recorder, you can record your students’ interviews. That way, at the end of November, you'll have video all of your students’ characters that you can watch together as a class!

Materials:

- Blank white paper.
- Markers, crayons, pencils.
- Scissors.
- Popsicle sticks (optional).
- A video camera (optional).
- (Optional) Copies of the "Character Interviews on NaNo-TV" worksheet; one for each student. This can be found on page 97 of the Young Novelist Workbook.

Step One: Characters' Wardrobes—Think/Pair/Share *5 minutes*

Ask your students to think about what kinds of clothes their main characters like to wear. Give them one minute to think, then ask each student to pair up with a buddy. Give each pair a few minutes to discuss their main characters’ wardrobes. After the pair share, call on a couple students to share about their main characters’ clothes.

Step Two: Make Character Paper Dolls *25 minutes*

1. Tell your students that they will be making paper dolls for their characters. Model how to make a paper doll by drawing a picture of character on blank white paper and then cutting it out in front of the class. Clothes can either be drawn right on the paper doll or constructed out of additional paper and applied with tape or glue.

2. Hand out paper to each student. Make sure there are crayons or markers available for your students to use. While the students construct their paper dolls, remind them to consult any pictures of their characters they might have drawn in the past.

3. (Optional) Tape a popsicle stick to the back of each paper doll so it can be used as a puppet.

4. Divide students into pairs and give the class some time to play with their paper dolls and act

out scenes from their novels. Students can either take turns sharing scenes from their novels (or, for younger kids, just generally playing with the paper dolls) or pretend that a character meets a partner's character.

Step Three: Introduce Character Interviews on NaNo TV *5 minutes*

Note: This can be done on a separate day if the paper dolls take a lot of time to construct.

1. Announce that all the students' characters have been invited to be interviewed on NaNo TV! Say, "Unfortunately, your characters can't make it because they are so busy having awesome adventures in your novel. That means that *you* will have to use your paper dolls to act like your characters! Today, you're going to use your paper dolls to talk like your characters, walk like your characters, and think like your characters. Your characters will be asked questions during the television interviews, and you will have to answer *pretending to be your characters*! That means if you hate going fishing but your character loves to fish, you'll have to pretend for a while that you would do anything to get out on a boat with a fishing line and a can full of worms!"

Step Four: Practice As a Class *15 minutes*

Remember, if this is too complex for your young students, they can continue to use their paper dolls to act out scenes from their novels with their partners.

1. Take out a copy of the "Character Interviews on NaNo-TV" worksheet. Start with the "Main Character Interview."

2. If you brought a video camera, set it up at the front of the room. Have students come up to the front of the class one at a time. Playing the part of the host, ask them each a few questions from the "Main Character Interview." (Be sure to ask the character's name and which student's novel he or she is starring in.) If time permits, or on another day, you can interview supporting characters and villains too. It's okay if not all students want to participate in these interviews as long as they are being active members of the audience! To make this activity more engaging for all students, encourage audience members to ask the characters questions after you ask questions from the worksheet.

Throwing a “Thank Goodness It's Over” Party

Chances are, the end of this year’s NaNoWriMo leaves you and your students relieved— but also a little sad. There’s no better way to celebrate your students’ hard work than by throwing the kind of “Thank Goodness It's Over!” (TGIO) celebration your students deserve!

There are a lot of things you can do to make this party special. TGIO parties are thrown all around the world in our chapters and in many classrooms. Some are thrown on December 1, as soon as the initial drafting process is over, but if you are having your students read at the party, you may need to allow extra time as your kids revise and pick excerpts to read.

Some ideas for your TGIO:

Host a Reading.

A reading might the best way to celebrate your students’ new works of fiction. You can either host a reading in your classroom during school hours, or you can host one after school so your students’ families can come bask in the glory of their young novelists. If you have the time and energy, call your local independent bookstore or library to see if you can host the reading there.

Note: Keep individual reading times short (five minutes tops) so everyone who wants to read has a turn before attention spans run out.

Hand Out Prizes.

Hand out your “Imagination Activated” buttons, plus any extra stickers, pencils, or other small prizes you’ve picked up.

Make sure you print out certificates (available by mid-November) for each of your students. We have both winner and participant certificates, so everyone (no matter what their final word count is) should get one.

Above and Beyond:

Some of our more energetic teachers have gone above and beyond for their students’ TGIO parties. They’ve invited local authors to speak, they’ve videotaped the readings, and they've even had T-shirts made for the students.

No matter what, we encourage you to make your TGIO as special as you can for your class. They deserve it!

Lesson Plan 14: Taking the "Work" Out of Workshopping

Supports Common Core Standards for English Language Arts:

- **Kindergarten**: Reading: 1. With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about details and events in a text. Writing: 5. With guidance and support from adults, add details to strengthen writing as needed through revision.
- **Grade 1**: Reading: 1. Ask and answer questions about key details and events in a text. Writing: 5. With guidance and support from adults, add details to strengthen writing as needed through revision; 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic).
- **Grade 2**: Reading: 1. Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details and events in a text. Writing: 5. With guidance from adults, strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing; 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic).

Total Lesson Time: 50 minutes

Objectives: By the end of this lesson, SWBAT:

1. Provide positive feedback on a peer's writing.
2. Ask questions about a peer's writing.
3. Identify strengths of their own writing as well as areas in need of revision.

Materials:

- Each student should provide the **original** first two to five pages of his or her novel.
- Two different colors of Post-it Notes.
- (For older students or teacher reference) One clean copy of "The Workshop" worksheet per student and two clean copies of the "Reader Review Worksheet." These can be found starting on page 111 of the Young Novelist Workbook.

Step One: What Is a Workshop? *5 minutes*

Tell students to get excited: it's time for them to share their novels with a real audience! Fortunately, this time their audience will be made up of friendly classmates who want to help them bring out what is already great about their writing. Then ask students if they know what the word "workshop" means. Help them connect the concept of the workshop as a place where people fix things with their hands to the concept of a workshop as an activity in which people improve things using other tools, such as their minds. Explain that today, like the characters they wrote about for their prompt, they will be "fixing up" their novels to make them great. They will do this by participating in a writing workshop.

Step Two: Explaining the Workshop *10 minutes*

1. Explain that today, each student will read the first few pages of his or her novel to a partner. The partner will listen closely to the novel, coming up with positive feedback (pointing out the great parts!) and questions (What didn't make sense? What could be explained in more detail?). Together, talk about guidelines for reviewing one another's drafts. Tell the group that it is important to remain kind and positive when workshopping each other's novels. You may also remind students of the discussion they had on respect at the very beginning of their

novel-writing adventure. If needed, use “The Workshop” worksheet for guidance. With older kids you may want to pass this worksheet out and read the guidelines listed on the worksheet as a class.

2. Tell your students that one of the jobs they will have today is to ask questions about a partner’s novel. Kindergartners may need help writing questions down. While waiting for help with dictation, young students may put a question mark and/or picture on colored Post-its to remind themselves of their questions.

Step Three: The Workshop *30 minutes*

1. Assign each student a partner. Tell the partners that they will take turns reading excerpts of their novels (2-5 pages) to each other. An alternative for kindergartners is to have partners talk about their novels with each other.

2. After reading both novels aloud, partners will swap novel excerpts. Each student will look at the excerpt of their partner’s novel and think about words, sentences, or whole sections that they really like. Then, on a colored Post-it note, partners will write a short sentence describing what they liked about each and post the note on the corresponding section. (Young students can skip the writing step and simply put a colored Post-it next to the parts they liked.) Each student should write three “Positive Praise Post-its” and stick them on their partner’s novel.

3. Using another color of Post-it notes, each partner will write down questions they had about the novel. Tell students that if something doesn’t make sense, ask about it. If you need more detail about a character, ask about it. If you just want to know how your partner came up with a word, phrase, or idea, ask about it!

Brainstorm as a class what kinds of questions would be helpful to ask (and for partners to answer). Use the following questions for guidance:

- What does the setting look like in this scene?
- What does your character look like? What is he/she wearing?
- What does your character feel at this moment?
- What does your character see/hear/touch/feel/taste in this scene? (Refer back to the sensory details lesson.)
- Can you add more details here?
- Can you talk about what happens next? Between these two scenes, what does your character do?

For older students, you may want pass out the "Reader Review Worksheet" and have students refer to the questions on it.

4. Partners should spend about 20 minutes looking at and responding to each other’s work. Keep track of time and provide time warnings to the class.

Step Four: Share *5 minutes*

1. Lead students in a brief discussion about the workshopping process so far. Is it hard or easy to follow the workshopping guidelines? Are there any guidelines that need changing? Invite

response from as many students as possible.

2. Tell the class that they did a great job providing feedback to each other. Remind students to bring their novel excerpts to class tomorrow because they will be using the feedback they received today to make their novels even better!

Lesson Plan 15: Novel, Take 2

Supports Common Core Standards for English Language Arts:

- **Kindergarten**: Writing: 3. Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order that they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened; 5. With guidance and support from adults, add details to strengthen writing as needed through revision.
- **Grade 1**: Writing: 3. Write narratives in which they include at least two or more appropriately sequenced events, use time cue words to signal event order, and provide some details and a sense of closure; 5. With guidance and support from adults, add details to strengthen writing as needed through revision; 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic).
- **Grade 2**: Writing: 3. Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or series of events, use temporal words and phrases to signal event order, include details to tell what the narrator did, thought, and felt, and provide closure; 5. With guidance from adults, strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing; 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic). Language: 1d. Observe conventions of grammar and usage by producing and expanding complete sentences to provide requested detail or clarification.

Total Lesson Time: 3 days; 45 minutes each day

Objectives: By the end of this lesson, SWBAT:

1. Identify strategies for revising their novels.
2. Add descriptive detail to their writing.
3. Clarify the sequence of events in their novels by adding time cue words as needed.
4. Start revising!

Materials:

- Each student should bring his/her two to five page original novel excerpt containing the Post-it feedback from the previous lesson's workshop.
- Each student should also have the entire original copy of their novel available.
- Blank writing paper (or computers, if possible).
- (For teacher reference or older students) One clean copy of the "Unleash the Inner Editor" worksheet. This can be found on page 115 of the Young Novelist Workbook. If desired, this worksheet can be substituted for some of the activities described below.

Day One

Step One: Praise *10 minutes*

1. Have everyone gather together and sit with the partner they worked with during the previous lesson. Everyone should have their novel excerpts and Post-it feedback with them.

2. Give students a moment to reflect on their partners' excerpts, each choosing one thing about the writing that they really liked. Explain that they may choose something general, such as how their partner used lots of great details, or something specific, such as a particular character or sentence that he or she liked. Point out that they may look at the Post-its they wrote for inspiration.

3. Go around the room and have students share with the class what they loved about their partners' drafts. Make sure each student has a chance to speak. When necessary, prompt students for more information or specifics. When all have finished, congratulate students for having such a wide, impressive range of writing skills!

Step Two: Revise *30 minutes*

1. Explain that today students are going to start revising their novels. Explain that "revise" is just a fancy word for making changes and corrections so your novel will be even better. We are going to use the feedback we gave and received yesterday to help us get started!

2. Begin by modeling how students will use the feedback from the Post-its to make changes to their novels. Use a page of a student's novel as an example, or create your own. If a partner was asked, "Can you add some description here?" think aloud with the class about what description would be most effective. Show how to make changes and add details when revising. It may be easiest for young children to make changes to their novels on the original pages. If you decide to go that route, show your students how to use carets to add words and lines to cross out words. If this is too complex and/or messy, encourage your students to write revised portions of their novels on blank writing paper or computers. If students rewrite sections of their novels on separate pieces of paper, show them how to use numbers to keep track of where the new writing will fit into their original novels. For example, the first place where a student decides to add more detail can have a "1" written next to it. Then on a blank piece of paper the student can write a "1" and add on to their novel.

3. Tell students that they should find at least five revisions to make. Feel free to change this number based on the age and abilities of your students. Point out that, as they revise, they should keep in mind what they and their classmates liked best about their writing. This will help them decide what to change and what to leave alone!

4. Give students time to work on revisions. Have partners sit next to each other and encourage them to work together when appropriate. Circulate around the room to help individual students with revision.

Step Three: Share *5 minutes*

Have partners share some of their revisions with each other. Encourage students to look back to the Post-its they wrote in the previous lesson and explain how they answered some of the questions that were asked.

Day Two

Step One: Adding Descriptive Details *10 minutes*

1. Write the following sentence on the board: "Jill eats pizza." Ask the class, "Does this sentence paint a picture of Jill and the pizza in your mind?" Students may give a variety of responses to this question; take a chance to listen to a diverse selection.

2. Ask, “What kinds of details would give a better description of this scene?” Take a few suggestions and change the sentence accordingly. Encourage students to add sensory details and details about both the setting and the characters. If the class gets stuck, ask questions like “Where do you think Jill is eating the pizza?”, “What does Jill look like? How old is she?”, “What kind of pizza is it?”, or “What expression does Jill have on her face when she takes her first bite of pizza?”

Step Two: Revise *30 minutes*

1. Tell the class that today they are going to continue revising their novels. Instead of just focusing on the first five pages, today the rest of their novels get to be revised too! Explain that today the students will be focusing on adding descriptive details to their writing. Each student should find at least five places in their novel where they could add descriptive details. Descriptions could be added using carets or students can rewrite sections, adding more detail on a separate piece of paper and using numbers to keep track of the sections they change.

2. Give students time to work on adding descriptive details to their writing. Circulate around the room to help individual students with revision.

Step Three: Share *5 minutes*

Call the class back together. Have several students share one place where they added descriptive details to their writing. Point out how the details the author added helped to paint vivid pictures in readers’ minds!

Day Three

Step One: Linking Words *10 minutes*

1. Ask the class, “Does anyone know what a linking word is?” Take a few students’ ideas. Explain that a linking word is a word that links two events in a story together. Write a list of linking words on the board: “next,” “then,” “after,” etc.

2. Tell students that linking words also show that time has passed in a story. For example, perhaps first a character goes to the store **then** he goes on a wild car chase and **after** that he falls asleep on the floor of his room. This all took place over the course of a several hours, or even a whole day! Explain that novelists need to make sure the order of events in their novel is clear.

Step Two: More Revising! *30 minutes*

1. Explain that today students are going to revise their novels by focusing on the order of events. They are going to act like detectives to make sure that no information was left out, and put in any information or scenes that may be missing. For example, if a character in a novel goes to the store, then falls asleep on the floor of his room, one might wonder what happens between these events! Tell the class that they are going to think about what is happening between the events in their novels. If any important or interesting parts are missing, their job is to add them in today.

2. New writing could be added using carets or by writing new scenes on another piece of paper. If students choose to write new scenes on another piece of paper, they can use the number system described above by writing a number on the part their novel where the new section should fit in.

Step Three: Share *5 minutes*

Call the class back together. Have several students share one of the revisions they made today. Point out how the revisions the author added helped to make the order of events clear! Congratulate your students on having done a great job with revising their novels!

Note: By this point your students' novels are going to look pretty marked up. If possible, have the students copy over or type up their novels. Or, even better, get a parent volunteer to help with typing up your students' work!

Lesson Plan 16: Cleaning it Up

Supports Common Core Standards for English Language Arts:

- **Kindergarten**: Language: 2a. Observe conventions of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling by capitalizing the first word in a sentence and the pronoun I; 2b. Observe conventions of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling by naming and identifying end punctuation, including periods, question marks, and exclamation points.
- **Grade 1**: Writing: 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic. Language: 1c. Observe conventions of grammar and usage by using subject, object, and possessive pronouns in speaking and writing (e.g., I, me, my; they, them, their); 1d. Observe conventions of grammar and usage by using verbs to convey a sense of past, present, and future in writing and speaking (e.g., Yesterday I walked home; Today I walk home; Tomorrow I will walk home); 2a. Observe conventions of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling by capitalizing names, places, and dates; 2b. Observe conventions of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling by using end punctuation for sentences, including periods, question marks, and exclamation points; 2d. Observe conventions of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling by using conventional spelling for words with common spelling patterns and for common irregular words.
- **Grade 2**: Writing: 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic. Language: 2c. Observe conventions of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling by using apostrophes to form contractions and common possessives; 2e. Observe conventions of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling by consulting reference materials, including beginning dictionaries, as needed to check and correct spellings.

Total Lesson Time: 50 minutes

Note: If you feel your students would benefit from extra support with grammar and mechanics, spread this lesson out over a few days; students acquiring English or emergent readers, for example, may require added review of concepts covered here. When editing, some kids may be insistent that their novels are perfect. Briefly sit with those kids and help them find errors to correct.

Objectives: By the end of this lesson, SWBAT:

1. Proofread their work for punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.
2. Use proofreading marks to edit their own work.

Materials:

- Each student should bring his or her entire novel, typed or handwritten. If typed, make sure the novels are double-spaced and in at least 12 point font.
- Chart paper and markers.
- A children's dictionary.
- (For teacher reference or older students) One clean copy of the "Cleaning It Up" worksheet. This can be found on page 122 in the Young Novelist Workbook.

Step One: What's the Point? *5 minutes*

1. Start by congratulating students for having made it this far. Tell them that the hard part of writing a novel is over; the bulk of the work is done. All they have to do now is clean it up so it will sparkle and shine. Explain that proofreading is the absolute last step in writing. They may have been tempted to fix spelling and punctuation before that, especially when they got stuck

writing or revising for the “big picture.” Now that they’ve done all that, though, they can fix all those piddly mistakes.

2. Ask students to think of mistakes they have seen in their own writing or other people’s writing. Were any of these mistakes confusing or even funny? Help students grasp that mistakes in their writing will distract readers, confuse them, or even amuse them in a bad way—which in turn will make it harder for readers to understand what their novels are about. Write a few examples on the board to help make this point. Give examples such as writing “Harry ran down the toad” instead of “Harry ran down the road.”

Step Two: Proofread and Correct *Suggested time: 15 minutes*

1. Tell students that today they’re going to act as detectives once again, this time looking for spelling, capitalization and punctuation errors to fix. Point out that even famous and best-selling novelists are guilty of many of these offenses. Fortunately for published authors, they have editors who will point out and mark errors. Your students will have to mark their own errors themselves! Then work through an example exercise with students. Write the following sentence on the board:

it seemed like a Good idea the nigt before. But now as Simon walked into Room, he new he haD mad a mistake?

3. Ask students to think about the problems they see in the sentence. Have students raise their hands to share the problems they see. If somebody sees a problem with the word “nigt,” for example, demonstrate on the board how to mark it by drawing a line through it, adding a caret, and writing the correct word *night* above. This is also a great chance to remind children that they can use a dictionary to look up spellings of words they are not sure about. (If time allows, demonstrate looking up “nigt/night” in the dictionary.) Also ask children to identify the punctuation marks used and ask if each one is correct.

Finish editing the sentence as a group.

Step Three: Clean It Up *25 minutes*

1. Come up with an editing checklist with your students. Write the checklist on chart paper. Depending on the age and abilities of your students, the checklist may look like this:

Inner Editor Proofreading Checklist

- Every sentence begins with a capital letter.
- Every proper noun begins with a capital letter.
- Every sentence has the correct end mark.
- I used other punctuation marks, such as commas and apostrophes, correctly.
- I have checked my spelling.
- I have *really* checked my spelling and looked for tricky words, using a dictionary if needed.

2. Tell students that they will have about 20 minutes to proofread and mark up their novels. For some students, this may just be the start of their editing adventure (see the note above), so tell

your class they don't need to worry about editing their entire novel in 20 minutes. For kindergartners, the editing process may be a difficult one, so don't stress about spending too much time editing. It's quite a feat to have young children do even minimal editing! Remind them that this is not the time to make major changes to the story; they should have already done that! Instead, they should focus on fixing mistakes in the writing. Tell students to use the checklist on the chart paper to remind them of the types of errors they should be looking for. Provide the dictionary and remind students that they can use it at any time.

Step Four: Share *5 minutes*

1. Have volunteers share mistakes they found or improvements they made to their pages. You may wish to have some volunteers write sentences they corrected on the board and show how they marked them up. Or have them hold up their work and explain what they did. Provide support and encouragement to students. Tell them that "cleaning up" writing is hard work and sometimes tedious, but makes an enormous difference in whether people understand what is happening in their novels.

2. You may also wish to have students post "Before and After" paragraphs from their novels on a class bulletin board. Other students will benefit from seeing the types of grammatical and conventional edits classmates are making.

Lesson Plan 17: Art Project! Design Your Own Book Cover

Supports Common Core Standards for English Language Arts:

- **Kindergarten**: Reading: 6. Name the author and illustrator of a text and define the role of each. Writing: 3. Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order that they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.

Total Lesson Time: 45 minutes

Objectives: By the end of this lesson, SWBAT:

1. Recognize the different aspects of a book cover including the front cover image, title, and author's name.
2. Create a book cover for their NaNo-novels.

Materials:

- A few hardback books for cover examples.
- Paper.
- Markers, colored pencils, old magazines, and glue sticks.

Note: You can do this lesson plan any time before, during, or after NaNoWriMo. Teachers have found that it works best to make book covers after NaNoWriMo is over. Students will know more about what their books are about, making the cover design easier to create. On the other hand, an art project is always a good way to give your students a break from writing!

Step One: Book Cover Discussion *5 minutes*

Together, look at some published books and take notice of their covers. Ask your students what kinds of things you might find on a book cover. You want to make sure you discuss the cover image, the title, and the placement of the author's name. If students notice any illustrator names, help them understand the difference between a book's author and its illustrator. You might also ask your students what they like and dislike about these book covers to help them think of ideas for their own covers.

Step Two: Design Your Book Covers *30 minutes*

1. Pass out supplies. There are many ways to design your covers. If your students have been working in a notebook, you can draw or collage right onto the notebook. You can also hand out blank sheets 8.5" by 11" paper. Do whatever makes most sense for your students' novels.

2. Make sure each front cover includes:

- **A front cover image**. When your students design their own book covers, they can get as detailed as they like. Since drawing might be difficult for some kids, encourage them to make a collage on the front cover with cut-outs from old magazines.
- **The title of the novel**.
- **The author's name**.

It would probably be a good idea to create an example book cover so your kids know what goes

where.

Step Three: Share! *10 minutes*

Call on students to share their covers with the class. They should show the class their covers and read aloud the titles of their novels.

Making NaNoWriMo Classroom Anthologies

Supports Common Core Standards for English Language Arts:

- **Grade 1**: Writing: 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic).
- **Grade 2**: Writing: 6. With guidance from adults, use technology to produce writing; 7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of books on a given topic).

Your class has put in a month of hard work. Why not give them something they can show off? Consider creating a NaNoWriMo anthology with your class, featuring excerpts from each student, author pictures, student reflections about their NaNoWriMo experience, and much more. Below you will find all the elements that make up a great anthology!

Materials:

- Book-making supplies: These materials can be as simple or as elaborate as you like. Your school district may have access to software that can be used to make something more professional-looking. If you do not have access to computers, you can also use scissors, a stapler, and a copy machine just as well. You may also approach local copiers to see if they would be willing to donate printing services or offer you a discount.
- You can also use an online self-publishing platform to design and self-publish the anthology.
- A digital or film camera to take author photos.

The Elements of a Great NaNoWriMo Classroom Anthology

Title and Cover

A title is an important thing for any anthology because it sets the tone for the work inside. Sure, you could go with *Mrs. Smith's First Grade Class NaNoWriMo Anthology*, but wouldn't something like *Monkeys vs. Aliens* be more fun? You could look for cool lines from the kids' excerpts and pick one, or you could let them come up with titles in class and vote.
If you take the time to make a book cover, the book will appear that much more "real." You can design it yourself or you can host a "Book Cover Contest" in your classroom.

Tables of Contents

Don't forget the little things that make your book look professional. A table of contents and page numbering system will allow proud parents to find their child's story easily.

The Content

There are a couple ways you can do this. One is by making this a "First Chapter Anthology," meaning every student could revise and turn in their first chapters, or the first 2–5 pages, depending on grade level, classroom size, and the size of your printing budget.

Another way to do it is to have each student choose and revise a favorite excerpt from his or her novel. It could be that really cool action scene about alien ninjas, a climax involving a two-headed dragon, or an awesome ending. Again, the page limit is up to you.

No matter which pages students select for their excerpts, however, one thing is essential: each excerpt must include a title and the author's name, and have been proofread very, very carefully. If students use the first few pages of their novels, proofreading will likely have been completed during Lesson 16. If they choose a different set of pages, however, these may need to be proofread for the first time. Remind students how to do this by correcting spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. If needed, refer them back to the Lesson 16 worksheet for specific tips on what to look for. If the excerpt is handwritten, students should rewrite clean copies in their best handwriting.

The simplest way to arrange the stories in your anthology is alphabetically, by author's last name. That way, everything is as fair and equal as possible.

You could also look for a "flow" from one story to the next. It's hard to explain, but once you start reading the stories and arranging them, there may be an order that just feels right, possibly even one that creates a feeling of something bigger than the sum of its parts.

Extra Cool Things That Will Make Your Students Feel Like Real Authors

You can enhance the authorial feel by giving each student the full-feature treatment:

1. Have them write an author bio. This could be a real bio, or a fictional one. If they want this NaNo-novel to be recognized as their fifth best-seller, that's great!
2. Include an author photo, preferably with the student looking very serious and authorial. You may want to bring in some props, like large quills, busts of Shakespeare, typewriters, etc.
3. Write a bit of praise for each student's novel. Something like, "A must read. James is a genius when it comes to ninjas."

General Notes

For students so new to the writing process, focus on praise and encouragement rather than editing. The word counts here may be low enough that you will be able to include each student's entire novel in this anthology.

Encourage kids who do not want to draw to cut out pictures from magazines (or provide them with clip art that they can cut out) to illustrate their stories for the anthology. For the older elementary students, encourage them to draw illustrations for their stories.

In any case, remember that the anthology is a celebration of your students' work in November. It deserves to look wonderful and to find an honored place in your classroom!

Also keep in mind that some students will continue to work on their novels even after the project is over, or may even start new novels on their own! Consider checking back in with the group periodically to see who's still writing. For those who get their novels to a stage they feel is final, encourage them with ideas of how to find audiences for their work by entering it contests, submitting it to children's literary magazines, and more.

Quick Links to Web Resources

- How Does NaNoWriMo Work for Educators?
- How Does NaNoWriMo Work for Young Writers?
- Workbooks
- Pep Talks
- Classroom Kit
- Virtual Classroom How-To
- Educator Forums
- Donate to Support NaNoWriMo