

# Marvelous Mini-Lessons for Teaching Nonfiction Writing, K-3

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Reflections on a book club study

strategy/page	reflection
Adding on Details Pg.33, Chapter 2	We used this strategy with our beginning story writing. I liked this strategy, but it took some ground work first as it was a little advanced to just start this way with grade ones. We had to learn what a detail is and that we can add details that are added words and not just by adding a whole new sentence. It took more than just a little mini lesson for them to understand this. We did the whole class example and partner work looking at a previously written story, but they had trouble with reading previous written work. They wrote their added detail in a different colour pencil. This does not work well unless they have double spaced their writing. We backtracked a little and practiced just adding details to sentences and are now back at adding details to stories with more success.
Start with a Grabber p. 70	This was a simple strategy to improve student's opening sentences. I loved the <i>two good ways to grab your reader - A question or - An amazing fact</i> . The students enjoyed using these two strategies and with only 2 choices the struggling writers could still do it.
Adding on Details P. 33.	This was a great strategy to get students to slow down when writing and teaching them to revisit their work. I found it worked well with grade 2 students. We had been working on adding more detail into our sentences and paragraphs. This lesson took this concept to another level. The "I do, We do, You do" strategy worked well with these students. They were engaged in the lessons and did a great job at going back and adding more detail to their writing. Having modeled the expectations made it "easier" for the students to be more independent with their work. The expectations were clearer and more manageable. Great lesson.
Four kinds of sentences p. 94.  Fascinating facts about p. 105	<p>This is a simple way of explaining what a period, question mark, exclamation marks in kid friendly language. The visual is one kids liked and understand.</p> <p>This graphic organizer was easy for all students to use regardless of their skill set and writing abilities. It had a space for a picture and lines for writing simple facts--easy to use and my students felt successful in being able to complete the sheet without too much effort. It was a great one that I will continue to use again and again.</p>
Writing Celebration (Author Party) p. 98	This was great. We could consider doing it school wide. I made them each a passport with questions listed inside. It was just a bit of extra work to make sure that lower students had some writing to be proud of and that they practiced reading it out loud. I would suggest using a really structured piece of writing. We used an

		<p>animal fact paragraph and then the students chose one thing from their writers' workshop folder. It is also important to make sure you have enough readers on hand. I gave the students stickers to mark their name in the passports. That was fun.</p>
<p>Chapter 3 "Expert Bingo" Page 43</p>		<p>This was a great activity that did not take too long at all! The students learned that they have many new things to write about!</p> <p>The students all received a black line master on fun coloured paper. I had my Teacher sample my answers. The students list a few things that they are experts on under the main categories. The first one done got a candy:)My samples were displayed on document camera such as: walk a cow on a halter, cook spaghetti, make slime, fold laundry, blow bubbles with bubble gum ,jumping jacks etc.</p> <p>The kids then did a "Talk To Your Neighbor " and learned so much about each other. They now have a sheet in their writing folder we can use for our next journal prompt or writing prompt. I used this in a Grade 1 classroom where they were given the option to draw the picture or write..... They all decided to write!!</p>
<p>"Are/Can/Have" Research  (page?)</p>		<p>This was perfect for grade one. We used it before our Swan Lake field trip for reptiles and amphibians. We looked at books, pictures and videos and then used the categories to brainstorm what we could put in each. The three categories helped us to organize and then transfer that info to journals. It really expanded and improved their journal responses.</p> <p>I don't think the book provides enough detail though, as I had to already understand KWL type writing to know how to use this best. A blackline master, like one I already have, was very useful and it would be nice for the book to include one in an appendix.</p>