

The Immersion Excursion

Examples of Lessons and Ideas to Help
Students Travel through a Text Type

Kindergarten Unit 8

Informational Writing - Personal Expertise



Table of Contents

Background Section

Purpose of Sample Immersion Lessons	1
Purpose of Immersion.....	1
Reading Like a Reader, Reading Like a Writer	2
Inquiry Approach versus Architecture of a Mini-Lesson.....	2
Text Selection	2
Where to Find More Information on Immersion.....	2

Lesson Plan Section

Three Basic Goals of Immersion	3
Sample Week of Immersion Lessons	3
Sample Lessons based on 3 Goals.....	4

BACKGROUND SECTION

The purpose of these lessons is to provide a sense of possibilities for teachers. “Shop around” for ideas to share with students. Pick and choose lessons based on teacher background knowledge and students’ background knowledge and interests. These lessons serve as exemplars for how the study of Immersion might go. Teachers urged (really begged) me to craft lessons to guide newcomers on various ways to explore a text type and mentor texts. The intent is not to simplify the process into formulaic lessons. Instead, these represent samples of possible activities a teacher might include during an Immersion Phase. Immersion is inquiry-based – discussion should revolve around what students notice and want to discuss. Therefore, modify, adjust, delete, and add lessons based on the background knowledge and needs of your students. An On-Demand performance assessment is an excellent vehicle to determine what students know and need to learn.

Good luck being a tour guide for your students as they explore various text types and books. The act of writing opens hearts and minds ---

Dr. Sandy Biondo

Purpose of Immersion

The purpose of the Immersion Phase is to help students develop a thorough understanding of the text type they will be writing. Immersion will help students to create a vision of how their own texts may be written and possible items to include. The goal is to move students from *explorers* of the text type to *writers* of it. Through studying mentor texts, students will develop a greater understanding of:

- A. Definition and Purpose (What is xxx? Why do people read xxx? Why do people write xxx?)
- B. Characteristics (What makes an effective xxx?)
- C. How these texts tend to go?
 1. How does the beginning or lead tend to go? What is included?
 2. How does the middle part or body tend to go? What is included?
 3. How does the ending or conclusion tend to go? What is included?
 4. Author craftsmanship specific to that text type (e.g. narrative: character, plot, heart of the story, details such as internal thinking, setting, character action, physical description, dialogue, etc.; information: text structures, text features such as captions, headings, bold face, etc.; details such as numbers, names, examples, partner sentences, topic specific words, etc.; opinion – claim, reasons, supporting details as facts, quotes, micro-stories with a slant, interview information, surveys, etc.)

Webster’s dictionary defines a mentor as: “a close, trusted, and experienced counselor or guide” - which perfectly describes the relationship we want our students to have with mentor texts.

Reading Like a Reader, Reading Like a Writer

It is important that students have multiple experiences with a piece or book. Time should be devoted to them first *reading like a reader* – read, enjoy, and discuss. Then, pieces will be *reread* in part or whole through “writerly eyes.” Students will now *read like a writer*. Selections will be *reread* to notice, name, and discuss how and why an author structured things in a particular way or selected specific words. Students will come to learn that authors “intentionally” craft words and text in certain ways to share information and create different types of meaning. Ultimately, reading like a writer means to read with a sense of possibility – *What did this author do that I could try?* Subsequently, teachers want students to use mentor texts as resources for when they write.

Inquiry Approach Versus Architecture of a Mini-Lesson

Immersion lessons typically follow an inquiry approach; therefore, they are open-ended and idiosyncratic to the group. They will not follow the typical architecture of a mini-lesson (e.g. connection, teach, active engagement, link and share). Teachers may not have specific lessons for this phase, but instead have general areas of study (e.g. background - definition, purpose, characteristics, how texts tend to go, writing ideas, class shared draft, etc.). Teachers should follow the lead of their students -- notice, restate, negotiate what they say in order to bring meaning and understanding. This is a time for students to notice the characteristics and purposes of a text type. Teachers are assisting students in moving from → EXPLORERS of the text type to WRITERS of the text type.

Text Selection

Text selection should include published work (e.g. literature books, articles), student authored work, and teacher authored work. Texts should exemplify the various components that a well written text at that grade level would include. See resource packet per unit for criteria for mentor text selection and possible titles. Additionally, teachers may check out the following resources for possible mentor text: literature/trade book lists for that text type and grade level, websites that include student and teacher-authored work, selections from Reading and Writing Project from Teachers College (www.readingandwritingproject.com), professional resources and recommendations from noted researchers (e.g. Katie Wood Ray, Lucy Calkins, Ralph Fletcher, Tony Stead, etc.), collections from the MAISA website, your district or local intermediate school district, etc.

Tip: When planning, jot notes on what the text has to offer so it can be used as a “cheat sheet.” Affix these notes on the back of the text. Select different texts for different reasons. Variety is the key. Don’t select books/texts that all look and sound the same and have the same features.

Make a list of text that can be shared beyond Immersion sessions. Include these selections during shared reading or read alouds during the entire unit of study.

Where to Find More Information on Immersion

Prior to studying these lessons, it is highly recommended teachers read the supplemental resources on Atlas: [Immersion Phase: Creating a Vision for Writing, Part 1 – Background Information and Part 2 – Grade Level Appendices.](#)

LESSON PLAN SECTION

Three Basic Goals of Immersion (simplifying a complex process)

Goal 1 – Develop Background Knowledge

Goal 2 – Generate Possible Writing Ideas

Goal 3 – Try It – Shared Class Writing – Begin a Class “Flash” Draft

SAMPLE WEEK OF IMMERSION LESSONS

Day 1# Goal 1: Develop Background Knowledge

Read, Study, and Discuss How Information Books Work!

Day 2* Goal 1: Develop Background Knowledge

Mark Up Discoveries of Information Text - Book

Day 3* Goal 1: Develop Background Knowledge

Mark Up Discoveries of Information Text – Student or Teacher Work

Day 4 Goal 2: Generate Possible Writing Ideas

Linking Mentor Texts with Writing Ideas

~~~~~      Goal #3: Try It – Shared Class Writing

**Write a Class Informational Book. *This may begin anytime during the Immersion phase during shared/interactive writing time.***

#      It is suggested to do part or all of this lesson during reading time - Read Aloud with Accountable Talk and Shared Reading. Multiple reading sessions may be needed to provide ample time to read, enjoy and discuss books from a readerly perspective.

\*      Depending on availability of time, teachers may add additional days to study Goal 1: Develop Background Knowledge – Discoveries of Information Text.

## IMMERSION Goal #1 – Develop Background Knowledge

### Day 1 – Read, Study and Discuss How Information Books Work!

**Please Note:** Some teachers may choose to do this lesson during Immersion time, Read Aloud with Accountable Talk, Shared Reading or a combination of all three. If there is limited time during writing, it is suggested to do this lesson during reading components prior to the activities in Day 2. Please read Day 1, 2, and 3 lessons before preparing for this lesson.

Select at least 4-6 information books that you will share with students (preferably during reading aloud with accountable talk and/or shared reading). These selections should be a combination of published text, teacher authored work, student authored work and/or a class shared writing piece from a previous class. Read, enjoy and discuss these books. Teachers may need multiple reading sessions to accomplish this. Guide students in seeing a pattern of what an information book is, its purpose and how it tends to go. Reading and discussion of these texts should be done prior to Day 2 lesson. Days 2 and 3 of Immersion call for a deeper study of some pages of these familiar texts. Day 1's focus is a broader, overall understanding of information writing.

#### Possible discussion points:

- 1. Introduce the concept of Information Writing or Personal Expertise** – *Today we will begin the study of another kind of writing or text type. It is called Information Writing or Personal Expertise. As young writers, you will learn to author information books. You will write about something you know a lot about and could teach others. In other words, you will share information you have about a person, place, thing or activity. When a person knows a lot about something and shares that information, we say they have “personal expertise” on the topic. This means this person is like an expert on the topic or area they are teaching.*
- 2. Discuss - How do people know a lot about topics?** *There are different ways that people may know a lot about a topic:*
  - A. They read about the topic.*
  - B. They have experience with the topic. For example, if a person - they met that person, if a place - they went there, if an activity - they've tried it, if a thing - they may own it or have tried someone else's.*
  - C. They studied that topic in school, at home or at a special place.*
  - D. They have talked to other people that know a lot about the topic and learned from them.*

Provide examples for each area.

- 3. Read and discuss selected information books. After reading 2 or 3 books, generate discussion to further explore the following questions:**
  - A. Definition: What is personal expertise writing or information writing?*
  - B. Purpose: Why do people write information pieces/ books? Why do people read information pieces/books?*

C. *Characteristics: What makes an effective information book? Elaborate on how each part tends to go (Keep general on Day 1) -*

- *How does the beginning or lead tend to go? What is included?*
- *How does the middle part or body tend to go? What is included?*
- *How does the ending tend to go? What is included?*

**Through studying various samples, help students to discover that information books tend to follow a certain organization:**

- Cover and Table of Contents - tells reader what book is about or topic; lists what it will teach
- Beginning or Lead – introduces or tells what the author is going to teach the reader, called topic
- Middle – teaching section; gives information about the topic; often organized by the different things the author is going to teach about the topic; these are called subtopics; etc. At the kindergarten level, may discuss facts versus subtopics.
- End or Ending – author restates or names the topic again

Continue adding to this discussion as additional information books are shared. Keep the discussion general as specifics will be studied during Days 2 and 3. See next part to assist with discussion. Please note: Author craftsmanship will be studied during Days 2 and 3. What are some special features (craft items) specific to information writing?

**Begin charting their understandings and noticings. This can be done in an open-ended list format or by putting each noticing on a large sticky note and displaying. For example:**

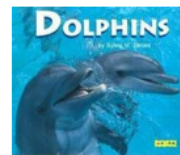
- Information books are.... (definition)
- People read them because... (purpose)
- People write them .... (purpose)
  
- General Noticings
  - Has a cover and sometimes a table of contents
  - Beginning - tells the topic or what the author is going to teach the reader
  - Middle – teaches information about the topic
  - End – wraps up or ends the book....

## SAMPLE ANCHOR CHARTS FOR DAY 1

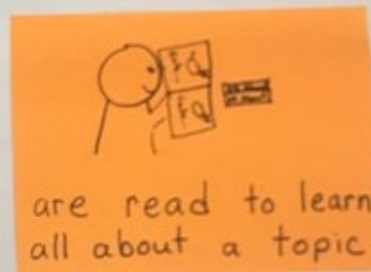
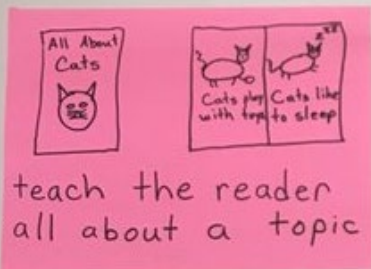
Source: Kindergarten Study Group – Open ending listing with visuals (Sample A: typed with samples from familiar texts, Sample B: sticky note version)

Informational Books...

- teach the reader all about a topic
- are read to learn all about a topic
- are written to share all about a topic



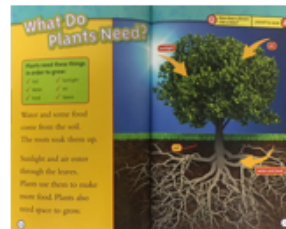
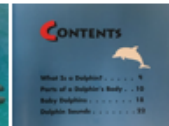
Informational Books...





# Informational Books Have...

- Title and maybe Table of Contents
- Beginning - tells what the topic is
- Middle - teaches information about the topic
- End - wraps up or ends the book



## Informational Books Have ...

|                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| All About Cats | Table of Contents |
|                | Cats 3            |
|                | Parts 4           |
|                | Food 5            |
|                | Toys 7            |

a title and maybe table of contents

A cat is an animal

have a beginning -tells the topic

|                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Cat Parts              | Food                  |
|                        |                       |
| whiskers               | Fish                  |
| Cats have pointy ears. | mouse                 |
|                        | Cats eat many things. |

have a middle -teaches about topic

You should get a cat for a pet.

have an ending -wraps up the topic

## IMMERSION Goal #1 – Develop Background Knowledge

### Day 2 – Mark Up Discoveries of Information Texts (Books)

The purpose of this lesson is to revisit familiar mentor texts to add to existing knowledge. Select 1 or 2 books for this lesson. Also, select 1 or 2 student or teacher pieces previously read for Day 3 lesson. These books will be studied more in-depth, looking more specifically at *how* information is shared. Initially, noticings will be identified by marking up text with sticky notes. Then, the teacher should transfer this information onto large sticky notes with visuals or into an open-ended listing chart with visuals. Either format will be used as a review and resource throughout the unit. Continue adding to the chart as the unit progresses and students learn more.

**Please note:** There are several options of how to record students' thinking and discoveries of text, specifically Notice, Name and Why/Purpose. This lesson uses Option E: Combination of Mark-Up Text and then record in chart form (e.g. Noticing Chart with Visuals). Please see packet: Immersion Phase Part 1 Background knowledge for further information and samples. Continue adding to the chart as the unit progresses and students learn more.

Possible Steps Goal #1 Develop Background Knowledge:

- A. Teacher Preparation prior to lesson: Select a familiar text to study that has several page spreads that demonstrate different writing techniques in both text features and words/text. Select 4+ pages or page spreads to study - perhaps lead pages, body pages, and ending pages. Make a list of noticings for teacher reference. See sample below. This is a teacher list of possibilities. It does not mean students will notice all these items. They may not notice some of these items until after studying several different texts that have samples of a particular item. This may happen during subsequent Immersion lessons or during unit lessons.
- B. Revisit the concept that information books do not have to be read from page 1 to the last page like narrative text and discuss why.
- C. Read the first page/page spread selected and discuss.
- D. Ask student to share what they notice. Generate discussion on Notice, Name and Why: "What do you notice (notice)? What is that called (name?), and Why would an author include that in text (purpose)?" See: Immersion Phase Part 1 Background knowledge for more specifics.
- E. Mark up page with a sticky note that names the item/s under discussion. See sample.
- F. Repeat with each page spread.
- G. As a review, go back and transfer noticings listed on sticky notes on book pages to some type of recording anchor chart - large sticky notes or an open-ended listing chart with visuals (e.g. take a picture of that item or draw a picture).

- H. Keep adding to the anchor chart or large sticky notes throughout the unit as students make more discoveries.
- I. If time allows, study an additional familiar book and do the same steps.

**Example:** Seed to Plant by Kristen Baird Rattini (2014) National Geographic Society. (I highly recommend any of National Geographic Kids information books.) Affix sticky notes directly on the text with the name of the noticing. See sample after teacher preparation section. This book is available online for free to teachers through Epic. Simply sign up at [getepic.com](http://getepic.com). This is a digital resource that includes a multitude of books to share with students. Also, through this site teachers can access other FREE copies of texts such as National Geographic Kids series.

***Sample teacher preparation:***

Beginning

Cover Title, picture, author

Table of Contents page

pp. 4-5 What is a Plant? – ask students to do noticings for text features and running text (words) (e.g. text: header - tells the topic, includes - definition, facts, comparison to people, examples, etc.; features: photographs, labels, close up)

Middle

pp. 10-11 How Does a Plant Begin - ask students to do noticings for text features and running text or do pp. 28-29 (e.g. features: photographs for each step, #s, labels and arrows, definition box, etc. text: heading, word box, How-To steps, facts, etc.)

pp. 14-15 What Do Plants Need - ask students to do noticings for text features and running text (e.g. features: check list, directional arrows, labels, diagram, Q & A, etc. text: heading, facts, explains information, etc.)

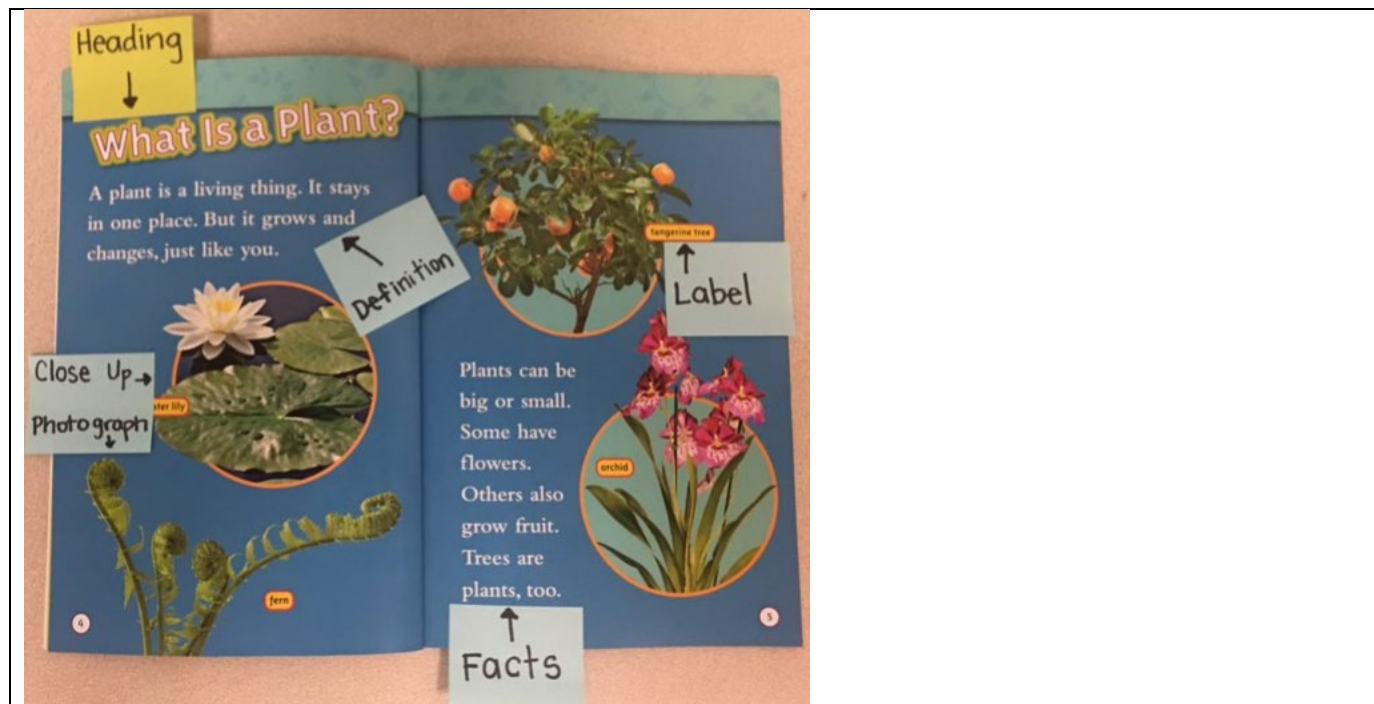
pp. 16-17 6 Fun Plant Facts - ask students to do noticings for text features and running text (e.g. features: heading, #s, photo circles, photos, label, arrow, etc. text: facts, comparison, examples, etc.)

End

pp. 30-31 last pages (ending – names/talks about main topic again, review of things learned in book – photo and hint, glossary)

***Please note: Each of these page spreads have different things for student to notice. They were intentionally selected to study a variety of items.***

## Sample Mark Up Text - pages 4-5



Seed to Plant by Kristen Baird Rattini (2014) National Geographic Society. (I highly recommend any of National Geographic Kids information books.) Affix sticky notes directly on the text with the name of the noticing.

This book is available online for free to teachers through Epic. Simply sign up at [getepic.com](https://www.getepic.com). This is a digital resource that includes a multitude of books to share with students. Also, through this site teachers can access other FREE copies of texts such as National Geographic Kids series.

## Example of Mark-up Discoveries in a Second Book

Example: Dolphins by Sylvia M. James (2002) Mondo. (Available in big book format too)

*Sample teacher prep:*

### Beginning

Cover Title, picture, author

Table of Contents page

pp. 4-5 What is a Dolphin? – ask students to do noticings for text features and running text (words)  
(e.g. text: heading, facts, comparison, etc.; text features: photographs, labels, etc.)

### Middle

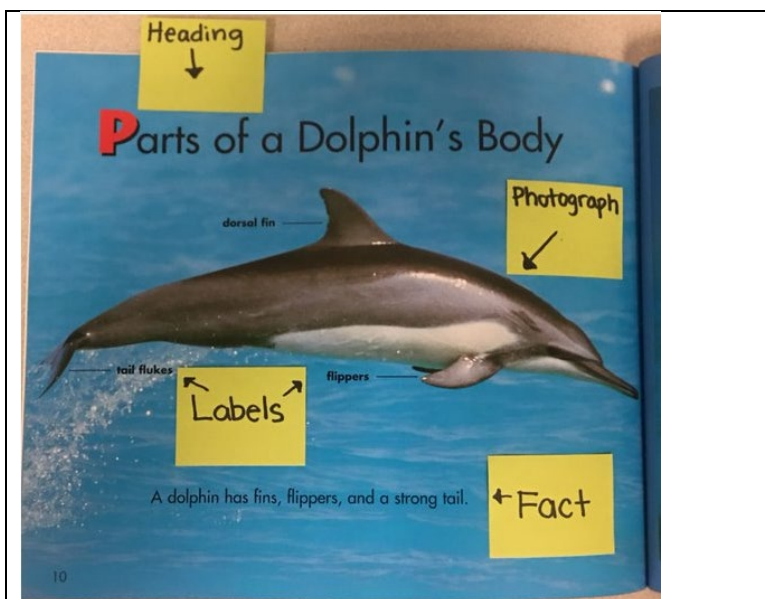
Page 8 Ask students to do noticings for text features and running text (words)  
(e.g. text: three of a kind page; text features: photographs, labels, etc.)

Page 10 Parts of a Dolphin's Body- ask students to do noticings for text features and running text  
(e.g. text – facts, examples; text features: photo with arrows and label, etc.)

Page 15 Ask students to do noticings for text features and running text (words)  
(e.g. text – facts, definition, comparison; text features: photo, labels, close up, etc.)

End no ending pages

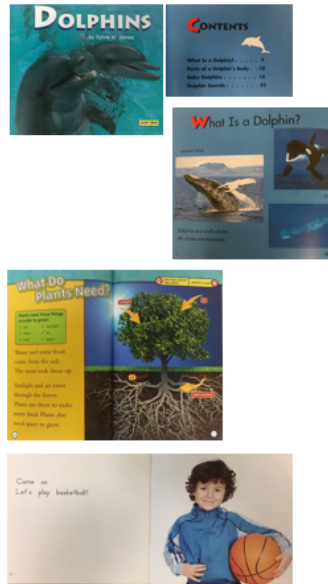
*Please note: Each of these page spreads have different things for student to notice. They were intentionally selected to study a variety of items.*



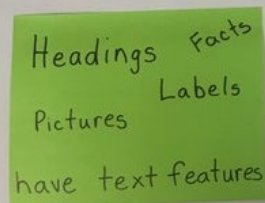
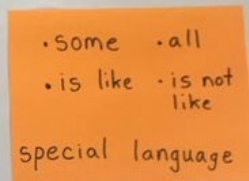
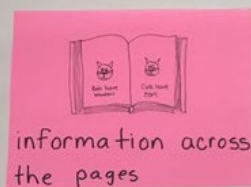
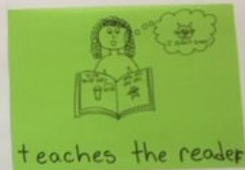
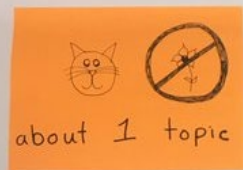
## SAMPLE ANCHOR CHARTS FROM DAY 2

### Informational Noticings...

- About 1 topic
- Teaches reader
- Different information across pages
- Special language
  - some
  - all
  - is like
  - is not like
- Text features



### Informational Book Noticings...



**OPTION: If time allows, study another familiar book. Also, some teachers choose to study additional books during Shared Reading and/or Read Aloud with Accountable Talk.**

Suggestions: See unit for text suggestions.

Check books being studied in content areas.

Check Shared Reading Informational Texts.

Other Sandy favorites:

Caterpillar to Butterfly by Laura Marsh (National Geographics)

How Toys Work - Pulleys by Sian Smith (part of the Acorn series – Heinemann Raintree)

Australian Animals by Sharon Callen (Capstone)

Dolphins by Sylvia M. James (Mondo)

Basketball by Sean Finnigan (Pioneer Valley Educational Press)

## IMMERSION Goal #1 – Develop Background Knowledge

### Day 3 – Mark Up Discoveries of Information Text (Teacher or Student Authored Work)

Revisit lesson from Day 2 using a familiar teacher or student piece that was studied on Day 1 or during reading time. Follow the same steps in previous lesson. Help students to note that some things appear over and over again in information texts. Assist them in discovering new items that this text has to offer. Mark up these texts with sticky notes, then later add new items to Immersion Noticing Anchor Chart.

Sample: Student Work Artifact – Birds - See Resource Section on Atlas for the entire student piece. It is suggested the teacher keeps pictures intact, but retypes the words in standard spelling and places over existing text before duplicating and sharing. See retyped sample below. Develop a teacher list of possible noticings before the lesson.

Unit: Informational Writing Personal Expertise

Grade: K

Task: Student Work Sample

Title: Birds

#### **Birds (cover p. 1)**

##### **Table of Contents (page 2)**

All about the eggs... [actual page says - All about the wings]

All about the smooth wings...

Mother birds lay eggs...

When birds are hungry for worms...

A part of the bird...

##### **All about the wings (pages 3 and 4)**

Some birds have wings. Some birds have colorful wings! Some birds have blue wings or black wings or red wings. Red Robins have red wings. The blue wings are the blue jay wings. The black wings are the regular birds.

##### **All about the smooth wings (pages 5 and 6)**

The birds have smooth wings. All birds have smooth wings. Like dogs they have smooth fur on the top of the heads! And people! They have smooth hair. Like me!

##### **Mothers lay eggs (page 7)**

Birds lay eggs. All birds lay eggs! Just like mother Robins they get babies.

##### **When the birds are hungry for worms (pages 8 and 9)**

Birds eat worms! Do you know? They are hungry. Just like people! I always get hungry! We don't eat worms. We eat people food. Just like me!

##### **Birds can fly (pages 10 and 11)**

Birds can fly! They flap their wings up and down! Just like owls but they can glide! Just like owls too... they can fly!

##### **A part of a bird (pages 12 and 13)**

Here is a diagram of a bird. It has labels! They have a body? Like me! I have a face but I don't have a beak!



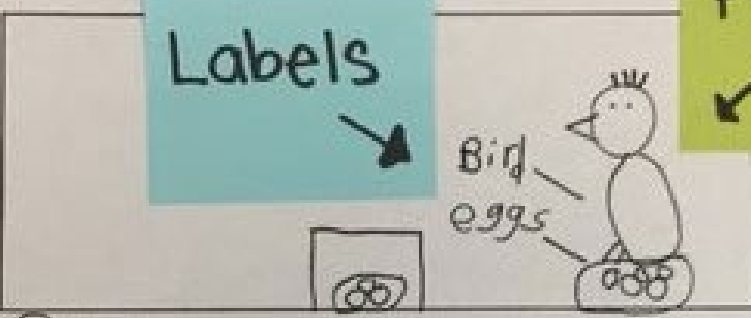
Example of a Mark-up Discovery of a Student Piece

Heading  
↓

Mothers lay eggs

Labels  
↓

Picture  
✓



Birds lay eggs.  
All birds lay  
eggs! Just like  
Mothers <sup>birds</sup> ~~do~~ if they  
get <sup>birds</sup> ~~babey~~s! Jus  
like ~~birds~~! But ~~the~~ ~~mothers~~ ~~do~~ ~~not~~

← Facts

Birds lay eggs. All birds lay eggs!

Just like mother Robins they get babies.

### Sample Kindergarten Open-Ended Listing Chart with Visuals - Optional

This is an alternative chart in lieu of noticings placed on large sticky notes with some type of visual. A chart like this may be made after a couple of days studying Goal #1: Developing Background Knowledge. Also, it could include pictures and/or samples from *any* of the texts studied during Immersion (e.g. books, student authored work, or teacher authored work). The teacher should develop the chart, then share with the class as a review of what has been learned so far about informational writing. Keep adding to the chart as the unit progresses and students learn more.

Example: Seed to Plant by Kristen Baird Rattini (2014) National Geographic Society. (I highly recommend any of National Geographic Kids information books.) Column 1 – Example could come from all the texts studied. This example highlights Seed to Plant, but could easily be adapted to include samples from all Immersion texts studied.

Typically, with Kindergarten students, the teacher would do a 2-column format or have large stick notes with the name and an example. The third column, Purpose, is for teacher use. However, a teacher may include this column on the class anchor chart, if deemed appropriate. This information may help teachers guide discussion on why an item may be in text.

| Example – put photo, drawing or sample text | Name         | Purpose – teacher use only, not for display                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Insert picture of heading: What is a Plant? | heading      | Names the topic                                                                                |
| Insert picture of white-water lily          | photograph   | Shows what something looks like                                                                |
| Insert picture of words: white water lily   | label        | Tells the name of what is in a photo                                                           |
| Insert text or type out                     | facts        | Teaches us information about the topic                                                         |
| Trees are plants, too.                      | example      | Gives more information about the topic                                                         |
| But it grows and changes, just like you.    | comparison   | Show how something might not know about is like something do know; show how alike or different |
| Copy of page 10                             | How-To Steps | Shows the steps or order of doing something                                                    |
| Copy of word box – Buzz Words, Germination  | Word Box     | Tells what a word means, usually a word we don't know                                          |
| Continue adding items as noticed            |              |                                                                                                |

## **IMMERSION Goal #2 – Generate Possible Writing Ideas**

### **Linking Mentor Texts with Writing Ideas**

- 1. Teacher Preparation: Select texts from a class, school or public library that fall into various territories and categories. Texts may be literature books, student written, teacher written or class shared writing pieces. If book/piece is not available, copy the front cover. These texts will be used to highlight various topics or possible writing ideas. The broad territories used will be: People, Places, Activities and Things. See sample chart at the end of the lesson.**

Brainstorm categories under each territory. Find a variety of student pieces and/or books that would fit under each category. For example, People – a book that highlights a community helper, a book that shows a celebrity or athlete, a book that studies an inventor or historian, a book about a family member, etc. Teachers will not be reading these texts per se, but will show the title and cover (and maybe a few interesting pages).

**\*Select categories based on age and interest of students. Modify for Kindergarten students.**

Example 1 People = territory

Possible Categories\*: family member, artist, friend, historian, inventor, athlete, musician, actor/actress, politician, scientist/researcher, explorer, community helper, philanthropist, school worker, celebrity, etc.

Example 2 Places = territory

Possible Categories\*: local sites, famous sites or tourist attractions, educational spots, community (e.g. library, recycle center, etc.), life skills (e.g. dentist, vet's office, etc.), etc.

Example 3 Activities = territory

Possible Categories\*: sports, hobbies, arts and crafts, collections, fine arts areas, extra-curricular activities, everyday routines (e.g. braiding, nail polish, etc.), outdoor adventures, etc.

Example 4 Things = territory

Possible Categories\*: science/nature (e.g. plants, magnets), animals, reptiles, dinosaurs, food, artifacts (e.g. medal won, shark tooth), equipment (e.g. camping, sports), clothing, personal hygiene (e.g. hair wraps, nails, braces), collections, instruments, etc.

- 2. Introduce purpose of lesson – generating ideas for books they will author, etc.**
- 3. Revisit Discussion - How do people know a lot about topics? *There are different ways that people may know a lot about a topic:***
  - A. They read about the topic.*
  - B. They have experience with the topic. For example, if a person - they met that person, if a place - they went there, if an activity - they've tried it, if a thing - they may own it or have tried someone else's.*
  - C. They studied that topic in school, at home or at a special place.*
  - D. They have talked to other people that know a lot about the topic and learned from them.*

**4. Name the Territory (e.g. people, places, activities or things). Hold up a book/piece and give a brief overview.**

**5. Explain the broader category rather than just naming the specific item or providing a narrow lens (e.g. narrow = dogs, broader = pets or animals.)**

Example of teacher talk in narrow version: *“This book by Cooper is about Golden Retrievers and he teaches us... Do you know about Golden Retrievers or Dogs?”*

Example of teacher talk using a broader category – *“This book by Cooper is about Golden Retrievers and he teaches us... Golden Retrievers or dogs are part of a bigger category – pets or animals. Think if there is a pet or animal you know a lot about and could teach others. If so, list on your chart under Things....”*

Example 2: *“This piece written by Baker from last year’s class teaches readers about a famous athlete named xxxx... Baker teaches us these things about xxxx.... This selection would fall under People on the chart. Let’s think of other famous athletes from this sport or any sport you might know a lot about and could teach others (versus the specific name of the athlete or just that sport). If so, list on your chart under People., etc.”*

Continue showing the cover of another piece/book and discuss another category under people – e.g. community workers, family members, celebrities, musicians, scientists and researchers, philanthropists, historians, politicians, etc. (Adjust for age group and background of students)

**6. Add information to class anchor chart.**

**7. Continue discussion and charting for each territory (e.g. people, place, thing and activities). Help guide them in understanding different categories under each territory. Be sure to list several examples under each category.**

**Please note: This is session 1 in the MAISA unit, so teachers have 3 options: 1) Skip this Immersion lesson and teach it during the unit, or 2) teach during Immersion and skip in the unit or 3) study in both places (do in Immersion and revisit or expand in the Unit).**



Sample Anchor Chart and Student Handout – see Unit Resource Packet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**My Personal Topics**

|                                                                                                 |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                      |                                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p>People</p> |  <p>Places</p> |  <p>Activities</p> |  <p>Things</p> |
|                                                                                                 |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                      |                                                                                                   |

Example of class generated categories. **Please note: Students should not replicate this chart. They should make a chart with specific topics that relate to them personally within each category** (i.e instead of family members, a student may write Mom, Dad, Cooper, Baker, Shirlann, etc.)

|                                                                                               |                                                                                               |                                                                                                    |                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Name: _____<br><b>My Personal Topics</b>                                                      |                                                                                               |                                                                                                    |                                                                                                 |
| <br>People | <br>Places | <br>Activities | <br>Things |
| Family<br>Community<br>Helpers<br>Characters                                                  | Parks<br>Stores<br>School<br>Restaurants                                                      | Sports<br>Games<br>Lessons<br>Vacations                                                            | Animals<br>Transportation<br>Toys                                                               |

### **Goal #3: Try It – Shared Class Writing**

**May begin anytime during the Immersion Phase.**

#### **General Background Information**

It is recommended that Shared Writing be included as part of a balanced literacy program. Shared Writing is defined as a process whereby the teacher acts as scribe for a group of children, with the emphasis being placed on the composing process and constructing a text that students can read and study later. It may take place during Immersion time and/or during a designated shared writing time. The piece that is co-constructed as a class will be revisited throughout the unit and revised. This piece will serve as a model. Therefore, it is not the intent to have this be a “polished” product, but rather a “rough” draft that has missing elements. Intentionally, don’t create a finished product. A ‘bare bones’ piece drafted quickly in a short period of time is just fine. Lucy Calkins often refers to this piece as a “flash” draft, meaning it was drafted quickly or in a “flash” to get a shared class piece started. Teachers scaffold students in writing the various parts.

Lucy Calkins advocates volume - having students write lots of drafts of whatever type of writing they are studying, even having students begin drafting during the Immersion Phase. During this phase, get students to write “flash” drafts – write quickly a draft knowing they can go back later and make them better. These early pieces help teachers to see where students are, thus enabling teachers to coach students along based on their needs. Students will be encouraged if not required to go back to earlier drafts and apply new learning. For example, after a teacher does a lesson on describing words, students would go back to earlier drafts and add (or revise) descriptive language.

Depending on the text type and form, a class shared flash draft may be completed in one setting or over the course of a few days. For longer text as an information piece, shared writing may occur over a period of days (e.g. day 1 – select topic and brainstorm subtopics, develop a table of contents, day 2 – lead, day 3 – write 1<sup>st</sup> chapter, etc.) These parts may be done prior to the unit or in small groups once the unit has begun.

**Highly recommend the following resource book:** Roth, Kate & Dabrowski, Joan. (2016). *Interactive writing across grades: A small practice with big results, PreK-5*. Stenhouse Publishers - [www.stenhouse.com](http://www.stenhouse.com)

## Class Shared Writing – Information Books

It is suggested that the class piece *be done during the Interactive/Shared Writing component* of a Balanced Literacy Program. Plan to spend a few days during shared writing working on the class piece. As the unit progresses and students learn more about Information Writing, go back and revise based on their new knowledge. Encourage students to do the same – go back to earlier pieces and revise, just like the class did with the shared writing piece.

- Sample sequence of shared writing lessons. Adjust based on time available and students' needs. Some days may be combined.

Day 1 -

1. Brainstorm possible class writing topics – things the class knows a lot about and could teach others. It is suggested to start with things studied in social studies or science.
2. Select a topic.
3. Discuss things the class could teach others about the topic. Develop subtopics – use fact hand, web or other planning tools. Use the planning tool to select the most important subtopics and put into a table of contents (put lead as first item and ending as last item).

Day 2 -

1. Rehearse and plan for what to write for the first subtopic.
2. Draft.

Days 3+4

Review previous day's work. Rehearse and plan the next subtopic. Draft.

Day 5

Draft a lead and ending. (do separate days if not enough time).

Day ?

As the unit progresses, go back and add text features. Also, go back and “say more” based on new learnings. This is also when a more “creative” lead or ending could be added.

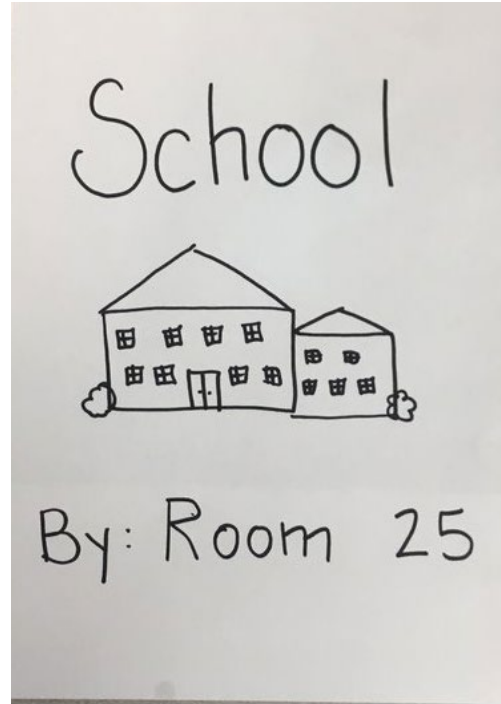
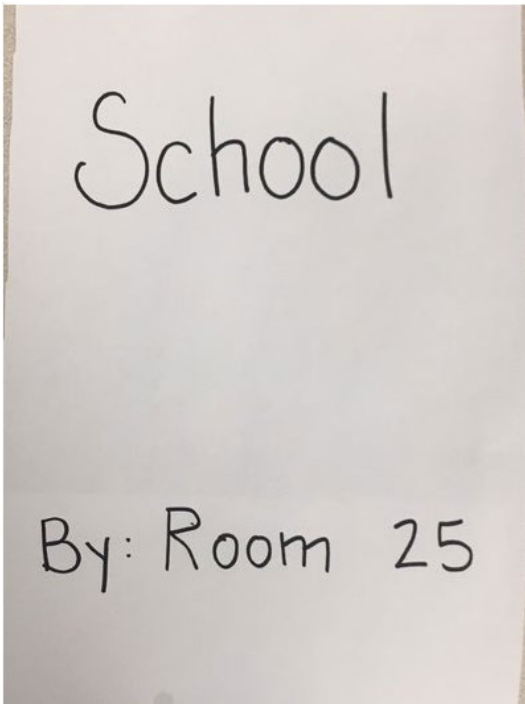
**Highly recommend the following resource book:** Roth, Kate & Dabrowski, Joan. (2016). *Interactive writing across grades: A small practice with big results, PreK-5*. Stenhouse Publishers - [www.stenhouse.com](http://www.stenhouse.com)

# Sample from a Kindergarten class

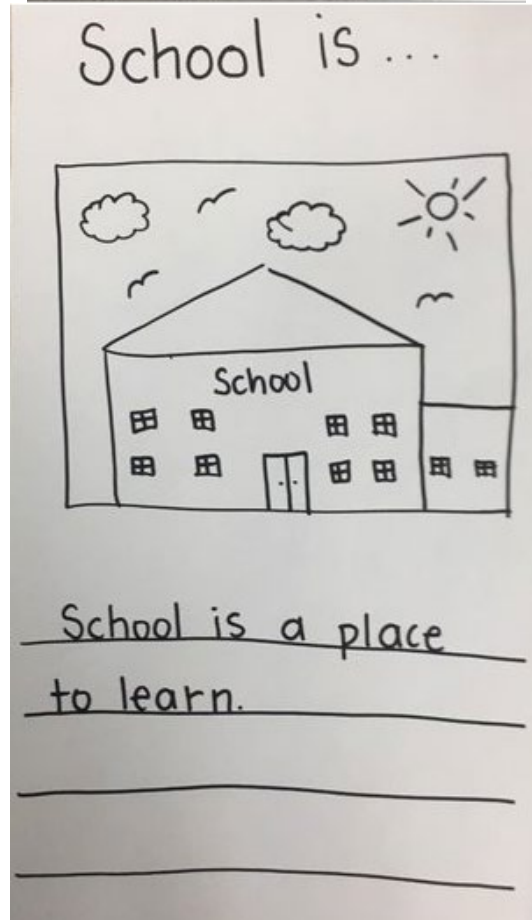
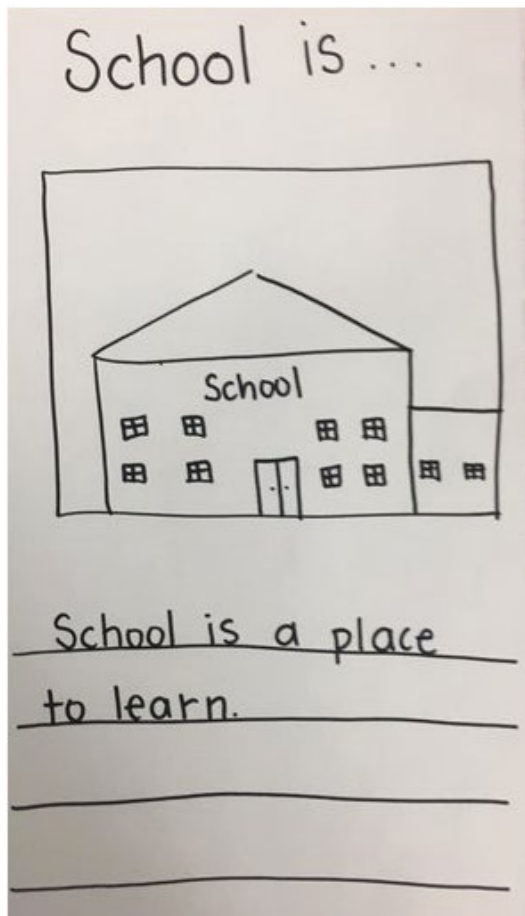
Beginning of the Unit

End of Unit

Cover

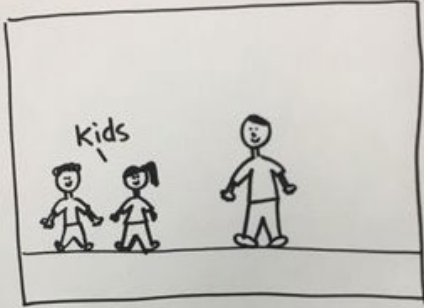


Page 1





# People at school...



Kids are at school.  
Teachers are at school.

---

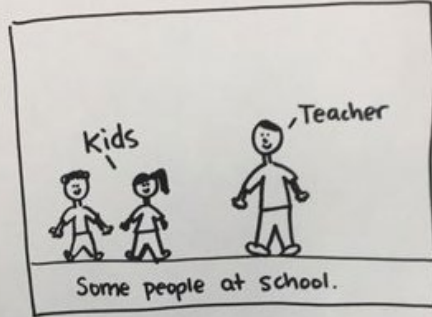


---



---

# People at school...



Kids are at school.  
Teachers are at school.  
The Principal is at school.

---



---



---

# Parts of school...



There is a gym.  
There is an office.

---



---



---

# Parts of school...



There is a gym.  
There is an office.  
There are classrooms.

---



---



---

What you do at school.



You can read.

You can play.

---

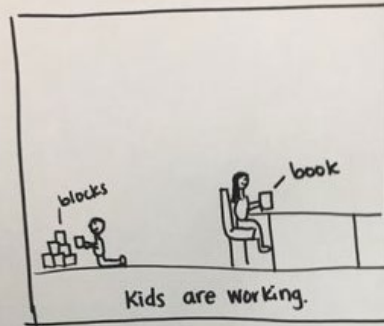


---



---

What you do at school.



You can read.

You can play.

You can do math and

science.

---

School !



School is great!

I like school!

---

**Suggestion: Please replace sample information pieces in this packet with ones from your school – select student written, teacher written or class shared pieces.**

