



Language Arts Lessons

Title: Biography Project

Benchmark(s): LA.A.2.2.1
The student reads text and determines the main idea or essential message, identifies relevant supporting details and facts, and arranges events in chronological order.

LA.A.2.2.8
The student selects and uses a variety of appropriate reference materials, including multiple representations of information, such as maps, charts, and photos, to gather information for research projects.

LA.B.1.2
The student uses writing processes effectively.

LA.B.2.2
The student writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.

LA.E.1.2.3
The student knows the similarities and differences among the characters, settings, and events presented in various texts.

LA.E.2.2.1
The student recognizes cause-and-effect relationships in literary texts.

Materials: *Famous Person Checklist*
Paper
Pencils, pens, markers
Biographies of famous people
Computers (Internet access; Microsoft Word; PowerPoint)

Procedures: Each family picks a famous person to research. They will write a paper, create supporting illustrations, charts, maps, timelines, and/or graphs, and create a PowerPoint slide or show based on the selected person's life and contributions.

Extensions: Write a poem about the selected person.

Write a play about the selected person.

Names: _____

Biography Project Checklist

Activity	Done
Choose a famous person to research. We will write about: _____	
Write why you chose this person.	
Find and read at least 2 websites about your famous person. List websites:	
Read at least 1 book about your famous person. List books:	
Did you use any other resources?	
Write a report in your own words about your famous person to be included in a class book.	
Draw at least one illustration of your famous person for the book.	
Create PowerPoint page(s) about your famous person.	
Copy and paste a picture from the computer (Internet on-line encyclopedia, etc.) of your famous person on the PowerPoint page.	
Write a poem about your famous person.	
Create a timeline of your famous person's life.	

Title: Biography Project: Art Table

Benchmark(s): LA.A.2.2.1
The student reads text and determines the main idea or essential message, identifies relevant supporting details and facts, and arranges events in chronological order.

Materials: Spiral binders
Cardstock for front and back cover
Notebook paper
Paper
Markers, crayons, colored pencils
Pens, pencils
Backboard for each family

Procedures: Each family will work together on illustrations, maps, graphs and/or charts for their project.

Each family will create a timeline of their famous person's life.

- Title:** Biography Project: Charts
- Benchmark(s):** LA.A.2.2.8:
The student selects and uses a variety of appropriate reference materials, including multiple representations of information, such as maps, charts, and photos, to gather information for research projects.
- Materials:** Notebook paper
Pens
Pencils
Computer (with Microsoft Word)
Markers, crayons, colored pencils
Copy paper
Graph paper
Tracing paper
- Procedures:** Each family will create a chart showing important places and events from the life of the famous person that has been selected to study.
- Charts can cover the famous person's family life, what he/she did to become famous, or interesting facts that the family has learned about this person.

- Title:** Biography Project: Compare and Contrast
- Benchmark(s):** LA.A.2.2.7
The student recognizes the use of comparison and contrast in a text.
- LA.E. 1.2.3
The student knows the similarities and differences among the characters, settings, and events presented in various texts.
- Materials:** Notebook paper
Pens, pencils
Computer (with Microsoft Word)
Markers, crayons, colored pencils
Copy paper
Chart paper
- Procedures:** Two families will work together to create a chart that will compare and contrast the famous people that their families have selected.
- The families should look at different characteristics of their subjects and see how they are alike and different.
- Each family should get a copy of the chart and illustrate it to add to their book and/or backboard.

Title: Biography Project: Computer Area

Benchmark(s): LA.A.2.2.1
The student reads text and determines the main idea or essential message, identifies relevant supporting details and facts, and arranges events in chronological order.

Materials: Computer with Microsoft Office and Internet access
Printer
Paper

Procedures: Families may use the computer area to research, write, edit or illustrate their projects.

Families should also use the computer to create a PowerPoint presentation of their research.

- Title:** Biography Project: Dramatic Interpretation
- Benchmark(s):** LA.E. 1.2.2
The student understands the development of plot and how conflicts are resolved in a story.
- LA.E. 1.2.3
The student knows the similarities and differences among the characters, settings, and events presented in various texts.
- Materials:** Notebook paper
Pens
Pencils
Computer (with Microsoft Word)
Markers, crayons, colored pencils
Copy paper
Tracing paper
Large paper
Materials for props
- Procedures:** Each family will write a play about the famous person they have selected. The play can depict an important event from that person's life.
- Plays can cover family life, what the person did that made him/her famous, or interesting facts that the family has learned about the person that was selected for study.
- Extensions:** Props and simple scenery and/or costumes can be added.
- Each family should perform its play for the group. (Members of other families can be added to the cast, as needed.)
- These plays can be videotaped and shared, or kept as a memento and/or learning resource.
- Scripts can be published to be used by other students.

Title: Biography Project: Library Area

Benchmark(s): LA.A.2.2.1
The student reads text and determines the main idea or essential message, identifies relevant supporting details and facts, and arranges events in chronological order.

Materials: Biographies

Procedures: Each family will choose a famous person for the project.

The family will read books together to gather information about the famous person they have chosen.

Families will identify important information and take notes.

- Title:** Biography Project: Maps
- Benchmark(s):** LA.A.2.2.8
The student selects and uses a variety of appropriate reference materials, including multiple representations of information, such as maps, charts, and photos, to gather information for research projects.
- Materials:** Notebook paper
Pens, pencils
Computer with Microsoft Word and Internet access
Atlas
Markers, crayons, colored pencils
Unlined paper
Graph paper
Tracing paper
- Procedures:** Each family will find or draw a map showing important places in the life of the famous person selected.
- Maps can be found in books, atlases, or on the computer.
- Maps can be traced, copied, or printed.
- Maps should be colored and marked to show key places in the life of the person that was selected.
- Each family should write a few sentences describing places that were important in the life of the person that was selected. Information explaining why these places are important should also be included.

Title: Biography Project: Persuasive Essay

Benchmark(s): LA.A.2.2.3
The student recognizes when a text is primarily intended to persuade.

Materials: Notebook paper
Pens, pencils
Computer with Microsoft Word
Markers, crayons, colored pencils
Unlined paper

Procedures: Each family will work together to write a persuasive essay to convince others that the famous person that they have selected is the best person for the project.

The essay should be illustrated and added to the family's project (book, backboard, and/or PowerPoint).

Title: Biography Project: Writing Table

Benchmark(s): LA.A.2.2.1
The student reads text and determines the main idea or essential message, identifies relevant supporting details and facts, and arranges events in chronological order.

Materials: Spiral binder
Cardstock for front and back cover
Notebook paper
Paper
Markers, crayons, colored pencils
Pens, Pencils

Procedures: Each family will choose a famous person for a project.

After reading about their famous person, the family will work together to write information in their own words about the person that was selected. They should include where and when he/she was born, interesting facts about the person's family, what he/she did to become famous, interesting facts about the person's life, where he/she lived, and why they chose this person.

The family should work together to edit their story.

A graph, table, map and/or chart should be made to illustrate some part of their story.

Information should be presented in both book and backboard form.

Information should also be put on a PowerPoint page and included in class PowerPoint project.

Title: Continuing Story

Benchmark(s): LA.B. 1.2
The student uses writing processes effectively.

LA.B. 2.2
The student writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.

Materials: Notebook paper
Pens, pencils
Computer with Microsoft Word
Markers, crayons, colored pencils
Copy paper

Procedures: Families sit in a circle. Someone starts telling a story and stops after a few sentences. The next person picks up the story and continues it for a few more sentences, then it is the next person's turn. Each person in the circle takes a turn adding to the story.

Families then draw a picture to illustrate the story, or a section of the story. The pictures can be put together to create a book to share.

Extensions: Families can write the story and pass the paper to the next family. When not writing, families can be working at other stations.

Create the story in a word document on the computer. Each family is called to the computer when it is their turn.

- Title:** Juicy Words
- Benchmark(s):** LA.B. 1.2
The student uses writing processes effectively.
- LA.B. 2.2
The student writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.
- Materials:** Notebook paper
Pens, pencils
Computer with Microsoft Word
Markers, crayons, colored pencils
Paper and/or index cards
Dictionary
Thesaurus
- Procedures:** The group brainstorms a list of “juicy” words. Juicy words are adjectives or words that are descriptive.
- Each participant or family chooses a word to illustrate.
- Definitions are obtained and written on notebook paper with the word.
- The word is written in bold colorful letters on unlined paper or an index card.
- A picture depicting the word’s meaning is drawn onto the page/ card.
- Extensions:** Combine all of the illustrations into a book and make copies for all participants.
- Word illustrations can be done on index cards and hung as a border for the room.
- A similar activity can be done with antonyms (opposites).

Title: Play on Words: Working with Homonyms

Benchmark(s): LA.A.1.2.3
The student uses simple strategies to determine meaning and increase vocabulary for reading, including the use of prefixes, suffixes, root words, multiple meanings, antonyms, synonyms, and word relationships.

LA.B.1.2
The student uses writing processes effectively.

LA.B.2.2
The student writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.

Materials: *A Chocolate Moose for Dinner* by Fred Gwynne
New York: Aladdin Paperbacks - 1976

White copy paper
Pencils
Crayons/markers/colored pencils
Rubber cement
Yarn to bind booklet

Procedures: Read the book to participants

Discuss homonyms, words that sound the same but have different meanings.

After hearing the story, participants will each write and illustrate a page for an original class book (written in the same style). These should be original ideas—not terms that the author used in the original text.

Example: “My dad had a date last night.”
Illustration would show dad dancing with a date (fruit).

Students share their entries with the class.

Entries are mounted on construction paper and assembled to create a book. (Entries can be laminated.)

- Title:** Sentence Expansion (Boring Sentences)
- Benchmark(s):** LA.B. 1.2
The student uses writing processes effectively.
- LA.B. 2.2
The student writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.
- Materials:** Notebook paper
Pens
Pencils
Computer (with Microsoft Word)
Markers, crayons, colored pencils
Copy paper
Boring Sentences Worksheet
- Procedures:** Each family gets a list of “boring sentences.” Families work together to add descriptive words to make the sentences more interesting.
- Sentences can relate to their project, but do not have to.
- Families may choose to draw a picture to illustrate their favorite “interesting” sentence.
- Extensions:** This can be done as a group activity. Write the boring sentence on the board or on chart paper. Group members take turns adding descriptive language to expand upon the story. The sentence may even evolve to create a story!

Boring Sentences Worksheet

The boy ran.

The cat bit.

The woman is old.

The car made a sound.

The tree is green.

The man knocked.

The dress is pretty.

The tree fell.

The man is old.

The book is big.

Title: Word Flipbook

Benchmark(s): LA.A.1.2.3
The student uses simple strategies to determine meaning and increase vocabulary for reading, including the use of prefixes, suffixes, root words, multiple meanings, antonyms, synonyms, and word relationships.

Materials: Spiral binder
Cardstock cut to the correct size
Sample flipbook

Procedures: Show participants how to create new words with the flipbook.

Start with a root word. Add a prefix, then a suffix.

Show how the consonant must be doubled for some words.

Have participants think of other root words, prefixes, and suffixes.

Have students add cards so they can make other new words.