Sample Lesson, Grade 3

Being a Writer™
SECOND EDITION

Teacher’s Manual | Volume 1

DSC Collaborative Literacy

Have you ever had a pet that you cannot pet? I do. Their names are Goldie, Headstand, Bigboy and Mr. Clean.

GRADE 3

Explore the new digital resources!
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Week 1

Overview

Tacky the Penguin
by Helen Lester, illustrated by Lynn Munsinger
A one-of-a-kind penguin saves the day.

If You Were a Writer
by Joan Lowery Nixon, illustrated by Bruce Degen
Melia wants to be a writer like her mother, but she is not sure what writers do.

Online Resources

Visit the DSC Learning Hub (teach.devstu.org) to find your online resources for this week.

- **Whiteboard Activities**
  - WA1–WA3

- **Assessment Forms**
  - "Class Assessment Record" sheets (CA1–CA2)
  - "Conference Notes: Focus 1" record sheet (CN1)

- **Professional Development Media**
  - "Cooperative Structures Overview" (AV9)
  - "Using 'Turn to Your Partner'" (AV11)
  - "Using 'Think, Pair, Share'" (AV13)
  - "Introducing Vocabulary During a Read-aloud" (AV30)
  - "Conferring About Fiction" (AV43)
  - "Exploring Fiction" (AV44)
  - "Creating a Class Blog" tutorial (AV76)
Writing Focus

- Students hear and discuss fiction.
- Students informally explore elements of fiction.
- Students generate and quick-write ideas for fiction.
- Students draft fiction pieces.

Social Development Focus

- Teacher and students build the writing community.
- Students cultivate a relaxed attitude toward writing.
- Students express interest in and appreciation for one another’s writing.

DO AHEAD

✓ Consider reading this unit’s read-aloud selections with your English Language Learners before you read them to the whole class. Stop during the reading to discuss vocabulary and to check for understanding. Or, do a picture walk and have partners who speak the same primary language talk to each other in that language about what they see in the illustrations.

✓ Prior to Day 1, decide how you will randomly assign partners to work together during this unit. For suggestions about assigning partners, see “Random Pairing” on page xxix and “Considerations for Pairing ELLs” on page lii. For more information, view “Cooperative Structures Overview” (AV9).

✓ Prior to Day 2, make a copy of the “Class Assessment Record” sheet (CA1) on page 54 of the Assessment Resource Book.

✓ Prior to Day 3, make a copy of the “Class Assessment Record” sheet (CA2) on page 55 of the Assessment Resource Book.

✓ Prior to Day 5, make a class set of the “Conference Notes: Focus 1” record sheet (CN1) on page 67 of the Assessment Resource Book.

TEACHER AS WRITER

“My writing is full of lives I might have led. A writer imagines what could have happened, not what really happened.”

— Joyce Carol Oates

The work of the fiction writer is to invent new worlds. This week, imagine a life you might have led, and write your “memories” of this fictitious life. Perhaps you were born into a different culture, grew up in a different family, or chose a different profession. How do you imagine that these life experiences have shaped you? As you write, include your feelings and perspectives, and invent details to make that life seem real.
Day 1  Exploring Fiction

Materials

- Tacky the Penguin
- She Come Bringing Me That Little Baby Girl from Unit 1
- Grandpa’s Face from Unit 1
- The Pain and the Great One from Unit 1
- Chart paper and a marker

In this lesson, the students:

- Work with new partners
- Hear and discuss fiction
- Informally explore the elements of fiction
- Write freely about things that interest them

IMMERSION IN AND DRAFTING OF FICTION

In a fiction story, *something happens to someone somewhere in time*. In this unit, the students build this understanding in stages over a six-week period.

The first half of this unit immerses the students in stories, stimulating their imaginations and developing their dispositions for creativity and experimentation. The students hear, enjoy, and make observations about different examples of fiction. Having heard some examples, they begin drafting fiction and continue to learn about the genre. Skills and conventions are taught later in the unit so that the students can focus first on the big ideas: inventing interesting characters, describing believable settings, and building imaginative plots that make sense.

GETTING READY TO WRITE

1 Pair Students and Discuss Working Together

Randomly assign partners and make sure they know each other’s names (see “Do Ahead” on page 211). Gather the class with partners sitting together, facing you.

Explain that over the next six weeks, partners will work together to explore writing fiction. They will hear and discuss fiction stories and learn how to write engaging stories that grab the reader’s attention.

Have partners take a few minutes to talk about some of the things they have written so far this year. Signal for their attention and ask:

Q  What did you learn about the writing your partner has done this year?

2 Introduce Fiction

Show the covers of She Come Bringing Me That Little Baby Girl, Grandpa’s Face, and The Pain and the Great One. Remind the students that they heard these fiction stories at the beginning of the year. Ask and briefly discuss:

Q  What do you think you know about fiction?
Students might say:
“Fiction is made up. It’s make-believe.”
“Fiction has characters. Sometimes characters can be talking animals.”
“Fiction can be funny or serious or scary.”
“Some fiction stories are based on the author’s life.”

Record the students’ ideas on a sheet of chart paper titled “Notes About Fiction.” Post the chart and tell the students that you will continue to add ideas to the chart as they learn more about fiction in the coming weeks.

Point out that fiction writers try to tell stories that capture the interest and imagination of their readers. Explain that by the end of the unit, the students will have learned and practiced different techniques for writing a good fiction story and will have published their own stories for the class library.

3  Read Tacky the Penguin Aloud

Show the cover of Tacky the Penguin and read the title and the names of the author and illustrator aloud. Invite the students to think as they listen about what it might be like to write such a story themselves.

Read the story aloud slowly and clearly, showing the illustrations and clarifying vocabulary as you read.

Suggested Vocabulary
companions: friends (p. 3)
in the distance: far away (p. 14)
switch: branch or stick used for hitting something (p. 17)

ELL Vocabulary
English Language Learners may benefit from hearing additional vocabulary defined, including:
odd: strange, different (p. 5)
splashy cannonballs: jumps that spray a lot of water (p. 11)
blared: yelled (p. 22)
puzzled: confused (p. 25)
dreadfully: unpleasantly, terribly (p. 28)

4  Discuss the Story

Ask and briefly discuss the questions that follow. Remind the students to use the discussion prompts to help them listen and build on one another’s thinking. Be ready to reread from the text to help the students recall what they heard.

Teacher Note
Save the “Notes About Fiction” chart to use in Day 2 and throughout the unit.

Teacher Note
Your students may be familiar with some of the read-alouds in this program. Encourage them to listen to the read-alouds as writers, noticing what the author is trying to do and thinking about what they could try in their own writing.

Teacher Note
To review the procedure for defining vocabulary during the read-aloud, see Unit 1, Week 2, Day 2 (page 29). For more information, view “Introducing Vocabulary During a Read-aloud” (AV30).
What makes Tacky a fun character to read about?

If you were going to create a character like Tacky for a story, what odd things might you have that character do?

Students might say:

“Tacky is an odd bird. He doesn’t do anything like anybody else.”

“I agree with [Pete] because, instead of saying ‘hello’ politely, he says, ‘What’s happening?’ ”

“In addition to what [Kim] said, he does huge cannonballs in the water.”

“I would make a character that blows giant bubbles with bubble gum.”

Point out that some things that happen in fiction stories could actually happen in real life, while other things (like talking penguins) could happen only in the imagination. Invite the students to think about both kinds of events as they write freely today.

**WRITING TIME**

5 Write Independently

Have students get their notebooks and pencils, sit together at desks with partners, and write silently for 20–30 minutes. During this time they may write about anything they choose. Remind them that they should write double-spaced in their notebooks and that there should be no talking, whispering, or walking around. Join the students in writing for a few minutes; then walk around the room and observe, assisting students as needed.

Signal to let the students know when Writing Time is over.

**SHARING AND REFLECTING**

6 Briefly Share Writing and Reflect

Ask partners to talk briefly about what they wrote today. After a moment, signal for their attention and ask questions such as:

Q What did your partner write about today?

Q What did you and your partner do to work well together when you were talking and sharing your writing?
Exploring Fiction  Day 2

In this lesson, the students:

- Cultivate a relaxed attitude toward writing
- Hear and discuss fiction
- Informally explore the elements of fiction
- Write freely about things that interest them

THE IMPORTANCE OF ATTITUDE IN WRITING

To get enough practice writing during the elementary school years, it is extremely important that students learn to start writing fairly quickly after they sit down, and to write freely, abundantly, and without fear. This requires a relaxed attitude, free from inhibitions, especially during the early drafting stages. In this lesson, the students hear the first half of a story that includes some fanciful, far-fetched situations. The intent is to inspire their imaginations and help them know that writing can be lighthearted and about anything.

Regularly remind the students that they are writing primarily for themselves. Encourage them to be willing to write something that is less than perfect. The important thing is to repeatedly practice getting their ideas on paper.

GETTING READY TO WRITE

1 Add to “Notes About Fiction” Chart

Gather the class with partners sitting together, facing you. Review that yesterday the students began exploring fiction, or invented stories. Remind the students that some fiction could happen in real life and some fiction could happen only in the imagination. Add this to the “Notes About Fiction” chart.

Teacher Note

An interview with Helen Lester is available on Developmental Studies Center’s website (devstu.org/helen-lester).
Explain that today they will hear another example of fiction and do more writing.

2 Discuss Writing Attitude

Point out that learning to write is like learning any new sport, musical instrument, or skill; you must practice over and over to become good at it. Ask:

Q What can be hard about starting to write, or continuing to write, for the whole Writing Time?

Students might say:

“It’s hard to start writing when I don’t know what to write.”

“I stop writing if I don’t know how to spell something.”

Explain that you expect the students’ writing to have spelling errors and to be imperfect and incomplete. This is natural for young writers. Assure them that practicing by writing many, many imperfect pieces is more important than writing just a few perfect pieces.

Encourage the students to try to bring a fun, relaxed attitude to their writing today.

3 Read the First Half of If You Were a Writer Aloud

Show the cover of If You Were a Writer and read the title and the names of the author and illustrator aloud. Tell the students that you will read the first half of the book today and the second half tomorrow. Invite the students to think as they listen about what they learn about being a writer.

Read pages 5–13 of If You Were a Writer aloud, showing the illustrations and stopping as described below. Clarify vocabulary as you read.

Suggested Vocabulary

fragrance: smell; aroma (p. 7)

wedge: slice (p. 7)

ELL Vocabulary

English Language Learners may benefit from hearing additional vocabulary defined, including:

typewriter: writing machine used before home computers became popular (p. 5; see illustration on p. 4)

an evil spell: magic (p. 5)

Stop after:

p. 13 “Then they could slip between the sheets to snore and sleep!’ she said.”
4 Discuss the Story and Generate Ideas

Ask and briefly discuss:

Q **What did you find out about being a writer?**

Q **In Tacky the Penguin, the events in the story are not realistic. In other words, they could not happen in real life. Are the events in today’s story realistic? Explain your thinking.**

_Students might say:_

“Sometimes writers need to think about what to write next, like Melia’s mom.”

“I agree with [Zeke]. Also, writers use interesting words like stamp and twirl and droop.”

“Today’s story could happen in real life. There’s a mom having breakfast with her kids. That’s realistic.”

“In addition to what [Ellie] said, Melia’s uncle comes to visit. That part could really happen, too.”

Use “Think, Pair, Share” to discuss:

Q **What realistic or imaginary things might you write about today? [pause] Turn to your partner.**

Have volunteers share their ideas with the class.

_Students might say:_

“I could write a funny story about when our new puppy ran around the house with my only clean pair of socks.”

“I might write about a race-car driver who wins a big race.”

“It might be fun to write about a kid who can fly.”

Explain that during Writing Time today, the students may write about realistic or imaginary situations, or anything else they choose. Encourage them to relax and write as freely and imaginatively as possible.

**WRITING TIME**

5 Write Independently

Ask the students to return to their seats and write silently for 20–30 minutes. Join the students in writing for a few minutes; then walk around the room and observe, assisting students as needed.
CLASS ASSESSMENT NOTE

Observe the students and ask yourself:
- Are the students staying in their seats and writing silently?
- Are they double-spacing their writing?
- Do they seem to be writing with a relaxed and free attitude?

If necessary, remind the students to double-space their writing. If you notice many students having difficulty starting to write, call for the class’s attention and have partners talk about what they might write. Have a few volunteers share their ideas with the class; then have the students resume silent writing.

Record your observations on the “Class Assessment Record” sheet (CA1); see page 54 of the Assessment Resource Book.

Signal to let the students know when Writing Time is over.

SHARING AND REFLECTING

6 Reflect on Writing Attitude

Talk briefly as a class about the students’ attitudes as they wrote today. Ask questions such as:

Q Were you able to relax and write freely today without getting stuck? If so, what happened? If not, what made you feel stuck? What did you do to try to get unstuck?

Explain that the students will continue to focus on developing a relaxed attitude toward their writing.

EXTENSION

Realistic and Imaginary Fiction Stories

Give the students more experience with distinguishing between realistic and imaginary stories in fiction by having them share about fiction stories they are reading independently. As a class, discuss questions such as:

Q What’s happening in your story?
Q Could that story happen in real life? Why or why not?
Technology Extension

Use a Class Blog for Reflection

Create a class blog and invite the students to reflect on their writing attitude as they draft and revise their stories in the coming weeks. Post reflection questions such as those in Step 6 on the previous page. After discussing the questions as a class, have interested students post their comments. Review the comments periodically and, with the respondents’ permission, discuss comments with the class.

Drafting Fiction

Day 3

In this lesson, the students:
- Hear, discuss, and draft fiction
- Generate and quick-write ideas for fiction
- Cultivate a relaxed attitude toward writing

Getting Ready to Write

1. Read the Second Half of If You Were a Writer Aloud

Have the students bring their notebooks and pencils and gather with partners sitting together, facing you.

Review that the students are hearing examples of fiction and thinking about what fiction can be. Explain that today they will hear the second half of If You Were a Writer and begin drafting a fiction story.

Tell the students that you will stop several times during today’s reading to have partners talk about what they heard. Read pages 15–30 of If You Were a Writer aloud slowly and clearly, showing the illustrations and stopping as described on the next page. Clarify vocabulary as you read.

Suggested Vocabulary

alley: narrow street or passageway, usually between two buildings (p. 22)

ELL Vocabulary

English Language Learners may benefit from hearing additional vocabulary defined, including:
in disguise: wearing a costume to hide who you are (p. 17)
Stop after:

p. 17 “What if the boy is really a detective in disguise? What would happen then?”

Ask:

Q **What could happen then? Turn to your partner.**

Have partners discuss the question for a few moments; then signal for their attention. Without stopping to discuss as a class, reread the last sentence and continue reading to the next stopping point:

p. 22 “‘What dog?’ Veronica asked. ‘What monster? Tell me!’”

Ask:

Q **What could happen next in this story? Turn to your partner.**

Have partners discuss the question for a few moments; then signal for their attention. Without stopping to discuss as a class, reread the last sentence and continue reading to the end of the story.

**2 Briefly Discuss the Story and Quick-write: Interesting People**

Facilitate a brief class discussion using the questions that follow. Be ready to reread from the story to help the students recall what they heard.

Q **What more did you find out about being a writer?**

Q **What are some things that happen to Melia that give her ideas for writing?**

**Students might say:**

“Melia and her mom see a boy running with a dog, and they make up a story from that.”

“Melia also makes up a story about the missing jar of honey. In her story, a bear comes in and eats it.”

Point out that Melia uses interesting people and situations in her own life to help her make up stories. Use “Think, Pair, Share” to have the students discuss:

Q **What interesting people do you know outside of school whom you could make up a story about? [pause] Turn to your partner.**

Without discussing the question, have the students open their notebooks to the next blank page of the writing ideas section, label it “Interesting People I Know,” and write a list of interesting people they know outside of school about whom they could write a story. Stop them after 3–4 minutes and have partners share and discuss their lists with each other. Then have them resume listing for a few more minutes.
Explain that during Writing Time, you would like all of the students to try writing a fiction story. They may make up a story about one of the interesting people on their list, or they may write any other made-up story. Remind them to double-space their writing and to look at the “Notes About Fiction” chart to help them get more ideas.

WRITING TIME

Begin Drafting Fiction Pieces

Have the students get their notebooks and pencils, and sit at desks with partners together. Display the "Writing Time" chart (WA1) and have the students write silently for 20–30 minutes.

Join the students in writing for a few minutes; then walk around the room and observe, assisting students as needed.

CLASS ASSESSMENT NOTE

Observe the students and ask yourself:
- Are the students staying in their seats and writing silently?
- Are they double-spacing their writing?
- Do they seem to be writing with a relaxed and free attitude?

If necessary, remind the students to double-space their writing. If you notice many students having difficulty starting to write, call for the class’s attention and have partners talk to each other about what they might write. Have a few volunteers share their ideas with the class; then have the students resume silent writing.

Record your observations on the “Class Assessment Record” sheet (CA2); see page 55 of the Assessment Resource Book.

Signal to let the students know when Writing Time is over.
SHARING AND REFLECTING

4 Reflect on Writing Process and Attitude

Briefly discuss questions such as:

Q: Were you able to make up a story about an interesting person you know? Tell us about it.

Q: What other fictional ideas did you write about today?

Q: (Point to the “Notes About Fiction” chart.) Which notes did you think about as you started writing today?

Help the students reflect on their attitudes toward writing by asking:

Q: How did you feel as you wrote today? If you got stuck, what happened? What do you want to try tomorrow to help you in your writing?

Explain that the students will continue to read and draft fiction for the next couple of weeks. They will eventually select one of their fiction drafts to develop and publish as a book for the class library.

EXTENSION

Conduct Interviews with Interesting People

Some students may be interested in learning more about the interesting people about whom they are writing. Have your students compose a list of questions to ask and then arrange to interview the people they have selected. Once the interviews are completed, have the students write stories based on the information they collected in their interviews. These stories may be fiction or nonfiction.

Day 4

Drafting Fiction

Materials

- If You Were a Writer from Day 3
- “Notes About Fiction” chart from Day 3
- Chart paper and a marker
- “Writing Time” chart (WA2)

In this lesson, the students:

- Review If You Were a Writer
- Quick-write “What if?” questions
- Draft fiction
- Cultivate a relaxed attitude toward writing

GETTING READY TO WRITE

1 Add to “Notes About Fiction” Chart

Have the students bring their notebooks and pencils and gather with partners sitting together, facing you. Review that yesterday they heard
the second part of If You Were a Writer. Remind the students that Melia uses people and situations in her own life to help her make up stories. Add *can be made-up stories about people and situations in our own lives* to the “Notes About Fiction” chart. Add any other ideas about fiction that the students heard in the reading.

2 **Review If You Were a Writer**

Explain that today the students will explore another way that fiction writers think of ideas for stories. Show pages 14–15 of the story, and point out to the students that Melia’s mother suggests asking the question “What if?” to get ideas for stories.

Tell the students that you will reread some passages from the story. Ask them to think as they listen about “What if?” questions they could ask. Read aloud pages 15–17, starting with “‘Maybe the dog and the boy could turn into an idea,’ Mother said.” Continue reading through the end of page 17.

Without pausing to discuss, turn to page 18 and read aloud the paragraph that begins: “Melia thought about the missing jar of honey.”

3 **Generate “What If?” Questions**

Explain that authors may get ideas for stories by asking themselves “What if?” questions. Direct the students’ attention to the “Notes About Fiction” chart and add *What if?* to it. Ask:

**Q** What “What if?” questions can you think of that might lead to an interesting story?

As the students report their ideas, record them on another sheet of chart paper titled “What if ______?”

**Students might say:**

“What if a monkey got loose from the zoo and ended up in my backyard?”

“What if I became the president of the United States?”

“What if someone finds out she can read people’s minds?”

“What if a boy’s parents forgot who he was?”

4 **Quick-write: What If?**

Ask the students to select one of the charted “What if?” questions and write in their notebooks for a few minutes about imaginative ways to answer it. Encourage them to imagine things that could happen in real life, as well as things that could not. Stop them after 3–4 minutes of writing and have partners discuss their thinking; then have the students write for a few more minutes.

If you notice many students having difficulty quick-writing about a “What if?” question, call for the students’ attention and write the first
few sentences together as a class. (For example, you might write: What if a monkey got loose from the zoo and ended up in the backyard? We heard screeching and got up from our dinner to see what was happening. We found the monkey swinging wildly from the swing set. We decided it was hungry, so we brought it inside and fed it a plate of spaghetti.)

Signal for the students’ attention and ask a few volunteers to share the “What if?” question they selected and the ideas they wrote.

Explain that during Writing Time today, the students may continue the “What if?” story they started, list other “What if?” questions, or work on any other fiction story. Assure them that it is perfectly fine to leave drafts incomplete and start new ones. Encourage them to relax and use their imaginations as they write today.

WRITING TIME

5 Draft Fiction Pieces

Ask the students to return to their seats. Display the “Writing Time” chart (WA2) and have the students write silently for 20–30 minutes. Invite them to refer to the posted “What if ______?” chart, if they wish.

Join the students in writing for a few minutes; then walk around the room and observe, assisting students as needed.

Signal to let the students know when Writing Time is over.

SHARING AND REFLECTING

6 Reflect on Writing Process and Attitude

Briefly discuss questions such as:

Q Who wrote a “What if?” story? Tell us about it.

Q What other fictional ideas did you write about today?

Q (Point to the “Notes About Fiction” chart.) Which notes did you think about as you started writing today?
Help the students reflect on their attitudes toward writing by asking:

Q How did you feel as you wrote today? If you got stuck, what happened? What do you want to try tomorrow to help you in your writing?

Remind the students that they will continue to focus on developing a relaxed attitude toward their writing practice and that they will continue to read and draft fiction for the next couple of weeks.

**WRITING ABOUT READING**

**Make Connections to *If You Were a Writer***

Show the cover of *If You Were a Writer* and remind the students that they heard this story earlier. Ask:

Q What do you remember about the story *If You Were a Writer*?

Have a few volunteers share their thinking. After they have shared, ask:

Q How does this story remind you of your own life?

Students might say:

“This story reminds me of my own life because Melia wants to do what her mom does. I want to do what my aunt does—she’s an architect.”

“I like learning cool new words, just like Melia does.”

“Melia has lots of good talks with her mom. That reminds me of having good talks with my grandpa.”

Explain that when you write or talk about how a story reminds you of your own life, you are making a connection to the story. Explain that making connections to stories helps us enjoy and remember them. Ask the students to watch as you model writing about how *If You Were a Writer* reminds you of your life.

You might say:

“I want to write about how *If You Were a Writer* reminds me of my own life. I’ll start by writing: *In* *If You Were a Writer* by Joan Lowery Nixon, *Melia* wants to be a writer, just like her mom. Notice that I put the title of the book and the author’s name in the opening sentence. Now I’ll explain how the book reminds me of my own life. I’ll write: *When I was growing up, my favorite person in the whole world was my aunt Sophie. She was a teacher. Just like Melia wants to be a writer like her mom, I wanted to be a teacher like my aunt. Aunt Sophie and I had many inspiring talks, just like Melia and her mom have in the book. Now I’ll write a closing sentence to wrap up my paragraph: Reading this book makes me remember how important Aunt Sophie was in my life.”

Explain that the students will now write about how *If You Were a Writer* reminds them of their own lives. Have the students begin writing about their connections to the story. If time permits, invite the students to share their writing with the class.

**Materials**

- *If You Were a Writer* from Day 4
In this lesson, the students:
- Quick-write more “What if?” questions
- Draft fiction
- Practice procedures for pair conferences
- Express interest in and appreciation for one another’s writing

GETTING READY TO WRITE

1 Gather and Briefly Review Fiction
Have the students bring their notebooks and pencils and gather with partners sitting together, facing you. Review that they have been exploring fiction. Ask and briefly discuss:

Q *What makes fiction writing different from other kinds of writing?*

If necessary, review the “Notes About Fiction” chart to help the students remember what they have learned. Add any new ideas they mention.

2 Generate More “What If?” Questions
Remind the students that authors often get ideas for stories by asking themselves “What if?” questions. Direct the students’ attention to the “What if ______?” chart from Day 4. Ask:

Q *What other “What if?” questions can you think of that might lead to an interesting story?*

As the students report their ideas, add them to the chart.

Students might say:
- “What if cats and dogs ruled the world?”
- “What if some kids started their own restaurant?”
- “What if my family moved to the South Pole?”
- “What if I became the youngest-ever Olympic athlete?”

3 Repeat Quick-write: What If?
Ask the students to select a different charted “What if?” question and write in their notebooks for a few minutes about imaginative ways to answer it. Encourage them to imagine things that could happen in real life, as well as things that could not. Stop them after 3–4 minutes of writing and have partners discuss their thinking; then have them write for a few more minutes.
Signal for the students’ attention. Ask a few volunteers to share the “What if?” question they selected and the ideas they wrote.

Explain that during Writing Time today, the students may continue the “What if?” story they started, begin a new “What if?” story, or work on any other fiction story. Remind them that it is perfectly fine to leave drafts incomplete and start new ones.

**WRITING TIME**

### Draft Fiction Pieces

Have the students get their notebooks and pencils and sit at desks with partners together. Display the ”Writing Time” chart (WA3) and have the students write silently for 20–30 minutes.

**Writing Time**
- Continue the “What if?” story you started during the quick-write.
- Start a new “What if?” story.
- Work on any other fiction story.

Join the students in writing for a few minutes; then begin conferring with individual students.

#### TEACHER CONFERENCE NOTE

Over the next three weeks, confer with individual students to get an idea of their thinking as they write fiction drafts. Ask each student to show you a piece of her writing and read some of it aloud to you. Hold off on any feedback about grammar or spelling. Instead, focus on clarifying the student’s ideas about the story she is writing. Ask questions such as:

- **Q** What is this story about?
- **Q** Who [is/are] the character(s)? What’s interesting about [him/her/them]?
- **Q** What do you imagine might happen to [him/her/them]?
- **Q** When and where do you imagine this story takes place?
- **Q** What part are you going to work on next?

Document your observations for each student on a “Conference Notes: Focus 1” record sheet (CN1); see page 67 of the Assessment Resource Book.

Signal to let the students know when Writing Time is over.

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Teacher Note

You may want to shorten today’s Writing Time to leave more time for the pair conferences in Step 5.

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Teacher Note

To see an example of a teacher conferring with individual students, view “Conferring About Fiction” (AV43).
SHARING AND REFLECTING

5 Confer in Pairs About Fiction Drafts

Explain that partners will each read one of their fiction drafts to the other and confer about both partners’ drafts today. Briefly review the procedure you established for pair conferring (see Unit 1, Week 3, Day 2, Step 4 on page 54). Remind the students that conferring means not only reading their writing to each other, but talking about it as well. Explain that today partners will tell each other one thing they like about the other’s draft. Ask and briefly discuss:

Q What would you like your partner to do to show that he or she is interested in your writing and your creative ideas?

Students might say:
- “I would like my partner to listen as I read my story.”
- “I would like my partner to ask me questions about the story.”
- “I would like my partner to tell me the part he likes.”
- “I would like my partner to say something nice about my story, like ‘I really want to read your story.’”

Have partners share their writing. Scan the class without intervening, providing sufficient time for both partners to share their writing before you signal for their attention.

6 Reflect on Pair Conferences

Help partners reflect on their work together by asking:

Q What did your partner do to show interest in your writing and creative ideas?

Q What did you like about your partner’s writing?

Explain that the students will continue to write fiction drafts during the coming two weeks. Remind the students that they will eventually select one of their fiction drafts to develop and publish as a book for the class library.