



EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 3: Module 2B: Unit 3: Lesson 2

Writing the Letter's Opening: Connecting to Mary Pope Osborne



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Long-Term Targets Addressed (Based on NYSP12 ELA CCLS)

- I can produce writing that is appropriate to task and purpose (with support). (W.3.4)
- I can use the writing process to plan, revise, and edit my writing (with support). (W.3.5)
- I can compare how people use language when they write versus when they talk. (L.3.3b)

Supporting Learning Targets

- I can practice for the performance task by writing about Japan (with support).
- I can plan and draft my writing for my opening paragraph using the model provided.
- I can identify criteria for completing a research-based informative letter.

Ongoing Assessment

- Partner drafts of opening paragraph



Agenda	Teaching Notes
<p>1. Opening</p> <p>A. Engaging the Writer: Unpacking the Learning Targets and Rereading the Model Letter (5 minutes)</p> <p>2. Work Time</p> <p>A. Analyzing the Letter's Opening Paragraph (15 minutes)</p> <p>B. Partner Practice: Drafting the Letter's Opening Paragraph (30 minutes)</p> <p>C. Begin to Develop Criteria for the Quality Research-Based Letter (5 minutes)</p> <p>3. Closing and Assessment</p> <p>A. Pair and Share (5 minutes)</p> <p>4. Homework</p> <p>A. Continue writing your letter to a family member or friend using the five-part letter format.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In this lesson, students begin to draft their practice letter using information from the country of Japan. This lesson specifically focuses on drafting an opening paragraph about Japan. Future lessons will follow a similar pattern: a mini lesson on crafting one of the paragraphs, work time to do draft writing, and continued construction of a criteria list for the performance task letter.• In this lesson, students begin their guided practice, working together to write a letter about Japan. Students will have the support of a peer in drafting the paragraph. Although students examine the Performance Task Model (about France), the actual writing that students <i>do</i> in this lesson is about Japan. Writing in front of students (in addition to showing them a completed model) helps students to see and hear the thinking of the writing as they are going through the process. Consider including a live demonstration of writing the opening paragraph about Japan based on class needs. If a demonstration is necessary, adjust the time for Work Time B as needed.• Consider students' abilities when forming partnerships. As students are working, check in with partnerships to ensure they are on track and supported.• In this lesson the class begins to build a Criteria for a Quality Research-Based Letter anchor chart. Students will continue to add to this chart over the next several lessons.• In advance:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Establish writing partnerships.– Prepare an anchor chart that looks exactly like the France Model: Opening Paragraph recording form but without the lines for the writing partners' names.– Preview the Criteria for a Quality Research-Based Letter anchor chart (see supporting materials).– Post the learning targets.



Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
criteria, opening, research-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Performance Task Invitation (from Lesson 1; one to display)• Document camera• Performance Task Model: Writing about France (from Lesson 1; one per student)• France Model: Opening Paragraph recording form (one per pair and one to display)• Analyzing the Model Letter anchor chart 1: Opening (from Lesson 1)• France Model: Opening Paragraph recording form (answers, for teacher reference)• Structure of the Opening Paragraph (for teacher reference)• Colored pencils (three different colors; for teacher use)• <i>Dragon of the Red Dawn</i> (book; one to display)• <i>Exploring Countries: Japan</i> (book; one to display)• Criteria for a Quality Research-Based Letter anchor chart (new; co-created with students during Work Time C; see sample in supporting materials)



Opening	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>A. Engaging the Writer: Unpacking the Learning Targets and Rereading the Model Letter (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let students know they will be working with a writing partner for the remainder of Unit 3 by saying something like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “Starting today and through the remainder of most of Unit 3, you will work with a writing partner. As you continue writing, you will see how beneficial it is to have a partner to share ideas with, to write with, and to give you feedback on your writing.” • Announce writing partnerships. • Display the Performance Task Invitation again using a document camera and read it aloud. Remind students that they will write a research-based letter to author Mary Pope Osborne. This means that their writing will contain information that comes from the research they did in Unit 2. Tell them this is a new challenge for them as writers, and you are confident they will be successful at it. • Say something like: “Yesterday you were shown a model letter about France. This letter met all the requirements outlined in the Performance Task Invitation.” • Ask students to take a pencil and their copy of the Performance Task Model: Writing about France and quietly move to sit with their writing partner. • Instruct partnerships to reread the Performance Task Model: Writing about France. • After students have reread the model letter, say something like: “For all of you to be successful with the performance task, you will need to practice. You are going to practice by writing about Japan. Remember back in Unit 1, we read, wrote, and worked together to learn about the culture of the amazing country of Japan.” • Direct students’ attention to the first two learning targets and read them aloud: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “I can practice for the performance task by writing about Japan (with support).” * “I can plan and draft my writing for my opening paragraph using the model provided.” • Clarify as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider providing nonlinguistic symbols to assist ELLs in making connections with vocabulary. • Clarify vocabulary with ELLs. They can record new terms in personal dictionaries or vocabulary logs.



Work Time	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Analyzing the Letter's Opening Paragraph (15 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distribute one copy of the France Model: Opening Paragraph recording form to each partnership and display a copy.• Tell that students will work with their writing partner to carefully examine and analyze the opening paragraph of the France model letter.• Partners should ask themselves: "What do we notice?" and "How is the paragraph structured?" They should then record their thinking on the lines provided on the recording form.• Give pairs 7 minutes to complete this task.• Circulate and support as necessary. Part of the intent with this step is to give the newly established writing partnerships a quick and relatively easy task to complete together. It also provides an opportunity once again for students to be in conversation with peers.• Refocus students whole group. Ask for volunteers to share observations about the opening paragraph with the class.• Remind them of the work they did in Lesson 1 with the Analyzing the Model Letter anchor chart 1: Opening. Tell them that they are going to go into more detail now. As students share, record their responses on the anchor chart. Refer to the France Model: Opening Paragraph recording form (answers, for teacher reference) for possible responses. Add students' responses to the anchor chart.• Congratulate students on their keen observations of the opening paragraph.• Invite students to return to their seats. Display the Performance Task Model: Writing about France. (See the Structure of the Opening Paragraph, for teacher reference, to help you know the exact structure for a opening paragraph that will be expected of students.• Using a colored pencil, underline the first sentence. Tell students that this first sentence introduces the <i>reason for writing</i>. This sentence serves as the <u>topic sentence</u> for the opening paragraph.• Use a different color and underline the next three sentences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Careful pairing of students is necessary for the writing partnerships. In Work Time B, when partnerships are drafting their practice opening paragraphs, students paired each need to have the ability to contribute.• Use thoughtful grouping: ELL language acquisition is facilitated by interacting with native speakers of English who provide models of language.



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students’ Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell students that these sentences provide the <i>background</i>. These sentences also connect with the Performance Task Invitation. They serve as the <u>detail sentences</u>. • Use a third color and underline the last sentence. Tell students that this sentence clearly states the <i>main idea</i> of the letter: “There are so many interesting things about the culture of France that you could use in your new story.” This sentence also serves as the <u>ending sentence</u>. 	
<p>B. Partner Practice: Drafting the Letter’s Opening Paragraph (30 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold up the two texts used in Unit 1: <i>Dragon of the Red Dawn</i> and <i>Exploring Countries: Japan</i>. Tell students it’s time to write about Japan for a time. • Say something like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “To support you in being successful with the module performance task, you will need to practice writing a research-based letter. We just finished examining the writing and discovering what makes a solid opening paragraph. You are now going to practice writing an opening paragraph using Japan as the country for Jack and Annie’s return destination.” • Tell students they will draft an opening paragraph with their writing partner. Remind them that the France Model: Opening Paragraph anchor chart is on display for them to reference as they work with their partner. • Guide them through the following process, taking more time where necessary given the needs of your specific students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Suggest that they talk first and then write. To do this, they should talk about what they think they want to write. – Ask them to write down different ways to say their ideas. Tell them to “get messy” and write down lots of possible sentences and variations of the opening paragraph. – Ask students to look over what they have and make decisions about which sentences they like best and which fit together using the structure shared earlier: reason for writing, background, and main idea of letter. – Ask each partnership to write out a clean copy of their paragraph and be ready to share with the class. As a final step, have the writing partners orally rehearse their paragraph. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong adjectives will help to make the students’ paragraphs engaging. It’s possible they may overuse a select few adjectives—great, super, interesting. Consider spending a few minutes building a list of potential adjectives for them to use in their letters. As they come upon additional adjectives, they can be shared with the class by adding them to this list. • Collaboration supports students’ engagement.



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>C. Begin to Develop Criteria for the Quality Research-Based Letter (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bring students back whole group. Display the Performance Task Model: Writing about France, but do not read it aloud.• Say something like: "This is a strong example of a research-based letter. You have spent some time examining this model letter in Lesson 1. I'm sure you noticed many things about what the letter contained and how the model letter was structured. And today you really dug in with the opening paragraph. In order for your letter to also be strong and clear, we need to establish some <i>criteria</i>."• Direct students' attention to the final learning target:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ "I can identify criteria for completing a research-based informative letter."• Underline the word <i>criteria</i>. Define criteria as qualities or characteristics. Deconstruct the remaining wording in the target.• Display the Criteria for a Quality Research-Based Letter anchor chart.• Say something like: "We will be building this anchor chart as we work over the next few lessons. Based on the work we've done so far, what criteria can we add to our anchor chart to get it started? Think of our work today with drafting opening paragraphs. You can think of it like you're writing a recipe for our research-based letter. What would be included in this recipe?"• As ideas come forth, add them to the anchor chart. Refer to the Criteria for a Quality Research-Based Letter anchor chart (for teacher reference) for possible responses. Be sure that following two criterion are discussed when co-constructing the anchor chart:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Includes a clear and inviting introduction that states the topic and purpose for writing– Demonstrates an understanding of audience• Remind students that you will add to this anchor chart throughout the unit.	



Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Pair and Share (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Instruct partnerships to switch paragraphs with another partnership.• Have students read each other's paragraphs using whisper voices.• Remind them of the first two criteria from the Criteria for a Quality Research-Based Letter anchor chart:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Includes a clear and inviting introduction that states the topic and purpose for writing– Demonstrates an understanding of audience• Invite partnerships to discuss what they think works well within the paragraph.• Direct partnerships to return the paragraphs and give the other partnership feedback by telling them what works well within their paragraph.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider using a sentence starter for students to share feedback. A possible starter could be, "I really like how you _____."
Homework	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue writing your letter to a family member or friend using the five-part letter format. Be prepared to share your letter in class during the next lesson.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students who lack the ability or responsibility for homework completion should be provided time and/or support in school in order to share a letter in Lesson 3.



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Supporting Materials



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France Model: Opening Paragraph Recording Form
(Answers, for Teacher Reference)

What do you notice about the opening paragraph?

I was so excited to hear you were writing a new *Magic Tree House* book series that I wanted to write you this letter. I think it's a great idea for Jack and Annie to revisit some of the countries they've adventured to before, but in the present. I have just finished researching France and have learned a lot about the people in France, how they live, and what they consider important. It was so interesting to learn about the culture of this fascinating country. There are so many interesting things about the culture of France that you could use in your new story.

- **It has five sentences.**
- **It sounds like you're talking to Mary Pope Osborne.**
- **It sounds like the writer is excited.**
- **It clearly states why the letter is being written.**
- **It mentions Jack and Annie.**
- **It matches the Performance Task Invitation.**
- **The sentences are long.**
- **Several sentences contain adjectives.**
- **It seems to have a topic sentence, detail sentences, and an ending sentence.**
- **It doesn't tell any facts about the country yet.**



Structure of the Opening Paragraph
(For Teacher Reference)

I was so excited to hear you were writing a new *Magic Tree House* book series that I wanted to write you this letter. I think it's a great idea for Jack and Annie to revisit some of the countries they've adventured to before, but in the present. I have just finished researching France and have learned a lot about the people in France, how they live, and what they consider important. It was so interesting to learn about the culture of this fascinating country. There are so many interesting things about the culture of France that you could use in your new story.

Opening paragraph: <i>main idea of the letter</i>	Introduction/ reason for writing:	I was so excited to hear you were writing a new <i>Magic Tree House</i> book series that I wanted to write you this letter.
	Background	I think it's a great idea for Jack and Annie to revisit some of the countries they've adventured to before, but in the present. I have just finished researching France and have learned a lot about the people in France, how they live, and what they consider important. It was so interesting to learn about the culture of this fascinating country.
	Main idea	There are so many interesting things about the culture of France that you could use in your new story!



Criteria for a Quality Research-Based Letter Anchor Chart
(For Teacher Reference)

- **Has an opening paragraph that explains the reason for the letter**
Includes a clear and inviting introduction that states the topic and purpose for writing
- **Sounds like it's for Mary Pope Osborne**
Demonstrates an understanding of audience