This unit is divided into four sections—four bends in the road. During the first bend you will introduce youngsters to a writing workshop. “You are an author,” you’ll say, and you’ll help youngsters understand how to think up a topic, draw it, and then do their best approximation of writing. Soon, you’ll teach children to linger longer and invest more in a piece of writing—thus launching an elementary school career of learning to elaborate! You’ll also teach youngsters how to go from finishing one piece to starting another with some independence. In no time, children will use letters as well as pictures to represent meaning. Your youngsters will develop phonemic awareness as they stretch out, listen to, distinguish and record the sounds in a word.

The second bend in the road is titled “Writing Teaching Books.” During this portion of the unit, children learn that they can reread what they have written, realize they have more to say, then staple on more pages to make a homemade book. You’ll channel children’s eagerness to fill up all the pages in their book into a willingness to label more of their pictures, represent more sounds in a word, and make two-word labels.

Things change dramatically in the third bend, “Writing True Stories.” So far children will have learned that they can write to teach others all about whatever they know. Now they learn that they can also write to capture true stories from their lives. They will draw what happened first, then touch the page and tell the story, then write the story of that one time. Your children will be eager to learn the tricks of the trade, so you’ll teach some early lessons in narrative craft.

In the last bend your children will select a few stories to publish and will learn to revise and edit as they make those stories the best they can be. To do this, you’ll introduce children to the writing checklists that will undergird every unit of study. With guidance from the checklists and from you, children will make their best writing better. They’ll add detail, fix spelling, and get more sounds into their words. Then, to culminate the unit, students will celebrate by reading selections from their writing to a circle of classmates.
BEND II  Writing Teaching Books

7. Turning Pieces into Scrolls and Books
   In this session, you'll teach students that when writers want to teach more, they add more pages to their book.

8. Planning Teaching Books Page-By-Page
   In this session, you'll teach students that when writers write a whole book, they plan how that book will go.

9. Asking and Answering Questions to Add More
   In this session, you'll teach students that writing partners help each other add more to their writing.

10. Stretching Out Words to Write Even More
    In this session, you'll teach students that young writers say words slowly, over and over again, to write all of the sounds that they hear.

11. Making Writing the Best It Can Be
    In this session, you could teach students that writers pause before they finish a piece, using a checklist to make their writing the best it can be before publishing it.

BEND III  Writing Stories

12. Getting Ideas for Stories and Practicing Storytelling
    In this session, you'll teach students that writers get ready to write by telling their stories.

13. Planning Stories Page-By-Page
    In this session, you'll teach students that writers plan how their stories will go by touching each page as they tell their story.

14. Adding More Details into Pictures and Stories
    In this session, you'll teach students that writers add details to their writing by thinking about where they were, who they were with, and what they were doing in their story.

15. Stretching and Writing Words: Hearing and Recording Sounds in Sequence
    In this session, you could teach students that writers spell words the best they can, stretching out the word slowly, listening closely to the sounds they hear, and then writing those sounds down.

16. Bringing Our Writing to Life: Adding Dialogue with Speech Bubbles
    In this session, you'll teach students that writers bring their stories to life by making their characters talk.

17. Using Everything To Make Pieces the Best They Can Be
    In this session, you'll teach students that writers reread their stories, drawing on everything they know to improve them.

BEND IV  Preparing for Publication

18. Editing
    In this session, you'll teach students that writers edit their writing by rereading their words and rewriting them if necessary to make their writing more readable to themselves and others.

19. Reading into the Circle: An Author’s Celebration
    In this session, students will have an opportunity to share their writing with an audience and celebrate becoming a published author.
Until now you’ve so wanted your children to feel good as writers that you have hidden your struggles to translate their spindly letters into meaning. When neither you nor the child could decipher a text, you have turned quickly to the picture or to the next story. The problem is that the only reason children will care about spelling, punctuation, or white space is that these conventions make it easier for others to read and to appreciate their texts! It’s crucial, therefore, that as soon as children have the ability to begin to write in ways a reader could conceivably read, you let them in on the truth. This unit of study begins with you, as a teacher, confessing to your children that you have a hard time reading their writing. You’ll quickly follow with an invitation to children to review their stories as readers, making a pile of the ones that are clear and another pile of the ones that still need work. As you review the piles, you will discover ways to tailor the lessons in this first bend to meet the individual needs of your students. Early in this bend, you’ll encourage children to draw on all they know about writing stories. As children work, you will encourage them to write words in more conventional ways, use drawing to plan, write in sentences, and reread their work as they write.

In Bend II you’ll give your students additional tools and opportunities to make their writing more powerful and clearer for their readers. You’ll begin by teaching children how to use a checklist to reflect on what they have learned so far this year. The next two lessons are designed to strengthen your students’ word-writing skills by spotlighting the use of vowels and sight words. To balance this close-in focus, you’ll next teach children to listen for and capture their true storytelling words, not just the easy-to-spell words. In the next few lessons you will teach your writers the power of partnerships as they aim to make their writing clearer, using everything they have learned to make writing that is easy for readers to read.

In Bend III the focus shifts from getting readable words on the page to telling stories more powerfully through revision. In the first lesson, you’ll teach your writers how to mine their drawings to find more stories to tell. The middle lessons of this bend teach your children how to use flaps to make additions to stories. In the final lesson children work as partners to help each other make their stories clearer and easier to read.

In the final bend you’ll challenge your kids to use all they have learned about revision and editing to make one of their pieces shine. Children will work on creating more satisfying endings and on making their pieces beautiful and ready for a larger audience. This is also an opportunity for writers to assess the work they have done. The final celebration of this unit might be making a bulletin board or reading work out loud to an audience.
BEND II  

Tools Give Writers Extra Power

6. Checklists Can Help Writers Make Powerful Stories
   In this session, you’ll teach students that writers use tools, such as checklists, to help them write the best they can.

7. A Vowel Chart Can Help with the Middles of Words
   In this session, you’ll teach students that vowels help writers spell the middle of words. Using a vowel chart can help writers identify and come up with the right vowels to put on their paper.

8. Writing Readable Stories Using Word Walls
   In this session, you’ll teach students that writers rely heavily on words they know in a snap in order to make their writing more readable.

9. Writing Stories with True Words: Making Stories Talk
   In this session, you’ll teach students that writers include storytelling words in their writing.

10. Using Reading Partnerships to Support More Conventional Writing
   In this session, you’ll teach students that writers use a partner as a tool to help make writing more readable.

11. Using a Partner to Hear More Sounds in Words
    In this session, you could teach students that writers work with other writers to help them find misspelled words, and then they work together to stretch out these words, listening for the sounds and writing down the sounds they hear.

12. Putting It Together: How to Make Readable Writing (Guided Inquiry Lesson)
    In this session, you’ll teach students that writers reflect on their past work and what they have learned in order to make plans to move forward in their writing.

BEND III  

Partnering for Revision: Making Stories More Fun to Read

13. Writers Search Their Mental Pictures and Their Drawn Pictures to Make Their Stories Better
    In this session, you’ll invite your writers to make the pieces they already wrote in the first part of this unit even more amazing by revising using their own pictures in their heads and on paper.

14. Writers Use Flaps to Make Better Stories
    In this session, you’ll equip children with tools and techniques for inserting material into many different places of their drafts. These tools should make your writers story builders.

15. Writing Amazing Story Beginnings
    In this session, you’ll pinpoint strategies for writing strong leads by studying mentor texts and helping students to imitate them.

16. Writers Work with Partners to Answer Readers’ Questions
    In this session, you’ll teach students how to revise their own work and help each other by offering strategies for peer partnerships.

BEND IV  

Preparing for Publication

17. Writers Use All They Know to Select and Revise a Piece to Publish
    In this session, you’ll help writers choose a piece for their celebration. You’ll model strategies for making a story more meaningful and help students begin their revision on their own pieces.

18. Writing Amazing Endings with Feelings
    In this session, you’ll help students focus on writing endings that leave readers with a strong feeling. By modeling an ending with strong emotion, you’ll provide an example of the kind of ending they might try.

19. Writers Make Their Pieces Beautiful to Get Ready for Publication
    In this session, you’ll teach students how to make a piece beautiful in service to adding depth to their story.

20. A Final Celebration: Bringing True Stories to Life
    In this session, you could teach students that writers share with others all they’ve learned, including what they’ve learned about writing and revising true stories.
How-To Books
Writing to Teach Others
Lucy Calkins, Laurie Pessah, and Elizabeth Moore

There are four bends in the road in this unit. Although the instructional focus changes a bit as your children progress through the unit, you will continue to expect them to write lots and lots of how-to texts. At the start, you’ll tell children that writers not only use writing to tell stories, they also use writing to teach others how to do things, and you’ll show them a how-to text. They’ll have no trouble seeing that writers of how-to texts teach the steps for doing something, and they’ll probably also notice that the steps are numbered and there are drawings for each step. You will then surprise kids by saying, “So, right now, go and write your very own how-to book!”

Because children will be writing what they know how to do, they’ll bring their areas of expertise into your classroom. You will discover the hidden talents of your young writers as they write books on everything from How to Make an Ice Cream Sundae to How to Change a Diaper,” to “How to Hit A Home Run,” to “How to Do Yoga. There will be lessons on drawing and writing one step at a time and writing with enough clarity and detail that others can follow the directions. Writing partners will play an important role in this bend, as pairs of children test their directions to make sure everything makes sense and get ideas from each other.

Lessons in the second bend focus on studying mentor texts and trying out techniques the students notice in those texts, including tucking tips into their teaching and using the “you” voice to write directly to readers. Many How-To texts use comparisons to make their points clear, and you will highlight that as well. Ultimately, you’ll want to use this bend to help your young writers understand that they can always look to real, published books as exemplars and then use what they learn.

In Bend III you will help your children find opportunities throughout the school day to write How-To books that can be helpful to others. You’ll encourage children to write a series or collection of How-To books for their classmates, so this bend emphasizes writing easy-to-read books that convey to readers exactly what they need to know.

In Bend IV, “Giving How-To Books as Gifts,” you will help your children get ready to share their work with its intended audiences. You will teach writers to think strategically about where in the world their books should go: “How To Give a Dog a Bath” might be suited for the neighborhood pet store, while “How To Make Guacamole” might be important for a family member about to hold a party.

Welcome to Unit 3

BEND I  ♦  Writing How-To Books, Step by Step

1. Writers Study the Kind of Writing They Plan to Make
   In this session, you’ll teach students that before a writer writes, he thinks “What kind of thing am I making?” and then studies examples of whatever it is he wants to make.

2. Use What You Already Know: Touch and Tell the Steps Across the Pages
   In this session, you’ll teach students to draw on what they already know about planning, touching, and telling the steps of their how-to books across pages.

3. Writers Become Readers, Asking, “Can I Follow This?”
   In this session, you’ll teach students that writers reread their writing as they go, making changes along the way.

4. Answering Your Partner’s Questions
   In this session, you’ll teach students that writing partners help each other make how-to books clearer and easier to follow.

5. Label Your Diagrams to Teach Even More Information
   In this session, you’ll teach students that writers add detailed information to their writing by labeling their diagrams.

6. Writing as Many Books as You Can
   In this session, you could teach students that writers develop the habit of writing faster, longer, and stronger. One way they do this is by setting goals for themselves.
7. Reflecting and Setting Goals for Creating Your Best Information Writing
   In this session, you’ll teach students that writers use an information writing checklist to set writing goals.

BEND II ✴ Using Mentor Texts for Inspiration to Lift the Level of All Your Work

8. Emulating Features of Informational Writing Using a Mentor Text
   In this session, you’ll teach students that writers study mentor texts: noticing, naming, and trying out what they discover.

9. Writing for Your Readers: Using the Word You
   In this session, you’ll teach students that writers focus in on their audience by addressing readers directly, using you.

10. How-To Book Writers Picture Each Step and Then Choose Exactly Right Words
    In this session, you’ll teach students that writers build vocabulary and choose precise language by envisioning each step in the process they are describing.

    In this session, you’ll teach students that writers focus on readers’ needs by anticipating issues and then clarifying them in their steps with warnings, suggestions, or tips.

12. “Balance on One Leg Like a Flamingo”: Using Comparison to Give Your Reader Clear Directions
    In this session, you’ll teach students that writers clarify their directions by imagining and then writing comparisons to describe actions.

BEND III ✴ Keeping Your Readers in Mind

13. Writers Write How-To Books about Things They Learn, throughout the Day and from Books
    In this session you’ll teach students that writers get ideas for their writing from things that they do and learn throughout the day and from other books.

14. Writing a Series or Collection of How-To Books to Teach Others Even More about a Topic
    In this session, you’ll teach students that writers sometimes collect a series of books focused on one umbrella topic in order to teach others even more about their topic.

15. Writers Can Write Introductions and Conclusions to Help Their Readers
    In this session, you’ll teach students that writers clarify a topic new to readers by writing introductions and conclusions.

16. Using Everything You Know to Make Your How-To Book Easy to Read
    In this session, you’ll teach students that writers are always working to make their writing easy to read, using all the strategies they know.

BEND IV ✴ Giving How-To Books as Gifts

17. How-To Books Make Wonderful Gifts!
    In this session, to prepare for publishing, writers determine a specific audience for a piece of writing and dedicate that piece to that person.

18. Thinking Ahead to the Publishing Party: Doing Your Best Work Now So You Can Share It Later
    In this session, writers use an editing checklist to prepare their writing for publication.

19. Publishing Celebrations: The Teacher Is You!
    In this session, you could teach students that writers share their how-to writing with others by publishing it, and sometimes by recording a video of themselves reading their writing so that they can teach others.
In this unit children do lots of lots of persuasive writing. They begin by writing signs, songs, petitions, and letters about problems they see in their classroom, then in their school, then in the larger world of their neighborhood. The first portion of the unit—the first bend in the road—is “Exploring Opinion Writing: Making Our School a Better Place.” From the very start of this unit, you’ll ask children to look at the world, seeing not just what is but what could be. You’ll teach children to reflect on problems, think about what could make things better, and then write to help make a change. This is not a time to assign students a particular genre or particular issue; instead you will offer a menu and urge them to consider even more ways they could write to make a change: a book, a song, a card, a letter—the choices are endless.

Regardless of the genre, your kindergartners will be learning to make words (and pictures) to express what they want to happen and convince an audience that it should. You’ll help students publish their work by posting signs in the hallways, reading pieces to schoolmates in other classrooms, reciting songs over the school loudspeaker, and using a bullhorn to rally friends to sign a petition during recess. As children send their words out into the school, they’ll learn that by writing they can convince others to make the world better.

In the second bend you’ll channel students to write lots of persuasive letters. You’ll teach writers that in order to make a change in the world, it helps to ask, “Who could help me fix this problem?” and then write letters to persuade people to join the cause. You’ll help children write lots of these letters, to lots of people, addressing lots of problems. You’ll teach children that including facts and information in this kind of letter helps make it more persuasive, and you’ll again give students an opportunity to publish their work, perhaps with a class trip to the post office or to the nearest mailbox.

In the final bend you’ll rally kids to join you in a whole-class pursuit around a more global cause, perhaps protecting the planet. You’ll again invite children to write in a variety of genres, working on individual projects that convince others to “be green!” You’ll remind writers to recall everything they have learned about persuasive writing this month and apply these strategies when writing new pieces, and you’ll also teach them ways to lift the level of their persuasive writing.

To prepare for the final publication, you’ll provide opportunities for partners to plan how their presentations might go, how they might use body language to show the big messages they have about their topic. You’ll help your young politicians learn ways writers captivate their audience. You’ll celebrate and publish the persuasive writing your students have worked on during the unit, reminding them of the larger purpose—sharing opinions and convincing others to make a change.
**BEND II ✦ Sending Our Words out into the World: Writing Letters to Make a Change**

7. **Writing Letters that Reach Readers**
   *In this session, you’ll teach students that writers write letters as if they are talking to their reader.*

8. **Studying a Mentor Text (a Guided Inquiry)**
   *In this session, you’ll teach students that writers read and study the work of other writers and then try to incorporate what they have learned into their own writing.*

9. **Knowing Just What to Say: Angling Letters to Different Audiences**
   *In this session, you’ll teach students that when writers are working to make changes, they write letters to many different people, angling those letters to the different audiences.*

10. **How Can We Make It Better? Imagining Solutions**
    *In this session, you’ll teach students that persuasive writers include possible ideas for how to fix the problem they are writing about.*

    *In this session, you could teach students that before writers send their letters out into the world, they reread their writing to make sure it is clear and easy to read.*

**BEND III ✦ Persuasive Writing Projects**

12. **Draw on a Repertoire of Strategies to Write about a World Problem**
    *In this session, you’ll teach students that when writers want to tackle new, ambitious projects, they draw on all they know—in this case, all they know about writing persuasively.*

13. **Sound Like an Expert! Teaching Information to Persuade Your Audience**
    *In this session, you’ll teach students that persuasive writers make their writing convincing by including facts that teach their readers important information about their topic.*

14. **More on Adding Detailed Information to Persuasive Writing**
    *In this session, you could teach students that writers read about their topic so they can include more detailed information in their writing. Or, you might teach students that writers reread their writing to see where more precise details can go.*

15. **Writing How-To Books to Make a Change**
    *In this session, you’ll teach students that writers can write how-to books to give their readers detailed instructions about how to solve a problem.*

16. **Editing for Punctuation: Partner Work**
    *In this session, you could teach students that writers reread their writing to be sure they have included the right punctuation that will tell their readers how to read their piece.*

17. **Speaking Up and Taking a Stand: Planning and Rehearsing Speeches**
    *In this session, you’ll teach students that when writers write to make a change, they share their writing with others, calling their audience or readers to action by answering their questions and asking them to add their name to a petition or a sign-up sheet.*

For additional information and sample sessions, visit [www.UnitsofStudy.com](http://www.UnitsofStudy.com)