

Lesson Five: Developing Illustrations and Text Features for Your Writing

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SUBJECT: Writing, Writing Process, Publishing, Art
GRADE: Grades 3-5

Students should know what text features are by reading class instruction. This lesson helps students to recognize that developing text features for their own writing is an exciting part of the writing process. Examples of text features are maps of kingdoms, using a different font for journal entries, sketches, diagrams, photographs, and scrapbook pages within your book. Students can also include an About the Author page, dedication at the front of the book, and a glossary at the back of the book with terms that relate to the story.



Two students hold up a book they illustrated together.



The author of *My Life as a First Lady* holds up the cover of her story after including her illustrations. She also had a catchy slogan on her cover like some books include- *Normal House, Normal Life. White House, First Lady Life... Which will I choose?*



One of my students holds up a map he sketched to go along with his fantasy book.

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will develop illustrations and text features for their novels.

MATERIALS

1. Writer's notebooks or other place where students have their drafts stored
2. Chart paper and marker
3. Different kinds of stationary, cardstock, and plain printing paper
4. Blank books for each student
5. Websites:
 - Character Trading Cards:
http://readwritethink.org/materials/trading_cards/ (Optional- This can be used in developing a text feature for your students' books)
6. Book Suggestions:
 - *The United States of America* by Paula Danzinger- Includes a scrapbook insert as well as a different cursive font for journaling.
 - *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* by Jeff Kinney- Written in a unique font for journaling and includes illustrations
 - *The Chronicles of Narnia- The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis- Includes a map of Narnia
 - *Dragon Rider* by Cornelia Funke- Incredible front cover illustration and maps
 - *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* by E.L. Konigsburg- Includes a floor plan of the Metropolitan Museum of Art
 - Any book by Marissa Moss- any book from the *Amelia's Notebook* series or *Hannah's Journal: The Story of an Immigrant Girl*- Admirable for illustrations
 - *Math Curse* by Jon Scieszka, illustrated by Lane Smith- Admirable for illustrations
 - Any book that has received the Caldecott Medal

SET UP AND PREPARE

1. Have copies of books that include text features and illustrations prepared to show your students.
2. Make sure that you have ample computers (or a laptop cart) available for your students.

DIRECTIONS

Part One: *Beyond the Words*

Step 1: Explain to your students that there are several ways in which you can bring the words on the page to life: maps of kingdoms, different fonts for journal entries, sketches, diagrams, photographs, and scrapbook pages within books. About the Author pages, dedications at the front of books, and glossaries at the back of a book can also enhance a written selection in many ways.

Step 2: Show copies of books that have illustrations, maps, or other interesting text features inside. After you show the books, lead a discussion about which books impressed your students the most. Categorize the books you just showed by genre and ask students which elements were common among books in each of the genres.

Step 3: Discuss the different genres of books with your students once again. Using chart paper, ask students what they feel are appropriate text features to include for different kinds of books such as fantasy, historical fiction, mystery, science fiction, and realistic fiction. You can discuss non-fiction books if any of your students has developed a non-fiction piece. For example, fantasy books can include maps of kingdoms. Historical fiction books can include a section in the back about the time period such as in the *American Girl* series.

Step 4: Show copies of books that have notable cover art. What makes the covers of those books interesting? How did the artist use elements of color in the illustration? Is the layout of the front cover unique? Did the artist use texturing or patterning?

Step 5: Show copies of books that have catchy slogans on the front cover. One student in my class had one on the front cover of her book that read, *Normal House, Normal Life. White House, First Lady Life... Which will I choose?* Explain how slogans reveal only the most basic plot information.

Step 6: Show copies of books that include dedications. Authors dedicate books to family members, friends, or others who have inspired them. Encourage your students to dedicate their books to someone important in their lives.

Step 7: Post the chart you developed in a visible location and have students utilize it as they begin developing their text features. Additionally, keep the books you shared with your students in an easily assessable location.

Step 8: Encourage your students to develop their text features on another sheet of paper from the blank books you will be issuing them in case they make a mistake. (Tip- Have different kinds of stationary, cardstock, and plain printing paper on hand.)

Part Two: *Using Technology* (Optional)

Step 9: The majority of my class normally makes the choice to type their stories for publication. Depending on how much you have used technology throughout the school year, you may need to invite a parent volunteer into the classroom to work with small groups of students as they type their stories. Before your students type, make sure you let them know about tools like Spelling and Grammar check as well as the place where to change fonts. (Tip- Make sure that students do not focus too much on font type, size, and color. You also need to let your students know which kind of printer you have access to, in case they type out their story in a different colored font. Their stories may not be able to print out as they desire.)

Part Three: Issuing Blank Books

Step 10: I prefer issuing blank books after students have been developing text features and using technology for a few days. Students can then focus on getting what they have developed secured in their books. (Tip- Have students pay for the books or have parents contribute blank books for the class. They

are approximately \$3.00-\$4.00 at teacher resource stores. Also for a more economical option, have students make books with regular paper and have a parent volunteer use a binding machine to make the books as nice as possible.)

SUPPORTING ALL LEARNERS

This lesson may bring out some of the best in your below grade level writers. ELL students will also be able to develop illustrations and find new ways to communicate with their classmates. Your students will be able to appreciate their classmates for artistic and technological talents.

ASSESS STUDENTS

When viewing your students' text features, ask students how they correlated with the story.

- How do your text features help readers to better understand your story or bring the events of your story to life?
- When sharing your book with classmates, did they feel they understood all aspects of the story by looking at the words and features you included?

HOME CONNECTION

Parents are encouraged to come to the class and assist students with technology during this lesson. You can also encourage parents to find books that have exceptional text features and illustrations. Encourage parents to visit the public library with their child to find books that are written in the same genre as their child's novel.

EVALUATE THE LESSON

- Did your students have the resources available that they needed?
- Did students remain on task when using the technology in the classroom?
- Did the books you share help your students to better understand different types of text features and illustrations?