

**Lower Township Elementary Schools  
Cape May, NJ**

**Grade Level: First Grade (1) / Content Area: Reading, Writing, Phonics**

Month	Reading Unit	Writing Unit	Phonics Unit
<b>September/October</b>	<b>Unit 1</b> -Building Good Reading Habits (Spiral 1)	<b>Unit 1</b> - Small Moments (Spiral1)	<b>Unit 1</b> - Talking and Thinking About Letters (Spiral 1)
<b>November</b>	<b>Unit 2</b> - Word Detectives (Additional Spiral)		<b>Unit 2</b> - The Mystery of the Silent e (Spiral 2)
<b>December</b>		<b>Unit 2</b> - How-To-Books: Writing to Teach Others (K- Spiral 4)	
<b>January</b>	<b>Unit 3</b> - Learning About the World- Reading Nonfiction (Spiral 2)	<b>Unit 3</b> -Nonfiction Chapter Books (Spiral 2)	<b>Unit 3</b> - From Tips to Tails (Spiral 3)
<b>February</b>			
<b>March</b>	<b>Unit 4</b> - Meeting Characters and Learning Lessons (Spiral 4)	<b>Unit 4</b> - Reviews (Spiral 3)	<b>Unit 4</b> - Word Builders (Spiral 4)
<b>April</b>			
<b>May/June</b>	<b>Unit 5</b> - Readers Have Big Jobs to Do (Spiral 3)	<b>Unit 5</b> - From Scenes to Series (Spiral 4)	<b>Unit 5</b> - Marvelous Bloopers (Spiral 5)

[Reading and Writing Mentor Texts \(Click Here\)](#)

# 1st Grade Reading Unit 1

## Building Good Reading Habits

This unit is designed as an introduction to first grade reading workshop. The theme: readers have good habits. These habits are organized into three categories--habits for reading long and strong, habits for solving hard words, and habits for working with a partner--each corresponding to one of the three bends.

This unit begins with **Bend I: Habits for Reading Long and Strong**, which reminds readers that call on familiar habits at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of the book, to read by taking a sneak peek at their books. Most importantly, you will establish structures, expectations, and values that will shape the work kids do during reading workshop. **Bend II, Habits for Tackling Hard Words**, rallies readers to draw on all that they know in order to work hard to solve tricky words. This work will push readers to focus on utilizing strong word solving habits, such as relying on meaning, phonics, looking across words, and being flexible. Students will learn that word solving takes careful monitoring. The teacher will coach students to cross-check sources of information while remaining flexible and persistent. **Bend III: Partners Have Good Habits**, Too channels readers to draw on their growing repertoire of ways to read with partners, including before reading book introductions, during reading support, and after reading work, such as rereading to smooth out or retell.

Reading	
<p><b>Big Ideas Course Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establish routines and expectations</li> <li>● Build strategies for partner reading</li> <li>● Use beginning reading behaviors and print strategies</li> </ul>	
Essential Questions	Enduring Understanding
<p><i>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</i></p>	<p><i>What will students understand about the big ideas?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How do readers push themselves to read more?</li> <li>● What do readers think while they read?</li> <li>● How do readers make sense of the words on a page?</li> <li>● How do readers share books?</li> </ul>	<p>Students will understand that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● There are many ways that readers push themselves to read with enthusiasm and stamina.</li> <li>● Readers envision as they read.</li> <li>● Readers match the picture in their minds with the words on the page.</li> </ul>

# 1st Grade Writing Unit 1

## ***Small Moments: Writing with Focus, Detail, and Dialogue***

This first unit is designed to help your students work with independence, confidence, and stamina. Children are encouraged to write about small moments, and this level of focus enables them to write with more detail, including showing a character's small actions, dialogue, and internal thinking. Children produce lots and lots of Small Moment stories and move with independence through the writing process: choosing an idea, planning their writing by sketching stories across 3-5 page booklets, storytelling repeatedly until the story feels just right.

In the final bends of this unit, children will engage in the vitally important process of revision. Children will study author's craft by engaging in deep analysis of mentor texts. Simultaneously, they will use checklists and learning progressions to help them set goals for improving their own writing. Because so much of the work of this unit requires the habits of revision and reflection, it is necessary to establish writing partnerships immediately. Peer partnerships will support goal setting, providing feedback, and celebrating successes throughout the writing process. It also sets the expectation that authors write with their audience in mind.

The most important thing to remember about writing workshop in first grade is this--don't wait! It is tempting to think that children need to be socialized into the rhythms of the school day before you start this teaching. IT IS NOT SO! You can start on day one. Take the brave step of gathering children on the first day of school and inviting them to live like writers.

Writing	
<p><b>Big Ideas Course Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage in the process of writing workshop to create, refine, and share our ideas</li> <li>Creating a small moment (narrative) story</li> <li>Write so that others can read and understand our ideas</li> </ul>	
Essential Questions	Enduring Understanding
<p><i>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</i></p>	<p><i>What will students understand about the big ideas?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why is it important to think about our audience when we write?</li> <li>How do authors improve their writing?</li> <li>How do authors communicate their ideas to an audience?</li> </ul>	<p>Students will understand that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a process writers engage in to create writings</li> <li>Writers write long and strong, with great volume and stamina</li> <li>A small moment is a story about a single event in one's life, written with detail and elaboration</li> <li>Writers can incorporate word study concepts and high frequency word walls to make writing more understandable for an audience</li> <li>Writers revise and edit their writing to improve readability for an audience</li> </ul>

## 1st Grade Reading Unit 2

### ***Word Detectives: Strategies for using High-Frequency Words and for Decoding***

This is a unit that aims to tap into the power of play. At this critical time in the year, your youngsters are moving into reading text with increased complexity and new words to solve at the turn of each page. This can feel like a monumental task, and the reality is, children will need to tackle these challenges with determination, grit, and hard work. However, this unit strives to support your children's word-solving skills in a way that feels joyful and fun. They will learn to monitor their reading: developing efficient word-solving skills that consistently use meaning, structure, and visual information, expanding their knowledge of phonics and its application in context, and strengthening fluency.

The unit moves through three parts. In the first bend, you'll invite children to take on the role of word detectives-in-training, who will focus on having students monitor their reading by locating difficult words, using what they know to try solving these words, and then checking their attempts before either trying again or moving on. In the second bend, you continue the playful theme by letting your students know that they are now ready to become full-fledged word detectives, who work to increase their bank of high-frequency words--and also to use the words they know to solve unknown words. Finally, in the third bend, you will focus on ways to use visual information effectively.

Reading	
<b>Big Ideas Course Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Readers use multiple strategies simultaneously as they read</li><li>• Readers utilize snap words to read with fluency and to solve longer, more complex words</li><li>• Reading use their knowledge of letters and sounds to read words</li></ul>	
Essential Questions <i>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</i>	Enduring Understanding <i>What will students understand about the big ideas?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How do readers push themselves to read more?</li><li>• What do readers think while they read?</li><li>• How do readers make sense of the words on a page?</li><li>• How do readers share books?</li></ul>	Students will understand that... <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There are many ways that readers push themselves to read with enthusiasm and stamina.</li><li>• Readers envision as they read.</li><li>• Readers match the picture in their minds with the words on the page</li></ul>

## 1st Grade Writing Unit 2

### **How-To Books: Writing to Teach Others**

This unit is designed to teach your students how to teach something to an audience by drawing and writing a sequence of steps. They will learn that one purpose of writing is to teach others. To begin a unit on how-to books, tell children that writers not only use their writing to tell the rich stories of their lives, or to label their environment or to celebrate others, but also to *teach* others. In writing these books, they describe a sequence of steps they hope the learner will take. This kind of procedural writing requires explicitness, clarity, sequence and that writers anticipate what their readers will need to know.

For some children, the best way to set them up to write more than one how-to text a day. Other children will benefit most from being channeled toward writing more detailed, elaborated texts. Talk up the choice of longer (five- to six-page) booklets, with extra single pages available, to encourage these writers to add yet more pages as they add more and more detail.

Writing	
<p><b>Big Ideas Course Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Engage in the writing process to create, refine, and share our ideas</li> <li>● Construct procedural writings that are explicit, clear, and sequential</li> <li>● Revise writing to improve clarity for the audience</li> </ul>	
Essential Questions <i>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</i>	Enduring Understanding <i>What will students understand about the big ideas?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Why is it important to think about our audience when we write?</li> <li>● How do authors improve their writing?</li> <li>● How do authors communicate their ideas to an audience?</li> </ul>	<p>Students will understand that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Writing is a process, and every step in the process is important</li> <li>● Writers write long and strong, with great volume and stamina</li> <li>● How-to writing contains content-specific expert language as well as descriptive language</li> <li>● Writers revise and edit their writing to improve readability</li> </ul>

# 1st Grade Reading Unit 3

## Learning About the World: Reading Nonfiction

This unit aims to introduce students to nonfiction texts, to be able to read about and learn about things in our world. You will want to have leveled nonfiction books available to students in topic baskets. You will find that many students will be interested in animals, plants, properties of water, and weather. Try to make connections to what you are studying in science and social studies, so that students can make connections to prior learning.

It is important to continue to match students to books that are just right for them. In the nonfiction world, books above level J are not as accurately leveled as those below. So, if you have higher-level readers, it is okay to have them read books at levels that are one or two steps below their independent reading level.

Setting up your nonfiction library will be very important. Allow students to independently sift through, sort, and label book baskets by category.

Reading	
<b>Big Ideas Course Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reading to learn</li><li>• Developing strategies for dealing with tricky words in nonfiction</li><li>• Growing ideas about nonfiction topics</li><li>• Comparing and contrasting information from different books</li></ul>	
Essential Questions <i>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</i>	Enduring Understanding <i>What will students understand about the big ideas?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Why do people read nonfiction texts?</li><li>• How do I use everything I know about reading to read books that teach me information and ideas about different topics?</li></ul>	Students will understand that... <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nonfiction readers read to become smarter about our world.</li><li>• Nonfiction readers think about what they read.</li><li>• Nonfiction readers have ways to deal with tricky words as they read.</li><li>• Readers can read more than one book about a topic to compare and contrast.</li></ul>

# 1st Grade Writing Unit 3

## Nonfiction Chapter Books

This unit prepares children to write informational texts of all sorts across this year’s curriculum. Because this unit is foundational, undergirding children’s reading of informational texts and enabling their cross-curricular writing, it is well positioned early on in first grade. This unit channels first graders’ youthful confidence and passion about topics that matter most to them. First graders love the chance to teach you and the world! This is also a wonderfully supportive unit for your striving learners, who will come alive when given the opportunity to teach what they already know! This unit takes children on a writing journey that builds in sophistication. It begins with instruction on how to make a basic type of information book—and ends with children creating multiple information chapter books, filled with elaboration, interesting text elements, and pictures that supplement the teaching of the words. The unit closes with lessons on craft and thoughtful punctuation, which will add a flourish to the powerful writing first graders are now doing in their information books. All this work culminates into a sharing celebration, where authors and audience teach and learn from one another.

Writing	
<b>Big Ideas Course Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nonfiction writers read several books about one topic so that they can become experts on that topic.</li><li>• Nonfiction writers use text features to help make complex ideas easier for their readers to understand.</li><li>• Nonfiction writers organize similar information into categories.</li><li>• Nonfiction writers introduce information and provide a sense of closure.</li><li>• Nonfiction writers ask and answer questions.</li><li>• Writers self-assess and set goals for their writing.</li></ul>	
<b>Essential Questions</b> <i>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</i>	<b>Enduring Understanding</b> <i>What will students understand about the big ideas?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How do writers write to teach what they know?</li><li>• How do nonfiction writers make their stories easy to understand?</li></ul>	Students will understand that... <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Writers write to teach what they know well.</li><li>• Writers revise to make writing better</li><li>• Writers elaborate to make writing stronger</li></ul>

# 1st Grade Reading Unit 4

## Meeting Characters and Learning Lessons: A Study of Story Elements

After a sequence of units that focused tightly on the reading processes—on cross-checking and integrating multiple sources of meaning and on reading across the word—this is a unit that helps kids experience the power of story. This unit teaches empathy, imagination, envisionment, prediction—all those beautiful comprehension skills that add up to engagement. It relies on the nuts and bolts of story elements and on the skills that are foundational to literal and inferential comprehension.

This unit is divided into four bends. The first bend invites readers to track the events of the story—paying attention to the shifts in setting, using pictures and words to keep track of the story events and to “keep up” with the character, along the way making predictions to “look ahead” to anticipate what’s to come. You’ll also help your readers hold onto longer and more complex texts by determining importance to retell key details in sequence. The second bend teaches readers to learn all they can about the main and secondary characters and to grow ideas about how these characters feel, as well as what they might be saying and thinking, in order to sound like the characters, reading in a way that brings them to life. The third bend digs deeper, focusing on pulling lessons from the stories they read. Lastly, the fourth bend encourages readers to recommend favorite books, passing along those life lessons.

Reading	
<p><b>Big Ideas Course Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize print strategies to read texts at just-right levels.</li> <li>• Identify story elements (characters, setting, and story events).</li> <li>• Retell stories, including key details.</li> <li>• Demonstrate understanding of a central message or lesson in a text.</li> </ul>	
Essential Questions <i>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</i>	Enduring Understanding <i>What will students understand about the big ideas?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why is it important to stop and think as we read?</li> <li>• How can I become a better reader?</li> <li>• How can working with a partner help me become a better reader, writer, and thinker?</li> </ul>	<p>Students will understand that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Readers can think about the story and how books sound to help them figure out tricky parts.</li> <li>• Readers react when they reach a tricky part in their reading, and work through difficulty with independence.</li> <li>• Readers reread to help their reading sound better and to monitor for understanding. □ Readers automatically use a repertoire of strategies as they read.</li> <li>• Reading books helps us learn about our lives and our world.</li> <li>• Readers match the picture in their mind with the words</li> </ul>



## 1st Grade Writing Unit 4

### Writing Reviews

This unit begins by teaching students that writing can give them a way to make and defend decisions and opinions, such as, “Which is my best baseball cap? Beanie Baby?” or, Which wins the prize for being the worst? Children will learn to write their judgments, their reasons for those judgments and to organize their reasons, supplying supporting details. These goals are pushing first graders beyond the CCSS expectation for opinion writing, which states that students will write opinion pieces in which they “introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion, and provide some sense of closure” (NJSL W 1.1). This unit will encourage writers to develop opinions with multiple reasons, provide detailed descriptions, as well as strong openings and closings. It will also encourage students towards using and revising more complex sentences, using linking words.

In Bend I, students will learn to review their collections and to make choices about which item in that collection is the best, writing defenses for those judgments. In Bend II, students will write multiple reviews about anything and everything: toys, restaurants, video games, movies, etc. Bend III has students writing book reviews. They will summarize, evaluate, judge and defend their judgments.

Writing	
<p><b>Big Ideas Course Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use writing to communicate personal opinions and ideas.</li> <li>● Construct opinions with well-developed, organized supporting details.</li> <li>● Create an introduction and conclusion that engages and persuades an audience</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Essential Questions</b>  <i>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</i></p>	<p><b>Enduring Understanding</b>  <i>What will students understand about the big ideas?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Why is it important for writers to share their ideas with others?</li> <li>● How do writers decide what details will best support their argument?</li> <li>● What is the difference between a personal persuasive and persuasive book review?</li> </ul>	<p>Students will understand that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● People can express their opinions in thoughtful, organized, and articulate ways.</li> <li>● There are several techniques authors can use to persuade their audience.</li> <li>● Writers consider opposing viewpoints when constructing their reviews</li> </ul>

## 1st Grade Reading Unit 5

### **Readers Have Big Jobs to Do: Fluency, Phonics, and Comprehension**

This unit sets children up to be able to read increasingly complex texts with accuracy, comprehension, and fluency—all of which require the development of great problem solving skills. The main goal is to help students realize that they're ready to take on the important jobs a reader needs to do. First graders will learn that they can be the bosses of their reading, solving their own reading dilemmas by drawing on the tools and strategies they've learned from minilessons and small-group work. Additionally, they will learn to balance their reading energies between word solving and meaning making so that their experiences with texts are well rounded, thoughtful, efficient, and meaningful. In the initial bends of this unit, it will be important to support a growth mindset with your students—one where children believe they CAN take charge of their reading if they persist and stay positive. They will learn to access and expand their repertoire of word-solving skills, as well as draw from multiple sources of information in their problem solving. Next, children will learn to apply their expanded repertoire of strategies across longer texts: monitoring for meaning and increasing their strategies for understanding new vocabulary words. Lastly, this unit will ask readers to pull together everything they've learned to problem solve on the run and read with fluency. Opportunities for shared reading, shared writing, interactive writing, and individualized feedback (that most frequently occurs in small groups and 1:1 conferences) are critical to the work of this unit. These supported structures model AND reinforce the skills children are expected to apply independently by unit's end.

Reading	
<p><b>Big Ideas Course Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Utilize phonetic strategies they need in order to read texts at their just right level.</li> <li>● Utilize strategies for word-solving, cross checking, self-correcting, and meaning making, and to model for them the resilience of careful readers.</li> <li>● Apply reading strategies with accuracy and automaticity</li> </ul>	
Essential Questions <i>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</i>	Enduring Understanding <i>What will students understand about the big ideas?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How do readers push themselves to read with accuracy, comprehension, and fluency?</li> <li>● Why is it important to stop and think while we read?</li> <li>● How do readers make sense of the words on a page?</li> <li>● How can I become a better reader?</li> <li>● Why is it important to persevere (never give up)?</li> </ul>	<p>Students will understand that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● There are many ways that readers push themselves to read for volume and stamina.</li> <li>● Readers can think about the story and how books sound to help them figure out tricky parts.</li> <li>● Readers react when they reach a tricky part in their reading, and work through difficulty with independence.</li> <li>● Readers reread to help their reading sound better and to monitor for understanding.</li> <li>● Readers automatically use a repertoire of strategies as they read.</li> <li>● Readers use context and word parts to figure out the meaning of unknown words.</li> <li>● Readers match the picture in their mind with the words on the page.</li> <li>● Partners can help each other solve tricky parts in their books.</li> </ul>

## 1st Grade Writing Unit 5

### ***From Scenes to Series: Writing Fiction***

In this final unit, you'll lead your first graders into series writing. In the first two bends of the unit, you will lead your students, somewhat step by step, through the process of creating a pretend character, giving that character adventures in more than one booklet, elaborating and revising across books and, finally, creating a "boxed set" of their stories. Along the way, of course, you'll be reminding your students what they know from their Small Moments writing, and extend those skills. Then, you'll invite students to use what they know to do it again with more independence and agency as they create a second "famous series."

Writing	
<b>Big Ideas Course Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Drafting with volume and stamina helps improve our narrative writing</li><li>● Fiction stories are well-elaborated, with an abundance of details</li><li>● Fiction authors <b>revise extensively, reviewing their writing numerous times to make improvements</b></li></ul>	
<b>Essential Questions</b> <i>What provocative questions will foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning?</i>	<b>Enduring Understanding</b> <i>What will students understand about the big ideas?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● How do writers decide on a topic?</li><li>● Why is revision important?</li><li>● How do authors decide on a planning method?</li></ul>	Students will understand that... <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Writers draw on personal experiences to write fiction stories.</li><li>● Writers lift the quality of their writing by stretching out problems and imagining creative solutions to story ideas.</li></ul>