

Grade 7 Writing Course
Curriculum: Writing Units of Study, Grade 7

Unit 1: Writing Realistic Fiction: Symbolism, Syntax, and Truth

The Writing Realistic Fiction unit provides opportunities for students to return to narrative writing through the lens of realistic fiction while enabling them to explore meaningful issues for seventh graders. Students continue to build stamina, increase volume, and develop strong writing habits. During this unit, students study mentor texts, read their own and others’ drafts using the narrative checklist, and develop their understanding of narrative craft as they plan a realistic plot that concludes with a satisfying resolution.

Essential Questions:

- How can fiction writers find inspiration and ideas in the small moments in their own lives?
- How can narrative writers develop compelling fiction that engages readers?
- How can writers analyze and annotate mentor texts in a way that helps them imitate the craft moves of published authors?

Enduring Understandings:

- Writers of fiction find inspiration and ideas for stories in the small moments in their own lives.
- Writing tools and resources such as anchor charts, checklists, and exemplars help writers revise and accomplish their narrative writing goals.
- Writers study mentor texts to learn the craft moves of published authors and to incorporate these moves in their narratives.
- Conventional spelling and proper grammar mechanics promotes understanding and clear communication in writing.

Maryland College and Career Ready Writing Framework, Grades 6 – 8

Writing Unit Bends	Session Titles	<u>Maryland College and Career Ready Standards for English Language Arts, Grades 6 - 8</u>
<p>Bend 1: Creating and Developing Meaningful Stories and Characters</p> <p><i>Writers will learn how to see the fictional possibilities in their true lives. During this bend, writers will develop characters and practice scene creation by engaging in a boot camp</i></p>	<p>Session 1: Imagining Stories from Everyday Moment</p> <p>Session 2: Imagining Stories You Wish Existed in the World</p>	<p>W.7.3</p> <p>W.7.3.a</p> <p>W.7.3.b</p>

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<p><i>session. Story arcs will be utilized to prepare for drafting and as a means of front-end revision. Writers will utilize their writer’s notebooks for all of Bend I.</i></p>	<p>Session 3: Developing Believable Characters through Scene Boot Camp</p> <p>Session 4: Giving Characters Struggles and Motivations that Mirror Real Life</p> <p>Session 5: Plotting with Tools: Story Arcs, Timelines, Lists, Mentor Texts</p>	<p>W.7.3.d</p> <p>W.7.3.e</p> <p>W.7.4</p> <p>W.7.5</p> <p>W.7.7</p>
<p>Bend 2: Drafting and Revising with an Eye toward Meaning</p> <p><i>Writers will focus on revision in Bend 2, revisiting mentor texts to study how fiction writers develop leads, dialogue, and endings. During this bend, writers will also reflect on the craft moves they have noticed from their reading lives to incorporate them in their own writing repertoires.</i></p>	<p>Session 6: From 2-D to 3-D: Planning and Writing Scenes by Including Evidence</p> <p>Session 7: Stepping into the Drama of the Story to Draft</p> <p>Session 8: Studying Published Texts to Write Leads</p> <p>Session 9: Grounding Dialogue in Scenes</p> <p>Session 10: Writing Endings that Make Readers Swoon</p>	<p>W.7.9.a</p> <p>W.7.10</p>
<p>Bend 3: Meticulous Revision and Precise Edits with Audience in Mind</p> <p><i>Writers will prepare their realistic fiction stories for an audience through revision and editing, focusing on meaning and message. During this bend, writers will consider how to incorporate symbolism and imagery to convey their intended meaning for their readers. Writers will also use a</i></p>	<p>Session 11: Reading Drafts like Editors</p> <p>Session 12: Revision: Weaving in Symbolism and Imagery to Bring out Meaning</p> <p>Session 13: Conducting the Rhythm of Language: Creating Cadence and Meaning through Syntax</p> <p>Session 14: Using Mentor Texts to Help Match Authorial Intent with the Page</p>	

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<i>variety of tools to edit and to enhance the quality of their writing.</i>	<p>Session 15: Economizing on the Sentence and Word Level</p> <p>Session 16: Editing with Lenses and Independence</p> <p>Session 17: Publishing Anthologies: A Celebration</p>	
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Unit 2: The Art of Argument: Research-Based Essays

The Art of Argument unit provides the opportunity for writers to research issues and engage in oral debate in order to develop argument essays. Students take multiple trips through the writing process as they hone their argument writing skills. During the unit, students analyze reasons and evidence from multiple sides of an issue to plan their arguments and to form a position.

Essential Question:

- How do writers weigh evidence from multiple sides of an issue to build a logical argument?
- How do writers structure their writing so that it includes claims supported by reasons and evidence?
- How do argument writers use oral debate to process their evidence, reasons, claims, and counterclaims as they prepare to write?

Enduring Understandings:

- Writers suspend judgment, read critically, and weigh evidence in order to develop a strong argument and to acknowledge other viewpoints.
- Argument writers structure their writing to include claims supported by sound reasons and relevant evidence.
- Writers learn to craft effective arguments by studying the arguments of others.

[Maryland College and Career Ready Writing Framework, Grades 6 – 8](#)

Writing Unit Bends	Session Titles	<u>Maryland College and Career Ready Standards for English Language Arts, Grades 6 - 8</u>
Bend 1: Establishing and Supporting Positions	Session 1: Weighing Evidence to Form Considered	

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<p><i>Writers will read texts to learn different perspectives on the issue of whether competitive sports help or harm young athletes. During this bend, writers will engage in oral debate using an argument protocol in order to defend and to develop their position.</i></p>	<p>Positions</p> <p>Session 2: Take Your Argument into a Scrimmage: Debating to Test and Strengthen a Position</p> <p>Session 3: Bam! Bolstering Positions by Adding Relevant Evidence</p> <p>Session 4: Stay with Me Now: Balancing Evidence with Analysis</p> <p>Session 5: Taking Stock</p>	<p>W.7.1</p> <p>W.7.1.a</p> <p>W.7.1.b</p> <p>W.7.1.c</p> <p>W.7.1.d</p> <p>W.7.1.e</p> <p>W.7.4</p>
<p>Bend 2: Comparing More Focused and Nuanced Arguments</p> <p><i>Writers will develop a more focused argument on an aspect of competitive sports that they found compelling. Writers will conduct another round of research and writing using nuanced reasoning and acknowledging a counterclaim. At the conclusion of the bend, writers may engage in a panel presentation to share their arguments with an audience.</i></p>	<p>Session 6: Forming Coalition Groups</p> <p>Session 7: Bringing a Critical Perspective to Your Research</p> <p>Session 8: Debating to Prepare to Draft</p> <p>Session 9: Introducing and Writing Your Argument</p> <p>Session 10: Self-Assessment with an Eye toward Counterargument</p> <p>Session 11: Studying Author’s Craft, Including Rhetorical Devices</p> <p>Session 12: When Company Comes: Knowing When and How to Maintain a Formal Tone</p> <p>Session 13: Celebration – Symposium</p>	<p>W.7.5</p> <p>W.7.7</p> <p>W.7.8</p> <p>W.7.9.b</p> <p>W.7.10</p>

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<p>Bend 3: Taking Arguments to a Global Audience</p> <p><i>Writers will identify issues that are important to them, forming cause groups around those issues as they develop a new argument. Writers will engage in a full cycle of the writing process as they research, form their claims, and analyze the logic of their arguments.</i></p>	<p>Session 14: Taking Opportunities to Stand and Be Counted</p> <p>Session 15: Revising by Qualifying Your Claim</p> <p>Session 16: Revising with Logical Fallacies in Mind - Evaluating Evidence</p> <p>Session 17: Cyberactivism</p>	
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Unit 3: Literary Essay: Analyzing Complex Texts for Meaning, Craft, and Tone

The Literary Essay unit provides the opportunity for writers to deepen their relationship with books through writing and to write about something they know and care about. Students write about a character or theme that is meaningful to them. During the unit, students draft quickly and focus on developing their argument and deepening their analysis of the text. They consider fluency and work to express their ideas clearly and support them with a lot of detail.

Essential Question:

- How can writers read stories closely to determine characters' values, choices, and motivations as well as the theme of the text to develop a literary essay?
- How can writers determine the similarities and differences between the way two texts deal with an issue or problem to develop a comparative literary essay?

Enduring Understanding:

- Writers explore ideas about their reading through writing.
- Writers read closely and think about the stories they are reading to form text-based claims about characters or themes that are supported with relevant evidence.
- Writers follow a writing process to generate, rehearse, plan, draft, revise and edit an essay.
- Writers use mentor texts to learn the craft moves of published authors and incorporate these moves in their essays.
- Writers revise for fluency, flow, and literary elements.
- Writing tools and resources such as anchor charts, checklists, and exemplars help writers revise and accomplish their goals.
- Conventional spelling and proper grammar mechanics promote understanding and clear communication in writing.

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Maryland College and Career Ready Writing Framework, Grades 6 – 8

Writing Unit Bends	Session Titles	<u>Maryland College and Career Ready Standards for English Language Arts, Grades 6 - 8</u>
<p>Bend 1: Writing Literary Essays that Explore a Theme or a Character in a Single Text</p> <p><i>Writers will write about texts to develop ideas for a character or theme essay. They will collect and organize evidence into a cohesive literary essay about one text.</i></p>	<p>Session 1: Exploring Ideas about Texts through Writing</p> <p>Session 2: Revisiting Pivotal Moments in Texts</p> <p>Session 3: Analyzing Characters to Uncover Big Ideas</p> <p>Session 4: Crafting Thesis Statements</p> <p>Session 5: Collecting and Testing Evidence</p> <p>Session 6: Using a Variety of Evidence to Support Ideas</p> <p>Session 7: Drafting a Cohesive Essay</p>	<p>W.7.1</p> <p>W.7.2</p> <p>W.7.4</p> <p>W.7.6</p> <p>W.7.7</p> <p>W.7.8</p> <p>W.7.9</p>

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<p>Bend 2: Writing across Texts to Explore the Different Treatment of Similar Themes</p> <p><i>Writers will build an argument that spans across texts. They will engage in talking about more than one text to find places where texts are similar and different in their approach to developing a theme.</i></p>	<p>Session 8: Identifying Ways Essayists Compare and Contrast Two Texts</p> <p>Session 9: Planning Essay Structure and Collecting Evidence</p> <p>Session 10: Revising with an Eye for Coherence, Flow, and Effect</p> <p>Session 11: Presenting and Refuting Counterarguments</p> <p>Session 12: Revising with an Eye for Literary Elements</p> <p>Session 13: Using Outside Sources to Support a Literary Essay</p> <p>Session 14: Preparing for Publication – A Celebration</p>	
<p><u>Unit 4: Writing About Reading: From Readers Notebooks to Companion Books</u></p> <p><i>The Writing About Reading unit provides opportunities for students to transfer all they know about writing in general to write in response to texts. During this unit, students craft real world products such as companion books, fan fiction, and guide books to favorite series. Students learn how the qualities of good information writing are tied to the qualities of good reading. As a result of the learning in this unit, students become not only stronger writers, but stronger readers as well.</i></p> <p>Essential Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How can writers make their writing about reading their best writing?• How can writing about reading make someone a stronger writer and reader?• How can writers use graphics to think about their reading and writing in new ways?• How can writers categorize their interpretations and analysis in a way that encompasses their most insightful thinking about their novel or series?		

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Enduring Understandings:

- Readers develop a deeper understanding of texts and the craft techniques authors use through writing about their reading.
- Writers use graphics in their notebooks to form new interpretations and fresh insights about what they are reading and writing.
- Literary information writers cite evidence from a story by incorporating specific details, examples, and quotations from the novel or series.

Maryland College and Career Ready Writing Framework, Grades 6 – 8

Writing Unit Bends	Session Titles	<u>Maryland College and Career Ready Standards for English Language Arts, Grades 6 - 8</u>
<p>Bend 1: Planning and Drafting Companion Books</p> <p><i>Writers will read closely to generate, organize, and synthesize personal ideas and interpretations about their text selection. Writers will reference their jots, sketches, and notes to generate longer writing about what they have read and begin drafting chapters for their companion book.</i></p>	<p>Session 1: Writing about Reading with Voice and Investment</p> <p>Session 2: Using Graphics to Think and Rethink about Literature</p> <p>Session 3: Thinking Big, Thinking Small: Ideas and Specifics</p> <p>Session 4: Explaining Thinking</p> <p>Session 5: Close Reading and Analytic Writing</p> <p>Session 6: Letting the Book Teach You How to Respond</p> <p>Session 7: Working Toward a Companion Book</p>	<p>W.7.1.a-c</p> <p>W.7.2.a-d</p> <p>W.7.3.a-c,f</p> <p>W.7.4</p> <p>W.7.5</p> <p>W.7.9.a</p> <p>W.7.10</p>

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	<p>Session 8: Incorporating Evidence from the Text as a Means to Elaborate</p> <p>Session 9: Reflection and Goal-Setting Using the Information Writing Checklist—and a Mini-Celebration</p>	
<p>Bend 2: Writing to Deepen Literary Analysis</p> <p><i>Writers will read their selected novels like insiders, noticing the techniques authors use and learning new strategies for revising their chapters and for adding new ones. In this bend, writers will develop a table of contents and craft introductions and conclusions for their companion books. A focus in this bend will be for writers to analyze the craft techniques authors use such as symbolism, text structures, and perspective. Writers will have the opportunity to try their hand at creating some fan fiction as well.</i></p>	<p>Session 10: Reading Like Writers—and Writing about It</p> <p>Session 11: Writing about Symbolism in Texts</p> <p>Session 12: Analyzing Structure in a Text</p> <p>Session 13: Writing Inside the Story: Improvisations and Fan Fiction</p> <p>Session 14: Writing Inside Perspectives</p> <p>Session 15: Writing Introductions and Conclusions</p> <p>Session 16: Final Edits and a Celebration</p>	
<p><u>Unit 5: Information Writing Books on Topics of Personal Expertise</u></p> <p><i>The Information Writing unit provides opportunities for students to write about topics they know well and increase their volume of writing. During this unit, students learn to plan using a variety of text structures and to use those structures to clearly convey information. In order to extend their knowledge of their topics, students also complete research and learn to weave outside information into their own writing. As a result of the learning in this unit, students become not only stronger writers, but stronger readers as well.</i></p> <p>Essential Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can writers determine the best topic for an information book? 		

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- How can information writers write with specifics and select appropriate content for their information books?
- How can writers make deliberate choices about how to organize information and ideas in preparation for creating a well-structured information book?
- How can writers explain a topic and their ideas using varied kinds of information in a well-structured text?
- How can writers incorporate research, text features, diagrams and illustrations, and expert and content vocabulary to engage the reader?

Enduring Understandings:

- How can writers determine the best topic for an information book?
- How can information writers write with specifics and select appropriate content for their information books?
- How can writers make deliberate choices about how to organize information and ideas in preparation for creating a well-structured information book?
- How can writers explain a topic and their ideas using varied kinds of information in a well-structured text?
- How can writers incorporate research, text features, diagrams and illustrations, and expert and content vocabulary to engage the reader?
- the reader.

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Writing Unit Bends	Session Titles	<u>Maryland College and Career Ready Standards for English Language Arts, Grades 6 - 8</u>
<p>Bend 1: Drafting and Revising to Teach What You Know</p> <p><i>Writers will consider their organizational structure, ways to divide their topics into smaller subtopics, and finally choose one way that best presents teaches their readers. Students will receive instruction on different qualities of good</i></p>	<p>Session 1: Considering Different Structures</p> <p>Session 2: Studying Qualities of Good Information Writing to Write Well Right from the Start</p> <p>Session 3: Working on Self-Assessment, Goal Setting, and Revision</p> <p>Session 4: Writing with Specifics</p>	<p>W.7.2,</p> <p>W.7.4</p> <p>W.7.5</p> <p>W.7.7</p> <p>W.7.8</p>

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<p><i>informational writing and use those teachings to draft new chapters and revise old ones.</i></p>	<p>Session 5: Selecting Appropriate Content</p> <p>Session 6: Creating Cohesion Using Transition Words</p> <p>Session 7: Developing Text Features to Teach Information and Ideas</p>	<p>W.7.9.b W.7.10</p>
<p>Bend 2: Using Brief Research to Supplement and Extend Books</p> <p><i>Writers will practice keeping their audience in mind. They will analyze their writing to determine if they need additional chapters, subchapters, or information to make their writing more compelling. Writers will conduct short research to learn what they need to know to enhance their information books.</i></p>	<p>Session 8: Researching to Find New Information that Bolsters Writing</p> <p>Session 9: Quoting Experts</p> <p>Session 10: Including Expert Language or Content Vocabulary</p> <p>Session 11: Using Diagrams and Illustrations to Convey Information</p> <p>Session 12: Self-Assessing and Setting Goals</p>	
<p>Bend 3: Using Mentor Texts to Lift Writing to the Next Level</p> <p><i>Writers will examine the work of expert authors and generate ideas for how to make their final book come to life for readers. Students will also celebrate their finished books and reflect on their learning and what they hope to accomplish in their next piece of information writing.</i></p>	<p>Session 13: Using Mentor Texts for Ideas on Presenting Information and Structuring Texts</p> <p>Session 14: Analyzing Texts by Published Authors, Asking, “What Makes This Text So Effective at Conveying Information?”</p> <p>Session 15: Readyng Writing for Presentation</p> <p>Session 16: Sharing Published Pieces with the World</p>	

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Unit 6: Test Preparation

The Test Preparation unit provides students with opportunities to practice writing tasks that will help them gain confidence and prepare for the state assessment.

Essential Question:

- How can I learn to study the tasks of a high-stakes exam to improve my performance?
- How can I incorporate evidence from multiple texts to develop my writing?

Enduring Understandings:

- Writers study high-stakes exam tasks to improve their performance.
- Writers produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Writers produce narratives, and argument and informative essays incorporating evidence from multiple texts.
- Conventional spelling and proper grammar mechanics promote understanding and communication in writing.

Maryland College and Career Ready Writing Framework, Grades 6 – 8

Writing Unit Bends	Session Titles	<u>Maryland College and Career Ready Standards for English Language Arts, Grades 6 - 8</u>
<p>Bend 1: Studying and Practicing Constructed Response Answers</p> <p><i>Writers will practice answering short-response questions which use single passages. An additional session at the end of the bend that focuses on answering short-response questions using paired informational or opinion texts may be most helpful for middle school writers preparing for the ELA/L MCAP.</i></p>	<p>Session 1: Writers Consider the Parts of the Question and Reread Closely for Text Evidence</p> <p>Session 2: Test-Takers Consider What They Are Really Being Asked</p> <p>Session 3: Detail/Not a Detail</p> <p>Session 4: Using Knowledge of How Tests Are Scored to Evaluate and Improve Your Answer</p>	<p>W.7.1</p> <p>W.7.2</p> <p>W.7.3</p>

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	<p>Session 5: The Special Challenge of Answering Part-to-Whole Short-Response Questions</p> <p>Session 6: Writing Constructed-Responses That Draw on Details from Two Texts</p>	
<p>Bend 2: Writing a Narrative Extended Constructed Response</p> <p><i>Writers will draft, revise, and edit up to four stories and in doing so, strengthen their skills at writing a narrative extended response. During this bend, writers will also draft a story based on informational texts.</i></p>	<p>Session 1: Reading and Understanding Prompts and Orally Rehearsing How Stories Could Go</p> <p>Session 2: Using Details from the Passage in Your Story, Details Which Establish a Situation and Then Proceed Bit by Bit</p> <p>Session 3: Drafting a New Narrative with Purposeful Dialogue That Develops Events and Characters’ Responses to Them (and Punctuating that Dialogue Correctly)</p> <p>Session 4: Drafting a New Narrative Based on an Informational Text (and Pulling in Critical Details as You Draft)</p> <p>Session 5: Writing a Second Story Based on Nonfiction Texts, Using Elaboration Techniques as You Draft</p> <p>Session 6: Going from Good to Great: Adding Sensory Details and Endings that Wrap Things Up</p> <p>Session 7: Editing All of Your Stories for the Essentials</p>	

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<p>Bend 3: Writing a Non-Fiction Based Essay on Two Passages</p> <p><i>Writers will draft, revise, and edit two argumentative essays and in doing so, strengthen their skills at writing an argumentative essay extended response. Writers will practice organizing their ideas, quoting, and paraphrasing as they prepare to write and make revisions.</i></p>	<p>Session 1: Reading Questions Carefully to Plan for an Opinion Essay off of Two Texts</p> <p>Session 2: Planning Essays with Structure in Mind (and Fitting Text Evidence into that Plan)</p> <p>Session 3: The Thin Line between Including Text Details and Plagiarism</p> <p>Session 4: Making Sure You Have Included Details from Both Passages</p> <p>Session 5: Drafting a New Essay with More Independence and Expertise</p> <p>Session 6: Using Checklists and Mentor Texts to Raise the Level of Our Opinion Essays</p> <p>Session 7: Editing All of Your Essays for the Essentials</p>	
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Unit 7: Poetry: Immersion and Innovation

The Poetry: Immersion and Innovation unit provides opportunities for students to craft a collection of poems, making intentional choices about words, figurative language, structure, and conventions. Students immerse themselves in reading, studying, and discussing different kinds of poems at the onset of the unit. Access to not only mentor poems, but mentor poets is essential. Since poetry is intended to be shared and read aloud, opportunities for celebration and audience are especially important in this unit, too.

Essential Question:

- How can writers find inspiration for a poem in ordinary life?
- How can reading poetry aloud help a writer revise their writing?
- How can poets carefully choose words, create images, and use conventions to affect readers and convey meaning?

Enduring Understandings:

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- Poets find significance and inspiration for poems in the details of ordinary life.
- Poets reflect on problems that are universal or shared by many to create a poem.
- Poets think about the big questions they have about the world and ask unanswerable questions to find inspiration and to create a poem.
- Poets use grammar and conventions to convey ideas precisely and powerfully.

Maryland College and Career Ready Writing Framework, Grades 6 – 8

Writing Unit Bends	Session Titles	<u>Maryland College and Career Ready Standards for English Language Arts, Grades 6 - 8</u>
<p>Bend 1: Trying Out Narrative and Lyric Poetry</p> <p><i>Writers will immerse themselves in poetry to notice and note poetic craft, meaning, and structure. They will mine their notebooks for pieces that can be turned into poems through new word choices and line breaks. As they begin crafting poems, writers will consider the details of their lives and the world around them for inspiration and meaning.</i></p>	<p>Session 1: Finding Poems in Old Writing Projects</p> <p>Session 2: Looking Inward and Outward to Find Inspiration in the Details of Life</p> <p>Session 3: Looking to the World for Inspiration</p> <p>Session 4: Asking Unanswerable Questions</p> <p>Session 5: Offering Feedback to Writing Partners during Revision</p>	<p>W.7.2</p> <p>W.7.3</p> <p>W.7.4</p> <p>W.7.5</p> <p>W.7.6</p> <p>W.7.10</p>
<p>Bend 2: Revising so that Every Syllable Counts</p> <p><i>Writers will revise their poems, paying close attention to word choice, shape, and length. They will utilize poetic techniques such as metaphor, simile, alliteration, and onomatopoeia and</i></p>	<p>Session 6: Paying Attention to the Sounds and Meaning of Words</p> <p>Session 7: Relating the Physical Appearance of a Poem to Its Meaning</p> <p>Session 8: Revising for Craft Again and Again</p>	

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<p><i>experiment with literary devices and conventions in order to revise their poems in meaningful ways.</i></p>	<p>Session 9: Using Craft in Fresh, Interesting Ways</p> <p>Session 10: Giving Special Attention to Endings</p> <p>Session 11: Experimenting with Voice and Word Choice</p>	
<p>Bend 3: Chapbooks and Slams: Publishing Poems with Flair</p> <p><i>Writers will prepare to publish their poetry, working with partners, choosing poems they would like to showcase, and considering the themes that emerge as they examine their writing. In this bend, writers will work on introductions that may take the form of an essay or an informational piece to establish the context for the theme they select.</i></p>	<p>Session 12: Selecting Poems that “Go Together” to Publish in a Chapbook</p> <p>Session 13: Creating Introductions to Poetry Collections</p> <p>Session 14: Celebration and a Final Reminder</p>	

For more information regarding the Grade 7 Writing course content, curriculum, and pacing, please contact Kristine Scarry, Supervisor of Reading, English, Language Arts (Kristine.scarry@hcps.org) or Annmarie Steltzer, Assistant Supervisor of Reading, English, Language Arts (Annmarie.steltzer@hcps.org).