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(Re)designing Narrative Writing Units for Grades 5–12

By Kathy Tuchman Glass

Study Guide

This study guide is a companion to the book *(Re)designing Narrative Writing Units for Grades 5–12* by Kathy Tuchman Glass. *(Re)designing Narrative Writing Units for Grades 5–12* provides a framework for teachers to rebuild and develop writing curricula with depth, rigor, and clarity.

This guide is arranged by chapter, enabling readers to either work their way through the entire book or focus on the specific topics addressed in a particular chapter. It can be used by individuals, small groups, or an entire team to identify key points, raise questions for consideration, assess conditions in a particular school or district, and suggest steps that might be taken to promote a healthy school culture.

We thank you for your interest in this book, and we hope this guide is a useful tool in your efforts to create a healthy culture in your school or district.

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Chapter 1

Building a Narrative Unit Map

1. Why is it critical to develop a unit map prior to teaching a lesson? In what ways can you improve your next unit map?
2. What does *backward design* entail? How can you use backward design in your classroom?
3. What is a preassessment, and why is it important to start a lesson with one?
4. The author mentions the importance of organizational structure; as a teacher, how do you organize the structure and flow of your units? What organizational strategies that the author mentions have you found helpful, and what organizational strategies not mentioned here have you found helpful?

Chapter 2

Formulating a Pre- and Culminating Assessment and Establishing Criteria for Success

1. The author mentions that narrative writing checklists are beneficial to students as well as teachers. Why does the author feel this is the case?
2. How does a checklist differ from a rubric in terms of its components and purpose? As an educator, how do you know when to use which one?
3. Why is it important not to mark students' work while they are still learning?
4. Consider this chapter's options for redesigning a preassessment, which can also function as formative assessments during a unit (pages 46–47). Which of these assessment options would you use in your classroom, and when and for what purposes would you use them?

Chapter 3

Using Gradual Release of Responsibility for Lesson Design in Action

1. In your own words, describe the four components in the gradual release of responsibility model.
2. As an educator, how can you successfully guide your students through focused instruction, guided instruction, collaborative learning, and independent learning?
3. What do you learn about how to best help students identify examples of imagery and draft a setting of their own from the two-part lesson in this chapter?
4. How may teacher roles change as lessons progress?

Chapter 4

Designing Lessons

1. Identify an excerpt from a text you use in your classroom that includes imagery. What senses does the excerpt appeal to? Identify the words or phrases in the excerpt that create the imagery.
2. What steps can teachers take to encourage students to write with specificity?
3. Within each of these lessons, the author mentions that it is important to include student self-assessment. Why is it important to remember this step?
4. Briefly describe the ways in which teachers can help students brainstorm ideas for a memoir, a personal narrative, or historical fiction.

Chapter 5

Examining Text to Appreciate Content

1. Why are reading and writing complementary forms of literacy?
2. How can graphic organizers serve as a useful tool for making sense of content and demonstrating understanding? Describe a case in which you have used a graphic organizer with students in the past.
3. What are collective interpretations, and how can you use them in your classroom to increase your students' understanding of narrative content?
4. Throughout this chapter, the author gives teachers several activities they can do with their students to enhance their learning. Which of these activities speaks the loudest to you, and why is this the case?