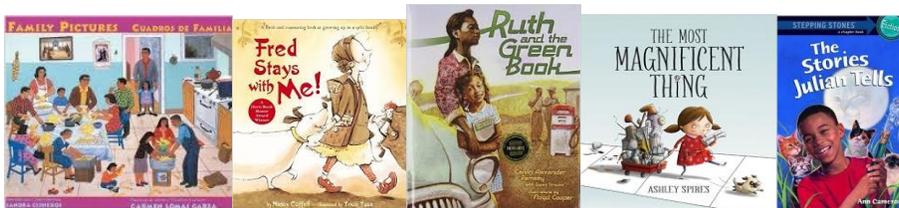




Bay City Public Schools Sample Mentor Texts to Teach 3-5 Narrative Reading and Writing

“By using mentor texts, the reader can virtually position him or herself to sit beside the author and study how the text is constructed and how it communicates. It is a powerful teaching and learning strategy...”

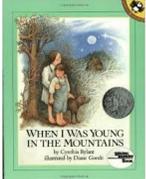
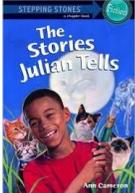
--The Writing Thief, Ruth Culhum

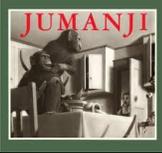
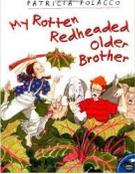
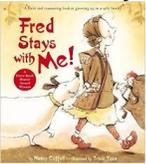


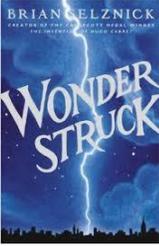
Sample 3rd-5th Grade Narrative Mentor Texts

The mentor texts listed below are samples of picture books that could be used in the classroom when teaching students how to write a personal narrative.

Using a specific set of questions to analyze the craft within a mentor text can open students to new ideas to consider in their own writing. The questions/prompts listed on the following page assists students with comprehension, analyzing and evaluating narrative pieces as well as developing narrative writing skills.

Narrative Texts	Additional Information
<p><i>When I Was Young in the Mountains</i> by Cynthia Rylant</p> 	<p>"An evocative remembrance of the simple pleasures in country living; splashing in the swimming hole, taking baths in the kitchen, sharing family times, each is eloquently portrayed here in both the misty-hued scenes and in the poetic text."</p>
<p><i>The Stories Julian Tells</i> by Ann Cameron</p> 	<p>Julian is a quick fibber and a wishful thinker. And he is great at telling stories. He can make people—especially his younger brother, Huey—believe just about anything. Like the story about the cats that come in the mail. Or the fig leaves that make you grow tall if you eat them off the tree. But some stories can lead to a heap of trouble, and that's exactly where Julian and Huey end up!</p>
<p><i>More Stories Julian Tells</i> By Ann Cameron</p> 	<p>"Reflecting incidents true to children (making a bet with a friend, sending a message in a bottle, attempting to be brave), these stories are the sort that will make children ask for more."--<i>School Library Journal</i>, starred review</p>
<p><i>The Most Magnificent Thing</i> By Ashley Spires</p> 	<p>Award-winning author and illustrator Ashley Spires has created a charming picture book about an unnamed girl and her very best friend, who happens to be a dog. The girl has a wonderful idea. She is going to make the most MAGNIFICENT thing! She knows just how it will look. She knows just how it will work. All she has to do is make it, and she makes things all the time. Easy-peasy!? But making her magnificent thing is anything but easy, and the girl tries and fails, repeatedly.</p>

Narrative Texts	Additional Information
<p><i>Jumanji</i> by Chris VanAllsburg</p> 	<p>Over thirty years ago, Peter and Judy first found the game—Jumanji—with the instructions that once the game is started, it must be finished or it will go on forever—</p>
<p><i>My Rotten Redheaded Older Brother</i> by Patricia Polacco</p> 	<p>After losing running, climbing, throwing, and burping competitions to her obnoxious older brother, a young girl makes a wish on a falling star.</p>
<p><i>Thundercake</i> by Patricia Polacco</p> 	<p>A loud clap of thunder booms, and rattles the windows of Grandma's old farmhouse. "This is Thunder Cake baking weather," calls Grandma, as she and her granddaughter hurry to gather the ingredients around the farm. A real Thunder Cake must reach the oven before the storm arrives. But the list of ingredients is long and not easy to find . . . and the storm is coming closer all the time!</p>
<p><i>The Lorax</i> by Dr. Seuss</p> 	<p>"Unless someone like you...cares a whole awful lot...nothing is going to get better...It's not."</p> <p>Long before saving the earth became a global concern, Dr. Seuss, speaking through his character the Lorax, warned against mindless progress and the danger it posed to the earth's natural beauty.</p>
<p><i>The Fantastic Flying Books of Mr. Morris Lessmore</i> by William Joyce</p> 	<p><i>Morris Lessmore loved words.</i> <i>He loved stories.</i> <i>He loved books.</i> <i>But every story has its upsets.</i></p> <p>Everything in Morris Lessmore's life, including his own story, is scattered to the winds. But the power of story will save the day. Stunningly brought to life by William Joyce, one of the preeminent creators in children's literature. <i>The Fantastic Flying Books of Mr. Morris Lessmore</i> is a modern masterpiece, showing that in today's world of traditional books, eBooks, and apps, it's story that we truly celebrate—and this story, no matter <i>how</i> you tell it, begs to be read again and again.</p>
<p><i>Fred Stays With Me!</i> by Nancy Coffelt</p> 	<p><i>Fred Stays with Me!</i> is an award-winning story that follows a young girl who turns to the one constant in her life, her dog Fred, in the face of her parents' divorce.</p> <p>In this poignant but not overly sentimental story, Coffelt's accessible and kid-friendly language alongside Tusa's charming artwork create a light, cheerful, and reassuring mood that will comfort any child who has two homes.</p>

Narrative Texts	Additional Information
<p><i>Wonderstruck</i> by Brian Selznick</p> 	<p>Ben and Rose secretly wish their lives were different. Ben longs for the father he has never known. Rose dreams of a mysterious actress whose life she chronicles in a scrapbook. When Ben discovers a puzzling clue in his mother's room and Rose reads an enticing headline in the newspaper, both children set out alone on desperate quests to find what they are missing. Set fifty years apart, these two independent stories--Ben's told in words, Rose's in pictures--weave back and forth with mesmerizing symmetry. How they unfold and ultimately intertwine will surprise you, challenge you, and leave you breathless with wonder.</p>
<p><i>Ruth and the Green Book</i> by Calvin Alexander Ramsey</p> 	<p>Ruth was so excited to take a trip in her family's new car! In the early 1950s, few African Americans could afford to buy cars, so this would be an adventure. But she soon found out that black travelers weren't treated very well in some towns. Many hotels and gas stations refused service to black people. Daddy was upset about something called Jim Crow laws... Finally, a friendly attendant at a gas station showed Ruth's family The Green Book. It listed all of the places that would welcome black travelers. With this guidebook--and the kindness of strangers--Ruth could finally make a safe journey from Chicago to her grandma's house in Alabama.</p>
<p><i>Family Pictures</i> by Carmen Lomas Garza</p> 	<p>Family Pictures is the story of Carmen Lomas Garza's girlhood: celebrating birthdays, making tamales, finding a hammerhead shark on the beach, picking cactus, going to a fair in Mexico, and confiding to her sister her dreams of becoming an artist. These day-to-day experiences are told through fourteen vignettes of art and a descriptive narrative.</p>
<p><i>Shoes From Grandpa</i> by Mem Fox</p> 	<p>Jessie, an active girl of nine or so, is growing out of her clothes, and all of the members of her large and loving family get carried away in their eagerness to provide her with a new wardrobe. . .</p>
<p><i>The Memory String</i> By Eve Bunting</p> 	<p>Each button on Laura's memory string represents a piece of her family history. The buttons Laura cherishes the most belonged to her mother. When the string breaks, Laura's new stepmother, Jane, is there to comfort Laura and search for a missing button, just as Laura's mother would have done. But it's not the same—Jane isn't Mom.</p>
<p>Websites with Reviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://writingfix.com/index.htm • https://nerdybookclub.wordpress.com/ 	<p>The links to the left provide teachers with other resources that can be mentors for narrative writing.</p>

Sample 3rd-5th Narrative Mentor Text Questions

Check grade level reading/writing standards when choosing which questions/prompts to address. Create additional prompts/questions based on the standards for your grade level.

To answer the questions or address the prompts, students should use evidence from the text to support their answers. This can be done by drawing, writing, or orally responding.

Author/Illustrator

- Who are the characters or people in the piece? How does the illustrator show this?
- How does the author help us get to know the characters?
- What might the author had to have known to write this book?

Setting/Tone

- Where does this story take place? Is there more than one place?
- What is the place like?
- When and where did this story take place? How do you know?
- Could there be a place like this? What evidence/proof/background knowledge do you have?
- Which part of the story best describes the setting?

Characters

- Who are the main characters in the story?
- Do you like or dislike them? Why? (Have they done something to make you feel this way?)
- Do any of the characters change in the story? How? Support with evidence from text.
- Does a character do things that are good/bad? What? Support with evidence from text.
- Choose a character. Why is the character important to the story? Use the text to support answer.

Plot/Problem/Solution

- What are the main things that have happened in the story? How does the illustrator show this? How does the author show this?
- How does the author feel about what happened? How can you tell?
- Is there a challenge/goal/problem? Is there more than one problem?
- What do the characters/people do to solve the challenge/goal/problem?
- How do you know that the problem was solved in this way?
- What would you have done differently if you had been one of the characters?
- Can you think of another way that something in the story might have happened?
- What might have happened if a certain action had not taken place?
- How did the author close the piece?

Theme/Tone

- Is there a message/lesson the author is trying to teach in this story? What is it? Use evidence from text to describe it.
- Why did the author write this book? Use evidence from the text.
- Does the book make you feel a certain way? Are there words that the author uses that make you feel that way?
- Is there a part of the story that describes the atmosphere? How does the writer do that? (words)

Resource questions were adapted from:

Boyles, N. (2004). Constructing meaning: Through kid friendly comprehension strategy instruction. Gainesville, FL: Maupin House.

Owocki, G. (2013). The Common Core writing book, K-5: Lessons for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann