Lesson 11: Setting Goals

Essential Question

What goals can you set for yourself to improve your narrative writing?

Materials

completed rubric for each student from pre-assessment
goal sheet for each student

Mini Lesson

"Authors are always working to improve their writing. Even professional authors are looking for ways to become better writers. The best way to become a better writer is to ask for feedback. You can look at the feedback, or suggestions, from someone else and use their advice to improve your work. Writers don't get upset about the feedback. It does not mean they are a bad writer! The feedback is good, because it helps them to become an even better writer."

"At the beginning of this unit, you wrote a fiction narrative about a kid that got in trouble. I carefully read all of your writing pieces. I was so excited to learn more about your writing abilities! After I read your work, I filled out a rubric. A rubric is a list of skills that would make your work exceptional. I looked for those skills in your writing. There were some skills that you are already doing really well! There are some skills that you are starting to develop, but just need some practice. There are other skills that you may not have YET. I marked them down on this rubric."

"Today we are going to go over the rubric together. I will read each skill and tell you a little about what it means. You can look at your rubric and see if that is a skill you need to practice. Then you will write three goals for yourself as a writer during the next two months."

Pass out the student rubrics. Display a blank rubric. Read each skill one at a time and give a very basic explanation of what it means. Let students know they will learn each skill in detail very soon.

Work Time

Students will look over their rubric and determine the three biggest ways they can become better writers. They will write their three goals on the goal sheet and glue the goal sheet into the resource section of their notebook.

Closing

Students will share with a partner their three writing goals. Partners should really listen so that they can check back with each other periodically about how the work towards their goals is going.

Intervention

Have a small group of students sit at a table near you. Highlight areas that they received a 0 or "Not Yet." Ask students to pick three of those areas to be their goals.

Extension

Lesson 12: Writing a Lead

Essential Question
What types of leads are most likely to hook a reader?

Materials
mentor text
lead anchor chart

Mini Lesson
Read the lesson 12 mentor text to students or have them read it with partners.

"Today I want to really focus on the first couple sentences of our stories. Authors call this a lead. Authors spend a lot of time writing their lead. Why is it important to write a good lead for your story?"

Reread the first few sentences of the mentor text. "How does this author begin their story?" (with a sound or onomatopoeia) "Starting a story with a sound, that has something to do with the story you are about to tell, is interesting and makes readers want to continue." Add an example to the anchor chart.

"If all stories started with a sound, would that be interesting? We need more than one type of lead or our stories get boring. Another way that an author can start a story is with characters talking (dialogue)." Add an example to the anchor chart. (Do not worry about teaching punctuation. That will come in lessons 16 and 17.)

"Another great way to start a fiction narrative is with action. Readers will be hooked right away!" Add an example to the anchor chart.

	Boring	Lead that Hooks!
Sound	It was raining.	Drip. Drip. The rain plopped against the window pain.
Talking	It was time to go.	"Hurry up! Get in the car! We are going to be late!" screamed Mom.
Action	I was excited.	I excitedly jumped out of the bed the moment the alarm sounded.

Work Time
Students will write a few possible leads for their seed story that they drafted. Encourage students to try writing at least one of each type of lead. This list can be written in the masterpiece section after their draft.

Closing
Students will share their possible leads with their partner and choose the one that they like best for their masterpiece story.

Intervention
Rather than asking for a list of possible leads, encourage these students to come up with two possible leads.

Extension

Lesson 13: Developing Characters

Essential Question
How do writers develop deep characters?

Materials
mentor text
developing characters printable

Mini Lesson
Read the lesson 13 mentor text to students or have them read it with partners.

"Who is the main character in the story?"

"I feel like I actually know a lot about Rex after reading this short story. The author gave us lots of clues about their personality, their strengths and their weakness. She doesn't just list all of his character traits, they are mixed into the details of the story. For example, I know that Rex does what he is told because he starts eating the spicy bugs even though he does not like them."

"Today, I want you to really get to know your own story's main character so that you can include details to help your reader to get to know them."

Model filling out the interview form using your main character or the example story I have included.

Work Time
Students will use the printable to brainstorm more details about their main character. Then they will go through their story and add details to help their readers learn about the character.

Closing
Students will share with their partner a couple places that they added details to help their readers learn about the main character.

Intervention
Highlight a few places in their stories that you want them to add additional character details. Ask oral questions about their main character to get them thinking about the details.

Extension
Students can also add more details to their secondary characters.

Lesson 14: Developing Setting

Essential Question

How can writers use their senses to show the setting rather than telling readers what the setting is?

Materials

mentor text
developing setting anchor chart
developing setting printable

Mini Lesson

Read the lesson 14 mentor text to students or have them read it with partners. Reread a specific sentence where the author shows the readers where they are, rather than telling them.

"The author did not just tell us where they were. They showed us by describing what they saw, heard and felt. Today we are going to show our readers the setting of our story so that they can visualize it and feel like they are right there with our characters."

Work together on the anchor chart to replace the telling phrase with a showing phrase. Really have students imagine the place using all their senses.

He was in his bedroom.	Books were stacked on the desk. Clothes were strewn across the floor and the bed covers were in a pile at the foot of the bed. He cleared a path from the door to his dresser.
I jumped in the pool.	The smell of sunblock lingered in the air as I threw my towel on the closest lounge chair. I tossed my cover up and it landed on the deck. Within moments I could feel the cool water cover me as I jumped from the ledge.
She went to school.	As she walked into the room she could faintly smell paint from the art project they worked on yesterday. She quickly hung her bag and turned in her homework before taking her seat.

Work Time

Students will use the printable to brainstorm more details about their main setting. Then they will go through their story and add details to show the setting without having to tell readers where the characters are.

Closing

Students will share with their partner a sentence that they have used the "Show, Don't Tell" strategy.

Intervention

After students fill out the printable, have them highlight 3-5 details that they want to include in their setting description.

Extension

Students can also add more details to their secondary setting (if they have one).

Lesson 15: Creating Suspense

Essential Question
How can writers create suspense in their stories?

Materials
mentor text
plot anchor chart
plot printable

Mini Lesson
Read the lesson 15 mentor text to students or have them read it with partners.

"I love how the writer kept me on the edge of my seat! I really wanted to know what was going to happen next. The author did this by creating suspense. I didn't know what was going to happen next, but I couldn't wait to find out. She slowly told the problem through a series of events. We want to create some interest and use suspense in our stories too! We can do that by including several events that finally lead to a climax, or that point where the problem is at peak!"

Fill out the Rising Action and Climax portion of the plot anchor chart with your story or use the example that I have provided. (The rest of the chart will be completed in lesson 21.)

Rising Action (Events that lead to the problem.)	1. Dominic finds a cat in the alley. 2. He hides the cat in his room and takes care of it there. 3. Dominic's brother finds out about the cat and threatens to tell his mom.
Climax (The problem at its peak or worst.)	Mom finds out that Dominic has been hiding the cat in his room.

Work Time
Students will use the printable to plan their rising action events and the climax. Then they will go back into their writing and add any events or details that they need to.

Closing
Students will share with their partner their plot planner and describe how the rising action events are creating suspense.

Intervention
These students might benefit from filling out the planner backwards. Start by putting the problem in the climax and then ask themselves, "What happened right before this?"

Extension
Students can add an additional rising action event to create even more suspense and interest.

Soggy Picnic

Day 12: The Lead

Tap! Tap! Tap! The rain beat hard on the window pane. Patricia and Claudia sat with their heads against the window and big frowns on their faces. The rain had been coming down for quite some time and everything was wet and drippy.

"What's got you down girls?" Asked Patricia's mother as she walked into the living room.

"It's just Patrica and I have been looking forward to this day for a whole week! Today is a day we have no school and we had plans to go to the park and have a picnic," Claudia explained.

"Yes, and we were going to play tag on the jungle gym, swing on the swings, slide down the slides and now with all this rain everything is wet," added Patricia.

"We can't even lay a blanket on the ground and have our lunch outside, because everything is all soggy," Claudia said sadly.

"Girls! You aren't going to let a little rain get you down are you?" asked Patricia's mother.

"Well, Mom what can we do since the rain has completely ruined our plans?" Patricia inquired.

"Patricia, don't we still have those rain coats and boots in the hall closet? You had a yellow one and your brother had the red one. Go check and meet me in the kitchen if you find them," said Patricia's mother.

With their hopes high, Claudia and Patricia ran to the hall closet to check for the boots and rain coats. Patricia's mother went to the kitchen and began making the girls a picnic lunch. She placed everything in a basket and even packed umbrellas. The girls came running back into the kitchen with the rain slickers and boots.

"Oh good! I've packed us lunches and umbrellas. The park has a few picnic tables that are covered and shouldn't be too wet, so we can eat there. Even if the slides are wet, your rain coats should keep you dry when sliding down them. I bet there will be some big puddles you girls can jump and splash in too!" said Patricia's mother.

"Mom, you're the absolute best," cried Patricia as she threw her arms around her mom and squeezed her tightly. Her mother just smiled and hugged her back.

"Yes! Thanks so much," added Claudia.

"Well you just need to figure out how to make lemonade when life gives you lemons! We better get going though, girls. Looks like the rain has stopped," Patricia's mother replied. They put on their rain coats and rain boots, grabbed their umbrellas and the picnic basket, then headed down to the park to have their picnic.

The Fireless Dragon

Day 13: Developing Characters

Once upon a time in a kingdom far away, there lay a gigantic forest full of the biggest trees you've ever seen. Deep inside this forest lived a talented little dragon that was known for his amazing abilities to blow fire farther than any of the other dragons in the forest. The dragon's name was Rex and while Rex had this amazing talent, he never bragged or boasted about it to his dragon and unicorn friends.

"Rex, can you breathe fire all the way to that tree over there?" one dragon asked. So, Rex blew his fire and sure enough the tree turned black from the fire that stretched across the forest to the tree. Other friends of Rex were always asking him to show how far his fire could reach. Rex didn't mind and even enjoyed the attention he received from his fire demonstrations.

One morning when Rex awoke, his good friend, Truffle the unicorn came over to play. As they were gallivanting through the forest and having a good time, Truffle gave Rex a challenge. "Hey Rex! I'll throw this rock as far as I can and you see if you can breathe fire and reach it," explained Truffle.

"Challenge accepted!" laughed Rex.

Truffle threw the rock and they watched as it bounced a few times on the grass, rolled, and then stopped. Rex took a deep breath and then gave it his all. Three small smoke rings came puffing out and Rex began coughing. Truffle looked at Rex surprisingly. Rex was a little confused himself. So he tried it again. He took a big breath in and tried with all his might to breathe out toward the rock, but all that came out was smoke rings.

"Oh no! Truffle! I think I've lost my fire!" panicked Rex.

"Is that even possible for a dragon to lose their ability to breathe fire?" questioned Truffle.

"Well, I didn't think so, but I definitely can't breathe fire right now," said Rex as he began to worry. He wasn't sure what to do or how to fix it either.

"Let's not panic yet. We can go see the wizard, he'll know what to do," Truffle reassured Rex.

When they got to the wizard's cave they explained what happened to Rex and demonstrated how he could only blow rings of smoke rather than fire. "Hmmm! I see, this is quite the problem indeed. How long has it been since you've eaten a spicy bug or plant?" asked the wizard.

"Well a few weeks because I really don't enjoy the taste of the spicy bugs and plants," Rex replied.

"Then that's your problem. Spicy bugs and plants are a very important part of a dragon's diet. These foods are what gives you the skill to breathe fire in the first place. A few days of eating these things again and you should be back to normal," explained the wizard.

Rex followed the orders of the wizard and ate the spicy plants and bugs, even though he didn't like them.

The following week, Truffle came over to see if Rex was back to his normal self.

Truffle threw the rock as far as he could and they both watched as it landed next to a large tree. Rex took a deep breath in, closed his eyes and blew it all out towards the rock. Fire came blazing out of Rex, hit the rock and burned down the tree next to it. The dragon and unicorn looked at one another in amazement, eyes wide and then began jumping for joy. Rex was back to his old self.

The Misunderstanding

Day 14: Developing Setting

Jason lay on his bed and watched as his mouse, Murphey scurried from the bottom of his bedspread to the top of his mattress. The tiny white mouse, stopped for a second and then began climbing Jason's navy blue pillow like it was a giant mountain. When Murphey reached the top, Jason rubbed him between the ears and gave him a small treat as his reward.

"Nice job buddy! Tonight I'm going to start working on the obstacle course I'm going to make for you. You're going to love it, just you wait and see," Jason told Murphey.

"Jason! We need to run to the store and grab some things, let's go!" called Jason's mother.

"Alright Murphey, we won't be gone too long, so I'm going to let you stay out and roam around my room. Be sure to stay out of trouble though," Jason warned him. Jason left and closed his bedroom door behind him.

A little later, the new housekeeper came to the house to begin cleaning. As she went from room to room cleaning, she spotted a little white puff ball scampering across the floor. She quickly grabbed the broom and got closer to the puff ball. When she realized it was a mouse, she screamed, took the broom and shooed it down the hall and out the front door.

Finally, Jason and his mother came home and the house keeper was still there cleaning the house. She told the story to Jason's mother about the mouse in the house and how she made sure to get him out right away. Jason overheard the story as he was going to his room to check on Murphey. He froze in fear at what he had just heard. "Mom!! It was Murphey! She scared Murphey all the way out of the house!" Jason cried.

"Jason, calm down. It was a misunderstanding, she didn't know Murphey was a pet. We will try and find him." Jason's mom reassured him.

"He could be anywhere and its cold out here! Where would he go to find warmth?" Jason thought to himself. Outside he stood looking around, trying to think about where to look first. He looked over at a large maple tree in the front yard and then over to an old shed off to the side of their house. He kept scanning everything he saw outside and tried to imagine where he'd go if he were a mouse out in the cold. He looked at their front porch and saw a dirty pair of his dad's work boots lit up by the porch light.

"Hmm... the inside of a work boot might be a warm place to get out of the cold," Jason thought. He crossed his fingers and ran over to the work boots. He picked one up and gently put his hand down inside, nothing! He grabbed the other one and gently putting his hand in he called Murphey's name softly. His hand touched a ball of soft fur. Jason's mouth dropped open! It was Murphey alight. He carefully pulled Murphey out and saw that he was scared, cold, and shaking.

"Come on Murphey, let's get you inside your cage under your heat lamp. You've had a rough day, I'm so sorry." Jason apologized.

"Oh thank goodness you found him, Jason. I was pretty worried he might have been gone forever. Did you happen to learn anything from this?" asked his mother.

"Absolutely! Anytime we leave, he's going in his cage from now on. Also, I'm never letting him out of my sight again. Oh, and we might need to get a new housekeeper," Jason teased and winked at his mom.

Jason's mother rolled her eyes and grinned at him. "Very funny Jason," she laughed.

Tabitha and the Red Balloon

Day 15: Suspense

Once upon a time there was a young girl named Tabitha. For Tabitha's eighth birthday, her mother gave her a large red balloon that was tied to a long white string.

Right away, Tabitha loved the red balloon and would not leave home without it. When her mother would take her to the park, the red balloon came with them. Tabitha enjoyed the way the balloon tagged along behind her as she'd run across the playground. She'd giggle as the balloon would chase her down the slide and then nuzzle her long brown hair when they'd hit the bottom.

Tabitha was upset when her mother explained that the red balloon could not go to school with her each day. She told Tabitha it could distract her classmates and the balloon could get lost. Tabitha agreed not to bring it to school. However, she did ask her mother if she would bring the balloon to school each day, when she came to pick her up.

One very windy day, Tabitha's mother did as she promised and brought the balloon with her as she walked to Tabitha's school to pick her up. Tabitha was delighted as she watched her mother walking toward her with the red balloon. Her mother gave Tabitha a big hug and kissed her forehead, as she handed the balloon to Tabitha. Tabitha went to grab the balloon and a mighty gust of wind blew it out of her hand and up high above their heads. Tabitha screamed in horror as she watched her balloon blow up higher and higher into the cloudy blue sky. Immediately she burst into tears and fell to her knees in sadness.

The balloon continued through the air and over tall sky scraper buildings. It overlooked huge trees and tiny people on the ground. It blew pass flocks of birds and across large bodies of water. The balloon seemed to really enjoy its freedom and adventure as it continued flying.

Meanwhile, Tabitha was crushed and didn't want to come out of her room for days. Her parents even offered to get her a new balloon. Tabitha knew her red balloon was irreplaceable. Her mother did her best to cheer her up, but nothing seemed to work. Tabitha needed her balloon back.

On its journey the red balloon floated over water fountains, statues, and canyons. Seeing all these wonderful things brought joy to the balloon. It wasn't until the balloon flew over the park and a school that it began experiencing sadness. These places reminded it of Tabitha. The balloon remembered his fun filled days of chasing Tabitha to the park and around the playground. As he remembered these moments, and became more saddened, he began to deflate. The more he thought about Tabitha, the further he drifted down towards the earth.

Tabitha was out on a walk with her mother. Her mother was hoping that fresh air might cheer her up. They were getting closer to the park that she used to frequent with her red balloon. Tabitha stopped walking and told her mother she wasn't ready to go to that park yet. It upset her to see it too much.

Just then, out of the corner of her eye, she saw a red speck above them. She wondered if it actually could be her long lost friend. She was hopeful and began walking quickly toward it. It was slowly fluttering down towards her. She ran as fast as she could until she was right under it. As it drifted down right in front of her she reached out and grabbed its dangling string. Tabitha was elated! It was her red balloon that she had been missing all along. At the same time the red balloon began gaining some of its air back, because he knew he had found his home again too.

WRITING A LEAD

HOW WILL THE BEGINNING OF YOUR STORY HOOK YOUR READERS?

TYPES OF LEADS	BORING LEAD	LEAD THAT HOOKS!
Sound		
Talking		
Action		

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Action	I was excited.	I excitedly jumped out of the bed the moment the alarm sounded.

DEVELOPING THE SETTING

SHOW! DON'T TELL!

TELLING	SHOWING
He was in his bedroom.	
I jumped in the pool.	
She went to school.	

DEVELOPING THE SETTING

SHOW! DON'T TELL!

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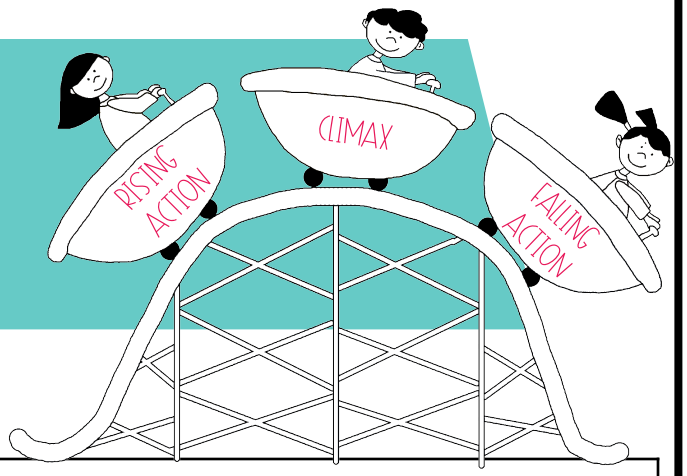
I jumped in the pool.	The smell of sunblock lingered in the air as I threw my towel on the closest lounge chair. I tossed my cover up and it landed on the deck. Within moments I could feel the cool water cover me as I jumped from the ledge.
She went to school.	As she walked into the room she could faintly smell paint from the art project they worked on yesterday. She quickly hung her bag and turned in her homework before taking her seat.

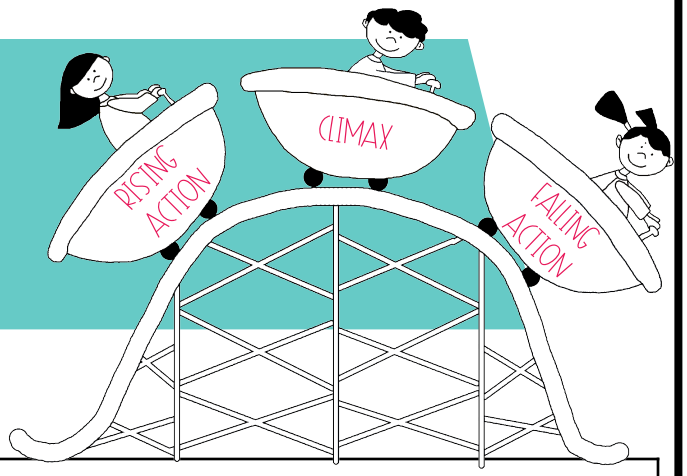
STORY PLOT



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? KEEP THEM IN SUSPENSE!

RISING ACTION (Events that lead to the problem.)	
CLIMAX (The problem at its peak or worst.)	
FALLING ACTION (Events that lead to the solution.)	
SOLUTION	

STORY PLOT



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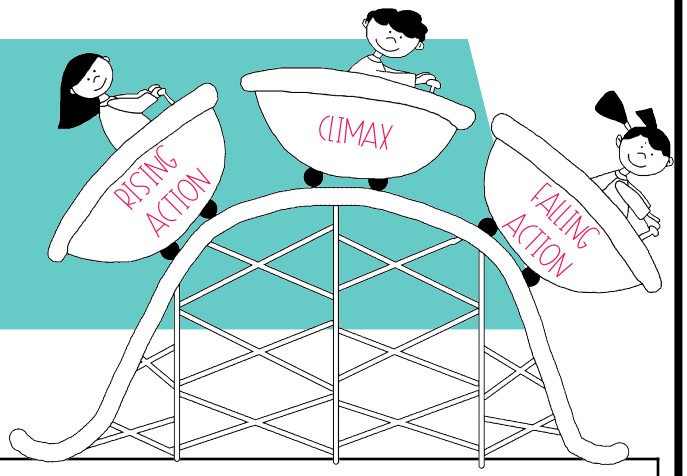
SOLUTION	

STORY PLOT



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CLIMAX (The problem at its peak or worst.)	Mom finds out that Dominic has been hiding the cat in his room.
FALLING ACTION (Events that lead to the solution.)	1. Dominic gets in trouble and is upset. 2. He finds a shelter for the cat. 3. Dominic's mom gets some allergy medicine.
SOLUTION	Dominic's mom changes her mind and lets him keep the cat.