**Sequencing Rationale**

While following the new common core standards for writing in first grade, learning-related and utilization-related sequencing are the best ways to teach writing. The goal is to follow the standards as closely as possible as it appears they follow a learning-related sequencing. Writer’s workshop with mini lessons from *6+1 Traits of Writing* by Ruth Culham will be used throughout the year.

Within the first full month of the school year, the students are introduced to writer’s workshop. The room is organized to facilitate writing opportunities, and the students are made aware of these locations and resources. Prewriting samples are taken to determine the needs of the students, and surveys are taken to gauge writing attitudes. The writing steps are discussed, followed by learning activities to introduce students to the writing process.

In October, the students will write opinion pieces, in which they state an opinion, support their opinion, and provide closure to their writing. The students will brainstorm possible opinion charged topics, and then choose for themselves what they would like to write about. The opinion paper will be supported by mini lessons that teach effective ways of focusing on the topic, writing effective leads, and revision techniques. The writing process: planning, drafting, revising, conferring with a buddy and revise, editing own writing, conferring with a buddy and edit, conferring with a teacher, and publishing; will be followed throughout the opinion pieces, as well as all other writing pieces throughout the year. This is to provide structure and solidify the writing process for these young writers.

In November, the students will write informative/explanatory texts in which they supply facts about a chosen topic and provide a sense of closure. *Reptiles Are My Life* by Megan McDonald will be shared to show how to organize writing. Then mini lessons in organization will be given followed by the students writing their animal reports.

In December, the students will write narratives including sequenced events. They will provide details, use temporal words, and provide a sense of closure to their writing. Mini lessons will be given throughout the month on story building, graphic organizer books, sensory words, juicy words, and vivid verbs. Students will choose their topic from the brainstormed ideas list.

In January, students will focus on topic and add details to strengthen their writing. Mini lessons on ideas that include brainstorming, elaboration through description lesson, and *Nothing Ever Happens on 90th Street* by Roni Schotter, will be used to support their writing. After reading *Nothing Ever Happens on 90th Street* by Roni Schotter, the students will tour the school and observe people working. They will take notes on what they see, focusing in on the details. Then the students will return to the classroom and write their own story, “Nothing Ever Happens at Riley Elementary”.

In February, students will collaborate with a partner while they use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing. They will use Microsoft Word and Microsoft PowerPoint for their piece on what they like about our school. Mini lessons will be taught on both Microsoft Word and PowerPoint in the school computer lab.

In March, students will again work as partners to research how-to books and then write a sequence of instructions. *The Secret Shortcut* by Mark Teague will be read aloud and a mini lesson will be given on a graphic organizer to help them through the research and writing process.

In April and May, students will recall information from their own experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question. *Through My Eyes* by Ruby Bridges will be read aloud to them, and mini lessons will be given on overused/tired words homerun sentences, sentence stretching, and paragraph writing. Students will then use Microsoft PowerPoint to write their final, end of the year project, “My Year in First Grade”.

I feel it is important to have mini lessons with each writing activity to provide guidance and to model the expectations. It is also important to make the writing relevant and worthwhile. Students will share their writing throughout the writing process in order to receive feedback and support of their work.

**Resources**

Areglado, N. & Dill, M..( 1997). *Let’s write.* New York: Scholastic.

Conroy, M., Marchand, T., & Webster, M. (2009). *Motivating primary students to write using writer’s workshop.* Saint Xavier University, Chicago, Illinois. Retrieved from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_&ERICExtS> earch\_SearchValue\_0=ED504817&ERICExtSearch\_SearchType\_0=no&accno=ED5048 17

Culham, R. (2003). *6+1 Traits of writing*. New York: Scholastic.

Sloan, M. (2005). *Trait-based mini lessons for teaching writing.* New York: Scholastic.