



Lesson Title: Using a List Structure to Organize a Personal Narrative

Subject: Writing Workshop / Drafting (Organization)

Audience: Grades K–1

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**LESSON OF THE WEEK**

Note: The Lesson of the Week is a Free Service.

### Rationale:

Writers structure and organize their writing to best convey their point of view. Students who recognize how the stories they read are structured connect to the need for planning and organizing their own writing.

This week's video clip features Schoolwide Educational Director Rory Cohen discussing what she looks for when choosing touchstone/mentor texts for a K–1 Writing Workshop. The video offers numerous mini-lesson possibilities, including how to model a "List Structure" for our youngest writers.

### Preparation:

- Video Clip: "Choosing Mentor Texts for a K–1 Personal Narrative Unit of Study" featuring Schoolwide Educational Director Rory Cohen
- Handout: "Books Lead the Way" by Rory Cohen
- Appendix: "Making an Outline"
- Book: *My Big Brother* by Valorie Fisher

### Teaching:

#### Inform

When writers get an idea, they have really only just begun. They next have to think, "What do I want this to be? Shall I make it a poem or a story, a picture book, a poster, or a series of drawings?" In other words, writers ask themselves, "What kind of structure and shape do I want to give my writing?"

#### Present

Several of our books are list books. That means the writers organized their stories like a list of points all about the same topic like Valorie Fisher does in *My Big Brother*. Here, the narrator introduces readers to her big brother (well, she really introduces us to his feet) on the first page (see pp. 1–2). It

### TEACHER WATCHES THE VIDEO

Enter the video link below into your web browser.

Note: To contact Rory Cohen about a professional development workshop for your school or district, please e-mail us at [pd@schoolwide.com](mailto:pd@schoolwide.com).



Video Link: <http://www.schoolwidenetwork.com/video/208/Choosing-mentor-texts-for-a-K-1-Personal-Narrative-Unit-of-Study>

makes sense to start off by introducing your subject to the reader, don't you think? Sometimes the title can do that, but it's nice when the first page sets the stage and makes the introductions for the story to come. After the narrator introduces readers to her big brother, each page after that lists a quality that describes her big brother: he "is really big" (p. 3), does "amazing things" (p. 5), has an "important job" (p. 7) and "funny friends" (p. 9). After listing the great things about her big brother, the baby ends the story by telling readers: "I love my big brother, and he loves me" (last 2 pages). That is such a positive and happy note to end on, and it is the big idea about her brother that she wanted to tell the readers. She wrote about him because she loves him. She saved the best for last!

### Engage

We all have pieces we are working on publishing. Some of your stories might make great list books. I want to make a list book about my house. Use the Appendix "Making an Outline" to demonstrate how you would make an outline to help plan your list book. Ask student volunteers to share or think aloud about how their list books might go.

### Community Share:

Please visit [SchoolwideBlog.com](http://SchoolwideBlog.com) to share your experience with the Lesson of the Week.

This week's Lesson of the Week is an excerpt from Schoolwide's



## K–1 Personal Narrative Unit of Study

CLICK HERE for more information about Schoolwide's Writing Fundamentals Units of Study.



To request a FREE Writing Fundamentals Product Sampler please e-mail us at [customerservice@schoolwide.com](mailto:customerservice@schoolwide.com).

