

Multimodal Narrative Writing

Thumbprint Autobiography

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Grade Level	8th Grade	**Time Frame**	3–4 class period(s)
Subject	English/Language Arts	**Duration**	150 minutes
Course	Composition, Creative Writing		

Essential Question

Who am I? What makes me me?

Summary

In this lesson, students explore the essential questions "Who am I?" and "What makes me me?" through multimodal narrative writing. For this creative composition, students engage in preliminary reflective writing and in an up-close look at their thumbprints. Throughout this creative writing process, students are also working with figurative language, question generation, and visual composition. Ultimately, students will compose a multimodal narrative that encourages visual literacy and re-think how a personal narrative can look. This lesson includes optional modifications for distance learning. Resources for use in Google Classroom are included.

Snapshot

Engage

Students complete a quick write and engage in a Think-Pair-Share session, then watch two videos about fingerprints.

Explore

Students reflect on and respond to the Thumbprint Autobiography handout. Using the Question Generating strategy, students will compose their own questions to answer in their Thumbprint Autobiography.

Explain

Students create an original Thumbprint Autobiography multimodal narrative using the pre-writing from the Thumbprint Autobiography handout and their own Question Generating questions.

Extend

Students publish their narratives by presenting their final work in a modified Gallery Walk to their classmates.

Evaluate

Students revisit their initial quick write and compose an additional reflective extension.

Standards

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - English (6-12)

ORG 201: Determine the need for transition words or phrases to establish time relationships in simple narrative essays (e.g., then, this time)
ORG 301: Determine the most logical place for a sentence in a paragraph
ORG 302: Provide a simple conclusion to a paragraph or essay (e.g., expressing one of the essay's main ideas)

Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 8)

8.2.W.2: Students will plan (e.g., outline) and prewrite a first draft as necessary.
8.8.W: Students will write independently over extended periods of time (e.g., time for research, reflection, and revision) and for shorter timeframes (e.g., a single sitting or a day or two), vary their modes of expression to suit audience and task, and analyze different perspectives.

Attachments

- Lesson Slides.pptx
- Thumbprint Autobiography - Spanish.docx
- Thumbprint Autobiography - Spanish.pdf
- Thumbprint Autobiography Student Examples - Spanish.docx
- Thumbprint Autobiography Student Examples - Spanish.pdf
- Thumbprint Autobiography Student Examples.docx
- Thumbprint Autobiography Student Examples.pdf
- Thumbprint Autobiography.docx
- Thumbprint Autobiography.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Thumbprint Autobiography handout (attached; one per student)
- Thumbprint Autobiography Student Examples handout (attached; one per student)
- White printer paper
- Writing materials (pencils with erasers, colored markers, pens)

30 minutes

Engage

Begin by displaying **slide 2** of the **Lesson Slides** to introduce the lesson, then **slide 3** to show the essential questions. The learning objectives are listed on **slide 4**. Ask students to complete a quick write as a bellringer over the following questions:

What makes you unique?

What sets you apart from everyone else and makes you you?

Give the students five minutes to write, then ask them to share one piece of information with a partner by using the Think-Pair-Share strategy.

Teacher's Note

To warm students up to share their quick write and engage in Think-Pair-Share, consider writing and sharing along with students. Going further, analyze a partner's fingerprint and share what was discovered. Be sure to provide guiding suggestions for students to think about, such as what is unique about their personality, goals, family, etc.

Show **slide 5** and invite students to do a quick write as a whole class. Ask students which part of the human body is completely unique to each individual. Invite them to consider fingerprints. Tell students that they will be examining their thumbprints and invite them to become acquainted with their unique prints by watching two videos.

Display **slide 6**. Play the first video, How to Compare Fingerprints, until the 1:30 mark. Pause after each fingerprint part (the delta, loop, arch, etc.) and ask students to find these elements on their own thumbs. As students are examining their prints for each different part, they may want to show and compare their findings with their Think-Pair-Share partner.

Watch the second video all the way through. It is titled Why Are Fingerprints Unique? It provides more context about the human fingerprint. This video will help students think more deeply and further about what makes each person's fingerprints unique.

Teacher's Note

The combination of the quick write, Think-Pair-Share strategy, and two videos will serve as a brainstorming session for the multimodal narrative students will compose. Spend enough time in this Engage session to be able to refer back to these activities throughout the rest of this lesson.

40 minutes

Explore

While it may seem counterintuitive, rather than writing first, introduce students to their Thumbprint Autobiography. Before they begin to create their thumbprint, share the **Thumbprint Autobiography Student Samples.** Since this is a multimodal composition, the creation of the thumbprint takes a bit of time. An in-depth analysis of the various grooves and elements of each other's thumbprints is important for them to produce their autobiography. Display **slide 7** and distribute the **Thumbprint Autobiography** handout. You may prefer to have students use a sheet of paper to create their thumbprint.

Teacher's Note

Before students try creating the lines of their thumbprint on their own, it is important for the teacher to model how to do it using a large Post-It, a whiteboard, or a document camera to show students how the teacher transfers the lines of their thumbprint onto paper.

For students who want to make their thumbprint "perfect," it is helpful to act as a supportive guide and remind them that the formation of the lines on the thumbprint can be very flexible. Since the teacher will not really know what each student's print looks like, the real point of this formation is to draw in enough lines to hold content, not how closely the lines resemble the actual thumbprint.

For students who would benefit from a modification during this stage, a template is provided on the Thumbprint Autobiography handout that may be printed to use or trace.

1. Give each student a sheet of white printer paper. Ask them to draw a large oval, using pencil and pressing very lightly, taking up as much of the page as possible, getting as close to all four sides as possible. This oval will serve as the border of the student's thumbprint. It is important to draw lightly because this line will be erased later.
2. Once they have drawn the oval, ask students to fill it in with the lines of their thumbprint. The best way to start is to the find the element on the thumbprint called "the core" (shown in the first video) and draw that. The core is the central, "main event" of the thumbprint, and is a good place to start so that all other lines can radiate from it.
3. Advise students to find any other interesting elements of their thumbprints that stick out as unique and to draw those in next. Remind students that everyone is unique and therefore their thumbprints will look very different from each other; some students may have whorls and deltas and others may not.
4. Give students time to find all of the fascinating elements of their thumbprint. Walk around the room and assist where needed. During this stage, the teacher will likely perform up-close observations of student thumbprints and help to transfer the lines to their paper. Continually remind students to draw in pencil very lightly since the lines will be eventually erased.
5. The last step is to fill in the rest of the thumbprint with lines that will hold the writing. These lines should follow the same flow as the first shapes drawn in. They should repeat on top of each other. The space between the lines will vary in width, but it is best to keep them similar to the width of a sheet of notebook paper. If the space is too thick, there will not be enough room to fit the content, and if the space is too small, there will be too much space to fill and too little room to write comfortably.

Once students have completed forming their thumbprint, have them set it aside. Using the Thumbprint Autobiography handout, have students pre-write for this multimodal narrative by answering both the guiding questions and generating their own.

Until this point, students have been brainstorming and getting immersed into the theme of individuality. Moving into the stages of more concrete writing, this would be a good time for the teacher to introduce or review the narrative mode of writing, and to distinguish an autobiography from a narrative. Emphasize that autobiography is a work written by the author about themselves. This autobiographical narrative describes the student's life experiences—highs and lows, ins and outs.

Inform students that the writing they are doing will be used to compose their narrative. A narrative tells a story. An autobiography gives information about the life of the author. The content written for this composition will tell the story of the writer. There are guiding questions that may be considered and answered on the attached Thumbprint Autobiography handout. You may also invite students to engage in the Question Generating strategy to compose questions of their own to answer.

First, ask students to write out on a separate sheet of paper the answers to the guiding questions in complete sentences, providing as much information as needed to tell their story. As a homework or end-of-day assignment, students will go a step further and generate their own questions to answer for their narrative. For this lesson, the Question Generating strategy should work like this:

1. Give students an element of inspiration on which to focus. For this lesson, provide examples such as either guiding questions or an image of a fingerprint displayed at the front of the room.
2. Next, ask students to generate questions that pertain to their story. These should be questions that they not only would be able to answer about themselves but would be passionate about answering. Students may start by looking for a gap in the existing guiding questions. After giving students time on their own to compose their questions, set aside time for Think-Pair-Share discussion.

Teacher's Note

Remind students that they should only write about experiences they are willing to share aloud in class.

40 minutes

Explain

Display **slide 8**. Now that students have their blank thumbprint ready to fill and the content for their autobiographical narrative written, it is time to combine the two. Ask students to use light pencil strokes to fill in the lines of their thumbprint with the answers to the questions provided and generated.

Teacher's Note

During this stage, the teacher may ask students to draw symbols or pictures or incorporate figurative language into their thumbprint. For example, a student who generated a question to answer about a sport they play may describe their basketball skills by using onomatopoeia or a simile. A student who wrote about their favorite book may draw a symbol from the text.

After all content is drawn in pencil, instruct students to go over the with permanent color or pen. There are many options to use here, including felt tip pens, colored pencils, and thin-tipped markers. Some students may choose to go over most of their words in black, and save bolder colors for specific words, symbols, or figurative language.

Display **slide 9**. Remember that it was important to draw the initial lines lightly in pencil. Once all content is written in permanent ink or color, the student's last step is to go back over the initial pencil lines and erase them, leaving only the lines of their unique thumbprint formed by their story in their own words.

30 minutes

Extend

As an extension, provide students with the opportunity to display their Thumbprint Autobiographies and to read the work of others in a modified Gallery Walk. To make this conducive to a class period and physical layout, desks may be arranged in small or large groups (one large circle also works well). Display **slide10**. Ask each student to place their Thumbprint Autobiography on their desk. This activity works well with music playing. Play calming music for the period that students are reading the project in front of them, then when you stop the music, instruct them to move to the next desk to read a new narrative. This modified Gallery Walk works similarly to musical chairs, except in this version the opportunity is presented for students' stories to be read and learned.

Teacher's Note

Provide small stacks of Post-It notes around the desk for peers to leave positive comments on the Thumbprint Autobiographies as they are read.

Optional Modifications for Distance Learning

If conducting this lesson in an online or distance learning environment, you may choose to omit the Gallery Walk activity. You can substitute an activity with a website such as VoiceThread. With VoiceThread, you can upload the images to the site beforehand. Then, students can choose whether they would like to make a quick video, a voice memo, or a written note to give feedback on other students' posters. Download all attachments to use this lesson in Google Classroom.

10 minutes

Evaluate

Display **slide 11**. Ask students to complete this lesson by returning to their first quick write:

What makes you unique?

What sets you apart from everyone else and makes you you?

Students should revisit their writing and extend it by writing about what they learned or remembered about themselves during this process. This final reflection can simply be an extension that remains in a composition book, or they can turn it in as a full paragraph to accompany the final Thumbprint Autobiography.

Resources

- K20 Center. *K20 Center 5-minute timer* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EVS_yYQoLJg&list=PL-aUhEQeaZXLMF3fltNDxiuSkEr0pq0c2&index=8
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Gallery walk / carousel. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/118
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Google classroom. Tech Tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/628
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Question generating. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/167
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Think-pair-share. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/139
- K20 Center. (n.d.). VoiceThread. Tech Tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/2932
- Life Noggin. (2015, January 22). *Why is every fingerprint unique?* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-OI95dpNSM
- Ray Forensics. (2010, November 22). *How to compare fingerprints - The Basics* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrpTqKkgygA