

Monster Monday: The Nessie Details

Writing with Water Cryptids

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Grade Level	9th – 12th Grade	**Time Frame**	180-240 minutes
Subject	English/Language Arts	**Duration**	3-4 class periods
Course	A.P. Language and Composition, A.P. Literature and Composition, Composition		

Essential Question

How do authors use similar tropes but come up with different variations of the same character?

Summary

Swimming in your local lake, you feel what you think is seaweed. But is it? When there's something strange in your local habitat, who ya gonna call? Mulder & Scully! In this third lesson of the Monster Monday series, students examine informational texts for examples to model and craft their own informative writing rules. After diving deep into the research surrounding these creatures, students write their own informational pieces on the Oklahoma Octopus to set the record straight about what's strange versus what's just seaweed.

Snapshot

Engage

Students participate in a Caption This activity with an image of the Loch Ness Monster and view a clip from the movie *Napoleon Dynamite*.

Explore

Students review examples and non-examples of writings on Ogopogo and the Loch Ness Monster.

Explain

Students create a list of rules and expectations for informative writing.

Extend

Students write a short informative piece on the Oklahoma Octopus.

Evaluate

Students peer review classmates' writing pieces.

Standards

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

CLR401: Locate important details in somewhat challenging passages

Oklahoma Academic Standards: English Language Arts (Grade 11)

11.2.W.4: Routinely and recursively use resources to edit for grammar, usage, mechanics, and format in order to finalize drafts for publication.

11.3.W.2: Compose informative essays, reports, or technical writing that:

- objectively introduce and develop topics
- include a defensible thesis
- incorporate evidence (e.g., specific facts, details, charts and graphs, data)
- maintain an organized structure
- use sentence variety and word choice to create clarity and concision
- establish and maintain a formal style
- emulate literary devices from mentor texts

Attachments

- Informative Writing Checklist—The Nessie Details - Spanish.docx
- Informative Writing Checklist—The Nessie Details - Spanish.pdf
- Informative Writing Checklist—The Nessie Details.docx
- Informative Writing Checklist—The Nessie Details.pdf
- Lesson Slides—The Nessie Details.pptx
- Nessie Informative Writing Sample—The Nessie Details - Spanish.docx
- Nessie Informative Writing Sample—The Nessie Details - Spanish.pdf
- Nessie Informative Writing Sample—The Nessie Details.docx
- Nessie Informative Writing Sample—The Nessie Details.pdf
- Ogopogo Informative Writing Sample—The Nessie Details - Spanish.docx
- Ogopogo Informative Writing Sample—The Nessie Details - Spanish.pdf
- Ogopogo Informative Writing Sample—The Nessie Details.docx
- Ogopogo Informative Writing Sample—The Nessie Details.pdf
- Paired Text H-Chart—The Nessie Details - Spanish.docx
- Paired Text H-Chart—The Nessie Details - Spanish.pdf
- Paired Text H-Chart—The Nessie Details.docx
- Paired Text H-Chart—The Nessie Details.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Ogopogo Informative Writing Sample (attached; one per student)
- Nessie Informative Writing Sample (attached; one per student)
- Paired Text H-Chart (attached; one per student)
- Links to three interactive activities:
  - Ogopogo: https://k20center.ou.edu/e-learning/monster-monday/?scene=canada
  - Nessie: https://k20center.ou.edu/e-learning/monster-monday/
  - The Oklahoma Octopus: https://k20center.ou.edu/e-learning/monster-monday/?scene=oklahoma
- Informative Writing Checklist (attached; one per student)
- Wakelet (linked)
- Student Devices
- Internet Access

Engage

Begin the lesson with the title slide on the attached **Lesson Slides**.

Display **slide 2** and share the instructional strategy Caption This with your students. Share the image on the screen and instruct them to write a caption based on observations and inferences.



Move to **slide 3** and share the 48-second clip "Napoleon Dynamite - Nessie" in which Napoleon reports on Japanese scientists and Scottish wizards seeking a connection with "our underwater ally." (Note that this slide and video are optional and can be skipped to save time.)

Embedded video

https://youtube.com/watch?v=93ClrSkeoCg

Move to **slides 4–5** to share the lesson's essential question and learning objectives to the extent you feel necessary.

Move to **slide 6** and review the definition of "trope":

1. A recurring theme or motif, as in literature or art: The heroic trope.
2. A convention or device that establishes a predictable or stereotypical representation of a character, setting, or scenario in a creative work: From her introduction in the movie, the character is nothing but a Damsel in Distress trope.

If you have taught Monster Monday: The Good, The Bad, and The Sparkly and/or Monster Monday: Puppy Love, then your students should have a good understanding of the term already.

Ask students about water creatures and sea monsters as tropes in stories and tales. To start a discussion, consider the following guiding questions:

- What kinds of different water creatures have you seen in movies?
- What other water creatures do you know of?

Sample Responses: Water Creatures

Sample Responses: Water Creatures

Sample responses may include:

- Mermaids
- Swamp Thing or other swamp monsters
- Monsters from Goosebumps
- Lake Placid

Explore

Display **slide 7** and share the goal for the upcoming activity: "Your goal in this activity is to identify the requirements for informative writing through exploration, observation, and analysis."

Move to **slide 8** and share the instructional strategy Paired Texts H-Chart with your students. Pass out a copy each of the attached **Paired Text H-Chart** handout, **Ogopogo Informative Writing Sample,** and **Nessie Informative Writing Sample** to each student.

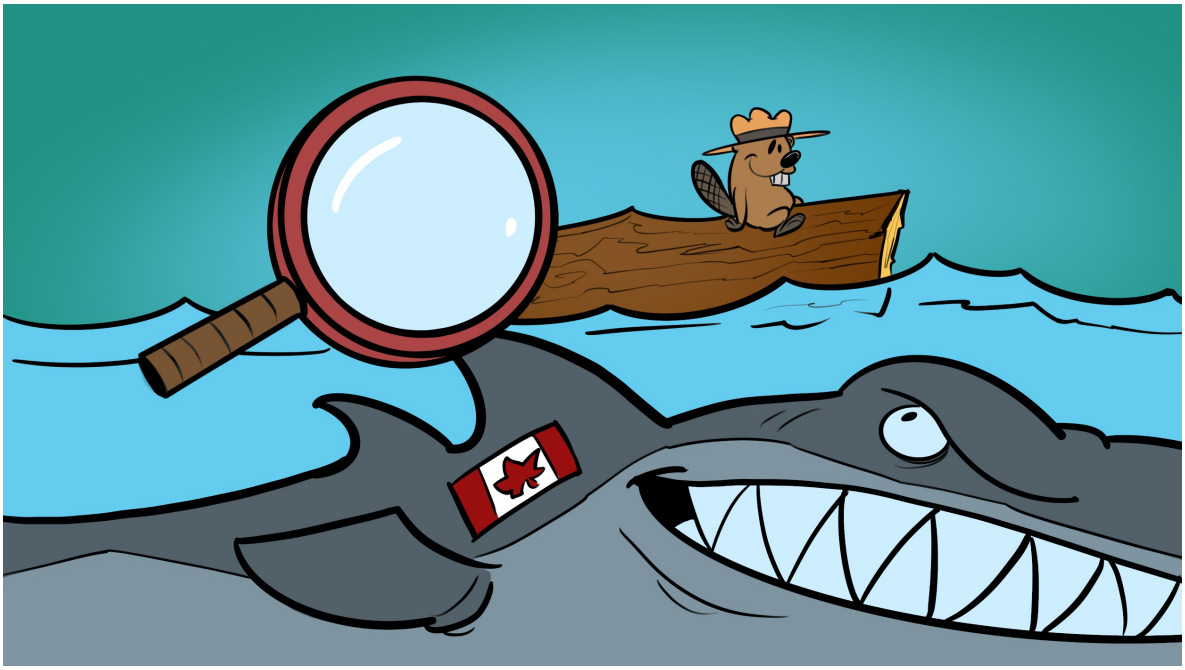
Share the first interactive activity on **slide 9** with your students: https://k20center.ou.edu/e-learning/monster-monday/?scene=canada. Have students use their devices to move the magnifying glass around the illustration. Once they have had sufficient time to explore the activity, move to **slide 10.** Have students read the Ogopogo Informative Writing Sample, considering the questions on the slide as they read:

- Does this writing give you enough information to understand what was happening in the image?
- What do you notice about the writing?
- What questions do you have?

As they read, students should take notes in the right column of the H-Chart on the structure of the writing and important things that stand out to them.

Once they have finished, instruct students to share their observations with a partner.

Move to **slide 11** to show the full hidden image from the interactive activity.



Move to **slide 12** and ask students to reflect on the following questions:

- Did the writing help you make sense of the second picture?
- Do you have a good understanding of what was happening as you moved the magnifying glass around?

As they read, students should keep taking notes in the right column of the H-Chart.

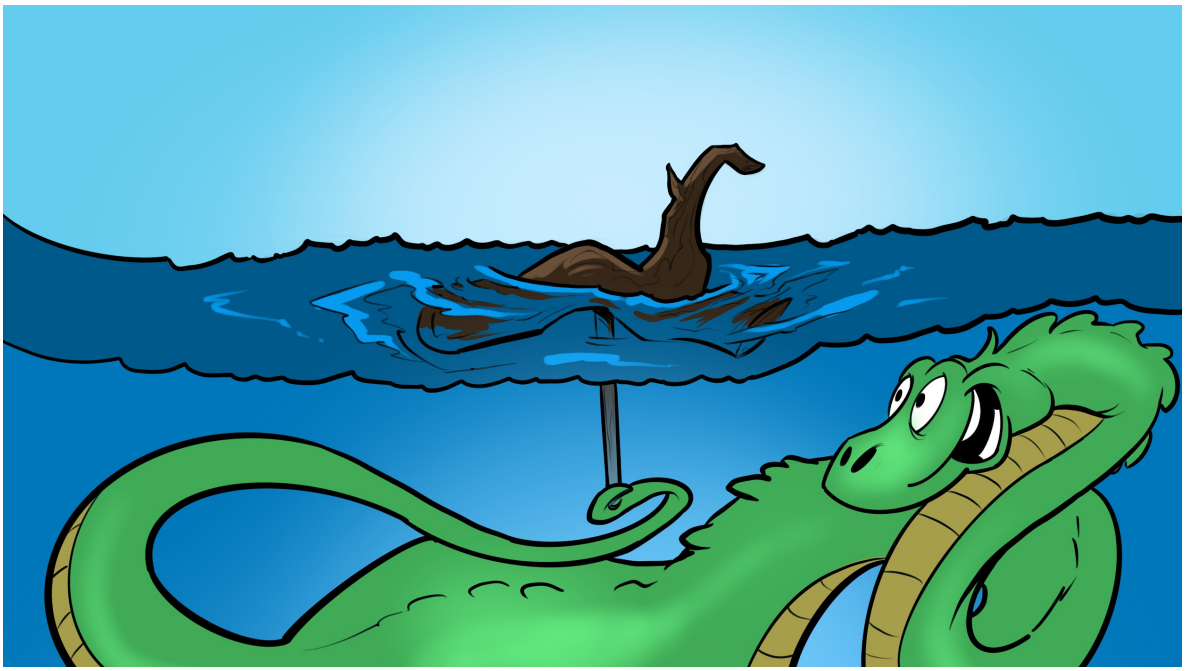
Share the next interactive activity on **slide 13** with your students: https://k20center.ou.edu/e-learning/monster-monday. Have students use their devices to move the magnifying glass around the illustration. Once they have had sufficient time to explore, move to **slide 14.** Have students read the Nessie Informative Writing Sample, considering the questions on the slide as they read:

- Does this writing give you enough information to understand what was happening in the image?
- What do you notice about the writing?
- What questions do you have?

As they read, students should take notes in the left column of the H-Chart on the structure of the writing and important things that stand out to them.

Once they have finished, instruct students to share their observations with a partner.

Move to **slide 15** to show the full hidden image from the interactive activity.



Move to **slide 16** and ask students to reflect on the following questions:

- Did the writing help you make sense of the second picture?
- Do you have a good understanding of what was happening as you moved the magnifying glass around?

As they read, students should keep taking notes in the left column of the H-Chart.

Display **slide 17** and instruct your students to synthesize what they noticed between the two texts. Use the following questions to help guide this synthesis:

- How are the writing samples similar or different?
- What does one have that the other doesn't?
- What makes one an exemplary essay?

Move to **slide 18** and have your students review everything they have written down. Instruct your students to flip their H-Charts over and make a list of what requirements and steps they believe are necessary for good informative writing based on what they observed.

Display **slide 19** and instruct each students to review their list with a partner, adding new ideas from their partner's list to their own.

Explain

Display **slide 20.** Share the instructional strategy Tell Me Everything with your students. Have them share what they wrote on the back of their H-Chart. As they are sharing out, record their responses on a sheet of paper.

Optional: Slides 21–33

You may choose to include or skip **slides 21-33** depending on how much experience and background knowledge your students have with informative writing. These slides include:

- What an exemplar informative essay includes
- How to introduce a topic
- What a thesis statement is
- Types of thesis statements
- How to write an effective thesis statement (with the video "Writing an Effective Thesis Statement")
- How to formulate a thesis statement
- How to write a thesis statement by starting with a question (with the video "How to Write a Thesis for Beginners")
- Incorporating evidence
- Choosing the right type of evidence with the A-CLAP instructional strategy
- Using quotation marks
- Paraphrasing or summarizing
- Organized structure
- Starting with a basic paragraph template

Teacher's Note: Citations

If your students need more practice with citing their sources, consider pausing at this time and guiding students through the lesson Making Sense of MLA: Citing Sources and MLA Formatting.

Extend

Display **slide 34** and inform your students that they will be independently researching Oklahoma's own water cryptid, the Oklahoma Octopus. Pass out the attached **Informative Writing Checklist** and take some time to review it with your students.

Move to **slide 35** and share the Mind Maps instructional strategy with your students. Have students scan the QR code on the slide or distribute the link to the Wakelet activity: The Nessie Details (https://wakelet.com/wake/0FZDXjsGqOzKM-2pbKcXO).

Move to **slide 36** to show students an example of a Mind Map. This Mind Map should look familiar to students because it was used to help research the exemplary Nessie writing sample.

Before your students begin their research and writing, share the image on **slide 37** along with a link to the interactive illustration: https://k20center.ou.edu/e-learning/monster-monday/?scene=oklahoma. Remind your students that you are looking for them to share more than just surface information.

Teacher's Note: Tech Integrated Strategy

To give students the option to create a digital Mind Map instead of a physical one, consider using the Mind Maps with Lucid Tech Integrated Strategy.

Give your students enough class time to research and write their informative essays about the Oklahoma Octopus.

Evaluate

Display **slide 38** and instruct your students to partner up. Ask each pair to use the Informative Writing Checklist to peer review their partner's writing. As students are taking notes on the checklist, encourage them to be specific—this will help them and their partner strengthen their skills.

Move to **slide 39**, which shows the full hidden image from the last interactive activity. Have students trade checklists with their partners. Invite students to review their partners' notes and feedback. Have students reflect on their work with the question, "does my writing go deeper than the surface level of this topic to show the real story?"

Give students class time to revise their writing. Once they have done so, collect students' finished informative essays.

Resources

- Andrew. (2013, April 21). How to write a thesis for beginners [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wCzuAMVmIZ8
- K20 Center. (n.d.). A-CLAP. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/183
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