

Unit 6.4: Memoirs: Exploring Personal Challenges
English as a Second Language
6 weeks of instruction

STAGE 1 – (Desired Results)

Unit Summary:	In this unit, the student explores the genre of memoirs through reading memoirs of individuals who faced challenges in their lives. He/she is introduced to several prewriting strategies as he/she brainstorms ideas for his/her own personal memoir about his/her childhood. The student experiences the writing process in-depth as he/she drafts, revises, and publishes his/her childhood memoirs.
Transversal Themes:	Integrity, Reflective Thinking, Adaptation, Origin, Type of Family, Quality of Life
Integration Ideas:	Social Studies/History

Essential Questions (EQ) and Enduring Understandings (EU)

- EQ1.** How do challenges lead to new learning?
EU1. Challenges are opportunities for new learning and personal growth.
- EQ2.** Which experiences are worth writing about?
EU2. Personal experiences can be turned into a specific type of writing called a memoir.
- EQ3.** What would the world be like without words?
EU3. Knowing how to use words well helps us become better readers and writers.
- EQ4.** What makes our writing great?
EU4. The writing process is made up of a series of strategies that authors use to improve their writing.

Transfer (T) and Acquisition (A) Goals

- T1.** The student will leave class able to apply his/her knowledge of reading skills to connect with a text and identify character traits as a way to better understand him/herself.
- T2.** The student will leave the class able to apply his/her knowledge of reading skills to predict and infer using texts of other genres and in other content areas.
- T3.** The student will leave the class able to apply his/her knowledge to produce published, written work that utilizes appropriate English language grammar and usage conventions and to follow the steps of the writing process.
- T4.** The student will leave the class able to apply his/her knowledge to employ strategies for determining the meaning of unknown words using a variety of methods so that he/she can interpret and use language in an exact and descriptive manner.
- The student acquires skills to...*
- A1.** Listen and respond during a read-aloud from a variety of narrative texts to comprehend and identify the main character, making connections to self.
- A2.** Make predictions and inferences based on evidence from a text (i.e., predictions about what will happen next).
- A3.** Write grammatically correct and complete sentences using appropriate punctuation and language to construct longer pieces of narrative writing.
- A4.** Determine the meaning of unknown or unfamiliar words using context clues, other strategies and resources to build vocabulary and verify meaning.

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Puerto Rico Core Standards (PRCS)	
Listening	
6.L.1	Listen and interact with peers during group participation and oral presentations.
6.L.1b	Interact in a socially appropriate manner.
6.L.1d	Listen and respond during read-alouds to a variety of narrative and informational texts to comprehend and identify main idea, character, and setting.
Speaking	
6.S.1	Contribute to class, group, and partner discussions by following turn-taking, asking relevant questions, affirming others, adding relevant information, and paraphrasing key ideas.
6.S.2b	Express self using correct, simple, compound, and complex sentences.
6.S.2d	Expand and enrich sentences to provide details about a familiar or new activity, process, or academic concept.
6.S.5	Describe and explain experiences, ideas, and concepts using appropriate grammar and vocabulary, adjusting language choices according to purpose, task and audience.
6.S.6a	Retell texts and recount experiences using complete sentences, key words, and a growing number of general academic and content-specific words in order to communicate with increasing precision.
Reading	
6.R.10	Read and comprehend literature from Puerto Rico and other cultures, including stories, dramas, and poetry, and informational texts (e.g., history/social studies, science, and technical texts) of appropriate complexity.
6.R.2L	Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.
6.R.3L	Compare and contrast characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).
6.R.4L	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a literary text, including figurative language.
6.R.6L	Describe how a narrator's or speaker's point of view influences how events are described in a literary text.
6.R.9L	Compare and contrast stories in the same genre (e.g., mysteries and adventure stories) on their approaches to similar themes and topics.
Writing	
6.W.3	Write descriptive and narrative paragraphs to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, details, structure, and using transitional words and other cohesive devices to better organize writing.
6.W.4	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing and applying appropriate sentence structure and word order.
6.W.8	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a variety of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.



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Language	
6.LA.1b	Use correctly and explain the function of prepositions in general and in particular sentences.
6.LA.1g	Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.
6.LA.3a	Expand, combine, and reduce sentences for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.
6.LA.3b	Compare and contrast the varieties of English (e.g., dialects, registers) used in stories, dramas, or poems.
6.LA.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on developmentally appropriate reading and content, choosing flexibly from a variety of strategies.
6.LA.4a	Use context clues and other strategies to help determine meaning of a word or phrase.
6.LA.4b	Use common Greek or Latin affixes and roots to help determine the meaning of a word (e.g., "able" - <i>affordable, sociable, disposable</i>).
6.LA.4c	Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauri), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.
6.LA.4d	Check predicted word meanings through context or in a dictionary.
6.LA.5c	Apply synonyms, antonyms, homographs appropriately to demonstrate meaning.

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STAGE 1 – (Desired Results)			STAGE 2 – (Assessment Evidence)		STAGE 3 – (Learning Plan)
Alignment to Learning Objectives	Content Focus (The student understands...)	Content Vocabulary	Performance Tasks	Other Evidence	Learning Activities
<p>PRCS: 6.L.1d 6.S.1 6.S.6a 6.R.2L 6.R.3L 6.R.6L 6.R.9L 6.R.10 6.W.8 6.LA.3b</p> <p>EQ/EU: EQ2/EU2 EQ3/EU3</p> <p>T/A: T1/A1 T2/A2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elements of memoirs (focuses on a particular time period, event or experience; reveals the writer’s feelings; shows the significance of the time period, event or experience to the author). How to make predictions about what will happen and how to make text-to-self connections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Descriptive text Dialect Dialogue Event Genre Memoir Prediction Register Senses Setting Text-to-self connection 	<p><i>For complete descriptions, refer to the section ‘Performance Tasks’ at the end of this map.</i></p> <p>Reading Response Letter on Memoirs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student shows his/her critical thinking about a text by writing a Reading Response Letter. The letter responds to a text by answering one of the following essential questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do challenges lead to new learning? Which experiences are worth writing about? The letter is not a summary, but rather the student’s metacognitive response to what has happened in the text. The student completes this task multiple times throughout the duration of a book or text. 	<p>Dialogue Journal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During read alouds and partner reading, the student uses his/her dialogue journal to note connections to characters and predictions of the sequence of events (See Attachment: 6.4 Other Evidence – Dialogue Journal). <p>Reflective Journal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student completes a journal entry after finishing the performance task (See Attachment: 6.4 Other Evidence – Reflective Journal). 	<p><i>For sample lessons related to the following group of learning activities, refer to the section ‘Sample Lessons’ at the end of this map.</i></p> <p>Memoirs: Predictions and Connections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher leads a genre comparison to help students better understand the memoir genre. The teacher reads aloud an excerpt from the memoir, <i>When I Was Puerto Rican</i>, by Esmeralda Santiago (See Attachment: 6.4 Text – When I Was Puerto Rican), pointing out the characteristics of a memoir (See Attachment: 6.4 Resource – Characteristics of Memoirs). The teacher shows students the titles and covers of various, pre-selected memoirs and models how to make predictions about what the book is about. Then, the student makes his/her own predictions and checks to see if he/she is correct by reading the book jackets and summaries. The student selects a part of a memoir that he/she identifies or connects with. The student draws an illustration of the scene he/she selected and writes a journal entry reflecting how this scene relates to his/her life. Some of the connections may include personal characteristics, similarities in setting, etc.



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					<ul style="list-style-type: none">The teacher reads aloud from a variety of memoirs to model and emphasize a character's voice based on the language he/she uses. The teacher points out these differences in vocabulary (i.e., dialect/register) and helps the students make connections between the language used and the characteristics of the person/people in the memoir.
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STAGE 1 – (Desired Results)		STAGE 2 – (Assessment Evidence)			STAGE 3 – (Learning Plan)
Alignment to Learning Objectives	Content Focus (The student understands...)	Content Vocabulary	Performance Tasks	Other Evidence	Learning Activities
<p>PRCS: 6.L.1 6.L.1b 6.S.2b 6.S.2d 6.S.5 6.W.3 6.W.4 6.W.8 6.LA.1b 6.LA.1g 6.LA.3a</p> <p>EQ/EU: EQ1/EU1 EQ4/EU4</p> <p>T/A: T3/A3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The steps of the writing process: brainstorming/free-writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. Prewriting strategies to generate ideas (writing prompts, drawing). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brainstorming Complex sentence Compound sentence Editing Final draft Memoir Prewriting Publishing Revising Rough draft Simple sentence Writing process 	<p><i>For complete descriptions, refer to the section ‘Performance Tasks’ at the end of this map.</i></p> <p>My Personal Childhood Memoir (four parts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student writes a personal memoir in four parts, taking the memoir through the entire writing process and using tools and strategies practiced throughout the unit to follow the steps described – prewriting, writing a rough draft, revising, and writing a final draft. 	<p>Writing Process Jigsaw</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student completes a group jigsaw activity to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the correct order of the writing process. Describe in writing and share each step of the writing process with his/her group (See Attachment: 6.4 Other Evidence – The Writing Process Jigsaw). <p>Reflective Journal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student completes a journal entry after finishing the performance task (See Attachment: 6.4 Other Evidence – Reflective Journal). 	<p><i>For sample lessons related to the following group of learning activities, refer to the section ‘Sample Lessons’ at the end of this map.</i></p> <p>The Writing Process: Prewriting and Brainstorming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher models strategies for brainstorming by using a prompt that is provided (See Attachment: 6.4 Writing Tool – Brainstorming Ideas for a Memoir). Next, the student selects one of the brainstorming prompts and writes on it for 3-5 minutes. The teacher may repeat this exercise as many times as desired. The student selects two of his/her brainstorming exercises and describes details about each event through his/her senses (See Attachment: 6.4 Graphic Organizer – Brainstorming Using the Senses). The teacher introduces the importance of varying sentence type when writing and models how to combine or expand sentences to make writing more descriptive and powerful, for example, by including the use of prepositions to clarify time, place or direction. The student first practices this by reviewing simple, compound and complex sentences (See Attachment: 6.4 Learning Activity – Choosing Sentence Structure), next, by using material from the prewriting



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					<p>activities and finally, in his/her own personal memoir. The teacher uses attachment 6.4 Learning Activity – Learning about Prepositional Phrases to introduce prepositional phrases and to provide students with practice using them to expand on simple sentences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The teacher explains the importance of word choice when writing dialogue, modeling how to select words that are more exact and descriptive than “said”. The teacher provides a list of dialogue tags (See Attachment: 6.4 Resource – Dialogue Tags) and copies of an excerpt from “Summer of the Monkeys” (See Attachment: 6.4 Text – Summer Excerpt). The student revises the dialogue tags in the excerpt using the dialogue tags list.
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STAGE 1 – (Desired Results)			STAGE 2 – (Assessment Evidence)		STAGE 3 – (Learning Plan)
Alignment to Learning Objectives	Content Focus (The student understands...)	Content Vocabulary	Performance Tasks	Other Evidence	Learning Activities
<p>PRCS: 6.R.4L 6.LA.4 6.LA.4a 6.LA.4b 6.LA.4c 6.LA.4d 6.LA.5c</p> <p>EQ/EU: EQ3/EU3</p> <p>T/A: T4/A4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to use knowledge of words to identify the meaning of unknown vocabulary encountered in texts. Root words and compound words. Prefixes (<i>un-</i> not, against, opposite; <i>trans-</i> across, beyond, change; <i>re-</i> back, again; <i>dis-</i> not, opposite of, exclude). Suffixes (<i>-age</i> activity, or result of action, <i>-er, -or</i> person or thing that does something, <i>-ful</i> an amount or quantity that fills). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affix Antonym Compound word Context clue Dictionary Figurative language Literal language Prefix Root word Suffix Synonym 		<p>Making Inferences with Vocabulary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student uses a vocabulary-specific graphic organizer to seek out context clues to help make meaning and utilizes reference materials to check his/her definition (See Attachment: 6.4 Other Evidence– Making Inferences with Vocabulary Graphic Organizer). <p>Root and Compound Word Quiz</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student completes a quiz that assesses his/her understanding of roots and compound words. The teacher provides feedback and corrects student errors as observed. 	<p>For sample lessons related to the following group of learning activities, refer to the section ‘Sample Lessons’ at the end of this map.</p> <p>Vocabulary Strategies for New Words</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher discusses with students a variety of strategies to use when encountering new and unknown vocabulary, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using context clues to help define unknown words. Using prior knowledge of roots, prefixes or suffixes or word parts (i.e., compound words). Using reference materials such as a dictionary to find more information. Using knowledge of synonyms or antonyms to find word meaning. Using knowledge of the difference between literal and figurative language. The teacher reads aloud memoirs and uses all of the strategies discussed to model this process. The student completes a word hunt by skimming the memoir, <i>When I Was Puerto Rican</i> (See Attachment: 6.4 Text – When I Was Puerto Rican), and identifying ten new words that have prefixes, suffixes or compound words (See Attachment: 6.4 Graphic Organizer – My New Words).



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					<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The student practices defining new words using context clues (See Attachment: 6.4 Learning Activity – Context Clues).• The student continues to practice strategies for identifying unknown words by focusing on prefixes (See Attachment: 6.4 Learning Activity – Prefixes Worksheet).
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STAGE 3 – (Learning Plan)

Suggested Literature Connections

- **Esmeralda Santiago**
 - *When I was Puerto Rican*
- **Ruth Gruener**
 - *Destined To Live: A True Story of a Child in the Holocaust*
- **Sherman Alexie**
 - *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*
- **Samantha Abeeel**
 - *My Thirteenth Winter: A Memoir*
- *Sample Childhood Memoirs (See Attachment: 6.4 Text – Sample Childhood Memoirs)*

Additional Resources

- Information on compound words (See Attachment: 6.4 Resource – Common Compound Words)
- Information on suffixes (See Attachment: 6.4 Resource – Common Suffixes)
- Information on prefixes (See Attachment: 6.4 Resource – Common Prefixes)
- Esmeralda Santiago Interview (See Attachment: 6.4 Resource – Esmeralda Santiago Interview)
- Root words resource (See Attachment: 6.4 Resource – Roots)
- Resource on using word walls to improve instruction (See Attachment: 6.4 Resource – Using Word Walls to Improve Instruction)
- Learning About Prepositional Phrases: <http://www.lessonsips.com/docs/pdf/prepphrase.pdf>

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Performance Tasks

My Personal Childhood Memoir (four parts)

The student writes a personal memoir in four parts, taking the memoir through the entire writing process and using tools and strategies practiced throughout the unit to follow the steps described – prewriting, writing a rough draft, revising, and writing a final draft.

(1) Prewriting/Brainstorming

- The student replies to the following prompts to help generate ideas for writing:
 - What is your first memory as a child? Walking? A birthday party? A car ride?
 - What was the most embarrassing thing that happened to you in first grade?
 - What was the best gift you've ever received?
 - Who were your best friends in second grade? Are they your friends now?
 - Did you ever get lost in your own neighborhood? Did you spend time outside? Think of something that happened to you outside and write about the experience.
- The student creates a map of his/her childhood neighborhood and connects the map to stories from his/her past by selecting three places on the map and recording important events that happened in those places.

(2) Rough Draft

- The student selects one of his/her ideas from the prewriting activities and writes a story from this experience as his/her own childhood memoir. The student produces at least four pages of double-spaced text (See Attachment: 6.4 Resource – Characteristics of a Memoir).

(3) Revision

- After writing a first draft, the student revises his/her own work and works with a peer to revise each other's work (See Attachments: 6.4 Writing Tool – Self-Revision Worksheet and 6.4 Writing Tool – Peer Revision Checklist).
- After completing these revisions, the student makes any necessary changes to his/her memoir.
- Next, the student works with another partner to further each other's work (See Attachment: 6.4 Writing Tool – Peer Editing Worksheet). If a student appears to be struggling greatly, the teacher may consider offering feedback as well.

(4) Final Draft and Assessment

- The student makes final revisions based on the feedback he/she received from his/her peers and the teacher.
- The student compiles all pre-writing/brainstorming documents, rough drafts and revision documents, and turns them in with his/her final draft on top.
- The student shares his/her memoir orally with the class.
- The teacher assesses each memoir using memoir rubric (See Attachment: 6.4 Writing Tool – Memoir Rubric).

Reading Response Letter on Memoirs

The student shows his/her critical thinking about a text by writing a Reading Response Letter. The letter responds to a text by answering one of the following essential questions:

- How do challenges lead to new learning?
- Which experiences are worth writing about?

The letter is not a summary, but rather the student's metacognitive response to what has happened in the text. The student completes this task multiple times throughout the duration of a book or text.

- The teacher introduces the Reading Response Letter format and expectations (See Attachment: 6.4 Performance Task – Reading Response Letter Sample and Reading Response Letter Rubric). In each letter, the student must use a friendly letter format and include the book title, author's name, and his/her impressions, connections and wonderings about the book he/she is reading. The

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student ends the letter with questions about the text, questions to the teacher, etc., as this is not simply a summary of the text but also the student's thoughts and questions about the text. The student receives written feedback on his/her letter in a response from the teacher. This dialogue serves as a tool for the teacher to help students think more critically about their reading.

- The teacher models the process for writing a Reading Response Letter using the sample provided (See Attachment: 6.4 Performance Task – Reading Response Letter Sample). The teacher uses a class read aloud (memoir) to model how to think aloud, generate connections with the text and think critically about what is being read.
- The student practices writing a Reading Response Letter using the same class read aloud as the topic for the first letter. Once the teacher checks the student's work, the student writes his/her own Reading Response Letter based on another book he/she has read in order to answer one of the essential questions posed in this unit. The student uses his/her dialogue journal as a graphic organizer to find examples of connections with the text, based on celebrations (See Attachment: 6.4 Other Evidence – Dialogue Journal).
- The teacher assesses the Reading Response Letter using the provided rubric (See Attachment: 6.4 Performance Task – Reading Response Letter Rubric).



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Suggested Sample Lessons

- Lesson on introduction to memoirs (See Attachment: 6.4 Sample Lesson – Memoirs)
- Lesson on memoir writing (See Attachment: 6.4 Sample Lesson – Memoir Writing)