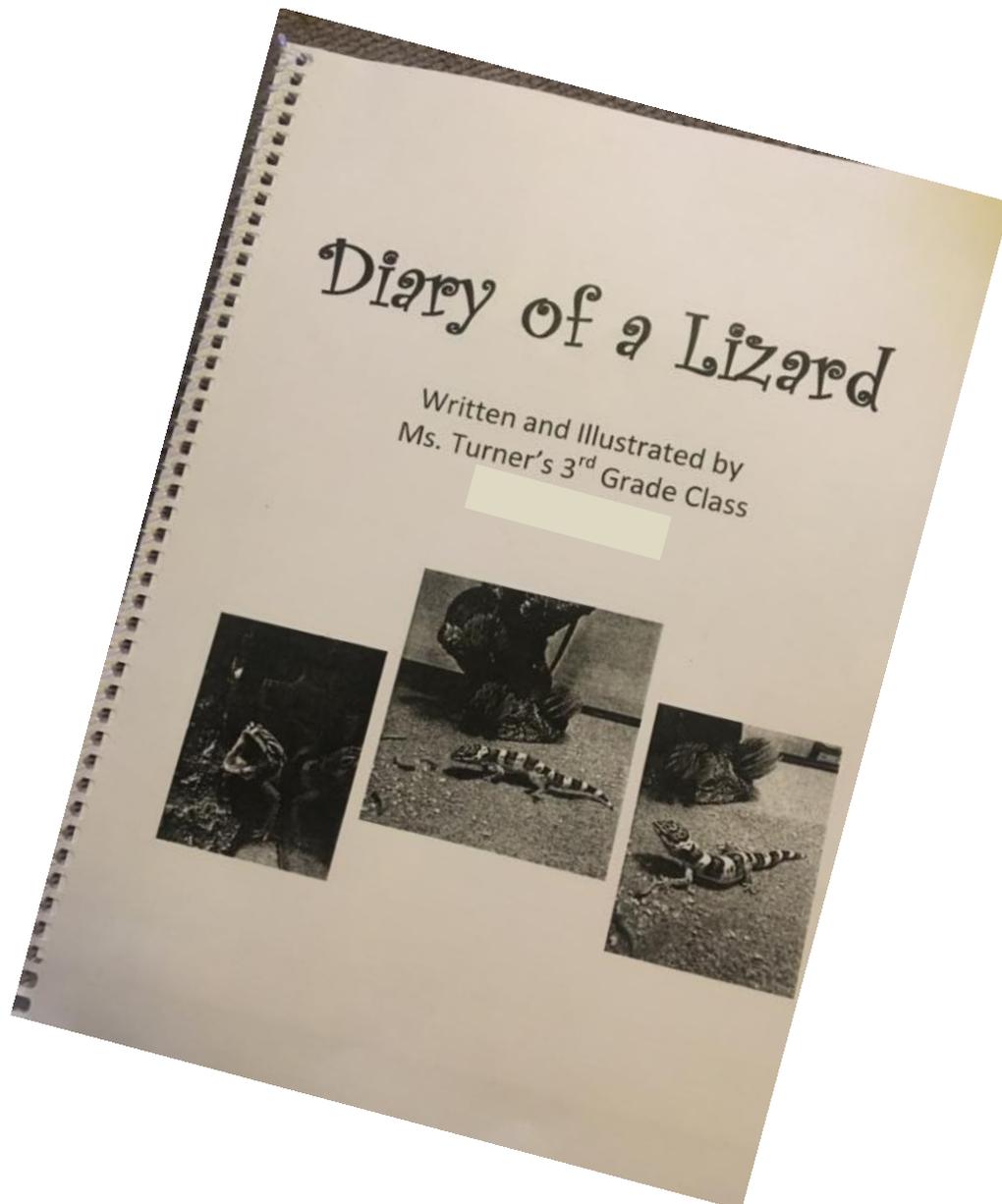


Diary of a Lizard
Lesson Plan
Grade 3
by Stephanie Brinkley



Objectives:

Students will ask and answer questions about things a gecko might feel or think.
Students will write diary entries from the perspective of a gecko.
Students will edit and revise their writing using feedback from peers and teacher.
Students will publish their writing using Microsoft Word and an illustration.

Pre-Lesson:

In the days leading up to the lesson, read *Diary of a Worm*, *Diary of a Spider* and *Diary of a Fly* to students. Discuss how the author has written from the point of view of the creatures. Have them pay special attention to the things that only a worm, spider, or fly would notice.

During Lesson:

Session 1: Tell students to think about the class pet. Our pet is a leopard gecko named Hunter. Have students talk in partners or small groups about things Hunter might be thinking, feeling, experiencing or wondering. After a few minutes, come together as a whole group and discuss what the students came up with. Ask students questions to get them thinking even more about the pet's perspective.

Examples:

What would he like for his birthday?
What does he do at night while no one is at school?
How does he feel about living alone in a cage?
Does he celebrate any holidays?
When is his favorite time of day?

Some students may need reminders that while their answers can be humorous, they should be based on the perspective of the gecko and should make sense for the life of a gecko.

Have students pretend the gecko can talk and they are going to be able to ask him any question they want. Tell them to write down 2-4 questions.

When the questions are written, have them get with a partner. Partner A will pretend to be the gecko and Partner B will ask questions. Partner A will answer the questions based on what they think the gecko would say. Then the partners switch.

Session 2:

Explain that each student will write one diary entry and all the entries will be compiled into a bound document called *Diary of a Lizard*.

Give students time to look at the questions they wrote down in the previous session. They should choose 1 question to circle. That will be the one they write their entry about. If students decide they liked someone else's question better, they can use that question.

Have students choose a date for their entry that makes sense. For instance, if they want to write about their favorite subject in school, they need to choose a date when school is in session. Some students will want to choose specific holidays while others will want to choose dates that fall within certain seasons.

Let students talk with a partner about things they want to write about in their diary entry. This will allow them to think through the words and ideas they want to use and help the writing flow better.

Now it's time for students to write! Have them write a rough draft from the perspective of the gecko. Give them plenty of time and encourage them to be creative, use humor but also use factual information they know about geckos.

Session 3: After handwriting, students type their diary entries in a Microsoft Word document. When they are done typing, they go through the rest of the writing process with peer editing, revising and teacher editing. When they are satisfied with their final draft, they will change the font and size so that it is visually pleasing to them but easy to read.

Students will also make an illustration that represents their diary entry.

Once all diary entries are complete, they should all be printed and compiled into one book.

Post-Lesson:

Present the finished diary to the class and read it aloud. The final product was such a hit with my students that I made a copy for each of them to keep forever. This was one of the best writing assignments I have ever taught because all the students were motivated and engaged. They loved our gecko so much and truly enjoyed learning about him.

May 10

I woke up and I saw lots of people so I ran to the water. I missed my Mom and Dad. Then I got out. I stood still and did not move. I looked at the kids and faced my fears. The person got me out of my cage. The hand was so soft and the kids' hands were soft. I saw a big cricket so I chomped it and it was so good. Then I ate small ones too. I was so full, my tummy touched the floor.

April 14

Today is April Fool's Day. Today I was in my cage and hiding in my tree and the class thought I was gone. Then I popped out and scared them. They were worried about me. Later they fed me. Then I went to bed. When I woke up they fooled me.

March 12, 2016

Today Ms. Turner let the kids go on the computers to write a diary about me. I have black, white and orange skin. When I shed my skin it tastes like strawberry. I love to jump on anything. I like my cage because it has wood, rocks, grass, shelter and water. When I'm scared my tail falls off and it never grows back. That's bad news. Waa! Waa!

I believe I can fly! I want to fly on Ms. Turner's shoulder and rest.

