Grade 2 Language Arts: Narrative Writing
(Submitted by Elisabeth Fox, 2017, while serving as Grade 2 teacher at International School of Havana, Cuba)

| Tool(s) used:                                    | • Systems Mapping  
|                                                 | • Clock Partners  
|                                                 | • Incubator of Ideas  
|                                                 | • Y Chart  
|                                                 | • Narrative T- Chart  
|                                                 | • Snowball Fight of Ideas  |

| Purpose of using tool:                           | • Synthesizing Thinking  
|                                                 | • Guiding Discussion  |

**Overview:**
Taking into account the student’s knowledge and ideas with a guided question and discovering their understanding of a narrative text through discussion with a peer using Clock Partners, group discussions and asking them to show their integrated thinking.

| Context of lesson/case study:                   | • Grade 2A Playful Foxes Class at the International School of Havana  
|                                                 | • Language Arts Lesson  |

| Participants (# and description):               | • 15 students Primary School Class  
|                                                 | • 7-8 year old children  
|                                                 | • 2 Compass Education Teachers facilitating the lesson  |

| Topic, Theme, or Key Understanding of unit/project: | Narrative Text types:  
|                                                   | The aim is to have students identifying features and styles of other narrative texts as a model for own writing. To do so, first students need to be able to understand and use appropriate structure, organization and language features of narratives.  |

| Length of unit/project:                         | • 6 week unit  
|                                                 | This lesson was part of the introduction for the unit.  |

| Resources/materials & setting required:         | Material:  
|                                                 | • System’s Map: Narrative writing checklist created by the students and a final synthesized narrative writing checklist created with the teachers support.  
|                                                 | • Narrative T- Chart  
|                                                 | • Clock Partner Schedule  
|                                                 | • Chairs for Incubator of Ideas  
|                                                 | • Paper  
|                                                 | • Poster Paper  
|                                                 | • Whiteboard  |

| Setting:                                        | • Open space for incubator and  
|                                                 | • Classroom with tables for groups to work  |
Lesson Plan/Description of the Project:

Introduction

- **Clock Partners:** Have the students get their Clock Partner Schedule and find their 10 o’clock date. Ask the every student’s to write on a small sheet of paper to discuss and answer the following question: “What do you know about Narrative Writing?” (3 min)

- **Incubator of Ideas:** All students take a seat in their incubator chairs to share their ideas of what they know about narrative writing. During this process many ideas are circulating. Every 30 seconds the teacher makes a loud crazy sound that sounds like a ridiculous bird, and students know this is the signal to rotate spots within the incubator. (8 min)

- **Narrative T-Chart:** Now students are engaged and excited share what they know about narrative writing on the carpet with new Narrative T-Chart Poster. On the left side of the poster it says what a narrative is and on the right side it shares what it’s not. The students take turns sharing their ideas and then need to categorize where on the T-Chart their knowledge should go. (6 min) Then to complete the T-Chart the student get into contact with their 11o’clock partner and discuss what could be the final definition of a narrative. They have 2 minutes to write down their ideas on paper. (2 min)

- **Snowball Fight of Ideas:** Now students are to get into two lines and face each other with their ideas on paper. The students are asked to crumble up their sheets of paper and turn their ideas into snowballs. When the teacher says “Snowball Fight!” all the kids launch their snowballs of ideas at one another and keep throwing around snowballs… until “Time is up! Find a definition). We take all the ideas and map them on the whiteboard in order to synthesize their thinking to one definition.

Main Activity:

- **Systems Map:** By now students have a good idea of the features and styles of a narrative text. The teachers asked the students if they could come up with the checklist or order for the features of the narrative text. The class is then broke up into 4 differentiated groups. The task is to create a map for the order/checklist using a large poster paper. They have a visual of the narrative features using the parts discussed in the T-Chart. (25 min)

Conclusion:

- With the teacher’s help, the class then creates a final synthesized narrative writing checklist using all 4 group’s ideas to create a final master poster. (25 min)

Teaching tips/ideas:

- Make it fun and exciting!
- Have the chairs in the incubator ready so the students get more curious.
- Tell the students this is the only time we will let students through snowballs in the class, EVER! If they tell the principal or director about our secret snowball fight, they will get extra homework!

Reflection

Plusses:

- It was a great way to discover their knowledge of narratives.
- Excellent way to have all students participate through partners and in groups.
- Students were always responsible for their own thinking.
- By the end all students could identify features and styles of other narrative text.
- We created a model checklist model where students could go back to if required and it was used further in the unit. After students wrote their own first narrative draft, they used this checklist to edit and review if they used all parts in their stories. Some students forgot to include a setting and were able to edit their own work thanks to our checklist. Some students had their characters floating in space before they had a setting and changed up their order afterward.
Challenges:
- Organizing clock partners in the previous lessons was challenging as many students had blank dates that couldn’t seem to get filled?
- Honestly, it was so engaging, awesome and full of learning that I don’t know what could have worked better.

Suggestions for other practitioners and educators:
- The Systems Mapping ideas help the students understand content in a new and exciting way. You could use this approach to anything such as global issues, service learning and even maths!
- Students were all engaged at one point or another, which gave the feeling all learners were responsible for sharing their ideas and learning more from their peers. This had a greater impact!
- I felt empowered with a collection of tools to help both my colleague Tania and I. These tools helped our Playful Foxes students develop the knowledge of a narrative, communication and sharing skills and furthermore, developed the dispositions necessary to participate in the real life.

Evidence and Resources:
Snowball Fight:

T-Chart and Systems Maps:

Systems Mapping: