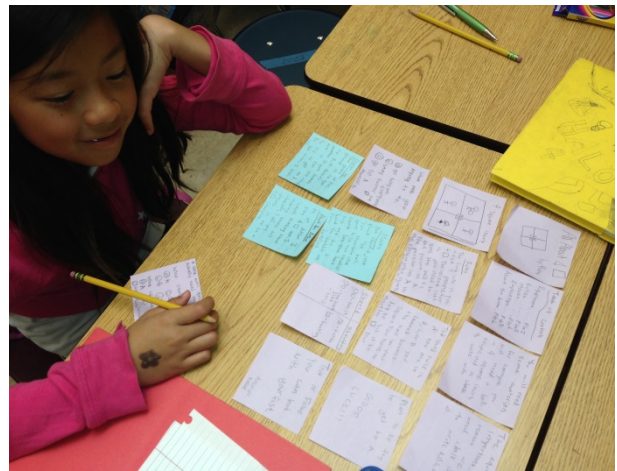




Grades K-3 Informative Reading & Writing Handbook

Together is Better

Teaching Literacy in Integrated Units



Knox Education
knoxeducation.com

Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	3
Why Focus on Informational Text Reading?	4
Why Focus on Informative/Explanatory Writing? Theory and Research	5
Writing Next Summary	6
Why an Informative/Explanatory Writing Campaign is particularly supportive of English Language Learners	7
Defining Informative/Explanatory Writing	8
WRITING STANDARDS: Informative/Explanatory Writing Standards Grades K-3	9-10
Grade 4-8 Anchor Papers for Informative/Explanatory Writing	11
READING STANDARDS: Informational Text Reading Standards Grades K-3	12-16
CCSS Unit Planner: Introduction and Planner; Teaching the Unit	17-28
INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING TOOLKIT: Gradual Release Model of Instruction	29
READING:	
Favorite Research Websites for Students and Teachers	30
Access to Complex Text:	31
Connecting the Known to the New	32
Generating Questions with Young Students	33-35
Shared Reading (and Cloze Procedure & Shared Reading of Projected Texts)	36-42
Finding Key Words (Plus Keyword Strategy and 5-Star Checklist) and using a matrix.	43-50
Teaching Students to Read Closely with Text-Dependent Questions	51-56
Text Marking with Symbols and Post-its	57
LANGUAGE:	
Language Instruction Planning & Language Standards K-3	58-61
Grow Lists	62-63
How to Write a Glossary	64
Pictorial Narrative	65-66
TEACHING INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING	
The Writing Process Model (Charlotte Knox)	67
Teaching Writing-Scaffolding	68-69
Language Experience Approach	70-83
Interactive Writing (also Procedural "How to" Writing)	84-90
Writing Topic Sentences	91-92
Cues, Sequences, and Transition Words	93-94
Crafting Conclusions in Informative/Explanatory Writing	95
Jumpstart	96
Revision and Editing Our Website Resources	97
Animal Report Checklist and Matrix	98-99
How to Write Informative Text Organization Sample	100
SPEAKING & LISTENING:	
Elevator Talk and Speaking Rubric K-3	101-103
MANAGING and EVALUATING the PROCESS	
5-Star Writing and Checklist	104-105
Managing and Evaluating the Process: Building a Student Checklist	106
Informative/Explanatory Writing Rubrics K-3	107-110
Resources for Report Writing on Our Website and Elsewhere	111
DIFFERENTIATION PACKET	112-119

INTRODUCTION:

Why Transition to the Common Core With and Integrated Unit Approach?

Making the transition to the new Common Core standards with existing textbook material is no small challenge for today's teachers. Current teacher's guides are aligned with the old standards making many of the lessons obsolete. For English Language Arts basal programs, the story by story approach, does not lend itself to in-depth study across multiple texts as recommended in the Core. Reading Anchor Standards 7 and 9, as well as Writing Anchor Standards 7, 8, and 9 ask students to become comfortable with gleaning information across multiple texts as they read for information and research to write.

Furthermore the recommended practices for basal textbooks during the NCLB "Reading First" era of pre-teaching story-specific vocabulary, then reading aloud or choral reading of instructional text with students for the "first read", runs contrary to the demands of the Common Core and the Smarter Balanced Assessment protocols. With CCSS students are to read and analyze text independently, interpret words and phrases in context on their own, and make inferences based on close reading of texts. An integrated approach to reading widely over common content will support this challenging process as students encounter repeated words and concepts across each text they study during the unit.

The intent of this handbook is to show teachers how to develop science and social studies units applying Common Core ELA standards. As noted by P. David Pearson, "Reading and writing are better when they are tools, not goals." (NY Times, 3/28/2006) During these 3-6 week units teachers and students will develop inquiry questions, read and research, organize notes, prepare spoken presentations, and produce an authentic writing project.

As the teachers teach the units they will have the opportunity to teach strategies linked with the CCSS:

- Close Reading and Text-Dependent Questions
- Researching using technology
- Writing using the three CCSS text types: Informative/Explanatory , Opinion/Argument, and Narrative

The units will be assessed using both performance task projects produced with guidance and support from the teacher and classmates, as well as on-demand prompts which mimic the Smarter Balanced assessments and require reading as well as writing.

Why Focus on Informational Text Reading?

The Common Core State Standards Requires Three Shifts in ELA/Literacy

1. **Building knowledge** through **content-rich nonfiction**
2. Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in **evidence from text**, both literary and informational
2. Regular practice with **complex text** and its **academic language**

achievethecore.org

"Students who meet the standards readily undertake the close, attentive reading..... They habitually perform the critical reading necessary to pick carefully through the staggering amount of information available today in print and digitally."

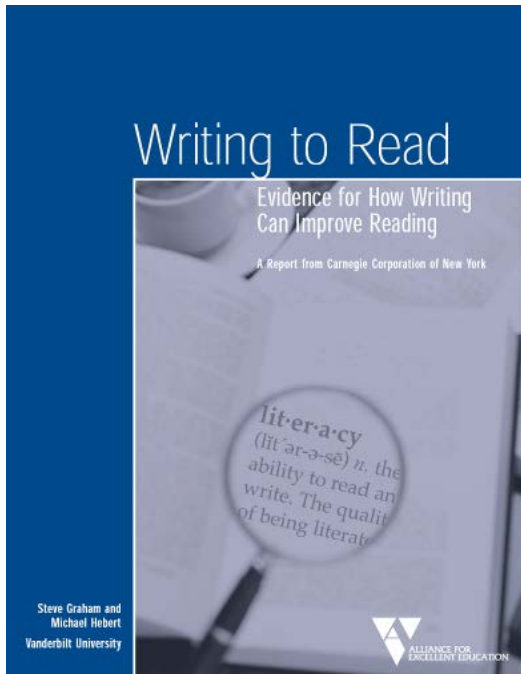
Introduction, California Common Core State Standards for ELA & Literacy.

www.corestandards.org

"The current average worker today stays at a job for 4.4 years or changes jobs 7-10 times over the course of a lifetime. The number of jobs our students will have to learn to perform over their adulthood is increasing and will require the ability to read information with ease in order to keep up with the demand for learning new skills."

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/jeannemeister/2012/08/14/job-hopping-is-the-new-normal-for-millennials-three-ways-to-prevent-a-human-resource-nightmare/>

Why Focus on Informative/Explanatory Writing: Theory and Research

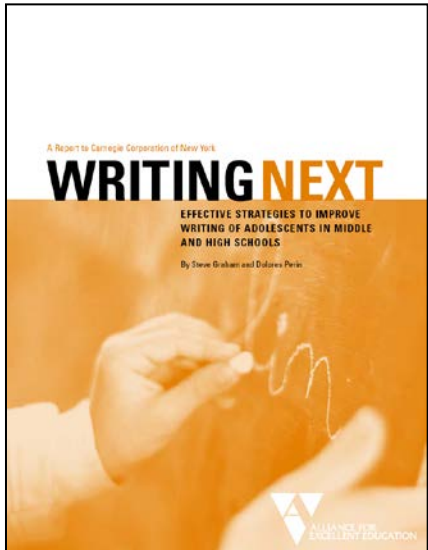


Writing to Read:

Evidence for How Writing Can Improve Reading, Carnegie Report, 2010

http://carnegie.org/fileadmin/Media/Publications/WritingToRead_01.pdf

- 1. Have students write about the texts they read-comprehension is improved when they:**
 - Respond to text in writing: personal reactions, analyzing and interpreting text (.77 effect size)
 - Writing summaries of text (.52 effect size)
 - Writing notes about a text (.47 effect size)
 - Answering questions about a text or creating and answering questions about text (.27 effect size)
- 2. Teach students the writing skills and processes that go into creating text-writing process, sentence construction, spelling: reading skills are improved when teachers:**
 - Teach writing process (improves reading comprehension- .27 effect size)
 - Teach spelling and sentence construction skills (improves reading fluency, .79 effect size))
 - Teach spelling skills (improves word reading .68 effect size))
- 3. Increase how much students write improves reading comprehension**
 - Students' reading comprehension is improved by having them increase how often they produce their own texts. (.30 effect size)



Writing Next

Effective strategies to improve writing of adolescents in middle and high schools

<http://www.all4ed.org/files/WritingNext.pdf>

Eleven Elements of Effective Adolescent Writing Instruction

This report identifies 11 elements of current writing instruction found to be effective for helping adolescent students learn to write well and to use writing as a tool for learning. It is important to note that all of the elements are supported by rigorous research, but that even when used together, they do not constitute a full writing curriculum.

- 1. Writing Strategies:** (.82 effect size)
Involves teaching students strategies for planning, revising, and editing their compositions
- 2. Summarization:** (.82 effect size)
Involves explicitly and systematically teaching students how to summarize texts
- 3. Collaborative Writing:** (.75 effect size)
Uses instructional arrangements in which adolescents work together to plan, draft, revise, and edit their compositions
- 4. Specific Product Goals:** (.70 effect size)
Assigns students specific, reachable goals for the writing they are to complete
- 5. Word Processing:** (.55 effect size)
Uses computers and word processors as instructional supports for writing assignments
- 6. Sentence Combining:** (.50 effect size)
Involves teaching students to construct more complex, sophisticated sentences
- 7. Prewriting:** (.32 effect size)
Engages students in activities designed to help them generate or organize ideas for their composition
- 8. Inquiry Activities:** (.32 effect size)
Engages students in analyzing immediate, concrete data to help them develop ideas and content for a particular writing task
- 9. Process Writing Approach:** (.32 effect size)
Interweaves a number of writing instructional activities in a workshop environment that stresses extended writing opportunities, writing for authentic audiences, personalized instruction, and cycles of writing
- 10. Study of Models:** (.25 effect size)
Provides students with opportunities to read, analyze, and emulate models of good writing
- 11. Writing for Content Learning:** (.23 effect size)
Uses writing as a tool for learning content material

Why an Informative Writing Campaign is Particularly Supportive for English Language Learners

Writing provides English language learning (ELL) students ample time to draw on all of their resources:



1. Writing allows ELL writers the **TIME** they may need in order to use what they have learned consciously about the English language.
2. The private nature of independent writing naturally lowers the affective filter which may obstruct language use in spoken “real time” conversations.
3. Writing includes the conditions to help monitor the output of language:
 - Writing helps students obtain knowledge of the **rules governing English**.
 - Writing helps students to **focus on forms** needed for control of the language.
 - Writing allows the student sufficient **time** to attend to the rules and forms of the English language.

Scaffolds for English Learners that Support Writing:

<p>Enhanced visuals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photos/illustrations • Charts • Graphic Organizers • Realia/hands-on experiences 	<p>Talking before writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think-pair-share • Language experience • Patterned sentences • Bilingual Language Brokers
<p>Writing Topics/Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MUCH exposure to a genre before students are expected to write. • Opportunity to “try out” the genres for the first time with a non-challenging topic. Example: Explain how to play kick ball before writing an explanation of a scientific procedure. • MUST have ability to talk about the topic before they are expected to write about it; must have background knowledge and experiences. • Explicit demonstrations of writing process and product for each type of writing are essential. • Allow choice in topic so that students may pull from known banks of English words. 	<p>Support with English Spelling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Dictionaries • Word wall—class and personal • Picture dictionaries • Word banks (vocabulary lists around topics/themes with picture support) <p>Multi-level approaches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group support during whole group writing period • Same assignment, varied production expectation • Roving conferences—individual help <i>on-the-run</i>

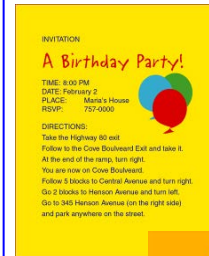
Defining Informative/Explanatory Writing

Informative/Explanatory writing requires students to research and include in writing, some information they do not already know. The format of this writing should span the full range of genres used within nonfiction writing.

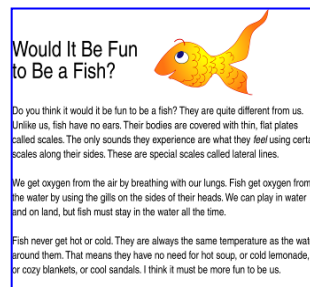
Informative/Explanatory Writing Genres Taught	Real Life Examples
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Procedures/how to 2. Report on information 3. Persuasive editorials 4. Biography/autobiography 5. Questionnaires 6. Science explanations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recipes, directions 2. News articles, brochures, websites 3. Newspaper editorials, advertising 4. Voter pamphlets, book jackets 5. Job applications, surveys, interviews 6. Weather reports, medical brochures

Functional Text types:

- Procedural passages with a question
- Lists of rules
- Informal flyer (i.e., Walkathon: who can participate, sign up, dates, etc.)
- Recipes
- Informational flyer (i.e., Museum: hours, facility, activities, etc.)
- Directions (i.e., seed packet)
- Directions (i.e., "how-to" project and game)
- Instructions for submitting writing to a magazine
- Coupon advertisement with order form
- Websites/research



Index	
Cats	page 89-91
Dogs	page 1-14, 47-53
Kangaroos	page 22
Pigs	page 2, 7, 80-91
Zebra	page 117



Other: Tables, charts and graphs

- Dictionary- guide words, entry (syllable division & definition), pronunciation guide
- Table of contents and index
- Semantic web
- Card catalog: call #, author, title, publishing information
- Maps
- Websites/research

shov-el (shuv' el) *n.* A tool with a long handle and a scoop, used for picking up material or for digging. *v.* To move, dig, or scoop up with a shovel; to push or move large amounts rapidly.





W Writing Standards – INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY **K-3**

TEXT TYPES and PURPOSES*:

ANCHOR STANDARD 2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
2. Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.	2. Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.	2. Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.	2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension. b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details. c. Use linking words and phrases (e.g., <i>also</i>, <i>another</i>, <i>and</i>, <i>more</i>, <i>but</i>) to connect ideas within categories of information. d. Provide a concluding statement or section.

*These broad types of writing include many subgenres. See Appendix A for definitions of key writing types.

W Writing Standards – ALL GENRES **K-3**

PRODUCTION and DISTRIBUTION of WRITING

ANCHOR STANDARD 4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
4. (Begins in grade 2) CA		4. With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.) CA	4. With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

ANCHOR STANDARD 5: Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.


Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
5. With guidance and support from adults, respond to questions and suggestions from peers and add details to strengthen writing as needed.	5. With guidance and support from adults, focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers, and add details to strengthen writing as needed.	5. With guidance and support from adults and peers, focus on a topic and strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing.	5. With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 3.)

ANCHOR STANDARD 6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.


Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
6. With guidance and support from adults, explore a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers.	6. With guidance and support from adults, use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers.	6. With guidance and support from adults, use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers.	6. With guidance and support from adults, use technology to produce and publish writing (using keyboarding skills) as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

W	Writing Standards – ALL GENRES continued	K-3
----------	--	------------


RESEARCH to BUILD and PRESENT KNOWLEDGE
--

	ANCHOR STANDARD 7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
--	---

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of books by a favorite author and express opinions about them).	7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of “how-to” books on a given topic and use them to write a sequence of instructions).	7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., read a number of books on a single topic to produce a report; record science observations).	7. Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.


	ANCHOR STANDARD 8: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
--	---

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
8. With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.	8. With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.	8. Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.	8. Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.

	ANCHOR STANDARD 9: Draw evidence from literary and or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
--	---

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
9. (Begins in grade 4)			

RANGE of WRITING

	ANCHOR STANDARD 10: 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 range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.
--	--

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
10. (Begins in grade 2) CA		10. 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 range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences. CA	10. 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 range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

ANCHOR PAPERS for WRITING


Anchor Papers for Informative/Explanatory Writing for all grades in the Common Core Standards are available on our website in the new Common Core section of the website.



- Log on to the website
- Select "Common Core" on the opening screen
- Select "Writing"
- Then you will see a list of the files with Anchor Papers in order by Grade Level!

Student Sample: Grade 3, Informative/Explanatory

This informative report is a process piece that was produced in class.



Horses
by Owen

Why I Chose This Animal

I chose horses because I like to ride them, I also like to pet them. At the camp I go to everybody gets to have horses back riding lessons. Horses are so beautiful and fun to ride.

Horse Families

A mother or female horse is called a mare. A father or male horse is called a stallion. A foal is a baby horse.

Markings

A star is a little white diamond on the forelock. The forelock is a horses forehead. A race is a white line down the middle of the horses face. A blaze is kind of like a race but wider. If the white line on it face spreads out to its eyes it is called a white face. A small amount of white on its muzzle is called a snip. A muzzle is a horses mouth.

Breeds and Color Coats

Icelandic and Shetland ponies are very small when they are full grown. Chestnuts are red-brown and Roans have white hairs on their brown coat. Cream is a rare color. Rare means you don't see the color cream very much. Brown horses are brown all over. Blacks are black all over. Piebalds have black and white spots. Skewbalds are brown and white. Duns are a sandy brown with black manes and tails. Palominos have a yellowish coat and a shiny mane and tail. Grays have black and white hairs that make the color gray. Bays are brown with black manes,tails,and legs. Whites are white all over.


Breeds I Like

I like thoroughbreds because they are such a pretty brown. I like Arabians because their different coats are very beautiful and they're one of the oldest horses. I like Morgans because they have a beautiful reddish-brown coat. I like Lipizzaners because their white coats are so very pretty. I like Icelandic and Shetland ponies because they are so very cute, pretty and small.




RI Reading Standards for **INFORMATIONAL TEXT** **K-3**


KEY IDEAS and DETAILS

 **ANCHOR STANDARD 1:** Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
1. With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.	1. Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.	1. Ask and answer such questions as <i>who, what, where, when, why,</i> and <i>how</i> to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.	1. Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

 **ANCHOR STANDARD 2:** Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
2. With prompting and support, identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.	2. Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.	2. Identify the main topic of a multiparagraph text as well as the focus of specific paragraphs within the text.	2. Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.

 **ANCHOR STANDARD 3:** Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
3. With prompting and support, describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.	3. Describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.	3. Describe the connection between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text.	3. Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.

Organizational Elements for Common Core Reading Standards

Key Ideas and Details
What does the text say?
 (RL and RI Standards K-3)

Craft and Structure
How does the text say it?
 (RL and RI Standards 4-6)

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
What does the text mean?
What is its value?
How does the text connect to other texts?
 (RL and RI Standards 7-9)

Range and Level of Text Complexity
How challenging and varied is the text?
 (RL and RI Standards 10)



RI Reading Standards for **INFORMATIONAL TEXT** **K-3**

CRAFT and STRUCTURE

ANCHOR STANDARD 4: Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
4. With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text. (See grade K Language standards 4-6 additional expectations.) CA	4. Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text. (See grade 1 Language standards 4-6 for additional expectations.) CA	4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 2 topic or subject area. (See grade 2 Language standards 4-6 for additional expectations.) CA	4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3 topic or subject area. (See grade 3 Language standards 4-6 for additional expectations.) CA

ANCHOR STANDARD 5: Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
5. Identify the front cover, back cover, and title page of a book.	5. Know and use various text structures (e.g., sequence) and text features (e.g., headings, tables of contents, glossaries, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text. CA	5. Know and use various text features (e.g., captions, bold print, subheadings, glossaries, indexes, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text efficiently.	5. Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.

ANCHOR STANDARD 6: Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
6. Name the author and illustrator of a text and define the role of each in presenting the ideas or information in a text.	6. Distinguish between information provided by pictures or other illustrations and information provided by the words in a text.	6. Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe.	6. Distinguish their own point of view from that of the author of a text.

Organizational Elements for Common Core Reading Standards

Key Ideas and Details
[What does the text say?](#)
 (RL and RI Standards K-3)

Craft and Structure
[How does the text say it?](#)
 (RL and RI Standards 4-6)

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
[What does the text mean?](#)
[What is its value?](#)
[How does the text connect to other texts?](#)
 (RL and RI Standards 7-9)

Range and Level of Text Complexity
[How challenging and varied is the text?](#)
 (RL and RI Standards 10)



RI Reading Standards for INFORMATIONAL TEXT

K-3

INTEGRATION of KNOWLEDGE and IDEAS



ANCHOR STANDARD 7: Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.*

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
7. With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the text in which they appear (e.g., what person, place, thing, or idea in the text an illustration depicts).	7. Use the illustrations and details in a text to describe its key ideas.	7. Explain how specific images (e.g., a diagram showing how a machine works) contribute to and clarify a text.	7. Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).

* Please see “Research to Build and Present Knowledge” in Writing and “Comprehension and Collaboration” in Speaking and Listening for additional standards relevant to gathering, assessing, and applying information from print and digital sources.



ANCHOR STANDARD 8: Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
8. With prompting and support, identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.	8. Identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.	8. Describe how reasons support specific points the author makes in a text.	8. Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence).



ANCHOR STANDARD 9: Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
9. With prompting and support, identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).	9. Identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).	9. Compare and contrast the most important points presented by two texts on the same topic.	9. Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.

RANGE of READING and LEVEL of TEXT COMPLEXITY



ANCHOR STANDARD 10: Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
10. Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding. a. Activate prior knowledge related to the information and events in texts. CA b. Use illustrations and context to make predictions about text. CA	10. With prompting and support, read informational texts appropriately complex for grade 1. a. Activate prior knowledge related to the information and events in a text. CA b. Confirm predictions about what will happen next in a text. CA	10. By the end of year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grades 2–3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.	10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grades 2–3 text complexity band independently and proficiently.



RF Reading Standards for FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

K-3

PRINT CONCEPTS

There are no Anchor Standards for Foundational Skills.

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
1. Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Follow words from left to right, top to bottom, and page by page. b. Recognize that spoken words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters. c. Understand that words are separated by spaces in print. d. Recognize and name all upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet. 	1. Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Recognize the distinguishing features of a sentence (e.g., first word, capitalization, ending punctuation). 		

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS

There are no Anchor Standards for Foundational Skills.

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
2. Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Recognize and produce rhyming words. b. Count, pronounce, blend, and segment syllables in spoken words. c. Blend and segment onsets and rimes of single-syllable spoken words. d. Isolate and pronounce the initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in three-phoneme (consonant-vowel-consonant, or CVC) words.* (This does not include CVCs ending with /l/, /r/, or /x/.) e. Add or substitute individual sounds (phonemes) in simple, one-syllable words to make new words. f. Blend two to three phonemes into recognizable words. CA 	2. Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Distinguish long from short vowel sounds in spoken single-syllable words. b. Orally produce single-syllable words by blending sounds (phonemes), including consonant blends. c. Isolate and pronounce initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in spoken single-syllable words. d. Segment spoken single-syllable words into their complete sequence of individual sounds (phonemes). 		

* Words, syllables, or phonemes written in /slashes/ refer to their pronunciation or phonology. Thus, /CVC/ is a word with three phonemes regardless of the number of letters in the spelling of the word.



RF Reading Standards for FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

K-3

PHONICS and WORD RECOGNITION

There are no Anchor Standards for Foundational Skills.

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
<p>3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words both in isolation and in text. CA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Demonstrate basic knowledge of one-to-one letter-sound correspondences by producing the primary sounds or many of the most frequent sounds for each consonant. b. Associate the long and short sounds with common spellings (graphemes) for the five major vowels. (Identify which letters represent the five major vowels (Aa, Ee, Ii, Oo, and Uu) and know the long and short sound of each vowel. More complex long vowel graphemes and spellings are targeted in the grade 1 phonics standards.) CA c. Read common high-frequency words by sight (e.g., the, of, to, you, she, my, is, are, do, does). d. Distinguish between similarly spelled words by identifying the sounds of the letters that differ. 	<p>3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words both in isolation and in text. CA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Know the spelling-sound correspondences for common consonant digraphs. b. Decode regularly spelled one-syllable words. c. Know final -e and common vowel team conventions for representing long vowel sounds. d. Use knowledge that every syllable must have a vowel sound to determine the number of syllables in a printed word. e. Decode two-syllable words following basic patterns by breaking the words into syllables. f. Read words with inflectional endings. g. Recognize and read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words. 	<p>3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words both in isolation and in text. CA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Distinguish long and short vowels when reading regularly spelled one-syllable words. b. Know spelling-sound correspondences for additional common vowel teams. c. Decode regularly spelled two-syllable words with long vowels. d. Decode words with common prefixes and suffixes. e. Identify words with inconsistent but common spelling-sound correspondences. f. Recognize and read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words. 	<p>3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words both in isolation and in text. CA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identify and know the meaning of the most common prefixes and derivational suffixes. b. Decode words with common Latin suffixes. c. Decode multisyllable words. d. Read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words.

FLUENCY

There are no Anchor Standards for Foundational Skills.


Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
<p>4. Read emergent-reader texts with purpose and understanding.</p>	<p>4. Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Read on-level text with purpose and understanding. b. Read on-level text orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings. c. Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary. 	<p>4. Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Read on-level text with purpose and understanding. b. Read on-level text orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings. c. Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary. 	<p>4. Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Read on-level text with purpose and understanding. b. Read on-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings c. Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.

How to Use the Unit Planner

To start plans for a new informative/explanatory reading/writing unit, utilize the CCSS Unit Planner.

The sections are broken out in the main categories:

1. **Planning:** big, enduring ideas, authentic format, assessment.
2. **Reading and Research:** sources, note taking, informational reading
3. **Teaching Writing:** strategies for informative/explanatory writing
4. **Lesson Flow:** possible step-by-step lessons

 CCSS Unit Planner-Informative/Explanatory Writing <i>"Begin with the end in mind."</i>	
Grade	Topic:
PLANNING	Big, Enduring Ideas and Concepts: Use "Look At" document for content standards. http://www.cde.ca.gov/ct/cf/grlevelcurriculum.asp
	Authentic Mode for Publishing/Sharing: Format (something you would see in the real world—magazine, brochure, webpage, poster, etc.) Style is covered under Writing: W 4 and publishing is in W6 and Speaking and Listening: SL 1-5.
	CCSS Grade level writing expectations:
	Authentic Audience (teach someone else at school, share with grade level team, spoken presentations/PowerPoints) Audience is covered in Writing: W 4 and W10; and Speaking and Listening: SL 4.
Assessment: rubric, peer commentary, points, bonus ideas Revision is covered under Writing: W5, and peer assessment under Speaking and Listening: SL 1 and 4.	

CCSS Unit Planner for Informative Writing

"Begin with the end in mind."



Grade	Topic:
PLANNING	<p><u>Big, Enduring Ideas and Concepts:</u> Use "Look At" document for content standards. http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/grlevelcurriculum.asp</p>
	<p><u>Authentic Mode for Publishing/Sharing:</u> Format (something you would see in the real world— magazine, brochure, webpage, poster etc.) <i>Style is covered under Writing: W 4 and publishing is in W6 and Speaking and Listening: SL 1-5.</i></p>
	<p>CCSS Grade level writing expectations:</p>
	<p>Writing Standard 2: Informative and others</p>
	<p><u>Authentic Audience</u> (parents, classroom website/blog, other grade level peers, little buddies, library display, author's tea, etc.) <i>Audience is covered in Writing: W 4 and W10; and Speaking and Listening: SL4.</i></p>
<p><u>Assessment:</u> district rubric, peer commentary, portfolio, self reflection <i>Revision is covered under Writing: W5, and peer assessment under Speaking and Listening: SL 1 and 4.</i></p>	





CCSS Unit Planner for Informative Writing continued

READING and RESEARCH SOURCES	<u>Possible Sources: INTERNET</u> <i>Internet resources are covered under Reading: RI7 and Writing: W6.</i>
	<u>Possible Sources: TEXTBOOKS/BOOKS</u> <i>Other resources are covered under Reading: RL 1-10, RI 9 and Writing: W6-8.</i>
	<u>Possible Sources: OTHER</u> (Guest speakers, community organizations, skype with expert etc.) <i>Interaction with people & resources is covered under Writing: W6 and Speaking and Listening: SL 1,2,3.</i>
<u>Evaluating Sources and Resources</u> Include a lesson on how to evaluate websites and conduct effective website searches. http://www.schrockguide.net/critical-evaluation.html <u>Excellent</u> source of website evaluation lessons <i>Evaluation of resources is covered under Reading: R 7,8,9.</i>	

WEEK 1 6-Week Plan: Backwards Planning for Success in Informative Writing





Week 1 Dates: _____ Number of lesson periods _____	
During Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Connect known to new: brainstorm about what students already know about topic ▪ Generate questions about topic with students: use photos/images/video, chart questions ▪ Textbook walk: or picture walk ▪ Pictorial Narrative Input: Draw/chart overall understanding of topic to research (page 65-66) <div style="text-align: right;">  <p>1</p> </div>
During Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Model writing a full piece. Label the parts of your piece showing elements of informative writing. Make sure to cover those listed on your rubric. ▪ Encourage quick tries with elements of writing you are modeling. (paraphrasing, topic sentences, etc.) <div style="text-align: right;">  <p>1</p> </div>

WEEK 2 6-Week Plan: Backwards Planning for Success in Informative Writing

Week 2 Dates: _____ Number of lesson periods _____	
During Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shared Reading of texts about topic with a high level of guidance (page 36-42) ▪ Teach "gist" and "key words" strategies (page 43-50) ▪ Build a matrix or other graphic organizer with notes about what learning while reading (example page 99-100) <div style="text-align: right;">  <p>2</p> </div>
During Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shared Writing of an informative piece about a sub topic of the overall unit with class input (see Language Experience pages 70-83). Walk through the process, encourage input with whiteboards or small group discussion, create a "how to" chart (page 100). Continue to encourage quick tries. <div style="text-align: right;">  <p>2</p> </div>



WEEKS 3-4 6-Week Plan: Backwards Planning for Success in Informative Writing

Weeks 3-4 Dates: _____ Number of lesson periods _____

<p>During Reading</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students read and research about subtopics/individual questions about the overall unit. Give guidance and support as students read, note the gist, select key words (43-50), and take notes in a matrix or graphic organizer (page 98-99). Students may work in small groups and teacher rotates to support. ▪ Use shared reading to teach students close reading strategies (page 36-42) and asking and answering text dependent questions (51-56). <div style="text-align: right;">  <p>2</p>  <p>3</p> </div>
<p>During Writing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Guided Writing: students choose a focus, plan, and draft one or more pieces following the process modeled in weeks 1-2. ▪ Mini-lessons: provide short targeted lessons on aspects of informative writing as needed. ▪ Write anchor papers with students to match their rubric (anchor papers page 11 and rubrics pages 107-110) <div style="text-align: right;">  <p>2</p>  <p>3</p> </div>

WEEKS 5-6

6-Week Plan: Backwards Planning for Success in Informative Writing

Weeks 5-6 Dates: _____ Number of lesson periods _____	
During Reading	<p>Students continue to read and research as needed. Consider giving more time for writing during the last couple of weeks of the unit so that students have time to revise, edit, word process, and create visuals for their pieces.</p> <p>Editing, see pages 104-106.</p> <div style="text-align: right;">  <p>4</p> </div>
During Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revise: students select one piece to take to publication. Conduct mini-lessons on revision using student work, conference with individuals as possible. ▪ Edit and Publish: use self and peer techniques as well as word processing to edit and publish. Editing, see pages 104-106. ▪ "Dress Rehearsal": conduct a trial of an on-demand write if time before assessment (page 97). <div style="text-align: right;">  <p>4</p> </div>

TEACHING the UNIT:



Typical flow for Unit Lessons:

Ideas for how to teach each typical lesson are listed below as options. Please note: you do not need to do all of the ideas under each, and the flow of lessons may vary depending on the topic and grade level.

Lesson 1: Launching the Unit

- Orient students to the subject: video, photos, picture book, etc.
- Connect known to new: students discuss what they know via cooperative talk strategies, team word webbing, white board sharing, etc. (*See Speaking and Listening: SL 1,2,3.*)
- Begin building "grow list" for unit vocabulary (page 62-63). (*See Reading: RI 4, Writing: W2, and Language: L6.*)
- Begin generating questions about the topic: Post photos on chart paper and have students write questions about the photos on the chart. (*See Reading: RI 9; Writing: W 2 & 7; and Speaking and Listening: SL1.*)

Lesson 2: Reading the Textbook

- Try a textbook walk lesson (*See Reading: RI 1-10, especially 5*)
- Use suggestions for reading textbook chapter from teacher's guide if useful.
- Add to "grow list" of terms while you read. (*See Reading: RI 4, Writing: W2, and Language: L6.*)

Lesson 3: Guided Class Inquiry

- Choose a whole class sub-topic within the unit to explore as a class model.
- Do whole class shared reading of the text about this subtopic using whatever strategies you want the students to use when they are reading on their own. (*See Speaking and Listening: SL 1-6.*)
- Do whole class note taking using whichever graphic organizer, matrix or note sheet you want them to use on their own. (*See Reading: R 1,2,7,9 and Writing: W5,7,8,9.*)

Lesson 4: Students Choose Subject/Event

- Students can form teams or pairs to study subject/event. Conduct a guided search with students so they may choose their own topic or event, or pre-select several from which to choose. *(See Speaking and Listening: SL 1.)*
- Introduce unit checklist to students and provide due dates for each step. *(See Reading: RI 1-10 and Writing: W 2, 5,7,8,9)*

Lesson 5: Note Taking

- Students read about their topic and take notes on whatever format you modeled. *(See Reading: RI 1-10 and Writing: W5,7,8,9.)*
- Provide lots of guided practice and sharing out of how it went during the first stages of this. You can use your document camera to have teams or individual students share how they did their notes to help everyone understand how to take notes without copying whole pieces of text.

Lesson 6: Key Word Strategy

- Teach the Key Word strategy for summarizing text with a short article about the whole class topic (pages 43-50). *(See Reading RI 2.)*
- Have students repeat this process with 1-2 of the pieces of text they found for their individual or team topic.

Lesson 7: Creating a Glossary of Terms

- Model this and have students create their own.
- Use several resources to have students compare definitions for terms. Guide students in writing their own using shared writing of a common term the whole class understands. You can refer to your “grow list” of terms for the unit to select several for a whole class glossary as a way to teach this process. *(See Reading: RI 4, Writing: W2, and Language: L6.)*

Lesson 8: Practicing a Spoken Presentation

(See Speaking and Listening: SL 1-6.)

- Use the whole class note sheet to practice describing the class topic in a 1-2 minute spoken presentation, have students pair up and time each other. Have them try doing this without their notes.
- Model a 1-2 minute spoken presentation about the whole class topic and have students rate your presentation using the speaking standards from common core on the unit checklist.
- Have students create their own 1-2 minute presentations about their individual or team topics. If they are on a team, they can divide the content and each team member can speak about an aspect of their study. See “Elevator Talk” lesson page 101-103.

Lesson 9: Preparing Visuals for Spoken Presentation

(See Speaking and Listening: SL 1-6.)

Select and produce visuals: for presentations: Students may create artwork of their own, find images on the internet, or even create a short PowerPoint presentation.

Lesson 10: Writing an Outline

- Write a class outline for the class event.
- Have students use this model to write their own for their event.
- Have students use their notes and research to pick the most important and vivid details to include in their outline. *(For note taking, see Reading: RI1-2, especially 2,7,9 and Writing: W 5,7,8,9.) (For Collaboration, see Speaking and Listening: SL 1,2,3.)*

Lesson 11: Paragraph Writing/Topic Sentences

- Review how to use the main idea in the topic sentence. *(See main ideas/sentences in Language: L 1,2,3, Speaking and Listening: SL 1,2, and Reading RI 2.)*
- Do a sentence combining lesson and use transition words to show students how to write detail sentences. *(Transition words and details are in Writing: W3i and Speaking and Listening: SL 4 in the Common Core Standards.)*
- Students then write their own informative pieces about their topic. Consider meeting with groups to support the writing process. *(See Collaboration and peer interaction are covered under Speaking and Listening: SL 1-5.)*
- Consider using shared writing each day at the beginning of the writing period to write the whole class informative piece so the students will be reminded about the process via the whole class topic before they attempt their own pieces each day. See "Topic Sentences" lesson page. 91-92.

Lesson 12: Concluding Paragraph Writing

(See Writing: W3 concluding section required beginning in grade 1 .)

Concluding paragraphs are often the most difficult for students to write. Provide extra support with the final paragraph by teaching several options for the final paragraph:

- Review the content of the body paragraphs
- Restate the introductory paragraph with different words
- Encourage the reader to think about the meaning of the content or take some action with the information

Choose one of the above options for the whole class topic and use shared writing to write the class concluding paragraph. See Conclusions lesson page 95.

Lesson 13: Revising

(See Writing: W 5.)

Look at student writing, choose 1-2 teaching points to improve content of writing and teach mini-lessons using student writing; and give students time to apply what they learned in their own writing.

Lesson 14: Editing

(See Writing: W 5 and Language 1 & 2.)

Teach and have students apply one of the structures for editing:

- Peer edit with a checklist
- Editing machine
- Find it and Fix it!

Lesson 15: Publishing

(See Writing: W 4 and 6, and Speaking and Listening: SL 1-5.)

- Model for your students options for publishing their pieces. Encourage and facilitate use of technology as possible.
- Consider adding beyond the school day opportunities for students to word process and publish their pieces. Some schools will allow you to set up extra computer lab time after school, for example.

Lesson 16: Presentation/Evaluation

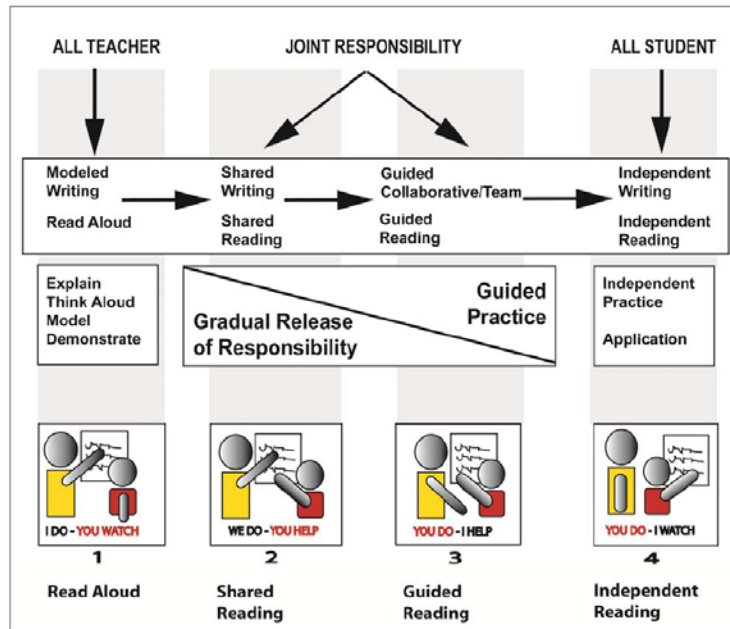
(See Writing: W 4, 6 & 10, and Speaking and Listening: SL 1-4.)

- Model the reflection/evaluation format you are going to use with the students by presenting the whole class project and evaluating it together with your rubric or checklist.
- Have students/teams present their projects and evaluate each other. Some options might include:
 - Gallery walk: post the projects and walk around leaving sticky note comments.
 - Class website or blog: students post their projects, review each others, and leave feedback.
 - Present to an authentic audience: Students/teams present to another classroom, groups of younger students, parents, or the principal.

Other Notes:

Informative Reading/Writing Units

The Gradual Release of Responsibility Model of Instruction



1



2



3



4

Modeling:

- Choose a sub-topic of the content you and the students will be exploring over the course of the unit.
- Use this topic to model each step of the process in the unit.

Shared:

- Research this sub-topic as a whole class.
- Use Shared Reading techniques to model and teach the reading processes.
- Use Shared Writing with student input via white boards to model and teach the steps of the writing process
- Label the parts of the writing piece and list the steps on a “how to” chart or student checklist.

Independent:

- Offer voice and choice! Let the students choose another subtopic within the content as individuals or teams
- Provide clear procedures and timelines.
- Use buddy projects to support struggling students with more complex assignments.

(See also Scaffolding page 68-69)

Favorite Research Websites for Students and Teachers Informative Reading/Writing Units

Instagrok <http://www.instagrok.com/>

This site allows teachers and students alike to research a topic with an interactive map, gather information via websites, video, text, and images, save that information and share it via edmodo. Warning: "grokking" can be addictive.....

Safe Search by google allows students to browse freely without stumbling upon inappropriate material: <http://www.safesearchkids.com/for-kids/>

Edmodo <http://www.edmodo.com/>

Edmodo is used for posting ideas to share or posting information for any group who subscribes to it. It is a way for teachers and students to build a culture of sharing information.

ReadWorks <http://www.readworks.org/>

Excellent source for downloadable nonfiction passages for teaching informational reading and informative/explanatory writing. These are searchable by topic and lexile level.

Others:



For Teachers:

The Teaching Channel:

<https://www.teachingchannel.org/?national=1>

This site houses nearly 700 video clips of mostly excellent teaching. 183 are Common Core Standards driven, and hundreds of others feature best practices. It is searchable by grade level and content. Most clips include information about the teacher, the school, and include the resources as attachments needed to teach the lesson.

Kathy Schrock's Guide to Everything is an outstanding resource for tools and lessons on using technology in the classroom: <http://www.schrockguide.net/>

Access to Complex Text

Strategies for assuring all students can learn from reading informational text

“Reading is a process of actively constructing of meaning and connecting prior knowledge with new information.”

Pearson, Dole, Roeler, and Duffy

“Developing Expertise in Reading Comprehension: What Should Be Taught and How Should It Be Taught?” [What Research Has to Say to the Teacher of Reading](#), IRA (1992)

Common Core State Standards require students to read more rigorous text, while also synthesizing information across several passages. This involves a much more active role for the student during reading time than previous story-by-story or chapter-by-chapter approaches to reading of the past. No longer will students spend a whole week on a story with the objective of passing the Friday test on that story and its vocabulary. Instead, students will be investigating concepts across multiple texts and online sources to gather information, organize it, and share their thinking about it in writing. There are countless strategies for supporting reading comprehension in general. Here are some of my favorites to incorporate into an Informative Reading/Writing Unit:

1. **Connecting known-to-new:** finding out what students already know before reading.
2. **Generating questions** prior to reading.
3. **Shared Reading:** reading projected texts or big books “all together.”
4. **Key Words:** selecting and working with key words and the “gist” of each paragraph in a text in order to summarize the information in “one’s own words”.
5. **Text Dependent Questioning:** generating questions that require the reader to return to the text to share their thinking.

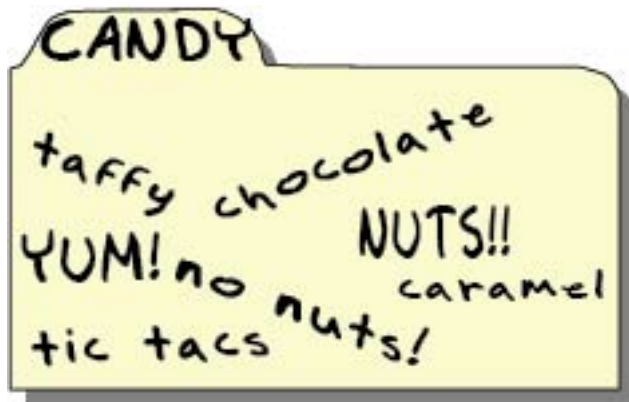
Connecting the Known to the New

What we
already know...



New
Learning!

Prior to any new reading take the time to help students think about what they already know about a topic before they begin reading the words in the new text. Good readers do this out of habit: they scan the cover and back cover, thumb through a few pages, and perhaps look skywards to recall what they know already before they dive in. Students can develop this helpful habit of bringing their “schema” or background knowledge about a topic forward before reading. Here are a few ways to do this:



Tell students that their brain likes to organize information in something like the files on a computer desktop. You can demonstrate this by drawing a file folder on the white board, listing a topic you know the students already know a lot about, then asking them to “open” that file and share with a partner everything they already know. I will often use a fun topic such as “candy” or “sports”

or “toys”, and let the whole class start speaking out loud at once. This generates a lot of noise and enthusiasm for just how much we already know.

Use photos, a picture book, a website, or a short video clip to introduce a topic and warm up the students’ memories, then ask them to list them on white boards, or tell their group everything they already know about the topic. You can even give small groups a large sheet of paper to write on collaboratively what they know as they discuss the topic.

Linking

what we wonder about and
what we think we know to what we've learned

Another way to work with questions students have generated is in this three column approach. This encourages students to rethink possible misconceptions as they read. Strong readers spontaneously revise their understandings as they notice the differences between what they thought they knew and what is presented in text. This strategy assures that is happening for all readers.

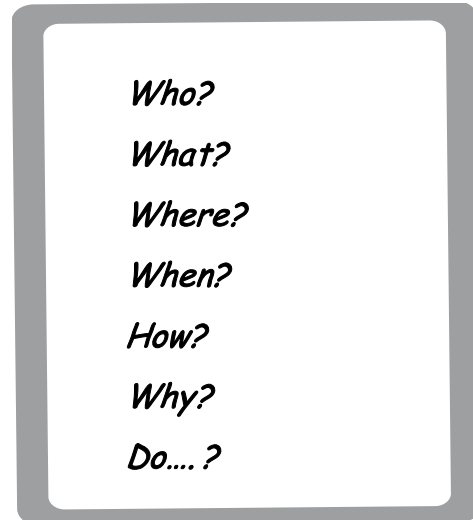
Topic: Bats		
Questions	What we think we know	New learning
How do they see at night?	They have really good eyes like cats	They use echolocation—making noise that bounces off of things and back to them
What do they eat?	Bats suck blood from small animals	Only some eat blood, they lick it—don't suck it. Most eat insects and some eat fruit

Adapted from Goudvis, A. and Harvey, S. (2007) *Strategies the Work: Teaching Comprehension for Understanding and Engagement*. Stenhouse: Portland, Maine.

Generating Questions with Young Students:

Young children are naturally curious and have lots of questions about the world around them. Sadly, this impulse seems to get dampened the longer students are enrolled in school where questioning is mostly the domain of the teacher. You can reverse this trend by following this simple procedure before and during a class study of any topic.

1. Introduce the topic to the students through a read aloud, hands-on experience, virtual fieldtrip, or website exploration. Let the students free-explore a basket of books on the topic as well.
2. List the basic question words on the board like this:
➔



3. Ask students to create questions about the topic and chart these after each student shares one. Initially students may offer statements instead of questions. Help them change their statements into questions unless it is something we already obviously know.

For example, a student may say, "*Butterflies have 6 legs.*" You could say something like, "*Yes, we already know that, but do we know everything about a butterfly body. How about—what are all of the parts of a butterfly's body?*"

Students will also tend to create a string of questions that all start the same way. You can then prompt, "*Does anyone have a Why question?*"

4. Post these questions on a large chart with room to write the answer as the study unfolds. You may want to write the questions in one color and the answers in another to help the students distinguish between the two sentence types.

You may also want to teach the students the difference between a closed and open question. A closed question can be answered with a simple yes/no or a short statement. An open-ended question requires a deeper inquiry and a longer answer. Alternatively, you may just make a big deal out of "Why" questions which are always deeper and involve higher levels of thinking.

Generating Questions with Young Students:

Butterfly Questions

How do butterflies crack out of their eggs?
 How do butterflies fly?
 When do butterflies lay eggs?
 Where do butterflies come from in the world?
 How do caterpillars turn into butterflies?
 How do butterflies have their colors?
 How do butterflies eat?
 What do butterflies eat?
 How does a butterfly curl its tongue?
 How do butterflies sleep?

Question
 How do butterflies eat?
 What do butterflies eat?

Answer
 Butterflies suck nectar with their proboscis. They eat nectar from flowers.

Question
 How do butterflies lay eggs?

Answer
 A male and a female come together to make eggs. Sometimes it takes 90 minutes. The female lays eggs on the underside of a leaf.

Question
 How do caterpillars hatch out of their eggs?

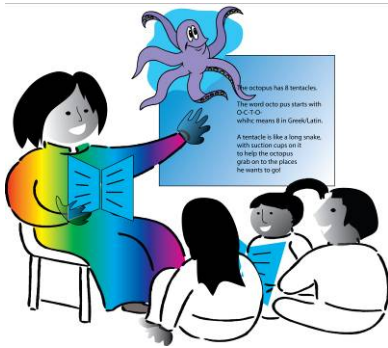
Answer
 The caterpillars eat their way out of their shells and then they eat the shell for their first meal.

Questions About Air / Weather

1. How do tornado's start?
2. Why is air infisibele?
3. How does the sun come out?
4. How is air very white?
5. How do snowes start?
6. Where does air come from?
7. How do you Breth in air?
8. Why do earthquakes start?
9. How is air cold and hot?
10. How does rain start?

C = Pink is colosed

O = Green is open



Shared Reading

Quotable Quotes on Shared Reading...

"The bed-time story situation should not be separated from the independent productive behavior which it generates. Such behavior normally engages the child in extensive, self-monitored, linguistic behavior for longer periods of time... In both aspects there is close visual and tactile contact with books, becoming increasingly focused on the conventions of print. All of the most powerful strategies of mature reading are being established and the complexity of the behavior makes the normal description of pre-reading skills look quite ridiculous."

The Foundations of Literacy, Holdaway p. 61

"The shared reading of carefully selected material provides special opportunities for convincing children that they can be readers and writers, and for encouraging them to read and write in a supportive and success-oriented climate."

Reading TO, WITH and BY Children, Mooney, p. 25

"Shared reading is an apprenticeship: the teacher reads with the children, and the children actively contribute to the reading with the teacher's guidance."

"Children enjoy shared reading because it enables them to begin reading successfully from their first day of school. It is an important experience for less able readers who enter school with limited exposures to books and print. It is a non-threatening and enjoyable way to strengthen the language skills of struggling readers. When children read familiar texts over and over, they build literacy skills without boring, repetitive worksheet drills."

Apprenticeship in Literacy, p. 32

Shared reading defined by Mooney as "eyes past print with voice support" became the means whereby I could help students both learn new words and develop in depth knowledge of words they knew only in a single context.

Words, Words, Words, Janet Allen

In shared reading, a learner....sees the text, observes an expert...reading it with fluency and expression and is invited to read along. In the optimal learning model, shared reading is an ideal way to demonstrate and support what good readers do.

Shared reading is also powerful because it helps students and teachers bond: students are partners in an enjoyable process and see themselves as ultimately capable.

Reading Essentials, Routman, 2003

Advantages of Shared Reading:

- It provides an opportunity to share and learn about books in a supportive atmosphere, thereby bolstering self-esteem and a positive feeling about books and reading.
- It encourages students to participate and become involved in reading. Active participation develops community spirit as students enjoy and respond to the story together.
- Opportunities for close reading and sharing of textual evidence are abundant
- Repeated readings help students to become confident enough to read the text independently.
- Enlarged text allows the teacher to point out conventions of print, and teach reading strategies and skills within the context of reading.
- The nature of the patterned texts provides models for innovation and students' own writing.

Suggestions for Shared Reading Instruction:

Choosing Appropriate Texts:

- Text can be displayed so all students can read it from their seats—document camera, LCD projection, or a good old fashioned big book!
- Reading difficulty level extends beyond the instructional level of the majority of students
- Content integrates with current learning and concepts in classroom

... for Younger Students – Foundational Reading Skills Support:

- Contains language patterns and repetition of phrases and vocabulary
- Uses high utility concepts, speech structures and vocabulary in English
- Illustrations match text and extend background knowledge to make concepts more comprehensible
- **Contains rhyme, rhythm and repetition of language patterns and phrases useful to ELLs**
- **Encourages readers to make connections between existing knowledge and new information**

Plan and Introduce:

- Connect to background knowledge and experiences
- Use realia, and hands-on experiences when possible to provide comprehensible input
- Examine text structure: the front and back cover illustrations, table of contents/index, layout of text, etc.
- Engage students at all stages of language acquisition in the discussion with varied response possibilities. For example, beginning ELLs may point to elements of illustration to show understanding
- Use illustrations to support comprehension by *pointing clearly* to items at the same time you are speaking about them

Read the Text:

For All Texts:

- Make connections to **background knowledge**
- Talk about the meaning of **words or phrases in context**

For Fiction:

- Predetermine ONE or TWO spots for asking **prediction** questions.
- Point to and discuss illustrations as a support to comprehension
- The first reading should be lively with few stops so that the students may enjoy the total story.

For Nonfiction:

- The sequence of reading will be determined by the purpose for reading. For example if children are learning how to use an index, you may start with a question about the topic then refer to the index to find a page which may offer the information sought.
- This shared reading may look more like a dialogue between the students and the text as they use questions and comments to understand the content being presented.

For All Text Types:

- POINT clearly to each word as you read (for emergent and early readers). You may want to use a pointer so that the students can see all the words on the page. As the students follow the pointer with their eyes they learn one-to-one correspondence and directionality.
- Use expression and clear pointing to illustrations to highlight vocabulary and events

Return to the Text:

For English Language Learners:

- Provide many **repeated readings**
- Invite children to participate actively in the reading of the text. They can join in the reading of words and phrases they know. The class can brainstorm and create movement actions or sounds to accompany certain parts of the text. (This is particularly beneficial for helping students internalize the meanings of words) The class can be divided into groups which take the parts of characters in the story.

For Meaning Making:

Prepare several text dependent questions to ask, and invite students to locate evidence in the shared reading text by using a pointer on the screen, or highlighting a text under the document camera. Students may also use white boards to share evidence from text.

For Learning Foundational Literacy Skills:

Concepts about Print, Phonics, Phonemic Awareness, vocabulary, genres, punctuation

Emergent Readers/Beginning ELLs:

Word and/or Text Matching: Write words or phrases from the story on sentence strips or post-its. Let students match them to the text in the book to focus them on the features of the print.

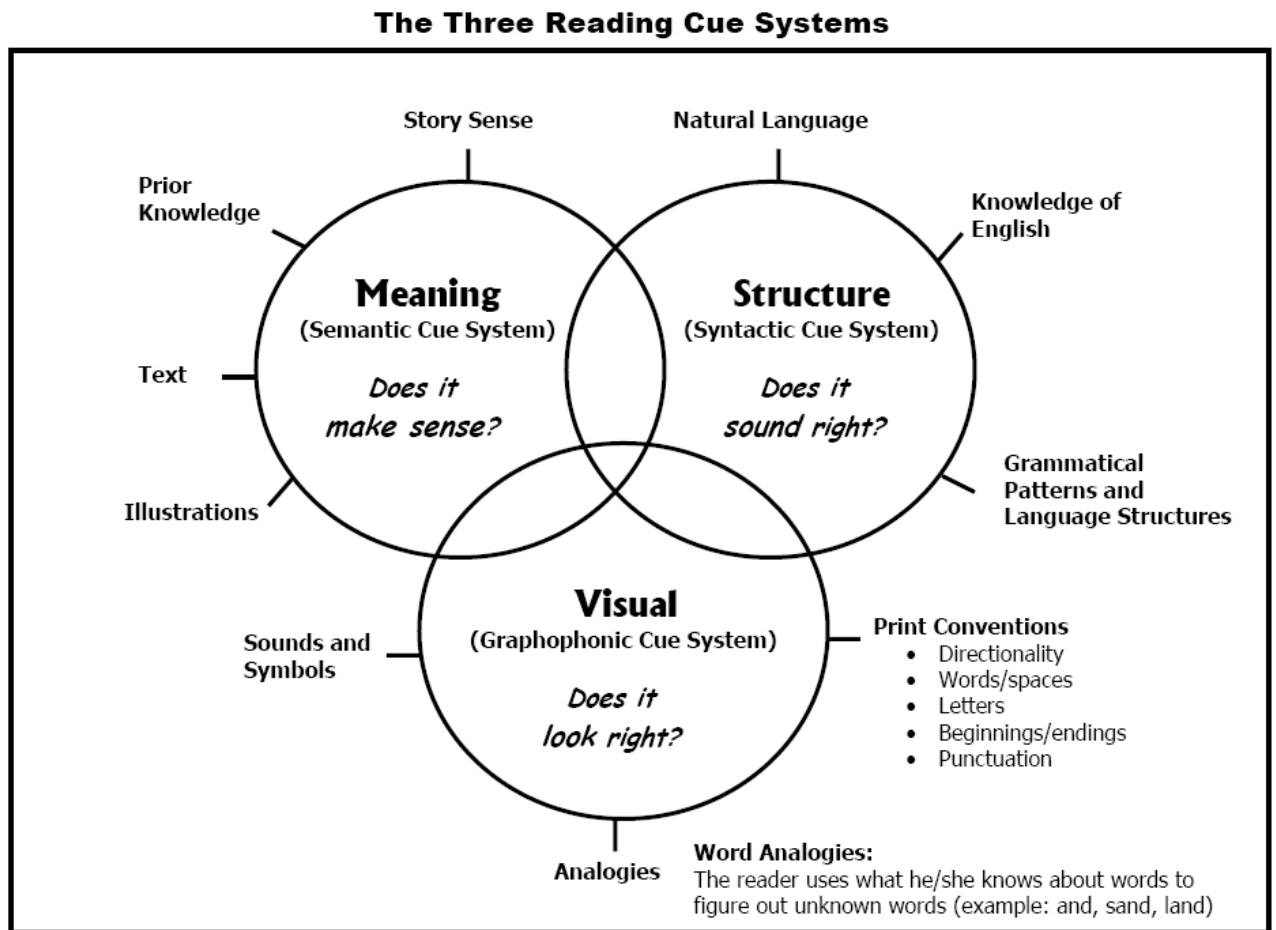
Cloze Procedure and Shared Reading of Projected Texts

Who Benefits?

- Students who don't realize that making meaning while reading is paramount!
- Students who need to build confidence with using what they know and applying it while they read
- Students who over-rely on one cueing system while reading
- Students who read word by word with little comprehensions
- Competent readers who need to be encouraged to discuss word choice in writing

Reading Cueing systems:

When we read we draw upon multiple cues simultaneously to make meaning from text.



How:

1. Choose a short piece of text you can project for shared reading such as an article, page from a textbook, poem, song, etc. For younger readers, choose text with some pattern, rhyme or repetition to add further support.
2. Mask words to encourage focus on particular cross-checking of cues. For beginning readers mask one word in every 15-20. For more skilled readers you may mask one word in every 10-15 words.
3. Read the text aloud with the students and when you get to the masked word, ask students to guess what word would make sense in the blank. List these words on the whiteboard next to the text.
4. Uncover the word letter by letter and eliminate words that could not work in the blank based on the visual cues uncovered. Prompt active thinking while reading by saying things such as:
 - Would that make sense? (meaning)
 - Does that sound right? (structure)
 - Does that look right? (visual)

Example:

The Bird

By Tony Milton

The full text of the poem	Possible words to mask for encouraging cueing system use:
Here are the legs that walk along.	Here are the _____ that walk along. <i>(What words could make sense there? How do you know?)</i>
Here is the beak that sings a song.	Here is the beak that _____ a song. <i>(What words would make sense there? , what letter would you expect to see?)</i>
Here are the wings that flap and spread.	Here are the wings that flap _____ spread. <i>(What kind of word do we need there to connect the two things wings do?)</i>
And here is the bird above my head.	And here is the _____ above my head. <i>(What is this poem about? What letters would we expect to see?)</i>

Responses to Shared Reading:

Response Activities **need to bring the reader back into the text:**

For Example:

- Draw a picture of something described in a book and refer back to the text to make sure all the details in the text are included.
- Sketch a family tree of characters in order to understand relationships in a story.
- Use a graphic organizers to organize information read
- Write a response to one of the text dependent questions you've explored in your discussion and remind students to include the precise evidence from the text they used to formulate their answer.

References for Shared Reading

Dorn, French, & Jones (1998) *Apprenticeship in Literacy*. Stenhouse

Holdaway, D. (1979) *The Foundations of Literacy*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Mooney, M. (1990) *Reading to With, and By Children*. New York: Richard C. Owen

Routman, R. (2003) *Reading Essentials: The Specifics You Need to Teach Reading Well*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Close Reading and Text Dependent Questioning:

<http://www.achievethecore.org/>

www.achievethecore.org/

Cummins, S. (2013) *Close Reading of Informational Texts*. New York, NY: Guilford.

Beers, K. & Probst, R. (2013) *Notice & Note: Strategies for Close Reading*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Shared Reading Lesson Planning Form

Title	Author
Author	Author
Plan and introduce	
Connections to background knowledge Vocabulary Concepts Skills	
Read	
Background knowledge Meaning of words or phrases in context Prediction points	
Return to the Text and Respond:	
Text dependent questions Foundational literacy skills	



Finding Key Words for a Summary

Select key content words in expository text and then use those words for oral and written summaries.

MATERIALS: Short article to project, individual copies, highlighters for each student

PROCEDURE:

1. Choose a short, high interest passage. Project the text on the screen and give copies to individual students.
2. Preview the topic with the students and make connections to any prior knowledge they may have about the material. Debrief any text features such as bold print, captions, numbers, or graphics and ask students to think about why they are there and how they might help them learn the content of the text.
3. Read the passage with the students—you can do a choral reading, or read it to them and have them “jump in” for words or phrases you leave out (this promotes active engagement). After the first paragraph, ask them to tell their partners what that paragraph is mostly about. Next, ask them to write the “gist” or 1-3 words that would remind them what the paragraph is mostly about.
4. Show them how to select key content words in each line of text. Use “think aloud” strategies to make your reasons for choices of words clear (model). For example, “*I’m going to pick this word because it tells why....*”, or “*I don’t need to pick this word because it says the same thing as....*” You can also show the students how you don’t need to pick most of the small words such as **a, an, the, is, are**, etc.
5. Once students begin to see how to pick the words, ask them to help you pick words (guided practice).
6. As you work with each paragraph, have students write the “gist” and list the key words for that paragraph on a separate sheet of paper as their notes. Do the same on a piece of chart paper so that students can see the key words lifted by the class.
7. After you finish selecting words for the passage, cover the passage, have the students turn over their papers, and model for them how to use the key words in sequence to orally summarize or retell the passage. Then have pairs of students practice this orally.
8. Next, use Language Experience or Shared Writing to compose with the class a summary of the material using all of their input. As you write the chart in front of the students, highlight the key words you use to write the summary as you go.
9. Once students have had extensive practice with this as a group chart activity, they can write summaries on their own after selecting the key words in a text.
10. It is also helpful to develop a bank of “mortar words” that match the structure of the topic so that students can glue the content words together in a logical description. For example, with a sequence selection students may need, “first, then, next, finally”.




Summaries are covered in the Common Core Standards under **Reading: RI 2**.

©2014 Charlotte Knox, www.knoxeducation.com

Known → new

Water Cycle

WATER WAYS



Picture a drop of water. Where does it come from? Where is it going?

Earth's water is always on the **move**. It **travels** from the **oceans** to the **sky**. It **falls** from **clouds** and fills **streams**, rivers, bays, and **oceans**. Water flows **deep underground**.

Water's endless journey from Earth to sky and back again is called the **hydrologic cycle**, or water cycle. (See diagram) A better name might be the water **re-cycle**. **Every drop** is used, **reused**, and used again.

Human beings can't **survive** without water. We **drink** it, **wash** in it, and **play** in it. At home, the average person in the **United States** uses **380 liters** (100 gallons) of water every day. That **doesn't include** all the water it takes to **grow our food**.

Intro

how it moves

cycle def.

humans use

List of Key Words

How it moves:

- Travels-flows
- Falls-comes down
- Clouds
- Streams, rivers, bays, oceans-bodies of water

Cycle definition

- Hydrologic
- Re-cycle
- Reused

Humans use of water

- Survive-live
- Drink, wash, play
- Aver person US
- 380 liters/100 gals./day
- not including water to grow food-crops

Source:
National Geographic "Extreme Explorer" Magazine, April 2010

Finding Key Words for a Summary

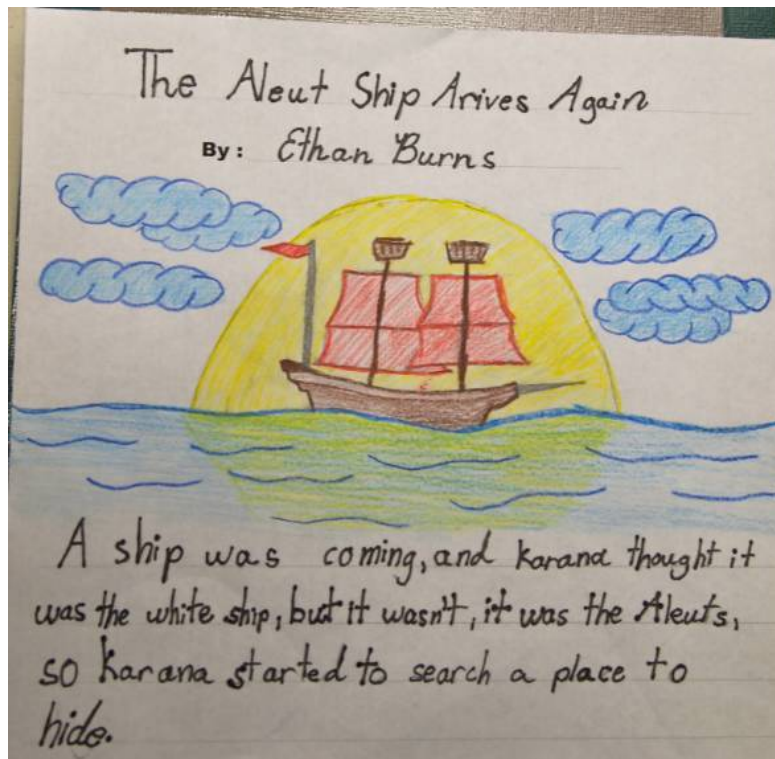
The \$2.00 Summary

Once students are used to summarizing information using key words, they can be challenged to create short summaries that give important content with as few words as possible.

Tell the students they have to summarize a section of the text in 20 words or less. Each word costs 10 cents. You can make a "free box" of words they can use such as 1-2 letter words, "the", and be sure to include in the "free box" any important content words specific to the domain of the topic (science, social studies, math, etc.) that you want to make sure they use in their \$2 summary.

Students then work together to create these short summaries. You can "pay" them \$2.00 for the summary if they include the important information AND do it in 20 words or less WITHOUT any errors of spelling, capitalization, or punctuation.

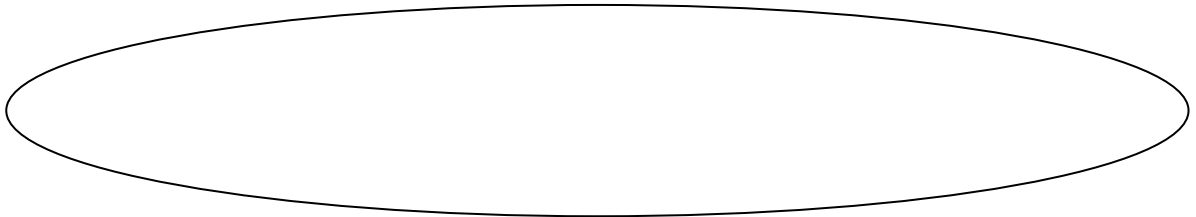
Once students understand this procedure it can be used as a homework assignment for summarizing content area reading in science or social studies.



\$2.00 Summary of Chapter 16, Island of the Blue Dolphins, S. O'Dell







ey Word Strategy and 5-Star Checklist

Name: _____ Date: _____



Key Words

(See page 44-51)

 PUNCTUATION	 CAPITALS	 SENTENCES or PARAGRAPH	 KEY WORDS	 EDIT
 ? - ! ,	Only where they go... <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Beginning of sentence• Names• Months or days of the week	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Title• Main idea, or• Make a connection• Indent• End point	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• From text you read or heard?• Used in sentences?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spelling• Spaces between words• Neat

Note Taking: Using Matrix Charts

Content Area Matrix

Native American Tribes	Location & homes	Relationship to Nature	Beliefs and Rituals	Tools	Family Structure	Famous Members	

Thinking Skill: Classifying and Categorizing

Identify similarities and differences across a topic sits at the top of the list of the 9 most effective teaching strategies in Marzano's *Classroom Instruction that Works*. Use of the strategy has been associated with an average effect size gain of 45 percentile points on standardized tests (Marzano, 2001). These matrices can be built around the important categories of information to be compared in the study of virtually any topic. Common uses for matrices include comparing cultures, times in history, kinds of roles of members in a society, habitats, animals, events, etc.

You may want to use the table of contents or the bold headings in a chapter in a text book in order to determine categories for comparison. Typically teachers model for the group the specifics of one of the groups to be compared, and then small groups or teams can complete the chart for other groups. These charts can easily be built in a classroom by having students use 5X8 inch cards for each item in the chart and attaching those in grid form on a large sheet of bulletin board paper.

These matrices become the outline for multi-paragraph essays. Show the students how to convert their notes into outline form for writing. Suggest some guiding higher level thinking questions for comparing elements in the chart such as:

How is the Native American's relationship to nature different from ours? Why might that be so and what can we learn from the Native Americans?

Marzano et al (2001) Classroom Instruction that Works. ASCD

English Language Development (ELD) Strategies for Using a Matrix Chart to Read, Research, and Write

Beginning English Learner Students: (CELDT 1-2)

Use the patterned sentence in each box. Generate patterned sentences on sentence strips. Use picture cues on the sentence strips. Have students cut up these strips, reassemble them, and then copy them into little books.

Intermediate English Learner Students (CELDT 3), Below Grade Level EO students


Use shared or modeled writing to show students how to write a simple paragraph for each box. You may need to provide a frame for the topic sentence. Nudge students to add adjectives, adverbs, or prepositional phrases to extend their writing within the paragraph. Students can publish this as a 6 page flip book report.

Early Advanced/Advanced English Learner Students and On Grade Level EO students:

Use shared writing to generate a paragraph about one of the boxes with the students. Extend their responses by asking for further detail. Show students how to add a concluding sentence to each paragraph. Include mini-lessons on different ways to generate a topic sentence. Expect students to write a 6 page report after they have finished gathering notes for each box. Have students read aloud their paragraphs to each other as they finish them in order for students to get ideas from each other.



Matrix Charts: Examples

All About Garden Snails 

Habitat	Life Cycle
Food	Did You Know?
Characteristics	

Animal Report Matrix

Animal Report on: _____

Name _____ Date _____

Description _____ have _____.	Habitat _____ live _____.
Behavior _____ can _____.	Diet _____ eat _____.
Predators _____ enemies are _____.	Life Cycle

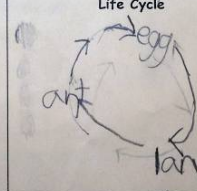
Samples of Matrix and Classification

Bats

<p>Have</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> thumbs knees that point backward fingers on their wings strong claws 	<p>Can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> walk dance see in the night fly at night hang upside down fly but they aren't birds 	<p>Are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> nice the only mammal that can fly the only animal that can police at night
<p>Live in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> trees attics houses caves cages zoos 	<p>Some Eat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> blood fruit insects frogs fish bat pudding other bats crops 	<p>Kinds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vampire fox little brown bat big brown bat fruit bat insect-eating bats Kitt's hog-nosed bat fishing bats 
<p>Enemies are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some farmers some bats 		

Animal Report Matrix

Animal Report on: ants
 Name: Colby Date: 1-17-13

<p>Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> insects 3 body parts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> head thorax abdomen 6 legs & antennae 	<p>Habitat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> underground Antarctica every continent cracks above ground
<p>Behavior</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> live in colonies work together Queen nurses/workers communicate lift and carry 	<p>Diet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> other insects plants fungus milk Catellars
<p>Predators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> anteaters birds ins 	<p>Life Cycle</p> 

© 2012 - Charlotte Knox at www.knoeducation.com - Page 33 of 67

capitalization

suffixes, prefixes, contractions, syllable

Name of Explorer

Vasco Nunez de Balboa

AMERIGO VESPUCCI

Vasco Nunez de Balboa

Ferdinand Magellan 1605

BASIC FACTS

- Where from?
- Where did he go?
- When?

Why did he go?

What impact did the exploration have on the local community?

September 1573

Spice Islands



Teaching Students to Read Closely with Text-Dependent Questions



Why Do We Need to Ask Text-Dependent Questions?

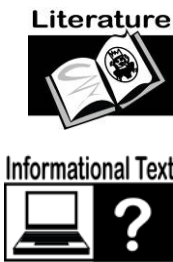
The CCSS Requires Three Shifts in ELA/Literacy

1. **Building knowledge** through **content-rich nonfiction**
2. Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in **evidence from text**, both literary and informational
3. Regular practice with **complex text** and its **academic language**

achievethecore.org



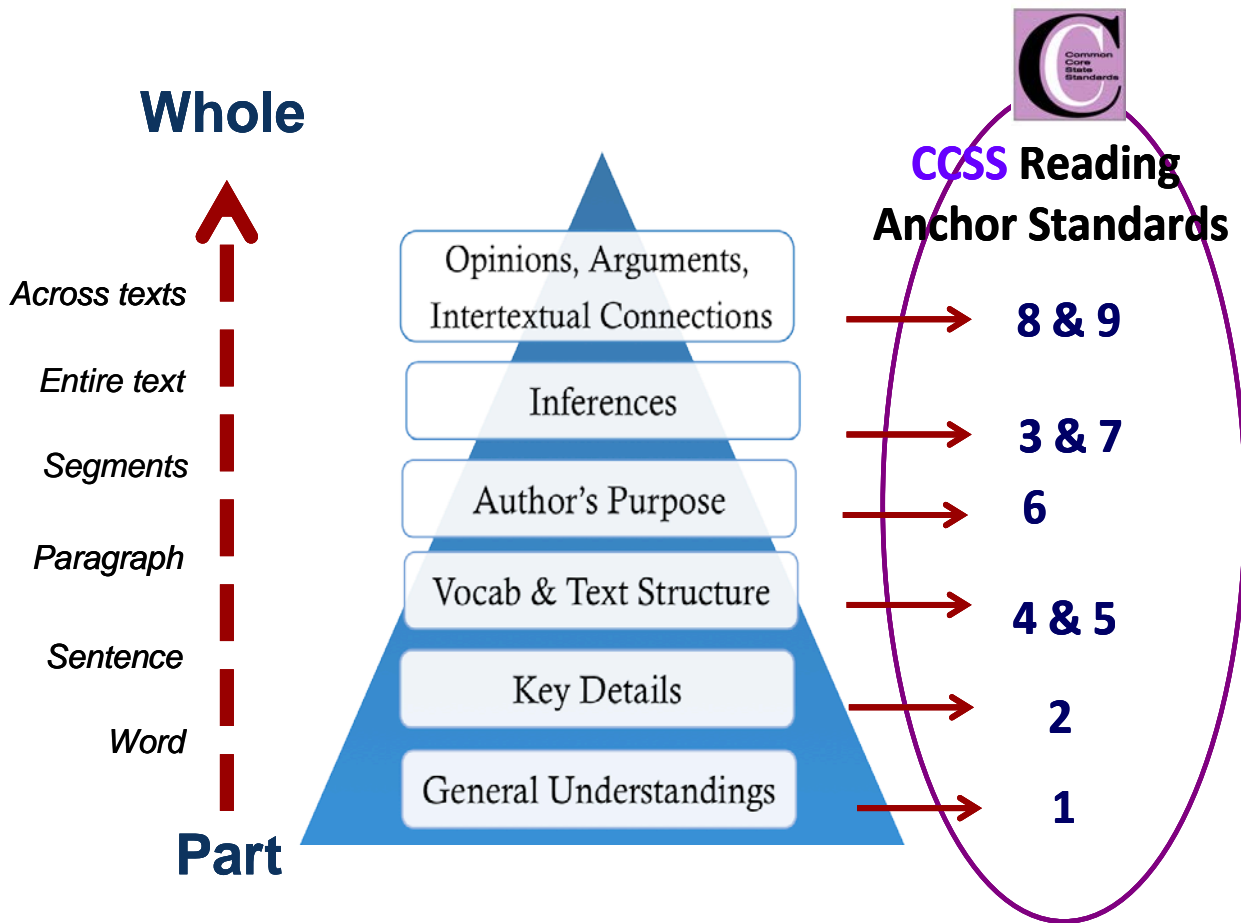
Common Core ANCHOR STANDARDS for Reading Across Grade Levels READING (Literature and Informational Text)



Category	<input type="checkbox"/>	Anchor Standard
Key Ideas and Details <i>What does the text say?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
Craft and Structure <i>How does the text say it?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas <i>What does it mean and how does it connect to other texts?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.*
	<input type="checkbox"/>	8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Progression of Text-Dependent Questions Chart

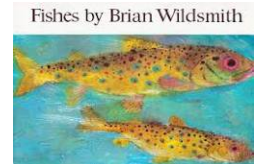
fisherandfrey.com



Text-Dependent Questions Qualities



Samples are written as reference to the Kindergarten book, *Swimmy*
Narrative Informational



<p>OPINIONS, ARGUMENTS, INTER-TEXTUAL CONNECTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Author's opinion and reasoning (K-5) Claims 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence Counterclaims Judgment, viewpoint <i>Links to other texts throughout the grades</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is this a happy story or a sad one? How do you know? Can a story be sad and happy at the same time? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are these two books similar? How are they different?
<p>INFERENCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process of making a logical conclusion from things we assume are true. Arrive at a conclusion. Read between the lines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process of using observation and background knowledge to determine a conclusion that makes sense. Schema (what I already know) + clues from text = inferences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When Swimmy swam away alone in the deep wet world, what made him happy again? When Swimmy meets the new school of red fish, why does he teach them to swim together as the biggest fish in the sea? 	
<p>AUTHOR'S PURPOSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Genre: Entertain? Explain? Inform? Persuade? The reason the author wrote about the topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point of View: First-person, third-person limited, omniscient, unreliable narrator Critical Literacy: Whose story is not represented?
<p>How did the author teach us about teamwork in this book?</p>	
<p>VOCABULARY AND TEXT STRUCTURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tier 2 academic words What makes the text challenging Sentence syntax 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple meanings Figurative language How organization and text structure contributes to meaning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the author describe the tuna fish on that bad day? What words did the author use to show that Swimmy was feeling happy again? 	
<p>KEY DETAILS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine why it is important Find supporting details that support the main idea(s) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answers who, what, when, where, why, how much, or how many. Readers begin to connect information from the text
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What caused Swimmy to feel scared, lonely and very sad? Can you name all of the wonderful creatures Swimmy saw while swimming in the deep wet world? 	
<p>GENERAL UNDERSTANDINGS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall view, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> what the whole text is about; critical components; main claim and evidence
<p>What did Swimmy teach the school of red fish to do?</p>	

Text Dependent Question Prompts

General Understandings

Literature



Informational Text



General Reading: both Literature and Informational Text

- What is the most important point in this ___(paragraph, piece, page, passage)?
- The beginning of this passage helps the reader recognize ____.
- The phrase ___ means ____.
- What ideas in the text support/validate ___?
- How do you know ____? Explain your thinking.
- What is the evidence of ____?
- ____ is an example of ____.
- Where does the author provide evidence of ____? What clues show you?
- Point to the evidence that ____?
- Share a sentence that ____?

Literature



Literature

- How does the main character change throughout the story? What evidence does the author include?
- How does the main character treat other characters? What evidence does the author include?

CCSS Reading Standard 1

Key Details

Literature



Informational Text



General Reading: both Literature and Informational Text

- Describe the major events of _____, in order.
- What supporting details does the author include to help you learn about____?

Literature



Literature

- How does the author show each character's feelings?
- How does the character react to the setting? How do you know?
- How does the setting change through the story? How do you know?
- What do you know about (character)? What words does the author use to show you?
- How does each detail about setting and characterization support the plot?
- How does the main character treat other characters? What evidence does the author include?
- What are (character's) strengths? Weaknesses? What words and phrases does the author use for each?
- How does the setting change through the story? How do you know?
- How does the sequence of events develop the story?
- What are (character's) strengths? Weaknesses? What words and phrases does the author use for each?

CCSS Reading Standard 2

Text Dependent Question Prompts

Vocabulary & Text Structure

General Reading (both Literature and Informational Text)



- What text structure(s) does this author use (question/answer, problem/solution, description, cause/effect, sequence, compare/contrast)? Why was this a good choice?
- What context clues tell you what ___ (word) means?
- What does ___ mean? How do you know?
- What words or phrases grab your attention?
- What does the word ___ mean as used on page ___?
- What word does the author use to show us how ___?
- How does the use of the word ___ contribute to ___?
- How does the author use transition words (such as first, last, suddenly, later) to help you transition from sentence to sentence, paragraph to paragraph, and section to section?
- What words (color, size, shape, material, proper names) help the author be specific?
- What strong verbs do you notice? How do they help you visualize the author's meaning?
- How do the author's words help develop sensory images?



Literature

- What do you notice about the author's use of punctuation?
- What words or phrases tug at your heart?
- What beautiful language does the author use?
- What words (color, size, shape, material, proper names) help the author be specific?
- What strong verbs do you notice? How do they help you visualize the author's meaning?
- How do the author's words help develop sensory images?
- What comparisons (simile, metaphor, personification) do you notice in the text? How do they help you understand the text?
- What onomatopoeia, interjections, and alliteration does the author use? How does it support you as a reader?

CCSS Reading Standard 4 & 5

Text Dependent Question Prompts

Author's Purpose

Literature General Reading: both Literature and Informational Text



Informational Text



- What is the author's purpose? How do you know?
- What does the author want us to know about ___?
- What is the purpose of paragraph/sentence x? What are the clues that tell you this?
- Why did the author use (specific text feature) on this page?

Literature Literature



- What is the author's message to his/her readers?

CCSS Reading Standard 6

Inferences

Literature General Reading: both Literature and Informational Text



Informational Text



- What new information did you learn from the captions?
- What do we know from the title and cover?
- What do you learn from the illustrations?
- Look at the illustration on page x. Why did the illustrator include details like ___?
- What do you learn from the text? From the illustrations?
- Where in the text can you make inferences? How does your inference help you understand the text more deeply?

Literature Literature



- How does the dialogue help you understand the interaction between characters?
- Can you tell if the story describes a particular culture? How do you know? Would the story be different if set in a different culture/setting?
- How does the author help you learn about the setting (time, place, season)?
- What does the author mean by this quote _____? What is the message in it? What would the text mean without it?

CCSS Reading Standard 3 & 7

Opinions, Arguments, Inter-textual Connections

Literature General Reading: both Literature and Informational Text



Informational Text



- What is the author's point of view? How do you know?
- I think the author means ___ when he/she says ___.
- What does the author think about ___?

Literature

- An author usually does some research to help him/her write the text. What evidence of research do you find in this text?
- The author addressed the opposing view when he/she says ____.
- What reasons does the book give for ___?

CCSS Reading Standard 8-9

Text Marking with Symbols and Post-its

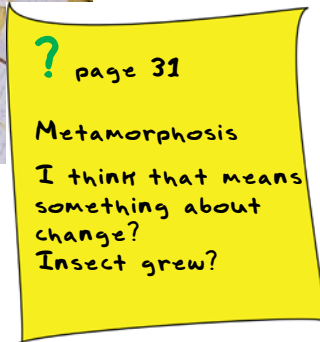
Using symbols to mark responses to text while reading is one easy way to ensure active engagement. We know that good readers interact extensively with text in their minds as they read the words; weaker readers need to be taught explicitly to do this in order for it to become habitual. You may use these bookmarks as reminders for students of the coding system. Make sure to teach each code separately and model with a "think aloud" how you would code a text yourself. For example, you could project a few paragraphs of an engaging text then:

1. Read aloud the first paragraph to the students and then choose something to mark and "think aloud" by telling the students why you chose that section. For example:

"I'm putting a star here because that sentence really helped me understand what the author was trying to explain."

"I haven't seen that word before, and I need to go back and figure out what it means"

2. Next, read another paragraph as a shared reading and ask pairs of students to code for the symbol you are teaching then share their choices with the whole class. Once you are confident they understand the use of the symbols through shared reading and collaboration, you can ask students to do this on their own.














If students are marking a text they can't write on, have them use post-its to do so, but make them annotate the post-its with the page number, and the reason why they marked that section with that symbol. They can then transfer all the post-its for a chapter or article onto a sheet of paper to bring to a class discussion, or use for notes for writing.

See our website www.knoxeducation.com for printable versions of these text marking symbols.

K-3 Text Marking

4-8 Text Marking

-  **Wow! Interesting!**
-  **New...I didn't know this.**
-  **IMPORTANT**
-  **Question...confused**
-  **Important VOCABULARY word**

-  **Insightful statement, quotation, attention grabber.**
What makes it stand out.
-  **Statement, sentence, or word that you are uncertain about.**
Include your own guess on its meaning.
-  **Summarize a large section of text or event that occurred.**
-  **An opinion about a statement in the text; this can also be an opinion the author holds that you agree + or disagree - with.**
-  **A thesis statement or topic statement; something that seems very important or poignant.**
-  **Your prediction about what comes next, or where the author is going.**



Language Instruction Planning Sheet



For teaching **Language**, use this planning sheet to organize your lessons. Use a separate sheet for each of the weeks you are covering Informative Writing.

Weeks 1-2

Language Standards to teach during this unit	How I will teach them

Weeks 3-4

Language Standards to teach during this unit	How I will teach them

Weeks 5-6

Language Standards to teach during this unit	How I will teach them



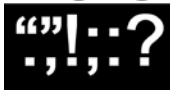
L Language Standards

K-3

CONVENTIONS of STANDARD ENGLISH

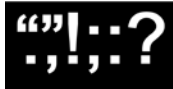
Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
<p>1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</p> <p>a. Print many upper- and lowercase letters.</p> <p>b. Use frequently occurring nouns and verbs.</p> <p>c. Form regular plural nouns orally by adding /s/ or /es/ (e.g., <i>dog, dogs; wish, wishes</i>).</p> <p>d. Understand and use question words (interrogatives) (e.g., <i>who, what, where, when, why, how</i>).</p> <p>e. Use the most frequently occurring prepositions (e.g., <i>to, from, in, out, on, off, for, of, by, with</i>).</p> <p>f. Produce and expand complete sentences in shared language activities.</p>	<p>1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</p> <p>a. Print all upper- and lowercase letters.</p> <p>b. Use common, proper, and possessive nouns.</p> <p>c. Use singular and plural nouns with matching verbs in basic sentences (e.g., <i>He hops; We hop</i>).</p> <p>d. Use personal (subject, object), possessive, and indefinite pronouns (e.g., <i>I, me, my; they, them, their; anyone, everything</i>). CA</p> <p>e. Use verbs to convey a sense of past, present, and future (e.g., <i>Yesterday I walked home; Today I walk home; Tomorrow I will walk home</i>).</p> <p>f. Use frequently occurring adjectives.</p> <p>g. Use frequently occurring conjunctions (e.g., <i>and, but, or, so, because</i>).</p> <p>h. Use determiners (e.g., articles, demonstratives).</p> <p>i. Use frequently occurring prepositions (e.g., <i>during, beyond, toward</i>).</p> <p>j. Produce and expand complete simple and compound declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences in response to prompts.</p>	<p>1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</p> <p>a. Use collective nouns (e.g., <i>group</i>).</p> <p>b. Form and use frequently occurring irregular plural nouns (e.g., <i>feet, children, teeth, mice, fish</i>).</p> <p>c. Use reflexive pronouns (e.g., <i>myself, ourselves</i>).</p> <p>d. Form and use the past tense of frequently occurring irregular verbs (e.g., <i>sat, hid, told</i>).</p> <p>e. Use adjectives and adverbs, and choose between them depending on what is to be modified.</p> <p>f. Produce, expand, and rearrange complete simple and compound sentences (e.g., <i>The boy watched the movie; The little boy watched the movie; The action movie was watched by the little boy</i>).</p> <p>g. Create readable documents with legible print. CA</p>	<p>1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</p> <p>a. Explain the function of nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in general and their functions in particular sentences.</p> <p>b. Form and use regular and irregular plural nouns.</p> <p>c. Use abstract nouns (e.g., <i>childhood</i>).</p> <p>d. Form and use regular and irregular verbs.</p> <p>e. Form and use the simple (e.g., <i>I walked; I walk; I will walk</i>) verb tenses.</p> <p>f. Ensure subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement.*</p> <p>g. Form and use comparative and superlative adjectives and adverbs, and choose between them depending on what is to be modified.</p> <p>h. Use coordinating and subordinating conjunctions.</p> <p>i. Produce simple, compound, and complex sentences.</p> <p>j. Write legibly in cursive or joined italics, allowing margins and correct spacing between letters in a word and words in a sentence. CA</p> <p>k. Use reciprocal pronouns correctly. CA</p>

Beginning in grade 3, skills and understandings that are particularly likely to require continued attention in higher grades as they are applied to increasingly sophisticated writing and speaking are marked with an asterisk (). See the table "Language Progress Skills, by Grade" for a complete list and Appendix A for an example of how these skills develop in sophistication.



L Language Standards				K-3
CONVENTIONS of STANDARD ENGLISH continued				
Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	
<p>2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Capitalize the first word in a sentence and the pronoun <i>I</i>. b. Recognize and name end punctuation. c. Write a letter or letters for most consonant and short-vowel sounds (phonemes). d. Spell simple words phonetically, drawing on knowledge of sound-letter relationships. 	<p>2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Capitalize dates and names of people. b. Use end punctuation for sentences. c. Use commas in dates and to separate single words in a series. d. Use conventional spelling for words with common spelling patterns and for frequently occurring irregular words. e. Spell untaught words phonetically, drawing on phonemic awareness and spelling conventions. 	<p>2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Capitalize holidays, product names, and geographic names. b. Use commas in greetings and closings of letters. c. Use an apostrophe to form contractions and frequently occurring possessives. d. Generalize learned spelling patterns when writing words (e.g., cage → badge; boy → boil). e. Consult reference materials, including beginning dictionaries, as needed to check and correct spellings. 	<p>2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Capitalize appropriate words in titles. b. Use commas in addresses. c. Use commas and quotation marks in dialogue. d. Form and use possessives. e. Use conventional spelling for high-frequency and other studied words and for adding suffixes to base words (e.g., <i>sitting, smiled, cries, happiness</i>). f. Use spelling patterns and generalizations (e.g., word families, position-based spellings, syllable patterns, ending rules, meaningful word parts) in writing words. g. Consult reference materials, including beginning dictionaries, as needed to check and correct spellings. 	
KNOWLEDGE of LANGUAGE				
Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	
<p>3. (Begins in grade 2)</p>		<p>3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Compare formal and informal uses of English. 	<p>3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Choose words and phrases for effect.* b. Recognize and observe differences between the conventions of spoken and written standard English. 	

**Beginning in grade 3, skills and understandings that are particularly likely to require continued attention in higher grades as they are applied to increasingly sophisticated writing and speaking are marked with an asterisk (*). See the table "Language Progress Skills, by Grade" for a complete list and Appendix A for an example of how these skills develop in sophistication.*



L Language Standards

K-3

VOCABULARY ACQUISITION and USE

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
<p>4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>kindergarten reading and content</i>.</p> <p>a. Identify new meanings for familiar words and apply them accurately (e.g., knowing <i>duck</i> is a bird and learning the verb <i>to duck</i>).</p> <p>b. Use the most frequently occurring inflections and affixes (e.g., <i>-ed, -s, re-, un-, pre-, -ful, -less</i>) as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word.</p>	<p>4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grade 1 reading and content</i>, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.</p> <p>a. Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.</p> <p>b. Use frequently occurring affixes as a clue to the meaning of a word.</p> <p>c. Identify frequently occurring root words (e.g., <i>look</i>) and their inflectional forms (e.g., <i>looks, looked, looking</i>).</p>	<p>4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grade 2 reading and content</i>, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.</p> <p>a. Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.</p> <p>b. Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known prefix is added to a known word (e.g., <i>happy/unhappy, tell/retell</i>).</p> <p>c. Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., <i>addition, additional</i>).</p> <p>d. Use knowledge of the meaning of individual words to predict the meaning of compound words (e.g., <i>birdhouse, lighthouse, housefly; bookshelf, notebook, bookmark</i>).</p> <p>e. Use glossaries and beginning dictionaries, both print and digital, to determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in all content areas.</p>	<p>4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning word and phrases based on <i>grade 3 reading and content</i>, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p> <p>a. Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.</p> <p>b. Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known affix is added to a known word (e.g., <i>agreeable/disagreeable, comfortable/uncomfortable, care/careless, heat/preheat</i>).</p> <p>c. Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., <i>company, companion</i>).</p> <p>d. Use glossaries or beginning dictionaries, both print and digital, to determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases in all content areas.</p>
Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
<p>5. With guidance and support from adults, explore word relationships and nuances in word meanings.</p> <p>a. Sort common objects into categories (e.g., shapes, foods) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent.</p> <p>b. Demonstrate understanding of frequently occurring verbs and adjectives by relating them to their opposites (antonyms).</p> <p>c. Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., note places at school that are <i>colorful</i>).</p> <p>d. Distinguish shades of meaning among verbs describing the same general action (e.g., <i>walk, march, strut, prance</i>) by acting out the meanings.</p>	<p>5. With guidance and support from adults, demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.</p> <p>a. Sort words into categories (e.g., colors, clothing) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent.</p> <p>b. Define words by category and by one or more key attributes (e.g., a <i>duck</i> is a bird that swims; a <i>tiger</i> is a large cat with stripes).</p> <p>c. Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., note places at home that are <i>cozy</i>).</p> <p>d. Distinguish shades of meaning among verbs differing in manner (e.g., <i>look, peek, glance, stare, glare, scowl</i>) and adjectives differing in intensity (e.g., <i>large, gigantic</i>) by defining or choosing them or by acting out the meanings.</p>	<p>5. Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.</p> <p>a. Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., describe foods that are <i>spicy</i> or <i>juicy</i>).</p> <p>b. Distinguish shades of meaning among closely related verbs (e.g., <i>toss, throw, hurt</i>) and closely related adjectives (e.g., <i>thin, slender, skinny, scrawny</i>).</p>	<p>5. Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.</p> <p>a. Distinguish the literal and non-literal meanings of words and phrases in context (e.g., <i>take steps</i>).</p> <p>b. Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., describe people who are <i>friendly</i> or <i>helpful</i>).</p> <p>c. Distinguish shades of meaning among related words that describe states of mind or degrees of certainty (e.g., <i>knew, believed, suspected, heard, wondered</i>).</p>
<p>6. Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts.</p>	<p>6. Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts, including using frequently occurring conjunctions to signal simple relationships (e.g., <i>because</i>).</p>	<p>6. Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts, including using adjectives and adverbs to describe (e.g., <i>When other kids are happy that makes me happy</i>).</p>	<p>6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal spatial and temporal relationships (e.g., <i>After dinner that night we went looking for them</i>).</p>

“Grow Lists”

Collecting words to learn about how language works

Students delight in the discovery of patterns and connections between the words they encounter in reading. If you set the stage for students to go hunting for words, they'll gladly gather up more than you'd imagine, and far exceed the typical vocabulary lists provided in vocabulary or spelling programs. This will set the habit of mind for noticing language as they are reading which will greatly increase the volume of new words acquired during pleasure reading.

Here's how to manage this process:

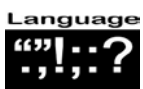
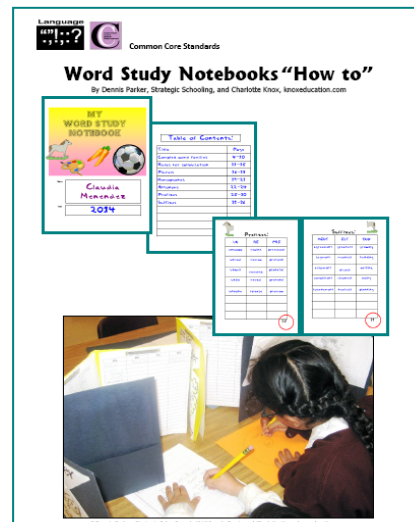
For spelling/phonics patterns:

1. Use your grade level language and foundational skills standards to determine which patterns you want the students to attend to. Post a piece of chart paper with the spelling pattern highlighted and a few words to start. Illustrate these words with pictograms to enhance comprehension and long term memory.
2. Tell the students to be on the look out for words that match this spelling pattern in their reading throughout the day. When a student finds a word they can either write it on the chart themselves, or if that's too hard to manage, have them write it on a slip of scrap paper and put it in an envelope attached to the chart or in a basket nearby. Make sure they sign their contribution so we can celebrate who “found” that word. This way allows multiple students to find the same words, and takes care of potential disappointment when a student discovers that a classmate has “stolen” his or her word.
3. Periodically add the collected words to the chart and talk with the students about what they are noticing about a particular pattern. Have the students highlight the target phoneme in the words after you or they add them to the class chart.
4. Ideally, students additionally collect these words themselves into their own word study notebook so that they have access to all of the words gathered over the course of the whole school year. For directions on how to set up a word studies notebook go to knoxeducation.com in the **Common Core Section** under **Language**.



Grow list for spellings of the long “e” sound in first grade, Dunlap, CA.

Grow lists are a concept of word sorts used by Marzano and in Words Their Way: Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling Instruction, by Templeton, Bear, Invernizzi, and Johnston. 2007 Prentice Hall.

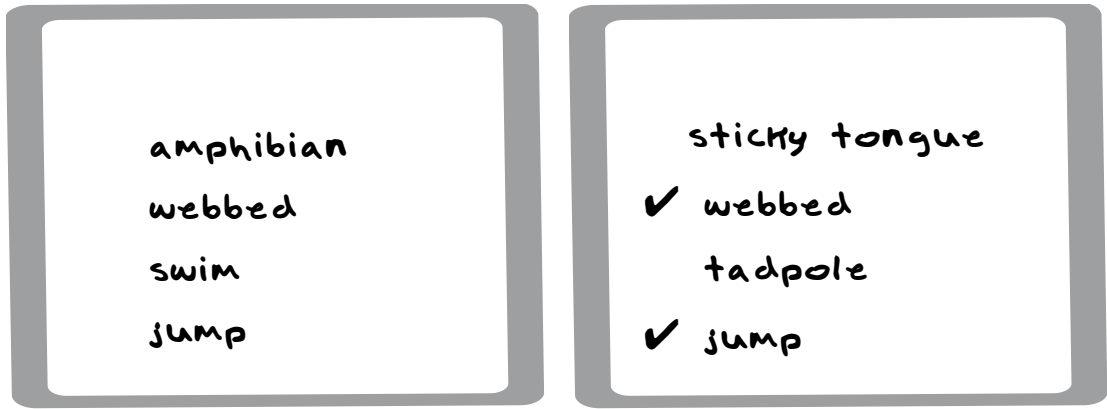


Grow Lists are part of vocabulary covered in the Common Core Standards under **Language: L4, 5, 6** and in **Writing W2** and **4**.

Grow Lists for a Unit of Study

Step 1: Introduce the topic and begin learning about it via reading, hands on experiences, multimedia, etc.

Step 2: Ask students to list as many words as they know so far about the topic on their white boards. Have students share these out to create a whole class brainstorm using the “no repeats” strategy. As each student shares their list, others check off the words they have on their lists which are the same, so that when it is their turn, they only share the words that haven’t been posted yet. Take care to call on the students with the fewest words first, so that they may shine, and the eager beavers will keep on working for you just so they can see their words posted.



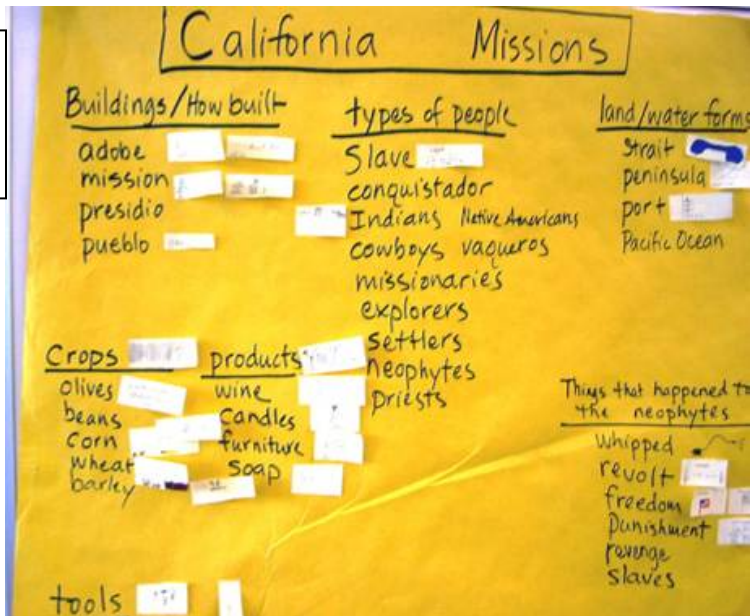
Step 3: Ask students to look over the big list and think of categories the words could be divided into, then re-build the list using those categories. Leave space so that this list can grow with student input throughout the unit of study.

Step 4: Ask students to illustrate the list by adding Post-It® sketches directly onto the chart.

“Grow list” for words out of a text book chapter on the California Missions. Student illustrations on “post its”, categories generated by fourth graders, Mountain View, CA.



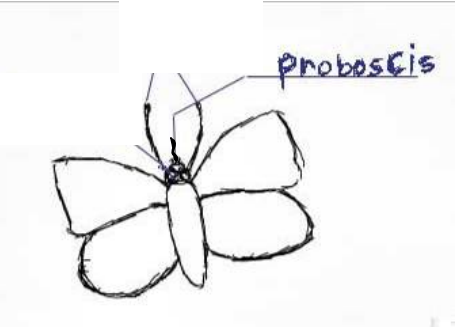
Word banks are covered in the Common Core Standards under “domain-specific” language in **Reading RI 4** and **Writing W2** and **Language L6**.



How to Write a Glossary

Glossaries provide definitions and visuals to help the reader of your informative/explanatory writing project understand specific vocabulary words about your topic. This will help your reader better comprehend the concepts and information you're sharing. In order to write a glossary in your own words, you might want to try this procedure:

1. Jot down notes about what the word means to you so far.
2. Look up the definition of the word in at least two places—online, in your textbook, in a dictionary (be careful to choose the right definition!), and in the texts you're reading as you research.
3. Re-write your own definition with ideas from the other 2-3 sources. Be careful not to copy full sentences, you may want to paraphrase by using synonyms, or borrowing phrases from each of the definitions you look up.
4. Add a visual to your definition to help the reader better remember your word.
5. Ask a partner to read the definition and see if they understand it. If they don't, add more detail or clarify until they can understand your definition. You can also add examples of the concept to the definition to help out.

WORD	DEFINITION	PICTURE OR EXAMPLE
<p>Proboscis</p>	<p>Long tubular structure attached to the butterfly's head which is used to suck nectar from flowers.</p>	

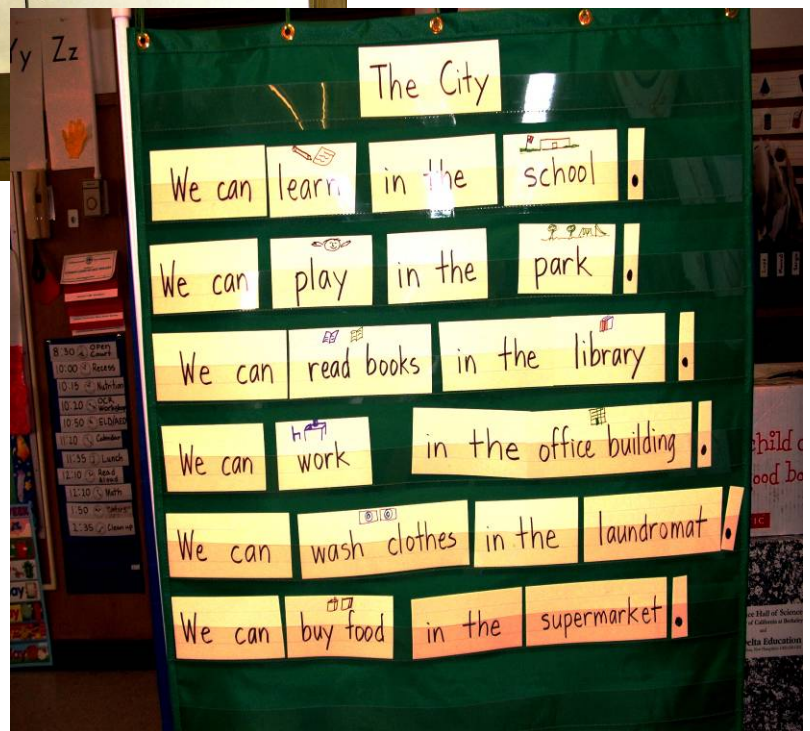


Informative/Explanatory Language Glossaries are covered in the Common Core Standards under "domain-specific" language in **Reading RI 4** and **Writing W2** and **Language L6**
 ©2014 Charlotte Knox, knoxeducation.com

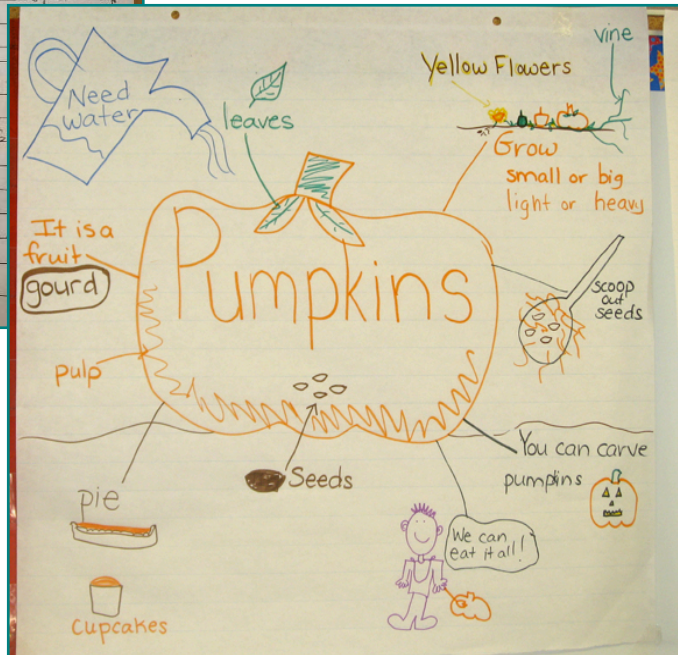
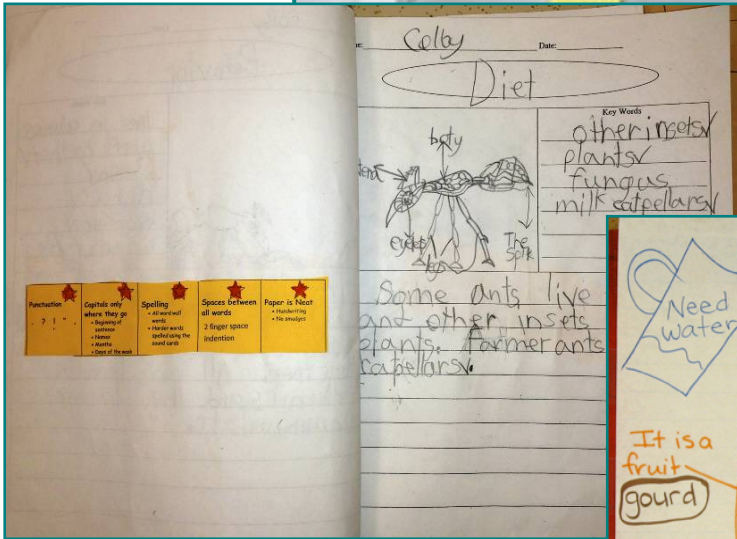
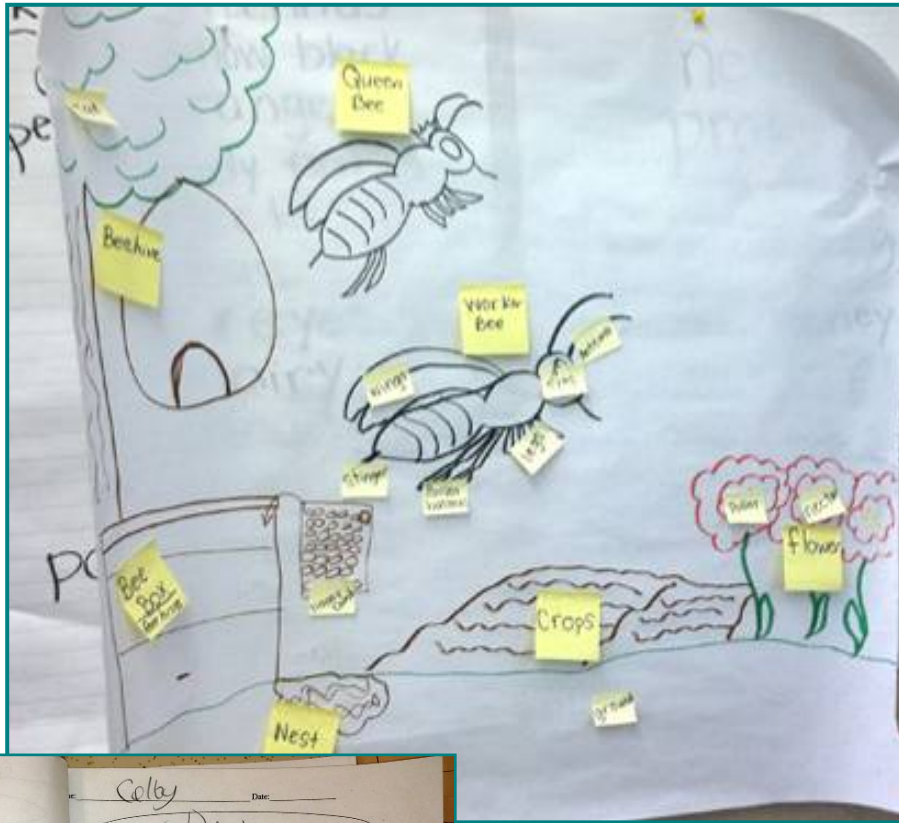
Pictorial Narrative Input

Adapted from Project Glad www.projectglad.com Marcia Brechtel, author and developer of the project.

1. Prepare (trace outline of what you will draw on chart paper with pencil—use overhead or document camera to make this easy)
2. Gather students and draw—talk!
3. Add to the chart
4. Use it for language practice



Pictorial Narrative Samples



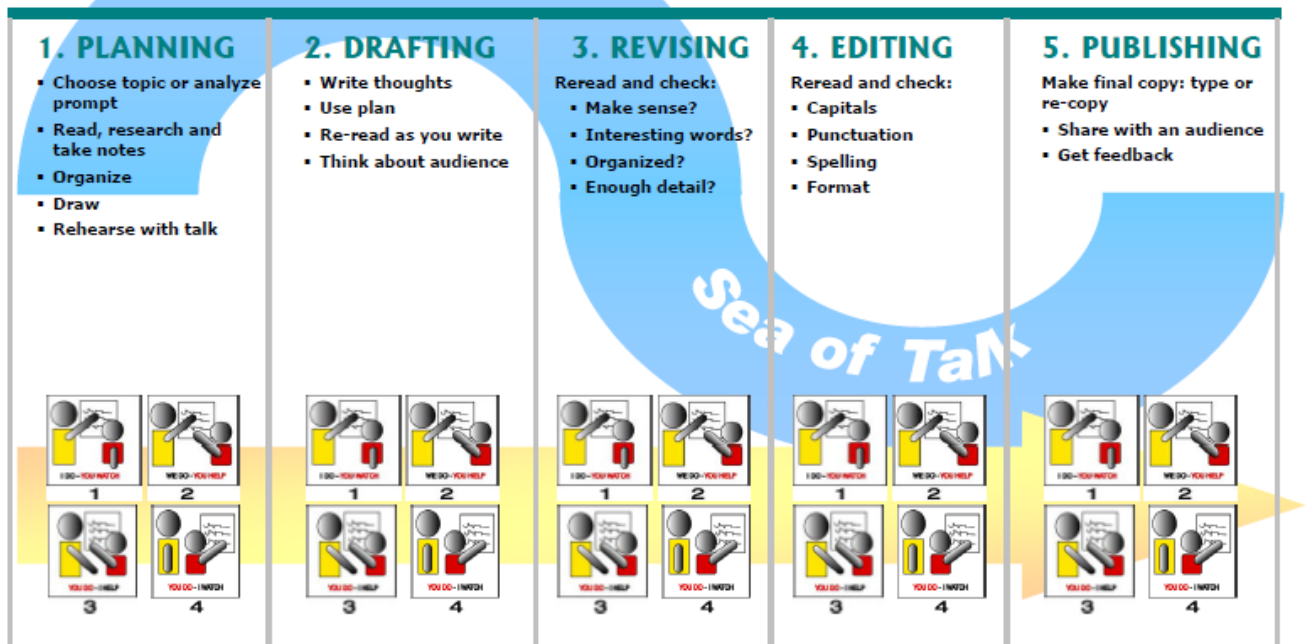
Teaching Writing Using Informative/Explanatory Writing

Common Core Standards



Sea of Talk

The Writing Process



Teaching Writing - Scaffolding

"Scaffolding is not simply a case
of breaking learning segments into scope and sequence.

Instead, it is a complex interactive process
whereby the teacher regulates levels of support
according to how well the children understand the task at hand."

"By that we mean that the child's behavior
signals the teacher, *I don't need your help anymore.*
I can do this by myself."

Dorn et. Al (1998). *Apprenticeship in Literacy*. York, ME: Stenhouse.

One of the most important aspects of the scaffolding process in writing is the celebration of the independence being earned along the way. The students need to be praised and validated for the skills that are becoming automatic. Understanding that automaticity means mastery provides a springboard for the student to take further risks and go deeper into the writing process. Writers invent themselves from successful feedback and praise experiences.

Most of us unfortunately learned to write through trial and error. We were given a writing assignment, and told how it would be graded. Then we faced the blank page and tried to figure out how to do the assignment to get the grade. Our efforts focused on getting a grade, not on improving our writing. When we are writing, our thinking should be about writing. Once we turned the paper in, we waited with trepidation to see how we did. The marks on our papers either became our "teachers" as reminders of what NOT to do next time, OR they simply made us feel a surge of resistance to any future writing tasks. As a result, many of us do not enjoy writing. This is not the way to train writers. However, it does scare students into copying someone else's voice and style. Writing instruction is sabotaged when students only focus on completing assignments during the K-12 experience. Students learning to write in this way will never get to the depth necessary to be successful in college.

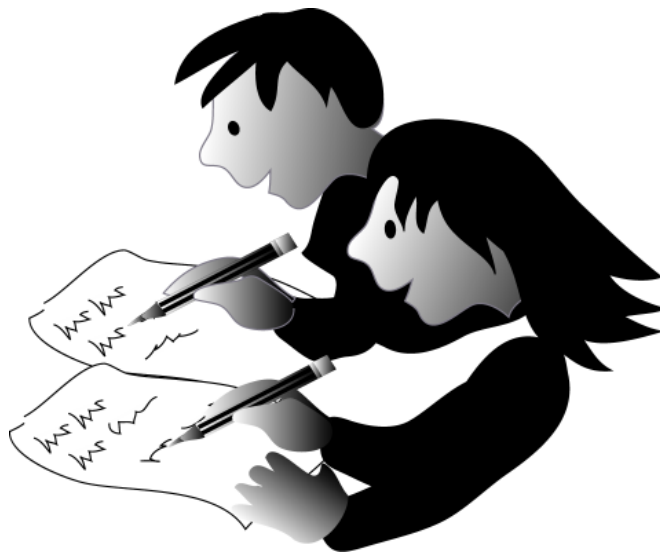
The most successful approach to teaching writing we have found with today's students is to honor the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model of Instruction. The model is shown in the graphic on the previous page. To make this paradigm work, 1) we first model the process through writing in front of the students OR through showing them examples of that writing type. Next, 2) we identify the steps or processes involved with producing that genre and list these in student friendly language. After that, 3) we write another sample piece with input from the class. This is often called "shared writing" or "language experience". Finally, 4) we provide guided writing experiences through mini-lessons preceding an independent writing period. During this phase of the model, 5) teachers can pull small groups of students to re-teach or extend the process based on individual progress with understanding writing skills. Differentiating for the language needs of English learners can also be offered during these small group sessions.

When this supportive flow is offered to student writers they become able to independently write a variety of complex forms of writing as indicated by the grade level standards for their age group. If students are still having difficulty, it's a signal to the teacher that perhaps a more gradual release of responsibility is called for. The teacher can ask him or herself, "Did I model enough? Did we look at enough examples? Did we walk through the process as a group in shared writing? Have I provided support for vocabulary for English learners? Did I leave up the examples and checklists for reference as students write?" If the answer is no to any of the above...more support may be needed.

Teaching Writing - Scaffolding

As an example, we are choosing to provide a detailed explanation for teaching *descriptive writing* as a model for this section. Remember that using description in writing is a skill that extends across all grade levels and needs to be taught and revisited throughout elementary and middle school. The following pages show how descriptive writing instruction may look over a 6-week period. The first few pages in this chapter provide a template for lesson planning with reminders about what might happen during each phase of the model. Detailed notes for each phase follow the template and provide examples of the kinds of teaching charts that may be generated over this 6-week course of instruction. This process is repeated for each of the other genres explored in this book. The amount of time and the individual lessons can be planned by each teacher or grade level team based on the needs of the student writers and the constraints on the instructional schedule.

If necessary, for example, something new in writing could be taught with a single session each for modeling, shared writing, and guided writing. However, writing is a complex task, and most teachers will find it necessary to take more time to teach specific aspects of the writing process at hand. Direct explicit instruction must always be followed by a writing project or inquiry based activity to ensure integration of the material presented. The formula we prefer is: explicit instruction: 10/15minutes – writing practice: 20/30minutes – edit, debrief the process, and get response: 10/15 minutes. This provides for some variation in the classroom time and emphasis but ultimately allows for one hour of writing instruction, practice, support, review, editing, and reinforcement. Stand and deliver writing instruction does not stand alone without practice in writing. Worksheets regarding language conventions and rules are not writing practice; practice worksheets involve the subskills that lead to writing. SO, when we say practice the gradual release model related to descriptive texts, we are asking you to allow the students to **write descriptions** of something on a daily basis.



The Language Experience Approach

(Also Known as Shared Writing)



2

*"What I can think about, I can talk about.
What I can say, I can write about, (or someone can write for me).
What I can write, I can read"*

Van Allen & Allen, 1966

What is the Language Experience Approach?

An approach to language learning in which students' oral compositions are transcribed and used as materials of instruction for reading, writing speaking, and listening.

Why use the Language Experience Approach?

- Offers a **perfect match** between the English language the student controls and the reading task at hand.
- Provides a means for teachers to discuss in detail **how texts work** and how words are written within the context of a meaningful experience.
- Demonstrates **conventions of writing**--spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Supplies reading material in the classroom that is meaningful and **readable for all students**.
- Focuses students on **composing**, and leaves the writing of the material to the teacher.
- Helps students see **new possibilities** for their own writing. Many students can share orally material which is far more complex and interesting than what they are able to write independently.
- Aids students to see how to **organize their writing** in terms of sequence, categories of information, and transitions.
- Builds a **sense of community** as class events, feelings, and thoughts are shared and written down.
- Enables both students and teachers to **gain confidence** in their writing ability.

The Language Experience Approach:

How Do You Teach with It?

Step 1 - Language Experience Charts are Generated Around Key Concepts and Group Experiences

Examples:

1. Daily news from the class, or weekly summaries for parents
2. Writing from a shared experience: a field trip, school-wide event, science experiment
3. Retellings of favorite stories
4. Summaries of content area learning, i.e., social studies/science
5. Classroom observations of pets, plants, or science projects
6. Class rules and procedures

The teacher facilitates **much oral discussion** of the key concepts before, during, and after the group experience in individual, small group, and whole group contexts.

Teachers use sheltering techniques during these discussions to **support and extend** students' language use at their English language proficiency levels.

Examples:

Beginning and Early Intermediate use:

- Realia
- Opportunities to label
- Patterned language

Intermediate and Early Advanced use:

- Experience/discussion in small heterogeneous groups
- Read and research with support
- Negotiated responses to extend sentence patterns

Advanced use:

- Independent writing of some portions with white boards
- Focus on word choice, style, and voice

The Language Experience Approach:

Step 2 - Generate the Language Experience Chart

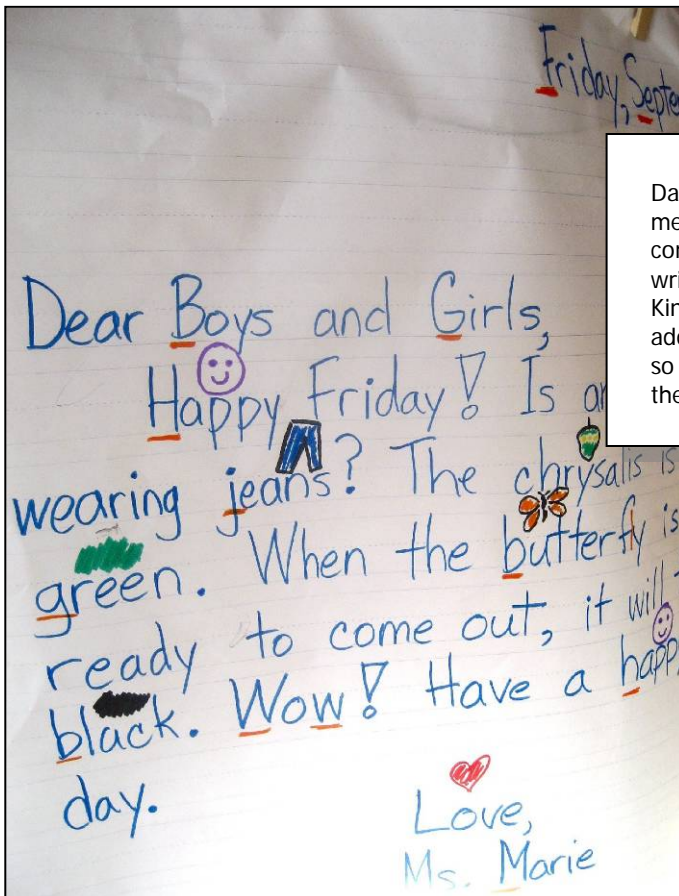
During these shared writing sessions the teacher and students compose writing collaboratively. They discuss the writing together to choose topics, select words, and create the meaning they want. The teacher acts as a guide, not a director of the material. While acting as a scribe for the class she enables students to compose far more complex material than would be possible for students writing on their own. The teacher takes care to keep the experience democratic by avoiding suggestions such as "I would choose," or "I don't think that should come next" instead invites their judgment with questions such as "What do you think about...?" or "Does that fit in here next?"



2



3



Daily news or morning message is one of the most common uses of the shared writing approach. This Kindergarten teacher has added doodles and graphics so that students can "read" the message on their own.

The Language Experience Approach:

Step 3 - Work the Text

Language experience charts provide contexts for **teaching English language print conventions**.

- **Key words, concepts and phrases** should be lifted from the chart and listed on word banks for future reference as students engage in independent reading and writing on the topic.
- **Phonics, spelling, word origin** elements can be highlighted in context, then taught and extended during future lessons.
- **Grammatical structures and concepts** may be discussed in this context
- **Concepts about print and punctuation** of English may be noted.

Shared Writing/Language Experience Model With “Work the Text” Sample

- Add “ed” for past tense: planted, placed, covered, watered
- Has capital letter for a day of the week (Tuesday)
- Uses sequence words: first, next, finally
- Uses “pl” blend: planted, placed
- Using ! shows excitement!

We planted green beans on Tuesday.
First we put soil in the cup. Next we dug
a hole with our finger. We placed one
bean seed in each hole. We covered the
seed with dirt. Finally we watered the
plants so that they can grow!

The Language Experience Approach

Management: Use LEA charts to Support Independent Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking.

- Refer to charts during class discussions.
- Illustrate elements of the charts with small “doodles” where possible.
- Type up and distribute group generated charts for independent reading material.
- Enter key vocabulary into personal word dictionaries.
- Highlight phonics/spelling elements and extend with word study instruction.
- Leave charts posted for as long as possible in the classroom.

Using the LEA throughout the School Day

Summaries

Using LEA to scaffold story retellings/summaries teaches students the important skill of summarizing. Often this is a **tested** skill, not a **taught** skill.

1. Facilitate students oral retelling of a Read Aloud by providing the signal words of story sequence:
 - In the beginning....
 - Next.....
 - And then.....
 - After that.....
 - Suddenly.....
 - Finally.....
 - At the end....
2. Help students keep track of the retelling by using the book illustrations and/or drawing “doodles” on the chalkboard.
3. Have students tell each sentence of the retell, and then record their ideas on chart paper. You may list student names next to each contribution, then have students copy and illustrate each section to make up a class book.

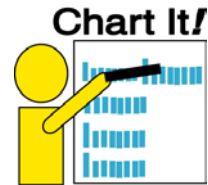
The Language Experience Approach: Using LEA Charts to Summarize Information in Nonfiction Books

1. Have students restate what they have learned in their own words. Scaffold this discussion by providing word banks of key vocabulary illustrated with simple "doodles" where possible.
2. Have students dictate to you the information in whatever format you are expecting them to be able to eventually write on their own.

For example:

Beginning/Early Intermediate ELs or K-1st students:

- Lists
- Labels on drawings
- Brief phrases and captions on drawings or diagrams
- Patterned sentences (Frogs can____, Frogs can _____ etc.)



Intermediate ELs or 1st-3rd grade students:

- Notes on topic
- Question/answer re: the topic
- Simple paragraphs with topic sentence and supporting details
- Graphic organizers/Matrices
- Step by step directions.
- Simple reports organized by topic
- Observation journal



2



3

Advanced ELs or 3rd-8th grade students:

- Note taking format
- Report outline
- Multi-paragraph report
- Cause/effect, problem/solution, other nonfiction text structures
- Multiple writing genres: (for example: persuasive essay, interview, etc.)

3. Have students read aloud the charts as you develop them. Leave them posted as references for information and spelling. Students may also recopy/type these selections and illustrate them in order to produce class books about content area topics in school.

The Language Experience Approach: Using the LEA after a Fieldtrip

LEA is the ideal way to record the thoughts and responses to a fieldtrip. Be sure to create these charts with students as soon as you can after a fieldtrip experience.

1. Have students orally discuss the fieldtrip. Try having them start the discussion in small groups or pairs to get everyone involved. Let students discuss the experience in their primary language when possible. Try to group students with a more bilingual "language broker" who can translate the small group discussion to the whole class when the LEA chart is being built.
2. Scaffold the discussions with a word bank of key vocabulary illustrated by "doodles" or with actual artifacts from the trip: maps, brochures, photos, etc.
3. Have students dictate their recollections to you in whatever format you would like them to be able to write independently:
 - Fieldtrip sequence
 - Paragraphs by topic
 - Graphic organizers/matrices
 - Question/answer
 - Letter
 - Travel journal
4. Have students recopy and illustrate these charts when appropriate to make class books.



2



3

Using the Language Experience Approach with Essay Writing

Organizing Writing:

The Language Experience Approach provides the ideal vehicle for showing students how essay writing works. Use the following steps to write several essays together as a class. Always begin with topics that students know a lot about already. Motivating topics for upper elementary students may include:

- Recess activities
- Sports they play
- Recent class projects, fieldtrips, performances
- Holidays
- Class pets
- School-wide events
- Classroom rules and procedures

You can also use the same procedure to introduce younger students in grades K-2 to report writing. Once again, choose a topic the students already know a lot about. This works really well as a culminating activity for a thematic unit on any social studies or science topic. It shows students how to organize information in preparation for beginning report writing.

The LEA charts can be used directly to create a class book on a topic by cutting/pasting the sentences into an enlarged book and inviting students to illustrate each page. See the Matrix Charts (on page 98-99 of this document) for a way to organize animal reports in primary grades.

<i>Rabbit</i>	<i>Big cage</i>	<i>Ms. Knox bought her at a breeder</i>
<i>Cute</i>	<i>Ears move to hear</i>	<i>Needs full water bottle</i>
<i>Eats pellets</i>	<i>Poops only in her cage</i>	<i>Gentle with kids</i>
<i>Soft fur</i>	<i>Brown and white</i>	<i>Goes home with students on weekends</i>
<i>Scratches</i>	<i>Likes carrots</i>	<i>Short tail</i>
<i>Wet nose</i>	<i>Chews on wood</i>	<i>Lies flat when scared</i>
<i>Hops around classroom</i>	<i>Dwarf lop-eared</i>	<i>Need permission to take home</i>

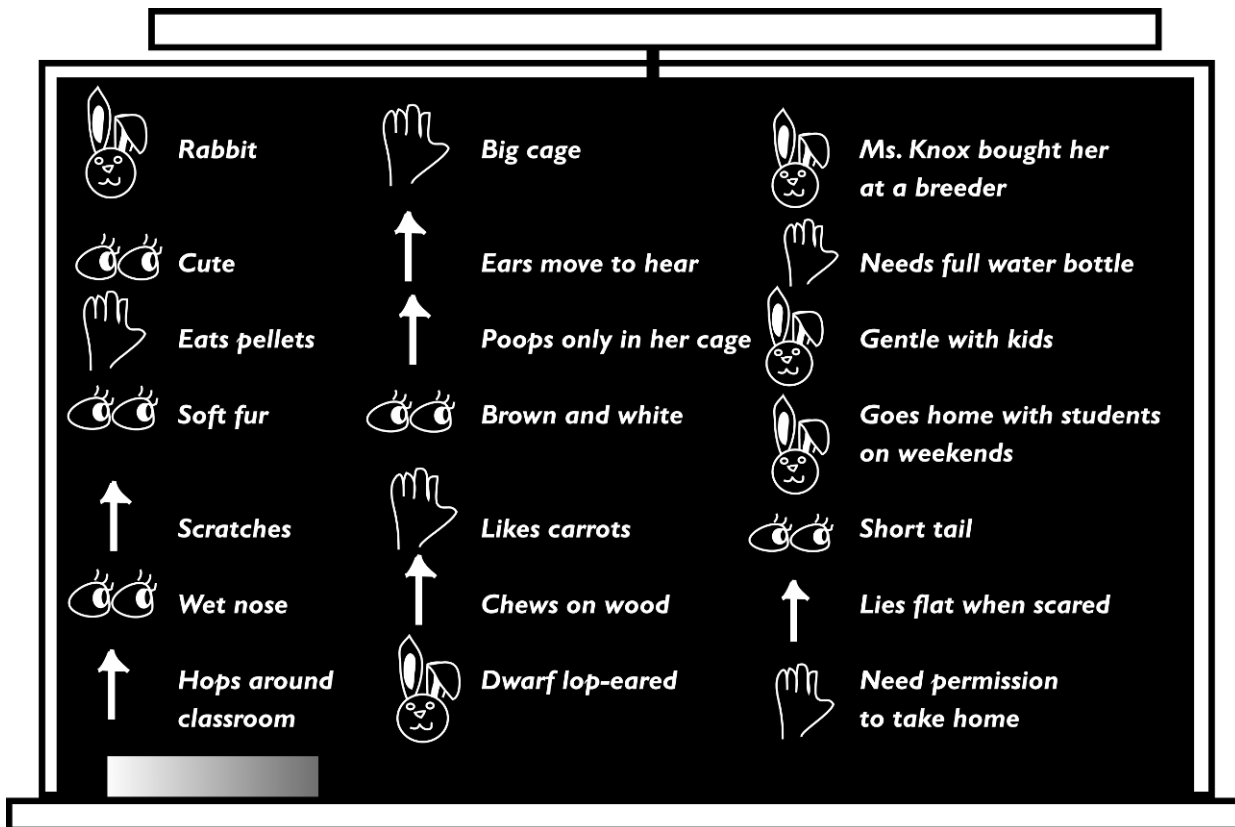
Adapted from *Information Please*, Allene Flanders ©Knox Education 2007

Essay Writing

Showing Students How to Organize Writing with the Language Experience Report

Step One: Brainstorm

1. Choose a topic with which the students are highly familiar.
2. Have students work in pairs or teams to brainstorm as much as they know about the topic. Use Cooperative Talk strategies and Interactive Teaching Strategies to make sure everyone participates in the discussion. You may have students browse/review books on the topics during this phase.
3. Have students share out what they discussed and chart all of their contributions on the white board or chart paper. Use the strategy "no repeats" to make students listen to each other. After one person shares an idea or fact, others cannot share the same thing. If they have used individual white boards or lists on scratch paper to record their brainstorming session, they can check off each item as it is shared out to keep them focused on what has already been said.



Adapted from *Information Please*, Allene Flanders ©Knox Education 2007

Essay Writing

Showing Students How to Organize Writing with The Language Experience Report

Step Two: Get organized

1. Tell the students, "good writing is always organized." Show them how nonfiction books or articles in magazines are organized into topics. An ideal vehicle for this with younger students is a big book. Ask students to review the brainstorm charts and see if they can find things that go together in the same category. If students do not have a lot of experience with categorizing, you will want to show them a category or two first.
2. Choose a color, or symbol to mark each item as you find the things that go in the same category. See the example below.
3. Work through all of the material until you have categorized it all.
4. Next tell the students that each category needs to be written about in the essay in a logical order. Look at the list of topics that was determined by the class and think out loud with the students about the order for writing about these. Depending on the experience level of the students, you may need to coach the class on what makes the most sense. List the topics again on a chart in outline form (Roman numerals and letters), or numbers only for younger students.

I. Kind of rabbit

- a. Dwarf Lop-eared*
- b. Gentle with children*
- c. Purchased at a breeder by Ms. K Knox*

II. How she looks

- a. Floppy ears*
- b. Brown and white soft fur*
- c. Wet nose*
- d. Short tail*

III. How she behaves

- a. Hops around classroom*
- b. Poops in her cage*
- c. Gets flat when scared*

IV. Taking care of Rosie

- a. Needs water*
- b. Eats pellets*
- c. Likes carrots*
- d. Goes home with students on weekends*
- e. Need permission to take home*



2

Chart It!



Essay Writing

Showing Students How to Organize Writing with The Language Experience Report

Step Three: Write the Essay Together

1. Use the outline, brainstorm chart (see page 78-79 this section) with color/symbol coding, and more chart paper to construct a class essay on the topic. Use the same basic procedures for Language Experience explained earlier in this section for the composing part of the lesson. Assure full participation of students regardless of English proficiency level by including cooperative talk strategies and interactive strategies for this phase. Have one student check things off the brainstorm chart as they are used for the class essay. Re-read sections as you write them together to check for flow and organization.
2. Once the essay is finished, you can use highlighters to identify the features of the essay. For example you may be working on:
 - Transition words
 - Topic sentences
 - Concluding sentences
 - Strong verbs
 - Theme
 - Supporting evidence
3. Highlight these features and create call-outs with all-large post-its to label the parts of the essay. Leave this essay up for students to refer to as they follow similar procedures for writing on their own independently or in collaborative groups.

All About Our Class Pet
By the Students in Room 6

Our class pet is a dwarf lop-eared rabbit. Ms. Knox bought her for our class at a rabbit breeder's farm. She chose her because this breed is gentle with children. She has soft brown and white fur. Her ears flop down and almost touch the ground. She has a short stubby tail. Her black nose is always wet.

During the day we leave her cage open and she hops around the room. She only poops in her cage. If she gets scared by a loud noise or sudden movement she crouches down on the floor.

We all take turns taking care of Rosie. She needs water in her water bottle. We feed her pellets for food. Students who get permission from their parents can take her home for the weekend.

Adapted from *Information Please*, Allene Flanders ©Knox Education 2007

Examples for Language Experience Approach: Essays/Summaries

Father Serra
 Father Serra was born November 24, 1713 Majorica, an island near Spain. He was an excellent student. He worked as a missionary in Mexico. From 1758 to 1767 he was the administrator of the Apostolic College.

In 1769 Father Serra founded the first mission in Alta California, Mission San Diego de Alcalá. He founded 8 more missions in Alta California.

He walked thousands of miles.

He lived in his favorite mission, Mission San Carlos. His bed was made of wood. He died quietly of tuberculosis. He was 70 years old. He

Upper grade teachers can use Language Experience Approach (shared writing) charts to summarize with the students information learned in social studies. This teaches students how to organize multi-paragraph compositions while also helping the students retain the information about Father Serra.

This teacher is using the Language Experience Approach to show students how to go from a word bank of notes about a topic to constructing paragraphs in a summary of information. Note how the class has crossed off information as they have used it in their writing. Students often have trouble moving from a graphic organizer or list of notes to connected text in writing and this makes it explicit and concrete for everyone in class.

Writing Summaries

Martin Luther King, Jr.
 Word Bank

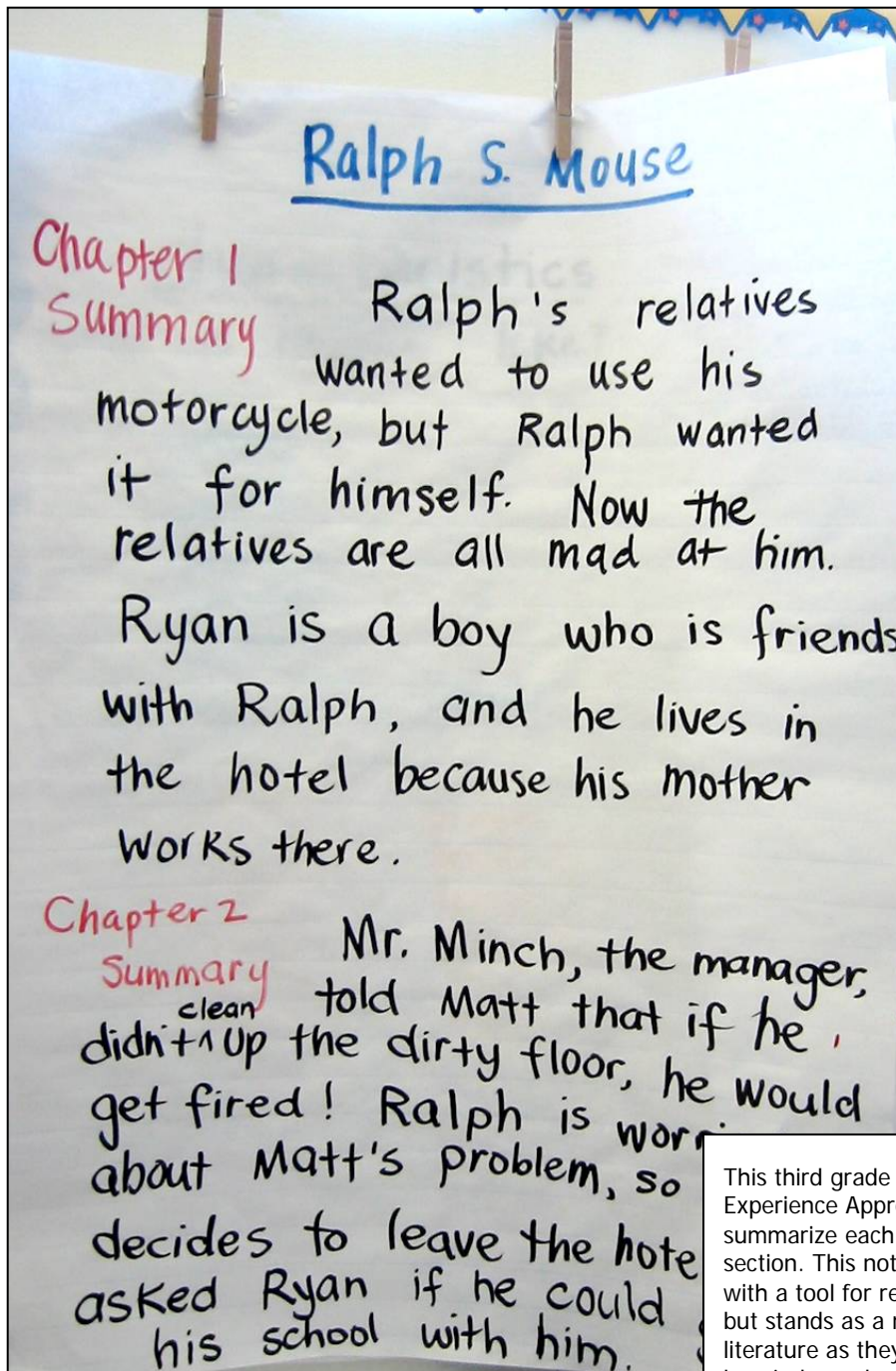
equal rights	freedom
minister	national holiday
civil rights	preach
believed	birthday 1/15/29
law	learning
bus	13-H.S.
1953	Atlanta, GA
jail	father
marches	decisions

Martin Luther King, Jr.
 Martin Luther King, Jr. was born January 15, 1929. He loved learning. When he was 13 years old he began high school. He grew up in Atlanta, Georgia.

He became a minister like his father. Black people didn't have equal rights. For example, they couldn't sit where they want.

Write that main reading and t signif

Examples for Language Experience Approach: Summaries



This third grade teacher uses Language Experience Approach (shared writing) to summarize each chapter after a read aloud section. This not only provides students with a tool for recalling events in the novel, but stands as a model for summarizing literature as they write their own reading logs independently.

This will help not only teach reading comprehension, but also provide a model for writing summaries about reading. In addition, if a student is absent he or she can refer to the chart to see what happened in a chapter that was missed.

The Language Experience Approach

References

Current Citations Below are all Referring to Original Work By:

Ashton-Warner, Sylvia (1963) *Teacher*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

Dixon, C. and Nessel, D. (1983) *Language experience approach to reading (and writing)*. Hayward, CA: Alemany.

Van Allen and Allen (1967) *Language Experience Activities*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Current:

Au, K. (1993) *Literacy Instruction in Multicultural Settings*. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace College Publishers.

Clark, E. R. (1995) "How did you learn to write in English when you haven't been taught in English?": The language experience approach in a dual-language program." *The Bilingual Research Journal*, summer/fall 1995, vol. 19, Nos. 3 & 4, pp. 611-627.

Miramontes, O., Nadeau, A., Commins, N. (1997) *Restructuring Schools for Linguistic Diversity: Linking Decision Making to Effective Programs*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Ovando, C. and Collier, V. (1998, second edition) *Bilingual and ESL Classrooms: Teaching in Multicultural Contexts*. Boston, MA: McGraw Hill.

Payne, C. and Schulman, M. (1998) *Getting the Most Out of Morning Message and other Shared Writing Lessons*. New York, NY: Scholastic.

Peregoy, S. and Boyle, O. (1997) *Reading, Writing, & Learning in ESL*. White Plains, NY: Longman Publishers. (There is a new edition to this book—ask the publisher.)

Richard-Amato, P. (1996) *Making it Happen*. White Plains, NY: Addison-Wesley Publishing Group.

Routman, Regie (1991) *Invitations*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Interactive Writing

Basic Procedure

PLEASE NOTE: It is critical that teachers know what each student understands about letters, sounds and concepts of print prior to using this technique. The teacher uses this information to help select the level of participation each student will take during the session.

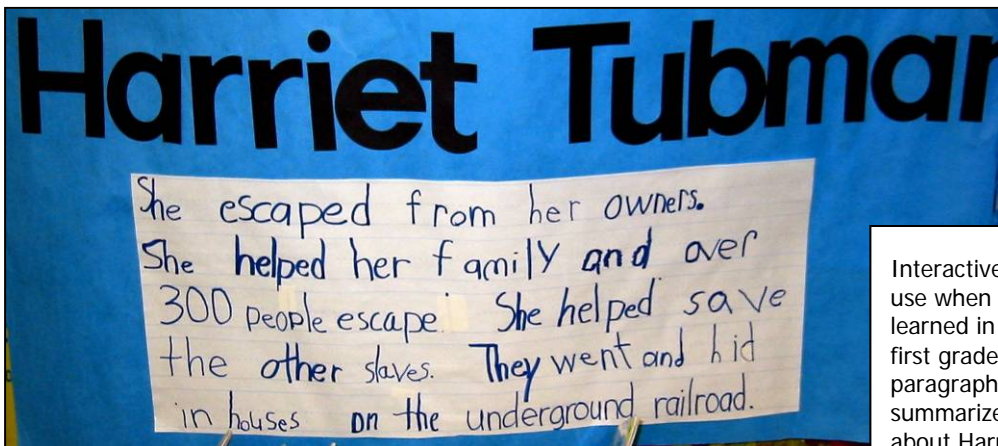
1. The teacher and children compose a short text. The subject may include the retelling of a familiar story, a classroom experience, a list for a recipe, labels for a science project, etc.
2. Once the message is decided upon, the teacher helps the children remember what will be written by repeating it with the children several times. Next, count how many words will be written in the message.
3. The teacher and children write the message word by word on a piece of chart paper. The teacher guides the children through the concepts about print as necessary throughout by reminding them of conventions such as where to start on the page, what to do at the end of a line, spaces between words etc. The teacher invites students to write words or letters within the text as they are able. Children may practice on a practice sheet before adding their bit to the chart. A letter chart, name chart, word wall, and teacher modelling on a chalkboard or "magnadoodle" provide additional supports where needed.
4. Words that are not known by the group are said slowly several times in order to be analysed for the sounds and predict letters that may appear in the word. Children may supply some or all of the letters. The teacher provides those not given by the children. During the process of constructing a word, the teacher reminds children of what they already know about words that may help them figure out a new word.
5. As each word is written the whole text is reread from the beginning in order that the children will know which word is to be written next.
6. It is important that the product of the interactive writing session be readable by the children. Post-it correction tape may be used to fix up any errors in letter formation or placement as the text is completed.
7. The resulting text is posted where all students may reread it independently throughout the day. Children will also refer to this text as a resource for their own independent writing.



2



3

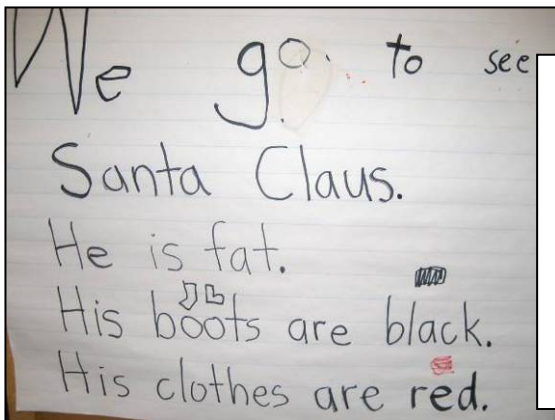


Interactive writing is an ideal tool to use when reviewing new information learned in the content areas. This first grade class has written a paragraph together which summarizes what they have learned about Harriet Tubman.

Interactive Writing



Interactive writing can play a dual role when it is used to not only teach students how it works, but the writing itself is teaching the grade level standards as well as reminding students about reading strategies and ...



This kindergarten teacher has used a combination of shared and interactive writing to show students how to write about seeing Santa Claus at a school assembly. The first four words of the first sentence have been written by the students in class because they are sight words the students already know. The rest of the text was provided orally by the students and written down by the teacher so that the students could read it back to themselves. The graphics for boots, black, and red were added to the chart as anchor points to help these emerging readers "read" this extended text on their

Assessment Considerations:

1. Teachers may observe the ability of individual children to contribute sounds and words to the text as an assessment during the lesson. During small group interactive writing sessions different colored pens are given to each student and the text is signed by the students at the end of the session. This provides a record of what was contributed by each student.
2. In order to involve all children in the experience, it is important that the teacher is aware of the individual abilities of the students. The teacher is then able to invite children to contribute successfully.

Further Reading:

- Button, Johnson, and Furgerson (1996) "Interactive writing in a primary classroom." *The Reading Teacher*, 49 (6). 446-494.
- Dorne, et al. (1998) *Apprenticeship in Literacy*. pp.58-64. Stenhouse.
- Fountas and Pinnell (2001) *Interactive Writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- (1996) *Guided Reading. Good First Teaching for All Children*. pp. 23-38, 164, 170, 182. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Swartz, S. et al. (2002) *Interactive Writing and Interactive Editing*. Carlsbad, CA: Dominic Press.

My Sentences for the week of _____

Winter is a cold season.

In winter see rain and cloudy skies.

In winter we can play in puddles.

We need to wear warm clothes in winter.

Weekly Routine for Informative Writing

Building English Language: reading, writing and thinking skills – *a weekly plan moving from receptive (reading and listening), to productive (speaking and writing):*

Prep:

1. Select a topic that integrates with something you want them to learn about in science, social studies, their ELA anthology, or a seasonal theme
2. Gather pictures, realia, read aloud books, etc. about the topic

Monday: Introduce the new topic

- Connect known to new
- Use photos, realia, pictures
- Read aloud
- Begin building a word bank with pictures in categories
- Shared writing—1-3 sentences

Tuesday:

- Learn more about the topic
- Add to the word bank
- Shared and/or interactive writing
- Independent writing/Drawing

Wednesday

- Learn some more
- Add words to the bank
- Interactively write more
- Independent writing/drawing

Thursday:

- Students practice saying what they know orally—pairs and whole group , try echo (one student speaks, the others echo afterwards : “Jose said he knows that pumpkins have seeds.”
- Students write independently
- (type up shared/interactive sentences into a little book that students can read and illustrate on Friday)

Friday:

- Guided “editing” (color code capitals and ending punctuation)
- Students share their writing by reading out loud to group
- Make a class book or individual books with their writing
- Give them a copy of the class shared writing to read to parents and illustrate at home

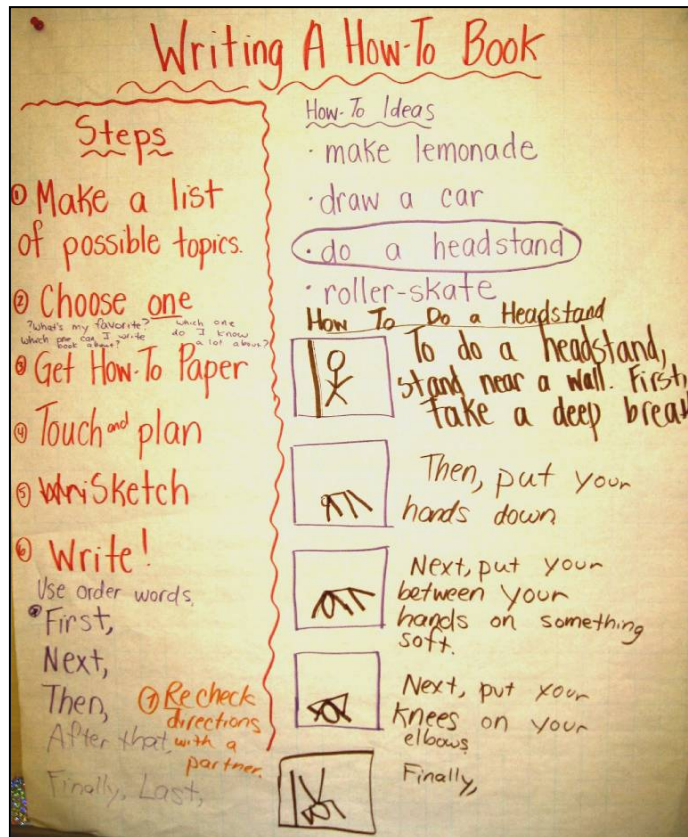
Procedural Writing: Informative/Explanatory Writing

"How-to" Book

Lucy Calkins in her series, *Units of Study for Primary Writing*, calls this sort of writing "teaching texts" and begins this series of lessons by having kids graduate into not only becoming writers, but teachers.

Children know how to do all sorts of things and engaging them in writing about how to do them teaches them to be clear and precise.

As always, using models of procedural writing and modeling the process yourself for the students first will help them understand the features of this genre.



Examples of "How To" Writing include:

How a Book Is Made (Reading Rainbow Book)

by [Aiki](#)

How to Make an Apple Pie and See the World (Dragonfly Books)

by Marjorie Priceman

How to Draw Cartoon Animals (Christopher Hart Titles)

by Christopher Hart

National Geographic Publishing - www.ngschoolpub.org

The "Windows on Literacy" series contains some leveled reading titles and big books with a "how to" theme. For example, "You can make a pom-pom" or "Making Raisins" in the emergent science series.

Benchmark Education - www.benchmarkeducation.com

"How to" books that are clearly written and include engaging topics and photographs of each step.

How to Write a “How-to” Book

Informative/Explanatory Writing

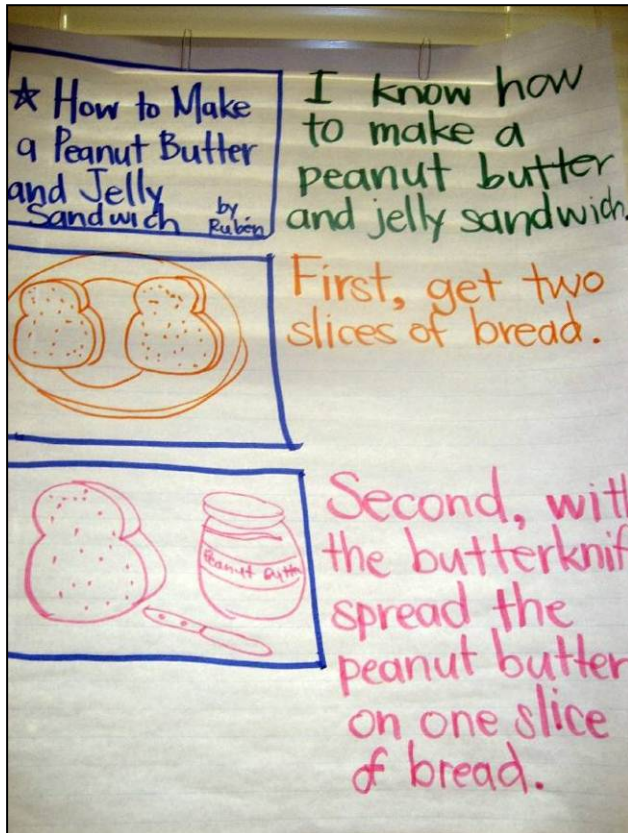
Chart It!



1. List things you could teach people how to do.
2. Choose one to write about.
3. Plan the steps on paper and draw pictures about the steps if you want to.
4. Write about each step in order.
5. Write a list of things you will need to have on the first page of your book.
6. After you write your book, read it to a friend and see if they can follow your directions.
7. Change anything you need to so that they can learn from your book.

Adapted from Calkins, L. (2005) *Units of Study, Nonfiction Writing: Procedures and Reports*.
Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Example of Teacher Modeling for Informative/Explanatory Writing



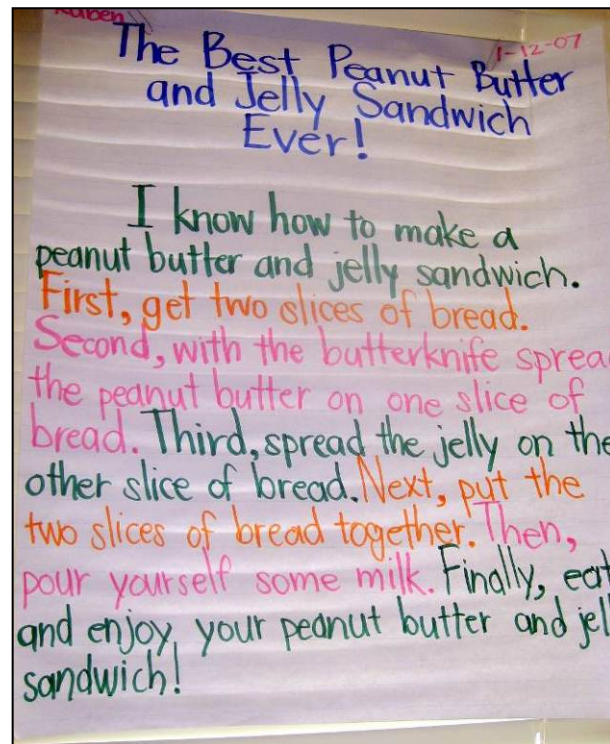
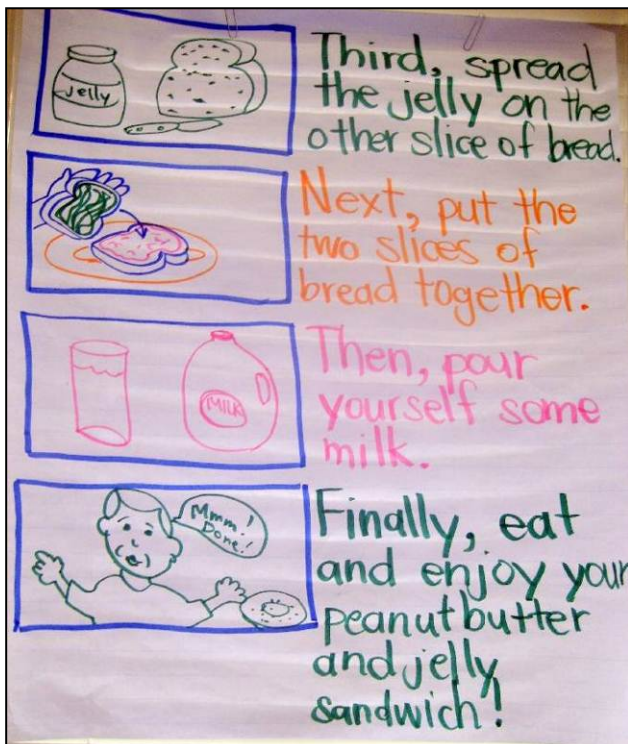
This first grade teacher has modeled all of the steps for writing a simple paragraph about how to make a sandwich.

First he used a hands-on experience and drawings to help him see the steps and rehearse the language to describe them.

Then he took notes to go with each picture.

Finally he reassembled the notes into a simple paragraph.

With explicit modeling, even young children can write about multi-step procedures.



Writing Topic Sentences

Step One: Pre-writing (Brainstorming)

Choose an easy and familiar topic to write about as you initially teach the structure for these different kinds of topic sentences. A popular topic most students know a lot about is recess. Have students talk in pairs about what they know about recess, and then list 2-3 ideas about recess on their white boards. Share these out to make a large class list using the “no repeats” strategy. Call on one person to share their list, then others check off duplicates on their own boards and only share what is different when you get to them.

<i>RECESS</i>	
<i>fun</i>	<i>play tetherball</i>
<i>running</i>	<i>snack</i>
<i>drink water</i>	<i>exercise</i>
<i>see friends</i>	<i>outside</i>
<i>talk</i>	<i>hot</i>
<i>play kickball</i>	<i>yard duty</i>
	<i>bell</i>

Step Two: Try out some of these ways to explain the main idea of your paragraph in a topic sentence:

Simple Main Idea Sentence:

Write a short simple sentence that states the major point you will be making in your writing:

Examples:

Recess is an enjoyable time of the school day.

A favorite type of cookie for everyone is the chocolate chip.

Number Statements

Using a number word in your topic sentence can be a good way to grab your reader's attention. Try these number words:

two **several** **some** **three**
four **a number of** **a few** **a couple** **many**

Examples:

*Chocolate chip cookies require **several** important ingredients.*

***A couple** of people I know have started raising chickens in their yards.*

"and, but, or" Statements

Write compound sentences using a conjunction.

Examples:

*You can be successful raising chickens, **but** you need to make sure you have plenty of space in your yard.*

*To bake a delicious cake you need to gather all the necessary ingredients **and** make sure you have the right pan.*

Question and Statement Topic Sentences

Grab your reader's attention by asking a question and then answering it.

Examples:

Do you love chocolate chip cookies as much as I do? Let me tell you how to make them.

Have you ever thought about raising chickens in your backyard? It's easier than you think.

Occasion/Position Statements

The **occasion** is the reason you are writing about the topic, and the **position** is what you will prove or explain.

Good starter words for occasion/position statements:

after **before** **even though** **if** **whenever**
unless **since** **until** **when**

Examples:

***If** you decide to raise chickens, you need to have plenty of space in your yard.*

***Whenever** you bake a cake, make sure you measure all the ingredients carefully.*

Cues, Sequences, and Transition Words for K-3

Transition Words Describing Importance:



the best

the most important

the first interesting



the next best

the next most important

more interesting



the least best

the least important

the most interesting

the worst

not important

not interesting

Contrast Cue Words: Describing Size or Quantity:



❖ best

❖ most

❖ all

❖ largest

❖ biggest

❖ huge



↑ almost

↑ more

↑ many

↑ larger

↑ bigger

↑ large-sized



▪ some

▪ some

▪ only

▪ equal to

▪ big

▪ medium-sized



◆ worst

◆ least

◆ fewest

◆ smallest

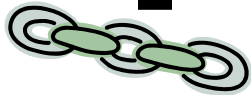
↓ little

↓ fewer

↓ smaller

↓ small-sized

◆ tiny



Linking Transition Words: to link two ideas together

To add information

+ again
+ also
+ and
+ another
+ as well
+ consequently
+ furthermore
+ in addition
+ in the same way
+ moreover
+ plus
+ still another
+ too

Opposition/change

↗ although
↗ besides
↗ besides
↗ conversely
↗ except
↗ however
↗ in spite of
↗ instead
↗ nevertheless
↗ not only
↗ otherwise
↗ yet

Timing *(see also next page)*

🕒 after
🕒 after that
🕒 at the same time
🕒 before
🕒 before this
🕒 last
🕒 next
🕒 soon
🕒 still
🕒 then
🕒 when
🕒 while

To give examples

➔ a similarity
➔ in fact
➔ on the one hand
➔ on the other hand
➔ a further example
➔ another example
➔ for example
➔ for instance
➔ furthermore
➔ likewise
➔ moreover
➔ one example of
➔ similarly

Reason/conclusion

★ as a result
★ because
★ in conclusion
★ in the end
★ is
★ since
★ so
★ therefore
★ thus

Speaking & Listening Language



Cues and Transition words are covered in SL4 Speaking and Language and W 1 and W3 in Writing Standards in the Common Core Standards

©2014 Charlotte Knox, knoxeducation.com

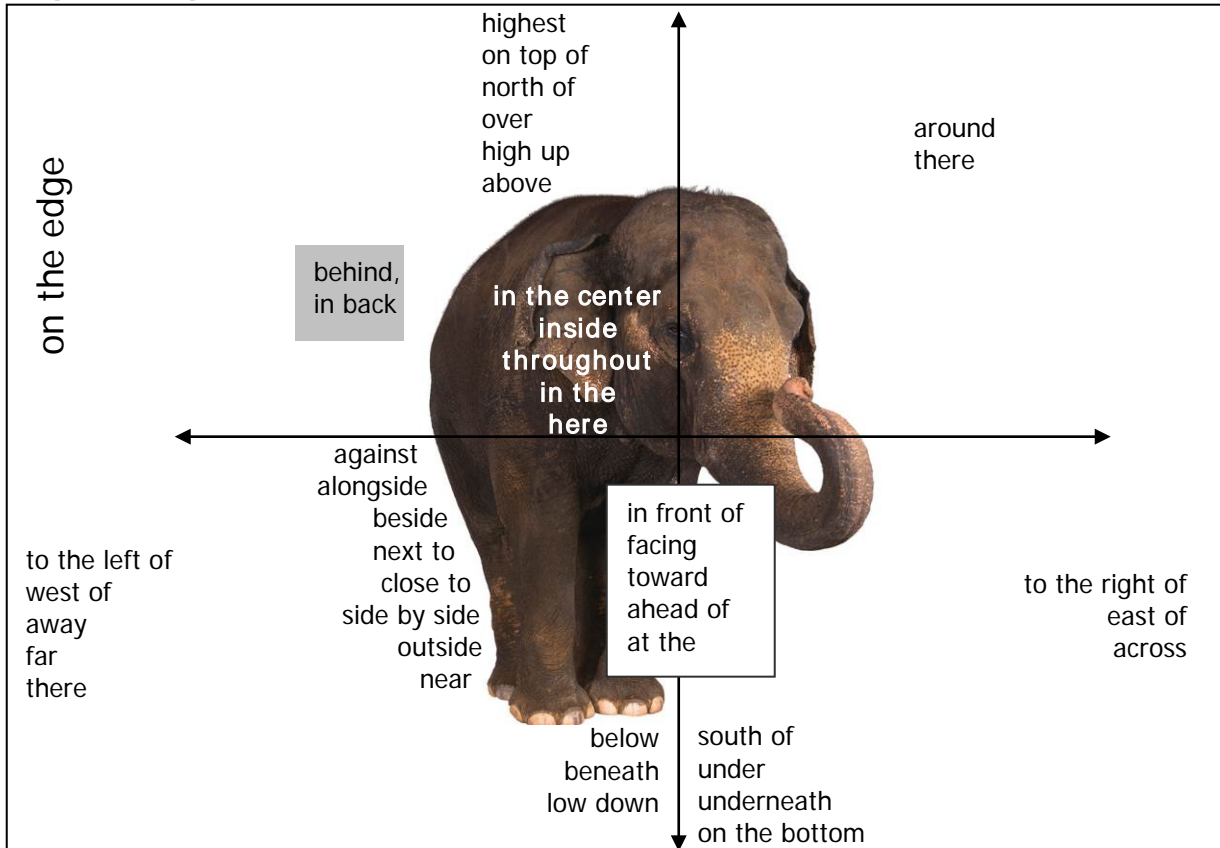
Cues, Sequences, and Transition Words for K-3

Cause/Effect Cue words: When words are needed to signal cause and/or effect.



because	as a result	as a consequence
by	since	this is the reason
then	so that	
unless	therefore	

Space Sequence: When details are arranged spatially in relationship to one another.



Time Sequence: When some details occur before, during, or after others in time.

Beginning/PAST	Middle/PRESENT	NEXT	End/FUTURE
in the past	in the present		in the future
to begin with/the oldest/the earliest	currently/the most recent		
before	during		after
yesterday	today	tomorrow	the day after tomorrow
then	now	soon	until
last year	this year	next year	in a few years
before	during/meanwhile	after/afterwards	later
at the beginning	in the middle	so far	at the end
in the morning	before noon	in the afternoon	in the evening
by this time	at this instant	at the same time	since
first/previously	second/then	third/next	finally/last
yesterday	today	the next day	two weeks later/six months later



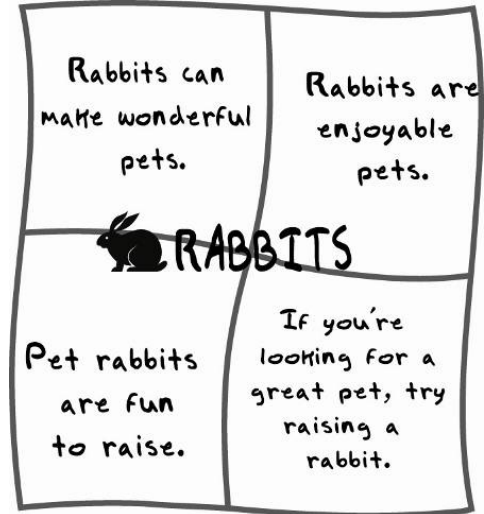
Crafting Conclusions in Informative/Explanatory Writing

Some possibilities:

Connect the beginning to the end by re-stating the statement in the introduction or topic sentence.

Trick:

1. Fold a paper in quarters
2. Writing the topic in the middle
3. Write 4 possible topic sentences for the topic
4. Choose one for the beginning and another for the end



Let the reader know what impact researching this topic had on the writer.

Learning about recycling has made me realize that even kids can have an impact on the future of our beautiful planet.

Make a personal connection between the topic you explored and your life.

I've learned so much about caring for animals as I have studied pet rabbits. I hope to learn about many more animals in the future.

Ask a question and answer it:

I wonder if _____ will be remembered as _____? I certainly believe so.

Share ideas with your team about how to help students writing conclusions:

Informative/Explanatory



Conclusions are covered in W3 and W8 of the Writing Standards in the Common Core Standards

Jumpstart



Whole Class Lesson



Differentiated Support



1



2



3

1st

Jumpstart

- Oral rehearsal of what they will write.
- Help with first section.
- Have them share first.

2nd

Guided

- Check in and guide during writing.
- Have them share during writing to extend their thinking and get ideas from each other.

3rd

Independent

- Can work productively after whole group lesson.
- Check in as finish and extend quantity and quality.

- 1. Jumpstart Group:** Students who are not able to use a new writing skill after a whole group lesson. Students who without additional reminders and support after a whole group lessons, would have trouble getting started with a new process. These might include beginning English learners who may not have understood the lesson, students who struggle with remembering the steps of a complex task, or students who just lack confidence in their ability to write. Bring them to a small group instruction area right after the whole group lesson and help them get started with extra support such as:
 - Additional opportunities to talk as a rehearsal to writing
 - Interactive or shared writing of the first part of the writing task
 - Word bank of vocabulary and ideas to include in the piece
 - Re-teach of skill
 - Language frame
 - Re-teach of steps in process listed for them on a small chart
- 2. Guided Group:** Students who get started with some ease, but may need further reminders and support along the way. You can rove the room and check in with them, or if the whole class is bogged down with a step, you can do some re-teaching mid-stream.
- 3. Independent Group:** these students are eager to get started and work quickly. However, they may need reminders about quality over quantity in writing, or you may have time to teach that group an extension of that skill once the other students are all underway. For example, while most students in the class are writing a basic description with sensory detail, these students may be ready to use literary devices such as metaphor, simile, or idioms in their descriptions.

Revision and Editing

Here are some examples of Editing lessons and tools available on our website knoxeducation.com

CCSS Editing is Fun Poster for Students

Editing is Fun!
Red Light
Green Light

Dogs make wonderful pets. They are always happy to see you. You can play ball with them and teach them to do tricks. There is nothing more cozy than snuggling on the couch with a soft and furry dog. Dogs have excellent hearing and will warn you with a bark if someone is approaching your house. I wonder we always say, Dogs are a man's best friend!

Green = Capitals
 Red = Ending Punctuation
 Yellow = Other punctuation: quotation marks, commas, apostrophes
 Orange = beginning of paragraph for indent
 Blue Dot = Read your writing backwards and say each word. Fix the spelling if it doesn't look right.

Common Core Standards
 Writing Standards that apply in the Common Core Standards W.5
 © 2013 Charlotte Knox, knoxeducation.com

CCSS Round Robin Revision for Students

Round Robin Revision

(My Name) _____ Writing _____

Reader

Reader

Common Core Standards
 Writing Standards that apply in the Common Core Standards W.5
 © 2013 Charlotte Knox, knoxeducation.com

CCSS Strengthen Writing with Synonyms and Vivid Details – color coding Lesson for Teachers

Improving Writing with Synonyms for "tired" words and "Show not Tell" vivid details

Step one: Write a boring narrative about a fun day such as this one:

The Fun Day
 Our class had a fun day when we went to the fire station. We saw many neat fire trucks. The firemen were really nice. There was a lot to see at the fire station. We really liked the uniforms they wear. Our favorite part was the siren. The hoses were cool. The trip to the fire station was really fun.

Step two: Identify and highlight the "tired" words and list synonyms for them:

Fun: amusing, interesting, enjoyable
Cool/neat: fascinating, spectacular, astounding
Liked/favorite: preferred, most entertaining

Step three: Identify and highlight in a different color the details that need description.

fire trucks	firemen	uniforms	siren	hoses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> gleaming red shiny huge covered with important equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enthusiastic friendly tall striding the truck 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> heavy lots of buckles big pockets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> blast loud fete the roar in our stomachs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> long heavy snaked

Common Core Standards
 Writing W.5 and Language: L.5
 © 2013 Charlotte Knox, knoxeducation.com

CCSS The Editing Machine for Teachers


The "Editing Machine"

This is a fun way to get students to help each other edit their pieces. You'll need to form groups of 3 or more ahead of time and have a timer handy. All students need to have a finished piece of writing—preferably the same assignment.

- Form groups and assign roles:
 - Capitalization
 - Punctuation
 - Format—neatness (checks indents, margins, and layout)
 - Spelling
- You may choose to assign a color to each role and have them make their corrections with their assigned color pen or pencil.
- Explain the task and review norms. Students are to only make corrections for their assigned role and are not to give comments about the writing during the editing machine.
- Set timer for an amount of time that will work with the length of the assignment (this will vary from 3-5 minutes or so).
- Have students begin with a single paper in front of each "editor".
- Tell the students to start the machine. When the timer goes off, the students pass papers to their right and repeat the process until each paper in the group runs through every editor in the machine.
- If students are going to publish these pieces, you may choose to collect them after the "machine" is complete and offer a final edit. For spelling errors, simply write the misspelled words on a Post-it and make students find them and fix them. For other kinds of errors, use the same editing marks and colors that were assigned to the editing machine.


Common Core Standards
 Writing Standards that apply in the Common Core Standards W.5
 © 2013 Charlotte Knox, knoxeducation.com

Animal Report Checklist

- Read about your animal.
- Take notes on the graphic organizer.
- Write a paragraph about each box.
- Use the main heading in the topic sentence.
Include supporting details.
- Paraphrase—  no copying
- Check for:
 - Capital at the beginning of each sentence
 - Punctuation
 - Spelling
 - Neat!

Animal Report Matrix	
Animal Report on _____ Name _____ Date _____	
Description Name _____	Habitat _____, _____
Behavior _____, _____	Diet _____, _____
Predators Naturally enemies are _____	Life Cycle

Animal Report Checklist

- Read about your animal.
- Take notes on the graphic organizer.
- Write a paragraph about each box.
- Use the main heading in the topic sentence.
Include supporting details.
- Paraphrase—  no copying
- Check for:
 - Capital at the beginning of each sentence
 - Punctuation
 - Spelling
 - Neat!

Animal Report Matrix	
Animal Report on _____ Name _____ Date _____	
Description Name _____	Habitat _____, _____
Behavior _____, _____	Diet _____, _____
Predators Naturally enemies are _____	Life Cycle

Animal Report Matrix


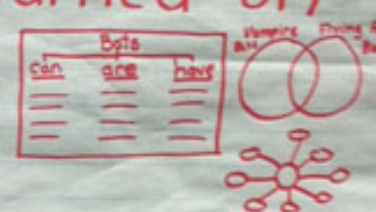
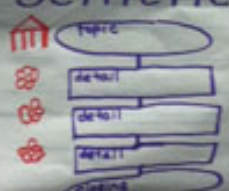

Animal Report on: _____

Name _____ Date _____

<p>Description _____ have_____.</p>	<p>Habitat _____ live_____.</p>
<p>Behavior _____ can_____.</p>	<p>Diet _____ eat_____.</p>
<p>Predators _____ enemies are_____.</p>	<p>Life Cycle</p>

How to Write Informative Text Organization Sample

How to write an Informative Text

1. Learn about a topic through research.

2. Write what you learned on a graphic organizer.

3. Plan your topic sentence, facts, and closing sentence on a writing planner.
Use your planner to draft.

4. Edit and Revise your draft
• Capitals **A B C** • Spelling **cat**
• Punctuation **?! .** • Neatness
5. Write your final draft!
Be proud of your hard work.


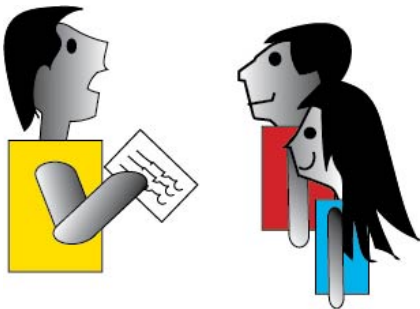


Elevator Talk

Getting fluent with what you want to say about a topic prior to writing

Having students practice brief spoken presentations about the topics they are researching prior to writing their formal papers really helps them figure out literally how to describe their understandings in “their own words.” After students have done all of their reading and note-taking, ask them to get in pairs or triads to practice “elevator speeches” (as if you were stuck in an elevator for 2 minutes and had to describe your feelings before the doors opened). Tell the students they will have 2 minutes to describe the most important understandings they have about their topics to their group.

Students will benefit from being allowed to have a single index card with bullet points reminding them of the key points they want to make. Give them time to do this and think about limiting them to 2-3 main points. Make sure they put their notes and books away before practicing their speeches, otherwise they will be tempted to simply read directly from their notes which won’t help them find ways to describe the information in their own words.



When everyone is ready set a timer and have the students give their 2 minute speeches to their partner or group. After each speech, allow a minute or two for questions or positive comments. Take turns until everyone has done a 2 minute version. Next do a round of the same speech reducing the time to a single minute. During the final round, give them 30 seconds only. Ask them ahead of time to think about what is the most important information to share.

Using the Speaking Score Checklist:

Once students become comfortable with speaking in front of each other, you can introduce the checklist as a rubric for giving feedback on speeches. I always let the students score me first. I’ll pass out the checklist, explain what each component is, and then do a very short speech that is not very well done. I’ll use a quiet voice, make no eye contact, and go off topic, for example. The students have fun giving the low scores to the teacher and giving you advice on how to make it better. Next do a quality short speech so that they can see what you mean about good body posture, use of visuals, etc. Let the students use the rubric in small groups first before trying it in front of the whole class. Ultimately, you can send your students to other classrooms to give their mini-speeches and have the other classroom teachers score their presentations for you. This can be a big win-win in terms of other students learning from each other, and not needing as much class time to listen to every talk.

SPEAKING SCORE CHECKLIST			
Name:	_____ # _____	Date:	_____
Title:	_____		
Checklist:		Your Rubric Score:	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Voice		4	
<input type="checkbox"/> Eye contact with audience		3	
<input type="checkbox"/> Visuals		2	
<input type="checkbox"/> Body Posture		1	

Common Core Standards that apply to this lesson:

Speaking & Listening



SPEAKING & LISTENING Standards:

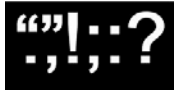
Comprehension and Collaboration

1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Language



LANGUAGE Standards:

Conventions of Standard English

1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

Knowledge of Language

3. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

4. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
5. Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

SPEAKING SCORE CHECKLIST

Name: _____ # _____ Date: _____

Title: _____

Checklist:

Voice



Eye contact with audience



Visuals



Body Posture



Your Rubric Score: _____

4



3



2



1



SPEAKING SCORE CHECKLIST

Name: _____ # _____ Date: _____

Title: _____

Checklist:

Voice



Eye contact with audience



Visuals



Body Posture



Your Rubric Score: _____

4



3



2



1

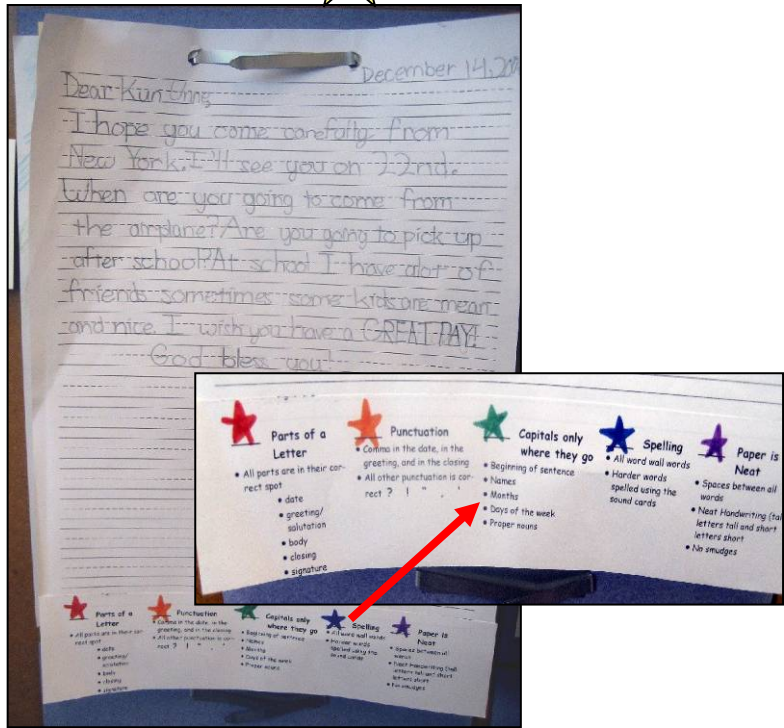


5 Star Writing

These checklists are used to evaluate students' writing that will be placed on our writing portfolio wall. Each month the students place one of their published pieces on the writing wall. The piece must have 4 or 5 stars to go up on the wall. Any less and they need to go back and rewrite it to fix mistakes.

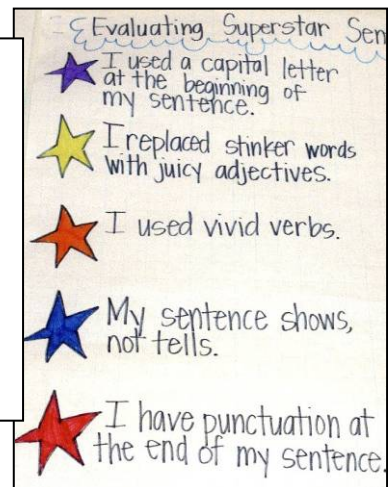
Each month I make a new rubric based on the lesson on which we are focusing, the genre of the writing, and grade level expectations. I also change the symbol each month (5 stars, 5 smiles, 5 hearts, etc.).

I put a star for each item they meet. The little slip gets glued at the bottom of their writing and put on the wall. The students get to color in their "stars" as they accomplish them. There is also a chart size copy of the checklist on the wall to which students can refer when they are writing.















This first grade teacher in Hacienda La Puente, California, created this simple explanation for what makes a "5-Star Writer." She and her students created the "rubric" at the right using the five-star process.







This led us to the development of the five-star checklists included in this section. These classroom rubrics can be adjusted over the course of the year to reflect the writing skills that students are learning. For example, one could add "show-not-tell" for description, or "use of strong words."









5-Star Checklist: Informative Writing

 TOPIC SENTENCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indent • Main Idea 	 INFORMATION & RESOURCES 	 CONCLUDING SENTENCE or PARAGRAPH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restate main idea, or • Make a connection 	 REVISE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sense? • Word choice? 	 EDIT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling • Capitals • Punctuation
---	--	--	---	---

 TOPIC SENTENCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indent • Main Idea 	 INFORMATION & RESOURCES 	 CONCLUDING SENTENCE or PARAGRAPH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restate main idea, or • Make a connection 	 REVISE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sense? • Word choice? 	 EDIT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling • Capitals • Punctuation
---	--	--	---	---

 TOPIC SENTENCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indent • Main Idea 	 INFORMATION & RESOURCES 	 CONCLUDING SENTENCE or PARAGRAPH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restate main idea, or • Make a connection 	 REVISE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sense? • Word choice? 	 EDIT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling • Capitals • Punctuation
---	--	--	---	---







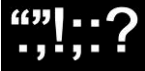
 TOPIC SENTENCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indent • Main Idea 	 INFORMATION & RESOURCES 	 CONCLUDING SENTENCE or PARAGRAPH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restate main idea, or • Make a connection 	 REVISE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sense? • Word choice? 	 EDIT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling • Capitals • Punctuation
---	--	--	---	---

Managing and Evaluating the Process



Grade		Project		Due Date	
Name					
Writing Team or Partner					

Building a Student Checklist for a CCSS Unit Project

Strands	Common Core Standards	Self	Peer	Teacher
Reading: <input type="checkbox"/> Informational Text  <input type="checkbox"/> Literature 				
Writing: <input type="checkbox"/> Narrative  <input type="checkbox"/> Informative/Explanatory  <input type="checkbox"/> Opinion/Argument 				
Speaking and Listening: <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation Speaking & Listening 				
Language: <input type="checkbox"/> Conventions <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge of language <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary Language 				



INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING RUBRIC
 California Common Core Standards Based - **KINDERGARTEN**



Level	INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING	LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS	WITH GUIDANCE and SUPPORT FROM ADULTS
4 Exceeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets all expectations in level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Includes several pieces of information on topic <input type="checkbox"/> Uses some descriptive words <input type="checkbox"/> Writes multiple complete sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a sense of closure 	<p>Mostly correct use of language conventions, and some above grade level skills used, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets all expectations in level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Writes proper names with capital letters <input type="checkbox"/> Consistently spells grade level appropriate words correctly 	<p>Guidance & Support</p> <p>Level of guidance and support from adults before writing:</p> <p>Check off what was done before the student wrote the piece being scored.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Read aloud or shared reading <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary word bank <input type="checkbox"/> Shared or interactive writing <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic organizer <input type="checkbox"/> Language frames
3 Meets	<p>INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING (W2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Draws, dictates, and/or writes an informative text about a topic (W2) <input type="checkbox"/> Names the topic (W2) <input type="checkbox"/> Supplies some information about the topic (W2) <hr/> <p>WRITING PROCESS (W5-W8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> WGASFA* Adds details to strengthen writing (W5) <input type="checkbox"/> WGASFA* Explores digital tools to write (W6) <input type="checkbox"/> Participates in shared research projects (W7) <input type="checkbox"/> WGASFA* Recalls information from experiences or gathers information from provided sources (W8) 	<p>Adequate use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Writes left to right and return sweeps (L1a) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses spaces between words most of the time (L1c) <input type="checkbox"/> Prints many upper- and lowercase letters (L1a) <input type="checkbox"/> Capitalizes the first word in a sentence and the pronoun <i>I</i> (L2a) <input type="checkbox"/> Recognizes and names end punctuation (L2b) <input type="checkbox"/> Writes a letter or letters for most consonant and short-vowel sounds (L2c) <input type="checkbox"/> Spells simple words phonetically (L2d) 	
2 Almost Meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Draws about topic <input type="checkbox"/> Names topic but provides little information <input type="checkbox"/> Includes simple sentences about topic <input type="checkbox"/> May rely on copying from a patterned sentence 	<p>Limited use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Begins to write from left to right and return sweeps <input type="checkbox"/> Begins to space words correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Writes uppercase letters are random or within words <input type="checkbox"/> Uses only uppercase letters in writing <input type="checkbox"/> Uses no or few end punctuation marks <input type="checkbox"/> Spells some words phonetically 	
1 Does Not Meet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Makes few or no attempts to write <input type="checkbox"/> Provides no details <input type="checkbox"/> Does not name topic 	<p>Infrequent use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Uses random letters to represent print <input type="checkbox"/> Makes no attempts at correct spelling <input type="checkbox"/> Writes no complete sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Writes in all directions or may just label drawing 	

• **WGASFA:** "with guidance and support from adults"

This rubric was adapted from rubrics at sbusd.org and information from Smarter Balanced Assessments (www.smarterbalanced.org) using the California Common Core Standards at www.cde.ca.gov.



INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING RUBRIC
 California Common Core Standards Based – **GRADE 1**



Level	INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING	LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS	WITH GUIDANCE and SUPPORT FROM ADULTS
4 Exceeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets all expectations in level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Uses many descriptive words <input type="checkbox"/> Writes many complete sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Includes many facts and details 	<p>Mostly correct use of language conventions, and some above grade level skills used, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets all expectations in level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Consistently spells grade level appropriate words correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Capitalizes holidays, product names, and geographic names <input type="checkbox"/> Uses an apostrophe to form contractions and possessives 	<p>WITH GUIDANCE and SUPPORT FROM ADULTS</p> <p>Guidance & Support</p> <p>Level of guidance and support from adults before writing:</p> <p>Check off what was done before the student wrote the piece being scored.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Read aloud or shared reading <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary word bank <input type="checkbox"/> Shared or interactive writing <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic organizer <input type="checkbox"/> Language frames
3 Meets	<p>INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING (W2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Writes an informative piece about a topic <input type="checkbox"/> Names the topic <input type="checkbox"/> Provides some facts about the topic <input type="checkbox"/> Provides some sense of closure <hr/> <p>WRITING PROCESS (W5-W8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> WGASFA * Adds details to strengthen writing as needed (W5) <input type="checkbox"/> WGASFA * Uses a variety of digital tools to write and publish writing (W6) <input type="checkbox"/> WGASFA * Recalls information from experiences or gathers information from provided sources to answer a question (W8) 	<p>Adequate use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Prints all upper- and lowercase letters (L1a) <input type="checkbox"/> Produces and expands complete simple and compound declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences in response to prompts (L1j) <input type="checkbox"/> Capitalizes dates and names of people (L2a) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses end punctuation for sentences (L2b) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses commas in dates and to separate single words in a series (L2c) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses conventional spelling for words with common spelling patterns and for frequently occurring irregular words (L2d) <input type="checkbox"/> Spells untaught words phonetically (L2e) 	
2 Almost Meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Names topic and supplies at least one fact <input type="checkbox"/> Does not include closure or closure is unclear <input type="checkbox"/> WGASFA * Adds few facts or details <input type="checkbox"/> WGASFA * Recalls little information from sources 	<p>Limited use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Writes most uppercase and lowercase letters correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Writes mostly simple sentences, and may rely on patterned sentences to write <input type="checkbox"/> Uses some end punctuation marks correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Spells some words phonetically 	
1 Does Not Meet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Makes few or no attempts to write <input type="checkbox"/> Does not name topic <input type="checkbox"/> Provides no facts 	<p>Infrequent use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Makes no or few attempts at correct spelling <input type="checkbox"/> Has many errors in capitalization <input type="checkbox"/> Writes no or few complete sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Makes no or few attempts at end punctuation 	

- **WGASFA:** "with guidance and support from adults"

This rubric was adapted from rubrics at sbusd.org and information from Smarter Balanced Assessments (www.smarterbalanced.org) using the California Common Core Standards at www.cde.ca.gov.



INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING RUBRIC
California Common Core Standards Based – **GRADE 2**



Level	INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING	LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS	WITH GUIDANCE and SUPPORT FROM ADULTS
4 Exceeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets all expectations in level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Writes several well-developed facts to support topic <input type="checkbox"/> Document is well organized and connected <input type="checkbox"/> Both introduction and conclusion are clear and well stated 	<p>Mostly correct use of language conventions, and some above grade level skills used, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets all expectations in level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Uses commas and quotation marks in dialogue. <input type="checkbox"/> Spells grade level appropriate words correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Chooses words and phrases for effect. 	<p>Guidance & Support</p>
3 Meets	<p>INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING (W2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Introduces the topic <input type="checkbox"/> Uses facts and definitions to develop points <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a concluding statement or section <hr/> <p>WRITING PROCESS (W5-W8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> WGASFA* Adds details and edits to strengthen writing as needed (W5) <input type="checkbox"/> WGASFA* Uses a variety of digital tools to write and publish writing (W6) <input type="checkbox"/> Recalls information from experiences or gathers information from provided sources to answer a question (W8) 	<p>Adequate use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Produces, expands, and rearranges complete simple and compound sentences (L1f) <input type="checkbox"/> Creates readable documents with legible print (L1g) <input type="checkbox"/> Capitalizes holidays, product names, and geographic names (L2a) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses commas in greetings and closings of letters (L2b) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses an apostrophe to form contractions and frequently occurring possessives (L2c) <input type="checkbox"/> Consults reference materials as needed to check and correct spellings (L2e) <input type="checkbox"/> Spells grade level appropriate words correctly most of the time, uses grade level appropriate phonetic spelling to write unfamiliar words <input type="checkbox"/> Uses knowledge of language and its conventions when writing (L3) 	<p>Level of guidance and support from adults before writing:</p> <p>Check off what was done before the student wrote the piece being scored.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Read aloud or shared reading <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary word bank
2 Almost Meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Names topic <input type="checkbox"/> Provides facts but may not develop points <input type="checkbox"/> Adds few details <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a conclusion but may not be well related <input type="checkbox"/> WGASFA* adds few details and does little editing to strengthen writing 	<p>Limited use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Writes simple sentences, and some incomplete sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Capitalizes first letter, and I, but not proper names <input type="checkbox"/> Uses some punctuation correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Spells some grade level appropriate words, and uses some phonetic spellings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Shared or interactive writing <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic organizer <input type="checkbox"/> Language frames
1 Does Not Meet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Does not name topic <input type="checkbox"/> Provides no facts <input type="checkbox"/> Does not develop points <input type="checkbox"/> Conclusion is missing or unrelated <input type="checkbox"/> Copies sentences directly from text in articles in prompt 	<p>Infrequent use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Makes few attempts at correct spelling <input type="checkbox"/> Has many errors in capitalization <input type="checkbox"/> Writes few complete sentences or only simple patterned sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Makes few attempts at correct punctuation 	

* **WGASFA:** "with guidance and support from adults"


This rubric was adapted from rubrics at sbusd.org and information from Smarter Balanced Assessments (www.smarterbalanced.org) using the California Common Core Standards at www.cde.ca.gov.



INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY RUBRIC

California Common Core Standards Based - THIRD GRADE



Level	INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING/PROCESS	LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS	WITH GUIDANCE and SUPPORT FROM ADULTS
4 Exceeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets all expectations in level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Provides information well supported by facts and details <input type="checkbox"/> Uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform/explain <input type="checkbox"/> Is well planned and organized 	<p>Mostly correct use of language conventions, and some above grade level skills used, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets all expectations in level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Uses commas in direct quotations, and apostrophes in possessive case of nouns and in contractions when appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Uses underlining, quotation marks or italics to identify titles of documents 	<p style="text-align: center;">Guidance & Support</p>  <p>Level of guidance and support from adults before writing:</p> <p>Check off what was done before the student wrote the piece being scored.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Read aloud or shared reading <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary word bank <input type="checkbox"/> Shared or interactive writing <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic organizer <input type="checkbox"/> Language frames
3 Meets	<p>INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Introduces topic (W2a) <input type="checkbox"/> Groups related information together (W2a) <input type="checkbox"/> Includes illustrations when they will aid comprehension (W2a) <input type="checkbox"/> Develops topic with facts, definitions, and details (W2b) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses linking words/phrases such as <i>also, another, and, more, but</i> to connect ideas within categories of information (W2c) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a concluding statement or section (W2d) <hr/> <p>WRITING PROCESS (W5 - W8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> WGASFA* Has clearly planned writing with organized notes, and shows evidence of revision and editing during writing process (W5) <input type="checkbox"/> WGASFA* Uses technology and keyboarding skills (W6) <input type="checkbox"/> Conducts research (W7) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses sources such as print and internet to gather evidence (W 8) <input type="checkbox"/> Takes brief notes on sources and groups into categories (W8) 	<p>Adequate use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Uses a variation of simple, compound, and complex sentences (L1k) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses subject/verb agreement, pronouns, adjectives, compound words, and articles correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Uses past, present, and future verb tenses correctly (L1g) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses commas in dates, locations, and addresses, items in a series, and quotations in dialogue correctly (L2 b/c) <input type="checkbox"/> Capitalizes titles correctly (L2a) <input type="checkbox"/> Spells high frequency words and adds suffixes correctly, uses spelling patterns from word families <input type="checkbox"/> Forms and uses possessives correctly (L2d) <input type="checkbox"/> Consults reference materials, as needed, to check/correct spelling (L2) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses grade appropriate academic and domain-specific words and phrases (L6) 	
2 Almost Meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Has weak introduction <input type="checkbox"/> Information loosely grouped <input type="checkbox"/> Information developed with few facts, definitions, details <input type="checkbox"/> Uses few transition words, or uses the same throughout <input type="checkbox"/> Concluding statement absent or unclear <input type="checkbox"/> Has some evidence of planning, organizing notes, and revision 	<p>Limited use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Writes mostly simple sentences with correct punctuation <input type="checkbox"/> Has some correct use of subject/verb agreement, pronouns, adjectives, compound words, and articles <input type="checkbox"/> Uses some correct use of past, present and future verb tenses <input type="checkbox"/> Uses some correct use of punctuation, commas and capitalization <input type="checkbox"/> Has many spelling errors 	
1 Does Not Meet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> May not introduce topic <input type="checkbox"/> Includes few or no facts or definitions on topic <input type="checkbox"/> Has little evidence of planning, organizing and revision <input type="checkbox"/> Copies sentences directly from text in articles in prompt 	<p>Infrequent use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Writes incomplete sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Has little or no subject/verb agreement or usage of pronouns, adjectives, compound words and articles <input type="checkbox"/> Uses past, present, and future verb tenses incorrectly <input type="checkbox"/> Uses little or no correct punctuation, commas and capitalization <input type="checkbox"/> Uses poor spelling 	

• **WGASFA:** "with guidance and support from adults"

This rubric was adapted from rubrics at sbusd.org and information from Smarter Balanced Assessments (www.smarterbalanced.org) using the California Common Core Standards at www.cde.ca.gov.



Resources for Teaching Informative/Explanatory Writing

- Calkins, Lucy. (1994) *The Art of Teaching Writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Daniels, H. & Steineke, N. (2011) *Texts and Lessons for Content Area Reading: 75 Articles for teaching*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Dorfman, Lynne R., Cappelli, Rose. (2009) *Nonfiction Mentor Texts: Teaching Informational Writing through Children's Literature*. Stenhouse Publishers; Portland, ME, paperback.
- Fletcher, R. (2001) *Nonfiction Craft Lessons*. York, Maine: Stonehouse Publishing.
- Fletcher, Ralph, and Portalupi, Joann. (1998) *Craft Lessons: Teaching and Writing K-8*. York, ME: Stenhouse Publishing.
- Graves, Donald. (1994) *A Fresh Look at Writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Green, P. (1992) *Matter of Fact: Using Factual Texts in the Classroom*. Victoria, Australia: Eleanor Curtin Publishing (Distributed through Owl Books 800-772-7165).
- Koehlin, C. and Swaan, S. (2000) *Information Tasks for Successful Learning: Building Skills in Reading, Writing, and Research*. Ontario, Canada: Pembroke.
- Kendall, J. and Khuon, O. (2006) *Writing Sense: Integrated Reading and Writing lessons for English Language Learners*. Portland, Maine: Stenhouse.
- Lane, Barry. (1993) *After the End: Teaching and Learning Creative Revision*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Marzano, R, Pickering, D., and Pollock, J. (2001) *Classroom Instruction That Works: Research-based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).
- McMackin, Mary C. (2002) *Knowing How*. Stenhouse Publishers; Portland, ME.
- Moline, S. (1996) *I See What You Mean: Children at Work with Visual Information*. York, ME: Stenhouse Publishing.
- Pappas, Kiefer, and Levstik. (1999) *An Integrated Language Perspective in the Elementary School: An Action Approach*. New York, NY: Longman.
- Payne, C. and Schulman, M. (1998) *Getting the Most Out of the Morning Message and Other Shared Writing Lessons*. New York, NY: Scholastic.
- Reeves, Doug. (2002) *Reason to Write*. New York, NY: Kaplan Publishing.
- Robb, Laura. (2004) *Nonfiction Writing from the Inside Out*. New York, NY: Scholastic.
- Rothstein, D. and Santana, L (2012) *Make Just One Change: Teach Students to Ask their Own Questions*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press
- Routman, Regie. (2005) *Writing Essentials*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Somoza, David and Lourie, Peter. (2010) *Writing to Explore: Discovering Adventure in the Research Paper, 3-8*. Stenhouse Publishers; Portland, ME. Paperback.
- Whitely, Peggy, Williams, Susan. (2003) *99 Jumpstarts for Kids: Getting Started in Research*. Libraries Unlimited, paperback.
- Write Time for Kids:** Teacher-Created Materials. This is a nonfiction reading and writing program for grades K-8. You can check out the program and download materials at www.teachercreated.com (see below).

Where to Find more on the Web:

- | | |
|--|---|
| www.knoxeducation.com | Our website for teaching tools and resources, including: Night Writing, writing tools, standards-based tools, anchor papers, and learning strategies. |
| www.discoverwriting.com | Another excellent writing site. |
| www.nwrel.com | For six traits writing. |
| www.writingfix.com | This site is amazing for writing tools and lessons aligned with children's literature—links to Amazon, watch out! |



Differentiation Techniques

Informative Writing



Most Special Education students can learn to write to grade level common core standards with a higher level of scaffolding as well as a more gradual release of responsibility to the students. This means that initially the students may be mostly dictating their ideas to the teacher as the teacher is writing a group story with the students. Other forms of scaffolding include providing frames, CLOZE passages, or narrowing the choice of options for developing their stories. The following suggestions provide one sample of what we mean by increased scaffolding and a more gradual release of responsibility.

Week 1

Choose a narrow topic focus for your modeling, read alouds, shared writing, and guided writing. You may choose to spend the entire 6 week unit learning how to write short informative pieces about individual animals, for example. This will allow the students the multiple exposures they need, and the very gradual release of responsibility over to the student that will allow them to become proficient in writing a short piece about a narrow topic to grade level standards.

Read Alouds and Research

Choose a narrow focus, and read several very short pieces. Pause and talk about each element of information, then list it or draw pictures in a simple matrix

Animal	Looks like	Lives	Eats	Fun facts

Here are some resources for finding very simple texts about animals

Readworks.org houses over a thousand short articles about topics of interest to children. It is searchable by grade level, lexile level, and topic.

National Geographic Kids website has a very kid-friendly platform for reading about animals and viewing photos, and video clips of the animal. The texts can be projected for shared reading

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals.html>

If you are having trouble finding something simple enough to read for the topic you want to explore with your students, it is fairly easy to write a short text yourself. Just go to google images and clip some photos or graphics to paste into the document. Then use a list of the high frequency words your students know to help you construct simple sentences about the topic. You can start with the Fry's 100 most frequent words of English and be pretty sure your students will have heard them all if not already know how to read most of them: here's the link:

<http://www.knoxeducation.com/standards-based-student-tool-and-resource/frys-sight-words-lists-1-40>

To make the passage even easier you may use patterned sentences and type them up so the pattern is obvious:

Lions can roar.

Lions can chase their prey.

Lions can sleep a lot.

Modeled Writing:

Model writing a simple paragraph about an animal you learned about. Talk out loud about what you are doing as you write it. The paragraph might look like this and sound like this as you are writing:

Teacher Talk....thinking out loud	Text you are writing
<p><i>" I need to put a title first so my readers will know what this is about.....I'll put my name so they'll know I wrote it...."</i></p> <p><i>My first sentence tells about the whole piece of writing, that's the main idea"</i></p> <p><i>I want to tell about where they live first</i></p> <p><i>Now I want to say something about how they eat</i></p> <p><i>Now I think I want to say something interesting about how powerful they are</i></p>	<p>African Lions By Ms. Knox</p> <p>African lions are powerful animals.</p> <p>They live in African deserts or grasslands. They live in groups called a pride.</p> <p>The pride hunts together for deer and other animals. The males get to eat first after they kill their prey. The males main job is to protect the pride. They can roar so loud you can hear it up to 5 miles away!</p>

Week 2-3: Shared Reading and Writing

Shared Reading

Continue reading texts with a narrow topic focus. Add to the matrix chart as you read about each animal or topic within the unit. Have students take turns tracking the text with a pointer on the screen, chart, or big book. Students may also have individual copies and highlight key words , or fun facts they want to remember. Use the cloze strategy with post-it notes described on page 36-42 to encourage strategy use when students come to a word they don't know.

Shared Writing

Make lists with student input of vocabulary terms to use when writing about the topics you've been reading about. For example if you're reading all about different animals, your charts may look like this. Students can draw pictures and attempt to write the words that go with them on their white boards to give their input. They may also write words from their reading on post-its and add them to the class charts. Your lists may look like this:

Where animals live
Jungle
Pond
Forest
Cave
Desert
Marsh
grass

What they look like
Fur
Wings
Tail
Beak
Feathers
Scales
wings

Eating
Hunt
Chase
Prey
Camouflage
Web
graze

Shared Writing or Language Experience

Post the matrix chart and vocabulary lists where all the students can see them. Guide students to dictate to you a short text about one of your topics. After each student contributes an idea for a sentence, use “echo” to have the students repeat that sentence, then write it down on chart paper where all the students can read along with you as you write. An easy way to do this is to type it on your computer and project that on the screen as you are typing. Students can see the words get constructed letter by letter. They will have fun guessing what word is being typed next while paying attention to the letters as they appear. Re-read the whole piece after you decide on and add each sentence. By the time you are done, most students will be able to “read” the shared writing text even if it is mostly memorized. Repeat this process several times and if possible print out copies for the students to keep in their own folders and practice reading.

Week 4-6:

Shared Writing - Highly Guided Practice

Create a paragraph frame like the one below that is similar to the texts you wrote together when you were doing shared writing. Show students how to choose words from your brainstormed lists and the story starters.

_____are _____ animals.

They live in _____. It is very _____there.

They like to eat _____. They _____ at day/night to find their food.

Their body is covered with _____and they have _____.

One interesting thing I know about _____is that they can _____.

You can make it even easier for students to select words to build a paragraph from your charts by color-coding the blanks to match the color of the chart they are lifting from for that particular blank.

Gradually take away the sentence frames and encourage students to write about what they know in their own ways. One way to encourage this is to let the student tell you what they want to say and then you list some of the words they say on a post-it as a crutch to writing down those sentences that were just spoken. This will help them not only know how to spell the words, but remember what they wanted to share about their topic.

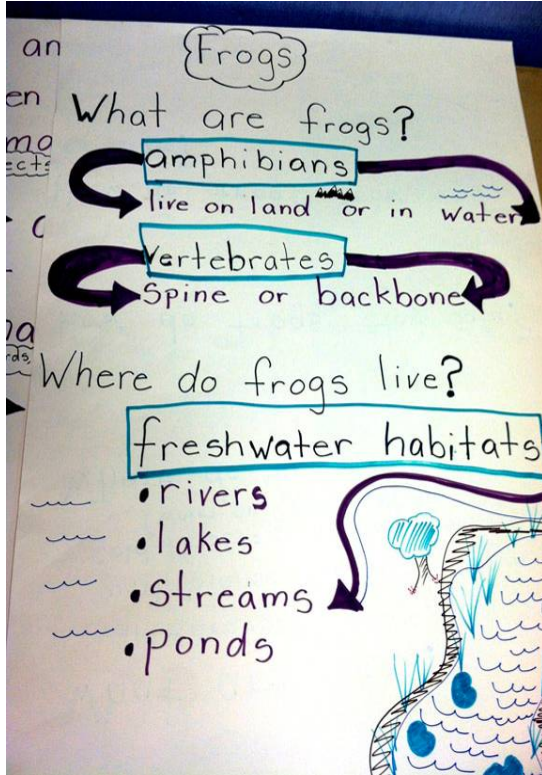
You might want to end the unit by creating a class anthology of their best paragraphs into a big book with lots of graphics and art added. It could be called our “Big Book all about the Animals we Know”. Make a table of contents and list the student author next to each “chapter” in the book. This will build a lot of pride in the process!

Sample Informative Writing in K-2 SDC Class

Teacher Chart:

Teacher uses shared writing and graphics to teach students about frogs.

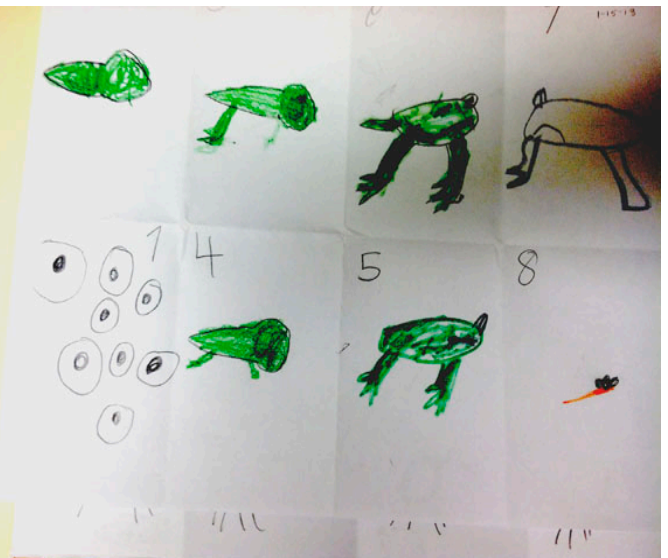
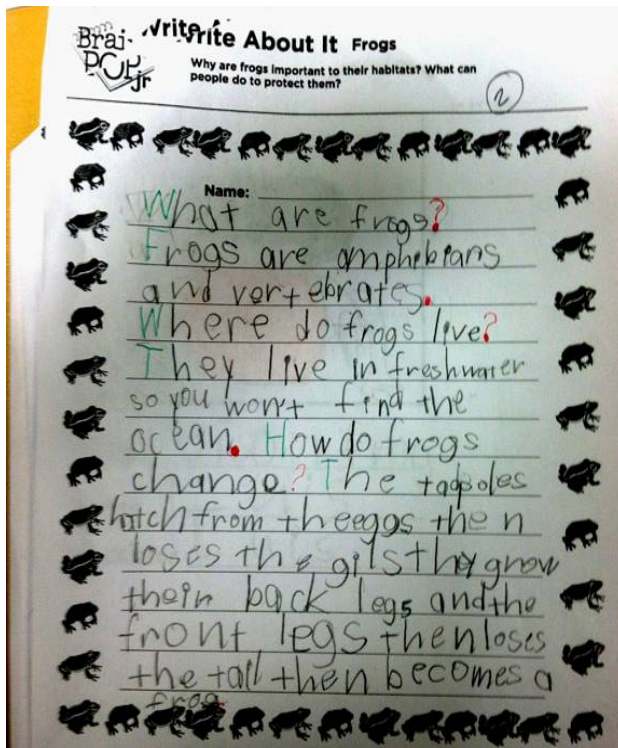
Students write and draw about what they have learned collaboratively.



Student does informative writing piece about frog using color coded editing marks.



Student draws sequence of frog life cycle.





It's really important to remember that English learners need help with learning or retrieving English words for the information they have learned and will be writing about. Please don't mistake this need for easy-to-reference support with English vocabulary and grammatical structures with a lack of aptitude for writing. It's also important to bear in mind that English learners can probably move along at a faster pace than your Special Ed students once they begin to acquire the English necessary to share their ideas. Here are some specific ways to give access to English and ample practice with talking throughout the writing process.

Week 1: Modeling

Read Alouds and Shared Reading

Choose texts supported with ample illustrations. A good nonfiction text for English learners has a specific photo or graphic for all the key vocabulary and doesn't assume students know what all the words mean from prior knowledge. Here are some modifications to the basic read aloud procedure that will really help English learners access the information once you begin reading:

1. Make sure all students can see the illustrations well. Either gather them close on the rug, or use a document camera to project the book up on the screen.
2. Preview the cover and back cover illustrations. Name the items you see and have the students repeat those words. Think out loud about what the text may be about. Invite students to share their predictions with a neighbor in English or their primary language. If you speak the primary language of your students, provide a preview of the information in their primary language.
3. Provide a picture walk of the text. Describe the information through the pictures using simple conversational English. This will help them understand the basic content before they are trying to also comprehend more literary English.
4. Read the text aloud to the students. Read with a slower pace, enunciate the words clearly, and pause often to make connections between the text and the illustrations. Where possible connect new English words to the illustrations so that they will understand the meanings of the words more easily.
5. Pause after each section and review orally what was just learned. List that information on a chart, or show students how to add it to their notes. For beginning ELs you may want to provide a language frame to respond with for example: "_____can _____" or "_____have _____."
6. Students can get great oral practice with English by retelling a what was just learned to a partner. Make sure they can access the illustrations or the notetaking chart and have them take turns telling each other what was learned.

Modeled Writing: Teacher’s Text

Take time to model the reading about and writing about a sub-topic within the unit you are studying. Make sure to pick a subtopic that isn’t the most popular within the unit, because once you do your model, that topic will be off limits for the rest of the class. The temptation to want to copy your model will be great. You can do this lesson in two sections. Session one, simply read aloud and think aloud about a topic and take notes. Session two think out loud as you write a piece that is just a bit above the writing level you expect your EL’s to be able to achieve. Below is a sample script to let you know what that modeling might sound like:

Teacher talk: thinking out loud	Text you are writing
<p><i>I’m putting my title first so the reader will know what it’s about.....then I’m going to add my name</i></p> <p><i>My first sentence needs to give my main point I want the reader to know.....let’s see, oatmeal is good for you.....</i></p> <p><i>Now I better give some reasons why.....let me check my notes.....</i></p> <p><i>I think I’ll end with something about taste because that will make my reader want to eat it more often.....</i></p>	<p>Nutritious Oatmeal By Ms. Knox Eating oatmeal for breakfast is a very good idea. It can give you lots of energy for school, but doesn’t have too many calories. It’s only 130 calories per cup. The fiber in oatmeal is especially good for you can help keep your heart safely. Finally, you can put different topics on it like raisins, cinnamon, or honey that make it taste super delicious.</p>

Week 2

Shared or Interactive Writing

Take a week or so to create informational texts together using shared or interactive writing. Follow the procedures on pages 84-90. Make sure the students have access to the vocabulary charts or matrices as they are thinking of ideas for each sentence to contribute. You can warm up the shared writing lesson for English learners by having them “chant the charts”, or simply read out loud chorally all the words or notes you have listed so far in your research. If you have created a pictorial narrative input chart, reference that as you decide what to say for each sentence of the shared writing.

To increase oral practice of English, have the students read aloud the whole piece after you add each sentence. Consider making copies of the shared writing pieces for students to practice reading for fluency as well. This is easiest when you type from your computer projected to a screen during shared writing, then you can simply print out each piece for the students as a model.

Weeks 3-5

Guided Practice

Help your ELs write their own pieces by making sure they have access to the texts, vocabulary lists, or note taking graphic organizers as they write. English learners will have learned a lot about their topics, but may not always be able to retrieve the English words needed to share what they know. You may want to have students work in pairs to do their informative writing. Beginning ELs will benefit from a “bilingual broker” if you have such a pair in your room. If you have someone new to English and can pair them with a student who has more English, but speaks the same primary language, they can discuss the concepts in their primary language and work together to figure out how to write about it in English.

Intermediate EL’s may write a lot of information, but do so in very simple choppy sentences. Explicit lessons in sentence combining may help them a lot. Meeting in small groups and using white boards to write new, more complex sentences about the same information will help. You can use your daily ELD time to provide the specific scaffolding the students need with the English aspect of this unit if you’re able to coordinate ELD lessons with your grade level team. See Back to School Writing Basics on our website:

http://www.knoxeducation.com/sites/main/files/file-attachments/ccss_back_to_school_writing_basics_-_for_teachers_2013.pdf

Week 6

Publishing

English learners may need very explicit help with grammar. Remember, what they wrote probably “sounds right” to them. Give gentle corrective feedback that may sound like this:

It’s great that you added _____, here’s how we say that in English: _____

If possible, don’t just fix it all with a red pen, that may be embarrassing to a student learning English. For example, you could pull your ELs one at a time during silent reading one at a time to help with the grammar challenges in their pieces.



Students who write and read with ease will thrive during in informative reading and writing unit. They will have more ideas than they have time for and may want to rush from inspiration to inspiration. The challenge with these students will be to help them first explore all of their ideas, and then choose one topic to and stick with it through to the end to create a really quality narrative. Here are some ideas for supporting and corralling these students.

Week 1

Read Alouds

Make sure to use collaborative talk structures as you discuss the information you are reading to the students. These students may dominate the conversation, so provide an equitable way for sharing. Challenge these students to read additional texts about the same topics of your read alouds throughout this unit. As you begin the unit, generate a list of related topics for them to study, and you may allow them to prepare a one minute “infomercial” and present that to the class during the read aloud time.

Modeled Writing:

As you model the writing of your own informative piece, these students may want to chime in with their own ideas and suggestions. Gently remind them that this is your writing and that they will have many opportunities to create their own. Encourage students to keep a notebook handy and to jot their ideas down as they come to keep them from blurring them out to the whole class. Make sure to include some elements in your own modeled informative piece that are beyond your grade level standards. Your **Extend** students may be able to include these elements in their own writing with very little instruction. For example, you may include a metaphor or simile, or cite a specific source in your piece before expecting all students to do so.

Week 2

Read Alouds

Your extend students may choose to research about their own topics as you teach the rest of the class how to read informational text efficiently. That is fine, but hold them to the same focus areas you are exploring with the rest of the class. For example, if you are learning about how to compare information across multiple texts, challenge them to do the same with a different topic. They will be listening in to your lessons and most likely be able to use the same strategy on their own.

Shared Writing:

Extend students may be able to begin guided practice after viewing the teacher modeling and receiving an explanation of the process via the “how to” chart. If they are dying to get started with their ideas, allow them to do so as long as they can work quietly while you teach the rest of the class. You'll probably see them look up and take in a lot of your shared writing instruction anyhow, but they won't be slowed down unless they need help.

Quick tries:

Extend students will love this because they generally are quick at doing just about everything. You can use their attempts as models for the other students. Make sure they participate in all of your quick try practices.

Weeks 3-5

Guided Practice

Make sure to find time to meet with your **Extend** students as is possible. Early on in the guided practice phase of the unit, you may want to pull them together and do a lesson on the elements in the level 4 (above grade level) aspects of your rubric. Make sure the students understand what each item means, and use the “quick try” method to get them to have a go with each element.

Extend students tend to write a lot, but not all of it is quality writing or on topic and necessary. Help them discipline themselves by referring to their planning notes frequently, checking off the elements they have incorporated, and labeling those elements on their draft. You may also be able to interest them in cutting unnecessary text by crossing out or even cutting up the paper and taping sections to each other. You'll probably have to schedule some one to one conferencing with these students to keep them focused as they finish up their pieces.



Jumpstart Group: Students who are not able to use a new writing skill after a whole group lesson. Students who without additional reminders and support after a whole group lessons, would have trouble getting started with a new process. These might include beginning English learners who may not have understood the lesson, students who struggle with remembering the steps of a complex task, or students who just lack confidence in their ability to write. Bring them to a small group instruction area right after the whole group lesson and help them get started with extra support such as:

- Additional opportunities to talk as a rehearsal to writing
- Interactive or shared writing of the first part of the writing task
- Word bank of vocabulary and ideas to include in the piece
- Re-teach of skill
- Language frame
- Re-teach of steps in process listed for them on a small chart

Guided Group: Students who get started with some ease, but may need further reminders and support along the way. You can rove the room and check in with them, or if the whole class is bogged down with a step, you can do some re-teaching mid-stream.

Independent Group: these students are eager to get started and work quickly. However, they may need reminders about quality over quantity in writing, or you may have time to teach that group an extension of that skill once the other students are all underway. For example, while most students in the class are writing a basic description with sensory detail, these students may be ready to use literary devices such as metaphor, simile, or idioms in their descriptions.