

An Introduction to Writing Instruction for Secondary Students



UTCRLA

University of Texas Center for Reading & Language Arts
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

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Introduction

What Is the University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts?

The University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts (UTCRLA) is in the College of Education at The University of Texas at Austin. When the Texas Education Agency first funded it in 1996, UTCRLA's efforts focused entirely on assisting Texas educators in implementing the newly adopted state standards for the Reading and Language Arts Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Now UTCRLA has expanded from one state-funded project, the Center for Educator Development in Reading and Language Arts, to many projects funded by state, federal, and private entities. This "diversified portfolio" of projects has allowed UTCRLA to expand its mission beyond Texas by funding critical research to determine effective practices for teaching students to read, leading to the timely incorporation of these findings into cutting-edge professional development materials for teachers across the country.

About This Guide

UTCRLA originally developed this guide in 2000 under the title, *Enhancing Writing Instruction for Secondary Students*, as a Center for Educator Development product for the Texas Education Agency, with Academics 2000 funding from the TEA. The original development team included Debra Freedman, Lorie Ochoa, Peter Pober, and Lanny van Allen. The educator focus group included Whitney Beach (Lubbock ISD), Renette Bledsoe (Austin ISD), Sue Hudson (Lubbock ISD), Barbara Spellman (Round Rock ISD), and Joe Willis (Odessa College).

In 2001, a team of developers headed by Diane Pedrotty Bryant introduced changes to this manual by including curricular and instructional adaptations provided by the Special Education Reading Project (SERP). SERP is a professional development branch of the University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts.

In 2003, in order to target teachers who are new to teaching writing, the title of this professional development guide was changed to *An Introduction to Writing Instruction for Secondary Students*, and its content was revised to reflect this focus. It is an introductory look at the skills necessary to begin the writing process. The guide focuses on helping secondary students develop the knowledge and skills necessary to learn to use the writing process successfully. Research supports the efficacy of the writing process as a way of teaching struggling writers to improve their skills.

The 2003 version of this guide was updated and revised by Pam Bell Morris, Carey Cooper, Bonnie O'Reilly, Alejandra Rodriguez-Galindo, Chris Latham, Jessica Ross, Susan Sivek, Elana Wakeman, Jennifer Wick, Johnnie Blevins, and Carlos Treviño. Recommendations for the revised version were provided by the educator focus group comprised of Sarah Crippen (TEA), Antonio Fierro (ESC Region XIX), Theresa Fuentes (Balmorhea ISD), Denisa Garcia (Tornillo High School), Alice Hawkins (Miller High School), Melva Kitchens (Pewitt High School), Al Lozano (Alpine High School), Opal Pate (Pewitt High School), Markay Rister (Stamford High School), Juanita Solis (Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD), and Jennifer Wiltsie (Rio Grande ISD).

For additional information about this and other professional development products, please visit our Web site at *www.texasreading.org*.

Organization of the Guide

This professional development guide is organized into four sections:

1) Presentation Slides

Presentation slides contain key points for the workshop. They may be used as either color overhead transparencies or as an Adobe Acrobat PDF presentation.

2) Presenter Notes

Detailed notes have been provided for the workshop presenter. The Presenter Notes section includes a snapshot of the presentation slide on the left side and the corresponding presenter notes on the right side.

The following formatting features, found on the slides and presenter notes pages, are designed to facilitate implementation:

- Icons indicate when activities occur.
- Directions to the presenter are printed in a different font so they are easy to distinguish from text the presenter says aloud.

A sample of the presenter notes pages can be found on the following pages.

3) Handouts

Handouts include activities, handouts with snapshots of presentation slides with room for participants to take notes, and informational handouts that expand on the ideas presented on the slides.

4) References

The References are suggestions for further reading.

Instructional Content

The slides present an introduction to (a) the writing process and characteristics of effective and struggling writers; (b) the planning stage of writing; (c) the drafting stage of writing; (d) the revising stage of writing; and (e) the editing stage of writing. Within each stage, further characteristics of struggling and effective writers pertinent to that stage of writing are discussed. Given the extensive content of the guide and the fact that the time available for professional development workshops will vary, we suggest the following guidelines:

- 1) Full-day workshop: the instructional content and some activities can be presented.
- 2) Half-day workshop: the introductory material and several of the stages can be presented.
- 3) Two-hour workshop: the introductory material and an overview of the stages can be presented.

Additionally, presenters should identify the purpose of the workshop: overview/introduction of knowledge; review of knowledge; and skill building with audience participation.

Preparing for the Workshop

This workshop is designed to enhance the knowledge and skills of secondary teachers to implement the writing process with their students, particularly those students who struggle with writing. This workshop is appropriate for secondary-level teachers, reading and language arts coordinators, curriculum directors, and principals.

Materials

Distribute copies of all handouts to each participant prior to the beginning of the workshop. Some activities require additional materials such as chart paper, markers, self-sticking notes, and pencils (one for each participant).

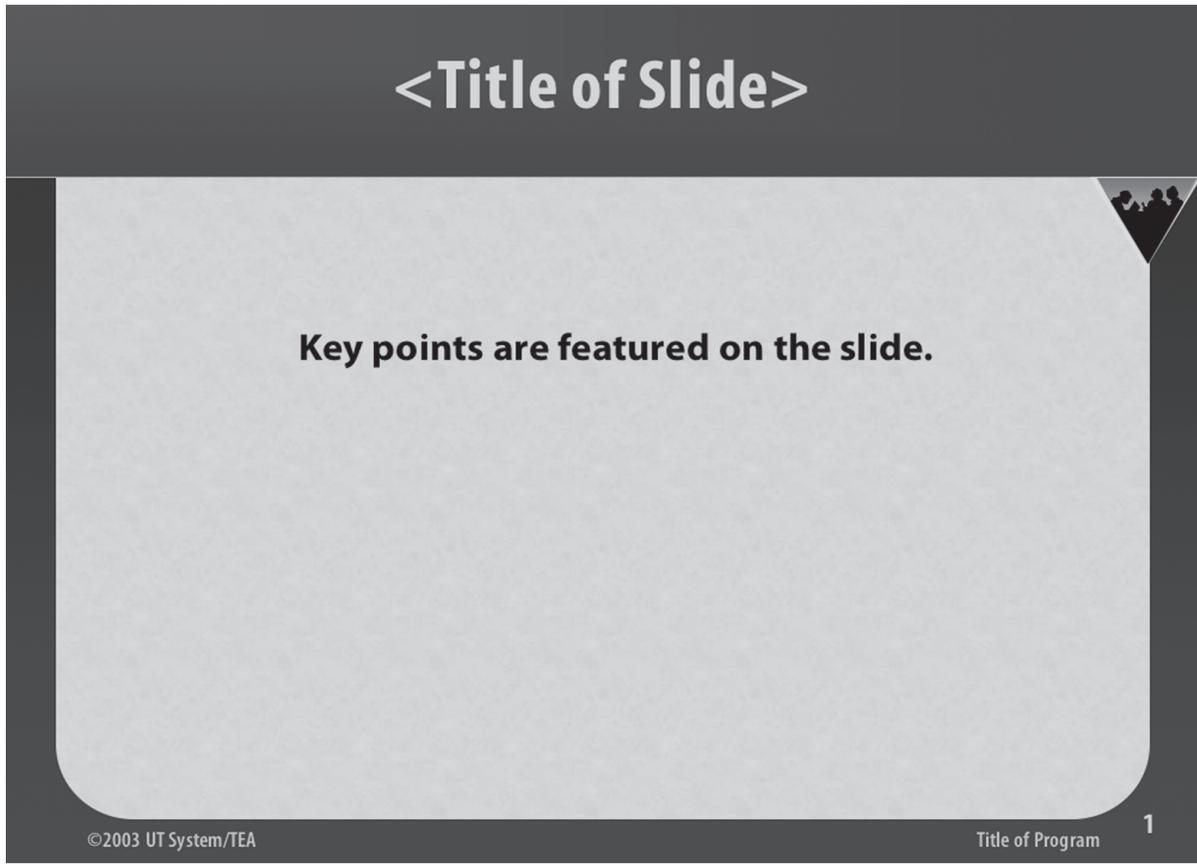
Equipment

The presenter may use presentation slides in one of two methods: as color transparencies with an overhead projector and screen; or as an Adobe Acrobat PDF presentation with a computer, LCD projector, and screen.

Room Arrangement

Activities are designed for large group participation and cooperative work in small groups. Seating should be arranged to facilitate interaction in small groups. All participants will need to be able to see the overhead screen.

Sample Presenter Notes



SAMPLE

References: List of references used for this slide and corresponding presenter notes

Title of Program

<Title of Slide>



Presenter notes contain detailed notes that elaborate on the content of the corresponding slide. Also included are instructions on how to conduct activities and work with handouts.

Because there is an activity icon at the top of this page, an activity will be described here.

Snapshots of presentation slides appear on the page opposite the corresponding notes.

Directives, appearing in a different font, give instructions to the presenter.

SAMPLE

University of Texas Center for Reading & Language Arts

**An Introduction
to Writing Instruction
for Secondary Students**

PRESENTER
NOTES

Objectives

Participants will:

- **Discuss components of the writing process**
- **Describe characteristics of struggling and effective writers**
- **Describe strategies for the planning, drafting, revising, and editing stages of the writing process**
- **Discuss techniques that can be implemented in classrooms to teach writing**

Objectives

The objectives of this workshop are to:

- Discuss components of the writing process;
- Describe characteristics of struggling and effective writers;
- Describe strategies for the planning, drafting, revising, and editing stages of the writing process; and
- Discuss techniques that can be implemented in classrooms to teach writing.

TEKS-pectations for Writing: Grades 6-12

The student is expected to:

- Write in a variety of forms for various audiences and purposes
- Select and use recursive writing processes for self-initiated and assigned writing
- Compose original texts, applying the conventions of written language to communicate clearly
- Apply standard grammar and usage to communicate clearly and effectively in writing
- Use writing as a tool for learning and research
- Evaluate his/her own writing and the writings of others
- Interact with writers inside and outside the classroom in ways that reflect the practical uses of writing

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- Compose original texts, applying the conventions of written language to communicate clearly.
- Apply standard grammar and usage to communicate clearly and effectively in writing.
- Use writing as a tool for learning and research.
- Evaluate his/her own writing and the writings of others.
- Interact with writers inside and outside the classroom in ways that reflect the practical uses of writing.

The TEKS vary slightly from grade to grade. You can refer to the TEKS for your grade level for precise wording.

It is important for you to be familiar with the TEKS for the grades preceding and following the grade you teach. Knowing those requirements can help you work from all three levels to accomplish the goals of the TEKS.

Writing as a Recursive Process . . .



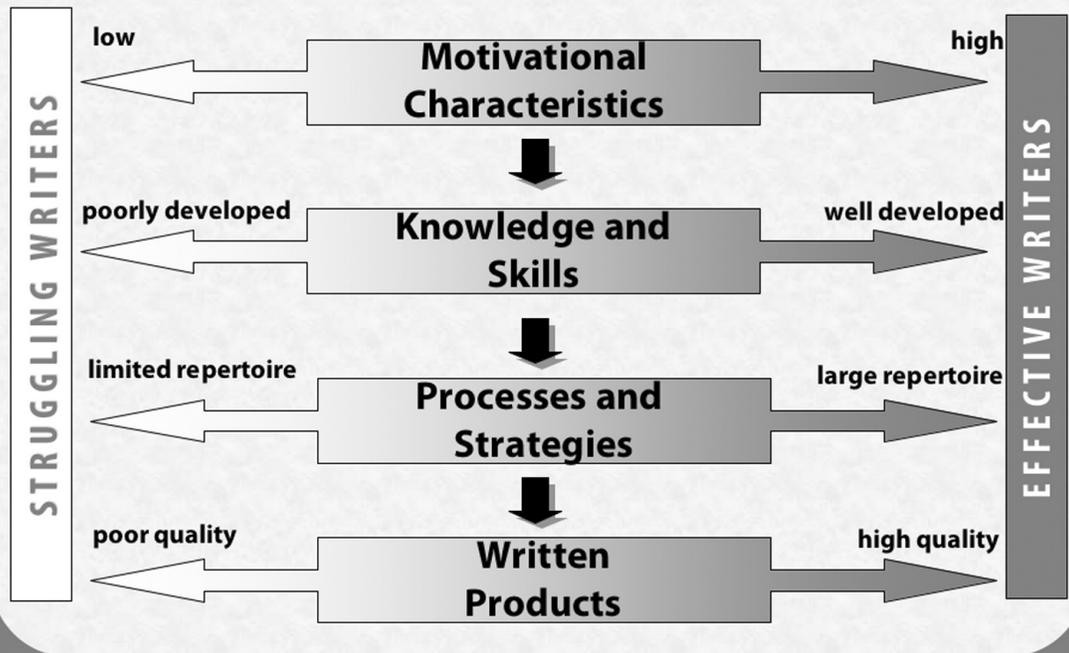
Writing as a Recursive Process

You may already be familiar with the writing process. This slide lists the recursive aspects of the process and elaborates on each stage.

Handout 1: “Teachers Talk about Strategies” also presents this information.

The details listed for each stage are taken directly from the expectations in the TEKS.

The Continuum of Writers



The Continuum of Writers

Students enter our classrooms with differences in motivation, knowledge, skills, and strategy and process use.

These differences create a continuum of writers, from struggling to effective writers and those in between.

Writers at various points along the continuum will produce written products of varying quality.

Characteristics of Effective Writers—Activity

What are the characteristics of an effective writer?

Consider:

- **Motivational Characteristics**
- **Knowledge and Skills**
- **Processes**
- **Written Products**

Characteristics of Effective Writers Activity



For the next activity, work with your group to generate some characteristics of effective writers.

Consider these four areas:

- Motivational characteristics,
- Knowledge and skills,
- Processes, and
- Written products.

You have 6 minutes to list your group's ideas.

Allow 6 minutes. Then call on a few participants to provide characteristics for each area.

Helping Struggling Writers: We Can Make a Difference

Why do some students struggle with writing?

How can we as teachers make a difference?

- **Provide a motivating environment for writing**
- **Teach knowledge and skills and their application**
- **Model thought processes and strategies
(think-aloud technique)**

Helping Struggling Writers: We Can Make a Difference

Cover the second question on the slide.

Why do some students struggle with writing?

Call on several participants.

Uncover the second question on the slide and ask for responses from the whole group.

Teachers can make a difference by:

- Providing a motivating environment for writing;
- Teaching knowledge and skills and their application; and
- Modeling thought processes and strategies (think-aloud technique).

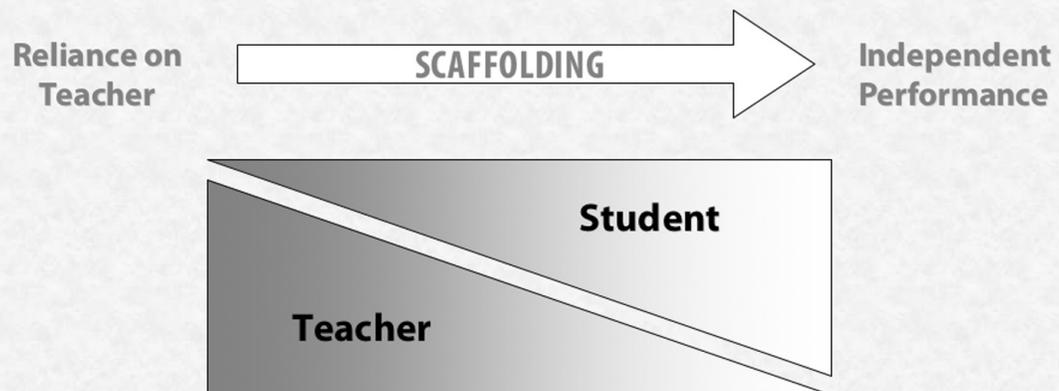
Successful instruction includes all of these elements. Teachers' efforts in each area produce improvements in the other areas. For example, teaching students how to think about writing helps them see it as an engaging and motivating task.

How can we adapt instruction to meet the needs of students who are struggling with writing?

When students struggle with a concept, effective teachers use scaffolding to teach the strategy in smaller steps.

Goal of Scaffolding

The goal of scaffolding is to produce independent thinkers, learners, and writers!



Goal of Scaffolding

The purpose of scaffolding is to develop students' independence. The roles of the teacher and student change over time as the student learns new skills and relies upon the teacher less and less.

Scaffolding

- Establish a motivating environment
- Assess student needs
- Select and explain a strategy
- Build prerequisite knowledge and skills
- Promote student mastery of the strategy
- Model the strategy (e.g., think aloud, etc.)
- Practice collaboratively to promote internalization
- Encourage students to apply the strategy independently
- Assess strategy mastery and usage
- Teach regulation of strategy use

References: De La Paz & Graham, 1997; El-Dinary, Brown, & Van Meter, 1995; Englert, Raphael, Anderson, Anthony, & Stevens, 1991; Pressley & Associates, 1995

Scaffolding

This slide demonstrates how scaffolding fits into your lesson cycle.

Scaffolding focuses on teaching a strategy while building related knowledge and skills. This is important because struggling writers lack the strategies that more effective writers use without prompting. Struggling writers need the additional support of scaffolding to develop their strategy use.

To integrate scaffolding into your teaching, you can follow these steps:

- Establish a motivating environment.
- Assess student needs.
- Select and explain a strategy.
- Build prerequisite knowledge and skills.
- Promote student mastery of the strategy.
- Model the strategy.
- Practice collaboratively to promote internalization.
- Encourage students to apply the strategy independently.
- Assess strategy mastery and application usage.
- Teach regulation of strategy use.

Handout 2: “Teaching a Strategy by Scaffolding” provides more details.

Tips for Getting the Most Out of Your Scaffolding

- **Select wisely and keep it simple.** Choose one or two strategies to teach and provide scaffolding for those strategies
- **Use record-keeping**, such as “status of the class” charts or checklists, to keep track of student progress and needs
- **Break the class into small groups** based upon needs and provide mini-lessons to groups of 4 or 5 students
- **Do not remove the scaffolding too early.** You are teaching for independent mastery and usage

Tips for Getting the Most Out of Your Scaffolding

- Select strategies wisely and keep them simple.

Choose one or two strategies to teach and provide scaffolding for those strategies.

- Use record-keeping.

“Status of the class” charts or checklists help you keep track of student progress and needs.

- Form small groups of four or five for instruction.

Base the groups on students’ needs and provide mini-lessons to the groups.

- Do not remove the scaffolding too early.

Remember, you are teaching for independent mastery and usage, but you should continue to assist students appropriately until they have reached that level.

Promoting Success in the General Education Curriculum: Special Education Adaptations

Adaptations

- What are the expectations?
- What are the setting demands?
- What do I know about the student?
- What are my choices for adaptations?

How is it working?

Promoting Success in the General Education Curriculum: Special Education Adaptations

This slide is the first in a series that focuses on adaptations for struggling readers and writers. These students may be those with learning disabilities, emotional/behavioral disorders, mild to moderate cognitive disabilities, physical disabilities, attention problems, pervasive developmental disorders, and/or sensory impairments (hearing and/or visual impairment).

Adaptations are key to the successful participation of struggling readers and writers in the general education curriculum.

When making adaptations, four key questions are asked:

- What are the expectations for learning (that is, what are the student outcomes that you expect, which may vary for individual students)?
- For example, student outcomes may include reading on grade level by the end of the year.
- What are the setting demands (that is, what are the specific tasks the student is expected to perform, and what does the student have to do to successfully complete the task)?
- For example, the student should be able to read, summarize, and answer a variety of questions about grade-level reading material.
- What do I know about the student in the general education classroom in relation to his/her learning strengths and needs?
- For example, what are the student's specific strengths and needs in reading?
- What are my choices for adaptations (for instance, for students with disabilities, what does the IEP require and what resources might you need to make these adaptations)?
- For example, will the student need high-interest/controlled-vocabulary text to be able to access subject matter on a topic?

Answering these four questions assists teachers in selecting adaptations. Remember to collaborate with other specialists, such as specialists in vision, hearing, speech/language, and technology.

A final step in the process is to determine how the adaptation(s) is working and make adjustments accordingly. This is an important key to the student's success in the general education curriculum. For example, is the student able to answer inferential comprehension questions successfully?

(notes continued on next page)

Promoting Success in the General Education Curriculum: Special Education Adaptations

Adaptations

- What are the expectations?
- What are the setting demands?
- What do I know about the student?
- What are my choices for adaptations?

How is it working?

DUPLICATE

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA '97)

With the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA '97), the participation of students with disabilities in the general education curriculum and state/district assessments, such as the TAKS, has increased, as has general education teachers' participation in the IEP process. You may want to highlight these recent changes using the information provided below as one resource.

The law (IDEA '97) requires that accommodations or adaptations, modifications, supports, and supplementary aids and services be provided to ensure the success of students with disabilities in the general education curriculum.

IDEA '97 has also increased the participation of students with disabilities in district/state assessments. Under the IDEA, special education students are expected to: (1) take the standard assessments; (2) take them with accommodations; or (3) take alternative assessments. The IEP specifies whether accommodations and modifications in the administration of these assessments or alternative assessments are to be used.

IDEA '97 has also increased the general education teacher's role in the development, implementation, review, and revision of the student's Individualized Education Program. For example, goals and objectives may be targeted for completion in the general education classroom, with monitoring the responsibility of both the general and special education teacher.

Student Success: Adaptations

Bright Ideas



**Instructional
Design
Adaptations**



**Behavioral
Support
Adaptations**

**Instructional/
Curricular
Adaptations**

**Positive Learning Community
and Access to the General Education Curriculum**

Student Success: Adaptations

Adaptations for students can be organized into three categories: designing instruction, adapting instruction or curriculum, and providing behavioral support. For example, an adaptation for “designing instruction” might be including fewer problems per page. For “adapting instruction or curriculum,” you might enlarge print for a child with poor vision. For “behavioral support adaptations,” you might develop a behavior plan to alter out-of-seat behavior.

Refer participants to Handout 3: “Planning for Students with Special Needs.”

Instructional Design Adaptations: Know Your Students

- **Plan for adaptations**
- **Access resources**
- **Collaborate with the team**
- **Integrate technology**
- **Assess learning**
- **Monitor student progress**

Instructional Design Adaptations: Know Your Students

Instructional design is critical when making adaptations. For struggling readers and writers to benefit from instruction, effective teachers:

- Plan for adaptations;
- Access resources;
- Collaborate with the team;
- Integrate technology;
- Assess learning; and
- Monitor student progress.

Instructional and Curricular Adaptations

Instructional:

- Consider students' literacy levels and needs
- Activate background knowledge
- Use clear, simple directions
- Provide opportunities to respond
- Adjust pacing and provide feedback

Curricular:

- Make learning visible and explicit
- Highlight key information and concepts
- Break tasks or activities into steps
- Use games to provide practice
- Provide multiple ways for students to demonstrate learning

Instructional and Curricular Adaptations

Research supports these adaptations to instruction and curriculum.

To successfully adapt your instruction:

- Consider students' literacy levels and needs;
- Activate background knowledge;
- Use clear, simple directions;
- Provide opportunities to respond; and
- Adjust pacing and provide feedback.

To successfully adapt your curriculum:

- Make learning visible and explicit;
- Highlight key information and concepts;
- Break tasks or activities into steps;
- Use games to practice new skills; and
- Provide multiple ways for students to demonstrate learning.

Instructional and Curricular Adaptations (cont.)

**Make
Learning
Visible and
Explicit**



- Use modeling and think-alouds
- Provide a written list of steps
- Have students self-monitor as they complete each step
- Support auditory information with visual and tactile cues

Instructional and Curricular Adaptations (cont.)

Research demonstrates that struggling readers and writers, including students with disabilities, learn better when taught steps for cognitive processes (for example, steps for finding main ideas or for solving math word problems).

These students need systematic, explicit instruction in how to complete complex, cognitive processes. This type of instruction consists of modeling the steps including the thinking that occurs (that is, think-alouds), and then having the students think aloud as they do the steps themselves. It is also helpful to provide a written list of steps and have the students self-monitor as they complete each step.

You may wish to provide students examples that demonstrate steps and monitoring for a particular skill. For example, you can write the steps involved in editing a written work.

Adding visual and tactile cues to auditory information helps make the auditory information more visible and explicit. You can do this by writing the key words for each point on a transparency when lecturing, for example.

Instructional and Curricular Adaptations (cont.)

Examples:

- Advertisement
- News release
- Web or map
- Comic strip
- Collage
- Diorama



**Provide
Multiple Ways
for Students to
Demonstrate
Learning**

Instructional and Curricular Adaptations (cont.)

Struggling readers and writers may know information that has been taught, but may not be able to demonstrate it effectively because of their specific learning needs.

For example, a book report is a traditional assignment in many classrooms. However, some students could perhaps better demonstrate their knowledge and skills by creating an advertisement, a news release, a web or map, a comic strip, a collage, or a diorama.

Ask participants to expand the list of alternatives to the traditional book report, and some alternate ways their students could demonstrate their learning for these projects. Share the groups' ideas either orally or by writing them on chart paper.

Behavioral Support Adaptations

Use strategies that increase appropriate student behaviors:

- **Provide structure and be consistent**
- **Use proactive teaching**
- **Teach alternative behaviors**



Behavioral Support Adaptations

A third type of adaptation focuses on behavioral support. Students learn better when behavioral supports are in place.

There are some basic strategies you can use to increase appropriate student behavior.

- Provide structure and be consistent.
- Use proactive teaching.
- Teach alternative behaviors.

Page five of handout 3 provides examples of strategies you can use to promote positive behavior and a positive learning environment.

Work in pairs and discuss one student with whom you have worked successfully. List and explain one adaptation you used to support that student in each of these three areas.

Allow 10 minutes. Discuss each category with the whole group.

Note: You may use chart paper and self-sticking notes so that participants can display their ideas. Hang one piece of chart paper for each of the three types of adaptations. Ask participants to write their adaptations on the notes and put the notes on the appropriate chart paper. This can be an ongoing activity throughout the workshop.

The Think-Aloud Technique

My First Wheels

My first bike was blue and had a black seat, black tires, and chrome handlebars. It got pretty banged up the first week because I kept crashing and wrecking. My dad told me that was normal, but I wanted it to stay pretty and new-looking.

I kept that bike for years and helped my younger brothers learn to ride on it. Do you remember getting your first wheels? Maybe you call the baby carriage and the tricycle your first wheels, but I don't count those! That new bike could really take me places — fast. And I was the “driver.”

Would this line make more of an impression in another place?

I'm not sure about this start, but I think I'll come back to it later.

Hmm . . . I wonder if my audience has had similar experiences?

The Think-Aloud Technique

It is very important to model the thinking processes of writing as well as the writer's actions. The goal of the think-aloud technique is to make these processes and actions explicit through teacher modeling and scaffolding. Teachers can say out loud what they are thinking as they model making choices during the writing process. Later, students develop increasing responsibility by explicitly stating the thought processes behind their own text choices.

Effective Writing

Effective writing requires keeping the purpose, audience, content, and form in mind as the “big picture” develops.

Effective Writing

To write effectively, writers must possess specific basic skills. Writing well requires knowledge, skills, and strategies at each stage of the task, as well as an eye for the “big picture.”

Throughout the workshop the slide sections titled “Increasing Related Knowledge and Skills” are intended to highlight prerequisite skills for each topic.

As we continue, we will encounter questions that writers ask themselves as they write. These questions are intended to help writers keep the “big picture” in mind by focusing on the purpose, audience, content, and form of their writing. Writers need skills and knowledge to complete their projects; they also need to remember their overall plans.

Keep in Mind . . .

- **Planning occurs *after* determining a topic.**
- **Plans are continually revisited and revised throughout the writing process.**
- **Planning includes thinking about purpose, audience, content, and form.**
- **There is no *one* right way to plan.**

Keep in Mind . . .

Planning is essential to the writing process. Writers must create a plan that encompasses every aspect of the writing project. The writer's plan includes purpose, audience, content, and form.

Keep in mind:

- Planning occurs after determining a topic.
- Plans are continually revisited and revised throughout the writing process.
- Planning includes thinking about purpose, audience, content, and form.
- There is no one right way to plan.

When Planning . . .

Effective Writers

- Set goals by reflecting upon the purpose, audience, and mode of writing
- Systematically search their memories for related information
- Conduct research to find new information
- Organize the collected information
- Reflect upon topics, ideas, content, and organization

Struggling Writers

- Spend little time planning
- View planning as determining a topic
- Do not have an organizational plan
- Lack effective strategies for generating content
- Fail to research new information
- Lack knowledge of text structure

When Planning . . .

This slide highlights the differences in the way effective writers and struggling writers approach planning.

Effective writers may succeed because they:

- Set goals by reflecting upon the purpose, audience, and mode of writing;
- Systematically search their memories for related information;
- Conduct research to find new information;
- Organize the collected information; and
- Reflect upon topics, ideas, content, and organization.

Struggling writers may fail because they:

- Spend little time planning;
- View planning as determining a topic;
- Do not have an organizational plan;
- Lack effective strategies for generating content;
- Fail to research new information; and
- Lack knowledge of text structure.

Handout 4: “Techniques for Discovering a Topic” introduces eight ways to help struggling writers during this initial stage of the process.

***Extending the Workshop**

Assess teachers’ needs by asking them, “What seems to be the most troublesome aspect of planning for your students?” Use this feedback to help you select which activities and strategies you will need to emphasize or spend time scaffolding.

Lead participants in determining a topic for either a collaborative paper or individual papers that they would like to write during the workshop.

Planning for Purpose



- **Why am I writing this?**
- **What do I hope to accomplish?**
- **How will I accomplish my purpose?**

Teach Students Related Knowledge and Skills by :

- Showing examples of writing for different purposes and helping students identify each purpose.
- Brainstorming a list of reasons for writing and posting it in the classroom.
- Explaining the relationship between text structure and purpose.
- Having students record their answers to the metacognitive questions listed above.

Planning for Purpose

To plan for purpose, students can ask themselves three metacognitive questions:

- Why am I writing this?
- What do I hope to accomplish?
- How will I accomplish my purpose?

Teachers can model these questions using the think-aloud technique.

These activities build related knowledge and skills and support students' ability to plan for purpose:

- Showing examples of writing for different purposes and helping students identify each purpose;
- Brainstorming a list of reasons for writing and posting it in the classroom;
- Explaining the relationship between text structure and purpose; and
- Having students record their answers to the three metacognitive questions shown.

***Extending the Workshop**

Use the metacognitive questions and the think-aloud technique to help participants plan for the collaborative paper and/or their own writing.

Choose an activity from those listed to scaffold for participants.

Planning for Audience



- **For whom am I writing?**
- **What do I know about this audience?**
- **What will my audience need or want to know?**

Teach Students Related Knowledge and Skills by :

- Brainstorming possible audiences and discussing characteristics of each.
- Discussing the effects of audience on what you say (content) and how you say it (style).
- Discussing characteristics of writing that effectively reaches the intended audience and writing that doesn't.
- Having students record their answers to the metacognitive questions listed above.

Planning for Audience

Some appropriate questions to help students think about audience during the planning phase are:

- For whom am I writing?
- What do I know about this audience?
- What will my audience need or want to know?

The think-aloud technique can be used to model these questions.

Activities that can help students understand planning for audience are:

- Brainstorming possible audiences and discussing characteristics of each;
- Discussing the effects of audience on what you say (content) and how you say it (style);
- Discussing characteristics of writing that effectively reaches the intended audience and writing that doesn't; and
- Having students record their answers to the three metacognitive questions shown.

***Extending the Workshop**

Use the metacognitive questions and the think-aloud technique to help participants plan for the collaborative paper and/or their own writing.

Choose an activity from those listed to scaffold for participants.

Planning for Content



- **What do I know about this topic?**
- **What do I need to know about this topic?**
- **How can I learn what I need to know?**

Teach Students Related Knowledge and Skills by:

- Demonstrating how different prewriting strategies can be used to generate and organize what a student knows.
- Conducting a mini-lesson on research techniques.
- Having students record their answers to the metacognitive questions listed above.

Planning for Content

Students can think about content during the planning phase using the following questions:

- What do I know about this topic?
- What do I need to know about this topic?
- How can I learn what I need to know?

The think-aloud technique can be used to model these questions.

Some activities that strengthen students' ability to plan for content are:

- Demonstrating how different prewriting strategies can be used to generate and organize what a student knows;
- Conducting a mini-lesson on research techniques; and
- Having students record their answers to the three metacognitive questions shown.

Handout 5: “Techniques for Exploring a Topic and Determining What You Know” contains ways to help students think about their knowledge of a topic.

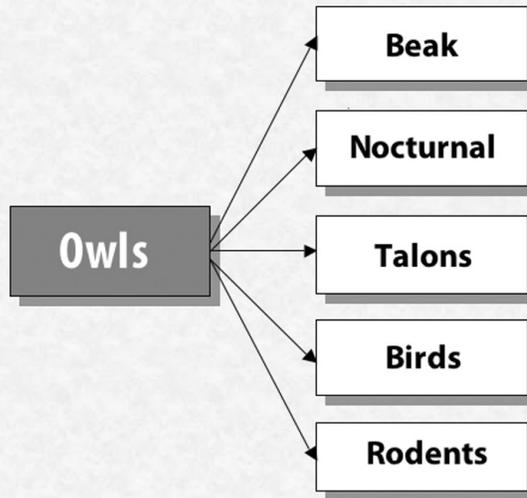
***Extending the Workshop**

Use the metacognitive questions and the think-aloud technique to help participants plan for the collaborative paper and/or their own writing.

Choose an activity from those listed to scaffold for participants.

Planning Content for Struggling Writers

Strategy: Webbing



Possible Adaptations



- Activate prior knowledge through webbing.
- Model webbing with multiple examples.
- Limit the number of web branches.
- Provide a peer scribe.
- Use color-coding to highlight categories.
- Provide graphic organizers (semantic map, Venn diagram) to record ideas.
- Access library materials.
- Use self-sticking notes for arranging and rearranging.
- Allow nonwriters to use illustrations to depict ideas.

Planning Content for Struggling Writers

Adaptations can be made in each stage of the writing process. For example, a strategy such as webbing often helps struggling writers because it provides structure for their planning. Webbing is helpful with both expository and narrative text.

Some possible adaptations to webbing are:

- Activate prior knowledge through webbing;
- Model webbing with multiple examples;
- Limit the number of web branches;
- Provide a peer scribe;
- Use color-coding to highlight categories;
- Provide graphic organizers (for example, semantic map, Venn diagram) to record ideas;
- Access library materials;
- Use self-sticking notes for arranging and rearranging; and
- Allow nonwriters to use illustrations to depict ideas.

After brainstorming ideas related to their topics, students can categorize the ideas and discuss the categories in which they have the most knowledge. Teachers may want to limit the number of categories so students focus on fewer but more important ideas. Self-sticking notes allow for easy rearranging and assist struggling writers.

For example, if “owls” are the topic of study, students might brainstorm words such as beak, nocturnal, talons, feathers, rodents, birds, and so forth. Students can categorize the words into habits (nocturnal), body parts (beak, feathers, talons), and food (rodents, birds), and then rearrange the web so that “owls” is at the center surrounded by the categories. Details are then listed around each category.

Planning for Form



- **How should I arrange my ideas in order to achieve my purpose?**
- **What are the big ideas I want to get across to my audience?**
- **What do I know that supports these big ideas?**

Teach Students Related Knowledge and Skills by :

- Showing examples of different text structures, and examining the arrangement of ideas within them.
- Having students record their answers to the metacognitive questions listed above.

Planning for Form

These are some useful questions to help students think about form during the planning phase:

- How should I arrange my ideas in order to achieve my purpose?
- What are the big ideas I want to get across to my audience?
- What do I know that supports these big ideas?

The think-aloud technique can be used to model these questions.

These activities will help students learn to plan for form:

- Show examples of different text structures, and examine the arrangement of ideas within them; and
- Have students record their answers to the three metacognitive questions shown.

Text structures you can use in these activities include: narrative, compare/contrast, explanation, problem/solution, and thesis/statement.

Encouraging students to think about form is NOT the same as promoting formulas for content. Teachers should be encouraged to teach text structure and the flexible nature of predictable forms without limiting students to formulas such as “the five-paragraph theme.”

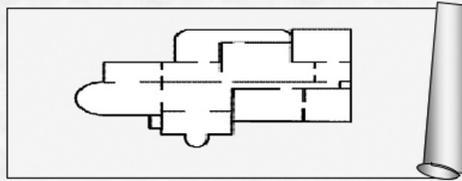
***Extending the Workshop**

Use the metacognitive questions and the think-aloud technique to help participants plan for the collaborative paper and/or their own writing.

Choose an activity from those listed to scaffold for participants.

Generating a Writing Plan

"A writing plan is an artist's sketch, a carpenter's plan scratched on a board, a cook's recipe that will be changed during the cooking. A writing plan is not an order or a binding contract. It is an educated guess"



(Murray, 1996, p. 82)

Before students begin drafting, they need to have a plan.

This plan can take many forms, such as:

- **formal and informal outlines;**
- **graphic representations; or**
- **any other technique for arranging and sequencing ideas.**

Generating a Writing Plan

While most planning takes place mentally, many writers find it helpful to generate a written plan to guide their efforts during the subsequent stages of the writing process.

This plan can take many forms, including:

- Formal and informal outlines;
- Graphic representations; or
- Any other technique for arranging and sequencing ideas.

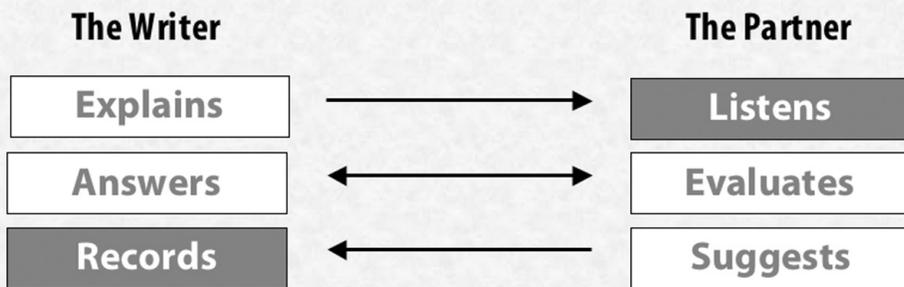
Handout 6 includes sample graphic organizers for “Webbing,” “Persuasive/Descriptive Writing,” and “Compare/Contrast Writing.”

***Extending the Workshop**

Have participants generate and share a plan for their individual papers (or a collaborative paper) using their favorite planning technique.

The Planning Conference

Focus of Conference: Purpose Content
Audience Form



The Planning Conference

Conferencing can help students plan more effectively. The conference should focus on purpose, audience, content, and form.

The conference gives the writer a forum to receive feedback on his or her ideas.

Here are some tips for planning conferences:

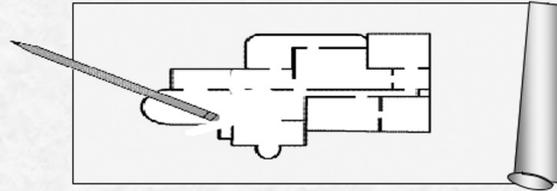
- Spend class time modeling and scaffolding appropriate conferencing.
- Enlist the support of parents, volunteers, and aides to help so that struggling readers are not left behind.
- Provide students with visual and verbal reminders of their roles until they gain competence.
- Monitor students closely and provide feedback.
- Practice conferencing frequently.
- Confer with struggling readers to identify topics for mini-lessons, and to review their answers to the metacognitive questions for purpose, audience, content, and form.
- Select student partners carefully. Struggling writers should have partners who provide specific feedback with sensitivity, highlighting one or two points at a time.

Handout 7: “Planning Conference Guide” contains more specific information on the roles of the writer and partner during this conference.

Students should be able to conference effectively with the teacher in whole class instruction and/or in small group instruction before working in pairs.

Conferences may fail if students do not have an agenda for the conference, have not internalized the process, and/or feel little ownership of the product.

Revising the Plan



“Plan is revision at its purest The revised plan allows you to avoid a finished draft that does not meet the teacher or employer’s assignment.”

(Murray, 1996, p. 110)

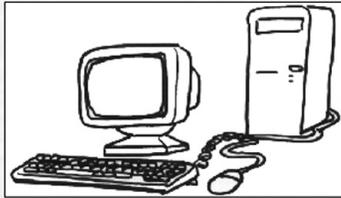
Revising the Plan

Writing plans are flexible, and students should be encouraged to revise their plans as necessary, incorporating changes after the planning conference. Revised plans should be shared with the teacher or the conference partner.

Revising now saves time and energy later!

Using Computers for Planning

Word processing programs help students:



- **Easily organize and reorganize their written thoughts during the planning stage.**
- **Develop outlines using the conventional form or a software organizational tool.**
- **Easily make changes to their outlines.**

Using Computers for Planning

Word processing and organizational software tools are good ways for students, particularly struggling writers, to get preliminary thoughts on paper.

Word processing helps students:

- Easily organize and reorganize their written thoughts during the planning stage;
- Develop outlines using the conventional form or a software organizational tool; and
- Easily make changes to their outlines.

However, be sure to allow opportunities for students to develop keyboard skills and familiarity with the word processing application before beginning the writing process.

Next, we will focus on the drafting stage of the writing process.

Drafting: Making a Preliminary Sketch

How Effective Writers Draft

- Keep the plan in mind while drafting
- Monitor whether the draft fulfills the plan
- Monitor whether the draft and/or the plan is effective
- Anticipate and answer reader's questions
- Rely on a variety of drafting strategies

How Struggling Writers Draft

- Write whatever comes to mind with little thought for purpose, audience, or form
- Focus rigidly on mechanics, rules, and formulas rather than meaning
- Lack knowledge of text structure
- Take few, if any, risks

Drafting: Making a Primary Sketch

This slide lists some of the differences between effective and struggling writers during drafting.

Struggling writers typically:

- Write whatever comes to mind with little thought for purpose, audience, or form;
- Focus rigidly on mechanics, rules, and formulas rather than meaning;
- Lack knowledge of text structure; and
- Take few, if any, risks.

However, effective writers typically:

- Keep the plan in mind while drafting;
- Monitor whether the draft fulfills the plan;
- Monitor whether the draft and/or the plan is effective;
- Anticipate and answer the reader's questions; and
- Rely on a variety of drafting strategies.

***Extending the Workshop**

Assess participants' needs by asking, "Which aspect of drafting seems to be particularly troublesome for your struggling writers?"

List them on a blank transparency and check them off as they are addressed.

Drafting

Introduction

Audience:

What type of introduction would best capture my reader's attention?

Purpose:

What do I want to accomplish in my introduction? What will help accomplish my purpose and give direction to the rest of the paper?

Content:

What ideas do I need to introduce or explain? How can I introduce my ideas?

Form:

How should I organize my introduction material? What first? Next?

Drafting

An introduction is much like the front door of a house. It is the entranceway to the rest of the paper and provides the reader's first impression.

Writers must consider these metacognitive questions as they draft introductions:

- For purpose: What do I want to accomplish in my introduction? What will help accomplish my purpose and give direction to the rest of the paper?
- For audience: What type of introduction would best capture my reader's attention?
- For content: What ideas do I need to introduce or explain? How can I introduce my ideas?
- For form: How should I organize my introduction material? What first? Next?

To reinforce your students' ability to write introductions, you can:

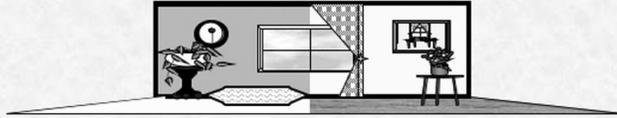
- Demonstrate effective introductions and show how to determine their critical attributes; and
- Explain strategies for gaining the reader's interest by describing and showing examples of their use.

These activities build students' familiarity with effective introductions. Both suggested activities draw upon examples of successful introductions so that students can experience effective techniques firsthand.

Page one of Handout 8: "Drafting Strategies" lists additional effective introductory techniques.

Drafting (cont.)

Body Paragraphs



Audience: What level of formality do I want to use for this audience?
What transition words will help my reader know that this idea relates to the other ideas?

Purpose: Where can I use elaboration to help fulfill my purpose?
Does this sentence state my idea clearly?

Content: What else do I know about this idea? How can I explain this idea?

Form: How am I sticking to my plan?

Struggling writers benefit from reviewing their answers to these questions with you.

Drafting (cont.)

This slide lists the writer's considerations when drafting body paragraphs.

- For audience: What level of formality do I want to use for this audience? Which transition words will help my reader know that this idea relates to the other ideas?
- For purpose: Where can I use elaboration to help fulfill my purpose? Does this sentence state my idea clearly?
- For content: What else do I know about this idea? How can I explain this idea?
- For form: How am I sticking to my plan?

Students benefit from reviewing their answers to these questions with you. Students who struggle with writing will require frequent feedback and scaffolding to answer these questions satisfactorily.

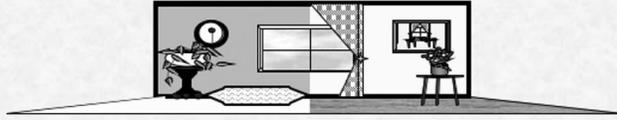
Call upon a few participants for ways to provide frequent teacher feedback to struggling writers.

***Extending the Workshop**

Use the think-aloud technique and the questions from the slide to aid teachers in drafting a body paragraph.

Drafting (cont.)

Body Paragraphs



Teach students related knowledge and skills by:

- Discussing paragraph structure, stressing its flexible nature
- Teaching students to develop topic sentences, detailed supporting sentences, and concluding sentences
- Drawing from a repertoire of elaboration techniques, giving examples for and modeling each type
- Providing a sentence-generating strategy
- Modeling elaboration at the sentence level

Drafting (cont.)

To draft effectively, students must be able to generate sentences, elaborate on ideas, and organize paragraphs. Struggling writers often have difficulty with all of these processes and need specific instruction in strategies. There are several techniques teachers can use to assist students during the drafting stage:

- Discussing paragraph structure, stressing its flexible nature;
- Teaching students to develop topic sentences, detailed supporting sentences, and concluding sentences;
- Drawing from a repertoire of elaboration techniques, giving examples for and modeling each type;
- Providing a sentence-generating strategy; and
- Modeling elaboration at the sentence level.

Pages two through four of Handout 8 include “Paragraphing,” “Sentence Expansion Strategy,” and “Sentence Generating Strategy” ideas, which provide more information on drafting paragraphs.

Allow time to skim the handouts.

Students can be more productive during the drafting stage if they:

- Write on every other line;
- Write on only one side of the paper;
- Focus on intended meaning; and
- Follow their writing plans, realizing that the plans may change later.

Help students see that although they should focus on fulfilling their initial writing plans, they also need to remain flexible. They may realize during drafting that they left out information, that there are flaws in their arguments, or simply that they have new and better ideas to integrate. Flexibility will prevent frustration and encourage students to continue to use writing plans.

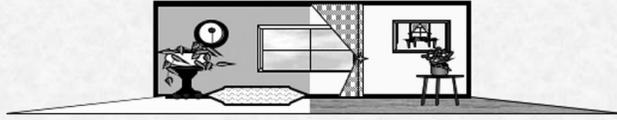
Struggling writers become frustrated with generating drafts when they end up revising repeatedly. Their frustration often leads them to write less.

Technology can help struggling writers begin drafting written work.

(notes continued on next page)

Drafting (cont.)

Body Paragraphs



Teach students related knowledge and skills by:

- Discussing paragraph structure, stressing its flexible nature
- Teaching students to develop topic sentences, detailed supporting sentences, and concluding sentences
- Drawing from a repertoire of elaboration techniques, giving examples for and modeling each type
- Providing a sentence-generating strategy
- Modeling elaboration at the sentence level

(notes continued)

Word processing programs can help students, especially struggling writers, to:

- Begin the process of writing a first draft;
- Make changes without the annoyance of continually erasing; and
- Incorporate feedback from peer conferences more easily.

Word processing encourages students to write ideas, because elaboration and editing can be done quickly and simply.

Drafting (cont.)

Conclusion

Audience: How can I avoid leaving my reader feeling confused? How can I make an impression on my audience?

Purpose: How can I reiterate my purpose?

Content: How can I summarize my main points?

Form: How should I order my conclusion?

Drafting (cont.)

To end the paper as strongly as it began, writers should consider these questions:

- For audience: How can I avoid leaving my reader feeling confused? How can I make an impression on my audience and/or cause them to think?
- For purpose: How can I reiterate my purpose?
- For content: How can I summarize my main point(s)?
- For form: How should I order my conclusion?

These questions help create a conclusion which clarifies, intensifies, and summarizes the paper's topic or arguments. A successful conclusion gives the reader a sense of closure, not confusion.

Drafting (cont.)

Conclusion

Teach students related knowledge and skills:

- Use examples of successful and unsuccessful conclusions to emphasize that effective conclusions summarize content and appeal to the reader
- Model think-aloud techniques that effective writers use to conclude a text
- Guide students to ask questions about purpose, audience, content, and form when choosing their writing techniques

Drafting (cont.)

Struggling writers may have little understanding of the purposes of conclusions or of the techniques used to create conclusions. You can guide students to write good conclusions by:

- Using examples of successful and unsuccessful conclusions to emphasize that effective conclusions summarize content and appeal to the reader;
- Modeling think-aloud techniques that effective writers use to conclude a text; and
- Guiding students in the use of purpose, audience, content, and form questions when they choose writing techniques.

Earlier we discussed questions students can use to consider purpose, audience, content, and form. The answers to these questions also apply to conclusions.

***Extending the Workshop**

In small groups, have participants select a concluding strategy and write a conclusion using purpose, audience, content, and form questions as a guide.

Call on representatives from various small groups to share their ideas as time allows.

Drafting for Struggling Writers

Strategy: Timed Free Writing

- Activate prior knowledge
- Suspend normal writing conventions temporarily
- Allow students to write sentences, phrases, or word lists
- Encourage students to write continuously for the specified time

Drafting for Struggling Writers

Timed free writing is a strategy that helps students put their ideas on paper. During timed free writing, students' thoughts can flow freely without concern for punctuation, spelling, and organization. Students can write anything they like that is related to the topic.

To enrich the quality of students' writing, activate their prior knowledge before they start to write. Without this, struggling writers frequently produce very little. To activate the thought process, discuss the topic with students and make connections to what they already know about it.

To begin a timed free writing session,

- Assign an amount of time (around three minutes) to spend on writing;
- Explain that the conventions of writing do not apply during that time;
- Remind students that they may write sentences, phrases, or word lists, and that they should write continuously for the given time; and
- Set the timer and have students begin writing.

When the time is over, allow students to work with a partner to discuss their writing and elaborate on their ideas.

Students can also count the number of words they write in each timed writing session and graph their results. This can be done periodically and kept as a record of progress.

The Drafting Conference

The Writer

- Explains purpose, audience, content, and form to conference partner
- Reads aloud the draft or a selection from the draft
- Asks partner questions to clarify and improve the draft
- Records any ideas or changes

The Partner

- Listens and notes writer's intended purpose, audience, content, and form
- Listens to draft
- Answers writer's questions
- Asks questions regarding the draft
- Rereads draft if necessary
- Suggests improvements

The Drafting Conference

Struggling writers often get stuck or get off track during drafting. Drafting conferences can help struggling writers when they need it the most . . . while they are writing.

The purpose of the drafting conference is to empower the writer. The writer is in charge of the drafting conference.

Give students guidelines for their roles in the drafting conference.

The writer should:

- Explain purpose, audience, content, and form to the conference partner;
- Read aloud the draft or a selection from the draft;
- Ask the partner questions regarding the draft to clarify and improve it; and
- Record the partner's ideas and changes.

The conference partner should:

- Listen to the writer and note the writer's intended purpose, audience, content, and form;
- Listen to the draft as the writer reads it aloud;
- Answer the writer's questions;
- Ask questions regarding the draft;
- Reread the draft if necessary; and
- Suggest ways to improve the paper.

Teach partners to provide constructive feedback, and have students practice doing this with each other.

Drafting conferences are intended to be brief and should be based on the writer's needs at a particular time during drafting.

Page five of Handout 8: "Drafting Strategies" provides more information on drafting conferences.

Revising

“Tell any group of teachers in a workshop that revision is the key to good writing and you’ll generally see hearty nods of agreement. The trouble is, so much energy has been spent on pre-writing and drafting before we ever get there. Revision is like the last stop on a long, long vacation. Everybody is tired and really wants to get on home, even if it means missing a few things.”

(Spandel & Stiggins, 1990, p. 106)

Revising

“Tell any group of teachers in a workshop that revision is the key to good writing and you’ll generally see hearty nods of agreement. The trouble is, so much energy has been spent on pre-writing and drafting before we ever get there. Revision is like the last stop on a long, long vacation. Everybody is tired and really wants to get on home, even if it means missing a few things” (Spandel & Stiggins, 1990, p. 106).

By the time struggling writers arrive at the revision stage, they are often tired of writing and are ready to “recopy” and turn in their papers. They are too exhausted to imagine continuing the task, even if more work would lead to significant improvement.

If you’ve ever remodeled your house, you were probably dissatisfied with it. You also probably had a vision of your house’s possibilities.

Effective teachers help students both feel dissatisfaction and gain vision with regard to writing so that they will be motivated to continue to “remodel” and revise their work.

For students who struggle with writing, handle their dissatisfaction with sensitivity to their past difficulty with this task. Target a few areas at a time to prevent overwhelming students with numerous revisions.

When Revising . . .

Effective Writers

- Focus on organization of text as a whole
- Evaluate text in terms of writing goals
- Undertake substantial revision to improve the text
- Check grammar, syntax, spelling, and word choice

Struggling Writers

- Cannot identify what would improve their writing
- Often fail to recognize errors and lapses in meaning
- Lack strategies and skills for solving the problems they can identify
- Make revisions that do not improve quality of text

When Revising . . .

Struggling writers' failure to continue to "remodel" and revise often stems from their lack of skill in revision and even from an inability to recognize the need for revision.

Effective and struggling writers approach revision very differently.

Effective writers:

- Focus on the organization of the text as a whole;
- Evaluate the text in terms of their writing goals;
- Undertake substantial revision to improve the text; and
- Check their grammar, syntax, spelling, and word choice.

On the other hand, struggling writers:

- Can't identify what would improve their writing;
- Often fail to recognize errors and lapses in meaning;
- Lack strategies and skills for solving the problems they can identify; and
- Make revisions that do not improve the quality of the text.

However, you can provide struggling writers with a set of specific steps that they can use to revise successfully.

Guidelines for Revision

Writers can:

- Locate problems by considering text section by section, and then sentence by sentence
- Add, delete, substitute, and rearrange material as needed
- Revise for purpose, audience, content, and form

Guidelines for Revision

The first step in revision is locating problems in the text. Students should not attempt to tackle their writing as a whole to locate these problems. Instead, it will be easier for them to consider the text section by section, and then sentence by sentence, to find areas of difficulty.

The recommended steps for the section-by-section part of this process are in Handout 9: “Suggested Steps in Revision.”

There are four basic options during revision. Writers can add, delete, substitute, and rearrange their material.

Adding information is generally the easiest revision technique for struggling writers, and will usually improve their writing because most writers fail to give enough information.

Help your students write to accomplish their goals by emphasizing revising for purpose, audience, content, and form. Handout 10: “Revision Guidelines” outlines questions that students can ask when revising these areas.

Handout 11: “Strategies for Revising Sentence Structure” contains ideas for lessons that will help students improve the quality of sentences used in their writing.

Teaching Revising

Scaffolding should be used when teaching revising.

- **Introduce revision steps gradually**
- **With success, teach more steps in the process**

Teaching Revising

When teaching students to revise, it is important to introduce the revision process in segments, allowing students opportunities to practice skills incrementally. For example, first practice peer conferencing, focusing on “purpose” and then on both “purpose” and “audience.” As students become more successful with pieces of the revision process, they build on their skills until they can revise their entire product for purpose, audience, form, and content. Handout 10: “Revision Guidelines” can be used in class as a checklist to assist students in this process.

Revision for Struggling Writers

Strategy: Color Coding for Expansion

First Draft

I saved my money to buy a car. I saved for a long time and really wanted it. I thought about it a lot. When I was sixteen, I got the money from the bank and I bought it.

Working Draft

For the last three years, I saved every penny I could so that I could buy a car. I saved for a long time and really wanted it. I thought about it a lot. Then my sixteenth birthday arrived. I was thrilled to go to the bank, withdraw all my savings, and go to the dealership with my father to make my down payment on this incredible purchase.

Revision for Struggling Writers

This slide displays an example of a color-coding revision strategy for expansion.

To begin the color-coding process, the teacher or peer editor chooses and highlights one or two sentences for the writer to expand. The writer then works to incorporate more complex form and content into those sentences.

If the writer cannot expand on his or her own, then the teacher can demonstrate. For example, the teacher can provide a list of adjectives and ask the student to add at least one “describing word” per sentence.

On the slide, the First Draft is an example of “bare bones” writing and the Working Draft shows the paragraph after the first and fourth sentences were expanded. The writer can ask at least two questions regarding each sentence to find ways to expand them.

For examples of ways to use expansion across multiple drafts, refer to Handout 12: “Revisions for Struggling Writers: Stages of Expansion.”

Revision for Struggling Writers (cont.)

Additional ideas for revision:

- Use teacher conferencing
- Highlight sparingly
- Choose specific colors for coding
- Teach one revision type at a time
- Encourage peer questioning
- Use a graphic organizer
- Provide access to the computer

Revision for Struggling Writers (cont.)

Consider the following additional ideas on revision strategies and color-coding.

- Use teacher conferencing with the struggling student to discuss and model expansion for the existing draft.
- Highlight a few sentences that need expansion. With only a small amount of text highlighted, the student can focus more clearly and with less frustration than if asked to deal with the entire passage.
- Choose a specific color for each revision type (for example, yellow for expansion: adding more complex content or form; and red for elaboration: clarifying ideas that are presented).
- Teach one revision type at a time (for example, expansion, elaboration). Selecting only one revision reduces frustration for the struggling student.
- Use peer questioning to guide the writer toward expansion. Before using peer questioning, students should be familiar with effective techniques to expand their writing and ways to provide feedback.
- Use a graphic organizer for each sentence if needed. Place the sentence in the center and add at least two additional pieces of information.
- Many students prefer to use a computer for revision. With a computer, many revisions can be made quickly and easily, provided that students possess basic word-processing skills.

Revising Tips

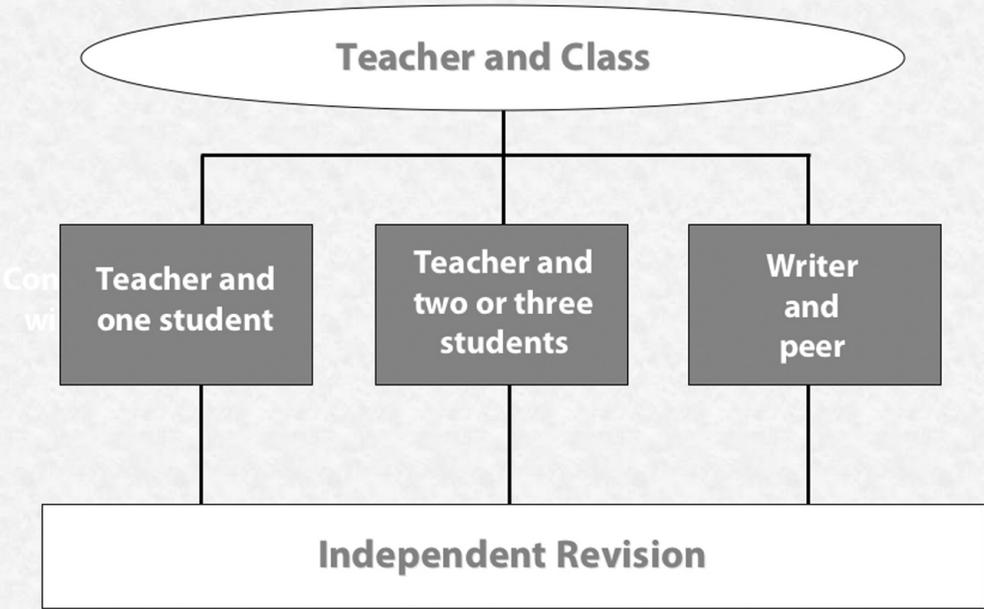
- **Empower students and improve their motivation.**
- **Encourage additions. Most student writing is underdeveloped.**
- **Facilitate peer conferencing and consultation.**
- **Pose questions related to purpose, audience, content, and form.**

Revising Tips

The following tips may help you integrate revision instruction into your classroom:

- Empower students and improve their motivation. If students feel ownership of their writing, they will be more inclined to work to improve it. Allow them to make their own choices during revision.
- Encourage additions. Most students' writing is underdeveloped.
- Facilitate peer conferencing and consultation.
- Pose questions related to purpose, audience, content, and form.

Revision Conferences





Revision Conferences

Conferencing is an important revision tool. Through a variety of groupings, struggling writers can receive the support they need to eventually revise independently.

Students can have a conference with the teacher, a peer, or a small group.

Ask participants to describe the strengths and weaknesses of each type of conferencing. Record their answers on a piece of chart paper.

The Revision Conference

Steps:

1. The partner listens and praises.
2. The writer and partner reread and evaluate.
3. The writer records questions, comments, and suggestions.
4. The writer asks the partner questions about step 3.
5. The partner discusses questions, comments, and suggestions with the writer.
6. The writer revises.

The Revision Conference

The revision conference has six steps.

- The partner listens and praises.
- The writer and partner reread and evaluate.
- The writer records questions, comments, and suggestions.
- The writer asks the partner questions about step 3.
- The partner discusses questions, comments, and suggestions with the writer.
- The writer revises.

You can also use Handout 13: “Peer Revision Guide” as a guide for students.

Revision Conferences: Classroom Tips

Students need to be taught to conference effectively.

Modeling is extremely important in teaching conferencing.

While you are conferencing with a student, other students can be engaged in reading, writing, or peer conferencing.

Revision Conferences: Classroom Tips

Teaching how to conduct a revision conference will pay off in the long run by making students more independent.

You should include teaching students to give specific praise, to ask helpful questions, to make constructive comments, and to give suggestions.

- Modeling is extremely important in teaching conferencing. To demonstrate, you can:
 - prepare a monologue in which you play the roles of both the writer and the peer;
 - ask for a volunteer from the class to help model conferencing;
 - enlist the help of another teacher or an aide; and
 - tape-record a good conference.
- While you are conferencing, other students can be engaged in reading, writing, or peer conferencing.

Editing: Cleaning Up

What is editing?

When should writers edit?

Why teach editing skills?

Who is responsible for editing?



Editing: Cleaning Up

Review the nature and purposes of editing with participants in a group discussion. Use the questions on the slide as prompts.

Call on 3-4 participants for each question. Limit the discussion to 8 minutes.

- What is editing?
- When should writers edit?
- Why teach editing skills?
- Who is responsible for editing?

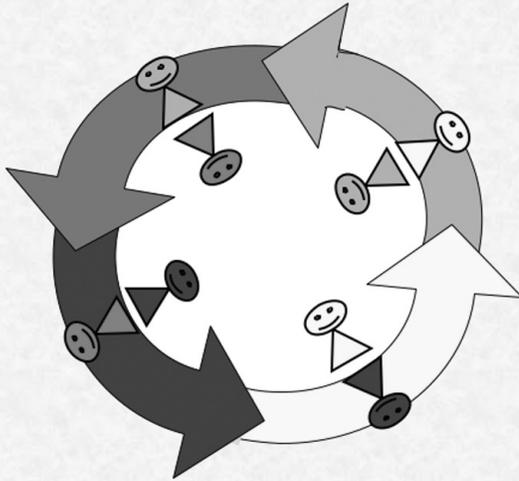
For additional information, refer to Handout 14: “Editing.”

Students typically are not skilled at editing because they lack strategies for effectively scrutinizing their own work.

Proofreading and editing are essential stages in the writing process. Writers protect their credibility by ensuring that the details of spelling, punctuation, and grammar are accurate. Teachers should communicate the importance of careful editing to students. Students should also be discouraged from relying on word processing programs’ spelling and grammar features.

Editing for Struggling Writers

Strategy: Clocking



Possible Adaptations



- Model the editing process using think-alouds and demonstrations
- Allow more time for editing
- Provide mini-lessons on the editing skills required
- Begin by editing only one area at a time
- Pair a struggling student with a successful student
- Teach collaborative skills to facilitate interaction among students

Editing for Struggling Writers

Clocking is an effective editing strategy. It is especially useful with struggling students. The procedures for clocking are as follows:

- Students sit facing each other in two concentric circles.
- All students have working drafts of their papers.
- A teacher-made editing form is provided, listing the area(s) to be edited (for example, spelling, punctuation). This form is clipped to each student draft. Handout 15: “Editing Form for Clocking” provides a sample.
- Students seated across from each other in each circle trade papers.
- Students look for and mark errors in the specific area being edited (for example, spelling).
- Student editors sign the editing form on the line beside the specified edit and return the paper to the author.
- Students on the outer circle move one seat to the right and the process continues with the next area to be edited.

Students must be aware that cooperative behavior is important for this process to work smoothly. The teacher may explain the process to a small group of students and have them model the process to the entire class.

When implementing the clocking procedure in your writing classroom, struggling writers may benefit from the adaptations listed on this slide.

The IEP guides the adaptations you make to this activity. This document should be consulted for information in dealing with all identified students.

Handout 16: “Editing for Struggling Writers: Student Editing Rules to Accomplish Clocking” can be used as a guideline when using clocking with struggling writers.

Cleaning Up After Editing: Classroom Tips

- The student first uses checklists and other strategies to edit the work
- Peers edit the work after the teacher has modeled editing strategies
- Students place a well-edited piece (edited by both self and peer) in an editing basket for a final editing conference with the teacher
- Use mini-lessons to build knowledge and skills
- Teach one strategy at a time
- Students should proofread for conventions that have been taught
- Use selective marking to focus on specific errors that the teacher has tried to help the student eliminate
- Don't just assign editing—teach the necessary skills, strategies, and symbols

Cleaning Up After Editing: Classroom Tips

These tips were synthesized from leading teachers and researchers:

- The student should be the first editor of his or her own work, using checklists and other strategies. After modeling and collaborative practice, students should be able to apply editing skills to their own papers.
- Use peers as editors, after the teacher has modeled strategies and taught the students to make appropriate comments.
- Have students put a well-edited piece (edited by both self and a peer) in an editing basket for a final editing conference with the teacher. After reviewing the paper briefly, hold a conference with the student about one or two editing skills.
- Use mini-lessons to build knowledge and skills for the whole class or small groups of students.

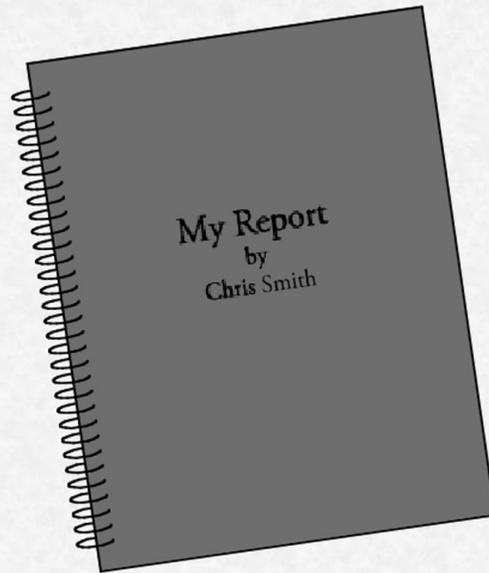
Some further tips from research:

- Teach one skill at a time.
- Don't expect students to proofread for conventions that have not been taught. Students can keep a list of conventions for which they are expected to proofread. This list will grow over the course of the year.
- Use selective marking to focus on the particular kinds of errors that the teacher has tried to help the student eliminate.
- Place a check mark at the end of the line with the error and ask the writer to find and correct it.
- Don't just assign editing. Teach the necessary skills, strategies, and symbols.

By following these tips, teachers can avoid many of the frustrations associated with teaching editing.

These suggestions are listed on Handout 17: "Cleaning Up After Construction Tips."

The Finished Product





The Finished Product

At some point in the writing process, we conclude that the project is finished. True, there may still be an endless number of small changes to be completed. In writing, there is always an endless number of possible revisions to be made. But at some point we must allow students to declare the work finished.

In groups of four or five, discuss one thing you learned today that was new, and one thing you are going to change in how you teach writing.

Or, if participants teach content areas other than English language arts, ask them to identify three ways they can begin to incorporate writing strategies into the instruction they provide.

Allow ten minutes. After discussing in small groups, ask for a volunteer from each group to report to the entire group.

PARTICIPANT NOTES



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An Introduction to Writing Instruction for Secondary Students

Objectives

Participants will:

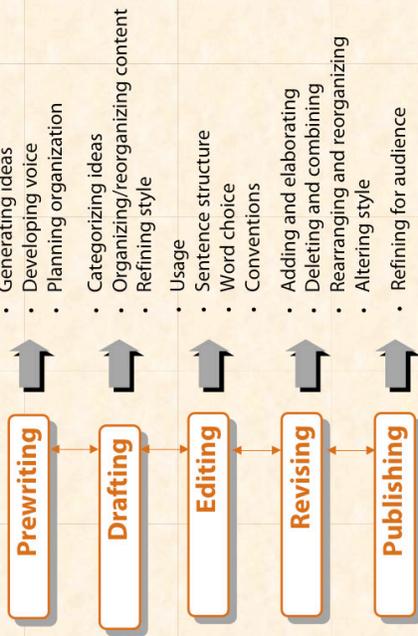
- Discuss components of the writing process
- Describe characteristics of struggling and effective writers
- Describe strategies for the planning, drafting, revising, and editing stages of the writing process
- Discuss techniques that can be implemented in classrooms to teach writing

TEKS-pectations for Writing: Grades 6-12

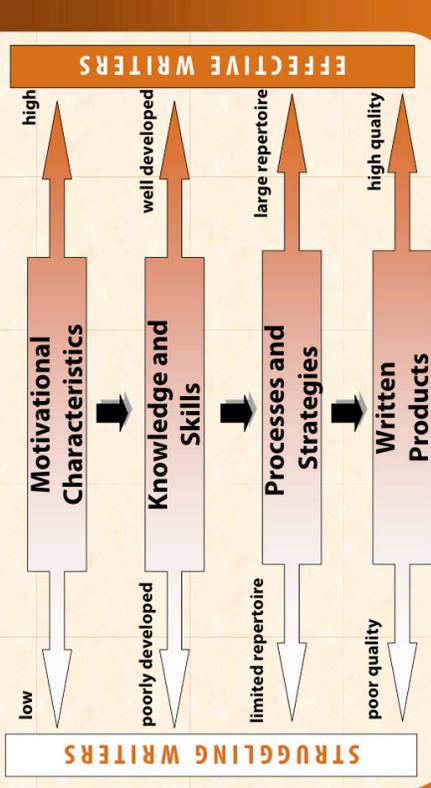
The student is expected to:

- Write in a variety of forms for various audiences and purposes
- Select and use recursive writing processes for self-initiated and assigned writing
- Compose original texts, applying the conventions of written language to communicate clearly
- Apply standard grammar and usage to communicate clearly and effectively in writing
- Use writing as a tool for learning and research
- Evaluate his/her own writing and the writings of others
- Interact with writers inside and outside the classroom in ways that reflect the practical uses of writing

Writing as a Recursive Process



The Continuum of Writers



Characteristics of Effective Writers—Activity

What are the characteristics of an effective writer?

Consider:

- **Motivational Characteristics**
- **Knowledge and Skills**
- **Processes**
- **Written Products**

Helping Struggling Writers: We Can Make a Difference

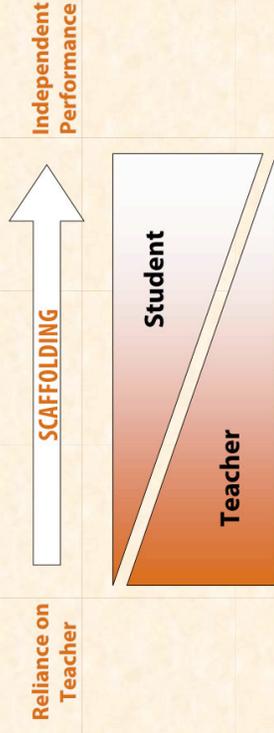
Why do some students struggle with writing?

How can we as teachers make a difference?

- Provide a motivating environment for writing
- Teach knowledge and skills and their application
- Model thought processes and strategies (think-aloud technique)

Goal of Scaffolding

The goal of scaffolding is to produce independent thinkers, learners, and writers!



Scaffolding

- Establish a motivating environment
- Assess student needs
- Select and explain a strategy
- Build prerequisite knowledge and skills
- Promote student mastery of the strategy
- Model the strategy (e.g., think aloud, etc.)
- Practice collaboratively to promote internalization
- Encourage students to apply the strategy independently
- Assess strategy mastery and usage
- Teach regulation of strategy use

Tips for Getting the Most Out of Your Scaffolding

- **Select wisely and keep it simple.** Choose one or two strategies to teach and provide scaffolding for those strategies
- **Use record-keeping,** such as “status of the class” charts or checklists, to keep track of student progress and needs
- **Break the class into small groups** based upon needs and provide mini-lessons to groups of 4 or 5 students
- **Do not remove the scaffolding too early.** You are teaching for independent mastery and usage

Promoting Success in the General Education Curriculum: Special Education Adaptations

Adaptations

- What are the expectations?
- What are the setting demands?
- What do I know about the student?
- What are my choices for adaptations?

How is it working?

Student Success: Adaptations



**Instructional
Design
Adaptations**



**Instructional/
Curricular
Adaptations**

**Behavioral
Support
Adaptations**

**Positive Learning Community
and Access to the General Education Curriculum**

Instructional Design Adaptations: Know Your Students

- **Plan for adaptations**
- **Access resources**
- **Collaborate with the team**
- **Integrate technology**
- **Assess learning**
- **Monitor student progress**

Instructional and Curricular Adaptations

Instructional:

- Consider students' literacy levels and needs
- Activate background knowledge
- Use clear, simple directions
- Provide opportunities to respond
- Adjust pacing and provide feedback

Curricular:

- Make learning visible and explicit
- Highlight key information and concepts
- Break tasks or activities into steps
- Use games to provide practice
- Provide multiple ways for students to demonstrate learning

Instructional and Curricular Adaptations (cont.)

Make Learning Visible and Explicit



- Use modeling and think-alouds
- Provide a written list of steps
- Have students self-monitor as they complete each step
- Support auditory information with visual and tactile cues

Instructional and Curricular Adaptations (cont.)

Examples:

- Advertisement
- News release
- Web or map
- Comic strip
- Collage
- Diorama



Provide Multiple Ways for Students to Demonstrate Learning

Behavioral Support Adaptations

Use strategies that increase appropriate student behaviors:

- Provide structure and be consistent
- Use proactive teaching
- Teach alternative behaviors

The Think-Aloud Technique

My First Wheels

My first bike was blue and had a black seat, black tires, and chrome handlebars. It got pretty banged up the first week because I kept crashing and wrecking. My dad told me that was normal, but I wanted it to stay pretty and new-looking.

I kept that bike for years and helped my younger brothers learn to ride on it. Do you remember getting your first wheels? Maybe you call the baby carriage and the tricycle your first wheels, but I don't count those! That new bike could really take me places — fast. And I was the "driver."

Would this line make more of an impression in another place?

I'm not sure about this start, but I think I'll come back to it later.

Hmm... I wonder if my audience has had similar experiences?

Effective Writing

Effective writing requires keeping the purpose, audience, content, and form in mind as the “big picture” develops.

Keep in Mind . . .

- Planning occurs *after* determining a topic.
- Plans are continually revisited and revised throughout the writing process.
- Planning includes thinking about purpose, audience, content, and form.
- There is no *one* right way to plan.

When Planning . . .

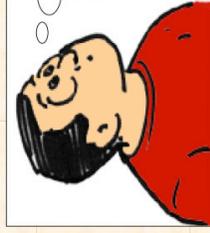
Effective Writers

- Set goals by reflecting upon the purpose, audience, and mode of writing
- Systematically search their memories for related information
- Conduct research to find new information
- Organize the collected information
- Reflect upon topics, ideas, content, and organization

Struggling Writers

- Spend little time planning
- View planning as determining a topic
- Do not have an organizational plan
- Lack effective strategies for generating content
- Fail to research new information
- Lack knowledge of text structure

Planning for Purpose

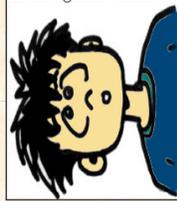


- Why am I writing this?
- What do I hope to accomplish?
- How will I accomplish my purpose?

Teach Students Related Knowledge and Skills by :

- Showing examples of writing for different purposes and helping students identify each purpose.
- Brainstorming a list of reasons for writing and posting it in the classroom.
- Explaining the relationship between text structure and purpose.
- Having students record their answers to the metacognitive questions listed above.

Planning for Audience



- For whom am I writing?
- What do I know about this audience?
- What will my audience need or want to know?

Teach Students Related Knowledge and Skills by :

- Brainstorming possible audiences and discussing characteristics of each.
- Discussing the effects of audience on what you say (content) and how you say it (style).
- Discussing characteristics of writing that effectively reaches the intended audience and writing that doesn't.
- Having students record their answers to the metacognitive questions listed above.

Planning for Content



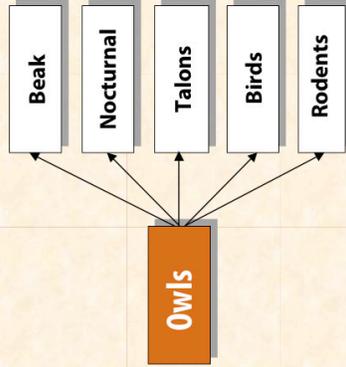
- What do I know about this topic?
- What do I need to know about this topic?
- How can I learn what I need to know?

Teach Students Related Knowledge and Skills by :

- Demonstrating how different prewriting strategies can be used to generate and organize what a student knows.
- Conducting a mini-lesson on research techniques.
- Having students record their answers to the metacognitive questions listed above.

Planning Content for Struggling Writers

Strategy: Webbing



Possible Adaptations

- Activate prior knowledge through webbing.
- Model webbing with multiple examples.
- Limit the number of web branches.
- Provide a peer scribe.
- Use color-coding to highlight categories.
- Provide graphic organizers (semantic map, Venn diagram) to record ideas.
- Access library materials.
- Use self-sticking notes for arranging and rearranging.
- Allow nonwriters to use illustrations to depict ideas.



Planning for Form



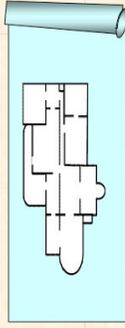
- How should I arrange my ideas in order to achieve my purpose?
- What are the big ideas I want to get across to my audience?
- What do I know that supports these big ideas?

Teach Students Related Knowledge and Skills by :

- Showing examples of different text structures, and examining the arrangement of ideas within them.
- Having students record their answers to the metacognitive questions listed above.

Generating a Writing Plan

"A writing plan is an artist's sketch, a carpenter's plan scratched on a board, a cook's recipe that will be changed during the cooking. A writing plan is not an order or a binding contract. It is an educated guess"



(Murray, 1996, p. 82)

Before students begin drafting, they need to have a plan.

This plan can take many forms, such as:

- formal and informal outlines;
- graphic representations; or
- any other technique for arranging and sequencing ideas.

The Planning Conference

Focus of Conference:

Purpose
Audience
Content
Form

The Writer

Explains

Answers

Records

The Partner

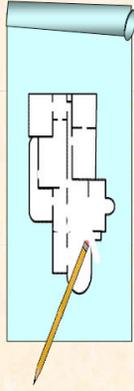
Listens

Evaluates

Suggests



Revising the Plan

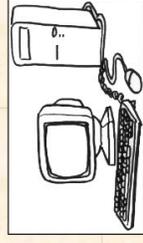


"Plan is revision at its purest The revised plan allows you to avoid a finished draft that does not meet the teacher or employer's assignment."

(Murray, 1996, p. 110)

Using Computers for Planning

Word processing programs help students:



- Easily organize and reorganize their written thoughts during the planning stage.
- Develop outlines using the conventional form or a software organizational tool.
- Easily make changes to their outlines.

Drafting: Making a Preliminary Sketch

How Effective Writers Draft

- Keep the plan in mind while drafting
- Monitor whether the draft fulfills the plan
- Monitor whether the draft and/or the plan is effective
- Anticipate and answer reader's questions
- Rely on a variety of drafting strategies

How Struggling Writers Draft

- Write whatever comes to mind with little thought for purpose, audience, or form
- Focus rigidly on mechanics, rules, and formulas rather than meaning
- Lack knowledge of text structure
- Take few, if any, risks

Drafting

Introduction

Audience:

What type of introduction would best capture my reader's attention?

Purpose:

What do I want to accomplish in my introduction? What will help accomplish my purpose and give direction to the rest of the paper?

Content:

What ideas do I need to introduce or explain? How can I introduce my ideas?

Form:

How should I organize my introduction material? What first? Next?

Drafting (cont.)

Body Paragraphs



Audience: What level of formality do I want to use for this audience?
What transition words will help my reader know that this idea relates to the other ideas?

Purpose: Where can I use elaboration to help fulfill my purpose?
Does this sentence state my idea clearly?

Content: What else do I know about this idea? How can I explain this idea?

Form: How am I sticking to my plan?

Struggling writers benefit from reviewing their answers to these questions with you.

Drafting (cont.)

Body Paragraphs



Teach students related knowledge and skills by:

- Discussing paragraph structure, stressing its flexible nature
- Teaching students to develop topic sentences, detailed supporting sentences, and concluding sentences
- Drawing from a repertoire of elaboration techniques, giving examples for and modeling each type
- Providing a sentence-generating strategy
- Modeling elaboration at the sentence level

Drafting (cont.)

Conclusion

- Audience:** How can I avoid leaving my reader feeling confused? How can I make an impression on my audience?
- Purpose:** How can I reiterate my purpose?
- Content:** How can I summarize my main points?
- Form:** How should I order my conclusion?

Drafting (cont.)

Conclusion

Teach students related knowledge and skills:

- Use examples of successful and unsuccessful conclusions to emphasize that effective conclusions summarize content and appeal to the reader
- Model think-aloud techniques that effective writers use to conclude a text
- Guide students to ask questions about purpose, audience, content, and form when choosing their writing techniques

Drafting for Struggling Writers

Strategy: Timed Free Writing

- Activate prior knowledge
- Suspend normal writing conventions temporarily
- Allow students to write sentences, phrases, or word lists
- Encourage students to write continuously for the specified time

The Drafting Conference

The Writer

- Explains purpose, audience, content, and form to conference partner
- Reads aloud the draft or a selection from the draft
- Asks partner questions to clarify and improve the draft
- Records any ideas or changes

The Partner

- Listens and notes writer's intended purpose, audience, content, and form
- Listens to draft
- Answers writer's questions
- Asks questions regarding the draft
- Rereads draft if necessary
- Suggests improvements

Revising

"Tell any group of teachers in a workshop that revision is the key to good writing and you'll generally see hearty nods of agreement. The trouble is, so much energy has been spent on pre-writing and drafting before we ever get there. Revision is like the last stop on a long, long vacation. Everybody is tired and really wants to get on home, even if it means missing a few things."

(Spandel & Stiggins, 1990, p. 106)

When Revising . . .

Effective Writers

- Focus on organization of text as a whole
- Evaluate text in terms of writing goals
- Undertake substantial revision to improve the text
- Check grammar, syntax, spelling, and word choice

Struggling Writers

- Cannot identify what would improve their writing
- Often fail to recognize errors and lapses in meaning
- Lack strategies and skills for solving the problems they can identify
- Make revisions that do not improve quality of text

Guidelines for Revision

Writers can:

- Locate problems by considering text section by section, and then sentence by sentence
- Add, delete, substitute, and rearrange material as needed
- Revise for purpose, audience, content, and form

Teaching Revising

Scaffolding should be used when teaching revising.

- **Introduce revision steps gradually**
- **With success, teach more steps in the process**

Revision for Struggling Writers

Strategy: Color Coding for Expansion

First Draft

I saved my money to buy a car. I saved for a long time and really wanted it. I thought about it a lot. When I was sixteen, I got the money from the bank and I bought it.

Working Draft

For the last three years, I saved every penny I could so that I could buy a car. I saved for a long time and really wanted it. I thought about it a lot. Then my sixteenth birthday arrived. I was thrilled to go to the bank, withdraw all my savings, and go to the dealership with my father to make my down payment on this incredible purchase.

Revision for Struggling Writers (cont.)

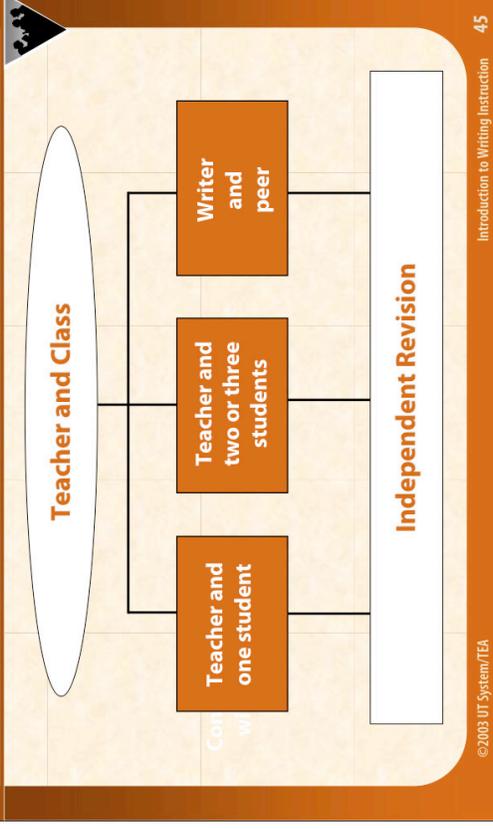
Additional ideas for revision:

- Use teacher conferencing
- Highlight sparingly
- Choose specific colors for coding
- Teach one revision type at a time
- Encourage peer questioning
- Use a graphic organizer
- Provide access to the computer

Revising Tips

- Empower students and improve their motivation.
- Encourage additions. Most student writing is underdeveloped.
- Facilitate peer conferencing and consultation.
- Pose questions related to purpose, audience, content, and form.

Revision Conferences



The Revision Conference

Steps:

1. The partner listens and praises.
2. The writer and partner reread and evaluate.
3. The writer records questions, comments, and suggestions.
4. The writer asks the partner questions about step 3.
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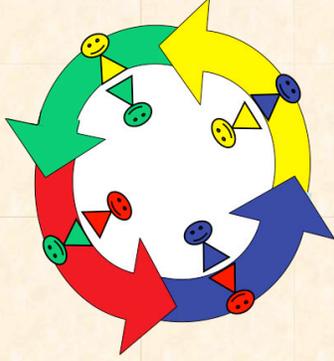
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The Finished Product



HANDOUTS



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Teachers Talk about Strategies

Here is a list of what other teachers have named as a few of their favorite strategies.

Planning

- Literature themes, characters, plots
- Webbing
- Listing
- Journaling
- Drawing
- Three questions you want answered
- Reporter's formula
- Graphic organizers

Drafting

- Timed writing
- Elaboration techniques
- Peer conferencing

Revising

- Color coding (sentence starts, assertion/elaboration)
- Modeling through class revision
- Teacher conferences
- Peer conferences
- Show good and poor examples
- Evaluate organization: listing; bracketing steps; position of parts

Editing

- Focus on one or two error types (e.g., selective scoring)
- Mini-lessons
- Student tracking of errors
- Single-focus peer editing
- Circle words that are possibly misspelled

Publishing

- Reading aloud
- Displaying student work
- Anthology of student work
- Enter contests, submit to journals
- Letters to editor, famous person, congressman

Teaching a Strategy by Scaffolding

- **Establish a motivating context.** Motivate students to find topics that are important to them. Meaningful writing tasks connect the demands of school and the issues of students' cultures and personalities. Students need to take ownership and responsibility for their writing. Students should choose their own topics if possible.
- **Assess student needs.** Assess the individual strengths and weaknesses of your students and set goals with each of them. Keep in mind that students will have varying needs throughout the writing process.
- **Select and teach strategies.** After you determine student needs, select and teach instructional strategies. Explain how, when, why, and where the strategy should be implemented and the benefits of using the strategy.
- **Build prerequisite knowledge and skills.** Identify the knowledge and skills students must have in order to successfully complete the strategy. Teach these skills before introducing the strategy, or within the context of teaching the strategy.
- **Promote student mastery of the strategy.** Have students explain and memorize each step in the strategy. Verbalizing the strategy helps students master it and will allow you to assess their comprehension of the strategy.
- **Model the strategy.** Use think-alouds to model writing strategies with the whole group. Explain which strategy you are using as you write. Students will develop skills through your application and modeling of specific strategies.
- **Practice collaboratively to promote internalization.** Encourage students to use self-talk and new strategies of effective writing. Allow students to practice in collaboration with you and with other students as they use the new strategies.
- **Encourage students to apply the strategy independently.** Have students practice with increasingly difficult material, structuring the tasks to build confidence. Encourage students to apply the new strategies as needed.
- **Assess strategy mastery and use.** Encourage continued application of strategies and allow students to evaluate the usefulness and effectiveness of the strategies.
- **Teach regulation of strategy use.** Teach students to select, modify, and combine strategies to meet their needs.

Planning for Students with Special Needs

There are several steps that teachers should work through to address the needs of students with disabilities in the general education classroom. The steps must be revisited as you learn more about the student and what makes him or her successful in the classroom.

The Student and the Task

Student expectations

It is essential to know the student's strengths and needs to help them be successful in the classroom. Look at previous samples of their schoolwork. What goals and objectives are stated on the IEP? What do you need to learn about this particular student's disability? What suggestions have other teachers, professionals, and the student's parents made for this student to be successful? Gathering all the information you can will help you and the rest of the team develop the most appropriate educational plan possible for this student.

Identify the task demands

Identifying task and setting demands will help to determine which part of the instruction and/or assignment is too challenging. What is expected of the other students? What is important for this student to learn? What are the student's capabilities? Knowing the demands of the task and setting, as well as being familiar with student's abilities will help you modify the task so that the student can achieve the desired outcomes.

The Team

Collaboration

It is important to collaborate with professionals who can assist the students with special needs. It is also very important that professionals collaborate with parents when preparing instructional adaptations for students with special needs. Parents can provide a wealth of information about the student, including a history of what has proven successful for the student in the past.

Working as a team makes your job as classroom teacher easier and maximizes outcomes for students with special needs. General and special education teachers and other specialists should share responsibilities and work together to identify, access, and gather resources necessary for adaptations. When developing an IEP for a student with a disability, there should be a consensus in decision-making regarding the identification of a student's educational goals and objectives.

When considering these goals, student participation in the general education curriculum should be taken into account. This may vary depending on the student's learning levels and disabilities in relation to the goals of the lesson. For example, a struggling reader may use taped books and partner reading along with study guides to access the social studies textbook. In contrast, a student with moderate cognitive disabilities may be learning to recognize and demonstrate key concepts of the lesson.

Problems will naturally arise (e.g., special materials not available, student with autism disrupting class with occasional outbursts). Use formal (e.g., grade level/cohort planning meetings, student study teams, teacher assistance teams) and informal problem solving to resolve student problems. The key is to communicate as needs arise and to support each other to assist students in attaining their goals.

For a list of professionals who typically work with students with special needs and a brief description of their duties, see the handout titled "Related Service Personnel."

Technology

All students can benefit from integrating technology into the classroom, but it can be especially beneficial to struggling readers and writers, and students with special needs. The use of technology in the classroom can range from very sophisticated and expensive equipment or programs to very simple, common items. It is important to keep student's needs in mind and to be parsimonious when choosing the type of technology. Sometimes the simplest interventions can be the most effective and least intrusive.

High-Technology

The term "technology" includes "high-tech" and "low-tech" devices. "High-tech" usually refers to electronically engineered, state-of-the-art devices. Examples of "high-tech" include:

- Computer-assisted reading and writing instruction
- Augmentative communication
- Adaptive switches
- Writing tools assisting with word processing including spelling and grammar checkers
- Laptop computers used for note-taking and handwriting assistance
- Auditory trainers and voice recognition programs
- Optical character recognition software/scanner
- Voice recognition software and peripherals
- Word processors with spelling and grammar checking
- Alternative keyboards
- Instructional software
- Word prediction programs

Since technology changes quickly, it is important the team stays informed on updates in the area of technology for students with disabilities.

Low-Technology

The term "low-technology" refers to very basic tools or materials that are used to perform simple tasks. These items may or may not be specifically designed for assisting students with disabilities. Examples of "low-tech" items include:

- Colored paper
- Highlighting markers
- Velcro
- Pencil grips
- Carbon paper
- Tape recorders
- Simple magnifying devices
- Calculators
- Picture boards
- "Talking" picture frames
- Communication books
- Audio-taped instructions or books

There are dozens of simple, low-cost items that can assist students with special needs in the classroom. Office supply stores, pharmacies and large discount stores are excellent places to find “low-tech” materials.

Monitoring Progress

Monitoring struggling readers and writers’ progress and providing feedback help the teacher determine when these students require extra assistance. Monitoring and feedback on a student’s progress should be frequent and ongoing. The information from this feedback should be used to adjust your instruction accordingly.

Using self-monitoring is one way to involve students in their own progress. Assisting students in setting individual, academic, and behavioral goals is effective, especially at the secondary level. For example, students can chart their reading rate or number of math problems completed. Students are more likely to improve if they have ownership of their goals and objectives.

Assessment is an essential component of instruction for students with special learning needs. It is important to determine whether the instruction and adaptations for the student you are working with are indeed effective. While planning for assessment, be sure to consider student needs and any adaptations necessary for the students during assessment. Check the “modifications” section of the student’s IEP to determine whether any special considerations during the assessment must be implemented.

Presentation Techniques	Practice Techniques	Assignments/Tests
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make learning visible and explicit • Use modeling • Use clear, simple directions • Adjust pacing • Highlight key information • Reduce amount of information/skills taught • Check frequently for understanding • Use study guides, semantic maps, graphic organizers • Activate background knowledge • Allow alternative ways to demonstrate learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use peer and cross-age tutoring • Use cooperative learning • Use games • Use manipulatives • Use more frequent practice on less information/skills • Use computer programs • Ensure mastery before moving on to next skill • Provide additional practice • Provide a variety of practice opportunities (e.g., manipulative, problem solving, explanations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce assignment/test (only what is necessary to demonstrate mastery) • Allow alternative ways to demonstrate learning • Use cooperative projects • Provide extra time • Divide projects into steps with students submitting and receiving feedback for each step • Use individual contract • Break assignments into smaller chunks, students complete one chunk, get feedback, and complete next chunk • Use alternative exam formats (e.g., oral exam, objective rather than essay)
Textbooks/Materials	Content	Behavior/Classroom Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight key points/concepts • Provide books on tape with study guides • Reduce amount of reading • Use shared reading or peers to read to student • Provide study guides • Highlight directions • Use high interest/controlled vocabulary books • Use trade/textbooks written at various levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use task analysis to divide task into smaller steps • Identify and check to see if students have prerequisite skills • Teach the vocabulary of instruction (e.g., direction words) • Teach technical vocabulary • Relate concepts to each other using organizers such as semantic maps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be consistent and provide structure • Establish clear rules, routines, and expectations • Inform students of consequences • Use logical consequences • Recognize and reinforce appropriate behavior and learning • Teach alternative behaviors for inappropriate behaviors • Check that work is at the students' instructional levels

Effective Behavioral Strategies In the Classroom

When teachers use effective behavioral strategies is helpful for all students, not just those with behavioral difficulties. Good general classroom management includes the strategies listed below:

- Plan and arrange the environment. Organization enhances student attention.
- Establish rules, routines, and expectations. Rules should be stated positively, displayed, and limited (e.g., using specific numbers). Have the class generate the rules and expectations in order to promote their participation.
- Use natural and logical consequences for positive and negative behaviors (e.g., call on students who raise their hand and redirect students who speak out of turn).
- Prepare students for transitions and change by giving frequent cues. Establish time limits for transitions.
- Be consistent.
- Be proactive. Anticipate situations, statements or activities that can elicit undesirable classroom behaviors.
- Notice when students are on-task and are working well. Reinforce their efforts.
- Identify reasons for specific problem behavior. For example, if a student regularly engages in a number of avoidance behaviors (e.g., sharpening pencil, searching in desk, talking to neighbor) when a math problem-solving assignment is given, it may be that the work is too difficult for the student to do independently. The teacher should determine if this assumption is correct and if so, modify the task accordingly.
- If there is a specific student with a disability whose behavior you are concerned about, consult with the special education teacher to determine the behavioral support plan that may be identified in the IEP.
- Effective behavioral support focuses on teaching students appropriate alternative behaviors. Modeling the appropriate behavior and then having the student practice the new behavior will help build alternative positive behaviors.

Specialist	Possible duties
Speech Language Pathologist	Helps students with speech and language disorders; conducts speech and language evaluation.
Vision Educator	Assesses student's visual skills to determine eligibility; procures adaptive material; trains students in specific adaptive skills; provides teacher, agency, parent consultation/ coordination.
Audiologist	Assesses hearing loss and auditory problems; provides auditory training; supports assistive technology.
Licensed Physical Therapist (LPT) Licensed Physical Therapist Aides (LPT Aides)	Implements postural and gross motor interventions.
Occupational Therapist	Directs activities that improve fine motor muscular control and develop self-help skills.
School Psychologist	Evaluates individual student learning abilities; provides behavioral interventions.
Rehabilitation Counselor	Facilitates transition planning and evaluation of older students; specializes in the assessment of work potential and training needs of students.
Nurse	Coordinates medical screening; provides for medical needs (e.g., medication).
Social Worker	Collects information from the family; provides social and educational histories; conducts case studies.
Behavior Specialist	Designs behavior interventions; conducts functional assessments.
Orientation and Mobility Specialist (O&M)	Teaches students with visual impairments the skills needed to travel safely, efficiently, and independently.
Deaf/ Hard-of-Hearing Educator	Assesses impact of hearing loss on progress in the curriculum; procures and adapts materials to accommodate language level; provides direct instruction to hard-of-hearing students, and to other educators in strategies for communication and adapting curriculum.
Inclusion Teacher	Provides instruction to and supports students with special needs in general education classrooms using co-teaching and/or consultation.
Transition Specialist/Job Developer	Facilitates transitioning students with special needs from school-to-work or post-secondary setting; provides job training.
504 Coordinator	Coordinates and monitors 504 plans developed under Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1974.

Techniques for Discovering a Topic

1. **Writing Territories:**
Encourage students to develop writing territories and keep lists of questions related to these territories. Writing territories are the subjects that we think about the most when we are alone or when we daydream. They are the questions and topics that we wonder about (Atwell, 1998; Murray, 1996).
2. **Brainstorming:**
Have students brainstorm by writing down everything that comes to mind about a writing territory or broad topic, such as "childhood." After brainstorming for 5-15 minutes, model how to search the list for "surprises" and "connections." Model how to draw lines between items, and group items in order to find a topic of interest to write about (Murray, 1996).
3. **Mapping:**
Place the general subject in the center of the page and draw lines branching off, as related ideas occur to you. Use branches to search your memory for fragments of related information. Model for students how to use mapping to choose a topic (Murray, 1996).
4. **Interview with Self:**
The student asks himself or herself questions to determine what he or she might like to write about. Murray (1996) suggests the following as possibilities:

What has surprised me recently?
How are things different from what they used to be?
How will things be different in the future?
What do I know that others need to know?
Who would I like to get to know?
What's not happening that should?
What's happening that shouldn't?
What process do I need to know?
What makes me mad? Sad? Happy? Worried? Frightened

5. **Large and Small Group Discussion or Partner Interview:**
This strategy can be used flexibly with the discussion of a current event, a piece of literature, or a hot topic.
6. **Memory Writing:**
This is a technique that encourages writing about the self. Students try to capture four incidents from their pasts as briefly but as realistically as possible. Have the students:
 - go back in time 24 hours, remember an incident, and record it;
 - go back in time one week, remember an event, and record it;
 - go back a year and record an incident, concentrating on particular details;
 - go back as far as possible and record their first clear memory (Kirby & Liner, 1988).

7. **Making Lists:**

There are many different lists students can make for finding a topic to write about. Nancie Atwell (1998) suggests that students keep lists of past and potential purposes, audiences, topics, and genres. Students can also keep lists of things that interest them as well as lists of favorite things or accomplishments. Alternatively, the teacher can give a general topic such as accidents, courage, or school. The teacher models, first listing one or two personal events that have to do with that topic. Students develop lists of their own experiences and share those lists. Sharing often helps trigger memories for those who are having difficulty. Teachers then need to model how to choose the best topic from the list (TEA, 1990).

8. **Literature:**

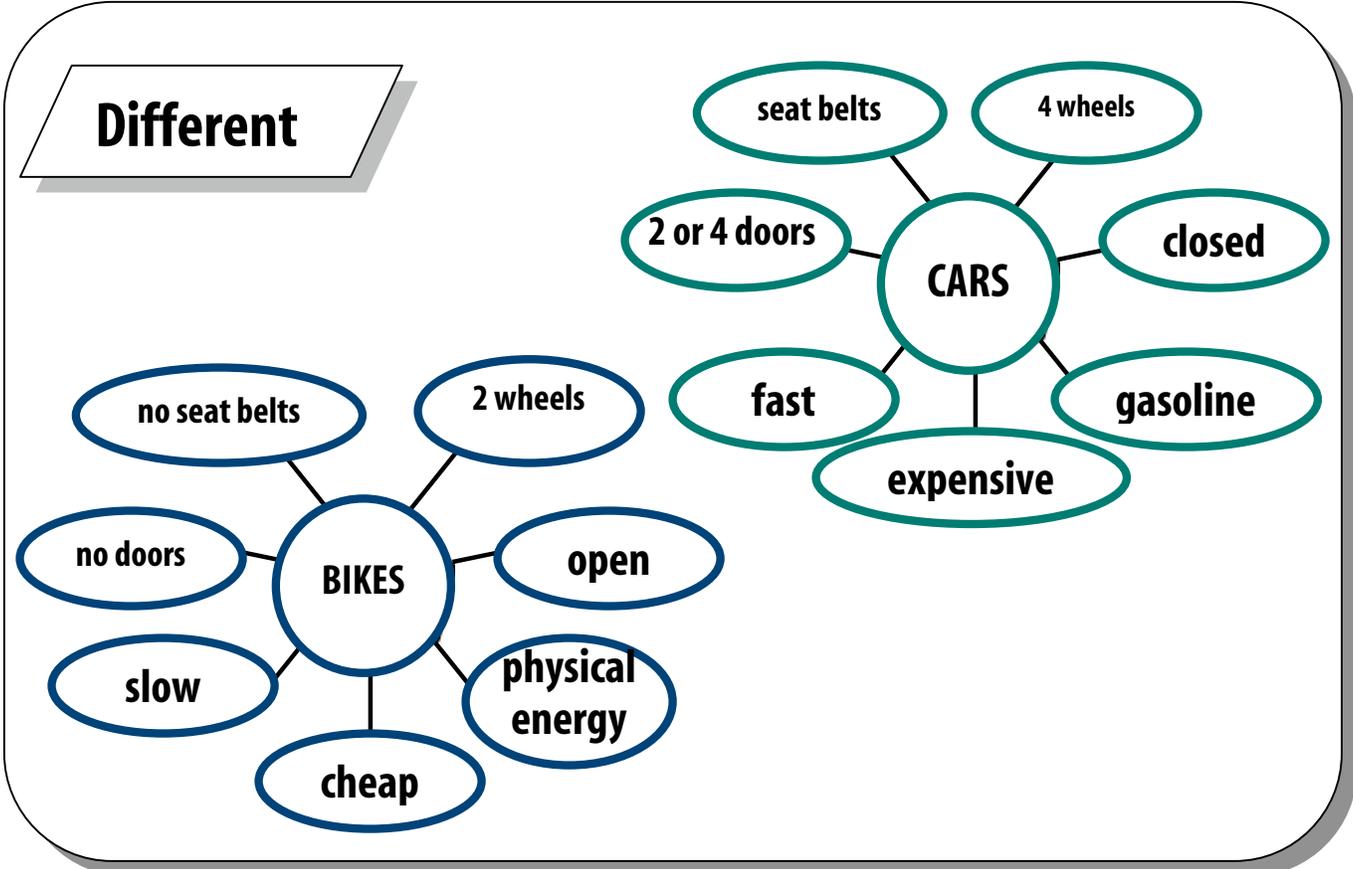
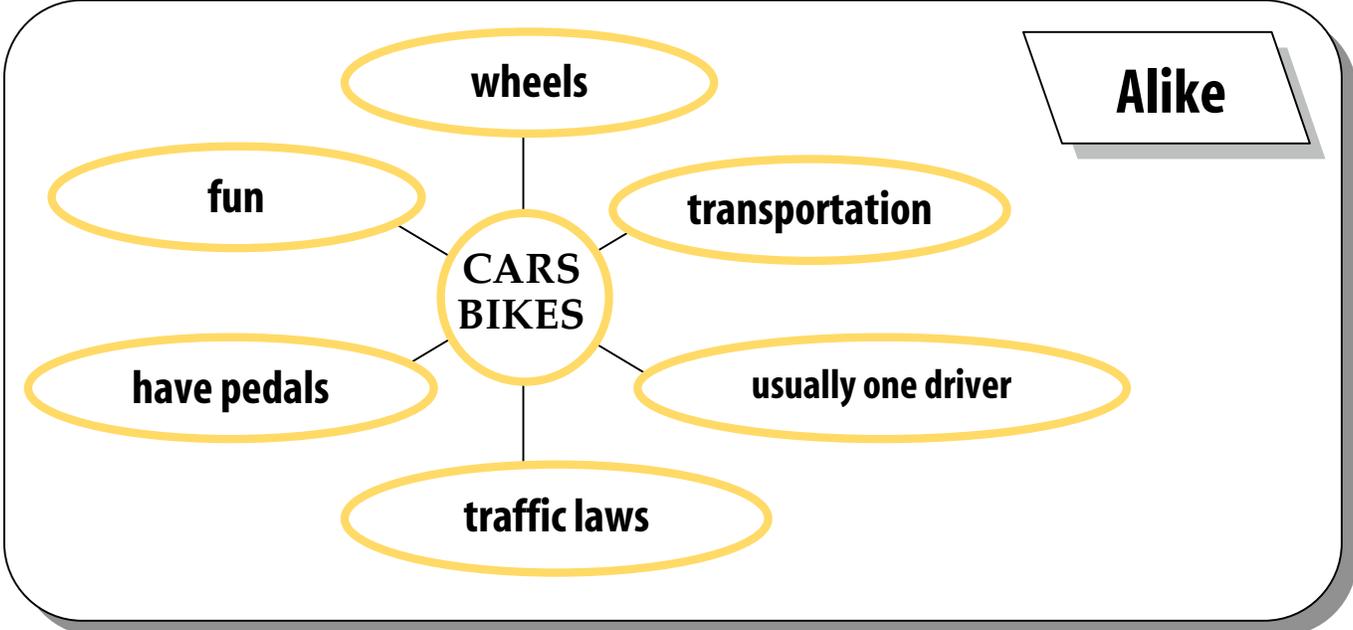
After reading a story, novel, play, or poem, have students brainstorm possible themes of the piece and then plan an original one using the same theme. Alternatively, the student could write a story using one of the characters or a setting from the literature, or compare/contrast a character in one story with a character in another. Literature, especially children's books, can also be used to trigger memories and promote personal applications (TEA, 1990).

Techniques for Exploring a Topic and Determining What You Know

1. **Free Writing:**
Write nonstop about your subject for ten minutes, writing whatever comes to mind about your topic.
2. **Clustering or Webbing:**
Use your subject as the nucleus word and create "clusters" of ideas related to your topic.
3. **Pretend you are a reporter asking questions about the topic:**
Answer questions about your topic beginning with *Who? What? Where? When? Why?* and *How?*
4. **Cubing:**
Imagine that your topic is like a cube that can be explored from many different angles. Write down ideas about your topic as you explore it in each of the following ways:

Describe:	What does it look like? What sounds, sights, smells, and tastes are associated with it?
Compare:	What is it like? What is it different from?
Associate:	What does it remind you of?
Analyze:	What are the parts? How are the parts connected?
Apply:	How can you use it?
Argue for or against:	Choose an issue related to your topic and argue for or against it. (Cowan & Cowan in Carroll & Wilson, 1993)
5. **K-W-L chart:**
This is a chart with three different columns. In the first column, students write down what they know about a topic. In the next column, students write what they want to find out. In the last column, students list information they learn as they explore (Ogle, 1986).
6. **Venn Diagram:**
This graphic organizer is appropriate for helping students prepare to compare/contrast two things or ideas.

Webbing



Persuasive/Descriptive Writing

Position Statement:

Reason:

Explain:

Reason:

Explain:

Reason:

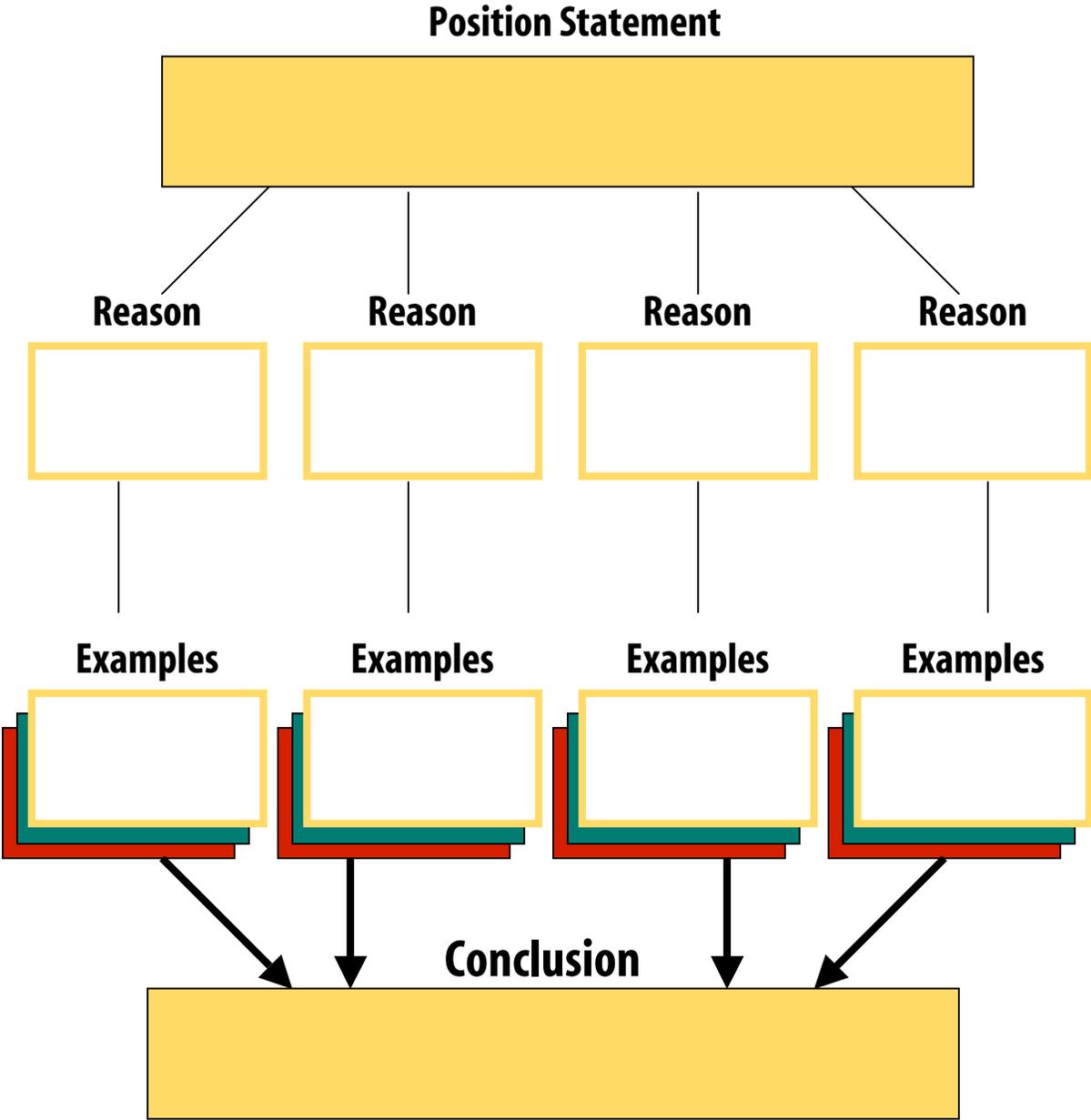
Explain:

Reason:

Explain:

Conclusion:

Persuasive/Descriptive Writing



Compare/Contrast Writing

What is being compared/contrasted?

On what?

Alike?



Different?

On what?

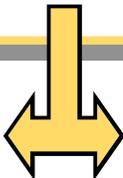
Alike?



Different?

On what?

Alike?



Different?

Planning Conference Guide

Planning for Purpose:

- Explain your purpose for writing
- Answer any questions your partner asks
- Make a note of suggestions

Planning for Audience:

- Describe your audience
- Answer any questions your partner asks
- Make a note of suggestions

Planning for Content:

- Explain your main ideas to your partner
- Describe how you plan to elaborate on each main idea
- Make a note of suggestions

Planning for Form:

- Share your organization plan with your partner
- Answer any questions your partner asks
- Make a note of suggestions

Listening for Purpose:

- Decide if the writer has a clear purpose for writing
- Suggest a possible purpose and help the writer make changes if necessary

Listening for Audience:

- Decide if the writer really understands the audience
- Suggest possible audiences and new audience characteristics

Listening for Content:

- Listen to the writer as you are told the ideas
- Decide if the ideas make sense
- Suggest new ways to elaborate

Listening for Form:

- Look and listen as the writer describes the plan
- Decide if the form is clear and fits the writing purpose
- Suggest new ways to organize

Drafting Strategies

Introductions

- Ask questions
- Use a related or meaningful quote
- Cite statistics
- A very brief story (anecdote)
- Disprove a common belief or assumption
- Establish background information
- Identify with the reader
- Dialogue
- Establish that a problem exists

Elaboration of Main Points

- Facts
- Metaphors
- Quotations
- Examples
- Explanations
- Showing, not telling
- Reasons
- Facts
- Adjectives, adverbs
- Figures
- Details (sensory, memory, or reflective)
- Definition
- Description
- Cause/effect
- Dialogue
- Action words

Conclusions

- Summarize content
- Reword thesis statement
- Include a startling fact
- Emotional plea
- Rhetorical question
- Quotation
- Project into the future

Hint: Choose from among these strategies by asking yourself questions related to your purpose, audience, content, and form of writing.

Paragraphing

Instruction in writing paragraphs has generally focused on teaching students to use a few basic patterns that account for the majority of paragraphs found in writing.

Method 1

One approach that has been validated in research (Schumaker & Lyerla, 1993) includes teaching four basic paragraph patterns:

Sequential — relates details in order of time, often to tell a story

Descriptive — is used to describe a person, place, thing, or idea

Expository — presents or explains facts and ideas

Compare/Contrast — uses details and elaboration to support the similarities or differences between two subjects

Method 2

Alternatively, Alton Becker (as discussed in Irmscher's *Teaching Expository Writing*, 1979) identifies two major paragraph patterns:

TRI — **T** represents stating the topic, **R** represents restatement or expansion of the topic, and **I** represents an illustration or any other kind of elaboration

(Other variations of this pattern include **TI**, **ITR**, **IT**, and **TRIT**.)

PS — **P** represents a problem or a question, **S** represents a solution or an answer

Teaching techniques:

1. Choose either Method 1 or Method 2. (Trying to teach both will confuse the struggling writer.)
2. Provide real-world and classroom-generated examples of paragraph types. Allow students to master identification of topic, supporting and concluding sentences, as well as identification of different paragraph forms.
3. Guide the class in developing paragraphs of the different types.
4. Teach students to select appropriate paragraph types using purpose, audience, content, and form questions.

Sentence Expansion Strategy

Teach students that all complete thoughts or sentences contain subjects and predicates. Allow students to become comfortable generating subjects and predicates and combining them to create sentences. Then, demonstrate how simple subjects and predicates can be expanded to create more powerful sentences. Teach the use of **Who? What? Where? When? Why?** and **How?** questions to build on basic ideas.

Example: The dog barked.

What kind of dog?

When did the dog bark?

Where did the dog bark?

Why did the dog bark?

How did the dog bark?

Sentence:

After I went to bed, my yellow Lab puppy barked plaintively at the back door, pleading to be let into the warm interior of my home.

Sentence Generating Strategy

1. Present a sentence pattern (begin with simple and move to compound, complex, and compound complex).
2. Use examples and nonexamples to illustrate the critical features of each sentence pattern.
3. Have students practice identifying parts of sentences and the associated sentence patterns. Students should begin to memorize the basic sentence patterns.
4. Model the process of writing sentences using the think-aloud technique. Include your thoughts about choosing a pattern, generating sentence content, writing, and checking to make sure the sentence is complete and makes sense.
5. Once students have demonstrated mastery knowledge of the basic sentence patterns, they should begin to practice generating their own sentences to fit the patterns. Provide scaffolding and feedback during this stage.
6. Model how the strategy can be used to generate sentences in a paragraph with a variety of different structures.
7. Students practice generating paragraphs with scaffolding and feedback.
8. Students use the strategy during drafting and during all writing assignments.

The Drafting Conference

The Writer

- Explains purpose, audience, content, and form to conference partner
- Reads aloud draft or a selection from the draft
- Asks partner questions to clarify and improve the draft
- Records any ideas or changes

The Partner

- Listens and notes writer's intended purpose, audience, content, and form
- Listens to draft
- Answers writer's questions
- Asks questions regarding the draft
- Rereads draft if necessary
- Suggests improvements

Note: The purpose of the drafting conference is to empower the writer. The writer is in charge of the drafting conference.

Suggested Steps in Revision

1. Read each paragraph. At the end of each paragraph, use purpose, audience, content, and form questions to locate problems.
2. Use related knowledge and skills to improve the paragraph. Make choices about adding, deleting, substituting, and rearranging.
3. Make changes or mark areas for possible changes.
4. Continue reading and evaluating the next paragraph.

Once all the paragraphs have been reviewed, students can reconsider each sentence. They should ask themselves:

- Does this sentence make sense standing alone?
- Is this sentence connected to my main idea in this paragraph?
- Should I add more?

Effective teachers model and scaffold this process for students.

Revision Guidelines

Revising for Purpose

These four questions help students revise for purpose:

- Does my paper answer the question “So what?”
- Is my purpose clear? If not, how can I make it clearer?
- Is there any part of my paper that does not help achieve my purpose?
- What are the main words that make my purpose clear?

Review your students’ answers to these questions. Students can also highlight parts of their paper that answer the questions.

Before students can meaningfully evaluate their purpose or revise for purpose, they must possess relevant background knowledge and skills.

You can use these exercises with your students to reinforce those abilities:

- Identify writers’ purposes in a variety of examples;
- Highlight sentences or words that clearly state the writer’s purpose;
- Display a sample paragraph that fails to contribute to a paper’s intended purpose; and
- Provide modeling, scaffolding, and practice before asking students to revise their own paragraphs independently for purpose.

Remember to model ways to add, delete, substitute, and rearrange in order to revise for purpose.

Revising for Audience

To question their papers’ success in reaching the intended audience, students can ask:

- Is my choice of words appropriate for my audience?
- Is the degree of formality appropriate for my audience?
- Is there anything my audience might not understand?
- Have I answered all of my reader’s questions?

Review your students’ answers to these questions to assess their ability to revise for audience.

You can increase students’ ability to answer these questions by:

- Using examples and modeling to teach students to identify writing that fails to reach its intended audience;
- Demonstrating adding, deleting, substituting, and rearranging during revision for audience; and
- Using mini-lessons on style and diction to demonstrate and teach revision for audience.

Revising for Content

Suggest these questions for your students to use while revising for content:

- Where have I stated my main idea?
- Have I included all the ideas from my plan?
- Have I given enough information?
- Have I explained my ideas so clearly that my reader will know exactly what I mean?
- Where can I elaborate to make my meaning clearer?
- Does my elaboration support the main idea?
- What parts aren't really related to my main idea? Can I delete them?
- What parts don't make sense?
- Have I said the same thing over and over?
- Have I communicated my ideas effectively?

These questions target frequent weaknesses in student writing that are difficult for struggling writers to recognize.

Help students develop skills and knowledge for revising for content through the following activities:

- Identifying and evaluating main ideas and elaboration in writing samples;
- Locating common content problems, including:
 - unclear main ideas;
 - unrelated or ineffective elaboration; and
 - insufficient elaboration;
- Revising by adding, deleting, substituting, or rearranging information; and
- Making elaboration specific and avoiding useless generalizations.

Be sure to scaffold these skills.

Revising for Form

Students benefit from thinking through specific questions related to the form of their papers. Some sample questions you can provide are:

- Have I organized my ideas into paragraphs according to my plan?
- Does each section support my meaning?
- Does the order make sense?
- Does each point lead to the next?
- Are my ideas connected by transitions?
- Should I rearrange any of the parts?
- Do I have an introduction, body, and conclusion?
- Does the structure of the draft support my purpose?

Guiding students through these questions and reviewing their answers will help students understand the procedure for, and value of, revising for form.

Teachers can further reinforce revision knowledge and skills through these exercises on form:

- Teach strategies for rethinking organization after drafting by rearranging words, sentences, and paragraphs; and
- Provide techniques for sentence-level revision.

The handout "Strategies for Revising Sentence Structure" will give you ideas for the second exercise.

Strategies for Revising Sentence Structure

1. **Sentence Beginnings**

Provide a mini-lesson on a variety of sentence patterns, integrating lessons on phrases and clauses. Then, model a technique in which students evaluate their own writing for a variety of sentence structures and beginnings. Have students underline the first four or five words of each sentence to determine if the same pattern has been used in most sentences. Provide mini-lessons and scaffolding, selecting sentences to revise to improve variety and meaning.

Another version of this activity is to have students list just the first word of each sentence. If more than one sentence in a row begins with the same word, the student should revise one of the sentences. Students will need related mini-lessons on ways to begin sentences, as well as punctuation of common sentence structures.

2. **Model Sentences**

Display examples of sentences by professional writers as models for proper structure based on content. Then, model how to integrate these patterns into the student's own writing.

3. **Sentence Combining**

List simple sentences that make up a paragraph on the board, transparency, or chart tablet. Have students practice combining the sentences in different ways. These skills should be modeled and practiced collaboratively with an appropriate amount of coaching before students can be expected to combine sentences in their own writing. Emphasize that sentence structure often affects meaning. Sentence combining also offers an appropriate opportunity for teaching punctuation with sentence structure or patterns.

4. **Transitions**

Model passages written for different purposes and modes, pointing out the use and effectiveness of transitional words and phrases. Present examples of passages with poor transitions in order to emphasize their importance. Then, model and scaffold revision of the passage through the addition of transitions. Have students practice this revision skill collaboratively on a prepared passage before being asked to apply this revision skill to their own writing.

5. **Fragments and Run-ons**

Show examples of student writing containing run-ons and fragments. Model a strategy of reading from period to period, asking if it is a complete thought or if it is several thoughts strung together with a conjunction. Suggest that students read their papers sentence by sentence. Model identification of fragments and run-ons as well as how to fix the problems. Have students practice during whole class and small group instruction before being asked to apply the strategy to their own work.

Revision for Struggling Writers: Stages of Expansion

First Draft

I saved my money to buy a car. I saved for a long time and really wanted it. I thought about it a lot. When I was sixteen, I got the money from the bank and I bought it.

Working Draft

For the last three years, I saved every penny I could get my hands on so that I could buy a car. I saved for a long time and really wanted it. I thought about it a lot. Then my sixteenth birthday arrived. I was thrilled to go to the bank, withdraw all my savings, and go to the dealership with my father to make my down payment on this incredible purchase.

Final Draft

For the last three years I saved every penny I could get my hands on so that I could buy a car. Since I have been five years old, I have dreamed of owning my very own beautiful automobile. I considered the color, the cost, the make, and the model. I changed my mind about each of these at least twice every month. Finally, I made my decision. Then, my sixteenth birthday arrived. I was thrilled to go to the bank, withdraw all my savings, and go with my father to place my down payment on this incredible purchase.

Peer Revision Guide

Step 1:

Listen as the writer reads the draft aloud and praise something.

In your paper, you had a good transition between the second and third paragraphs.

Step 2:

Reread your partner's paper silently. At the end of each paragraph, ask yourself questions related to Purpose, Audience, Content, and Form.

Make comments in the margin or on sticky notes.

Step 3:

Write questions, comments, and suggestions for your partner.

Questions:

What did you mean when you said . . . ?

Comments:

Your ideas . . .

Your organization . . .

Your introduction . . .

Your conclusion . . .

I had a hard time understanding . . .

Suggestions:

I suggest you add . . .

I suggest you go into more detail on . . .

I think it would help if you . . .

Add more elaboration . . . (where?)

Step 4:

Discuss your comments with your partner in a constructive fashion. The writer can ask questions of the peer.

Step 5:

Writer's Plans for Revision—the writer identifies revisions that he or she will make to the draft.

Editing

1. What is editing?

- It is cleaning up errors after meaning is developed.
- It is done to keep the reader from being distracted while reading for meaning.
- It requires a variety of strategies that are explicitly taught.
- A distinction is usually made between editing and proofreading. Editing is making decisions regarding grammar and mechanics and their effects on content. Proofreading is making sure that the final draft is free of errors in grammar and mechanics.

2. What should writers edit?

- Error correction through editing occurs as students prepare the finished product.
- Students look for inconsistencies in writing mechanics and grammar choices, such as subject-verb agreement, pronoun-antecedent agreement, and sentence fragments or run-ons.

3. Why teach editing skills?

- Editing is taught to help writers become competent at finding and correcting errors.
- As writers become better editors, correcting grammar and sentence mechanics becomes easier.
- Student papers can be used to determine which skills need to be taught.
- Working with grammar and mechanics will help students to see the improvement in their writing style and writing fluency. This improvement will carry over into other writing that they produce.
- Emphasis is placed on improvement of mechanics rather than on errors.

4. Who is responsible for editing?

- The student edits his or her paper first.
- A peer or peers in a small group edit the paper next.
- The student, acting as a reader, edits the paper for final submission.
- The teacher is the final editor once the paper has been submitted for a grade.

Editing Knowledge and Skills for Students

Writers need specific knowledge and skills to be effective editors.

Teach students to recognize and improve:

Sentence fragments and run-ons

Sentence variety

Verb tense

Subject-verb agreement

Use of strong, vivid verbs

Use of specific nouns

Comma rules

Other punctuation rules

Capitalization

Spelling

With struggling writers, you should focus on editing only a few problem areas at a time to avoid overwhelming and discouraging students.

Vary “quality control”:

Editing groups

Editing consultants

Proofreading for spelling errors

Editing checklist of persistent problems

Single-focus peer editing

Posted references and reminders

More information about editing is provided in your handout “Cleaning Up after Editing: Strategies.”

Editing Form for Clocking

Areas to be edited	Comments & Initials
a.	
b.	
c.	
d.	

Editing for Struggling Writers Student Editing Rules to Accompany Clocking

1. The purpose of clocking is to help students help each other produce the best product possible.
2. List the specific areas of editing to be completed on the editing form provided (e.g., punctuation: end-marks, commas, quotation marks).
3. Place the editing form, listing the areas to be edited, on top of your paper.
4. Trade papers with the person sitting directly across from you.
5. Read the paper and mark any errors that deal with the specific areas listed with a contrasting colored pen.
6. When finished, put your initials beside the line that lists the area that you edited.
7. When directed, return the paper to its owner.

Note:

This handout is intended to serve as a guide for the classroom teacher. These editing rules can be modified by the teacher and given to the students. It is fair to assume that some students possess more skills as editors than others. Under no circumstances should derogatory statements be made about anyone's work.

Cleaning Up after Editing Tips

- The writer should be the first editor of his or her own work, using checklists and other strategies.
- After you model strategies and teach the students to make appropriate comments, students can use peers as editors.
- Have students put a well-edited piece in an editing basket for a final teacher editing conference. After briefly editing the paper, conference with the student about one or two editing skills.
- Use mini-lessons to build knowledge and skills for the whole class or small groups of students. After modeling and collaborative practice, have students apply editing skills to their own paper.
- Teach one skill at a time.
- Do not expect students to proofread for conventions that have not been taught. Have students keep a list of conventions for which to proofread. This list will grow over the course of the year.
- Use specific editing marks to focus on errors. This will help students recognize their errors and become more familiar with the editing process.
- Place a check mark at the end of the line with the error and ask the writer to determine and correct the error.
- Don't just assign editing. Teach the necessary skills and strategies.

(Graves, 1996; Hillerich, 1985; TEA, 1990; Weaver, 1996)

Cleaning Up after Editing Strategies

Students keep a list of persistent problems to use as checklists each time they edit.

Students keep a list of frequently misspelled words. They can then search their papers for these words and check for the appropriate spelling.

“Clocking” is a single-focus, peer editing strategy to be used on final drafts before publication. Arrange students in two concentric circles facing each other. The students on the inside give their papers to the peers in front of them to read quickly. The reader makes changes according to their specified mechanical skill. The students in the outside circle move clockwise to the next person and check the same skill. This procedure continues until all of the skills are edited (*e.g., spelling, periods, commas in a series*). Corrections are then made by the writer according to the edits made by peers.

Have students code their texts using ratiocination (Carroll, 1982). In this strategy, students can use colored markers or pens to mark certain parts of the sentence, deciding if the sentence should remain as is or if it needs to be changed. The following are some examples:

*Circle all **to be** verbs.*

Make a wavy line under repeated words.

*Put the word **it** in a triangle.*

Underline the first and last words in sentences. Look for capitalization and punctuation.

Build a class list of vivid verbs and specific nouns as a reference.

Carroll and Wilson (1993) suggest making commas concrete by posting a visual representation of each of the four primary comma rules in sentences: a comma joining two clauses, a comma to set off grammatically unnecessary information, commas in a series, and a comma after introductory information. Students can use this chart to check their papers for proper comma usage.

Have students underline the first word in each sentence and list them on a separate slip of paper. Help students select sentences to revise for a varied beginning. List examples of ways to begin sentences (Carroll & Wilson, 1993).

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