



Back to School *Writing Basics:*

A great way to start off the new year is to focus on basic sentence and paragraph writing as you teach your students the procedures for writer's workshop. Depending on your grade level standards, you can use any of the attached lesson ideas from the *Night Writer's* project to build individual sentences or paragraphs with students. Using white boards for these lessons will greatly reduce the need for copies and allow you to give instant feedback.

Use your grade level writing standards list to determine which writing conventions and strategies you would like to focus on during these lessons.

Please see also our Teacher Tool, **The Complete Sentence Overview** in our new Common Core Section on our website knoxeducation.com.

<p>Informative/Explanatory Opinion/Argument</p>	<p>WRITING STRATEGIES (CCSS Writing W 1-10)</p>	<p>Language “”!,:;? ”</p>	<p>WRITTEN CONVENTIONS (CCSS Language L 1-6)</p>
<p>Narrative</p>			

A SENTENCE

1 Starts with a **CAPITAL LETTER**

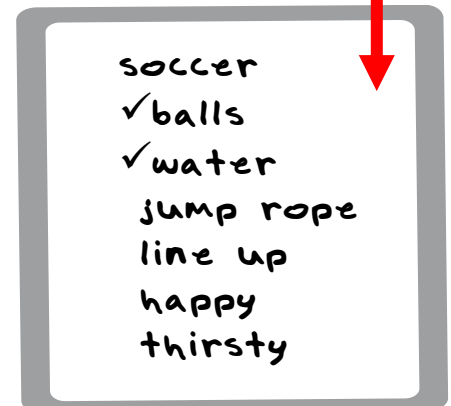
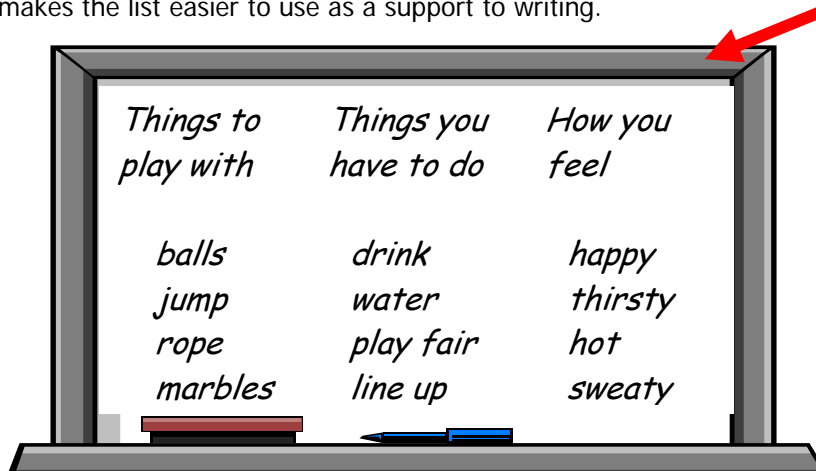
2 Has a **SUBJECT** and a **VERB** which expresses a **COMPLETE THOUGHT**



3 Always has an **END POINT**

Follow this basic procedure with the white boards:

- Brainstorm a list of words for students to be able to use as they compose the sentences/paragraphs using the “no repeats” strategy. Students list as many words as possible to go with the category (for example things we do in school) on their white boards. The teacher calls on one student at a time to share their list (call on the student with the fewest words on their list first). As students listen and see you list the words on the large white board, they cross off words on their own boards that are the same. Continue calling on students until you have listed all of their ideas. If you have time, categorize the big list into sub-categories like the list below. This greatly enhances the retention of these vocabulary words into long term memory, as well as makes the list easier to use as a support to writing.



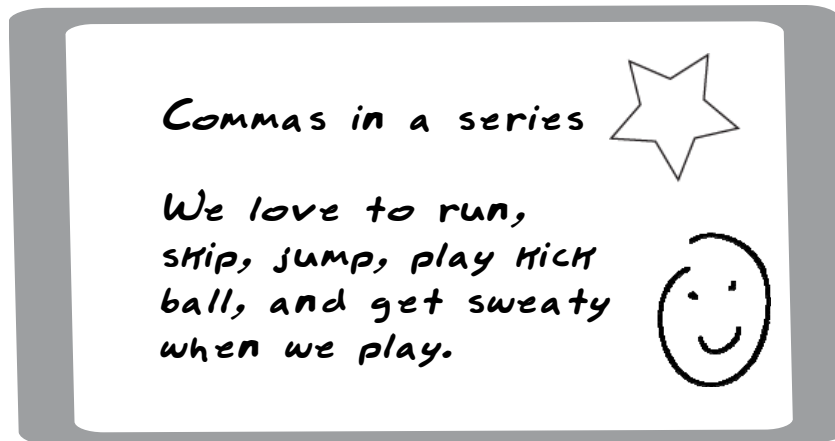


2. Model for students a sample sentence or paragraph focusing on the objective for this lesson. For example if it is a sentence with the conjunction it may be:

Math is my favorite subject in school, but PE is more fun!

3. Ask students to write their own sentences or paragraphs with the focus structure.
4. Have students read their work out loud from their whiteboards to their partners. Ask student volunteers to read aloud their writing to the whole class. (**Hint:** Partners can “volunteer” their neighbor’s writing.....)
5. After celebrating the content of the writing and all the good ideas, then ask students to edit their work following a simple checklist you may list on the board (for example):
 - Capitals where they go*
 - Punctuation*
 - Spelling*
 - Spacing*
 - Neat handwriting*
6. Finally have students “peer edit” each other’s sentences using the same checklist and giving feedback in the form of a happy face or whatever you choose.

Here’s a sample of students creating a sentence referring to a standard mastered...



7. At the end of a lesson students may choose to “publish” their best sentence onto the 5 star worksheet attached here. You may want to publish several class books of 5 star sentences for various sentence types you focus on. For example, “Our 5 Star Compound Sentences” or “Our 5 Star Sentences with Commas in a Series.”
8. You can follow this procedure for any of the lessons here or any others you may design as you have students warm up to the basics of writing in the first month of school.



5-Star Checklist - Sentences				
★ Punctuation . ? ! " , '	★ Capitals only where they go • Beginning of sentence • Names • Months • Days of the week	★ Spelling • All word wall words • Harder words spelled using the sound cards	★ Spaces between all words	★ Paper is Neat • Handwriting • No smudges

Writer Signature	Writing Partner

5-Star Checklist - Sentences				
★ Punctuation . ? ! " , '	★ Capitals only where they go • Beginning of sentence • Names • Months • Days of the week	★ Spelling • All word wall words • Harder words spelled using the sound cards	★ Spaces between all words	★ Paper is Neat • Handwriting • No smudges

Writer Signature	Writing Partner



5-Star Checklist: Descriptive Paragraph Writing

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

Writer Signature	Writing Partner
------------------	-----------------

5-Star Checklist: Descriptive Paragraph Writing

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

Writer Signature	Writing Partner
------------------	-----------------

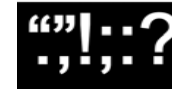


Language Progressive Skills, by Grade

The following skills, marked with an asterisk (*) in Language standards 1–3, are particularly likely to require continued attention in higher grades as they are applied to increasingly sophisticated writing and speaking.

Standard	Grade(s)							
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9–10	11–12
L.3.1f. Ensure subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
L.3.3a. Choose words and phrases for effect.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
L.4.1f. Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
L.4.1g. Correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., <i>to/too/two</i> ; <i>there/their</i>).	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
L.4.3a. Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.*	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
L.4.3b. Choose punctuation for effect.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
L.5.1d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense.	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
L.5.2a. Use punctuation to separate items in a series.**	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
L.6.1c. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
L.6.1d. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
L.6.1e. Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
L.6.2a. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
L.6.3a. Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.***	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
L.6.3b. Maintain consistency in style and tone.	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
L.7.1c. Place phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers.	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
L.7.3a. Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
L.8.1d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
L.9–10.1a. Use parallel structure.	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

Language



L3-10 Language Standards in the Common Core Standards grades K-12

* Subsumed by L.7.3a

** Subsumed by L.9–10.1a

*** Subsumed by L.11–12.3a

From Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects for California Public Schools Kindergarten through Grade 12 California Department of Education www.cde.ca.gov
Reformatted for our use at knoxeducation.com