



# THE AHA! FORMULA

$$+ V (K^2 \times I^2) = \text{AHA!}$$

V = VALUES, K<sup>2</sup> = COMPLEX KNOWLEDGE, I<sup>2</sup> = INTENSE INTERACTION, AHA! = LEARNING

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## White Board Basics:

1. **Explain** the skill/standard.
2. Provide a **student-friendly definition** of the skill on the large white board or a piece of chart paper. Connect this to prior learning—bridge the known to the new.
3. Provide some **examples**.
4. Ask students to respond to the teacher prompt by showing you their thinking on individual white boards. Give **think/work time**.
5. Have students **display** their **answers** all at once on the white board close to their chests.
6. Give **feedback** to every student every time and have students whose answers are wrong fix them.

### *For Example*

#### **Proper Nouns vs. Common Nouns**

A proper noun names a particular person, place or thing. A common noun names the category of a person, place or thing.

Teacher writes a proper noun on the white board, students respond with a common noun that describes it. Reverse this as well—teacher provides common noun, students write a proper noun they know that goes with it.

Proper Noun (Remember caps!)	Common Noun
Ms. Knox	teacher
Bellevue	school
Clifford	dog
Fairfield	our town
Maria	second grader

# **Alternatives to Worksheets:**

## **Worksheets are designed for**

- Highly structured/guided practice with close teacher monitoring and corrective feedback
- Teachers leading students through practice step by step using an overhead or chart with examples
- Working in the middle zone of gradual release model

## **Deciding whether you need an alternative to a given worksheet:**

1. Is it a grade level standard?
2. What is the objective?
3. Is it a priority standard for my grade level for this time of the year?
4. Does it provide adequate material for highly structured practice?
5. Is the vocabulary of the worksheet accessible to my EL students?

## **Criteria for development of alternatives:**

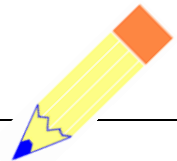
All of these white board alternatives lead to instruction that:

- Is more interactive (with each other, with the teacher)
- Includes an overt response from students
- Allows for immediate feedback
- Lets the teacher choose vocabulary to use that is comprehensible and meaningful to the students.
- Provides more practice with a targeted skill

## Various Ways to Elicit an Overt Response on a White Board:

- CLOZE sentence—you write or say orally a sentence with a blank and the students fill it in with a choice that works (answers may vary) “I know \_\_\_\_because \_\_\_\_.” Students use academic frames.
- Teachers provide one thing, students provide the matching item (for example a synonym, antonym, plural form for, past tense for, etc.).
- Word riddles: “I am thinking of word.....it has\_\_\_ letters, it rhymes with....., it means the same as\_\_\_\_\_, it is on the \_\_\_vocabulary chart.....” etc.
- Brainstorming patterns: these can be structural/spelling patterns (light, night, right, enlighten...), or semantic/meaning based patterns (words that describe a character, are part of our study of\_\_\_\_\_, etc.). Record these on a large piece of chart paper to begin a “grow list” of ideas.

*Other ideas from the teachers on your grade level team:*



## Creating a White Board Lesson from a Worksheet Page:

1. Look at the worksheet and determine the focus skill and the related standard to be addressed.
2. Write a student-friendly definition of that standard/skill.
3. Think of a student-friendly way to make that skill meaningful to your students. Remember to connect the skill to something they already know.
4. Determine a way to give students practice with that standard/skill that will allow for an overt response on the white board.
5. List some examples ahead of time that you can use during the lesson.
6. Think about ways to differentiate the level of difficulty with the skill.

<b>Worksheet source and standard or skill:</b>
<b>Student-friendly definition:</b>
<i>The lesson:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Bridging known to new</li><li>2. Practice examples</li><li>3. Ways to differentiate difficulty:</li></ol>

# Using White Boards to Teach Writing Conventions:

## Dictation

### *Procedure:*

- Use white boards or plain writing paper.
- Dictate a sentence or short paragraph to your students. Speak slowly and repeat as needed. Build into your dictation the skills you want to check for such as spelling, vocabulary, punctuation etc. Make sure to check your grade level standards blueprints to cover the specific skills expected for your grade level.
- Tell the students how many skills they are to find and use. For example, "The sentence below contains \_\_\_\_\_."

### *Benefits:*

- Use dictation to learn about your students while watching them "encode". You can see immediately what they are able to do, and what still confuses them. Walk around and observe while students are taking the dictation.
- Take time to use the "teachable moments" that will no doubt appear as you see where students are confused. You may want to stop the dictation and teach the skill right then so that all students are successful. For example, "I am noticing that many of you were having trouble with \_\_\_\_\_, let's go back and remember the rule for \_\_\_\_\_."

Sample of white board response

*Mrs. Knox said, "Do you like to go to San Francisco, California?"*

(6 capital letters, 6 punctuation points)

## **Using White Boards to Teach Writing Strategies:**

Nearly any writing strategy or skill that you are teaching can be given a “jumpstart” through the use of white boards. Here’s how:

1. Explain the strategy or skill to the students. Take the time to connect this to something they already know about writing.
2. Model how to use the strategy or skill in writing in front of the students on chart paper or the large white board. Think out loud as you do this so that the students can “hear” your thinking as you make all of the many decisions writers make as they write.
3. List the procedure for using this strategy or skill in simple terms on the white board.
4. Have students work in pairs or individually to “have a go” with this skill.
5. Once at least half of the students are finished, ask them to show their boards and read aloud their writing. Tell the students that when we are practicing on white boards, we can “steal” ideas from each other and easily change what we have written before we share.
6. Make sure to hear from all of the students and give corrective feedback as needed. Students can also trade boards and read and respond to each other’s writing to save time. You circulate and give corrective feedback.

### **Writing Strategies Standards particularly suited to this include:**

- Writing topic sentences
- Writing concluding sentences
- Summarizing
- Using vivid verbs
- Adding description to a sentence or paragraph
- Brainstorming ideas for topics
- Sentence combining
- Sentence constructions of all kinds



## Using White Boards to Pre-teach for the Writing Strategies CST items

Many CST items ask students to choose the BEST sentence to conclude a paragraph, summarize, add detail, provide a transition, or be used as a topic sentence. You can use white boards to pre-teach the writing task indicated on a Released Test Question item BEFORE you have the students look at the four possible answer choices to select the best sentence.

### Follow these steps:

1. Look at the item and decide what writing task is indicated.
2. Show the students the related passage from which they will work.
3. "Warm up" the passage by looking at the title, skimming, and discussing what it is about.
4. Ask the students to write a sentence by themselves based on the writing task.
5. Have students display their sentences and discuss which possible sentences are BEST given the task at hand.
6. Have students look at the four answer choices and select the BEST sentence. Discuss why it is best and why the others are not.

### Released Test Question:

The following questions are not about a Story. Read and answer each question.

70 Eve wrote some sentences about her little brother.

\_\_\_\_\_

First he holds on to the table. Then he lets go. Then he takes three steps before he falls down. He smiles when he falls because he likes learning to walk.

Which sentence should be put in the blank?

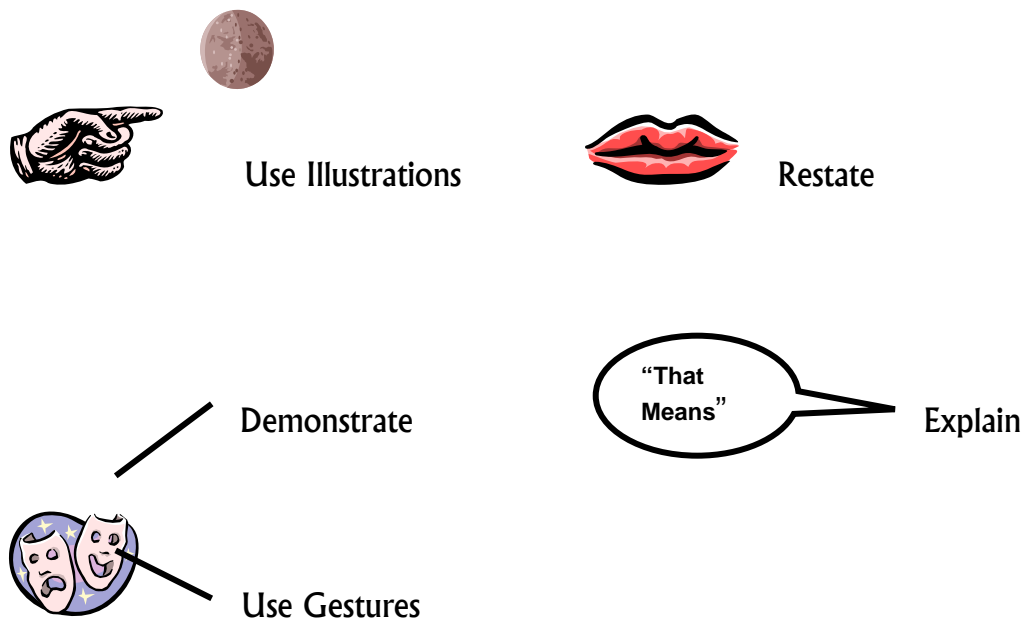
- A. I have a brother who is one year old.
- B. My brother is learning to walk.
- C. My brother's name is Alex.
- D. I help take care of my brother.

*My little brother  
tries to walk.*

# Using White Boards to Support Vocabulary Development

## Nonlinguistic Representations of new words:

Teach the students about the meaning of a new word using Strategies for Comprehensible Input:



Next, have students create an icon or pictograph for that word on their white board which will help them remember the meaning of the word. Have all of the students display their creations to get ideas from each other. Finally, have them list the word and draw the icon in a vocabulary notebook along with a student-friendly definition.

Students are much more likely to remember the meaning of a word if they have been given the time and encouragement to create a nonlinguistic representation of that word for themselves. Using white boards to work on their ideas lets them get ideas from each other as they develop their own.

## Building “grow lists”

Lists of words can be grown to represent both spelling patterns and meaning-based thematic groupings of words easily using white boards. Show the students the category or pattern on the large white board. Give them several minutes to list as many words as they can which belong to the category. Have students share out the words on their boards using the “no repeats” strategy. One student reads their list, others check off the words they have which are the same on their lists. The next student shares, but can’t repeat any of the words they’ve checked off. Make sure to call on the student with the fewest words first, so that they may participate. Those with longer lists will continue to think and add to their lists as others with more limited vocabulary get a chance to share first. The teacher “grows” the list with the student input from white boards on chart paper and leaves the list on display for as long as that material is being worked with.

Sample “grow list” for study of Volcanoes (semantic or meaning-based list)

<b>VOLCANOES</b>		<b>Materials</b>	<b>Processes</b>	<b>Effects on People</b>	<b>Places</b>	<b>Structures and Shapes</b>	<b>?</b>
magma	Mt. Saint Helens						
lava	bulge						
cone	steam						
Vesuvius	vent						
eruption	earthquake						
ash	core						
mud	evacuate						
hot	death						
destruction	flee						
igneous rock	crater						
tectonic plates							
Hawaii							
Paricutin							
pyroclastic flow							

Sample "grow lists" for spelling or structural patterns

__ike	__ake	Compound words	dic <i>spea</i> k	vid/vis
like bike Mike hike pike	bake lake make take	skateboard sunshine playground airplane motorcycle	Dictionary Predict Dictate Contradict Verdict	Video Evidence Visible Providence

Sample of Grow List for long e sound with envelope for students to contribute their ideas attached to the bottom of the list.





Here is a student using white boards to prepare reading comprehension questions prior to literature discussion.





Grow List of vocabulary related to study of California Mission with "post-it" illustrations by students



Kindergarten students using white boards to learn words about family.