



Grades 4-8 Informative Reading & Writing Handbook

Together is Better

Teaching Literacy in Integrated Units



Knox Education
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INTRODUCTION:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Why Focus on Informational Text Reading?

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

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

achievethecore.org

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

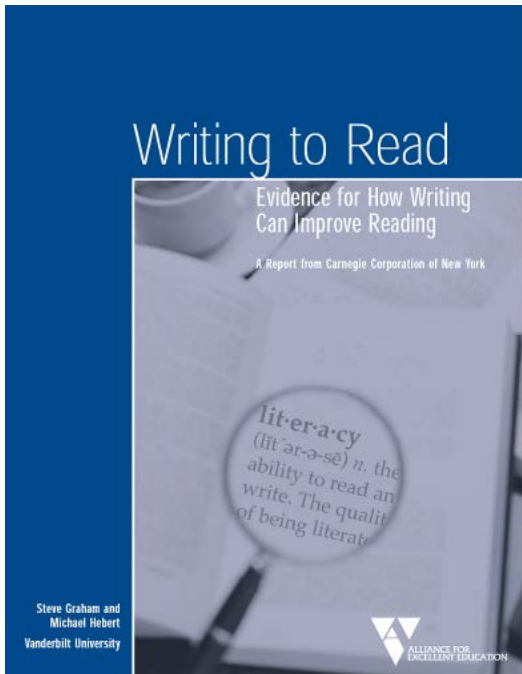
Introduction, California Common Core State Standards for ELA & Literacy.

www.corestandards.org

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

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

Why Focus on Informative/Explanatory Writing: Theory and Research

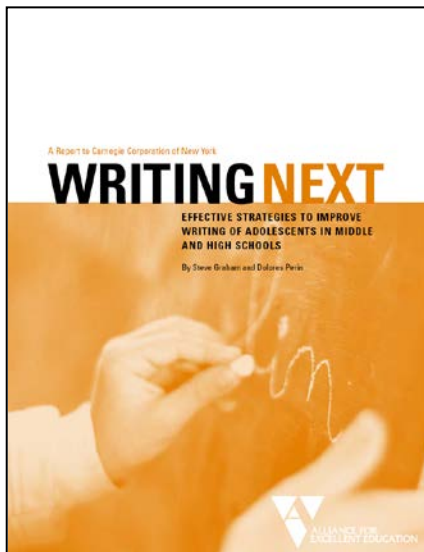


Writing to Read:

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

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

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



Writing Next

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

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

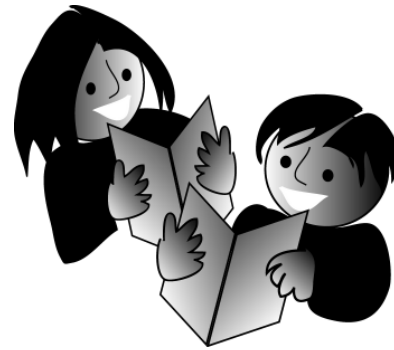
Eleven Elements of Effective Adolescent Writing Instruction

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

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

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

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



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

Scaffolds for English Learners that Support Writing:

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

Defining Informative/Explanatory Writing

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

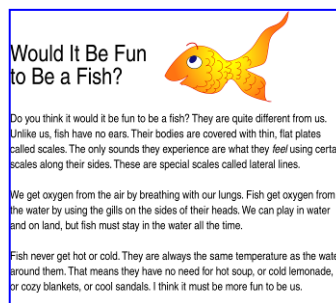
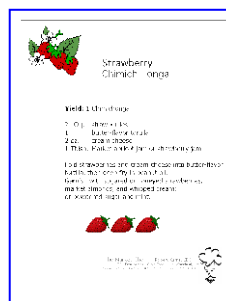
Informative/Explanatory Writing Genres Taught	Real Life Examples
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Procedures/how to 2. Report on information 3. Persuasive editorials 4. Biography/autobiography 5. Questionnaires 6. Science explanations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recipes, directions 2.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

Functional Text types:

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

Other: Tables, charts and graphs

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



Index	
Cats	page 89-91
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Kangaroos	page 22
Pigs	page 2,7,80-91
Zebbras	page 117

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





Writing Standards – INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY

4-8

TEXT TYPES and PURPOSES*:



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

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
<p>2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.</p> <p>a. Introduce a topic clearly and group related information in paragraphs and sections; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.</p> <p>b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.</p> <p>c. Link ideas within categories of information using words and phrases (e.g., <i>another, for example, also, because</i>).</p> <p>d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.</p> <p>e. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.</p>	<p>2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.</p> <p>a. Introduce a topic clearly, provide a general observation and focus, and group related information logically; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.</p> <p>b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.</p> <p>c. Link ideas within and across categories of information using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., <i>in contrast, especially</i>).</p> <p>d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.</p> <p>e. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.</p>	<p>2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.</p> <p>a. Introduce a topic or thesis statement; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. CA</p> <p>b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.</p> <p>c. Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.</p> <p>d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.</p> <p>e. Establish and maintain a formal style.</p> <p>f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.</p>	<p>2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.</p> <p>a. Introduce a topic or thesis statement clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. CA</p> <p>b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.</p> <p>c. Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.</p> <p>d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.</p> <p>e. Establish and maintain a formal style.</p> <p>f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.</p>	<p>2. Write informative/explanatory texts, including career development documents (e.g., simple business letters and job applications), to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content. CA</p> <p>a. Introduce a topic or thesis statement clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. CA</p> <p>b. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.</p> <p>c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.</p> <p>d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.</p> <p>e. Establish and maintain a formal style.</p> <p>f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.</p>

These standards are excerpted and then reformatted for our use from *The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects for California Public Schools Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve* www.cde.ca.gov



W Writing Standards – ALL GENRES

4-8

PRODUCTION and DISTRIBUTION of WRITING



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

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
4. Produce clear and coherent writing (including multiple-paragraph texts) in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)	4. Produce clear and coherent writing (including multiple-paragraph texts) in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)	4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)	4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)	4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)



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

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
5. With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 4.)	5. With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 5.)	5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 6.)	5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 7.)	5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 8.)



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

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
6. With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of one page in a single sitting.	6. With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of two pages in a single sitting.	6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.	6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.	6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

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W Writing Standards – ALL GENRES continued **4-8**

RESEARCH to BUILD and PRESENT KNOWLEDGE

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

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
7. Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.	7. Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.	7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.	7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.	7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

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

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
8. Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes, paraphrase, and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.	8. Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.	8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources.	8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.	8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

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W Writing Standards – ALL GENRES continued **4-8**

RESEARCH to BUILD and PRESENT KNOWLEDGE continued

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

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
<p>9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> <p>a. Apply grade 4 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text [e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions].”).</p> <p>b. Apply grade 4 Reading standards to informational texts (e.g., “Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text”).</p>	<p>9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> <p>a. Apply grade 5 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or a drama, drawing on specific details in the text [e.g., how characters interact]”).</p> <p>b. Apply grade 5 Reading standards to informational texts (e.g., “Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point[s]”).</p>	<p>9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> <p>a. Apply <i>grade 6 Reading standards</i> to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres [e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories] in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics”).</p> <p>b. Apply <i>grade 6 Reading standards</i> to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not”).</p>	<p>9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> <p>a. Apply <i>grade 7 Reading standards</i> to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history”).</p> <p>b. Apply <i>grade 7 Reading standards</i> to literary nonfiction (e.g. “Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims”).</p>	<p>9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> <p>a. Apply <i>grade 8 Reading standards</i> to literature (e.g., “Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new”).</p> <p>b. Apply <i>grade 8 Reading standards</i> to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced”).</p>

RANGE of WRITING

ANCHOR STANDARD 10: Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
<p>10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.</p>	<p>10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.</p>	<p>10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences</p>	<p>10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences</p>	<p>10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences</p>

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WHST Writing Standards – Informative/Explanatory - History/Social Studies, Science, & Technical Subjects 6-8

TEXT TYPES and PURPOSES:



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

2. Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes.
 - a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories as appropriate to achieving purpose; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
 - b. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
 - c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
 - d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
 - e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone.
 - f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

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**WHST****Writing Standards – All Genres History/Social Studies, Science, & Technical Subjects 6-8****PRODUCTION and DISTRIBUTION of WRITING**

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

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



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

5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed



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

6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas clearly and efficiently.

RESEARCH to BUILD and PRESENT KNOWLEDGE

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

7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.



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

8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources (**primary and secondary**), using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation. **CA**



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

9. Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis reflection, and research.

RANGE of WRITING

ANCHOR STANDARD 10: Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

These standards are excerpted and then reformatted for our use from *The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects for California Public Schools Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve* www.cde.ca.gov

ANCHOR PAPERS for WRITING

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



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

Student Sample: Grade 7, Informative/Explanatory

The extended project that led to this scientific report required students to review existing research, conduct original research, and produce a report. Although the student who wrote the report was in grade 7, the conceptual understanding the report displays is clearly at an exemplary level.

A Geographical Report

My report is on a very rare and unique wetland that many people do not even know exists. They occur only in a few places around the world.

My topic is created by a specific geographical condition. Vernal pools in San Diego occur only on the local mesas and terraces, where soil conditions allow, but these are the ideal place for much of the city's urban and agricultural development. Is it possible to find a balance between the two conflicting purposes of expansion and preservation?

This raises an interesting question; how can you establish vernal pools being thought of as a geographical asset?

METHODS

To answer my question I had to get information on vernal pools: what they are, where they are, and how they are a sensitive natural habitat. Then I needed to examine how city expansion is affecting vernal pools, and if it is apt to continue. I needed to know what the City thinks about the problem and what they are planning to do.

First I looked for any information available on vernal pools at public libraries, but I couldn't find what I was looking for. The topic is apparently too obscure. Next I went to a university library that had an environmental department to get as much information as possible (University of San Diego).

I also interviewed several authorities in the field: the district representative for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the federal agency responsible for the protection of wetlands; a senior environment planner with the City of San Diego, who wrote the City's Resource Protection Ordinance (RPO); the Station botanist at Miramar Naval Air Station, who is in charge of their vernal pool management plan on the land that has the largest number of pools remaining in the City of San Diego; a biologist working for RECON (Regional Environmental Consultants), a firm which is mapping the vernal pools for the City of Hemet, (another city in San Diego County facing the same issues); and finally a geographer working for SANDAG (San Diego Association of Governments), a regional organization that gathers, records, and analyzes data associated with regional planning and environmental issues. They answered many questions and offered their own ideas and information, including additional articles on my subject. I looked at several maps and photos of vernal pools locations, and charts of changing land use.

To decide how much education may be needed about vernal pools, I made a questionnaire, and surveyed two classrooms of elementary students, and a group of forty-two adults, trying to cover most age groups.

WHAT VERNAL POOLS ARE

Vernal pools are a unique and rare form of wetland. Wetlands are areas that are covered or soaked by water enough to support plants that grow only in moist ground. Some examples of wetlands are bogs, swamps, marshes, and edges of lakes and streams. These are what people think of when they hear “wetland”. But vernal pools are different than these other types of wetlands. They are located on dry and flat places. No one would expect to find a wetland in such a dry area!

San Diego vernal pools are surrounded by small mounds called “mima mounds”. The name mima mounds come from the Mima Prairie near Olympia, Washington. People don't know for sure how mima mounds are formed. Some think that they were formed by gophers piling up the earth. Others think that ice wedges from glaciers caused the upheaval, or maybe the wind pushed loose dirt, catching in clumps of shrubs. Mounds can be found on prairies or terraces with a hardpan or clay layer underneath.



RI Reading Standards for **INFORMATIONAL TEXT** **4-8**

KEY IDEAS and DETAILS



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

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
1. Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.	1. Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.	1. Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	1. Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	1. Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.



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

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
2. Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.	2. Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.	2. Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.	2. Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.	2. Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.



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

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
3. Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.	3. Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.	3. Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).	3. Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).	3. Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).

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RI Reading Standards for ALL GENRES

4-8

CRAFT and STRUCTURE



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

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area. (See grade 4 Language standards 4-6 for additional expectations.) CA	4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area. (See grade 5 Language standards 4-6 for additional expectations.) CA	4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings. (See grade 6 Language standards 4-6 for additional expectations.) CA	4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone. (See grade 7 Language standards 4-6 for additional expectations.) CA	4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts. (See grade 8 Language standards 4-6 for additional expectations.) CA



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

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
5. Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text.	5. Compare and contrast the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in two or more texts.	5. Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas. a. Analyze the use of text features (e.g., graphics, headers, captions) in popular media. CA	5. Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas. a. Analyze the use of text features (e.g., graphics, headers, captions) in public documents. CA	5. Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept. a. Analyze the use of text features (e.g., graphics, headers, captions) in consumer materials. CA

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READING



RI Reading Standards for ALL GENRES 4-8

CRAFT and STRUCTURE continued



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

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
6. Compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic; describe the differences in focus and the information provided.	6. Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.	6. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.	6. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others.	6. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.

INTEGRATION of KNOWLEDGE and IDEAS



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

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
7. Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.	7. Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.	7. Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.	7. Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).	7. Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.

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



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

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
8. Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.	8. Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point(s).	8. Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.	8. Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.	8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

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RI Reading Standards ALL GENRES **4-8**

INTEGRATION of KNOWLEDGE and IDEAS continued



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

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
9. Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.	9. Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.	9. Compare and contrast one author's presentation of events with that of another (e.g., a memoir written by and a biography on the same person).	9. Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.	9. Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.

RANGE of READING and LEVEL of TEXT COMPLEXITY



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

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
10. By the end of year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grades 4–5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.	10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grades 4–5 text complexity band independently and proficiently.	10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.	10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.	10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

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Organizational Elements for Common Core Reading Standards

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

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

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

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





RF Reading Standards for FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS			4-8
PRINT CONCEPTS			
There are no Anchor Standards for Foundational Skills.			
Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6-8	
No Foundational Skills standards for these grades			

RF Reading Standards for FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS			4-8
PHONICS and WORD RECOGNITION			
There are no Anchor Standards for Foundational Skills.			
Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6-8	
<p>3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.</p> <p>a. Use combined knowledge of all letter-sound correspondences, syllabication patterns, and morphology (e.g., roots and affixes) to read accurately unfamiliar multisyllabic words in context and out of context.</p>	<p>3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.</p> <p>a. Use combined knowledge of all letter-sound correspondences, syllabication patterns, and morphology (e.g., roots and affixes) to read accurately unfamiliar multisyllabic words in context and out of context.</p>	No Foundational Skills standards for these grades	
FLUENCY			
There are no Anchor Standards for Foundational Skills.			
Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6-8	
<p>4. Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.</p> <p>a. Read on-level text with purpose and understanding.</p> <p>b. Read on-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings.</p> <p>c. Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.</p>	<p>4. Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.</p> <p>a. Read on-level text with purpose and understanding.</p> <p>b. Read on-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings.</p> <p>c. Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.</p>	No Foundational Skills standards for these grades	

READING

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KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS



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

1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.



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



Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

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



Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

CRAFT and STRUCTURE



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

4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.



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

5. Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

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

6. Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

INTEGRATION of KNOWLEDGE and IDEAS



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



Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

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



Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

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



Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

RANGE of READING and LEVEL of TEXT COMPLEXITY

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

10. By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.



RST	Reading Standards for Literacy in Science and Technical Subjects	6-8
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KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

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

1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts.

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

2. Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; provide an accurate summary of the text distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

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

3. Follow precisely a multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks.

CRAFT and STRUCTURE

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

4. Determine the meaning of symbols, key terms, and other domain-specific words and phrases as they are used in a specific scientific or technical context relevant to *grades 6–8 texts and topics*.

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

5. Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to an understanding of the topic.

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

6. Analyze the author's purpose in providing an explanation, describing a procedure, or discussing an experiment in a text.

INTEGRATION of KNOWLEDGE and IDEAS

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

7. Integrate quantitative or technical information expressed in words in a text with a version of that information expressed visually (e.g., in a flowchart, diagram, model, graph, or table).

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

8. Distinguish among facts, reasoned judgment based on research findings, and speculation in a text.

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

9. Compare and contrast the information gained from experiments, simulations, video, or multimedia sources with that gained from reading a text on the same topic.

RANGE of READING and LEVEL of TEXT COMPLEXITY

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

10. By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend science/technical texts in the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.


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How to Use the Unit Planner

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

The sections are broken out in the main categories:

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

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

CCSS Unit Planner for Informative Writing

"Begin with the end in mind."

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



CCSS Unit Planner for Informative Writing continued

WRITING

READING

READING and RESEARCH SOURCES

Possible Sources: INTERNET

Internet resources are covered under Reading: RI7 and Writing: W6.

Possible Sources: TEXTBOOKS/BOOKS

Other resources are covered under Reading: RL 1-10, RI 9 and Writing: W6-8.

Possible Sources: OTHER

(Guest speakers, community organizations, skype with expert etc.)

Interaction with people & resources is covered under Writing: W6 and Speaking and Listening: SL 1,2,3.

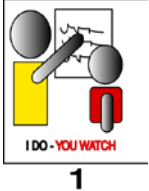

Evaluating Sources and Resources

Include a lesson on how to evaluate websites and conduct effective website searches.



<http://www.schrockguide.net/critical-evaluation.html> Excellent source of website evaluation lessons

Evaluation of resources is covered under Reading: R 7,8,9.

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





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

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

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

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

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

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

WEEKS 5-6

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

Weeks 5-6 Dates: _____ Number of lesson periods _____

During Reading

Students continue to read and research as needed. Consider giving more time for writing during the last couple of weeks of the unit so that students have time to revise, edit, word process, and create visuals for their pieces.



4

During Writing

- **Revise:** students select one piece to take to publication. Conduct mini-lessons on revision using student work, conference with individuals as possible.
- **Edit and Publish:** use self and peer techniques as well as word processing to edit and publish.
- **"Dress Rehearsal":** conduct a trial of an on-demand write if time before assessment (page 103).



4

TEACHING the UNIT:



Typical flow for Unit Lessons:

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

Lesson 1: Launching the Unit

- Orient students to the subject: video, photos, picture book, etc.
- Connect known to new: students discuss what they know via cooperative talk strategies, team word webbing, white board sharing, etc. (See *Speaking and Listening: SL 1,2,3.*)
- Begin building “grow list” for unit vocabulary (page 76-77. (See *Reading: RI 4, Writing: W2, and Language: L6.*)
- Begin generating questions about the topic: Post photos on chart paper and have students write questions about the photos on the chart. (See *Reading: RI 9; Writing: W 2 & 7; and Speaking and Listening: SL1.*)

Lesson 2: Reading the Textbook

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

Lesson 3: Guided Class Inquiry

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

Lesson 4: Students Choose Subject/Event

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

Lesson 5: Note Taking

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

Lesson 6: Key Word Strategy

- Teach the Key Word strategy for summarizing text with a short article about the whole class topic (pages 54-61). *(See Reading RI 2.)*
- Have students repeat this process with 1-2 of the pieces of text they found for their individual or team topic.

Lesson 7: Creating a Glossary of Terms

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

Lesson 8: Practicing a Spoken Presentation

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

- Use the whole class note sheet to practice describing the class topic in a 1-2 minute spoken presentation, have students pair up and time each other. Have them try doing this without their notes.
- Model a 1-2 minute spoken presentation about the whole class topic and have students rate your presentation using the speaking standards from common core on the unit checklist.
- Have students create their own 1-2 minute presentations about their individual or team topics. If they are on a team, they can divide the content and each team member can speak about an aspect of their study. See “Elevator Talk” lesson page 104-106.

Lesson 9: Preparing Visuals for Spoken Presentation

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

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

Lesson 10: Writing an Outline

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

Lesson 11: Paragraph Writing/Topic Sentences

- Review how to use the main idea in the topic sentence. (*See main ideas/sentences in Language: L 1,2,3, Speaking and Listening: SL 1,2, and Reading RI 2.*)
- Do a sentence combining lesson and use transition words to show students how to write detail sentences. (*Transition words and details are in Writing: W3i and Speaking and Listening: SL 4 in the Common Core Standards.*)
- Students then write their own informative pieces about their topic. Consider meeting with groups to support the writing process. (*See Collaboration and peer interaction are covered under Speaking and Listening: SL 1-5.*)
- Consider using shared writing each day at the beginning of the writing period to write the whole class informative piece so the students will be reminded about the process via the whole class topic before they attempt their own pieces each day. See "Topic Sentences" lesson page. 98-99.

Lesson 12: Concluding Paragraph Writing

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

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

- Review the content of the body paragraphs
 - Restate the introductory paragraph with different words
 - Encourage the reader to think about the meaning of the content or take some action with the information
- Choose one of the above options for the whole class topic and use shared writing to write the class concluding paragraph. See Conclusions lesson page 102.

Lesson 13: Revising

(*See Writing: W 5.*)

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

Lesson 14: Editing

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

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

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

Lesson 15: Publishing

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

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

Lesson 16: Presentation/Evaluation

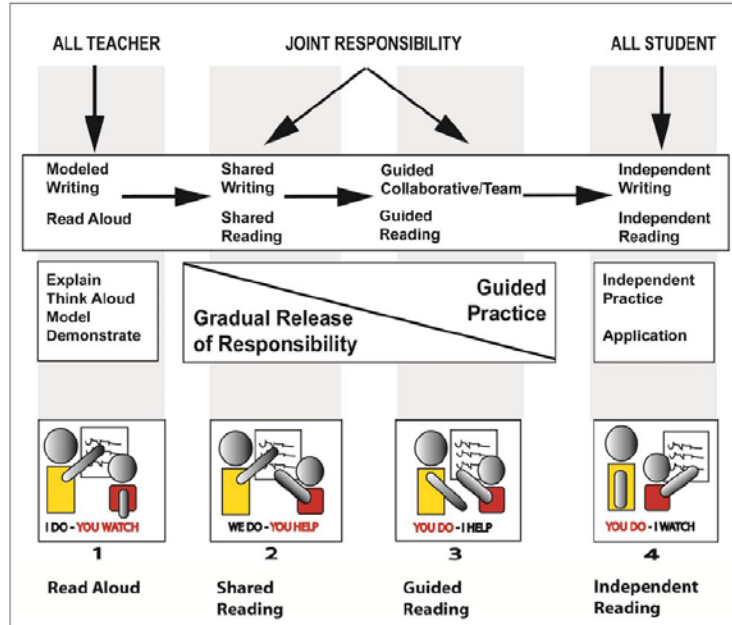
(See Writing: W 4, 6 & 10, and Speaking and Listening: SL 1-4.)

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

Other Notes:

Informative Reading/Writing Units

The Gradual Release of Responsibility Model of Instruction



1



2



3



4

Modeling:

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

Shared:

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

Independent:

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

(See also Scaffolding page 82-83)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Others:



For Teachers:

The Teaching Channel:

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

This site houses nearly 700 video clips of mostly excellent teaching. 183 are Common Core Standards driven, and hundreds of others feature best practices.

It is searchable by grade level and content. Most clips include information about the teacher, the school, and include the resources as attachments needed to teach the lesson.

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

Access to Complex Text

Strategies for assuring all students can learn from reading informational text

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

Pearson, Dole, Roeler, and Duffy

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

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

1. **Connecting known-to-new:** finding out what students already know before reading.
2. **QFT** (Question Formulation Technique) prior to reading, and **T.H.I.E.V.E.S.** informational text question cards, and **annotating texts**.
3. **Shared Reading:** reading projected texts or big books “all together.”
4. **Key Words:** selecting and working with key words and the “gist” of each paragraph in a text in order to summarize the information in “one’s own words,” and Matrix Charts.
5. **Text Dependent Questioning:** generating questions that require the reader to return to the text to share their thinking.

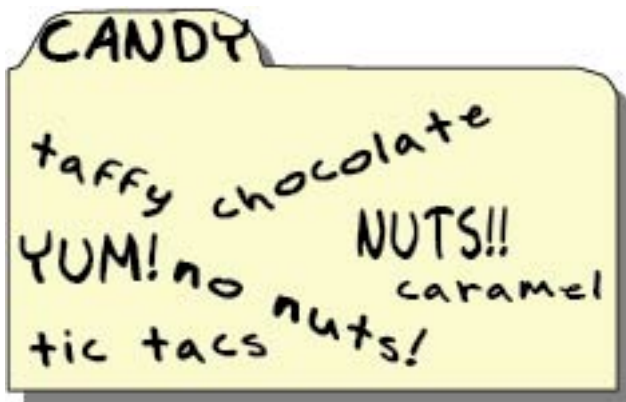
Connecting the Known to the New

What we
already know...



New
Learning!

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



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

class start speaking out loud at once. This generates a lot of noise and enthusiasm for just how much we already know.

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

Linking

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

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

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

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

Question Formulation Technique: QFT

The Six Steps of QFT

1. Teachers design a question focus.
2. Students produce questions
3. Students improve their questions
4. Students prioritize their questions
5. Students and teachers decide on next steps
6. Students reflect on what they have learned

I learned that asking questions is the best way to know what's going on.

I learned that asking questions can just be as important as a teacher asking a question.

The way it made me feel was smart because I was asking good questions and giving good answers.

Harvard Education Letter

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Teaching Students to Ask Their Own Questions

One small change can yield big results

By DAN ROTHSTEIN and LUZ SANTANA

Students in Hayley Dupuy's sixth-grade science class at the Jane Lathrop Stanford Middle School in Palo Alto, Calif., are beginning a unit on plate tectonics. In small groups, they are producing their own questions, quickly, one after another: What are plate tectonics? How fast do plates move? Why do plates move? Do plates affect temperature? What animals can sense the plates moving? They raise questions "that we never would have thought of if we started to answer the first question we asked," says one of the students. "And just when you think you already know the question you want to focus on, you realize: 'Oh, wow, here's this other question that is so much better, and that's really what you need to think about.'"

Far from Palo Alto, in the Roxbury neighborhood of Boston, Mass., Sharif Muhammad's students at the Boston Day and Evening Academy (BDEA) have a strikingly similar experience. Many of them had transferred to BDEA for various reasons from other schools and had not always experienced much success as students. But working individually, they find that formulating their own questions engages them in a new way. One of the students observes: "When you ask the question, you feel like it's your job to get the answer, and you want to figure it out."

These two students—one in Palo Alto, the other in Roxbury—are discovering something that may seem obvious: When students know how to ask their own questions, they take greater ownership of their learning, deepen comprehension, and make new connections and discoveries on their own. However, this skill is rarely, if ever, deliberately taught to students from kindergarten through high school. Typically, questions are seen as the province of teachers, who spend years figuring out how to craft questions and fine-tune them to stimulate students' curiosity or engage them more effectively. We have found that teaching students to ask their own questions can accomplish these same goals while teaching a critical lifelong skill.

The Question Formulation Technique

Dupuy, Muhammad, and many other teachers are using a step-by-step process that we and our colleagues at the Right Question Institute have developed called the Question Formulation Technique (QFT). This technique helps students learn how to produce their own questions, improve them, and strategize on how to use them (see sidebar “Question Formulation Technique”).

The origins of the QFT can be traced back 20 years to a dropout prevention program for the city of Lawrence, Mass., that was funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. As we worked together to increase parent involvement in education, we heard parents state the same problem over and over again: “We’re not going to the schools because we don’t even know what to ask.” Eventually, this problem led us to create a simple but powerful process that has been used effectively in a wide range of fields across the country and beyond. In health care, for example, research funded by the National Institutes of Health has shown that the QFT produces dramatic increases in levels of patient activation and improved patient-provider communication. In the classroom, teachers have seen how the same process manages to develop students’ divergent (brainstorming), convergent (categorizing and prioritizing), and metacognitive (reflective) thinking abilities in a very short period of time.

Teachers can use the QFT at different points: to introduce students to a new unit, to assess students’ knowledge to see what they need to understand better, and even to conclude a unit to see how students can, with new knowledge, set a fresh learning agenda for themselves. The technique can be used for all ages.

Students have used the QFT to develop science experiments, create their own research projects, begin research on a teacher-assigned topic, prepare to write an essay, analyze a word problem, think more deeply about a challenging reading assignment, prepare an interview, or simply get themselves “unstuck.”

The QFT has six key steps:

Step 1: Teachers Design a Question Focus. The Question Focus, or QFocus, is a prompt that can be presented in the form of a statement or a visual or aural aid to focus and attract student attention and quickly stimulate the formation of questions. The QFocus is different from many traditional prompts because it is not a teacher’s question. It serves, instead, as the focus for student questions so students can, on their own, identify and explore a wide range of themes and ideas. For example, after studying the causes of the 1804 Haitian revolution, one teacher presented this QFocus: “Once we were slaves. Now we are free.” The students began asking questions about what changed and what stayed the same after the revolution.

Step 2: Students Produce Questions. Students use a set of rules that provide a clear protocol for producing questions without assistance from the teacher. The four rules are: ask as many questions as you can; do not stop to discuss, judge, or answer any of the questions; write down every question exactly as it was stated; and change any statements into questions. Before students start generating their questions, the teacher introduces the rules and asks the students to think about and discuss possible challenges in following them. Once the students get to work, the rules provide a firm structure for an open-ended thinking process. Students are able to generate questions and think more broadly than they would have if they had not been guided by the rules.

Step 3: Students Improve Their Questions. Students then improve their questions by analyzing the differences between open- and closed-ended questions and by practicing changing one type to the other. The teacher begins this step by introducing definitions of closed- and open-ended questions. The students use the definitions to categorize the list of questions they have just produced into one of the two categories. Then, the teacher leads them through a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of both kinds of questions. To conclude this step, the teacher asks the students to change at least one open-ended question into a closed-ended one, and vice versa, which leads students to think about how the phrasing of a question can affect the depth, quality, and value of the information they will obtain.

Step 4: Students Prioritize Their Questions. The teacher, with the lesson plan in mind, offers criteria or guidelines for the selection of priority questions. In an introduction to a unit, the instruction may be, “Choose the three questions you most want to explore further.” When designing a science experiment, it may be, “Choose three testable questions.” An essay related to a work of fiction may require that students select “three questions related to the key themes we’ve identified in this piece.” During this phase, students move from thinking divergently to thinking convergently, zero in on the locus of their inquiry, and plan concrete action steps for getting information they need to complete the lesson or task.

Step 5: Students and Teachers Decide on Next Steps. At this stage, students and teachers work together to decide how to use the questions. One teacher, for example, presented all the groups’ priority questions to the entire class the next day during a “Do Now” exercise and asked them to rank their top three questions. Eventually, the class and the teacher agreed on this question for their Socratic Seminar discussion: “How do poverty and injustice lead to violence in *A Tale of Two Cities*?”

Step 6: Students Reflect on What They Have Learned. The teacher reviews the steps and provides students with an opportunity to review what they have learned by producing, improving, and prioritizing their questions. Making the QFT completely transparent helps students see what they have done and how it contributed to their thinking and learning. They can internalize the process and then apply it in many other settings.

When teachers deploy the QFT in their classes, they notice three important changes in classroom culture and practices. Teachers tell us that using the QFT consistently increases participation in group and peer learning processes, improves classroom management, and enhances their efforts to address inequities in education. As teachers see this happen again and again, they realize that their traditional practice of welcoming questions is not the same as deliberately teaching the skill of question formulation. Or, as one teacher put it: “I would often ask my students, ‘Do you have any questions,’ but, of course, I didn’t get much back from them.” In his seven years of teaching, Muhammad also encouraged his Roxbury students to ask questions but had seen just how difficult that could be for them. After using the six-step process outlined above, he was struck by “how the students went farther, deeper, and asked questions more quickly than ever before.”

One Significant Change

For teachers, using the QFT requires one small but significant shift in practice: Students will be asking all the questions. A teacher’s role is simply to facilitate that process. This is a significant change for students as well. It may take a minimum of 45 minutes for students to go through all the steps the first time it is introduced in a classroom; but as they gain experience using the QFT, teachers find that the students can run through the process very quickly, in 10 to 15 minutes, even when working in groups.

The QFT provides a deliberate way to help students cultivate a skill that is fundamentally important for all learning. Teaching this skill in every classroom can help successful students to go deeper in their thinking and encourage struggling students to develop a new thirst for learning. Their questions will have much to teach us.

Dan Rothstein and Luz Santana, codirectors of the Right Question Institute, are the authors of the forthcoming book [Make Just One Change: Teach Students to Ask Their Own Questions](#) to be published in September 2011 by Harvard Education Press.

References include:


Rothstein, D. and Santana, L. (2012) *Make Just One Change: Teach Students to Ask their Own Questions*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press


<http://rightquestion.org>

Harvard Education Letter: <http://www.hepg.org/hel/article/507#home>

T.H.I.E.V.E.S. Informational Text Question Cards

Adapted from The Reading Teacher, 2002 Jeff Zwiers @ jeffzwiers.com with permission

 <h2 style="text-align: center;">T.H.I.E.V.E.S.</h2>
<p>T:</p> <p>From the title, predict what the text is about:</p>
<p>H:</p> <p>Look at all headings (& Table of Contents) and then turn two of them into important questions that you think the text will answer. (Why, How...)</p>
<p>I:</p> <p>Use the introduction and first paragraph to predict the main idea (or to create a big question you think the text will answer):</p>
<p>E:</p> <p>Write down everything you know about the topic. Use back of this paper, if necessary. Circle any of your notes you would like to know more about or write a question about it.</p>
<p>V:</p> <p>List three important visuals and predict how they will help you understand the text</p>
<p>E:</p> <p>Guess the answers for the end-of-chapter questions, read any summaries—and write down every bold or <i>italicized</i> word.</p>
<p>S:</p> <p>So What? Why do you think the author wrote this? Its text structure tells me that:</p>

 <h2 style="text-align: center;">T.H.I.E.V.E.S.</h2>
<p>T:</p> <p>From the title, predict what the text is about:</p>
<p>H:</p> <p>Look at all headings (& Table of Contents) and then turn two of them into important questions that you think the text will answer. (Why, How...)</p>
<p>I:</p> <p>Use the introduction and first paragraph to predict the main idea (or to create a big question you think the text will answer):</p>
<p>E:</p> <p>Write down everything you know about the topic. Use back of this paper, if necessary. Circle any of your notes you would like to know more about or write a question about it.</p>
<p>V:</p> <p>List three important visuals and predict how they will help you understand the text</p>
<p>E:</p> <p>Guess the answers for the end-of-chapter questions, read any summaries—and write down every bold or <i>italicized</i> word.</p>
<p>S:</p> <p>So What? Why do you think the author wrote this? Its text structure tells me that:</p>

READING

Informational Text



Informational Text reading is covered in the Common Core Standards under **Reading: RI 1-10**.

The “Why” and “How” of Annotating Texts

Why annotate?

Think of annotating as having a conversation with the text. Active readers have thoughts, questions, and observations as we read literature. Annotating, or jotting ideas and questions in the margins of our texts as we read, helps us to:

- Stay focused on the text
- Better understand and analyze literature
- Remember information
- Locate important passages and words quickly

How do I annotate?

REMEMBER: Keep it **simple** and stick to what is important and relevant to the task at hand.

For highlighting, the example on the next page uses two colors a yellow and a purple. It does not matter what colors you use. You can switch colors when you change topics or use one color for words that are defined and another color for important points.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Make brief comments in the margins.✓ Make brief comments between or within lines of the text.✓ Circle or put boxes, triangles, or clouds around words or phrases.✓ Use abbreviations or symbols.✓ Underline: Underline only a few words at a time and always try and explain why it is underlined.✓ Highlight – CAUTION – don’t go highlight crazy, too many will confuse you.✓ Place “?” near places that confuse you.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Have a conversation with the text. Talk back to it.✓ Ask questions (important to what you have read).✓ Comment on the actions or events.✓ Comment on changes to a character or setting.✓ Summarize main ideas and key events.✓ Connect to what you already know.
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Note how the author uses language: Look for and label the following in literature and poetry specifically:

- Point of view
- Narrative pace/time/ order of events
- Irony
- Allusions
- Other figures of speech
- Tone/mood
- Themes
- Symbols

- Reliability of narrator
- Imagery
- Repetition
- Diction
- Similes/ metaphors
- Personification

EXAMPLE

READING ESSENTIALS AND STUDY GUIDE 1-2 (CONTINUED)

Europe's Heritage of Ideas (pages 99-101)

Main Idea: Ancient cultures laid the foundation of many modern ideas. *Something given from the past to the present*

Kind of Gov.

Kind of Gov.

The idea of democracy developed in the ancient Greek city of Athens during the 400s B.C. The Athenians practiced direct democracy. They met and voted on laws firsthand. Ancient Rome began as a republic. In the form of government, citizens elect their leaders. This idea later shaped the founding of the United States government. Rome also contributed the idea of the "rule of law." This means that the law should apply equally to everyone and that all people should be treated the same. The American legal system today is based on the rule of law.

Direct dem
Everybody
votes over
time

Republic
pick people
to speak for
the group

In the ancient world, most people worshipped many gods. The Jews believed in only one god. The Hebrew Bible describes a covenant, or agreement, between the Jews and their God. The idea of a covenant later influenced the way colonists set up their societies in North America. The Ten Commandments found in the Hebrew Bible shaped the moral laws of many nations. The new religion of Christianity, based on the message of Jesus, a Jewish teacher, shaped values around the world.

Don't steal,
kill, lie

Muslims, the followers of Islam, also believed in one God. Islam began in the Arabian Peninsula with the Preaching of Muhammad. Jewish and Muslim scholars saved much of the learning of the ancient world. Muslims made advances in mathematics and medicine. They introduced the Arabic numerals used today.

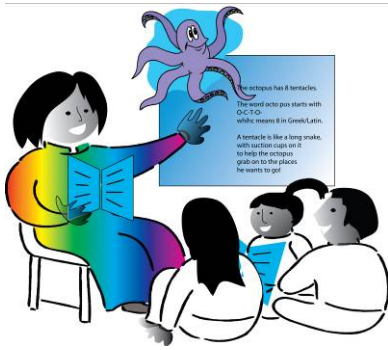
Rome
Greeks

Religious thought

A new way of thinking called scholasticism began to change theology, or the study of religion and God. Its followers used reason to explore questions of faith. One follower, Thomas Aquinas, emphasized the idea of natural law. This is the belief that people have certain rights from birth. Governments do not have to grant these rights. Among these are the rights to live, learn, worship, and reproduce. Americans' belief in human rights can partly be traced to the ideas of Aquinas.

Reason

Natural Law — People have rights they are born with



Shared Reading

Quotable Quotes on Shared Reading...

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

The Foundations of Literacy, Holdaway p. 61

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

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

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

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

Apprenticeship in Literacy, p. 32

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

Words, Words, Words, Janet Allen

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

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

Reading Essentials, Routman, 2003

Advantages of Shared Reading:

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

Suggestions for Shared Reading Instruction:

Choosing Appropriate Texts:

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

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

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

Plan and Introduce:

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

Read the Text:

For All Texts:

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

For Fiction:

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

For Nonfiction:

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

For All Text Types:

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

Return to the Text:

For English Language Learners:

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

For Meaning Making:

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

For Learning Foundational Literacy Skills:

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

Emergent Readers/Beginning ELLs:

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

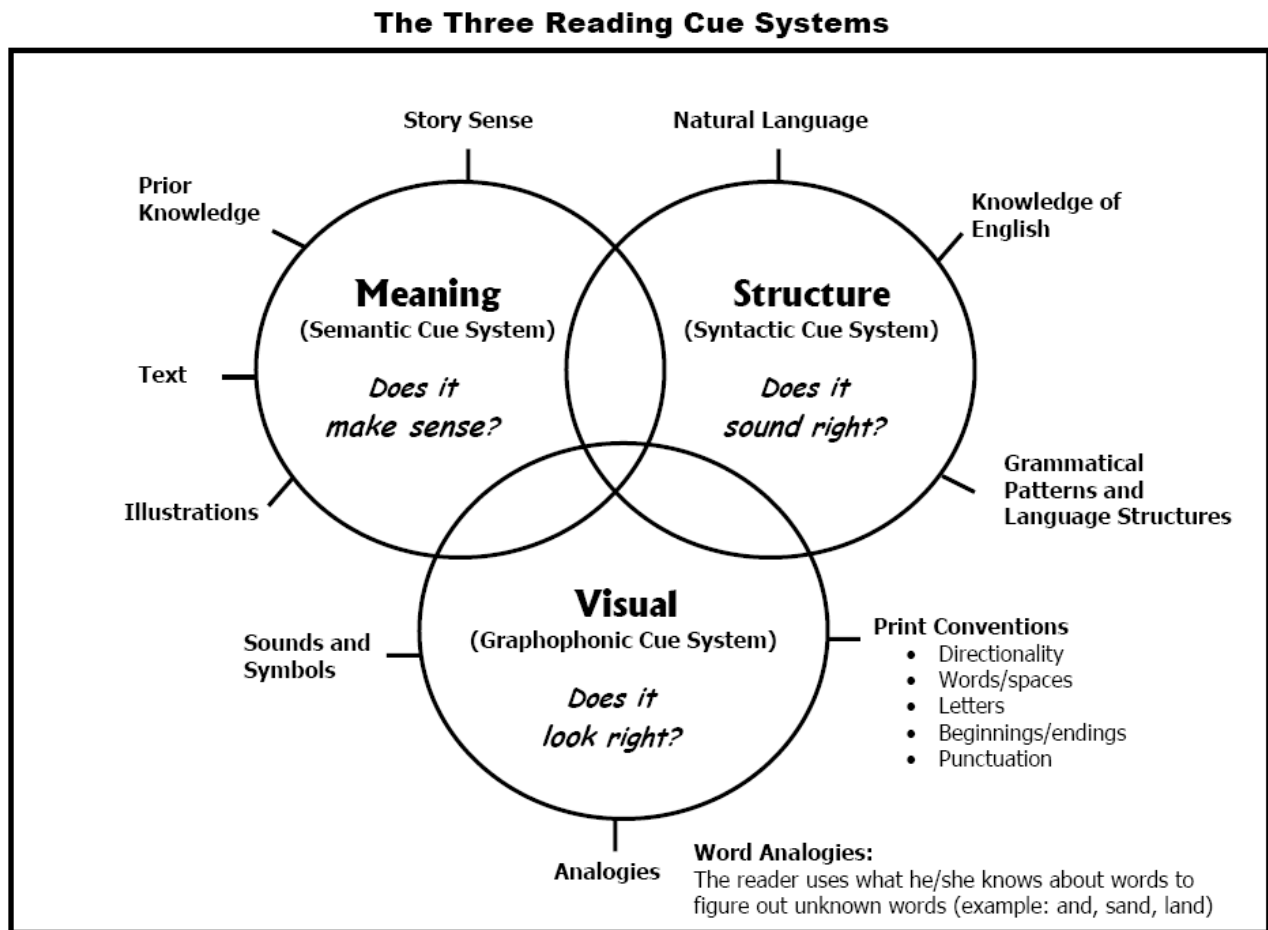
Cloze Procedure and Shared Reading of Projected Texts

Who Benefits?

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

Reading Cueing systems:

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



How:

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

Example:

The Bird

By Tony Milton

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

Responses to Shared Reading:

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

For Example:

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

References for Shared Reading

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

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

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

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

Close Reading and Text Dependent Questioning:

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

www.achievethecore.org/

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

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

Shared Reading Lesson Planning Form

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





Finding Key Words for a Summary

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

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

PROCEDURE:

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



Known → new
Water Cycle

WATER WAYS



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

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

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

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

List of Key Words

How it moves:

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

Cycle definition

- *Hydrologic*
- *Re-cycle*
- *Reused*

Humans use of water

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

Source:

National Geographic "Extreme Explorer" Magazine, April 2010

Finding Key Words for a Summary

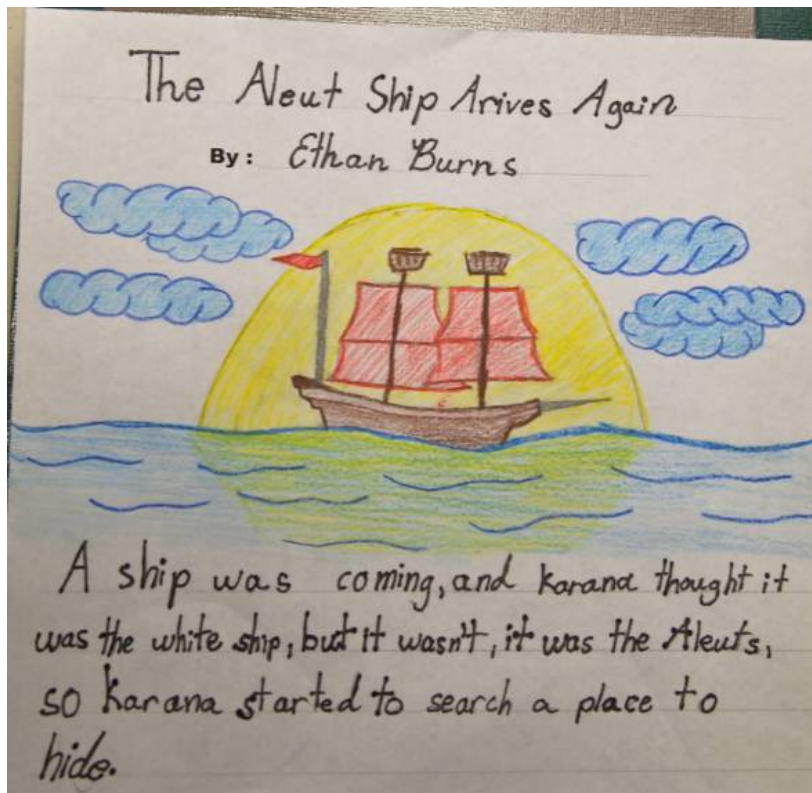
The \$2.00 Summary

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

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

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

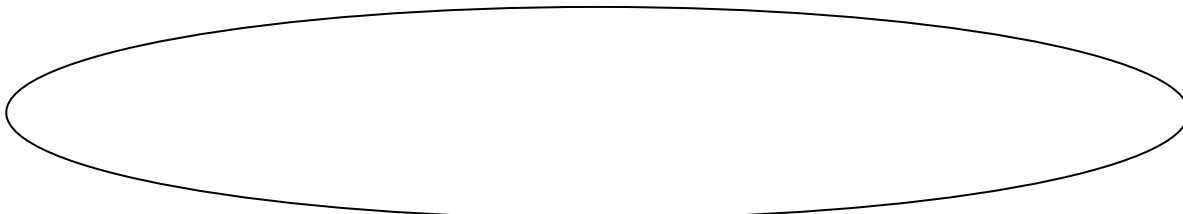
Once students understand this procedure it can be used as a homework assignment for summarizing content area reading in science or social studies.



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


Key Word Strategy and 5-Star Checklist

Name: _____ Date: _____



Key Words

(See page 54-61)

★ PUNCTUATION	★ CAPITALS	★ SENTENCES or PARAGRAPH	★ KEY WORDS	★ EDIT
 ? - ! ,	Only where they go... • Beginning of sentence • Names • Months or days of the week	• Title • Main idea, or • Make a connection • Indent • End point	• From text you read or heard? • Used in sentences?	• Spelling • Spaces between words • Neat

Note Taking: Using Matrix Charts

Content Area Matrix

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

Thinking Skill: Classifying and Categorizing

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

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

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

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

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

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

Beginning English Learner Students: (CELDT 1-2)

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

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

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

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

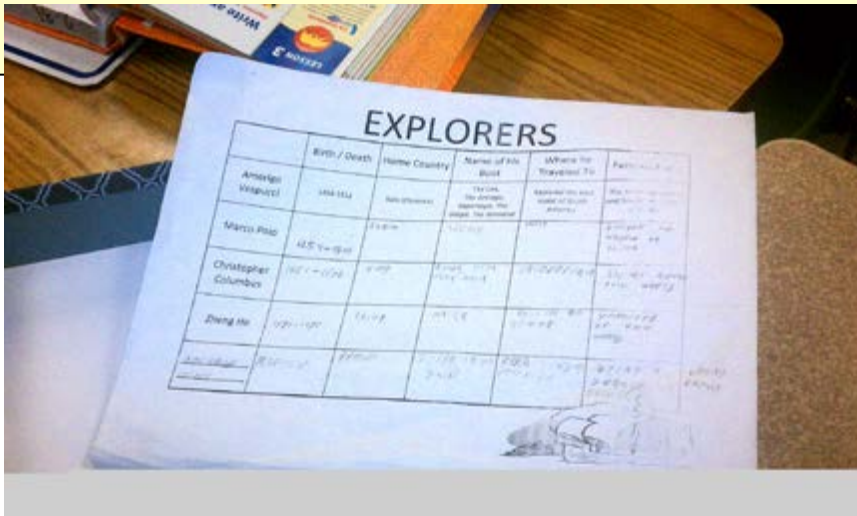
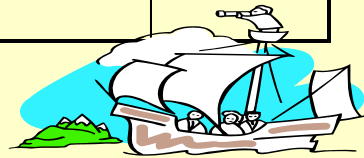
Use shared writing to generate a paragraph about one of the boxes with the students. Extend their responses by asking for further detail. Show students how to add a concluding sentence to each paragraph. Include mini-lessons on different ways to generate a topic sentence. Expect students to write a 6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



Matrix Charts: Examples

EXPLORERS

	Birth / Death	Home Country	Name of his Boat	Where he Traveled To	Famous For ...
Amerigo Vespucci	1454-1512	Italy (Florence)	<i>The San, The Antiago, Repertaga, The Wegiz, The Girmand</i>	Explored the east coast of South America	The Americas (North and South) are named after him
Marco Polo					
Christopher Columbus					
Zheng He					



Teaching Students to Read Closely with Text-Dependent Questions



Why Do We Need to Ask Text-Dependent Questions?

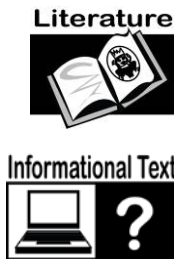
The CCSS Requires Three Shifts in ELA/Literacy

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

achievethecore.org



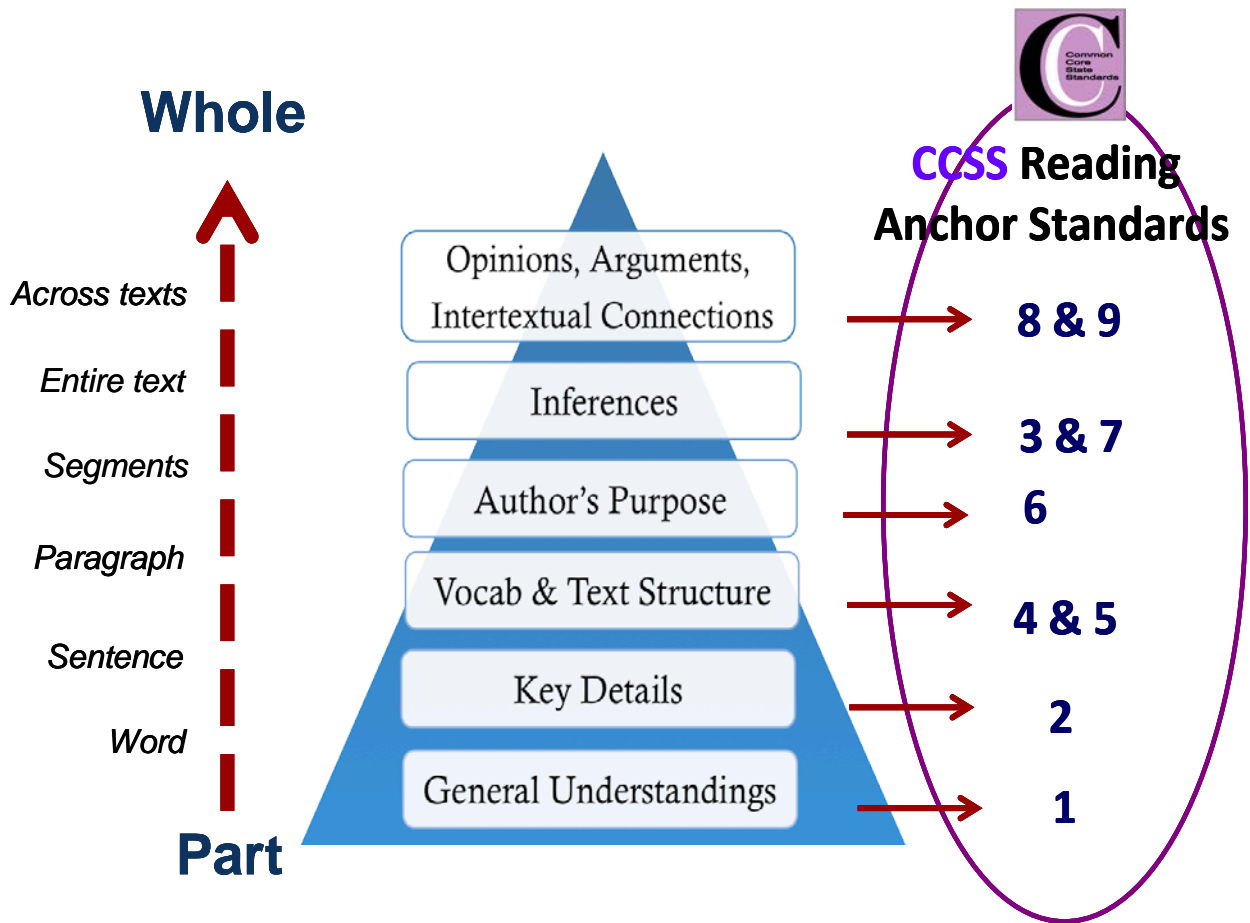
Common Core ANCHOR STANDARDS for Reading Across Grade Levels READING (Literature and Informational Text)



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

Progression of Text-Dependent Questions Chart

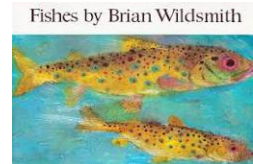
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Text-Dependent Questions Qualities



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



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

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Text Dependent Question Prompts

General Understandings

Literature



Informational Text



General Reading: both Literature and Informational Text

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

Literature



Literature

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

CCSS Reading Standard 1

Key Details

Literature



Informational Text



General Reading: both Literature and Informational Text

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

Literature



Literature

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

CCSS Reading Standard 2

Text Dependent Question Prompts

Vocabulary & Text Structure

General Reading (both Literature and Informational Text)



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



Literature

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

CCSS Reading Standard 4 & 5

Text Dependent Question Prompts

Author's Purpose

Literature General Reading: both Literature and Informational Text



Informational Text



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

Literature Literature



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

CCSS Reading Standard 6

Inferences

Literature General Reading: both Literature and Informational Text



Informational Text



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

Literature Literature



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

CCSS Reading Standard 3 & 7

Opinions, Arguments, Inter-textual Connections

Literature General Reading: both Literature and Informational Text



Informational Text



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

Literature

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

CCSS Reading Standard 8-9

Text Marking with Symbols and Post-its

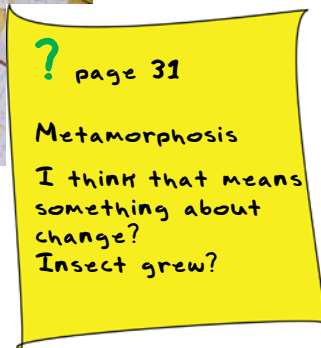
Using symbols to mark responses to text while reading is one easy way to ensure active engagement. We know that good readers interact extensively with text in their minds as they read the words; weaker readers need to be taught explicitly to do this in order for it to become habitual. You may use these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

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

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

“I haven’t seen that word before, and I need to go back and figure out what it means”

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



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

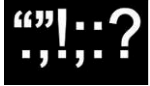
See our website www.knoxeducation.com for

K-3 Text Marking

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

4-8 Text Marking

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



Language Instruction Planning Sheet



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

Weeks 1-2

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

Weeks 3-4

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

Weeks 5-6

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





L Language Standards

4-8

CONVENTIONS of STANDARD ENGLISH



ANCHOR STANDARD 1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
<p>1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</p> <p>a. Use interrogative, relative pronouns (<i>who, whose, whom, which, that</i>) and relative adverbs (<i>where, when, why</i>). CA</p> <p>b. Form and use the progressive (e.g., <i>I was walking; I am walking; I will be walking</i>) verb tenses.</p> <p>c. Use modal auxiliaries (e.g., <i>can, may, must</i>) to convey various conditions.</p> <p>d. Order adjectives within sentences according to conventional patterns (e.g., <i>a small red bag</i> rather than <i>a red small bag</i>).</p> <p>e. Form and use prepositional phrases.</p> <p>f. Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.*</p> <p>g. Correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., <i>to, too, two; there, their</i>).*</p> <p>h. Write fluidly and legibly in cursive or joined italics. CA</p>	<p>1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</p> <p>a. Explain the function of conjunctions, prepositions, and interjections in general and their function in particular sentences.</p> <p>b. Form and use the perfect (e.g., <i>I had walked; I have walked; I will have walked</i>) verb tenses.</p> <p>c. Use verb tense to convey various times, sequences, states, and conditions.</p> <p>d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense.*</p> <p>e. Use correlative conjunctions (e.g., <i>either/or, neither/nor</i>).</p>	<p>1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</p> <p>a. Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive).</p> <p>b. Use all pronouns, including intensive pronouns (e.g., <i>myself, ourselves</i>) correctly. CA</p> <p>c. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.*</p> <p>d. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).*</p> <p>e. Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.*</p>	<p>1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</p> <p>a. Explain the function of phrases and clauses in general and their function in specific sentences.</p> <p>b. Choose among simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences to signal differing relationships among ideas.</p> <p>c. Place phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers.*</p>	<p>1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</p> <p>a. Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences.</p> <p>b. Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.</p> <p>c. Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.</p> <p>d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.*</p>

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

These standards are excerpted and then reformatted for our use from [The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects for California Public Schools Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve](#) www.cde.ca.gov



L Language Standards **4-8**

CONVENTIONS of STANDARD ENGLISH continued

ANCHOR STANDARD 2: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
<p>2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Use correct capitalization. b. Use commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text. c. Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence. d. Spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed. 	<p>2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Use punctuation to separate items in a series.* b. Use a comma to separate an introductory element from the rest of the sentence. c. Use a comma to set off the words <i>yes</i> and <i>no</i> (e.g., <i>Yes, thank you</i>), to set off a tag question from the rest of the sentence (e.g., <i>It's true, isn't it?</i>), and to indicate direct address (e.g., <i>Is that you, Steve?</i>). d. Use underlining, quotation marks, or italics to indicate titles of works. e. Spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed. 	<p>2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.* b. Spell correctly. 	<p>2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Use a comma to separate coordinate adjectives (e.g., <i>It was a fascinating, enjoyable movie</i> but not <i>He wore an old[,] green shirt</i>). b. Spell correctly. 	<p>2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break. b. Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission. c. Spell correctly.

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

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L Language Standards **4-8**

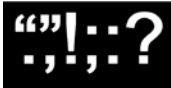
KNOWLEDGE of LANGUAGE

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

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
<p>3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.* b. Choose punctuation for effect.* c. Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion). 	<p>3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Expand, combine, and reduce sentences for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style. b. Compare and contrast the varieties of English (e.g., dialects, registers) used in stories, dramas, or poems 	<p>3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.* b. Maintain consistency in style and tone.* 	<p>3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.* 	<p>3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).

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

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L Language Standards

4-8

VOCABULARY ACQUISITION and USE



ANCHOR STANDARD 4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
<p>4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grade 4 reading and content</i>, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p> <p>a. Use context (e.g., definitions, examples, or restatements in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.</p> <p>b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., <i>telegraph</i>, <i>photograph</i>, <i>autograph</i>).</p> <p>c. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases and to identify alternate word choices in all content areas. CA</p>	<p>4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grade 5 reading and content</i>, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p> <p>a. Use context (e.g., cause/effect relationships and comparisons in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.</p> <p>b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., <i>photograph</i>, <i>photosynthesis</i>).</p> <p>c. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases and to identify alternate word choices in all content areas. CA</p>	<p>4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grade 6 reading and content</i>, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p> <p>a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.</p> <p>b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., <i>audience</i>, <i>auditory</i>, <i>audible</i>).</p> <p>c. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.</p> <p>d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).</p>	<p>4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grade 7 reading and content</i>, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p> <p>a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.</p> <p>b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., <i>belligerent</i>, <i>bellicose</i>, <i>rebel</i>).</p> <p>c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech or trace the etymology of words. CA</p> <p>d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).</p>	<p>4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on <i>grade 8 reading and content</i>, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p> <p>a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.</p> <p>b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., <i>precede</i>, <i>recede</i>, <i>secede</i>).</p> <p>c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech or trace the etymology of words. CA</p> <p>d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).</p>

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L Language Standards **4-8**

VOCABULARY ACQUISITION and USE continued

ANCHOR STANDARD 5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
<p>5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</p> <p>a. Explain the meaning of simple similes and metaphors (e.g., <i>as pretty as a picture</i>) in context.</p> <p>b. Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs.</p> <p>c. Demonstrate understanding of words by relating them to their opposites (antonyms) and to words with similar but not identical meanings (synonyms).</p>	<p>5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</p> <p>a. Interpret figurative language, including similes and metaphors, in context.</p> <p>b. Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs.</p> <p>c. Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., synonyms, antonyms, homographs) to better understand each of the words.</p>	<p>5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</p> <p>a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., personification) in context.</p> <p>b. Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words.</p> <p>c. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., <i>stingy, scrimping, economical, unwasteful, thrifty</i>).</p>	<p>5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</p> <p>a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., literary, biblical, and mythological allusions) in context.</p> <p>b. Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., synonym/antonym, analogy) to better understand each of the words.</p> <p>c. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., <i>refined, respectful, polite, diplomatic, condescending</i>).</p>	<p>5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</p> <p>a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context.</p> <p>b. Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.</p> <p>c. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., <i>bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute</i>).</p>

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L Language Standards

4-8

VOCABULARY ACQUISITION and USE continued



ANCHOR STANDARD 6: Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., <i>quizzed</i> , <i>whined</i> , <i>stammered</i>) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., <i>wildlife</i> , <i>conservation</i> , and <i>endangered</i> when discussing animal preservation).	6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships (e.g., <i>however</i> , <i>although</i> , <i>nevertheless</i> , <i>similarly</i> , <i>moreover</i> , <i>in addition</i>).	6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.	6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.	6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

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

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“Grow Lists”

Collecting words to learn about how language works

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

Here's how to manage this process:

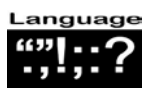
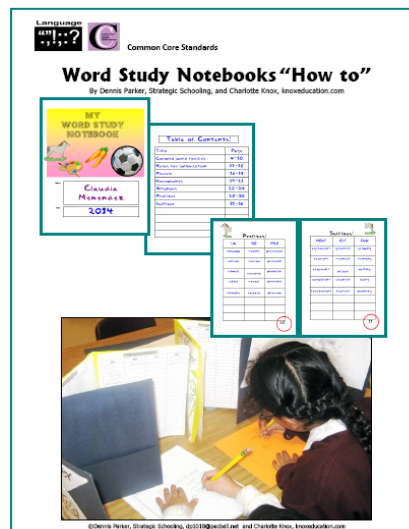
For spelling/phonics patterns:

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



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

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

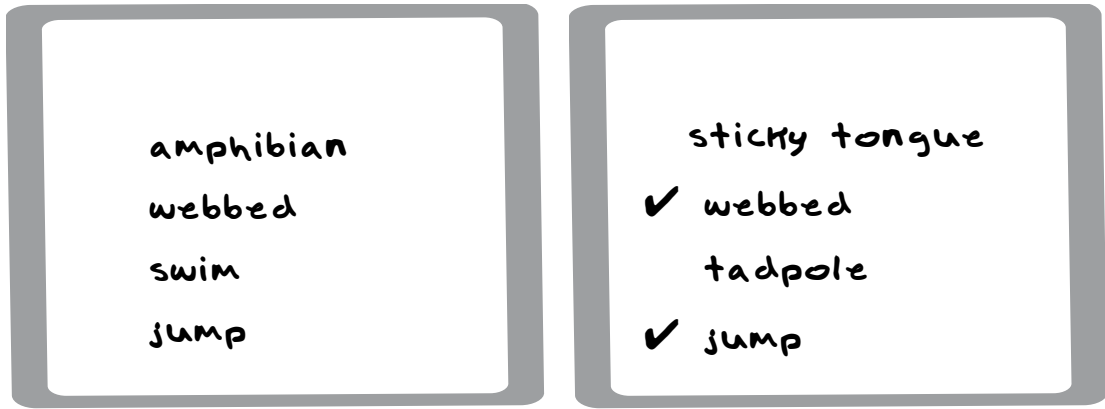


Grow Lists are part of vocabulary covered in the Common Core Standards under **Language: L4, 5, 6** and in **Writing W2 and 4**.

Grow Lists for a Unit of Study

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

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



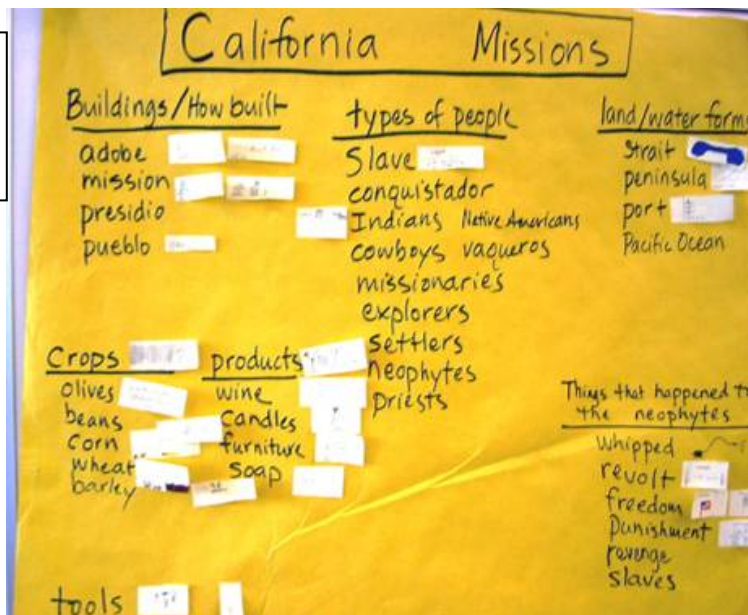
Step 3: Ask students to look over the big list and think of categories the words could be divided into, then re-build the list using those categories. Leave space so that this list can grow with student input throughout the unit of study.

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

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



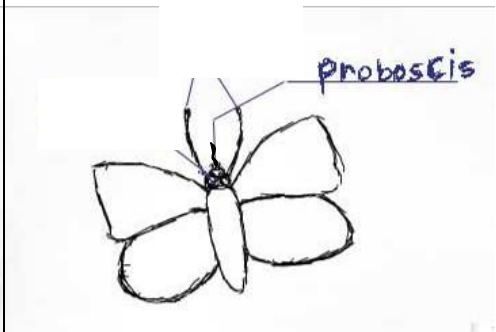
Word banks are covered in the Common Core Standards under “domain-specific” language in **Reading RI 4** and **Writing W2** and **Language L6**.



How to Write a Glossary

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

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

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

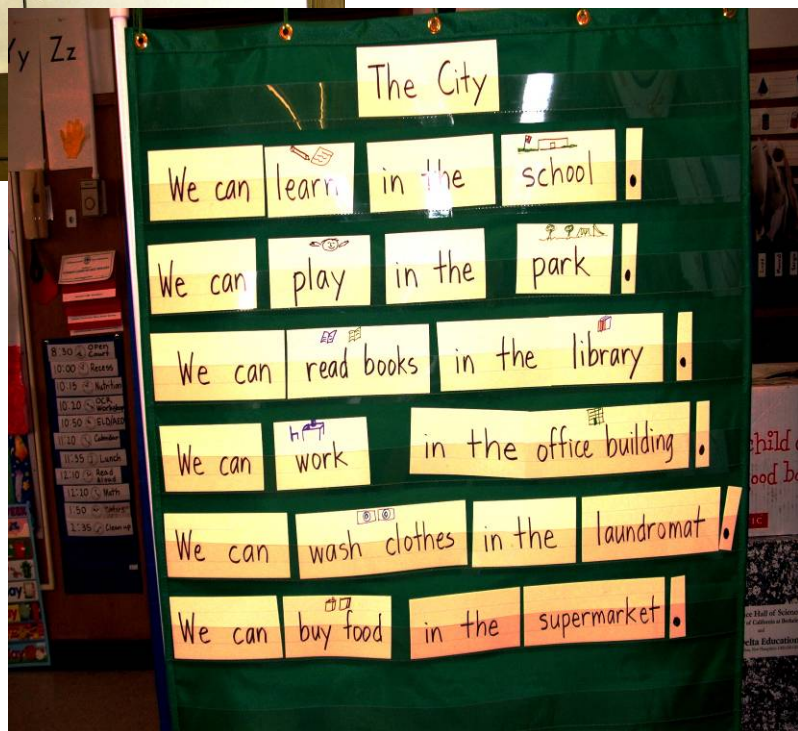


Informative/Explanatory Language Glossaries are covered in the Common Core Standards under “domain-specific” language in **Reading RI 4** and **Writing W2** and **Language L6**
 ©2014 Charlotte Knox, knoxeducation.com

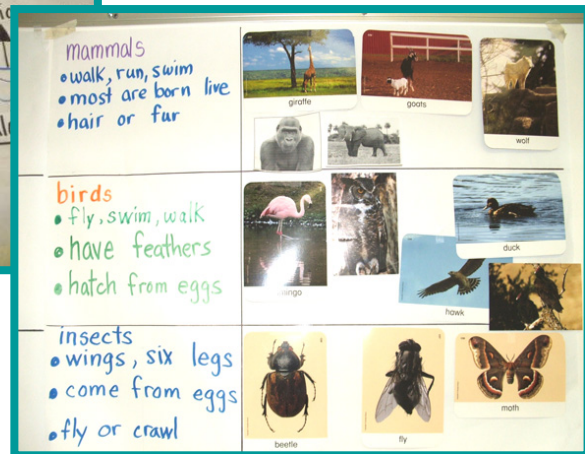
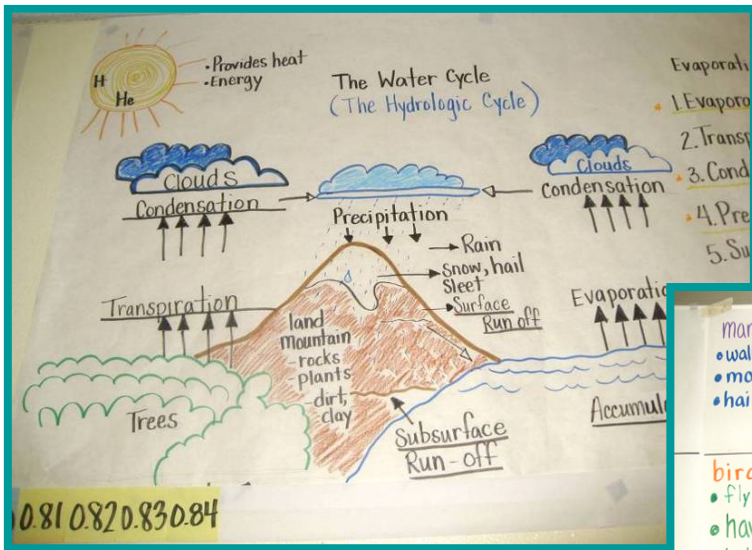
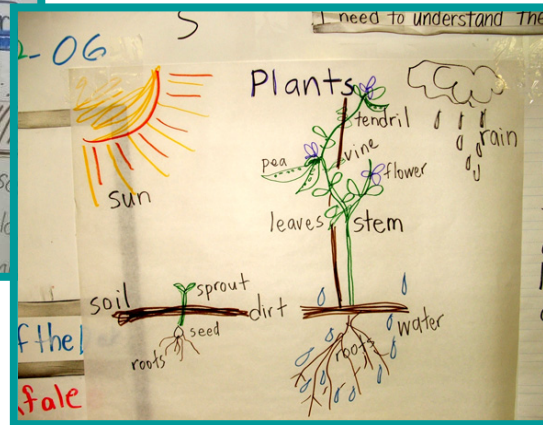
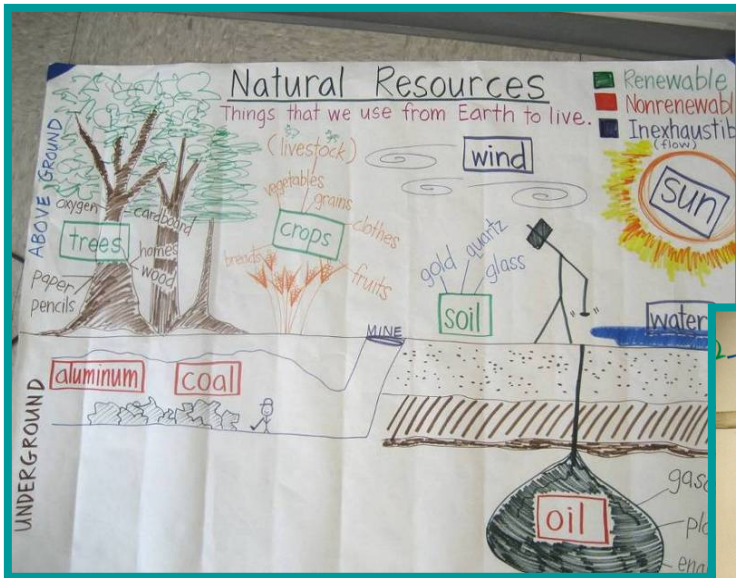
Pictorial Narrative Input

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

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



Pictorial Narrative Samples



Teaching Writing Using Informative/Explanatory Writing

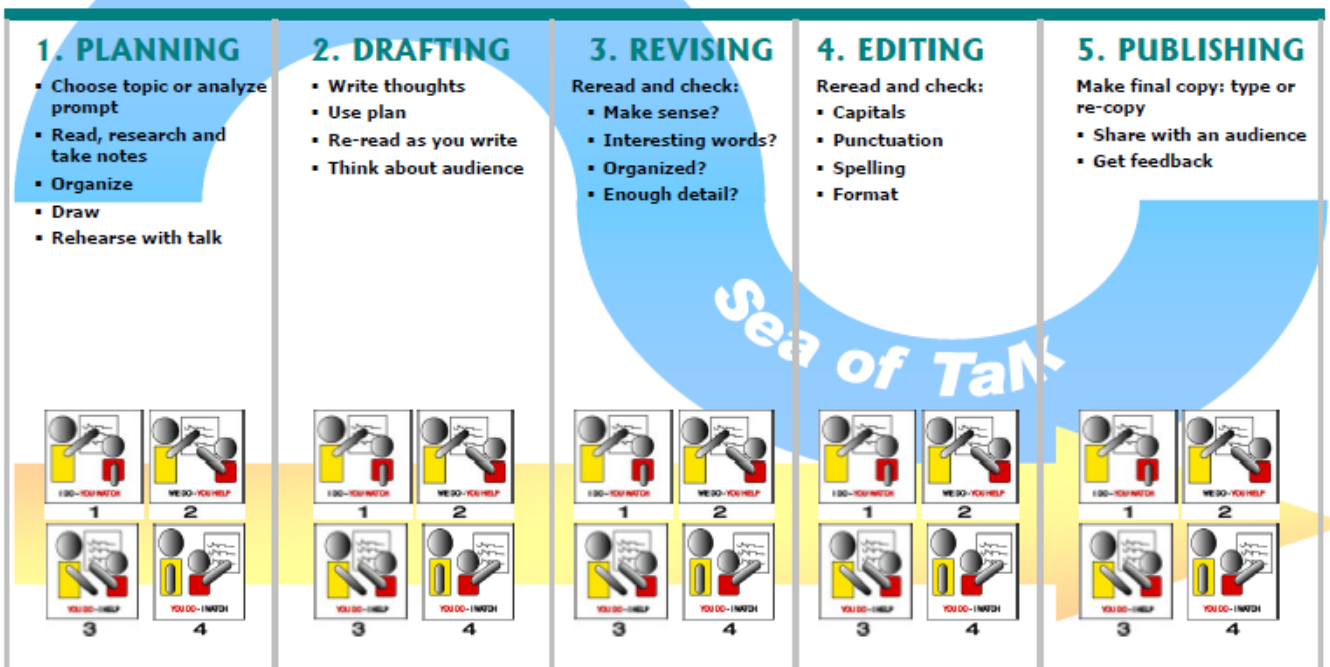
Common Core Standards



Sea of Talk

The Writing Process

Sea of Talk



Teaching Writing - Scaffolding

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Teaching Writing - Scaffolding

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

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



The Language Experience Approach

(Also Known as Shared Writing)



2

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

Van Allen & Allen, 1966

What is the Language Experience Approach?

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

Why use the Language Experience Approach?

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

The Language Experience Approach: How Do You Teach with It?

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

Examples:

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

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

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

Examples:

Beginning and Early Intermediate use:

- Realia
- Opportunities to label
- Patterned language

Intermediate and Early Advanced use:

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

Advanced use:

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

The Language Experience Approach:

Step 2 - Generate the Language Experience Chart

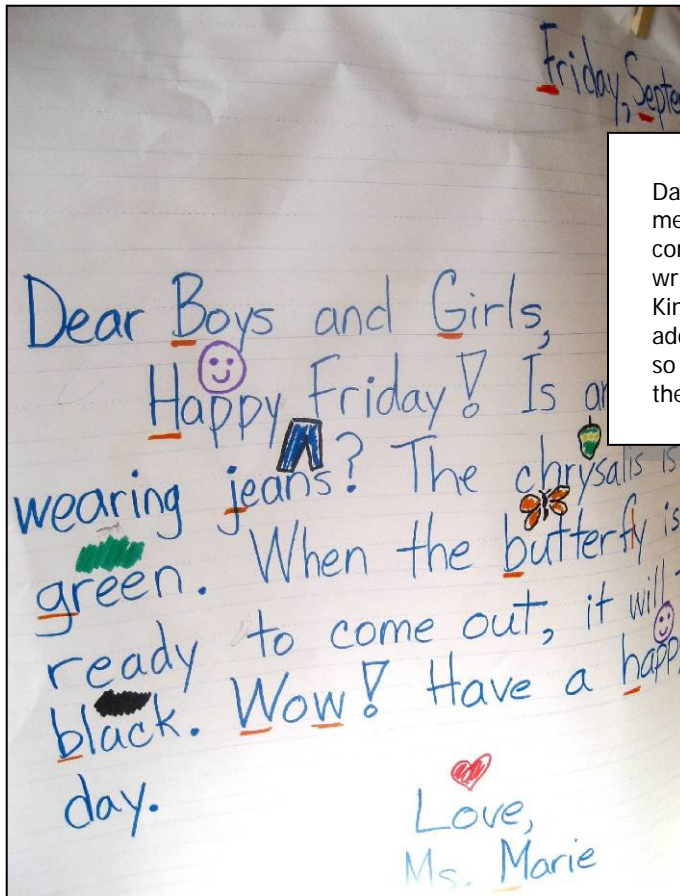
During these shared writing sessions the teacher and students compose writing collaboratively. They discuss the writing together to choose topics, select words, and create the meaning they want. The teacher acts as a guide, not a director of the material. While acting as a scribe for the class she enables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



2



3



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

The Language Experience Approach:

Step 3 - Work the Text

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

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

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

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

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

The Language Experience Approach

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

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

Using the LEA throughout the School Day

Summaries

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

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

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

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

For example:

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

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

Intermediate ELs or 1st-3rd grade students:

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

Advanced ELs or 3rd-8th grade students:

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

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



The Language Experience Approach: Using the LEA after a Fieldtrip

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

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



Using the Language Experience Approach with Essay Writing

Organizing Writing:

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

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

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

The LEA charts can be used directly to create a class book on a topic by cutting/pasting the sentences into an enlarged book and inviting students to illustrate each page. See the Matrix Charts (on page 54-61 of this document) for a way to organize animal reports in primary grades.

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

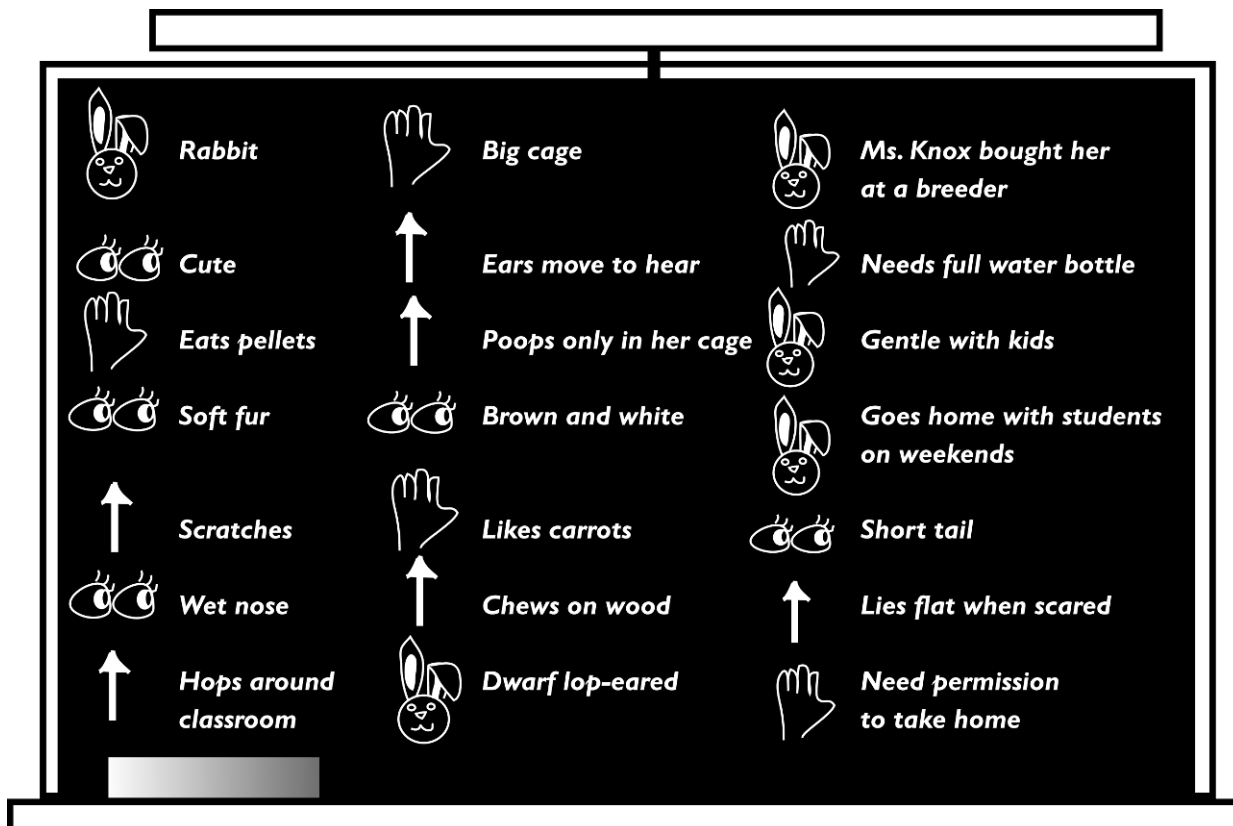
Adapted from *Information Please*, Allene Flanders ©Knox Education 2007

Essay Writing

Showing Students How to Organize Writing with the Language Experience Report

Step One: Brainstorm

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



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

Essay Writing

Showing Students How to Organize Writing with The Language Experience Report

Step Two: Get organized

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

I. Kind of rabbit

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

II. How she looks

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

III. How she behaves

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

IV. Taking care of Rosie

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



2

Chart It!

Essay Writing

Showing Students How to Organize Writing with The Language Experience Report

Step Three: Write the Essay Together

1. Use the outline, brainstorm chart (see page 92-93 this section) with color/symbol coding, and more chart paper to construct a class essay on the topic. Use the same basic procedures for Language Experience explained earlier in this section for the composing part of the lesson. Assure full participation of students regardless of English proficiency level by including cooperative talk strategies and interactive strategies for this phase. Have one student check things off the brainstorm chart as they are used for the class essay. Re-read sections as you write them together to check for flow and organization.
2. Once the essay is finished, you can use highlighters to identify the features of the essay. For example you may be working on:
 - Transition words
 - Topic sentences
 - Concluding sentences
 - Strong verbs
 - Theme
 - Supporting evidence
3. Highlight these features and create call-outs with all-large post-its to label the parts of the essay. Leave this essay up for students to refer to as they follow similar procedures for writing on their own independently or in collaborative groups.

All About Our Class Pet
By the Students in Room 6

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

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

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

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

Examples for Language Experience Approach: Essays/Summaries

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

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

He walked thousands of miles.

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

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

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

Writing Summaries

Martin Luther King, Jr.
 Word Bank

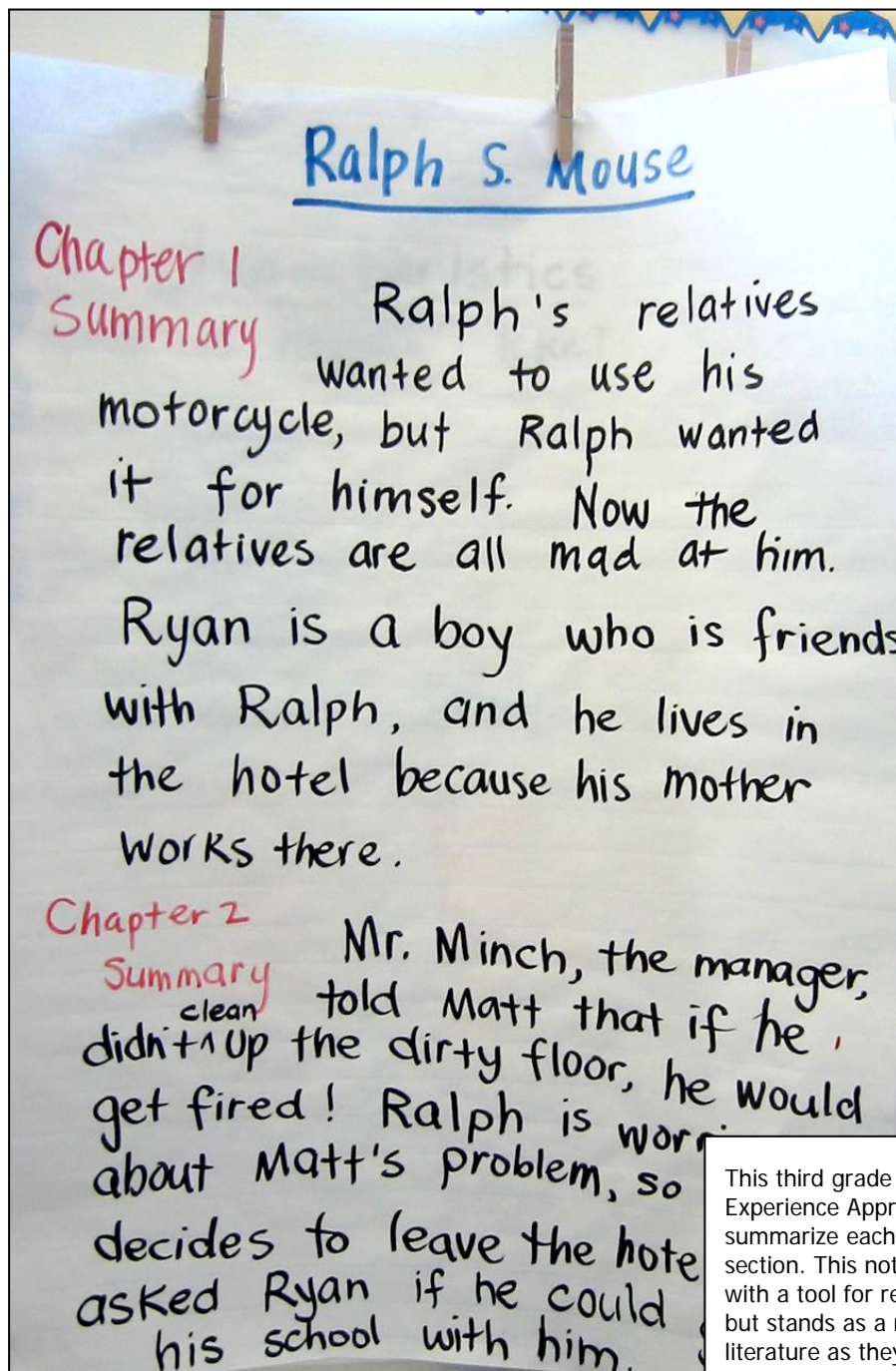
equal rights	freedom
minister	national holiday
civil rights	preach
believed	birthday 1/15/29
law	learning
bus	13-H.S.
1955	Atlanta, GA
jail	father
marches	decisions

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

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

Write that down main reading and to sign

Examples for Language Experience Approach: Summaries



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

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

The Language Experience Approach

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Current:

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Writing Topic Sentences

Step One: Pre-writing (Brainstorming)

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

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

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

Simple Main Idea Sentence:

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

Examples:

Recess is an enjoyable time of the school day.

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

Number Statements

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

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

Examples:

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

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

"and, but, or" Statements

Write compound sentences using a conjunction.

Examples:

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

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

Question and Statement Topic Sentences

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

Examples:

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

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

Occasion/Position Statements

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

Good starter words for occasion/position statements:

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

Examples:

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

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

Common Core Standards

Cues, Sequences, and Transition Words

Size Sequence: When details are larger/smaller than each other.

the smallest	larger than	the largest	the small-sized
the larger of	equal to	the smallest	the medium-sized
the largest	smaller than	the next smallest	the large-sized

Time Sequence: When some details occur before others in time.

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

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

behind	on the edge	beside	in front of	west of	highest
over	toward	around	in back of	east of	against
under	throughout	side by side	facing	north of	alongside
below	to the right of	close to	in the center	south of	ahead of
beneath	to the left of	next to	inside	at the	here
low down	on top of	near	outside	in the	there
above	away	far	across		



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

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Cues, Sequences, and Transition Words

Important Sequence: When some details are more important than others.

the best	the most important	the first interesting	the best
the next best	the next most important	more interesting	the next best
the least best	the least important	the most interesting	the worst

Chain-Link Sequence: When details are not uniquely related; they can be chained together any way that you want them to be.

one example of	in addition	on the one hand	also	is
another example	in the same way	on the other hand	so	because
a further example	in fact	again	since	still
furthermore	a similarity	besides	yet	although
the latest example	still another	nevertheless	as well	while
moreover	in spite of	consequently	except	conversely

Transitional Sequence: When ideas/details are being integrated; they can be linked using transitional words.

and	also	in addition	furthermore
plus	besides	otherwise	moreover
too	after	after that	not only
likewise	another	similarly	at the same time
another	however	for example	for instance
instead	therefore	thus	when

Final Sequence: When ideas are being concluded.

finally	therefore	consequently	in conclusion
then	by now	for this reason	

Contrast Cues: When words are needed to indicate relations of degree.

only	many	most	more	least
little	some	worst	all	fewer
fewest	almost	best		

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

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



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

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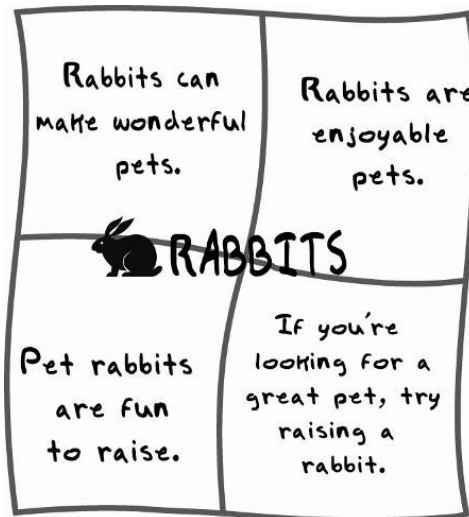
Crafting Conclusions in Informative/Explanatory Writing

Some possibilities:

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

Trick:

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



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

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

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

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

Ask a question and answer it:

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

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

Informative/Explanatory



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

Revision and Editing

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

CCSS Editing is Fun Poster for Students

Editing is Fun!
Red Light
Green Light

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

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

Common Core Standards W.5
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CCSS Round Robin Revision for Students

Common Core Standards W.5
 Round Robin Revision
 (My Name) _____ Writing _____
 Reader _____

Common Core Standards W.5
 Round Robin Revision
 (My Name) _____ Writing _____
 Reader _____

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

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

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

The Fun Day

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

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

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

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

fire trucks	firemen	uniforms	siren	hoses
gleaming red shiny huge covered with important equipment	enthusiastic friendly tall striding the truck	heavy lots of buckles big pockets	blast loud fete the roar in our stomachs	long heavy snaked

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CCSS The Editing Machine for Teachers

The "Editing Machine"

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

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

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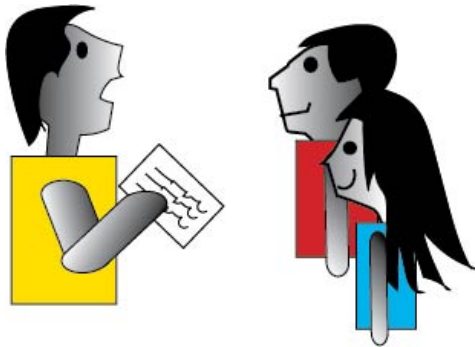


Elevator Talk

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

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

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



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

Using the Speaking Score Checklist:

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

SPEAKING RUBRIC		SPEAKING SCORE CHECKLIST	
4:	Exemplary	Name: _____ # _____	Date: _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Expressive, fluent <input type="checkbox"/> Loud, clear voice <input type="checkbox"/> Eye contact with audience <input type="checkbox"/> Good body posture <input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent content/ beyond expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Visuals used very effectively	Title: _____	Your Rubric Score: _____
3:	Competent	_____ Expressiveness, fluency:	_____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Some expressiveness and fluency <input type="checkbox"/> Voice could be louder <input type="checkbox"/> Some eye contact with audience <input type="checkbox"/> Good body posture <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat confident <input type="checkbox"/> Quality content/ meets expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Visuals used	_____ Voice	_____ Eye contact with audience
2:	Developing	_____ Body posture:	_____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor expressiveness and fluency <input type="checkbox"/> Soft voice, hurried/unclear speech <input type="checkbox"/> No eye contact with audience <input type="checkbox"/> Fair body posture <input type="checkbox"/> Appeared nervous <input type="checkbox"/> Poor content/ below expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Visuals absent or ineffectively used	_____ Confidence	_____ Content
1:	Beginning	_____ Visuals:	_____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Lacks expressiveness and fluency <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to hear or understand <input type="checkbox"/> No eye contact <input type="checkbox"/> Poor body posture <input type="checkbox"/> Appeared nervous, unprepared <input type="checkbox"/> Little content/ does not meet expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Visuals absent	_____ Other:	_____
Speaking & Listening Speaking and Listening Standards in the Common Core Standards SL2 (follow directions/establish main idea) SL4 (use description) SL6 (presentation) SL3 (ask/answer questions) SL5 (use-visuals)		©concept originally from Karen K. Garcia, M.A., kkgarcia@knex.edu , for Knox Education Writing Handbook	

Common Core Standards that apply to this lesson:

Speaking & Listening



SPEAKING & LISTENING Standards:

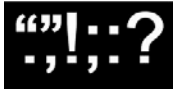
Comprehension and Collaboration

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

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

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

Language



LANGUAGE Standards:

Conventions of Standard English

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

Knowledge of Language

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

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

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

SPEAKING RUBRIC

4: Exemplary

- Expressive, fluent
- Loud, clear voice
- Eye contact with audience
- Good body posture
- Confident
- Excellent content/ beyond expectations
- Visuals used very effectively

3: Competent

- Some expressiveness and fluency
- Voice could be louder
- Some eye contact with audience
- Good body posture
- Somewhat confident
- Quality content/ meets expectations
- Visuals used

2: Developing

- Poor expressiveness and fluency
- Soft voice, hurried/unclear speech
- No eye contact with audience
- Fair body posture
- Appeared nervous
- Poor content/ below expectations
- Visuals absent or ineffectively used

1: Beginning

- Lacks expressiveness and fluency
- Unable to hear or understand
- No eye contact
- Poor body posture
- Appeared nervous, unprepared
- Little content/ does not meet expectations
- Visuals absent

SPEAKING SCORE CHECKLIST

Name: _____ # _____

Date: _____

Title: _____

Your Rubric Score: _____

_____ Expressiveness, fluency:

_____ Voice

_____ Eye contact with audience


_____ Body posture:

_____ Confidence

_____ Content

_____ Visuals:

_____ Other:







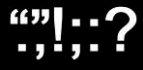
	Speaking & Listening Speaking and Listening Standards in the Common Core Standards		
	SL2 (follow directions/establish main idea)	SL 4 (use description)	SL 6 (presentation)
	SL3 (ask/answer questions)	SL 5 (use visuals)	
Concept originally from Karen K. Garcia, M.A., karenkg@napanet.net , for Knox Education Writing Handbook			



Managing and Evaluating the Process

Grade	Project	Due Date
Name		
Writing Team or Partner		

Building a Student Checklist for a CCSS Unit Project

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

Informative/Explanatory Writing Assignment Sheet and Checklist

Completed			Tasks to Complete
You	Partner		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1.	Complete a Matrix of information: What do we want to learn about _____ ?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.	Create a question to focus your writing.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3.	Complete an outline to organize your writing
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4.	Read and research from at least 3 sources to answer your question. Some helpful websites: www.proquestk12.com www.erslibrary.org
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5.	Keep notes as you read. Remember “key words”. Include the source with your notes.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6.	Write a rough draft for your project
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7.	Create text features as needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title page and Table of Contents ▪ Diagrams, timelines, graphics, graphs ▪ Page numbers, Headings and sub headings ▪ Glossary and/or index
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8.	Write your bibliography with this format: A list in alphabetical order of your references If it is a book: author (last name, first name), (year published), <u>Title</u> (underlined), Publisher. EXAMPLE: Jones, Henry, 2004, <u>The History of George Washington</u> . Random House. If it is a website: copy down URL and the date you accessed the web. EXAMPLE: www.history.com/george_washington/gw.pdf , accessed January 11, 2011.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	9.	Revise your project: read it out loud to your writing partner. Add details as needed. Select better words using a thesaurus to help you. Make sure you've used different kinds of sentences. Use transition words as needed to make the writing flow.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	10.	Edit your project. Check your spelling and punctuation, including quotation marks. Have your writing partner check it too.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	11.	Publish your project —type or recopy in pen with your best handwriting.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	12.	Illustrate your project: draw pictures, download photos, make a cover.

THIS PROJECT IS DUE ON _____

MY NAME _____

MY WRITING PARTNER'S NAME _____



INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING RUBRIC

California Common Core Standards Based – **GRADE 4**

Level	WRITING	ORGANIZATION and FOCUS	LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS	WITH GUIDANCE and SUPPORT FROM ADULTS
4 Exceeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Contains illustrations and multimedia to aid comprehension <input type="checkbox"/> Uses vivid and descriptive language that supports genre <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a list of sources (8)* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Paper is well-developed with smooth transitions and indentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Combines, short related sentences with appositives, participial phrases, adjectives, adverbs, or preposition phrases <input type="checkbox"/> Uses verbs that are often misused <input type="checkbox"/> (lie/lay, sit/set, rise/raise) correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Uses a colon to introduce a list, when applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Uses quotations marks around titles of poems, songs, and short stories <input type="checkbox"/> Correctly uses frequently confused words (e.g., to, too, two; there, their) (L 1h)* 	<p>Level of guidance and support from adults before writing:</p> <p>Check off what was done before the student wrote the piece being scored.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Read aloud or shared reading <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary word bank <input type="checkbox"/> Shared or interactive writing <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic organizer <input type="checkbox"/> Language frames
3 Meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Paper introduces a topic clearly, and groups related information in paragraphs and sections, including headings (2a)* <input type="checkbox"/> May contain illustrations, and multimedia, when useful to aiding comprehension (2a)* <input type="checkbox"/> Develops the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information related to the topic (2b)* <input type="checkbox"/> Links ideas within categories of information using words and phrases such as, <i>another, for example, also, and because, etc.</i> (2c) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform or explain the topic (2d)* <input type="checkbox"/> Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented (2e)* <input type="checkbox"/> Uses multiple sources to gather information about the topic (internet, media, speakers, books, newspapers, and magazines) (9)* <input type="checkbox"/> Notes are organized, used, and information is shared in own words (8)* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Includes well-developed supporting facts and details <input type="checkbox"/> Uses transition words to move the reader from one detail to the next with indentation <input type="checkbox"/> Clearly planned writing with graphic organizer, rough draft or notes <input type="checkbox"/> Document is neat and legible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Uses a variation of simple, compound, and complex sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Produces complete sentences, recognizing and correcting fragments and run-ons (L 1g)* <input type="checkbox"/> Uses regular and irregular verbs, adverbs, prepositions or coordinating conjunctions correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Uses a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence (L2c)* <input type="checkbox"/> Uses quotation marks correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Uses commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text (L 2b)* <input type="checkbox"/> Uses correct capitalization (titles of literary works, holidays, product names, geographic names, dates, names and titles of people, and the first word in quotations) (L 2a)* <input type="checkbox"/> Spells grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed (L 2d)* 	
2 Almost Meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Describes some aspects of topic, but lacks topic sentence <input type="checkbox"/> Includes few facts & details for focus <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting sentences are weak and/or unclear <input type="checkbox"/> Draws information from one source <input type="checkbox"/> Notes are not organized or not used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Includes simple supporting details that follow a logical order <input type="checkbox"/> Rough draft, graphic organizer or notes are incomplete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Uses mostly simple sentences or run-on sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Some errors in verb tense <input type="checkbox"/> Missing commas before coordinating conjunction a compound sentence <input type="checkbox"/> Quotation missing a comma or quotation marks <input type="checkbox"/> Some capitalization errors <input type="checkbox"/> First word of quotation not capitalized <input type="checkbox"/> Some spelling errors in one-syllable words with blends, contractions, compounds, doubling consonants, change <i>y</i> to <i>ies</i>, and common homophones 	
1 Does Not Meet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Limited information on topic <input type="checkbox"/> Includes little to no facts for focus <input type="checkbox"/> No outside sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Disjointed ideas <input type="checkbox"/> No evidence of rough draft, graphic organizer or notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly run-on sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Word order in sentences are incorrect <input type="checkbox"/> No capitalization or punctuation <input type="checkbox"/> Many misspelled words 	

*The California Common Core Standards for Writing are available on our website, knoxeducation.com under the section on Common Core. This rubric was adapted from rubrics at sbused.org.



INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING RUBRIC

California Common Core Standards Based – GRADE 5

Level	WRITING	ORGANIZATION and FOCUS	LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS	WITH GUIDANCE and SUPPORT FROM ADULTS
4 Exceeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates a clear understanding of topic <input type="checkbox"/> Contains graphics (tables, chart, graphs) and multimedia to aid comprehension <input type="checkbox"/> Uses vivid and descriptive language that support genre <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a list of sources (8)* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Paper is well-developed with smooth transitions and indentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Uses compound-complex sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Uses colons after the salutation in business letters, or to introduce a list, if applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Uses semicolon to connect independent clauses 	<p>Level of guidance and support from adults before writing:</p> <p>Check off what was done before the student wrote the piece being scored.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Read aloud or shared reading <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary word bank <input type="checkbox"/> Shared or interactive writing <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic organizer <input type="checkbox"/> Language frames
3 Meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Paper introduces a topic clearly, and provides a general observation and focus (2a)* <input type="checkbox"/> Logically groups related information in paragraphs and sections, including headings (CCSS 2a)* <input type="checkbox"/> Contains illustrations, and/or multimedia, when useful to aiding comprehension (2a)* <input type="checkbox"/> Develops the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic (2b)* <input type="checkbox"/> Links ideas within categories of information using words, phrases, and clauses such as, <i>in contrast, also, in addition, etc.</i> (2c)* <input type="checkbox"/> Uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform or explain the topic (2d)* <input type="checkbox"/> Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented (CCSS 2d)* <input type="checkbox"/> Uses various sources to gather information about the topic (internet, media, speakers, books, newspapers, and magazines) (9)* <input type="checkbox"/> Notes are organized, used, and information is shared in own words (8)* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Includes well-developed supporting facts and details <input type="checkbox"/> Uses transition words to move the reader from one detail to the next <input type="checkbox"/> Clearly planned writing with graphic organizer, rough draft or notes <input type="checkbox"/> Document is neat and legible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Uses a variation of simple, compound, and complex sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Uses propositional phrases, appositives, dependent and independent clauses, and conjunctions to connect ideas correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Uses verbs that are often misused (lie/lay, sit/set, rise/raise) correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Uses verb tense to convey various times, sequences, states, and conditions (L 1c)* <input type="checkbox"/> Corrects inappropriate shifts in verb tense (L 1d)* <input type="checkbox"/> Use correlative conjunctions (e.g., either/or, neither/nor) (L 1e)* <input type="checkbox"/> Uses a comma to set off the words <i>yes, no</i> and <i>thank you</i> and to set off a tag question from the rest of the sentence (e.g., It's true, isn't it?) and to indicate direct address (e.g., Is that you, Steve?). (L 2c)* <input type="checkbox"/> Uses commas in compound and complex sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Uses commas for quotations, to separate an introductory element from the rest of the sentence (L 2b) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses underlining, quotation marks, or italics to indicate titles of works when applicable (L 2d) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses quotations marks around the exact words of a speaker and for quotations in a text <input type="checkbox"/> Uses correct capitalization ((titles of literary works, holidays, product names, geographic names, dates, names of people, and the first word in quotations) when appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Spells grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed (L 2e) 	
2 Almost Meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Describes some aspects of topic, but lacks topic sentence <input type="checkbox"/> Includes few facts & details for focus <input type="checkbox"/> Draws information from one source <input type="checkbox"/> Notes are not organized or not used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Includes simple supporting details that follow a logical order <input type="checkbox"/> Rough draft, graphic organizer or notes are incomplete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Use mostly simple or run-on sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Verbs are misused or inappropriate verb tense <input type="checkbox"/> Subject/verb agreement errors <input type="checkbox"/> Commas are missing from compound sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Quotations are inappropriately punctuated <input type="checkbox"/> Incorrect capitalization <input type="checkbox"/> Many misspelled words 	
1 Does Not Meet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Limited information on topic <input type="checkbox"/> Includes little to no facts for focus <input type="checkbox"/> No outside sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Disjointed ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Organization not well planned <input type="checkbox"/> No evidence of rough draft, graphic organizer or notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly incomplete sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Punctuation missing <input type="checkbox"/> Capitalization missing <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly misspelled words 	

*The California Common Core Standards for Writing are available on our website, knoeducation.com under the section on Common Core. This rubric was adapted from rubrics at sbusd.org.



INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING RUBRIC

California Common Core Standards Based – GRADE 6

Level	WRITING	ORGANIZATION and FOCUS	LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS	WITH GUIDANCE and SUPPORT FROM ADULTS
4 Exceeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Introduces a topic clearly, and previews what is to follow <input type="checkbox"/> Establishes and maintains a formal style <input type="checkbox"/> Uses vivid and descriptive language that support genre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Paper is well-developed with smooth transitions and indentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Uses colons after the salutation in business letters, and lists when applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Uses semicolon to connect independent clauses, and commas when linking two clauses with a conjunction in compound sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Uses correct punctuation (parentheses, dashes, hyphens or brackets) (L2a)* <input type="checkbox"/> Spells correctly (CCSS L 2b) 	<p>Level of guidance and support from adults before writing:</p> <p>Check off what was done before the student wrote the piece being scored.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Read aloud or shared reading <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary word bank <input type="checkbox"/> Shared or interactive writing <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic organizer <input type="checkbox"/> Language frames
3 Meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a thesis statement <input type="checkbox"/> Paper examines a topic and conveys ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organizations and analysis of relevant content (2)* <input type="checkbox"/> Introduces a topic clearly, organizes ideas, concepts and information using definitions, classifications, comparison/contrast, cause and effect (2a)* <input type="checkbox"/> Includes headings, graphics (tables, charts, graphs), and/or multimedia, when useful to aiding comprehension (2a)* <input type="checkbox"/> Develops the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples (2b)* <input type="checkbox"/> Uses appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts (2c)* <input type="checkbox"/> Uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic (2d)* <input type="checkbox"/> Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented (2e)* <input type="checkbox"/> Uses various sources to gather information about the topic (internet, media, speakers, books, newspapers, and magazines) <input type="checkbox"/> Notes are organized, used, and information is shared in own words <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a list of sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Includes well-developed supporting facts and details <input type="checkbox"/> Uses transition words to move the reader from one detail to the next <input type="checkbox"/> Clearly planned writing with graphic organizer, rough draft or notes <input type="checkbox"/> Document is neat and legible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Uses a variation of simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences for meaning and interest (L 3a)* <input type="checkbox"/> Ensures that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, or possessive). (1a)* <input type="checkbox"/> Uses all pronouns, including intensive pronouns correctly (L 1b)* <input type="checkbox"/> Recognizes and corrects vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents (L 1d)* <input type="checkbox"/> Use effective coordination and subordination of ideas to express complete thoughts <input type="checkbox"/> Uses indefinite pronouns and present perfect, past perfect, and future perfect verb tenses <input type="checkbox"/> Ensures that verbs agree with compound subjects <input type="checkbox"/> Uses correct capitalization <input type="checkbox"/> Spells frequently misspelled words correctly (their, there, they're, by, buy, bye) 	
2 Almost Meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Describes some aspects of topic, but lacks topic sentence <input type="checkbox"/> Includes few facts & details for focus <input type="checkbox"/> Draws information from one source <input type="checkbox"/> Notes are not organized or not used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Includes simple supporting details that follow a logical order <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic organizer, rough draft or notes are complete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Contains some run-on sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Uses some simple or compound sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Uses propositional phrases, appositives, dependent and independent clauses, transitions or conjunctions incorrectly <input type="checkbox"/> Uses verbs that are often misused (lie/lay, sit/set, rise/raise) incorrectly <input type="checkbox"/> Uses a colon to introduce a list, when applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Contains some punctuation errors <input type="checkbox"/> Contains some capitalization errors <input type="checkbox"/> Contains some spelling errors 	
1 Does Not Meet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Limited information on topic <input type="checkbox"/> Includes little to no facts for focus <input type="checkbox"/> No outside sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Disjointed ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Organization not well planned <input type="checkbox"/> No evidence of graphic organizer, rough draft or notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Contains run-on sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Contains many punctuation errors <input type="checkbox"/> Contains many capitalization errors <input type="checkbox"/> Contains many spelling errors 	

*The California Common Core Standards for Writing are available on our website, knoxeducation.com under the section on Common Core. This rubric was adapted from rubrics at sbused.org.

INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING RUBRIC

California Common Core Standards Based – GRADE 7-8

Level	WRITING	ORGANIZATION and FOCUS	LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS	WITH GUIDANCE and SUPPORT FROM ADULTS
4 Exceeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Shows insightful understanding of subject or text <input type="checkbox"/> Clear introduction of a topic or sophisticated thesis statement and previews what is to follow <input type="checkbox"/> Skillfully organizes ideas, concepts, and information <input type="checkbox"/> Establishes and maintains a formal style <input type="checkbox"/> Effectively integrates and cites credible sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Insightfully addresses all aspects of the prompt <input type="checkbox"/> Paper is well-developed with smooth transitions and indentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Uses all pronouns, including intensive pronouns correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Uses correct punctuation (parentheses, dashes, hyphens or brackets) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses colons and semicolons correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Spells correctly 	<p>Level of guidance and support from adults before writing:</p> <p>Check off what was done before the student wrote the piece being scored.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Read aloud or shared reading <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary word bank <input type="checkbox"/> Shared or interactive writing <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic organizer <input type="checkbox"/> Language frames <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluating resources
3 Meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Shows competent understanding of subject or text <input type="checkbox"/> Paper effectively examines a topic/thesis statement and organizes ideas, concepts, and information to support the topic. <input type="checkbox"/> Introduces topic clearly, and develops with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other pertinent information and examples using relevant body paragraphs <input type="checkbox"/> Includes headings, graphics (tables, charts, graphs), and/or multimedia, when useful to aiding comprehension <input type="checkbox"/> Creates cohesion by using appropriate transitions (words/phrases/clauses) to and clarify the relationships among paragraphs, ideas and concepts <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a meaningful or reflective concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented <input type="checkbox"/> Adequately uses and integrates various sources to gather information about the topic (internet, media, speakers, books, newspapers, and magazines) <input type="checkbox"/> Notes are organized, used, and information is shared in own words <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a list of sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Competently addresses all aspects of the prompt <input type="checkbox"/> Includes well-developed supporting facts and details <input type="checkbox"/> Uses transition words to move the reader from one detail to the next <input type="checkbox"/> Clearly planned writing with graphic organizer, rough draft or notes <input type="checkbox"/> Document is neat and legible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Uses purposeful variation of simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences for meaning and interest. <input type="checkbox"/> Use effective coordination and subordination of ideas to express complete thoughts <input type="checkbox"/> Uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose to inform about or explain the topic <input type="checkbox"/> Uses indefinite pronouns and present perfect, past perfect, and future perfect verb tenses <input type="checkbox"/> Ensures that verbs agree with compound subjects <input type="checkbox"/> Uses correct capitalization <input type="checkbox"/> Spells frequently misspelled words correctly 	
2 Almost Meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Describes some aspects of topic, but lacks topic sentence or well developed body paragraphs <input type="checkbox"/> Shows adequate understanding of subject or text <input type="checkbox"/> Creates some cohesion using transition words/phrases but are limited or not all are clear <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a conclusion that at least partially follows from and supports information presented <input type="checkbox"/> Includes no headings or graphics, or few facts and details for focus <input type="checkbox"/> Draws information from one source or ineffectively integrates or sites credible sources <input type="checkbox"/> Notes are not organized or not used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Partially addresses all aspects of the prompt <input type="checkbox"/> Includes simple supporting details that follow a logical order <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic organizer, rough draft or notes are complete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Contains some run-on sentences or fragments <input type="checkbox"/> Uses some simple or compound sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Uses some domain-specific vocabulary but may not be specific to audience or purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Uses propositional phrases, appositives, dependent and independent clauses, transitions or conjunctions incorrectly <input type="checkbox"/> Uses some verbs that are often misused incorrectly <input type="checkbox"/> Contains some errors in conventions which may cause confusion <input type="checkbox"/> Contains some punctuation, capitalization, or spelling errors 	
1 Does Not Meet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Limited information on topic or shows no understanding of it <input type="checkbox"/> Topic not developed with body paragraphs <input type="checkbox"/> Includes little to no facts for focus <input type="checkbox"/> No or incorrect transition words/phrases/paragraphs are used or cohesion is lacking <input type="checkbox"/> No outside sources or does not cite them <input type="checkbox"/> Provides no conclusion or insufficiently developed or supported conclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Minimally addresses all aspects of the prompt <input type="checkbox"/> Disjointed ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Organization not well planned <input type="checkbox"/> No evidence of graphic organizer, rough draft or notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Contains many fragments or run-on sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Uses no domain-specific vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> Contains many or serious errors in conventions which cause confusion <input type="checkbox"/> Contains many punctuation, capitalization and spelling errors 	

Resources for Teaching Informative/Explanatory Writing

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

Where to Find more on the Web:

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



Informative/Explanatory



Differentiation Techniques

Informative Writing



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

Week 1

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

Read Alouds and Research

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

Animal	Looks like	Lives	Eats	Fun facts

Here are some resources for finding very simple texts about animals

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

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

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

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

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

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

Lions can roar.

Lions can chase their prey.

Lions can sleep a lot.

Modeled Writing:

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

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

Week 2-3: Shared Reading and Writing

Shared Reading

Continue reading texts with a narrow topic focus. Add to the matrix chart as you read about each animal or topic within the unit. Have students take turns tracking the text with a pointer on the screen, chart, or big book. Students may also have individual copies and highlight key words, or fun facts they want to remember. Use the cloze strategy with post-it notes described on page 47-53 to encourage strategy use when students come to a word they don't know.

Shared Writing

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

Where animals live
Jungle
Pond
Forest
Cave
Desert
Marsh
grass

What they look like
Fur
Wings
Tail
Beak
Feathers
Scales
wings

Eating
Hunt
Chase
Prey
Camouflage
Web
graze

Shared Writing or Language Experience

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

Week 4-6:

Shared Writing - Highly Guided Practice

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

_____ are _____ animals.
They live in _____. It is very _____ there.
They like to eat _____. They _____ at day/night to find their food.
Their body is covered with _____ and they have _____.
One interesting thing I know about _____ is that they can _____.

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

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

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





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

Week 1: Modeling

Read Alouds and Shared Reading

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

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

Modeled Writing: Teacher's Text

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

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

Week 2

Shared or Interactive Writing

Take a week or so to create informational texts together using shared or interactive writing. Follow the procedures on pages 85-91 in the K-3 handbook. Make sure the students have access to the vocabulary charts or matrices as they are thinking of ideas for each sentence to contribute. You can warm up the shared writing lesson for English learners by having them "chant the charts", or simply read out loud chorally all the words or notes you have listed so far in your research. If you have created a pictorial narrative input chart, reference that as you decide what to say for each sentence of the shared writing.

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

Weeks 3-5

Guided Practice

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

Intermediate EL’s may write a lot of information, but do so in very simple choppy sentences. Explicit lessons in sentence combining may help them a lot. Meeting in small groups and using white boards to write new, more complex sentences about the same information will help. You can use your daily ELD time to provide the specific scaffolding the students need with the English aspect of this unit if you’re able to coordinate ELD lessons with your grade level team. See Back to School Writing Basics on our website: http://www.knoxeducation.com/sites/main/files/file-attachments/ccss_back_to_school_writing_basics_-_for_teachers_2013.pdf

Week 6

Publishing

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

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

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



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

Week 1

Read Alouds

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

Modeled Writing:

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

Week 2

Read Alouds

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

Shared Writing:

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

Quick tries:

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

Weeks 3-5

Guided Practice

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

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



Jumpstart students are those who are slow to get started with writing for a variety of reasons. They may simply lack confidence, have trouble following and remembering multi-step processes in writing, or need more think time to gather their ideas. It is very helpful to establish a procedure in your classroom for meeting with them first just after any whole group mini-lessons at the beginning of a writing period.

Have those students meet you at a small table or on the carpet to receive a “jumpstart” for the writing task of the day. If possible, arrange this small group area within view of any teaching charts you may be using for this writing unit so that the students can easily reference them from where they are working. Remind the students to bring their writing folders, a pencil and any other tools for writing you expect them to use. Make sure they have a copy of the rubric or checklist for the task, and the “how to” chart of the type of writing you are working on. Start by reviewing the task for the day and how to do it.

For example, you might say, “Remember, today we are working on describing the setting for your stories, let’s have each person tell us what their setting is and how you would describe it.” Then go around the group and have each person describe their setting out loud. If they have drawn pictures as a pre-writing activity, ask your **Jumpstart** group to label their pictures with describing words.

Next you could get the group started with the writing by reminding them where they could access vocabulary or even language frames to get going. Once everyone has started writing, leave your **Jumpstart** group and circulate to the other students in class. After several minutes, swing back by the jumpstart group to remind them of the next step in the process. Remember to praise with specific feedback for this group. They are typically reluctant and lacking in confidence—your positive feedback will begin to erode that negativity and help them begin to see themselves as writers. When it’s time to share at the end of the writing period, let this group share their work first so that they can shine before others share.