

The Writing-Reading Connection

Writing Instruction Strategies that Enhance Reading Comprehension Facilitator Guide

Purpose: To introduce a resource for teaching writing strategies for students in K-12.

Goals: Participants will

- Use the Simple View of Writing as an organizing framework for writing instruction
- Discover *The Writing Revolution* (TWR) resource for teaching writing
- Watch a TWR video explaining *because, but, so* sentence expansion as one example out of many presented in TWR.
- Practice *because, but, so* sentence expansion.
- Develop an understanding of why explicit instruction in sentence structure is an important part of developing literacy skills

Time: Approximately 75 minutes

Format: In-person, (or adapted for synchronous online)

Structure: PowerPoint presentation and activities

Slides 1 and 2: Introduction (3 minutes) whole group

- Introduce topic, purpose, and goals

Slide 3: Facilitator asks participants to write down the top 2-3 challenges with teaching students to write. Presenter can use sharing protocol (Think-Pair-Share, or Whip Around) or participants can share in chat- feature. (3 minutes)

(Slides 4-14 should take approximately 15 minutes)

Slide 4: What do we mean by Written Expression? Link to next slide. (1 min)

Slide 5: Facilitator reads slide 5 and asks participants to discuss The Simple View of Writing infographic. What are some take-away ideas? How can this infographic help organize our instruction? Some points to discuss may be: There are sub-skills to writing that need to be explicitly taught, and scaffolds, graphic organizers, and checklists may help support these executive functions and working memory when developing the skill of writing. Writing is not a natural process, but one that takes careful planning and decision making that must be modeled and reinforced. Some students' working memory may be taxed if they are asked to write without systematic instructions. (3 min)



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Slide 6: Facilitator asks volunteer to read slide 5 aloud. Ask for participants to turn and talk (or type into the chat if virtual) to discuss.

- Effective, evidence-based writing instruction shows positive outcomes for improved reading comprehension. (2 min)

Slide 7: Facilitator reads Slide 7 or asks a volunteer to read aloud. (2 min)

- High-quality resources are available to teachers that include strategies for developing academic language, improving syntax and reading comprehension.
- The benefits of TWR strategies is that teachers can easily tailor to their instruction no matter what age group or content area they teach, and it fits in along with any curriculum.
- Teachers can start implementing these strategies right away!

Slide 8: Facilitator asks a volunteer to read aloud slide 7.

- These 6 principles are the framework for TWR strategies. (1 min)

Slide 9: Facilitator reads slide 9 and asks participants to make connections between the SVW and TWR principles.

- Many young students receive little, if any, explicit instruction in writing. Often, teachers assume that good readers will naturally become good writers.
- Or, they assume that students who speak well will know how to write well. Many students today speak in fragments, which is reflected in their writing. It is important to teach students the elements that make up good writing from the sentence level up so they understand the difference between spoken communication and written communication. This leads us to the next slide. (2 min)

Slide 10: Facilitator reads slide 10 and discusses briefly.

- Sentence level work is manageable for students and teachers, and is a great starting point for teachers when trying to lift the level of their students' writing.
- This slide is the heart of this module. (2 min)

Slide 11: Facilitator asks volunteer to read slide 11 aloud.

- Writing across the curriculum has many benefits. Ask participants to suggest some of these benefits. (Deepen understanding of content knowledge, clarify and reinforce concepts learned, develop written expression skills)
- When you ask students to write about what they are learning, you may uncover significant gaps in their knowledge and comprehension, before it's too late to do anything about them. (2 min)

Slide 12: Facilitator asks volunteer to read slide 12 aloud.

- If you follow Principle #3 and connect student writing activities with subject matter, Principle #4 implies that you can use the same activities for any grade level or content area.



- The rigor is in the content. For example, we can teach conjunctions *because, but, and so* as a strategy across K-12 with grade appropriate content. In K-1, instruction will be oral language activities. (2 min)

Slide 13: Facilitator asks volunteer to read slide 13 aloud.

- Teachers struggle with how best to teach grammar, and research has consistently shown that teaching grammar rules in isolation does not often work.
- What has been shown to work is teaching students grammar in the context of their own writing. Sentence combining is a technique that has shown positive results in a number of studies, and is recommended for multilingual learners (WIDA). (2 min)

Slide 14: Planning and Revising - Read individually and one person reads aloud.

- Facilitator guides participants to think about planning and revising within context of SVW to relieve the tax on working memory and support executive functioning. (2 min)

Slides 15 & 16: Introduce video of TWR strategy.

This part of the module should take approximately 30 minutes. Keep participants moving and on-task when you pause. <https://vimeo.com/403767780/394027afca> from 3:53 to 22:00 on above

Facilitator will pause at following time stamps:

- 3:53 - Start video, being sure to point out that TWR is a K-12 resource
- 6:17 - Pause for participants to jot down what *because, but, so* signify
- 11:00 - Video shows student-facing documents - remind participants they will receive some templates. Consultant mentions using sentence stems and activities as oral language activities in K-1
- 12:23 - First grade example. Presented can pause to allow participants to take a minute to consider application of this strategy across grade levels. This section of the video reinforces the principle that *the content of the curriculum drives the rigor of the writing activities*. Point out to teachers that in CCSS, these conjunctions are called out in the language standards. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.1.1.G
- Use frequently occurring conjunctions (e.g., *and, but, or, so, because*).
- 15:29 - Spot the Errors - teachers can use student answers to check for understanding. Take a minute to read the examples on the screen, spot the errors and jot down *why* the student used “but” and “so” incorrectly. Share with a partner, or in the chat feature.
- 17:26 - this part of the video reviews the errors in Spot the Errors segment. Participants should check their understanding.
- 22:01 - End show video here. Explain to participants they will now have an opportunity to delve a little deeper by looking at a few more examples, and then use some templates to practice their own sentences.



Slides 17 - 20:

- Follow up video with sentence expansion activities using **because, but, so**.
- This first grade example is good to use for oral language development
- Later in the year in first grade, students can be instructed to write with guidance. Teachers might hold off on “so” depending on their students.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.1.1. Use frequently occurring conjunctions (e.g., *and, but, or, so, because*).
- Math example highlights comprehension check through writing with *because, but, so* strategy.
- Provide templates for participants to “have a go” on their own (5 min)

Slide 21: Facilitator reads slide 21

- With these strategies in mind, let’s look at some further evidence of the importance of explicit instruction in sentence structure and look at more practices that strengthen student learning.

Slide 22 Facilitator asks volunteer to read slide 22.

- Ask participants to reflect on how a lack of understanding of sentence structure may impact students as they progress through the grades (1 minute)

Slide 23 : Facilitator asks volunteer to read slide 23. Discuss briefly with participants.

- Practice in the writing process allows students to draw on the sentence-level skills they’ve acquired: using subordinating conjunctions, appositives, and other techniques to vary their sentence structure and inserting transition words and phrases between sentences and paragraphs to make them flow.
- Point out how teachers can work with students in small groups to target instruction according to need (2 min)

Slides 24: Facilitator reads slide 24 aloud

- It is not enough to just teach these skills, but it is important for students to practice these skills (1 min)

Slide 25 Facilitator reads slide 25 aloud

- Furthermore, it’s important for teachers to give immediate, corrective feedback so students can have concrete guidance on how to improve their writing (Slide 25) (1 min)

Slides 26-30: Suggested resources for going further with PLC or during a Common Planning Time. (2 min)

- This book makes for a great PLC, and educators can use the structure of this module and adapt it to explore other strategies outlined in the book.

Slide 31: Wrap Up with 3-2-1 Strategy Exit Slip (3 min)



Resources:

Gillon, G. and Dodd, B.

The Effects of Training Phonological, Semantic, and Syntactic Processing Skills in Spoken Language on Reading Ability <https://doi.org/10.1044/0161-1461.2601.58>:
In *American Educator*

Graham, Steve and Hebert, Michael (2011) Writing to Read: A Meta-Analysis of the Impact of Writing and Writing Instruction on Reading. Harvard Educational Review: December 2011, Vol. 81, No. 4, pp. 710-744.

<https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.81.4.t2k0m13756113566>

Greene V., Framing Your Thoughts, *Language Circle Enterprises*

Hochman J. and Wexler, N., *The Writing Revolution* and *Hochman Method* journal articles in *The Atlantic Monthly*, and *American Educator*

International Dyslexia Association, Knowledge and Practice Standards For Teachers of Reading,

Justice, Laura., *The Syntax Handbook: Everything You Learned About Syntax But Forgot (2nd ed)*. (2016).



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