KINDERGARTEN
Sample Sessions

UNITS OF STUDY
in Opinion, Information, *and* Narrative Writing

LUCY CALKINS *with* COLLEAGUES *from the* READING AND WRITING PROJECT

Heinemann
DEDICATED TO TEACHERS™

KINDERGARTEN Components

Four Units of Study

- The units offer all of the teaching points, minilessons, conferences, and small-group work needed to teach a comprehensive workshop curriculum.
- Each session within the units models Lucy and her colleagues' carefully crafted teaching moves and language.
- The kindergarten set includes one unit each in opinion, information, and narrative writing, and one additional narrative unit.
- Each unit provides 4-6 weeks of instruction.

If... Then... Curriculum: Assessment-Based Instruction

- The *If… Then…* book offers six additional abbreviated units of study that teachers may choose to teach before, after, or in between the core units to meet specific instructional needs.
- This helpful resource also includes dozens of model conferring scenarios to help teachers master the art of conferring.

A Guide to the Writing Workshop, Primary Grades

- The *Guide* introduces the principles, methods, classroom structures, and instructional frameworks that characterize effective workshop teaching.
- It provides the information teachers need to prepare to teach the units, and offers guidance on how to meet the needs of all students.

Writing Pathways: Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions

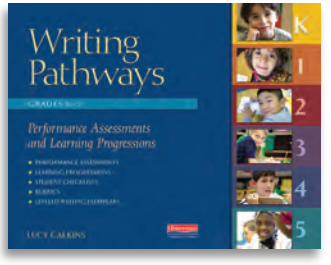
- This practical assessment system includes learning progressions, on-demand writing prompts, student checklists, rubrics, student writing samples, and exemplar pieces of writing.
- The tools in *Writing Pathways* help teachers set all students on trajectories of growth.

Anchor Chart Sticky Notes

- Preprinted, large-format sticky notes feature each key teaching points and help teachers evolve anchor charts across the units.

Online Resources

- This treasure chest of resources includes reproducible checklists, pre- and post assessments, learning progressions and rubrics, videos and web links, Spanish translations for various resources, and more!



Trade Book Pack

- Includes books that are used as demonstration texts for the teacher to model the skills and strategies students will try. Recommended optional purchase.

For complete details, please visit **unitsofstudy.com/K5writing**

"At the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, we have been working for more than three decades to develop, pilot, revise, and implement state-of-the-art curriculum in writing. This series—this treasure chest of experiences, theories, techniques, tried-and-true methods, and questions—brings the results of that work to you."

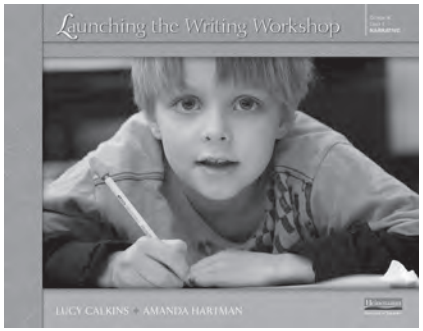
—LUCY CALKINS

Welcome to the Kindergarten Units of Study in Opinion, Information, and Narrative Writing Sampler. This booklet includes sample sessions from each of the four core units of study for this grade level plus the additional unit (available separately). These sessions were chosen to broadly represent the range of work that students will do and to provide a snapshot view of how instruction develops across the school year.

SAMPLER CONTENTS

OVERVIEW

SAMPLE SESSIONS



Launching the Writing Workshop

LUCY CALKINS • AMANDA HARTMAN

This unit is divided into four sections—four bends in the road. During the first bend you will introduce youngsters to a writing workshop. "You are an author," you'll say, and you'll help youngsters understand how to think up a topic, draw it, and then do their best approximation of writing. Soon, you'll teach children to linger longer and invest more in a piece of writing—thus launching an elementary school career of learning to elaborate! You'll also teach youngsters how to go from finishing one piece to starting another with some independence. In no time, children will use letters as well as pictures to represent meaning. Your youngsters will develop phonemic awareness as they stretch out, listen to, distinguish, and record the sounds in a word.

The second bend in the road is titled "Writing Teaching Books." During this portion of the unit, children learn that they can reread what they have written, realize they have more to say, then staple on more pages to make a homemade book. You'll channel children's eagerness to fill up all the pages in their book into a willingness to label more of their pictures, represent more sounds in a word, and make two-word labels.

Things change dramatically in the third bend, "Writing Stories." So far children will have learned that they can write to teach others all about whatever they know. Now they learn that they can also write to capture true stories from their lives. They will draw what happened first, then touch the page and tell the story, then write the story of that one time. Your children will be eager to learn the tricks of the trade, so you'll teach some early lessons in narrative craft.

In the last bend, your children will select a few stories to publish and will learn to revise and edit as they make those stories the best they can be. To do this, you'll introduce children to the writing checklists that will undergird every unit of study. With guidance from the checklists and from you, children will make their best writing better. They'll add detail, fix spelling, and get more sounds into their words. Then, to culminate the unit, students will celebrate by reading selections from their writing to a circle of classmates.

Welcome to Unit 1

BEND I ✦ We Are All Writers

1. We Are All Writers: Putting Ideas on Paper with Pictures and Words
2. Writers Know that "When We Are Done, We Have Just Begun."
3. Carrying on Independently as Writers
4. Writers Call to Mind What They Want to Say, Then Put That onto the Page
5. Stretching Out Words to Write Them
6. Writing Even Hard-To-Write Ideas

BEND II ✦ Writing Teaching Books

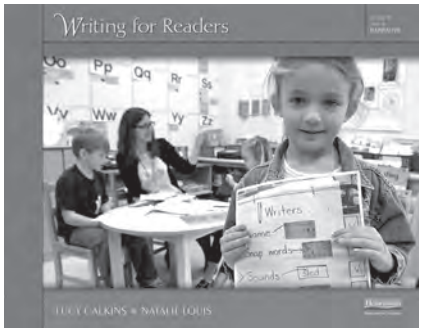
7. Turning Pieces into Scrolls and Books
8. Planning Teaching Books Page by Page
9. Asking and Answering Questions to Add More
10. Stretching Out Words to Write Even More
11. Making Writing the Best It Can Be

BEND III ✦ Writing Stories

12. Getting Ideas for Stories and Practicing Storytelling
13. Planning Stories Page by Page: Planning and Telling Stories across Pages
14. Adding More Details into Pictures and Stories
15. Stretching and Writing Words: Hearing and Recording Sounds in Sequence
16. Bringing Our Writing to Life: Adding Dialogue with Speech Bubbles
17. Using Everything to Make Pieces the Best They Can Be

BEND IV ✦ Preparing for Publication

18. Editing
19. Reading into the Circle: An Author's Celebration



Writing for Readers

LUCY CALKINS • NATALIE LOUIS

Until now you've so wanted your children to feel good as writers that you have hidden your struggles to translate their spindly letters into meaning. When neither you nor the child could decipher a text, you have turned quickly to the picture or to the next story. The problem is that the only reason children will care about spelling, punctuation, or white space is that these conventions make it easier for others to read and to appreciate their texts! It's crucial, therefore, that as soon as children have the ability to begin to write in ways a reader could conceivably read, you let them in on the truth. This unit of study begins with you, as a teacher, confessing to your children that you have a hard time reading their writing. You'll quickly follow with an invitation to children to review their stories as readers, making a pile of the ones that are clear and another pile of the ones that still need work. As you review the piles, you will discover ways to tailor the lessons in this first bend to meet the individual needs of your students. Early in this bend, you'll encourage children to draw on all they know about writing stories. As children work, you will encourage them to write words in more conventional ways, use drawing to plan, write in sentences, and reread their work as they write.

In Bend II, you'll give your students additional tools and opportunities to make their writing more powerful and clearer for their readers. You'll begin by teaching children how to use a checklist to reflect on what they have learned so far this year. The next two lessons are designed to strengthen your students' word-writing skills by spotlighting the use of vowels and sight words. To balance this close-in focus, you'll next teach children to listen for and capture their true storytelling words, not just the easy-to-spell words. In the next few lessons you will teach your writers the power of partnerships as they aim to make their writing clearer, using everything they have learned to make writing that is easy for readers to read.

In Bend III, the focus shifts from getting readable words on the page to telling stories more powerfully through revision. In the first lesson, you'll teach your writers how to mine their drawings to find more stories to tell. The middle lessons of this bend teach your children how to use flaps to make additions to stories. In the final lesson children work as partners to help each other make their stories clearer and easier to read.

In the final bend, you'll challenge your kids to use all they have learned about revision and editing to make one of their pieces shine. Children will work on creating more satisfying endings and on making their pieces beautiful and ready for a larger audience. This is also an opportunity for writers to assess the work they have done. The final celebration of this unit might be making a bulletin board or reading work out loud to an audience.

Welcome to Unit 2

BEND I ✦ Writing Stories that People Can Really *Read*

1. Writing for Readers
2. How to Write True Stories that Readers Really Want to Read
3. Drawing Stories for Readers
4. Writing Sentences that Tell a Story
5. The Power of Rereading

BEND II ✦ Tools Give Writers Extra Power

6. Checklists Can Help Writers Make Powerful Stories
7. A Vowel Chart Can Help with the Middles of Words
8. Writing Readable Stories Using Word Walls
9. Writing Stories with True Words: Making Stories Talk
10. Using Reading Partnerships to Support More Conventional Writing
11. Using a Partner to Hear More Sounds in Words
12. Putting It Together: How to Make Readable Writing (Guided Inquiry Lesson)

BEND III ✦ Partnering for Revision: Making Stories More Fun to Read

13. Writers Search Their Mental and Drawn Pictures to Make Their Stories Better
14. Writers Use Flaps to Make Better Stories
15. Writing Amazing Story Beginnings
16. Writers Work with Partners to Answer Readers' Questions

BEND IV ✦ Preparing for Publication

17. Writers Use All They Know to Select and Revise a Piece to Publish
18. Ending with Feelings
19. Writers Make Their Pieces Beautiful to Get Ready for Publication
20. A Final Celebration: Bringing True Stories to Life

How-To Books
Writing to Teach Others

LUCY CALKINS • LAURIE PESSAH • ELIZABETH MOORE

There are four bends in the road in this unit. Although the instructional focus changes a bit as your children progress through the unit, you will continue to expect them to write lots and lots of how-to texts. At the start, you'll tell children that writers not only use writing to tell stories, they also use writing to teach others how to do things, and you'll show them a how-to text. They'll have no trouble seeing that writers of how-to texts teach the steps for doing something, and they'll probably also notice that the steps are numbered and there are drawings for each step. You will then surprise kids by saying, "So, right now, go and write your very own how-to book!"

Because children will be writing what they know how to do, they'll bring their areas of expertise into your classroom. You will discover the hidden talents of your young writers as they write books on everything from "How to Make an Ice Cream Sundae" to "How to Change a Diaper," to "How to Hit a Home Run," to "How to Do Yoga." There will be lessons on drawing and writing one step at a time and writing with enough clarity and detail that others can follow the directions. Writing partners will play an important role in this bend, as pairs of children test their directions to make sure everything makes sense and get ideas from each other.

Lessons in the second bend focus on studying mentor texts and trying out techniques the students notice in those texts, including tucking tips into their teaching and using the "you" voice to write directly to readers. Many how-to texts use comparisons to make their points clear, and you will highlight that as well. Ultimately, you'll want to use this bend to help your young writers understand that they can always look to real, published books as exemplars and then use what they learn.

In Bend III, you will help your children find opportunities throughout the school day to write how-to books that can be helpful to others. You'll encourage children to write a series or collection of how-to books for their classmates, so this bend emphasizes writing easy-to-read books that convey to readers exactly what they need to know.

In Bend IV, "Giving How-To Books as Gifts," you will help your children get ready to share their work with its intended audiences. You will teach writers to think strategically about where in the world their books should go. "How to Give a Dog a Bath" might be suited for the neighborhood pet store, while "How to Make Guacamole" might be important for a family member about to hold a party.

Welcome to Unit 3

BEND I ✦ Writing How-To Books, Step by Step

1. Writers Study the Kind of Writing They Plan to Make
2. Writers Use What They Already Know: Touching and Telling the Steps across the Pages
3. Writers Become Readers, Asking, "Can I Follow This?"
4. Writers Answer a Partner's Questions
5. Writers Label Their Diagrams to Teach Even More Information
6. Writers Write as Many Books as They Can
7. Writers Reflect and Set Goals to Create Their Best Information Writing

BEND II ✦ Using Mentor Texts for Inspiration: Revising Old How-To Books and Writing New Ones

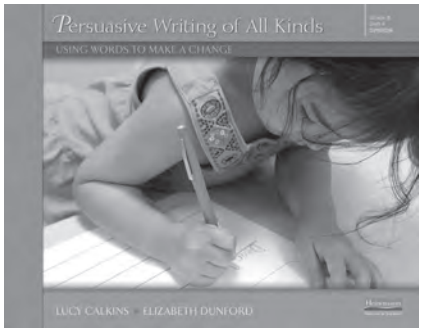
8. Writers Emulate Features of Informational Writing Using a Mentor Text
9. Writing for Readers: Using the Word You
10. How-To Book Writers Picture Each Step and Then Choose Exactly Right Words
11. Elaboration in How-To Books: Writers Guide Readers with Warnings, Suggestions, and Tips
12. "Balance on One Leg Like a Flamingo": Using Comparisons to Give Readers Clear Directions

BEND III ✦ Keeping Readers in Mind

13. Writers Write How-To Books about Things They Learn, throughout the Day and from Books
14. Writing a Series or Collection of How-To Books to Teach Others Even More about a Topic
15. Writers Can Write Introductions and Conclusions to Help Their Readers
16. Writers Use Everything They Know to Make Their How-To Books Easy to Read

BEND IV ✦ Giving How-To Books as Gifts

17. How-To Books Make Wonderful Gifts!
18. Preparing for the Publishing Party: Writers Do Their Best Work Now to Share It Later
19. Publishing Celebration: Writers Are Teachers!



Persuasive Writing of All Kinds
Using Words to Make a Change

LUCY CALKINS • ELIZABETH DUNFORD

In this unit children do lots of persuasive writing. They begin by writing signs, songs, petitions, and letters about problems they see in their classroom, then in their school, then in the larger world of their neighborhood. The first portion of the unit—the first bend in the road—is "Exploring Opinion Writing: Making Our School a Better Place." From the very start of this unit, you'll ask children to look at the world, seeing not just what is but what could be. You'll teach children to reflect on problems, think about what could make things better, and then write to help make a change. This is not a time to assign students a particular genre or particular issue. Instead, you will offer a menu and urge them to consider even more ways they could write to make a change: a book, a song, a card, a letter—the choices are endless.

Regardless of the genre, your kindergartners will be learning to make words (and pictures) to express what they want to happen and convince an audience that it should. You'll help students publish their work by posting signs in the hallways, reading pieces to schoolmates in other classrooms, reciting songs over the school loudspeaker, and using a bullhorn to rally friends to sign a petition during recess. As children send their words out into the school, they'll learn that by writing, they can convince others to make the world better.

In the second bend, you'll channel students to write lots of persuasive letters. You'll teach writers that in order to make a change in the world, it helps to ask, "Who could help me fix this problem?" and then write letters to persuade people to join the cause. You'll help children write lots of these letters, to lots of people, addressing lots of problems. You'll teach children that including facts and information in this kind of letter helps make it more persuasive, and you'll again give students an opportunity to publish their work, perhaps with a class trip to the post office or to the nearest mailbox.

In the final bend, you'll rally kids to join you in a whole-class pursuit around a more global cause, perhaps protecting the planet. You'll again invite children to write in a variety of genres, working on individual projects that convince others to "be green"! You'll remind writers to recall everything they have learned about persuasive writing this month and apply these strategies when writing new pieces, and you'll also teach them ways to lift the level of their persuasive writing.

To prepare for the final publication, you'll provide opportunities for partners to plan how their presentations might go, how they might use body language to show the big messages they have about their topic. You'll help your young politicians learn ways writers captivate their audience. You'll celebrate and publish the persuasive writing your students have worked on during the unit, reminding them of the larger purpose—sharing opinions and convincing others to make a change.

Welcome to Unit 4

BEND I ✦ Exploring Opinion Writing: Making Our School a Better Place

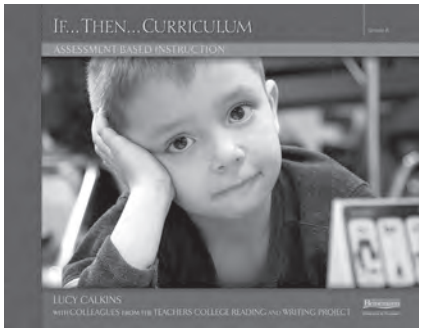
1. Words Are Like Magic Wands: They Can Make Things Happen
2. Convincing People: Providing Reasons and Consequences
3. Don't Stop There! Generating More Writing for More Causes
4. Writers Reread and Fix Up Their Writing
5. Spelling Strategies Give Writers Word Power
6. Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Writing to Spread the Word (a Mini-Celebration)

BEND II ✦ Sending Our Words out into the World: Writing Letters to Make a Change

7. Writing Letters that Reach Readers
8. Studying a Mentor Text (a Guided Inquiry)
9. Knowing Just What to Say: Angling Letters to Different Audiences
10. How Can We Make It Better? Imagining Solutions
11. Wait! What's That Say? Fixing Up Letters before Mailing Them

BEND III ✦ Persuasive Writing Projects

12. Draw on a Repertoire of Strategies to Write about a World Problem
13. Sound Like an Expert! Teaching Information to Persuade Your Audience
14. More on Adding Detailed Information to Persuasive Writing
15. Writing How-To Books to Make a Change
16. Editing for Punctuation: Partner Work
17. Speaking Up and Taking a Stand: Planning and Rehearsing Speeches
18. Fixing and Fancying Up for Publication Using the Super Checklist
19. The Earth Day Fair: An Author's Celebration



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If... Then... Curriculum
Assessment-Based Instruction

LUCY CALKINS • WITH COLLEAGUES FROM THE TEACHERS COLLEGE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

The *If... Then... Curriculum* offers additional, abbreviated units teachers can use before, after, or in between the core curriculum based on students' needs. This resource also includes conferring scenarios that help teachers plan individual and small-group instruction.

PART TWO Differentiating Instruction for Individuals and Small Groups: If... Then... Conferring Scenarios

NARRATIVE WRITING

Structure and Cohesion

If the writer is new to this particular genre . . .
If the story is confusing or seems to be missing important information . . .
If there are multiple stories in the booklet . . .
If the story lacks focus . . .

Elaboration

If the writer has created a story that is sparse in pictures and words . . .
If the writer spends more time adding insignificant details to the picture, rather than elaborating with words onto the story . . .
If the writer tells action, action, action and seems not to elaborate on any of the options . . .
If the writer overuses one kind of detail more than others to elaborate . . .

Language

If the writer has few if any words on the page . . .
If the writer has words on the page, but they are difficult to read . . .

The Process of Generating Ideas

If the writer struggles with thinking about an idea for a story . . .
If the writer returns to the same story repeatedly . . .

The Process of Drafting

If the writer starts many new pieces but just gives up on them halfway through. . .
If the writer tends to write short pieces with few words or sentences . . .
If the writer's folder lacks volume of pieces . . .

The Process of Revision

If the writer rarely adds to the writing without prompting and support . . .
If the writer usually adds to his writing rather than taking things away . . .
If the writer tends to revise by elaborating, rather than narrowing and finding the focus of the piece . . .

The Process of Editing

If the writer does not use what he knows to edit his piece . . .
If the writer does not know what in her piece needs editing . . .

INFORMATION WRITING

Structure and Cohesion

If the writer is new to this particular genre . . .
If the writer has included facts as he thinks about them . . .

Elaboration

If the writer provides information in vague or broad ways . . .
If the writer writes with lots of good information but it is in helter-skelter order . . .
If the writer invents or makes up information about the topic in order to elaborate . . .

Language

If the writer does not use all that he knows about letter sounds/vowel patterns to write words . . .
If the writer does not use domain-specific vocabulary . . .

The Process of Generating Ideas

If the writer chooses ideas that she likes rather than what she actually knows information about . . .

The Process of Drafting

If the writer spends more time elaborating on his drawing than using the picture to help add and write more information . . .

The Process of Revision

If the writer is unsure how to revise her writing and does not use the various tools in the classroom. . .
If the writer tends to revise by elaborating, rather than narrowing and finding the focus of the text or chapter . . .

The Process of Editing

If the writer edits quickly and feels done, missing many errors . . .

OPINION WRITING

Structure and Cohesion

If the writer is new to the writing workshop or this particular genre of writing . . .

Elaboration

If the writer is struggling to elaborate . . .

If the writer uses some elaboration strategies some of the time . . .

If the writer's piece lacks voice . . .

Language

If the writer struggles to write longer or "harder" words on the page . . .

If the writer tends to not use specific and precise language as she writes about her opinions . . .

The Process of Generating Ideas

If the writer is stymied to come up with an idea for writing . . .

If the writer writes one piece, then another, without making any one her best . . .

The Process of Drafting

If the writer doesn't have a plan before he begins to write . . .

The Process of Revision

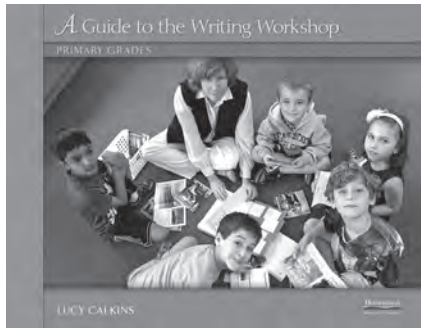
If the writer fills the pages as she drafts and only writes to the bottom of the page when she revises . . .

If the writer tends to have a limited repertoire of how to elaborate on his topic . . .

The Process of Editing

If the writer edits for one thing but not for others . . .

If the writer only uses or knows one way to edit her spelling . . .



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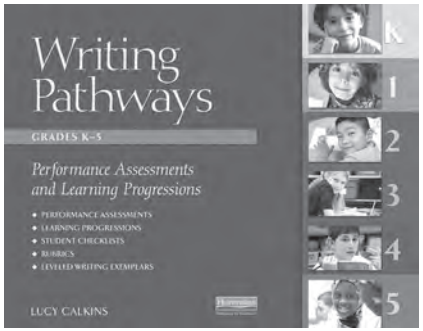
A Guide to the Writing Workshop
Primary Grades

LUCY CALKINS

This important resource describes the essential principles, methods, and structures of effective writing workshop instruction.



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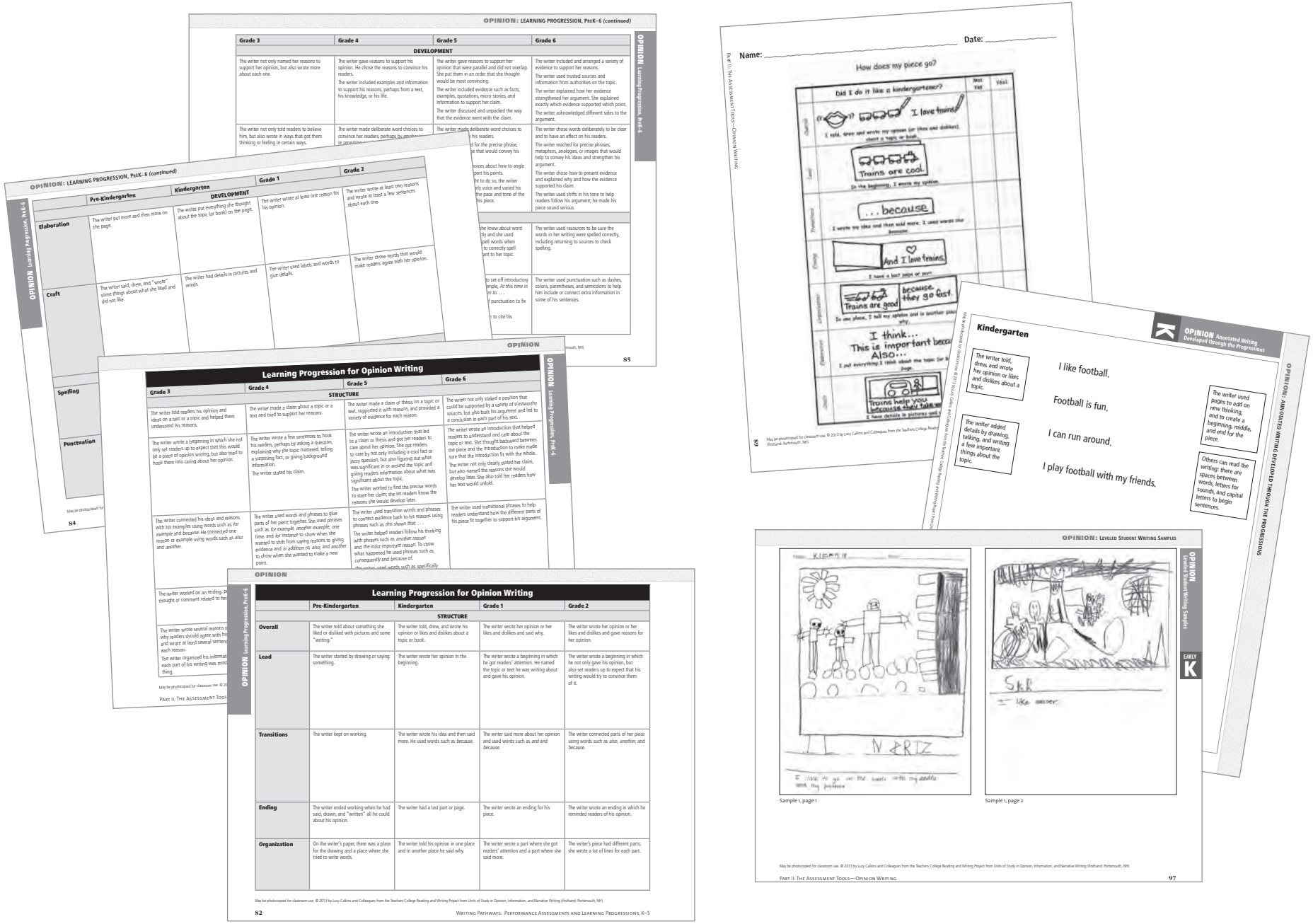
Writing Pathways
Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions, Grades K–5

LUCY CALKINS

This powerful assessment system offers learning progressions, performance assessments, student checklists, rubrics, and leveled writing exemplars—everything the teacher needs to provide students with continuous assessment, feedback, and goal setting.



OPINION: LEARNING PROGRESSION, PREK–6 *(continued)*

Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
DEVELOPMENT			
The writer not only named her reasons to support her opinion, but also wrote more about each one.	The writer gave reasons to support his opinion. He chose the reasons to convince his readers. The writer included examples and information to support his reasons, perhaps from a text, his knowledge, or his life.	The writer gave reasons to support her opinion that were parallel and did not overlap. She put them in an order that she thought would be most convincing. The writer included evidence such as facts, examples, quotations, micro-stories, and information to support her claim. The writer discussed and unpacked the way that the evidence went with the claim.	The writer included and arranged a variety of evidence to support her reasons. The writer used trusted sources and information from authorities on the topic. The writer explained how her evidence strengthened her argument. She explained exactly which evidence supported which point. The writer acknowledged different sides to the argument.
The writer not only told readers to believe him, but also wrote in ways that got them thinking or feeling in certain ways.	The writer made deliberate word choices to convince her readers, perhaps by emotion or persuasion	The writer made deliberate word choices to [illegible] his readers. [illegible] for the precise phrase, [illegible]e that would convey his [illegible]	The writer chose words deliberately to be clear and to have an effect on his readers. The writer reached for precise phrases, metaphors, analogies, or images that would help to convey his ideas and strengthen his argument. The writer chose how to present evidence and explained why and how the evidence supported his claim. The writer used shifts in his tone to help readers follow his argument; he made his piece sound serious.
		[illegible]oices about how to angle [illegible]port his points. [illegible]ht to do so, the writer [illegible]ly voice and varied his [illegible]the pace and tone of the [illegible]his piece.	
		[illegible]she knew about word [illegible]tly and she used [illegible]spell words when [illegible] to correctly spell [illegible]ant to her topic.	The writer used resources to be sure the words in her writing were spelled correctly, including returning to sources to check spelling.
		[illegible] to set off introductory [illegible]mple, *At this time in* [illegible]n to. . . . [illegible] punctuation to fix [illegible] to cite his	The writer used punctuation such as dashes, colons, parentheses, and semicolons to help him include or connect extra information in some of his sentences.

OPINION Learning Progression, PreK–6

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OPINION: LEARNING PROGRESSION, PREK–6 *(continued)*

	Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2
		DEVELOPMENT		
Elaboration	The writer put more and then more on the page.	The writer put everything she thought about the topic (or book) on the page.	The writer wrote at least one reason for his opinion.	The writer wrote at least two reasons and wrote at least a few sentences about each one.
Craft	The writer said, drew, and "wrote" some things about what she liked and did not like.	The writer had details in pictures and words.	The writer used labels and words to give details.	The writer chose words that would make readers agree with her opinion.
Spelling				
Punctuation				

OPINION Learning Progression, PreK–6

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OPINION

Learning Progression for Opinion Writing

Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
STRUCTURE			
The writer told readers his opinion and ideas on a text or a topic and helped them understand his reasons.	The writer made a claim about a topic or a text and tried to support her reasons.	The writer made a claim or thesis on a topic or text, supported it with reasons, and provided a variety of evidence for each reason.	The writer not only stated a position that could be supported by a variety of trustworthy sources, but also built his argument and led to a conclusion in each part of his text.
The writer wrote a beginning in which she not only said readers up to expect that this would be a piece of opinion writing, but also tried to hook them into caring about her opinion.	The writer wrote a few sentences to hook his readers, perhaps by asking a question, explaining why the topic mattered, telling a surprising fact, or giving background information. The writer stated his claim.	The writer wrote an introduction that led to a claim or thesis and got her readers to care about her opinion. She got readers to care by not only including a cool fact or jazzy question, but also figuring out what was significant in or around the topic and giving readers information about what was significant about the topic. The writer worked to find the precise words to state her claim; she let readers know the reasons she would develop later.	The writer wrote an introduction that helped readers to understand and care about the topic of text. She thought backward between the piece and the introduction to make made sure that the introduction fit with the whole. The writer not only clearly stated her claim, but also named the reasons she would develop later. She also told her readers how her text would unfold.
The writer connected his ideas and reasons with his examples using words such as *for example* and *because*. He connected one reason or example using words such as also and another.	The writer used words and phrases to glue parts of her piece together. She used phrases such as *for example, another example, one time,* and *for instance* to show when she wanted to shift from saying reasons to giving evidence and in addition to, also, and another to show when she wanted to make a new point.	The writer used transition words and phrases to connect evidence back to his reasons using phrases such as *this shows that. . . .* The writer helped readers follow his thinking with phrases such as *another reason* and *the most important reason*. To show what happened he used phrases such as *consequently* and *because of*. The writer used words such as specifically	The writer used transitional phrases to help readers understand how the different parts of his piece fit together to support his argument.
The writer worked on an ending. P[illegible] thought or comment related to her			
The writer wrote several reasons [illegible] why readers should agree with his [illegible] and wrote at least several sentenc[illegible] each reason. The writer organized his informat[illegible] each part of his writing was most[illegible] thing.			

OPINION Learning Progression, PreK–6

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PART II: THE ASSESSMENT TOOLS—OPINION WRITING

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OPINION

Learning Progression for Opinion Writing

	Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2
		STRUCTURE		
Overall	The writer told about something she liked or disliked with pictures and some "writing."	The writer told, drew, and wrote his opinion or likes and dislikes about a topic or book.	The writer wrote her opinion or her likes and dislikes and said why.	The writer wrote her opinion or her likes and dislikes and gave reasons for her opinion.
Lead	The writer started by drawing or saying something.	The writer wrote her opinion in the beginning.	The writer wrote a beginning in which he got readers' attention. He named the topic or text he was writing about and gave his opinion.	The writer wrote a beginning in which he not only gave his opinion, but also set readers up to expect that his writing would try to convince them of it.
Transitions	The writer kept on working.	The writer wrote his idea and then said more. He used words such as *because.*	The writer said more about her opinion and used words such as *and* and *because.*	The writer connected parts of her piece using words such as *also, another,* and *because.*
Ending	The writer ended working when he had said, drawn, and "written" all he could about his opinion.	The writer had a last part or page.	The writer wrote an ending for his piece.	The writer wrote an ending in which he reminded readers of his opinion.
Organization	On the writer's paper, there was a place for the drawing and a place where she tried to write words.	The writer told his opinion in one place and in another place he said why.	The writer wrote a part where she got readers' attention and a part where she said more.	The writer's piece had different parts; she wrote a lot of lines for each part.

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WRITING PATHWAYS: PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS AND LEARNING PROGRESSIONS, K–5

Name: _____ Date: _____

How does my piece go?

	did I do it like a kindergartener?	Not Yet	Yes!
Content	I told, drew and wrote my opinion (or likes and dislikes) about a topic or book.		
Lead	In the beginning, I wrote my opinion.		
Transitions	I wrote my idea and then said more. I used words like because.		
Ending	I have a last piece or part.		
Organization	In one place, I told my opinion and in another place I told why.		
Elaboration	I put everything I think about the topic (or book) on the page.		
Spelling	I have details in pictures and words.		
Punctuation	I used labels and words to give details.		
Craft	I chose words that would make readers agree with my opinion.		

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OPINION Annotated Writing Developed through the Progressions

Kindergarten

The writer told, drew, and wrote her opinion or likes and dislikes about a topic.

I like football.

Football is fun.

I can run around.

I play football with my friends.

The writer added details by drawing, talking, and writing a few important things about the topic.

The writer used pages to add on new thinking, and to create a beginning, middle, and end for the piece.

Others can read the writing: there are spaces between words, letters for sounds, and capital letters to begin sentences.

OPINION: ANNOTATED WRITING DEVELOPED THROUGH THE PROGRESSIONS

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OPINION: LEVELED STUDENT WRITING SAMPLES

Sample 1, page 1

Sample 1, page 2

OPINION Leveled Student Writing Samples

EARLY K

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PART II: THE ASSESSMENT TOOLS—OPINION WRITING

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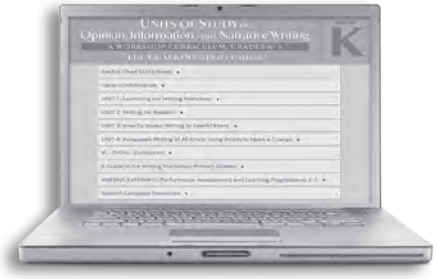
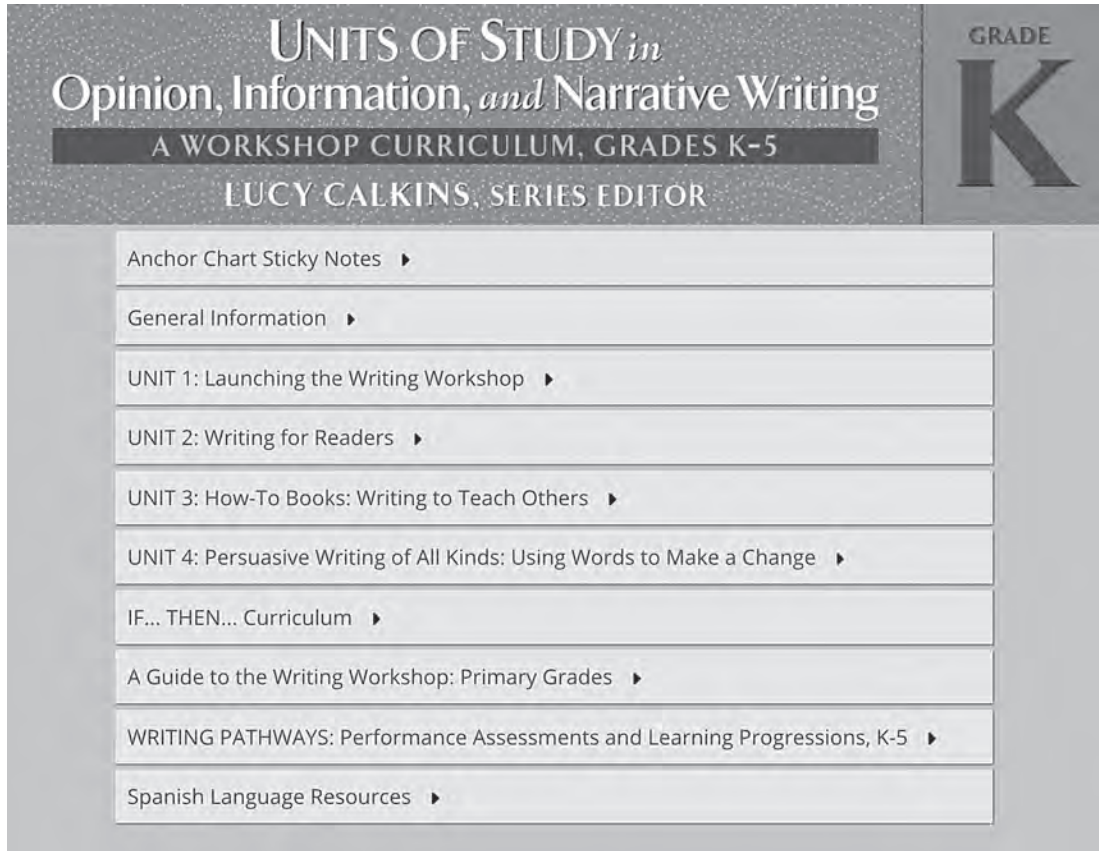
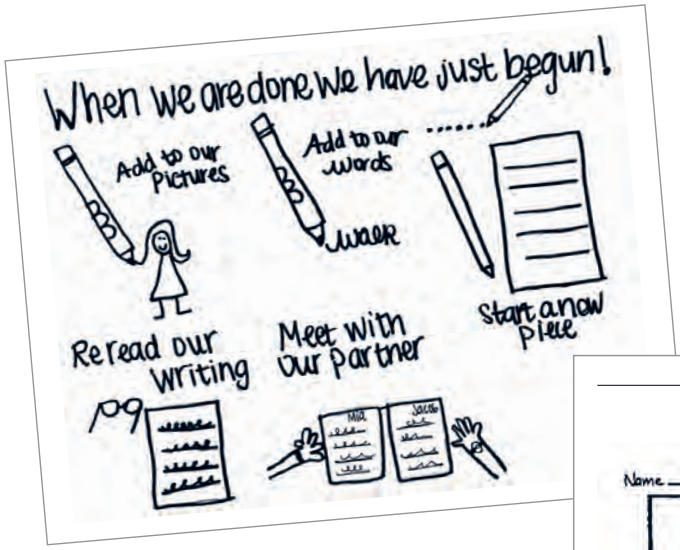
For additional information, visit **www.UnitsofStudy.com**



Online Resources for Teaching Writing

Grade-specific online resources support teaching throughout the school year. This rich assortment of instructional tools includes downloadable, printable files for anchor charts, figures, student exemplars, checklists, Spanish translations of many resources, and more.



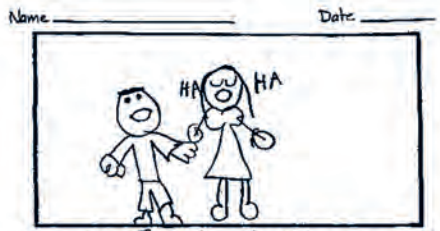


Name: _____ Date: _____

Narrative Writing Checklist

	Kindergarten	NOT YET	STARTING TO	YES!	Grade 1	NOT YET	STARTING TO	YES!
	Structure				**Structure**			
Overall	I told, drew, and wrote a whole story.	☐	☐	☐	I wrote about when I did something.	☐	☐	☐
Lead	I had a page that showed what happened first.	☐	☐	☐	I tried to make a beginning for my story.	☐	☐	☐
Transitions	I put my pages in order.	☐	☐	☐	I put my pages in order. I used words such as *and* and *then, so.*	☐	☐	☐
Ending	I had a page that showed what happened last in my story.	☐	☐	☐	I found a way to end my story.	☐	☐	☐
Organization	My story had a page for the beginning, a page for the middle, and a page for the end.	☐	☐	☐	I wrote my story across three or more pages.	☐	☐	☐
	Development				**Development**			
Elaboration	My story indicated who was there, what they did, and how the characters felt.	☐	☐	☐	I put the picture from my mind onto the page. I had details in pictures and words.	☐	☐	☐
Craft	I drew and wrote some details about what happened.	☐	☐	☐	I used labels and words to give details.	☐	☐	☐
	Language Conventions				**Language Conventions**			
Spelling	I could read my writing.	☐	☐	☐	I used all I knew about words and chunks of words (*at, op, it,* etc.) to help me spell.			
	I wrote a letter for the sounds I heard.	☐	☐	☐	I spelled all the word wall words right and used the word wall to help me spell other words.			

FIG. 19-1 Casey's favorite page



Units of Study in Opinion/Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing
Suggestions for Spanish-Language Mentor Texts

If you are teaching Units of Study with Spanish-speaking students, you may want to substitute Spanish-language texts for some of the English mentor texts. This list of suggested alternates comes from teachers who have successfully used Units of Study with Spanish-speaking students in their own classrooms.

Can you help us fill in the gaps?
Our list is a work in progress. Can you help us fill in the gaps? If you know of any great Spanish texts that work well with these units, please send your suggestions to tracy.wells@heinemann.com, and we will share them with other teachers. Thank you for sharing your ideas with the Units of Study community!

Kindergarten

Unit	To substitute for this English text . . .	. . . you might consider this Spanish text
1	**Creak! Said the Bed,** Phyllis Root	**La Casa Adormecida,** Audrey Wood (HMH Books for Young Readers)
1	**Freight Train,** Donald Crews	**Freight Tren/Tren de Carga** (bilingual edition), Donald Crews (Greenwillow Books)
2	**Shortcut,** Donald Crews	**¡Cuanto Ruido!**, José Campanari (Canal Lector)
2	**A Day with Daddy,** Nikki Grimes	**Un dia con papá**, Kate Banks (Editorial Juventud)
2	**The Snowy Day,** Ezra Jack Keats	**Un dia de nieve**, Ezra Jack Keats (Puffin Books)
		Mi primer libro de

Traducción de los Puntos de Enseñanza de Escritura—Kinder

UNIDAD # 1 DE ESCRITURA DE TCRWP PARA KINDER
LANZAMIENTO DEL TALLER DE ESCRITURA

Tramo # 1: Todos somos escritores.

Lección # 1: Todos somos escritores poniendo ideas con dibujos y palabras en el papel.
"Hoy quiero enseñarles que no son solo los adultos como Donald Crews que escriben para enseñarles a las personas todo lo que saben. Ustedes también pueden hacerlo. Piensan en algo que saben y después, con dibujos y palabras, ponen todo lo que saben en las páginas."

Lección # 2: Los escritores saben que, "*Cuando han terminado, acaban de empezar.*"
"Hoy quiero enseñarles que cuando los escritores escriben todo lo que saben sobre un tema, no dicen '¡Terminé!' En lugar de eso dicen, 'Voy a volver a mirar mi escrito para ver si le falta algo y lo puedo agregar.' Los escritores revisan."

Lección # 3: Ser escritores independientes.
"Hoy quiero enseñarles que cuando los escritores tienen problemas y no saben qué hacer, ellos dicen, 'Yo lo puedo resolver.' Entonces los escritores encuentran soluciones a esos problemas y siguen escribiendo, escribiendo, escribiendo. ¡De esta manera, los escritores no pierden tiempo precioso!"

Lección # 4: Los escritores piensan en sus mentes lo que quieren decir y después, lo ponen en el papel.
"Hoy quiero enseñarles que cuando los escritores ya han encontrado algo sobre lo que quieren escribir, les ayuda tener ese tema en sus mentes—mi jardín, el supermercado—antes de escribirlo. A veces, los escritores cierran sus ojos, se hacen un dibujo en la cabeza, y luego agregan todos los detalles en los dibujos y en palabras."

Lección # 5: Estirar las palabras para escribirlas.
"Hoy quiero enseñarles que los escritores dicen la palabra que quieren escribir. Dicen la palabra lentamente y la repiten con frecuencia para escuchar el sonido inicial." **NOTA:** *Hacer la demostración para ellos con una palabra que tiene un sonido fácil de identificar como mamá, estirando el sonido m-m-m-m lo más posible.*

Lección # 6: Utilizar todo lo que sabemos para hacer que nuestros escritos sean lo mejor que pueden ser.
"¡Escritores! No están solos. Yo también a veces me siento como ¡Oh, no! Hoy quiero enseñarles que cuando los escritores se sienten con esa sensación de '¡Oh, no! acerca de una idea difícil, no se dan por vencidos. Siguen intentándolo."

Session 1

We Are All Writers

Putting Ideas on Paper with Pictures and Words

IN THIS SESSION, you'll teach students that young writers think of something that they know about and use pictures and words to put their ideas on paper.

GETTING READY

- ✔ Desks clustered to support the conversations
- ✔ Plans for your own short piece of writing, both important to you and true (see Teaching)
- ✔ Chart paper and markers
- ✔ Two mentor texts you'll hold up to show the class. You'll use one as a model throughout the first part of the unit and the second for the second half of the unit. *Freight Train*, by Donald Crews (1992) and *Creak! Said the Bed*, by Phyllis Root (2010) are used here (see Connection).
- ✔ Paper for each child—blank pages and pages with a large box drawn on each and a few write-on lines below the box
- ✔ Pens and markers for each table of writers, for after the minilesson
- ✔ A way to take notes on your conferences. A notebook with a page for each child, in alphabetical order, might be helpful.

TO LAUNCH YOUR WRITING WORKSHOP, gather your youngsters close and tell them one of the great secrets of literacy. "All the books on our shelves that bring us such wonderful stories and ideas, were written by people like you and me. We, too, can put stories and knowledge on the page. This very day, each of you will be an author.

"Let me show you how to write a book," you'll say, and quickly demonstrate the gist of the writing process. Then you'll send your children off to draw and to write, putting something they know and care about onto the page.

I imagine you thinking, "Really? Maybe you don't know my kids—but mine come to me not knowing the alphabet, let alone having the skills to write on their own."

But I do know your youngsters, and this writing workshop is designed for them, precisely. Even though some children will make drawings that are nonrepresentative, not even attempting letter-like forms, one of the most powerful things you can possibly do is to invite youngsters to step into the role of being avid writers. Your children will approximate—they will pretend—but that is how young people learn many things. The wise parent will say to a toddler, "Could you help me sweep up this dirt?" And then, when the toddler scrubs back and forth with the broom, the parent will say, "Thanks for your help!" In this session, you will be educating in a very similar fashion. The power of the session will depend on your confidence that every one of your children can think of a topic she knows a lot about and then put that knowledge onto the page, drawing and writing as best she can.

If you are uneasy about this, remember that during dress up, children role-play their way into being kings and queens, waitresses and astronauts, and you probably don't worry that somehow you are letting them flounder in roles that are beyond them. In the same way, then, enjoy their approximations and role playing as writers, and trust that we'll help you teach into that work as quickly as possible. Your teaching will accomplish something important if children believe that they belong to the world of written language.

You also will give yourself a chance to see how much they can do on Day One.

MINILESSON

We Are All Writers

Putting Ideas on Paper with Pictures and Words

CONNECTION

Show the children different kinds of books, pointing out that writers wrote them all. Tell children that this year, they'll write too, producing books like those circling the meeting area.

"Friends, scoot up close because I have something important to tell you." I gave the children thirty seconds to move further up on the rug, and then I leaned in and continued. "We're sitting here because—look all around you! See all those books? Each one was written by a different writer." I held up *Creak! Said the Bed* and said, "A writer named Phyllis Root wrote this. See? Here's her name on the front cover." I pointed to it. "And look at this one! *Freight Train*! This author, Donald Crews, wrote a *teaching book* that teaches us all about the different parts of a train. Each page has a picture of a different part of the train, like the different freight cars. One page has the front of the train, like the steam engine, and another has the caboose. Each page has a label next to the part of the train to name it.

"Writers write to make stuff—stories," I held up *Creak! Said the Bed*, "and teaching books, too." I held up *Freight Train* by Donald Crews. "And this year, *you* are going to write books as well. That means *you*, Annie, and *you*, Owen, and *you*, Zoe, and *you*, Margay, and all of you." I swept my arm across the room, indicating each and every child. "So from this day forward, I'm going to call you *writers*."

Point out that if you are going to call children *writers*, they need time to write, and use that to introduce the daily structure of a writing workshop.

"Of course, if I'm going to call you *writers*, you'll need time to actually write, to make stuff—stories and teaching books, too. So every day we'll have what writers all around the world call a *writing workshop*. We'll gather in this spot to learn what writers do. We'll sit, surrounded by books, and soon, we'll add *your* books to these shelves."

Name the teaching point.

"So, writers, today, what I want to teach you is that it is not just grown-ups like Donald Crews who write to teach people what they know. You can do that as well. You think of something you know about, and then with drawings and writing, you put what you know on the paper."

◆ COACHING

We are on the first day of school and already you are offering children the excitement of a lifetime of writing, of bookmaking! Make sure you let your excitement show. Give children something to be wide-eyed about and proud of on their very first day!

Your confidence and enthusiasm will carry most children along. No matter how tentative and insecure you may feel, role-play your way into being confident about yourself and your children because they will hitch a ride on your enthusiasm. It's scary to begin, but every day teachers bravely send children off to draw and write, and lo and behold, the miracle happens. Children draw squiggles and turtles and tall buildings, they make writing-like graphics or alphabet letters that float across the page, and some record long stories. No matter what they do, children put themselves onto the page.

TEACHING

Demonstrate how you go about making a teaching text—coming up with topics, then picturing those topics, and then getting ready to put what you know on the page.

"Let's each do some writing to teach people what we know about. Watch me and then you can do it as well. We first need to think, 'What do I know about that I could teach other people?' Hmm, . . . Are you thinking, 'What do *I* know about?'" After pausing for everyone to begin thinking, I began listing possible topics. "I could write about TV shows or dogs or bikes. I have a bike so I could teach other people about bikes. Or I could write to teach people about gardens, because my Grandma has one. That's it! I'll write about gardens.

"Now I am going to put what I know on the page by drawing and writing. First, let me remember how my grandma's garden looks." I looked up toward the ceiling, conjuring up the image, then I started to draw, saying, "This is a tomato plant, held up by a stick, and there are three of these in my Grandma's garden. I'll add the little thing that ties the plant to the stick." I quickly added the words, 'Grandma's garden' under the picture, not discussing why or how I did that.

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

Channel writers to think of a topic they could teach others and to tell what they might put on their page.

"Right now, think of what you know about that you could teach others. Picture it." Silently, I pictured my topic again, modeling and giving children time to do this, too. Then, a few seconds later, "Tell the people near you what *you* will draw and write about in your teaching piece."

I crouched alongside Liam, who quickly blurted, "I am thinking I could write about cats because I have one and she is black, and really, really, really cute. She eats cat food." Then he poked Margay in the shoulder and said, "You go."

Before children finished talking, I interrupted. "Writers, after you picture your topic, you need to put it on the paper. You can draw it and write words, just like Donald Crews does." I showed a page of one of his nonfiction books.

LINK

Remind children that they can write to teach people things, just like grown-ups.

"It is not just *grown-ups* who can write to teach people things. You can each write about something you know, teaching others about that topic." Then I said, "If you know what you will put on your paper, thumbs up. When I see that you are ready, I will give you paper and a pen so that you can get started." Hands shot up, and I provisioned and dispersed half the class. Once they were settled, I did the same for the other half.

In the center of the tables you will want to have more paper that students can use to draw and write. There should be space for them to write their name at the top and a big box for them to draw in as well as a line (or two) below the picture box. This is helpful to have, especially for students who are already able to write with letters and sounds. These students should be encouraged from the start to not only label but to also write sentences below their drawings. If you have students who write with random strings of letters on the line below, do not be alarmed. They are approximating what they know about writing and how books go. But you will want to encourage these writers to label and put letters and sounds next to the pictures so that you can help them develop phonemic awareness.

Anticipating the Challenges of These First Days

ONCE YOUR CHILDREN have dispersed to their workplaces, you will need to "put on your roller skates" and start moving quickly among your youngsters, encouraging them to think of something they know, to envision that thing, that topic, and then to draw and perhaps write about it. As you do this, you will have a million questions. "I'm channeling them to write a teaching piece, but what if a child wants to write all about his mother? That's not exactly nonfiction. Do I support that? What if a child wants *me* to draw for him? Do I agree to do that?"

You will be able to make wise decisions as long as you keep in the front of your mind the fact that for today, your goals are for children to feel as if they are insiders in the world of written language, for them to carry on as writers with as much independence as possible, and for them to begin to grasp the big ideas of the discipline of writing. One big idea is this: a writer has a meaning to convey and works to put that meaning onto the page so that the page can be passed to someone else, and that person can see what the writer has done and make meaning from it. Another big idea is that

MID-WORKSHOP TEACHING **Writers Work on Their Writing**

"Writers," I said loudly, and did a 360-degree scan of the room. "I need your full attention, so pens down, please. Eyes up here, please." I did another 360-degree scan, and when I had children's attention, I continued. "Earlier, I said that you would all be writers today, just like Donald Crews and Phyllis Root." I held up their books. "And watching you, some of you *have* been working just like real writers." Turning to one child, I continued. "Clarissa, will you get back to work so the rest of us can watch you being a writer and say what we see?" Clarissa, sitting smack in the middle of the room, giggled a little and returned to work.

"Do you see that Clarissa is holding a marker in her hand and writing *on the paper*, just like real authors do! Is she writing on her arm?"

The children chorused, "Noooooooo."

Then I posed a sequence of other questions: "Is she tapping her marker on the table like this? Is she twirling around in her chair so much that she doesn't get any work done?" Each question was met with a chorus of "Nooooos."

"Right now, I'm going to take a picture of Clarissa, working like a writer, and we can put that picture up on our chart so we can all remember that this is what it looks like to be a writer." I clicked a picture with my cell phone. "I bet that pretty soon I'll have pictures of every one of you looking like real writers!

"*And* there is another way I can tell that Clarissa is a writer. I can look at her work." I held up her page of drawings and walked the page solemnly around the room so children, dispersed at desks and tables, could get a glance. "Clarissa has drawn a whole lot about dance class. Remember how I put the tomatoes into my writing about the garden? Well, Clarissa has put special dance shoes, and a dance leotard, and a dance bar, and all kinds of stuff onto her paper. I bet she is even going to write some letters beside her pictures!

"Tell someone near you what you are going to put into your writing." I let the children talk. After a minute of moving among children, giving them a thumbs-up sign, I voiced over quietly. "I know you are dying to work on your writing. Get going!"

(continues)

As Students Continue Working . . .

"How terrific. Deja is writing all about the school bus! Jose is writing about hamsters. Great topics!"

"When you picture your subject," I called out, "remember to add in little tiny details, like the string holding my tomato plants onto their sticks."

"Once you've drawn something, you can write words beside your picture. Like I am going to write *tomato* beside my plant so people will know." Then I muttered, as if to myself, "Tomatoes! *ttttt* like Tom! *T*! *T* for *tomatoes.*" I then said the word again and soon had added an *M*. "It'd be terrific to see some of you adding words beside your pictures, too."

writers look at the books that others have written and think, "I could do something like that too!" Keeping these goals in mind, you will probably be very accepting of children's efforts. If a five-year-old decides that what he knows most about is his mom, by all means, you'll encourage that youngster to use writing to teach the world all about his mom. If a child wants *you* to draw or write for her, resist the urge to lend a hand, as this may create dependency. With all the lightness and confidence in the world, you'll seize that request as an invitation to support approximation. "Oh my goodness, you wouldn't want *my* writing on your paper. What have you drawn? Oh! Cool! So just write that right here. Just write it any ol' way, as best you can." Then if the child writes something that looks like chicken scratch, say, "Good job! Where else do you want to put some writing?"

If you are worried that your children may not be able to sustain work for an entire writing workshop, you are wise. After twenty minutes, the room may begin to unravel. You'll rely on mid-workshop teaching points as a support structure for keeping writers working; early in the year, these interludes function as stones across the river, helping the students last through the entire workshop. It is not uncommon to have several mid-workshop teaching points in a day's writing workshop, especially during these first days. It is also entirely possible that the writing workshop will be abbreviated for this first week. Because you have not yet had a chance to teach writers to carry on with any independence, to go from one piece of writing to another, to add details to their drawings, to spell as best they can, or any of those other lessons, your children will very likely not yet know how to sustain themselves, and so you'll stop while the going is good, shifting to a share meeting once many children seem to be at loose ends.

You will probably find that you need to be physically present in all corners of the room, making it impossible to interact one-on-one very much. Instead, you'll pull up a chair alongside a table full of writers, asking all the children to stop what they are doing and to talk with you. Then you might, for example, name what one child has done that seems to you to be exactly right. Alternatively, you could name what the entire table full of children seem to be doing that you hope they continue to do. "I love the way the group of you has gotten started. You didn't wait for me to come around and help each one of you, one by one. No! Instead you've done exactly what real writers do. You've picked up your pens and gotten started putting what you know onto the page. And you are adding details, too. That is so, so smart. Get back to work, and I am just going to admire what you do for a minute." In a similar fashion, you could extol the way some writers have remembered to record their names or the way they have been brave enough to try spelling something they don't really know how to spell or have helped each other or drawn in ways that show action. We refer to those interactions as *table compliments*, and they have amazing power.

SHARE

Becoming a Club of Writers

Ask different children to share their work by holding it high for the world to see.

I convened the children in the meeting area, and after they were settled, said, "Writers, there's a lot of great writing in this room! How many of you put something on the page? Great! When I point to you, hold your writing up high so we can all admire it." I acted like a conductor, with children proudly hoisting pictures and writing overhead.

Point out that writers work with support from each other, and suggest the class become a giant writing club (with a club name and all).

"Your writing has been teaching me about so many things. That got me thinking about something else I want to tell you. Writers don't work alone. No way! Writers find people who will listen to their writing and who will say, 'I like this part,' or 'You should add such and such.' *And* writers get ideas from looking at what other writers do.

"I was thinking that all of us—in this class—could become kind of like a writing club for each other, and we could help each other write like real authors. Do you like the idea of us becoming a writing club? Thumbs up."

When children signaled with thumbs up, I said, "You definitely need a name for a club, right? Who has an idea for what we could name our writing club?" Hands shot up. "Turn and tell people sitting near you a good name for our writing club."

As children talked, I crouched among them, gathering a list of possibilities. "Here are some of the names I heard you suggest," I said, and in a jiffy, the class had decided on the name Super Writers.

Now that the class is a club of writers, rally children to learn from what several writers did.

"So, Super Writers, if we are a club of writers, we need to share our writing, right? Let's all look at Fabian's writing (see Figure 1–1) because it can teach us about baseball. Do you see his drawings here? And look what else he added—words! He labeled his drawings with letters! I bet you know what this is, right? Look, here is the letter *B* for /b/ *ball*! Can you tell where Fabian labeled himself? He wrote, 'me.' That's right, look, here is the *M* for *me*! Right next to the picture of himself playing baseball.

FIG. 1–1 Fabian's writing: *Bat. This is a baseball. I know how to play. This is me with curly hair.* (Labels: *Me. Baseball.*)

"Is any writer in this club of ours getting an idea for something *you* can do when you get more time for writing tomorrow? Thumbs up if Fabian's writing is giving you ideas for what you can do." The children signaled "yes."

"Let's look at one more! Here is Joseline's piece! (See Figure 1–2.) Let's read it together. I am going to move my finger and touch each thing in Joseline's piece about her bedroom. Here is Joseline's bed. Let me see what else there is. Oh, here is Joseline's dresser! And what else do we see? Oh yeah! Here is Joseline's desk!"

Joseline piped in, "And my dirty clothes on the floor!" And I agreed that I'd missed that.

"Do you see how Joseline has included *so much* about her bedroom? You can do that in your writing, too! You can try to fill up the pages with information just like Joseline did!

"Will those of you wearing red stand up?" They did, and I noted they were fairly well distributed among the group. "Share your writing with others who are near you, and touch each thing that you drew and say what it is, and then read what you wrote. I am sure the rest of you too will see things in your friends' writing that you could try in your writing tomorrow!"

After a minute or two, I said, "Writers, we need to stop now, but the good news is that you will be writing again tomorrow!"

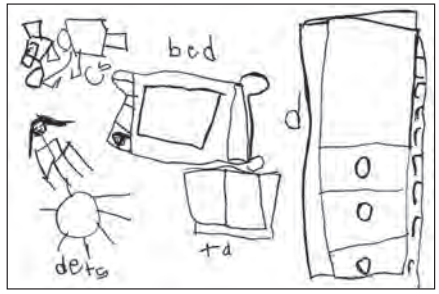


FIG. 1–2 Joseline's writing: *This is my room. I have my bed. This is the blanket. I have my animals at the end of the bed. I have a table next to my bed. This is the dresser where I put my clothes. This is my desk. I am sitting at the desk.* (Labels: *Bed. Dresser. Desk. Table. Clothes.*)

FIG. 1–3 Another example, Isabella's writing, "Animals Have Names." *Pony, Elephant, Pony, Horse, Horse.*

Session 5

Stretching Out Words to Write Them

YOU WILL HAVE NOTICED that prior to now, we have referred to children's work as *writing* when actually, for many children, there has not been a lot of writing at all. Today that will change. Your message will be, "Writers write with pictures *and* words."

This session helps students develop phonemic awareness and begin to build toward conventional reading and writing. Most state standards call for kindergarten students to be able to spell simple words phonetically, using what they know about letter-sound correspondence, and to put spaces between words. They must also be able to isolate and pronounce all the sounds in a CVC (consonant-vowel-consonant) word and read common high-frequency words with automaticity. This unit is a first step toward meeting these standards. Of course, your diverse group of spellers will represent a wide range of understandings about letters, sounds, and words.

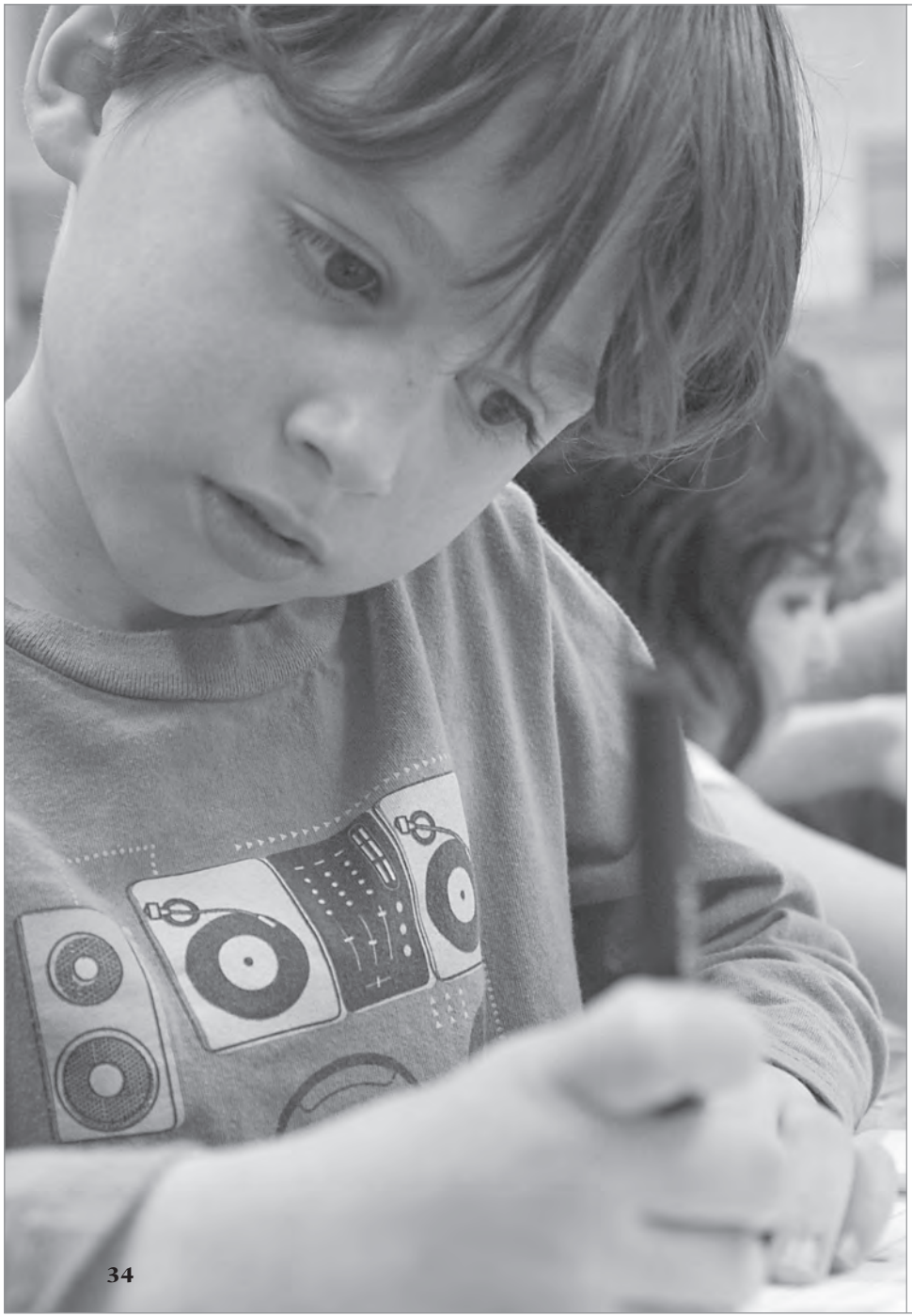
Some valuable instructional resources and materials for word study are the *Words Their Way* series by Donald Bear, Marcia Invernizzi, and Shane Templeton and *Phonics Lessons* by Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell. If you are using a resource like these, you have probably begun analyzing your students' knowledge of word features (letters, spelling patterns) and the ways they use word-solving strategies when they write words. You have probably administered an assessment to find out how many letter names and sounds your students know. If this showed that some children know most of their letter sounds, you will also want to administer a spelling inventory. By looking at the information provided by assessments like these and also by studying your students' writing and spelling behaviors, you will see what they already know. Understanding their strengths will help you determine where to begin your word study instruction.

You'll teach youngsters that writers slowly say whatever it is they want to write, listening for the first sound, then use the letters of the alphabet to record that sound. Don't worry whether your children know the alphabet or have a command of letter-sound correspondence. This lesson will be just as important for children who do not yet know any letter-sound correspondence as it will be for the children who spell sight words correctly.

IN THIS SESSION, you'll teach students that young writers say words slowly and then write down the sounds that they hear.

GETTING READY

- ✔ One child's work that will serve as a model for the minilesson
- ✔ Enlarged name chart with each child's name printed next to the letter with which it begins. Children should already be familiar with this chart.
- ✔ Class piece of shared writing and markers (see Teaching and Active Engagement)
- ✔ "When We Are Done We Have Just Begun" chart (see Mid-Workshop Teaching)
- ✔ Copy of name chart for each child to have on hand while writing



Most children are dying to write letters and happy to approximate as best they can. Their writing may end up looking like a chicken stepped in ink and then ran across the page, but the writers will be proud as punch that they've written some words.

"Most children are dying to write letters and happy to approximate as best they can."

In this lesson, you'll teach children that writers say the word they want to write. They say it slowly, often repeatedly, listening for the initial sound. Do this with a word that has an easy-to-identify initial sound. For example, *m* can be stretched out like a rubber band, with that sound continuing on and on. Then too, the names of some letters (*m*, *s*, *r*, *l*, *n*) all carry the sound they make, making sound-letter correspondence easier. If you want to spell *me* and recall that the double-mountain shape is an *m*, then putting those together is not all that hard! And given that most of the drawings a kindergarten child will make will feature themselves, teaching children to hear and record *m* is a lesson that will pay off!

Your bigger point will be that children can listen and record all the sounds in the words they want to write, and of course many of your children won't yet know all their sound-letter correspondence. Some children, then, will isolate the initial sound and then need to ask a friend, "How do you spell /rrrrr/?" Or, alternatively, the child may just record a diamond or a lollipop-like mark in lieu of a letter. Either way, this is still extremely important work for this child to do because isolating and hearing sounds is an essential part of developing phonemic awareness skills.

MINILESSON

Stretching Out Words to Write Them

CONNECTION

Find a way to elicit and celebrate the topics writers are writing about, and use this as a way to convey your interest in learning from their areas of expertise.

"Super Writers, wow! You are teaching so much through your books. How about we quickly share our topics with everyone in this room—want to do that?" The kids bobbed their heads yes.

"I'm going to tap one of you, then another, then another, lightly on the head, and when I tap you, will you tell everyone what one of your teaching books is about? Say it in just a few words, like 'my family' or 'horses.'"

I tapped Sophie and she said, "My family." Then I tapped Owen who sang out, "My dinosaur puzzle." Yatri jumped up on her knees and said, "Magic tricks!" And this continued for a few more children.

Tell the story of being stalled when trying to read a child's writing at home because pictures weren't labeled. Explain that the writer later added labels that clarified everything.

"Writers, you are all writing on such interesting topics that I am *dying* to read your books. Ryan has a really interesting topic. He is teaching us all about his family. I always read right before I go to sleep, so last night, I turned on my reading light and snuggled down to read about Ryan's family. I started to read, and saw this." I showed the children a picture Ryan had drawn. "'Hmm,' I thought. 'I wonder who this is. It is a guy with huge furry hair, and I was dying to know who had that hair. Lying there in my bed with Ryan's writing, I thought, 'Is this Ryan's dad? Is it his brother? Who?'"

"Writers, when I got to school, Ryan said it was his dad—and you know what he did? He picked up his pen and wrote that—'Dad'—beside the picture. So, now any one of you can take his writing home, and you will know what you are looking at. He also wrote 'suitcase' beside this thing the guy with the furry hair was holding. I thought the guy was holding a huge chunk of dirt but it turns out it is a suitcase!"

◆ COACHING

Even as we focus on the mechanics and conventions of writing, we need to be sure to balance that with an enthusiasm for the content and meaning of writing.

This connection also serves to help children learn from each other what they might write about next.

Transition toward setting up today's lesson on getting words onto the page.

"We know that writers write words the best they can. So when I saw that some of you hadn't written any words, I thought to myself, 'Wait a sec. Maybe it's *my* fault if some of you aren't getting down enough words. Maybe I haven't taught you enough ways to actually get words onto the page.' So listen up, because this is important."

Name the teaching point.

"Today I want to teach you that writers use words as well as pictures to teach people what we know. Writers write words by saying the word slooooooowwwwwwwwly and then writing down the first sound they hear."

TEACHING

Compare sounding out words to stretching out a rubber band, and get children stretching out words that you and they need to add to the class text.

"Have you ever tried stretching a rubber band as far as it will go? You stretch it out nice and slow, like this," I held a rubber band between my fingers to demonstrate. "Guess what, writers! It's the same thing with words! When you are trying to write words, it can help to stretch them out nice and slow so that you can hear all the sounds and get those onto the page. Watch me while I do that.

"Let's look at our playground writing and see what words we could add. Oh! We should write 'monkey bars.'

"*Monkey bars* is a lot to write! Let's say it slowly together and then watch how I figure out what to write: monkey bars. Monkey bars. Mmmmm." As we all said the word slowly, the children and I mimicked that we were holding a rubber band, stretching it out farther and farther. "Mmmmmm. /m/. That's like *me* and . . . what else? Let's think if there is anyone in this class whose name starts with /m/. We can look at the name chart, too."

Margay, meanwhile, had jumped to her feet. "You are right. Mmmmargay. And Mmmatthew! Point to your names on the name chart." They did, and I concluded, "So *monkey bars* starts like *Margay* and *Matthew*, with an *m*." I recorded the letter beside the picture.

"Class, did you see how we stretched out the word *monkey bars*, listening for the sound we heard first, and then we wrote that sound? Let's keep going, and see if we hear any other sounds in *monkey bars.* Monkkkkkk."

I was not sure that many children in the class would hear any internal sounds, so this was experimental. A child or two made /k/ noises, so I nodded and quickly recorded that, but then decided to move on, giving children practice hearing more first sounds.

It is important that by October, each of your kindergartners will at least grasp the principle that each sound (or phoneme) needs to be represented with at least one letter (or letter-like mark) on the page. This is foundational, and even children who do not yet have a strong knowledge of letter-sound correspondence can learn this principle. You will also see that in short order, with strong instruction, more and more of your children will move from using letter-like marks to using letters. Once you have begun some work with phonics and taught or reminded children of letter names, you will see them using their beginning knowledge of letters and sounds as they write. When a child writes the word coat, he might record a c *or* k *for the initial sound, and if the child hears an ending sound, he might use either a* t *or* d *to capture it. These sorts of spellings are expected for kindergartners.*

Debrief. Remind students of what they saw you do and why it is helpful.

"Writers, thank goodness we labeled those monkey bars, 'cause I'm not the best drawer. But now that we have labels, anyone can read our writing and know what we've got on our playground. Did you notice how I listened to the sounds and thought about how the word started? I think you could all do that, too!"

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

Channel students to work on labeling another item in the class text, again stretching the word out slowly and hearing constituent sounds.

"Let's try labeling something else in our writing. How about this?" I pointed to the sun, and soon children were working with partners to say "sun" slowly, stretching out the first sound. "Sssssssss. What sound do you hear? /S/ like . . . ," and children began producing names from the class list.

"Listen to the way you are saying the word slooooowly! I hear lots of you saying your words like you're stretching out a rubber band. I hear you saying 'sssssun' like Sssssophie and Sssssabastian. Liam just realized that sssssssun begins like sssssslide and sssswings, two other items we put on our playground piece. You're really getting the hang of this, writers."

LINK

Send students off to write, equipping them with name charts and with resolve to write as well as to draw.

"Writers, today I know you will be doing all that we learned. How many of you are going to picture whatever you are writing about, so you can add little details to your writing?" They signaled that they were.

"Great. And how many of you are going to write words to label things in your writing?" They signaled that they were.

"Great. I've put little name charts next to each of your writing spots so that you can use that to help you write. So, remember to stretch out your words slooooooowly to really hear the sounds, and then check the name chart to see if it can help. Are you ready for this challenge? Are you ready to do some hard work!? Off you go!"

The important thing in this session is that you expect children's drawings and spellings, both, to change visibly and quickly and to do so right away. Just as you should expect children's drawings to become representational so that by October a house will have some resemblance to a house, you can also expect that children will begin to label half a dozen objects on each page. The labels will be composed of letter-like shapes that go left to right, but more writers will use a bunch of consonant letters to represent first or dominant sounds in words.

CONFERRING AND SMALL-GROUP WORK

Supporting Students in Getting Words on Their Papers

THE WORK YOU HAVE TAUGHT in your minilesson is work that really is best taught through one-to-one conferences. It is great to rally kids to think about adding words to their pictures, but you really need to pull your chair alongside youngsters and make it happen. Essentially, what you need to do is teach like crazy. If a child draws himself on a bike, when you pull close to that child, listen to what he wants to write ("I rode my bike."), and then point to the part of the drawing that resembles a bike and say, "Let's write *bike*." If the child protests that he does not know how to write *bike*, then tell him, "I'll show you how. First, say *bike* slowly. Do that." Let him do it on his own. If you sense he needs support, join him, speaking in a quieter voice than his.

Then say, "Let's think about what sounds we hear in b . . . i . . . k . . . ," and say it with him again, this time more slowly. "Say it with me," you'll say again, so the child joins you in saying the word in a stretched out fashion. Listen with the child to the sounds as he articulates the word. "What do you hear?" The child might say, "I hear a *b*," but it is as likely that he will say, "I hear /b/," in which case you will tell him, "Write that down," and then look intently at the paper, as if you have not a single doubt that he can supply the letter. It is interesting to see what the child produces. In Draco's piece about pizza, he was able to hear and record one or two sounds in a few words (see Figure 5–1). You will want to make sure that students similar to Draco are able to carry on independently. To do so, looking at their work will not be enough. You will also have to teach students as they practice saying and recording letters across their books.

After setting the child up to record the sound, you need to look at the paper. You will feel the child's eyes fixed on you, as if he is saying, "How and what do I write?" The normal tendency, when you feel someone looking beseechingly at you, is to meet that person's eyes. Don't do it. Just continue staring at the place on the page where you anticipate the child will soon write, saying, "Just stick it here." Eventually, the child is apt to shrug and then to make some sort of a mark.

If the child records anything, even if the mark is a wiggle and not a letter, read it back, /b/, joining the child in reading /b/, and then making the long /i/ sound as the child

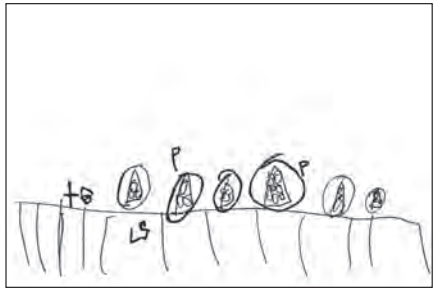


FIG. 5–1 Draco's writing: *This is lunch food.* (Labels: *Pizza. Table. Legs. Pepperoni pizza.*)

MID-WORKSHOP TEACHING

Reading Our Writing to Our Friends

"Stop, look, and listen," I sang out. "Oh yeah!" the students responded. "Writers, it seems to me that once you are writing with pictures *and* words, you all become not just writers, but also readers. Right now, take out your pointing finger. In a minute, I'm going to ask you to point to and read the pictures and then the words in your writing. Read this to yourself. Keep moving your finger and find something else on the page to read." Children did this.

"Now, read your writing to your friend who is sitting next to you. Decide who will go first, quickly. And then point to and read your pictures and words. Put your finger right *under* the word you are reading." They did this.

"Now read your writing to the person across from you." After children did this for a minute, I interrupted to say, "Wow, writers! You are also readers! I think I'm going to have to add 'We can reread our writing' to our "When We Are Done, We Have Just Begun" chart! Keep going! Let's write more so that we can read *more* of our writing to our friends! Go!"

As Students Continue Working . . .

"I can't hear you, writers! Pick something on your page and say the word slowly listening to all the sounds! Then write the letters the best you can! Let me hear you stretch them out!"

"I see Zoe looking around the room. She found the word *door* on our door—and labeled the door on her dollhouse that she is teaching us about! Use the room to help you! Another great strategy discovered by one of the Super Writers!"

"Don't just label one thing on your page. Try to label all the pictures on the page! Move your pen right now and tap all the things in your pictures that you could write a word next to!"

"I see you are working hard to say words and hear their sounds. Keep it up!"

prepares to record whatever he hears next. Again, nudge the child to record a mark representing that next sound.

If, on the other hand, the child did not isolate and hear a /b/ sound, you'll want to demonstrate how you say the word slowly and listen to a sound, producing your own /b/. You can also tell the child that the letter *b* makes a /b/ sound without feeling as if you are doing too much of the important work for the child because the most important lessons for the beginner revolve around phonemic awareness. Words can be said slowly; constituent sounds can be isolated and heard and then recorded. At the start of kindergarten, many children will need your help in saying words slowly, isolating the first sound, and making a mark on the page to represent that sound.

If the child has not isolated the first sound, you probably won't progress to help the child isolate and make marks representing later sounds. Instead you might move to asking the child to help you label other items—the sun, the child himself or herself. In each instance, help the child say the name of the item slowly, listening for the first sound and then making a mark to represent that sound. At this early stage, it is not essential that the mark be a letter, let alone that it be the correct letter!

In addition to one-to-one conferences, you may want to support labeling by leading a small-group session or two of interactive writing. To do this, cluster a few children together and recruit them to work together to help on a single piece of writing. It could be the class text or one child's text. Encourage the children in the small group to practice slowly saying the word that the writer wants recorded, listening for each sound, and to then write the words that match the pictures. Once children hear the first sound in a word, they might need to search for a letter or be taught how to use their alphabet chart to help them find the letter that makes the sound they heard and felt. You might label one page of your writing one day, putting six labels on the page. Interactive writing will give you a nice place to tuck in some of the state standards instruction that you'll be supporting across the year, including coaching children in the use of uppercase and lowercase letters.

In this session you gave children a name chart. In every unit of study, you will introduce a tool or two that remains throughout the rest of the year, often as a physical embodiment of the skill. In this minilesson, then, you not only gave children a name chart, but you also began the important work of reaching toward conventional spelling.

SHARE

Adding Labels to Pictures

Channel children to reread what they have written to a friend, showing the new words and details they've added. Then remind them to store writing in their folders.

"Before you come over to the meeting area for the share, just to your friend next to you, will you read all the new words and information you added to your pieces? Don't forget to put your finger on the words you are reading."

After children did this for a minute, I sang out, "Stop, look, and listen," and waited for the children to sing the chorus, "Oh yeah."

"Writers, put your writing in your folder. Remember that if you are done, put that writing in the red dot side. If you still have some information that you need to add to the pictures and words, place it on the green dot side. Then put your folder into the caddy at your table. Let me see which tables are ready to come over to the meeting area."

Recruit children to help you use an imaginary pen to record words generated earlier to accompany the drawing of a slide, saying those words slowly. Make clear the expectation to write lots of words.

Soon the children were sitting in the meeting area. "I wanted us to meet here because I thought we might work together to be sure we had added *many* words to our class piece about the playground! Let's do some of this challenging work together! What else do we want to label about the slide? Let's try to remember what we wanted to say. Quickly tell your partner again the different words we should write.

"I heard you say we should write, *curvy*, *fast*, and *high!* I remember now! So let's start with *curvy*. Take out your imaginary rubber bands, and let's say it slooooooowly. /Cccc/ like *cat*, like *cookie*, like . . ." Look at the name chart and point to the picture on the name chart with the same sound. "Clarissa!" all the kids cheered! "And . . ." Point to the other picture. "Casey!" Great! Now, with your imaginary markers, take your finger and draw the letter *c* on the carpet! I'll put it right here next to the slide to show *curvy*. Say *curvy* one more time. Curveeeeeeeeeeee."

"E! E!" Tanisa shouted. "I wrote the *e*."

"Let's read back what we have so far. Monkey bars. Sun. Slide. Swings. Curvy. Wow, we are writing lots of words!"

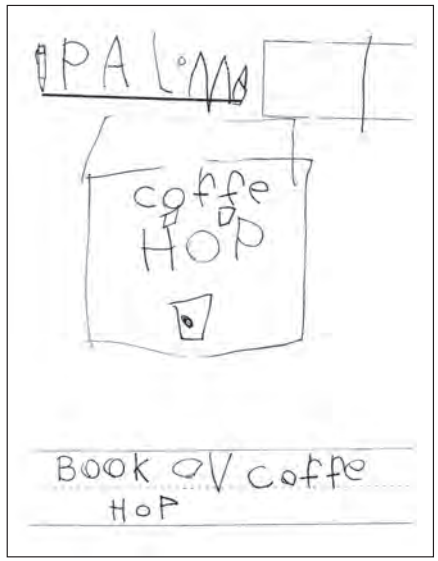


FIG. 5–2 Paloma's writing: *Coffee Shop, Book of Coffee Shops*

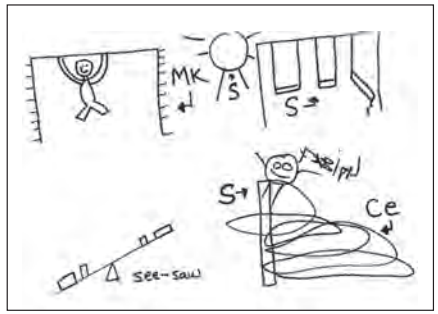


FIG. 5–3 Adding words to the class's playground piece. *Monkey bars. Sun. Slide. Swings. Curvy.*

QUICK LOOK

Show and Tell Writing
From Labels to Pattern Books

MARIE MOUNTEER • LIZZIE HETZER
LUCY CALKINS • SERIES EDITOR

This engaging additional unit gives your students the tools and strategies they need to approximate the words that are most meaningful for their writing. The unit celebrates invented spellings as kids develop foundational skills, knowing that your front-and-center goal will be to persuade your kids that they can write, that they, too, can be members of the literacy club.

Throughout the unit, students learn how to:

- engage in the inventive spelling process: drawing, then labeling part by part, and revising to add more and more labels
- write the most salient sounds in words and then "stretch out" these sounds into full words
- string together words learned through inventive spelling into full sentences
- write lots of sentences across pages in a pattern, using high-frequency words, as well as words learned through inventive spelling

Fit with the Core Units of Study

This unit is designed to be taught between Units 1 and 2 in the kindergarten writing units of study, and in conjunction with Unit 2 in the kindergarten phonics units of study.

Note: *This unit is not included in the grade-level set of units, but is a recommended optional purchase. For complete details on this and other additional units of study, visit* **UnitsofStudy.com**.

FROM
Show and Tell Writing: From Labels to Pattern Books

SESSION 4
Writers Use Everything They Know to Spell Words and Don't Wait to Be Perfect

Session 4

Writers Use Everything They Know to Spell Words and Don't Wait to Be Perfect

GETTING READY

- Be sure to have your tools out (alphabet chart, snap word collection, name wall) to use during this session, along with chart paper and markers to write words and do interactive writing (see Teaching and Share).
- Children will need their writing folders and a pen or pencil for the minilesson (see Active Engagement).
- Place mini alphabet charts on or in students' writihg folders, if you haven't already (see Active Engagement).
- Display the "Brave Spellers" anchor chart with the first three Post-its (see Link).
- Bring mailing labels and small adhesive stars for small-group work (see Conferring and Small-Group Work).
- You may want to draw a picture of a familiar object like a teddy bear for small-group work (see Conferring and Small-Group Work).
- Add to the "Brave Spellers" anchor chart by writing interactively on Post-its with students. Display the completed chart in the classroom. You'll want to refer to it all year, and you'll add a new Post-it to it in Session 7 (see Share).

IN THIS SESSION

TODAY YOU'LL teach students that writers try their best to write words on the page, even if they know the words are not spelled exactly right. You will demonstrate how to spell words by using all the tools in the room—the name wall, the alphabet chart, and the snap word chart.

TODAY YOUR STUDENTS will continue to draw and write pages about their objects. Expect to see students labeling at least five words on each page and using tools like the alphabet chart and name chart.

MINILESSON

CONNECTION

Challenge writers to work hard at writing words, even though they know what they are writing might not look the way it is written in a book.

"Writers, congratulations! You've been working to put stuff on the page—even when it's tricky. One thing I heard you say is that the pictures aren't the only tricky part. The words have been tricky, too!

"Yesterday some of you came up to me after checking the snap word chart and asked, 'How do I write about my robot? *Robot* isn't on the chart.' And that was a wise question because . . . I have a secret. Listen up." I waited a second. "*Most* of the time, when you want to write something, the words won't be on a chart on the wall.

"You could always line up beside a teacher and say (and I made my voice into a pathetic needy whine), 'Help me, help me,' but there won't always be teachers beside you when you want to write."

Name the teaching point.

"Today I want to teach you that it is really important for you to say, 'I'll just be brave. I'll use everything I know—my name, my friends' names, the alphabet—to spell as best I can.' If you do that every day, pretty soon you'll be able to write any word in the whole wide world."

TEACHING

Demonstrate being a brave writer. Show how writers use all the tools in the room—the name wall, the alphabet chart, labels up in the room—to help write all of the sounds they hear.

"You know that I am *much* older than you. And I've been spelling words since I was small. So I know a lot of words. But I'm going to pretend to be a five- or six-year-old right now and show you what you can do when you want to spell a word.

"I want to write some more words on my page about my bunny. One thing I want to write is that she is fuzzy. I know that I don't know exactly how to spell *fuzzy*. But if I don't try . . . I won't have that important word on my page. And if I don't try, I won't get better. So let me try to hear the sounds and write down the letters I know.

"Can you help me say the word slowly?" I slowly said *ffff-uuu-zzzzzzz-eeee*, sliding my right hand down my left arm.

"I think I hear some sounds! *Fffffff*, that sounds like the picture of *fan* on our alphabet chart! I'll write down the letter *F*. Maybe I can hear more sounds." I slid my hand down my arm again. *Fuuuuzzzz*. *Zzzzz*. Hmm, . . . that's like the *Z* in e letter *E*." I wrote it down.

the same as book spelling and that you used a variety

, but did we try the best we could? Yes! Did we say the word s. We even heard the ending sounds, didn't we? *Fuzzeeee*.

son who is brave enough to do the best you can. When other day you can do things perfectly, you'll just sit on the bench, ect.'

basketball player if you just sit around and wait until the day to say, 'I'm not perfect, but I'll try.'"

This concept is one of the most essential to this unit. Without a strong sense of "Yes, I can," students will be less likely to attempt this challenging work. The "Brave Spellers" anchor chart you'll use during the share of this session will be especially important for illustrating this concept.

If you draw something different, we recommend you choose a word that not all kids know how to spell easily. Also, avoid words that don't follow conventional spelling patterns, like eye *or* ear. *Demonstrate how you write down the salient sounds in the word.*

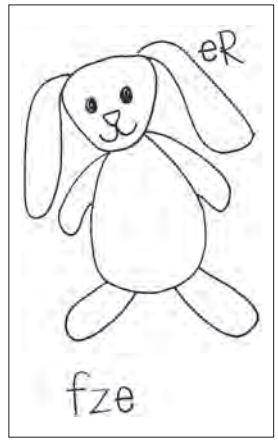


FIG. 4–1 Teacher example with inventive spelling.

CONFERRING AND SMALL-GROUP WORK

Supporting Reluctant Writers

TODAY YOU MAY WANT TO PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION to your more reluctant writers. They might be waiting to get started until you come to them, idly adding to their drawings or asking a friend to help them spell. To figure out what's stopping them, you may want to refer to the conferring in Session 3 for tips on how to assess young writers. You'll want to balance offering support with letting them productively struggle through getting words down on the page. See the small groups below for ideas on how to give them an extra boost.

In a small group, table conference, or one-to-one conference, support reluctant writers with special tools.

If a few students resist writing words, you may simply give them a new tool. You might ask a child to tell about the picture, and while listening, plop Post-its alongside objects in the picture that warrant a label. Or you might plop mailing labels in those spots, an introduce these "special one conferences.

this work with efficiency. Here are some special stick- one thing on your picture three other things that you tures, you may want to put words on the labels. You'll eir alphabet chart to match se labels to remind children e of the label, that star will

rough interactive writing

, you might begin by asking ghbor needs help with her

writing). You could then share a text in which you have already drawn a picture of a familiar object like a teddy bear. Channel students to help you point to parts you could label. As you work to write words, invite students to say the words slowly, segmenting the words and isolating the sounds. Recruit the children to help you find the letter that matches on the alphabet chart and share the pen with kids, so they also help write the letters. For example, you might share the pen for the first letter of the words *paw*, *tummy*, *nose*.

As you work together, you can use prompts like:

- "Say the word slowly. Catch the first sound. What sound did you hear?"
- "Move your hand down your arm as you say that word. *Beeeeaaaarrrr*." (Move your hand slowly from your shoulder to wrist, stretching out the word as you go.)

MID-WORKSHOP TEACHING

Celebrating Brave Attempts and Hard Work

"Writers, I am blown away by your bravery. There are writers in this room who didn't have any words on their papers yesterday, and today their papers are filled up with words. You should be so proud of how hard you have worked to get the letters and sounds down. When writers have worked hard and are super-proud, they share it with other people. Right now, will you point to a word on your paper that you worked really hard to write, and share it with you partner?" Kids turned to the person next to them and said, "I'm proud of this word, and this word."

"Wow! Such proud writers, give your partner a high-five for all that hard work! Now guess what? We can't stop there, we can keep going, writing even more words to teach our readers even more!"

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

Recruit students to try spelling words on their own. Remind them to use strategies like saying words slowly and referring to the alphabet chart.

"Who's willing to give this a go? Who's brave enough to try doing some of your own writing?" Hands shot up. "So pull your work out of your folder. I put a little alphabet chart in your folder to help! Ready to get started right now? Point to something in your pictures—to anything—and say that word aloud. Then get started, writing it as best you can."

As writers worked, I coached. "I see you saying a word, then looking at the alphabet chart for the first sound. I'm seeing some of you singing the ABC song to find the letter you want. Such good work!"

As students add more letters to their labels, keep in mind that they are likely to include the salient sounds first, the sounds they hear the most clearly. This may not always be the first and last sounds. It may be the medial sound.

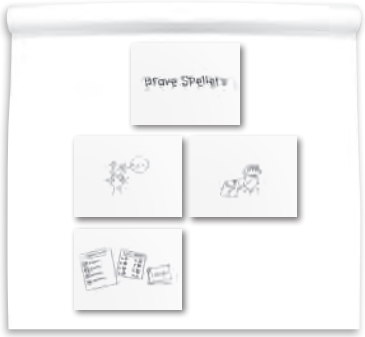
Each day, you'll want to be sure children are using their alphabet chart and have it nearby. Do what works best—a table alphabet chart or individual charts pasted on the front of folders. The most important thing is that kids use the tool!

LINK

Remind students that from now on, they will use all their tools and do their best at spelling words, even if it's not perfect.

"Writers, this is hard work. From now until the end of time we are going to not just say, 'Ehhh, that's good enough. I wrote the first sound, or I wrote one letter.' Now we are going to think, 'I'm going to do my very best, even if it's not perfect or if it doesn't look the same as it might in a book. I'm going to use all the tools in the room to help me try my very best.'

"Now I'm going to put up this 'Brave Spellers' anchor chart and these pictures to help us remember to be brave, use tools, and stretch out words." I put up the "Brave Spellers" anchor chart.



In the share, you'll add the words to the "Brave Spellers" anchor chart using interactive writing. You'll want to display the chart, so children can refer to it throughout this unit. You will add a new Post-it to this chart in Session 7.

- "Do you know what letter makes that sound? Let's check the alphabet chart."
- "Say the word again. What other sounds do you hear?"

After about three to five minutes of interactive writing, invite children to return to their writing. You might say, "Now it is your turn to put words on your pages. You can try doing what we just tried, and I'll coach you. Point and say the first word you want to try, and get going!" You can float from table to table today and the next, conducting quick bits of interactive writing.

Even as you focus in on tables, groups, or individuals who need more support, remember that your whole class could probably benefit from some encouragement to get a lot of words down on the page. As you move about the room, you might say:

- "Remember when you said you didn't know how to spell? Now you are spelling all on your own!"
- "Look at all you are doing to be brave and get letters down on the page. What did you do to help yourself?"
- "You didn't just write one word, you didn't just write two words, you wrote three words!"

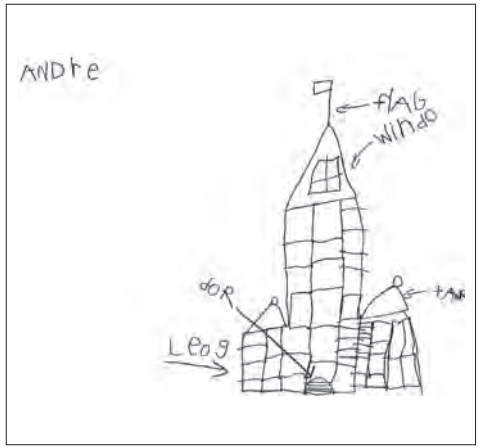


FIG. 4–2 Andre went back and added more words to his drawing of his Lego tower. (*Left to right, top to bottom*: Lego, door, flag, window, tower)

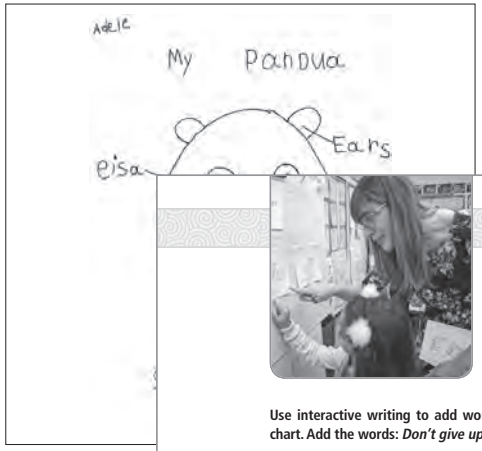


FIG. 4–3 Adele went back
(*Left to right, top to bottom*

SHARE

Using Interactive Writing to Create a Class Spelling Chart

Use interactive writing to add words under each picture on the "Brave Spellers" anchor chart. Add the words: *Don't give up!*, *Use tools*, and *Stretch it out*.

"Writers, you spelled tricky words today! On the count of three, will you say some of the words you tried to write? One-two-three!" The class chimed in all at once. "Wow! Listen to all of those words. What brave spellers you are! Place your writing in your folders on the 'done' or 'still working' side and come to the meeting area."

"Let's add words to our 'Brave Spellers' chart to keep track of the ways that we can be brave spellers." I placed the chart on the easel.

"Will you take a minute to remember the ways that you worked to spell words today? Turn and tell your partner something you did to help yourself be a brave speller today." I listened in as students talked.

"I heard a few of you say that you didn't give up! Don't give up! That's important. Let's write that down under this picture here." I quickly wrote the first two words, *don't give*, and stopped at the word *up*. I invited children to help me hear the sounds and write the letters of this word, referencing the alphabet chart along with way.

I continued to write words for each picture on the chart, stopping to give the students opportunities for practice. As we wrote "use tools," the students practiced hearing and writing the first letters in *tools*. As we wrote, "stretch it out," they helped write the snap word *it* and the last letter in *out*.

"I know this is going to be an important chart. It will help us all remember how we can be the kind of brave spellers that we want to be. Let's read the chart together."

FIG. 4–4 A student adds to "Brave Spellers" chart.

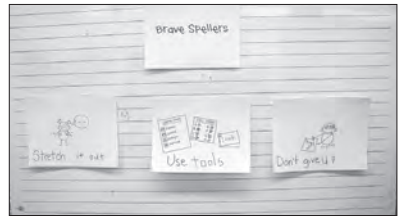


FIG. 4–5 Final "Brave Spellers" chart created through interactive writing.

FROM
Show and Tell Writing: From Labels to Pattern Books

SESSION 4
Writers Use Everything They Know to Spell Words and Don't Wait to Be Perfect

Session 6

Checklists Can Help Writers Make Powerful Stories

IN THIS SESSION, you'll teach students that writers use tools, such as checklists, to help them write the best they can.

GETTING READY

- ✔ Student writing folders containing writing from the entire unit, including the piece that was celebrated in the Session 5 celebration (see Connection)
- ✔ Photographs or pictures of people doing something that is made easier with the assistance of a tool, which could include bulldozers, levers, wheelbarrows, or even blenders for chefs (see Connection)
- ✔ Enlarged copy of the Narrative Writing Checklist, Grades K and 1, covered with a cloth so that it can be revealed with a flourish (see Teaching)
- ✔ Teacher-created writing sample to model using the Narrative Writing Checklist, as well as revised writing sample to reflect use of the checklist (see Teaching and Share)
- ✔ List of "What Makes Writing Easy to Read" (see Link)
- ✔ Student writing sample that models using the Narrative Writing Checklist, Grades K and 1 to improve the writing (see Mid-Workshop Teaching)

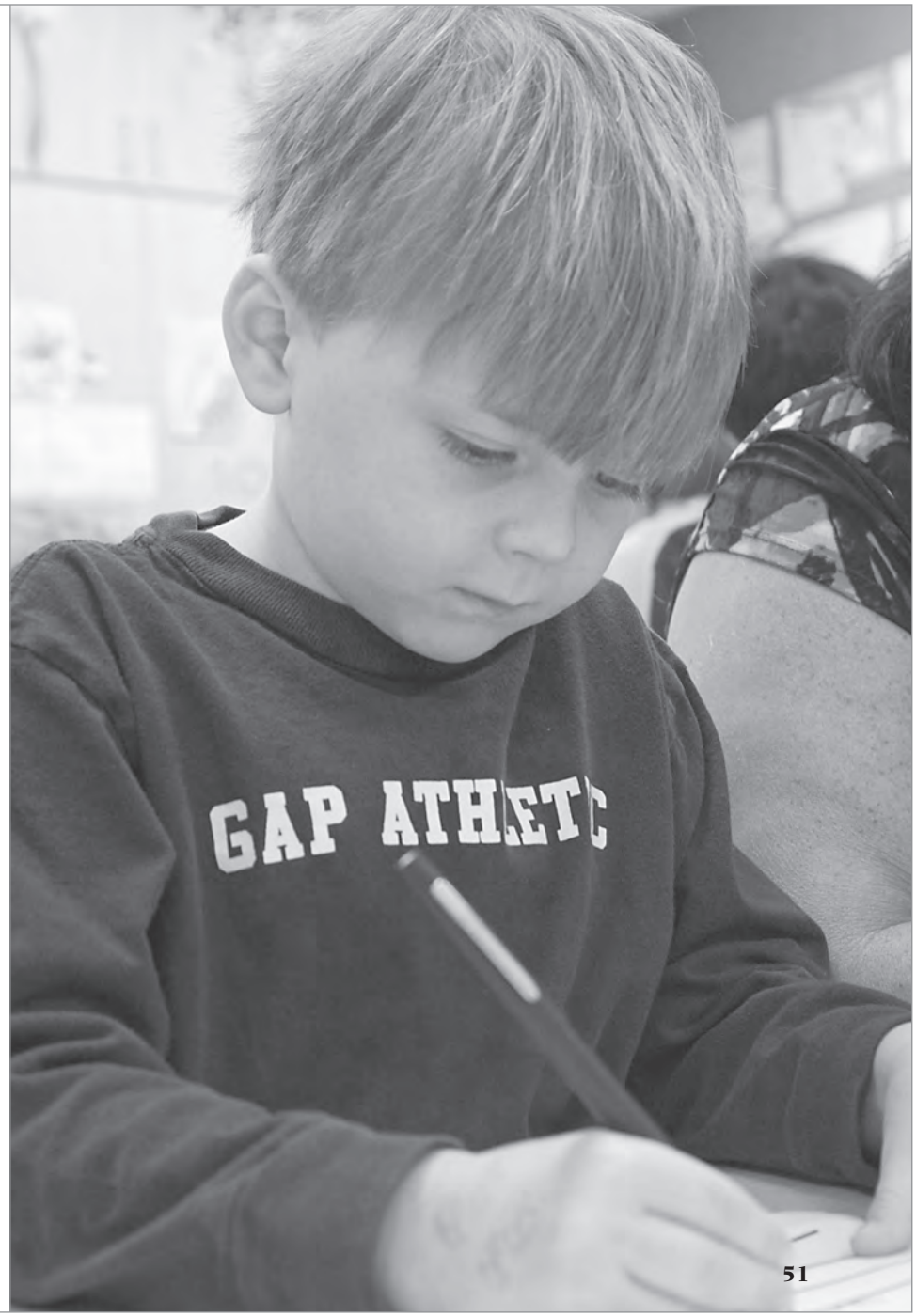
HOPEFULLY YOU WILL HAVE HAD A CHANCE to read over children's writing, noting ways in which it has and has not improved since the start of the unit and of the year. Chances are good that the writing has already become more conventional and easier to read. This should be a source of real pleasure for you because every bit of progress your children make as writers will give them important traction in their reading as well. When Marie Clay, the great reading researcher who founded Reading Recovery, visited Teachers College Reading and Writing classes, she told us her one biggest regret about her program, Reading Recovery, was that she hadn't named it Reading *and Writing* Recovery and made a bigger point about the central role that writing plays in supporting young readers. Clay told us that in her eyes, a child is ready to read conventionally—to move into level C books—if the child can write in a way that he or she can reread the writing and an adult can reread at least swatches of the writing, doing so with one-to-one matching. This unit is taking children a long way toward writing and reading with that level of proficiency.

But progress sometimes comes with a cost, and it is likely that you have noticed that although your children's writing is more conventional, it may also be less fluent, less detailed, less expressive, and less coherent. This shouldn't surprise you. Throughout the year, you'll find that when you emphasize a new aspect of writing (as you will have done with your new emphasis on conventions), some children will forget all your prior instruction. In this instance, children will be especially prone to forget concerns over content because a focus on convention not only is different from a focus on content but it also conflicts with a focus on content. This is why we, as adult writers, often say, when we are drafting, "I'll just spell as best I can for now and come back later to fix it." Of course, a concern for convention will be all the more taxing on a young child, for whom very little has reached the level of automaticity. And so it shouldn't surprise you if your children have focused less on their content and craft now that your teaching has created a new concern for mechanics.

This session, then, is one of several during this unit that spotlights not the importance of writing so that readers can read the text, but instead, writing well-developed stories in the first place. Like the earlier sessions that focused on narrative craft, this session essentially asks children to remember all they know about writing stories, to extend that knowledge just a bit, and to draw on what they know as they write. The features of narrative writing that are highlighted are essential ones, and the goal is not perfection but progress. Through this exercise we extend our work with most writing state standards, which ask students to order events and provide a reaction by also asking them to consider character and setting details and incorporate them into their story. We also set students well on a path for achieving many grade 1 writing standards, which, in addition to the grade K standards, expect students to recount two or more events and provide a sense of closure.

"The goal of narrative writing is not perfection but progress."

The checklist that you uncover and use in this session is part of an entire assessment system that undergirds not only this book but this series of books. You will see this list resurface later in this unit with grade 1 expectations alongside kindergarden expectations, and many or most of your children will reach grade 1 expectations before this year is over. We recommend this. Most state standards escalate rapidly in middle school, and we aim to send students to those grades doing work that is highly proficient (that is, for kindergartners, meeting first-grade standards). During the units on narrative writing, the different versions of the checklist will undergird instruction and assessment.



MINILESSON

Checklists Can Help Writers Make Powerful Stories

CONNECTION

Orient children to the start of a new bend in the unit, helping them know they'll continue to write readable true stories, this time using new tools.

"Writers, when you come to our meeting area, bring your folders and get out the story that you celebrated in the museum during our last writing workshop." They did this. "Writers, I know you remember the celebration you had during our last writing workshop. That celebration marked the ending of the first part of this unit. Today, then, starts some new work.

"The work won't be *all* new. You will still write true stories every day during writing time, and you will still write in booklets. You will still think about things that happen to you, and tap the pages of your book, then tell the story that goes on each page, then sketch and write it. You will still write sentences, and you will still use the chart to make your writing easy to read.

"But in one important way, your work will be a bit different. Look at these pictures and tell me if you notice something about the way that all these people are working," I said, "because that will give you a hint about how your writing work will be a bit different over the next stretch of time." I showed children a small collection of pictures, each featuring someone doing some heavy lifting work that was made easier because of the use of a tool: a shovel, an electric saw, a bulldozer, and a blender.

The children noticed that the workers all used tools, and I nodded. "During this next bend in the road of the unit, you won't rely on just your bare hands to make your writing readable—you'll have the help of tools. These won't be power saws, and bulldozers, or blenders. Instead, they will be the tools that writers use."

Name the teaching point.

"Today I want to teach you that writers use tools to help them write the best that they can. One of the tools that help writers write powerful true stories is a checklist. This may seem like a simple thing, but writers know that checklists can help them make their writing the best it can be."

◆ COACHING

We think is helpful for children to internalize the structure of units of study. It is commonplace, then, for children to grasp the ins and outs of different bends in the road of a unit.

As you prepare for your teaching during this bend, be mindful that one of the most common problems we see is that children don't produce enough writing and teachers don't expect enough volume. Sometimes this is because minilessons are too long. Be prepared to time yourself and to think hard about how to keep each minilesson to ten minutes, maximum.

TEACHING

Tell children about a time when checklists have proven very valuable.

"Writers, let me tell you a story. A few years ago, a pilot was flying an airplane, and all of a sudden he realized something was broken on that plane. It wasn't working. He thought, 'Oh no, this plane is broken. And I have hundreds of people on board.' For a second he was really worried. Then he remembered. 'Wait, I have a checklist that tells me the things to do when a plane is broken.' And quick as a wink, he pulled out that checklist—while the plane was starting to go down—and he did the first thing on the list, then the next, the next, and pretty soon this man landed the plane, safe as can be, on the Hudson River. Then he helped the people climb out and stand on the giant wings of the plane until motor boats came and picked them up.

"Everyone called the pilot a hero because most people would have been so scared; they would not have done every single thing right and brought the plane to safety. But the pilot said, 'I am not a hero. This checklist is the hero. All I did was follow the items, one by one.'

"There are whole books for grown-ups that came from that story because grown-ups started to realize that a checklist does not look like a fancy tool, but actually it is. Because the list reminds people to do all the things that the most experienced people in the world have decided really matter."

Tell children that all writers across their school will have checklists to remind them of the things writers do to make a good story and to make other kinds of writing good writing, too.

"So today, I want to tell you that in this school, all the kids—kindergartners, first-graders, even fifth-graders—will be given checklists that writers can follow (like that pilot followed the checklist for saving the plane) that will make your writing as good as it can be. And writers will get one checklist if they are writing stories and a different checklist if they are making other kinds of writing. The checklist we'll be using is for stories, for narratives, and you've seen it during the first unit. That's how it's supposed to be—you pull out the checklist often to see if you are doing more things on the list."

With a flourish, reveal part of the checklist for kindergartners, and remind children how it is used, using it to assess an imaginary and problematic piece by an unknown child.

"Are you ready?" With a great flourish, I pulled away a cloth that had been draped over an enlarged version of the checklist, displayed on the easel.

"Like we did in our last unit, I'll read an item from the checklist, and then you read over the writing you celebrated already and think, 'What can I do to make this more true?' Talk over your plans with your partner."

I read the first three skills aloud, one by one, and let children talk about it before moving on to the next item.

"Let's take a look at this piece of writing, done by my friend Rufus." I held a piece of writing in the air. "I'll read his piece over. We know that Rufus wrote, drew, and told a story, so let's think about the next point on our checklist: My story has a page that showed what happened first. Will you help me to decide whether it already matches the checklist, or would he need to make some changes?" I read the piece:

> I like rabbits. I like all colors of rabbits. I like babies and mommies and mommies with babies. I have a rabbit except he died.

"What do you think? Did Rufus tell what happened first?" I left just a tiny space for children to say no (or yes, mistakenly) and then answered my own question. "I don't think so. So writers, just like the pilot's checklist told him what to do, this checklist told Rufus what to do so he wrote his book *again*—and this time he told what happened first. He told what happened first, then next, then next. And he also put his pages in order, the next point on the checklist. Now Rufus has a new book about his rabbit and it goes like this:

> It was snowy. I fed my rabbit. He is brown. He did not wake up.
>
> I touched him and he was dead.

"Let's look at one more item on the checklist: 'My story indicated who was there, what they did, and how the characters felt.'

"Does Rufus tell details about the characters? Remember, characters are the people or animals. Let's look for evidence." I pointed to and underlined some examples in his piece and said, "I think he does."

Debrief in ways that spotlight the transferable process that you used and you hope children use as well, now and always.

"Rufus did a very smart thing as a writer. He used a checklist to help him make his writing the best that it can be. Just like a checklist was an important tool for that airplane pilot, this checklist was also a very important writing tool for Rufus. Using the checklist, he was able to figure out what was a little 'thumbs down' about his writing and then fix it to make it all 'thumbs up.'"

Notice that we emphasize that the checklist helps writers out because it gives writers a pathway to success, it tells writers (and specifically, Rufus) what they can do next to produce a successful piece. We are working hard to steer kids away from glancing at a piece of writing and then merrily going "check, check, check." In other checklist conversations, you'll see us emphasize that the important thing is to read the writing closely, looking for evidence. Sometimes we encourage students to annotate the piece of writing, citing where they have found evidence. The Narrative Writing Checklist can be found in the online resources.

Narrative Writing Checklist

	Kindergarten	NOT YET	STARTING TO	YES!	Grade 1	NOT YET	STARTING TO	YES!
	Structure				**Structure**			
Overall	I told, drew, and wrote a whole story.	☐	☐	☐	I wrote about when I did something.	☐	☐	☐
Lead	I had a page that showed what happened first.	☐	☐	☐	I tried to make a beginning for my story.	☐	☐	☐
Transitions	I put my pages in order.	☐	☐	☐	I put my pages in order. I used words such as *and* and *then, so.*	☐	☐	☐
Ending	I had a page that showed what happened last in my story.	☐	☐	☐	I found a way to end my story.	☐	☐	☐
Organization	My story had a page for the beginning, a page for the middle, and a page for the end.	☐	☐	☐	I wrote my story across three or more pages.	☐	☐	☐
	Development				**Development**			
Elaboration	My story indicated who was there, what they did, and how the characters felt.	☐	☐	☐	I put the picture from my mind onto the page. I had details in pictures and words.	☐	☐	☐
Craft	I drew and wrote some details about what happened.	☐	☐	☐	I used labels and words to give details.	☐	☐	☐
	Language Conventions				**Language Conventions**			
Spelling	I could read my writing.	☐	☐	☐	I used all I knew about words and chunks of words (*at, op, it,* etc.) to help me spell.	☐	☐	☐
	I wrote a letter for the sounds I heard.	☐	☐	☐	I spelled all the word wall words right and used the word wall to help me spell other words.	☐	☐	☐
	I used the word wall to help me spell.	☐	☐	☐		☐	☐	☐

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

Channel children to reread and assess their own narratives in light of the same two criteria.

"Now please get your writing out, and I will reread the checklist. Then you and your partner will talk about whether the checklist tells *you* what you can do when you write your story over again. This time, you'll be looking at both the kindergarten *and* the first-grade goals. Some of you are already doing things on the grade 1 side, so you can give yourself a thumbs up for them. Or, maybe there are goals on that side that you want to work hard to include in your writing next time.

"How many of you think that this checklist has given you ideas for how you can make your story more powerful?" Many children so signaled.

LINK

Summarize today's minilesson, reminding writers that they already have their copies of "What Makes Writing Easy to Read," which works like a checklist as well. Then send children off to revise and write true stories.

"So, writers, today you have a new tool—you have a checklist that you can look at to make sure you are writing a really great story. *And* you also have our chart we have been using from the beginning of the unit, "What Makes Writing Easy to Read." This can also be used like a checklist, too, to help you make sure that your readers can read your amazing stories. You'll probably notice that some of items on the checklist we were just using are also here. This is because I *really* want people to be able to read your great stories."

"Today, I am going to watch you use both these checklists to first fix up your writing like Rufus had to fix up his—and remember, Rufus needed to write his all over again. I am pretty sure most of you will do that, too. And then you can start a whole new story. You can also use your copies of our 'What Makes Writing Easy to Read' list. Be reading it before you start so that you keep those things in mind as you write.

"Give me a thumbs up if you already know what you are going to do to make the story you are holding better." Those children were sent off to get started. "The rest of you, will you read your writing over and talk with each other about whether your writing does the things on this chart and about what you can do today?" I had soon channeled those writers to their writing spots as well.

I've found that many teachers resist the idea of writing a whole new draft, thinking that's asking a lot of a writer—especially of a kindergartner. Don't project your resistance onto your children. Keep in mind that writing a whole new draft is actually an easier alternative than moving to a whole new story! Meanwhile, redrafting is a critical form of revision.

CONFERRING AND SMALL-GROUP WORK

Using the Narrative Writing Checklist to Inform Your Conferences and Small-Group Work

THE NARRATIVE WRITING CHECKLIST can be used as a helpful tool during your conferring to help you assess where your students currently stand in relation to state standards for narrative writing so that you can think about the areas in which they need the most support. For example, the checklist suggests that by the end of kindergarten, children should be able to look over their narrative writing (and you should be able to look over it as well) and say yes to the expectation that the story is written in order. As you look across the writers in your classroom, you may notice that there is a contingent of children still listing their thoughts about a topic rather than writing a narrative. Their so-called true stories might read, "I love Mom. Mom is my mom. My mom has brown hair." Such a text is not a narrative. If you have a cluster of children who, when asked to write true stories, often produce texts with that list-like, all-about structure, then you may want to pull them together to learn the difference between an all-about book and a story, a narrative. You will certainly want to read stories to those children (and others) and to create opportunities for the children to story-tell episodes in their lives and to retell the stories they read.

Then, too, the checklist suggests that in kindergarten, children should learn to include not only the events that occurred, but the person's reaction. Again, it is helpful for you to carry this checklist with you—or an internalized version of it—and to triage your children so that you take note if there are some children who have yet to do

MID-WORKSHOP TEACHING **Tapping Writers' Memories in Order to Add Details to Their Stories**

"Writers, eyes up here. You will remember that on the checklist it says that story writers include *details* about what happens. Roberto was just writing a story about playing baseball, and after he wrote a bit he said, 'Oops. I gotta check on details about the people.' So he did something that really helped. He reread what he had written and remembered what happened. He reread"

I threw the ball.

My brother came and helped me.

"Then he looked up from the page like this and he said, 'I couldn't hold the ball right.'

"And you know what he did after that? He added that detail. 'I couldn't hold the ball right. My brother showed me.'

"So, writers, the checklist can tell you things to do, but sometimes, it's going to be other kids who give you ideas for how to actually do the thing. The checklist tells us to add details, but Roberto showed us one way to do this. One way to add details is to do like Roberto did, and reread the story, then remember it, and come up with tiny little true parts that aren't yet on the page.

"Do any of you think you could do that right now? Will you look at your story—the part that is on the page right in front of you? Will you reread what you have written and then remember that time? And in your memory, look around. What do you see that you could add? You could add the details you see into the drawing or into the words. Do that right now."

To Lilly, I said, "Remember making that snowman? Look at your drawing, point to what is there on the page, and find things that you didn't yet draw. Then add them."

I got to Liam just as he was writing something with his pencil. I said to the class, "Liam searched for the missing stuff, and he found some and now he is writing more words into his story."

this work. You'll again want to convene small groups with children who need help doing this. You may, for example, want to show children that there are expectations that some people have decided are important for kids their age. Start with a simple and accessible one. "You are expected to put your name on all your stories. Can you reread through your folder of stories and see if you have done that?" Then you can up the ante.

"You are expected to show how you felt about what happened." You might say, "Let's pretend we were writing a story about this conference, and we wanted to show how you feel about our conference. What might you draw to show that? What might you write?" Then you could help children look back at a finished book and determine whether they have already done this. You can help them to tackle the task by adding on an ending sentence or by adding facial expressions to a picture.

By first grade, children learn to write a beginning for their stories. You might carry some familiar books with you and show children the way other authors begin their books and suggest they create beginnings for all their completed stories. The power of a folder full of completed stories is that it gives youngsters repeated opportunities to work at something and develop proficiency at that work.

Obviously, if you find that it is not a small group of children needing help in any of these qualities of effective narrative writing but that instead, most of your children need such help, you'll want to do the instruction through either a minilesson, a mid-workshop, or a teaching share—or all three!

SHARE

Reaching for New Narrative Writing Goals

Focus on a new item on the Narrative Writing Checklist.

"Writers, just like the pilot of that airplane, you have been working so hard today using a checklist to help you know what to do in your writing. Give yourselves a round of applause for all of this hard work!" I waited while the children cheered and clapped.

"Now I want to draw your attention to *one* item from our checklist. This one is about the way writers end their stories." I pointed to the checklist and read the fourth bullet on the grade 1 side: *After I wrote the last thing I did, I wrote how I felt about it.*

Rally students to use the new checklist item to assess a writing sample and then make plans for improvement.

"All right, let's take another look at my friend Rufus's writing. Pay careful attention to the ending." I read the writing to the class.

> It was snowy. I fed my rabbit. He is brown. He did not wake up. I touched him and he was dead.

"So what do you think? Did the story end with how Rufus felt about his rabbit dying? Let's see the thumbs up or thumbs down." I looked around the room to a sea of thumbs down. "You guys are right. Rufus's ending needs some work. He did not end his story with how he felt. Right now, turn to your partner and come up with some suggestions for Rufus, ways he could rewrite or add to his story now that he knows how stories should end." I gave the students a few moments to talk and then called the group back together. "Let's hear it! Suggestions for ways Rufus can rewrite his ending so that he ends with a feeling?"

"He was probably really sad," said Aiden. "Sad is a feeling, he could end it and say, 'I was sad.'"

"Maybe he was scared, like he didn't know what to do. He should say he was scared," volunteered Tyler.

"Nice suggestions, writers. You did such a great job using the checklist to help Rufus figure out that he needed to work on his ending. Tomorrow and every day when you go back to your writing, be sure to use this tool to help you make your writing the best that it can be!"

Session 3

Writers Become Readers, Asking, "Can I Follow This?"

THINK FOR A MOMENT about the way you learn skills, for example, the skills you have been learning about teaching writing as you work through these books. Presumably, when you started the first few sessions of the first book, you taught a full writing workshop. You gathered children, gave them a minilesson, sent them off to write, worked with individuals and small groups, and then convened the children. Now you continue to do all those things, but thinking about writing instruction is much more nuanced. You are aware of the differences between minilessons in which you use your writing as an example and those in which you rely on a child's piece of writing. You are aware that sometimes a minilesson ends with children getting started writing while they are still on the rug, and sometimes you send children off to work on their writing. And so on.

"This minilesson is the cornerstone of the unit. Prepare yourself to have a lot of fun, to let your children collapse into giggles."

In the same way, children will have been using fundamental skills repeatedly. For example, a month or so ago, at the start of the *Writing for Readers* unit, children learned that writers reread. They learned that writers use one end of the pencil to write, then flip the pencil over and use the other end of the pencil as a pointer to help with reading. Today you return to the concept that writers reread, only this time, your focus is less on the word work of rereading one's own writing and more on the work of comprehension and monitoring for sense, and you will teach the specific ways writers reread how-to writing.

This is a favorite minilesson. It was a mainstay in the first edition of Units of Study for Primary Writing. In many ways, it is the cornerstone of this unit. Enjoy it. Prepare yourself to have a lot of fun, to let your children collapse into giggles.

IN THIS SESSION, you'll teach students that writers reread their writing as they go, making changes along the way.

GETTING READY

- ✔ An example of student writing, displayed for the class to see (see Connection)
- ✔ Students' writing folders, from the previous session, and pencils (see Connection)
- ✔ An example of student how-to writing whose steps are unclear or difficult to follow (see Teaching)
- ✔ Chart paper and markers for rewriting part of a how-to booklet (see Active Engagement)
- ✔ Successful (easy to follow) how-to writing by one child in the class that he or she will read during the share
- ✔ "How-To Writing" anchor chart from previous sessions on display

MINILESSON

Writers Become Readers, Asking, "Can I Follow This?"

CONNECTION

Celebrate one child who reread her how-to book, reminding all students of the importance of rereading.

"Writers, yesterday I saw Sofia writing her how-to book, and do you know what she did? She wrote one of her steps, and then after she wrote that step, that page, she flipped her magic pencil over to the other end and used it as a pointer to help her reread her writing.

"Sofia, I've got your book displayed on the easel. Can you come up and show the class how you reread your writing?" Sofia scrambled up to the front of the meeting area and used her pencil's eraser to tap out her words. (See Figure 3–1 on p. 21.)

> Step 1–First take the cover and pull up. Make sure you hold with two hands.
>
> Step 2–Then you smooth it out to make it smoother.
>
> Step 3–Next take the blanket and pull it up with two hands.
>
> Step 4–Then put the pillow up with two hands. Stuff it up.
>
> Step 5–Put the stuffed animal on.

"Writers, you see how Sofia crossed words out and added in more words? What happened is that she reread her book and realized, 'Hey, wait a minute. I could say more!' Then she added the missing parts. That's good work, Sofia, to remember what you learned earlier about writers needing to become readers and about revision. You remembered that work from when you were working on your true stories last month!"

Bring home the importance of rereading by asking students to reread their writing from the day before, making small revisions as they go.

"Right now, will each of you get out the books you wrote yesterday? Use the eraser end of your pencils to reread just a page of your books, for now, and then if something is missing, do like Sofia did, and flip your pencils back to the writing end and fix things up."

◆ COACHING

You may have noticed that in minilessons where students will use a piece of their own writing, we usually ask them to bring their entire writing folder to the meeting area, even when only one booklet is needed. Many teachers find that a consistent routine for bringing work to the meeting area helps to move things along and avoids confusion. Alternatively, you could direct children to bring one how-to booklet instead of the entire folder.

There are many different ways you can have students share their writing during a minilesson. Sometimes it is enough for a student to just read her writing aloud. However, in this instance, it was important that the rest of the class actually see Sofia's writing, as well as the way she used her eraser to tap out the words as she read. Pages can be pulled apart and displayed side by side. Or if you have a document camera, simply use that to enlarge the writing.

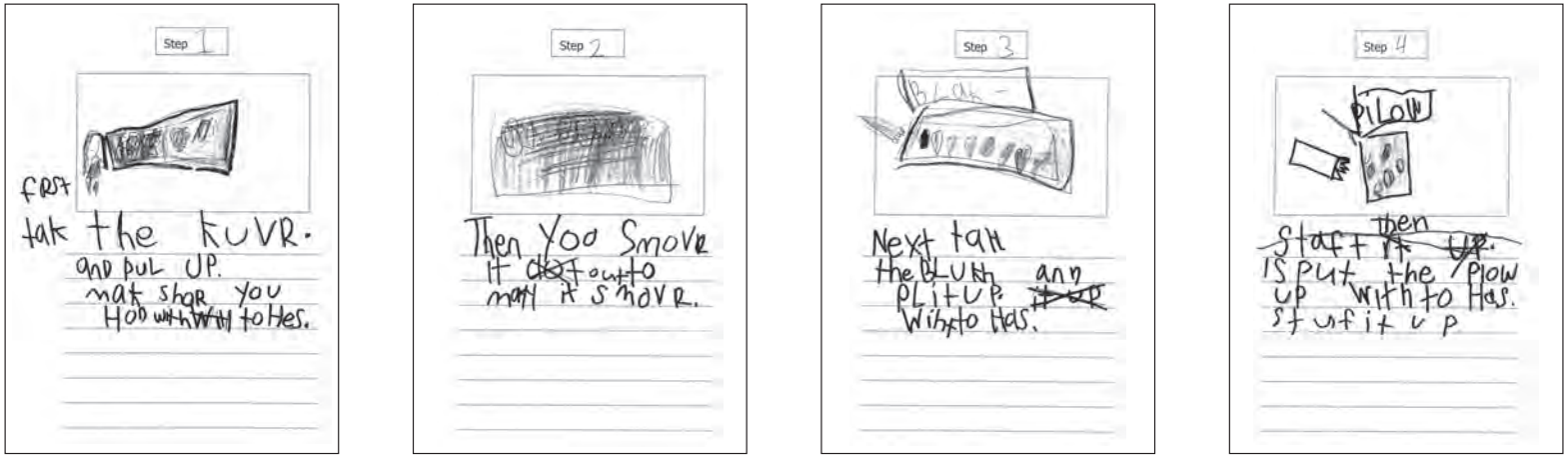


FIG. 3–1 Sofia revises her book on how to make a bed by simply crossing out the parts she'd like to change.

For a moment, children worked. I signaled that those who finished before the others could move on to their second pages.

Name the teaching point.

"Today I want to teach you that how-to writers don't just reread the words, touching them with a finger or a pencil. How-to writers *also* reread to check that their writing makes sense. To do that kind of rereading, writers reread to a partner or to themselves and make sure it is easy to follow the steps."

TEACHING

Demonstrate what it means to check your directions with a partner, noticing whether the directions make sense or need to be revised for clarity.

"The best way to check whether your directions will make sense is to read them to someone who will try to follow the steps, to do whatever you are teaching (for real or for pretend). If the partner can't figure out what you mean, if he or she can't figure out what to do, that means your directions don't *quite* work, and then you can revise them.

"Let's try reading the words of one of your books and see if we can follow those words, okay? Sam is writing a how-to book on doing a somersault. He'll read it to me, and let's all see if I can follow his directions." I brought Sam to sit on a chair beside my chair.

"Sam will read me his book (just the start—it isn't done), and I'll do whatever his book tells me to do. Writers, when you do this kind of reading—when you read directions—instead of reading the book straight through, it helps to read one step and then do that step, then read the next step, and then do that step."

Sam read, "First put your head down and your legs up." I looked at him, as if asking *"What?"* He reread, "First put your head down," and, still sitting on a chair at the front of the meeting area, I tucked my chin toward my chest. Then Sam read, "And your legs up." (Remember, I was still on the chair!) "Okay, my head is down, but hmm, my legs go up? To somersault?" I raised my feet so they stuck straight out from the chair. A bit puzzled, I said, "Okay, keep reading."

Sam had by now covered his eyes in dismay, though we could all see his huge grin. He read his next page, starting to giggle: "Then turn over."

"Turn over? I'll hurt myself!"

When the writer of confusing directions makes verbal revisions, capitalize on this, and name that, yes, after checking for clarity, writers often revise.

Sam started to protest that when he had told me to put my head down, he meant I needed to put my head *on the floor* and that of course I needed to get off the chair to do so, but I returned to the role of teacher rather than gymnast to be. "Are you saying, Sam, that now you realize you need to make revisions to your directions?" When he nodded vigorously, I said, "That's what happens when you reread your writing to a partner and see the way that person struggles to follow what you have written."

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

Ask children to think with their partners about ways to revise the original instructions. Attempt to follow the revised instructions, highlighting the idea that being specific makes directions easier to follow.

"Tell your partner how you might start a book on doing somersaults that could maybe work better," I said, and the room erupted into conversation.

Convening the class, I called, "Okay, let's try out another set of directions for doing a somersault. Just tell me the new steps, and I'll follow them."

This time the first step was "Sit on the floor."

"Okay, first you sit on the floor." After I clamored off the chair, I wrote on a piece of chart paper, "1. First, sit on the floor." "Okay, I've done that. What's next?"

"Put your head on the floor." I touched my face to the floor, not putting my head in the proper position.

Another child called, "No! Put the *top* of your head . . ."

I pointed out, "That's a smart revision! Put *the top of your head* on the floor." On the chart paper, I wrote, "2. Put the top of your head on the floor."

"You are getting better at realizing the details your readers will need. We'll stop here for now. This is such smart work! You are thinking about your readers and writing steps that will help them."

LINK

Tell children they'll need to decide what they will do, knowing many will recruit a partner to help them reread to check that the partner can follow the text.

"Writers, writing time is really your work time. Today as you work, think about everything you have learned so far." I gestured to our anchor chart to remind children of some of the key points. "You can be the boss of writing time and decide what you need to do to be sure you have a whole folder full of great how-to writing. Let's just think about what you *could* decide to do today. Who has an idea of what you could do?"

Sam suggested, "I could write an *even better* book on somersaults and headstands too 'cause I know how to do them."

I nodded, agreeing that writers could write whole new books. "And if you do that, write the directions so I won't fall and break my head, okay? So you might write whole new books. What else might you do today?"

One writer piped in with "Reread?" I practically fell off my chair over the brilliance of her suggestion. "You aren't going to need a teacher anymore. You are learning to teach yourselves. How totally cool that you take the stuff we did with Sam's book and imagine doing it with your own books. Do you mean you might bring your book to someone in the class and say, 'Will you try to do what I say?' and then watch whether they get as confused as I did?" The children nodded vigorously.

"Might you even *revise* your book to make it clearer? That would be *so* grown-up." The kids were definite that they'd absolutely do that.

"Oh my goodness. So get going. Don't waste a second. I gotta see this."

CONFERRING AND SMALL-GROUP WORK

Anticipating that Some Children Will Need Scaffolds and Supports to Access High-Level Work

THE MOST PRESSING THING YOU WILL NOTICE TODAY is that some children will quite rightly tell you they can't follow each other's directions. "I can't ski in this room, can I?" they'll say. You will need to show children that they can read each other's directions and *imagine* following them. If the directions say, "Break an egg on the edge of the bowl," the reader can grasp an imaginary egg and break it on the edge of the imaginary bowl. If the directions say, "When the person in line in front of you gets on the ski lift, push yourself forward quickly so that you are standing in the place where the lift will get you," then perhaps the actor is a finger puppet made from your two fingers, who pushes forward on imaginary skis. The important thing to realize is that the process of reading directions is a stop and go activity. The reader reads a step, then does the step—really doing it or imagining doing it. Then the reader presses on, reading the next step. This sort of reading can be done in a way that reveals potential problems in a draft.

While children read their how-to writing to each other and work to address the problems they see, you will want to also read their writing and think about how you can address the problems *you* see. Whereas the kids will address problems by adding words to their pages, you'll address problems with small-group work, mid-workshop teaching points, and minilessons you write on your own to address issues that we never imagined.

For example, if you find that your children are choosing topics such as "when I went to my grandma's house" that don't set them up to write procedural pieces, then you will want to spend more time immersing them in the sounds of procedural writing. This means it will be important for you to read how-to writing aloud. Don't talk this reading to death. Just read and immerse your children in the language of the genre. Meanwhile, find opportunities to give the class oral directions. "Today we're going to make bracelets. Let me teach you how. Listen. I'm going to give you all the how-to directions now. You'll see my directions will be like a how-to book. First, you . . ." Meanwhile, help children develop lists of topics that match the genre and key phrases they can use at the start of these texts that help to angle their writing. For example, you might have these words, hanging prominently in your classroom: "Do you want to know how to . . . ? I will teach you. First you . . ."

MID-WORKSHOP TEACHING **Writers Say It a Different Way if a Partner Doesn't Understand**

Near the end of writing time, I spoke up loudly, getting the children's attention. "Writers," I said, "eyes on me. When you read the directions from your how-to book to your partner, and your partner says, 'Wait, I'm confused. I can't follow these directions,' that's your signal that you have to do something. Do you just leave it the way it is and go on? No! Of course not. Here's a tip: try saying it a different way, and then ask your partner, 'Does it make sense now?' Then take your pen and cross out the old writing and put in the new way of saying whatever was confusing."

It may be that in your class there are one or two children that need extra special help getting started. Perhaps these are children who are just learning to speak English, or perhaps these are children who are extremely reluctant to take risks for fear of getting it wrong. In any case, the heaviest scaffolding you could provide might be to offer up the class how-to book to these few individuals to write as their own. You might say, "Remember how we wrote 'How to Have a Fire Drill' together yesterday? Well, guess what? The kids who come to this school next year are not going to know how to have a fire drill, and it would be great to have that written as a book. Would you each be willing to write that book for them? You could help each other." By offering each child a blank booklet and encouraging them to say those familiar fire drill steps aloud, you're helping them transfer familiar language and vocabulary from one context (whole-class, shared writing) to another (on their own in a small booklet). Encourage them to put it in their own words and draw their own pictures now that they have their own small booklet to write "How to Have a Fire Drill." As soon as they are up and running, leave them to continue, not without letting them know that they can write their next how-to book on any topic they choose!

SHARE

Envisioning the Steps in a How-To Book and Revising if They Don't Make Sense

Ask children to join you in listening and mentally following one child's directions.

"Today I saw something really terrific. Listen to this. I saw many of you reading directions not only to your partner, *but also to yourselves*! You reread what you wrote and thought, 'If I follow my own directions, will they work?' I have asked Nicole to read her how-to book to us. As she reads, let's close our eyes and see if we can picture ourselves doing each of these steps."

Nicole read her writing.

Nicole

How to Plant a Flower

1. First dig a hole. Then put the seeds in the hole.

2. Cover the hole with dirt. Water your flowers.

3. Then give your flower some sunlight and take care of your flower.

4. Talk to your flower. Then your flower will grow.

Nicole hadn't yet finished the book, but she told her classmates what she planned to write on the final page: "One day it will start to grow." "Thumbs up if you were able to see the steps of that happening." Thumbs went up across the room. "I feel ready to plant a flower right now!"

Ask children to turn to their partners and read aloud. The listener will try to imagine doing the steps.

"Writers, would you get with your partners? Partner 1, read your book to Partner 2, just like Nicole read her book to us. And Partner 1, listen and see if you can picture yourself doing each step. Are the directions clear? Do you know what to do first and next and next?"

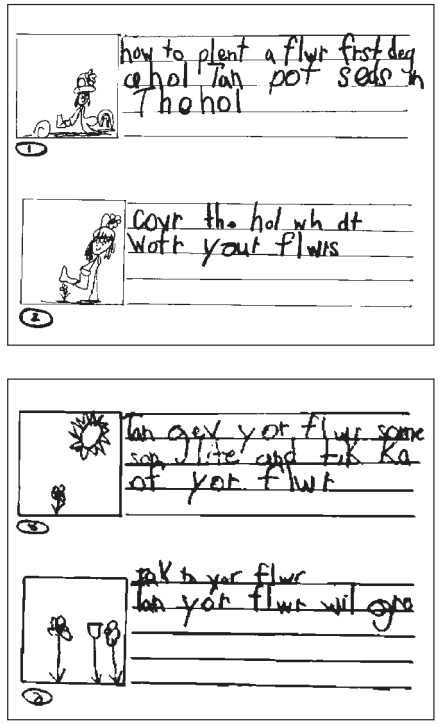


FIG. 3–2 Nicole's writing is easy to follow, in part because she writes more than one sentence for each step. This simple strategy could be tucked into small-group, conferring, or even a mid-workshop teaching point or share.

I listened in as Troyquon turned to his partner, Rachel, and began to read:

A Cook Book How to Make Pizza

Step One: Throw up the dough.

Step Two: Spin the dough in your fingers.

Stept Three: Pat the dough into a flat circle.
Put tomatoes onto the dough.

Step Four: Put tomatoes onto the dough.
Put the dough into the pan.

Rachel interrupted after Troyquon read Step Three. "A flat circle? How will it look like a pizza, not a donut?"

Help writers realize that if listeners aren't able to follow the steps in a how-to book, revision is necessary.

I agreed. "Rachel is asking a good question. That's so helpful, isn't it Troyquon? With that help, you can go back and reread and think, 'Have I told her enough?'"

Troyquon looked dubious about reconsidering his text, and it was time for the share session to end. Seizing the moment, I said, "I'll tell you what—why don't I take your directions home and try following them. I'd love to eat some pizza tonight!"

Troyquon took a sticky note and carefully wrote his telephone number. "If you need me, call me."

I convened the class. "Class, I'm going to follow Troyquon's pizza recipe tonight. I have a Post-it with his phone number in case it doesn't work. Will you listen and tell me if you think I'll need to call him?" I read Troyquon's piece to the class. "Thumbs up if you think I'll need to call him." Most of the kids raised their thumbs. "Hmm. Well, I'll give it a try and let all of you know tomorrow if I get stuck!" I made a mental note to follow up with this during morning meeting the next day.

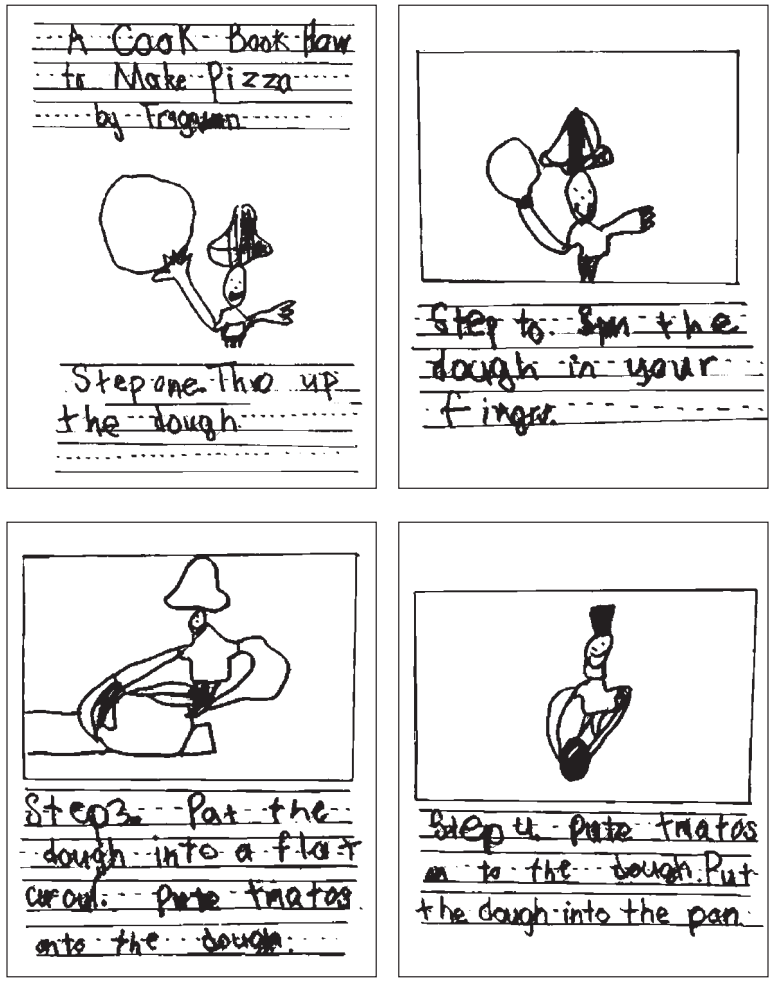


FIG. 3–3 Troyquon's pictures are nearly as helpful as the words for readers to understand his directions.

Session 2

Convincing People

Providing Reasons and Consequences

YOU HAVE ALREADY BEGUN TEACHING your students to look around with eyes that see not only what *is*, but also what could be, and now you will want to help them learn to write in ways that convince others. As you tackle this challenging work, you'll meanwhile want to notice whether a few writers are still struggling to generate topics, as those children will need small-group instruction.

The work of helping writers write in ways that convince readers will last this entire unit and will, of course, be work that children continue to study throughout their school careers. Your instruction in opinion writing will build on your children's oral language abilities. Face it: some children will enter this unit with tremendous skills at influencing people. These will be the children who already use their rhetorical prowess to get an extra recess, a second read-aloud, a class pet. In this unit, your goal will be to help *all* children learn to use language, evidence, and logic to persuade. The opinion writing expectations in most state standards are not high for kindergartners. Your children are merely expected to introduce a topic and state an opinion or a preference about that topic. But there is nothing holding you back from teaching your youngsters to do work that far exceeds these standards, and we recommend this. Within a few years, your students will enter fourth grade and will benefit from having lots of experience in this genre under their belt.

You will want to write your own demonstration text. You can, of course, write a marvelous text that is light years beyond anything your youngsters could ever produce, but actually it is helpful if you produce a text that is just beyond your children's zone of proximal development. You'll probably want to write an early draft that is filled with some of the problems children will produce in their writing. You'll find that when your draft mirrors the work that the bulk of your class is doing, then you can use your text to teach children how to spot and address common issues.

Spotting problems in your children's writing won't be a hard thing to do! When you look over the work that your children produce, chances are good that it will seem as if they're slipping backward now that they have shifted to opinion writing. You'll probably find yourself longing for the well-developed stories and how-to books that your children

IN THIS SESSION, you'll teach students that the more reasons they can provide, the more convincing their writing will be.

GETTING READY

- ✔ Teacher demonstration piece to model the work of adding reasons (see Teaching) This writing becomes a chart paper book eventually, with a line or two of text under the picture. See Figure 4–1 for the text you eventually write.
- ✔ Student writing from previous session (see Active Engagement)
- ✔ Student writing that models techniques for writing persuasively (see Share)

used to produce. Don't despair! This is a new genre, and you shouldn't expect that children will approach it with well-developed skills. Remember that when you bring children to any new genre, it is crucial for you to welcome approximation.

In this session, you'll teach children that to persuade people to do something, it is important to show them the reasons the

"In this unit, your goal is to help all children learn to use language, evidence, and logic to persuade."

action is important, and to share the possible consequences of doing nothing. Additionally, you'll demonstrate how opinion writers can do this with pictures and words—adding details to drawings, speech bubbles, and sentences.

MINILESSON

Convincing People

Providing Reasons and Consequences

CONNECTION

Tell children about someone who was influential—perhaps the Pied Piper—and suggest that their goal is to write in ways that rally people to follow.

"Writers, have you ever heard the fairy tale story of a boy who was called the Pied Piper? He went through the town playing a flute, and all these cats followed him. A cat would be sleeping on a little girl's bed, hear the Pied Piper, and jump up. 'Me-ow, me-ow,' the cat would say, and it would run out to follow the Pied Piper. Soon there was a whole parade of cats, following this Pied Piper.

"Writers, I'm telling you this because if you want to use writing to make the world better, then you need to be a little like the Pied Piper. *But* you need *people*, not *cats*, to follow you.

"For example, if you come up with the greatest idea in the world for keeping our coat closet clean, and you even stayed in one recess to get the new system started, but if then no one else followed your idea, what would happen to the coat closet?" The children all agreed it would look as bad as ever in no time.

Name the teaching point.

"So, writers, today I want to teach you that you can be like the Pied Piper, getting people to follow your idea, and you can do this using words, not a flute. One way that sometimes works to get people to follow your idea is to give people lots and lots of reasons why they should follow your idea. The more reasons you can give them, the more convincing you will be!"

TEACHING

Tell children that you are not convinced something you wrote the preceding day is convincing (make it not be!) and mull over how to make it more persuasive.

"Yesterday we talked about how kids running in the hallway has become a big problem in our school. Last night I took some time and started to draft a book about this. But now, I'm not sure that it's very convincing. I don't know if people

◆ COACHING

When using a metaphor, don't elaborate excessively. The only thing children need to know about the Pied Piper is that he was persuasive. He got people—well, cats—to follow him, parading through town. Adding a lot of other details will only complicate the comparison you want to make.

Note that the examples of ways to change the world that we suggest early in the book are all situated within the classroom and the school. In later bends in this unit, examples will affect the larger community.

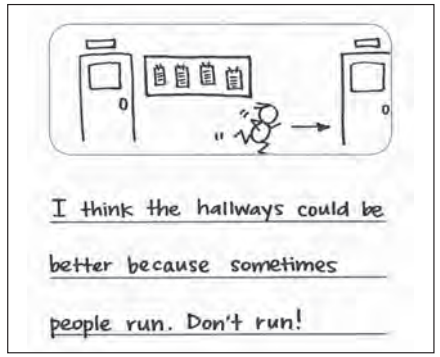


FIG. 2–1 The demonstration text before you add more reasons.

are actually going to follow the suggestions I made. Can you reread my draft and think if there are ways you can help me make it more convincing?"

I think the hallways could be better, because sometimes people run. Don't run!

"I'm wondering how we could make it so when kids hear this book read aloud, they think, 'Yup, that's right. We really better not run so much.' Hmm. I'm wondering how we could make this more persuasive."

Show children that writing is more apt to persuade people to take an action if it cites multiple reasons why an idea should be followed.

I waited to see if a child would repeat the teaching point, pointing out it helps to say lots of reasons why it is important to fix the problem. No one pitched in that idea, so I continued. "Oh! Now I remember. It sometimes helps to tell people *lots of reasons* why they should fix the problem.

"Hmm, let's think about more reasons why people should fix this problem, more reasons why it's a bad idea to run in the hallways." I paused to ponder while children eagerly raised hands to offer suggestions. "Okay, I have an idea! Here's a reason: It is dangerous to run in the hall. Someone might fall, or crash into another person. Kids could get very hurt! We should add that." I began sketching and writing this, although I did not finish doing this before talking again to the class.

Recap your process in ways that emphasize the transferable aspect of this strategy.

"After I draw this, I'll write some sentences about it as well. Did you see what we just did? We realized our writing was not that convincing and decided we needed to persuade people by adding more reasons to support the opinion. We reread our opinion and thought hard about a reason we could add. In this case, we gave a reason that supports the opinion that kids should stop running in the hallways."

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

Channel children to tell each other how they would make the writing they did the previous day more convincing by adding in more reasons.

"Now it's your turn to try! Take out the writing you did yesterday. Think about the problem you were hoping to solve, and think, 'What is *another* reason why people should help me solve this problem?'"

I gave the class a moment to rehearse and then said, "Turn and talk." As children talked, I added, "Make sure to tell your partner what you can add—the exact words that you might write."

You'll notice that we're not suggesting you start right away emphasizing the importance of incorporating reasons into your argument. Instead, we're suggesting that you first note that your writing is not convincing and only then come to the realization that you haven't included reasons and need to do so. This is actually a pattern you will see in most teaching components of a minilesson. When teaching kids how to generate topics for writing, the first thing you are apt to do is to suggest you are stuck, unable to think of what to write. Then, after encountering this problem, you show writers a strategy they can use to get themselves out of the problem. You are doing the same thing here. Strategies are a deliberate, conscious sequence of actions one takes to achieve a purpose. Eventually they become internalized and are done unconsciously, quickly, underground, at which point they cease being strategies.

Notice that you are always watching the time. The important thing to show is the process of generating reasons, not the process of drawing.

I listened to Serena tell her partner, "I think that all the kids should stop taking the Legos home." Her partner, Zaara, shrugged but said nothing. I prompted her to ask Serena, "*Why* should kids stop taking the Legos home? Why is that so important?" Once those girls were discussing what Choice Time would be like if there were no Legos left in the classroom, I moved on to another partnership.

As you listen in to partnership talk, when you find yourself wanting to coach a writer, try suggesting the partner do this coaching instead of you. Whisper a suggestion to the partner.

LINK

Remind children that their writing will be more convincing if they include many reasons.

"So from now on, remember that one of your biggest jobs as an opinion writer is to find problems in the world, to think of ways to fix things, and then to use writing to convince people to help fix the problem. You can be more convincing if you give your readers *lots* of reasons."

Notice that this gathers up, consolidates, all you have taught this far in the unit.

Channel writers to revise the writing they wrote previously to make it more convincing and to then write more.

"Today I bet you are going to want to go back to the writing you already did (and some of you wrote two pieces of writing yesterday) and to see if you can make those pieces of writing more convincing, so that your writing helps you act like the Pied Piper. After working to make yesterday's writing more convincing, I know you will get going on another piece of writing. Soon you are going to have a whole folder full of writing!"

It's great when the ending of a minilesson can link back to the connection, as this reference to Pied Piper does. Notice the cues you are giving to help youngsters know that they are expected to produce a lot of writing.

CONFERRING AND SMALL-GROUP WORK

Conferring to Ensure that Your Minilesson Is Reaching Students at Varying Ability Levels

YOUR CHILDREN PROBABLY MADE SIGNS, cards, and brief letters during yesterday's workshop. They're probably done with that work. Today's minilesson, then, asks them to reread their finished work and to return to that work to revise it. Your first job today, then, will be to nudge writers to get started rereading and revising. You'll want to create some upbeat energy about the grand project of revising writing so that your children don't grow up thinking that revision is anything but a compliment to good writing. If you want to fuel excitement for revision, bring out special supplies. "Revisers can use lots of colorful paper for adding on," you can say, and produce slips of colored paper, tape, and staplers. You will find that children are excited about the carpentry of revision, even if they are less enthralled with the prospect of adding reasons to support their opinions.

Once children are rereading to revise, you may want to remind them of other lenses they can bring to their rereading. For example, during the previous units, writers learned that they can reread and ask, on every page, "Did I do at least one special thing on this page?" What wonderful transference it would be to bring that strategy into this new unit. The good news is that adding something special to each page is an open invitation, and writers will find it easy. They're probably more able to do that than to add reasons to support their opinions.

If it is hard for your children to generate a couple of reasons to support their opinions, encourage them to use their fingers to count off reasons. Voice over and coach them as they name reasons across their fingers with language stems such as, "One reason is . . ." "Another reason is . . ." Then prompt them to add those reasons to their writing.

For your more proficient writers, you can help them know that they can not only mention the reasons why their readers should take action, but they can also provide their readers with possible consequences of inaction. "Kids should stop running in the hall *or else* someone could fall and hurt themselves." By helping a few of your stronger writers do that, you'll provide examples that the others can follow.

MID-WORKSHOP TEACHING

Providing Consequences of Inaction to Persuade

"Writers, can I interrupt? Eyes up here," I said and waited for their attention. "How many of you have not only revised the writing you did yesterday but also already started a piece of writing today?" I scanned the room and noticed lots of hands up. "Great! Earlier you learned that one way to be like a Pied Piper, getting people to follow your ideas, is to provide people with *lots* of reasons why they should follow your idea. That is just *one* way to convince people. Another way—one that might be even more important—is this. You can tell them that if they don't do something, the problem might get *worse and worse*!

"So if I want you to walk quietly in the hallway and not to run, it not only helps for me to give *lots* of reasons. It also helps for me to tell you what could happen if you *don't* follow my idea. 'Kids should stop running in the hallway, *or else* someone might fall down.' I could make it worse, too. 'They might hit their head on the wall and get bumps and bruises. Or kids could crash into each other!' And if Serena wants kids to stop taking Legos home, she can give an *or else*. Stop taking Legos home, *or else* we won't have enough to play with at Choice Time. We'll only get to play with Play-Doh.

"Now it's your turn to try! Think about the writing you are working on right now. Think about the problem you were hoping to solve, and think, 'What if people don't help? What could get worse and worse?' Give me a signal to show you have ideas to share."

I gave the class a moment of time to rehearse and then asked them to turn and talk to the kids at their tables. As children talked, I added, "Make sure to talk about what you can add—the exact words—that will get people worried about how things could get worse and worse if they don't help."

For example, as I approached Serena, I noticed that she was rereading a letter she'd started the day before. All on her own, I watched her add another sentence to a taped-on revision strip. As I sat down beside her, she looked up at me and proudly held up a scroll-sized piece of paper, made from combining several sheets. "What are you working on today?" I asked. "This is my letter to all the kids who take the Legos. They take them to their house and they don't bring them back," she explained. She proceeded to read her letter aloud, pointing with the end of her pencil as she reread each word (see Figure 2–2).

> Dear kids who takes Legos. We're missing. We need them out of your house if you forgot it. Teachers get sad if you don't bring it. Teachers are sad. Bring it back.

"Serena, can I give you a compliment? You are doing something that opinion writers do to get people to help them. At the very beginning, you explain the problem." I pointed to the words in her text that did that. Then I added, "Do you notice what you do next?" I helped Serena see that next, she tells her readers what they should do to fix the problem. She pointed to the part of the text that accomplished this while I smiled to myself at the thought that at the age of five, she was already engaging in the sort of close reading and text citation work that the world-class standards extol.

She added, "Yeah, and if the kids don't bring the Legos back, then we can't play at Choice Time and then there's only Play-doh and the other blocks, and not Legos," she rattled on.

As Serena spoke, I knew this conference would lead me to support the one thing I teach more than anything else when working with young writers. I'd lured Serena to say more, and now I was going to get her to add that added elaboration into her draft. Whether children are writing narratives or informational writing or arguments, it will happen time and again that they write in skeletal fashion and that conferences lead them to generate more content. To me, whenever I employ the conferring move that I knew lay ahead of me, I try to not only get the writer to add more, but to also *teach* the writer *how* to add more. I try to remember the admonition that I gave teachers decades ago in *The Art of Teaching Writing*: "If the piece of writing gets better and the writer learns nothing that can help another day with another piece, the conference was a waste. Teach the writer, not the writing" (1994).

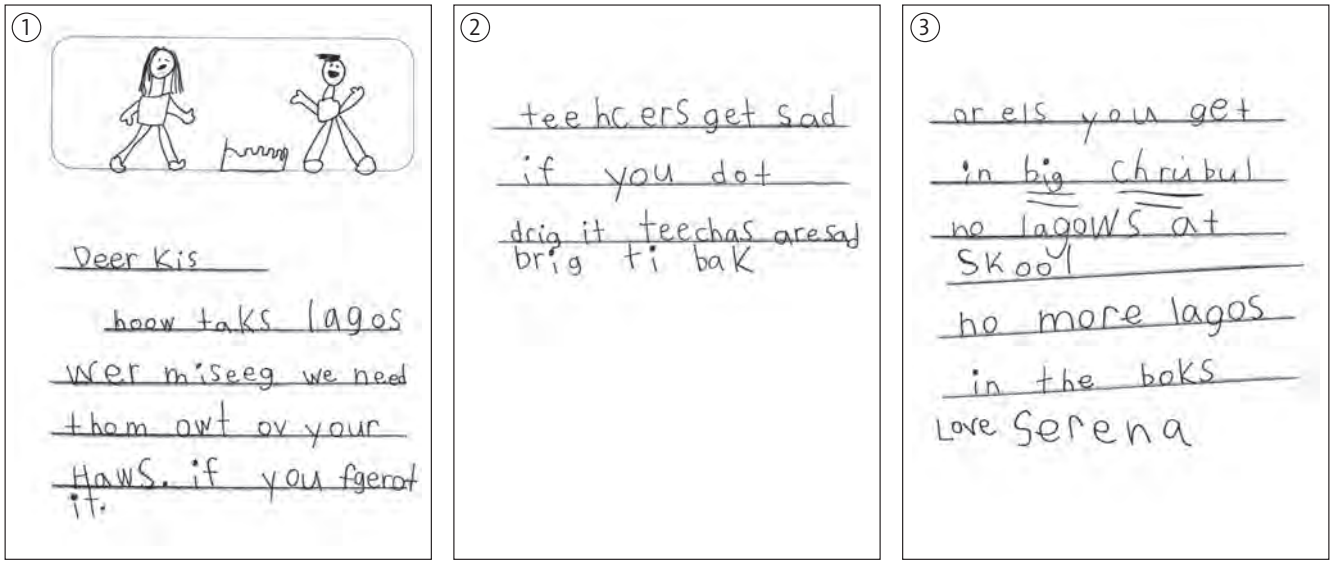


FIG. 2–2 Serena's letter

"Serena, you see how you reread this and *more* ideas came to your mind? You thought, 'If people don't do this, then. . . .' Whenever you are trying to persuade people to do something, you can do just what you just did! Reread your writing to get yourself to say more and try thinking to yourself 'This is important because . . .' This time, you said that to yourself and ended up thinking, 'Yeah! This is important because if kids don't do this then there's only Play-doh at Choice Time.'

"Serena, one more thing. Will you think about all that you have learned over this whole year, and think about what a writer like you should do after you have thought about all these other reasons why kids should bring back the Legos they've taken?"

"Add it?" Serena said. She looked back at her letter to the children and pointed to show that she was already at the bottom of the page and then clapped her hand over her mouth as if to convey, "I know! I know what to do!" and skipped off to the writing center to retrieve another page. As she headed off, I asked her to bring a whole bunch of add-on slips as well because I was quite sure that Serena's efforts would be infectious, leading others to try adding to their drafts. Upon her return, Serena added:

> or else you get in big trouble. No Legos at school, No more Legos in the box.

I restated what I hoped Serena would transfer to other pieces of writing, speaking in a way that made today's work as transferable as possible. "Serena, remember that whenever you are writing to convince people to help you, you are the kind of writer who includes an 'or else' as a way to tell your reader what *could happen* if the problem doesn't get fixed. Do this work in all your opinion writing." I then called for the attention of the writers at Serena's table and gave them a quick overview of the work Serena had done, which they could all do. Because Serena was a particularly proficient writer, I made the strategy seem especially accessible as I described it.

Of course, you'll help the novice writer have access to similar work doing this work with more supports. As you move among your students, conferring and leading small groups, be aware that your more novice writers can also profit from your help adding reasons to convince readers that the action they advocate is worthy, although some of the added content might be contained in speech bubbles. Perhaps in the drawing that accompanies the text, someone might say, "You better do this or else . . . " and fill in the consequence. Of course, this content can also be added into the text itself.

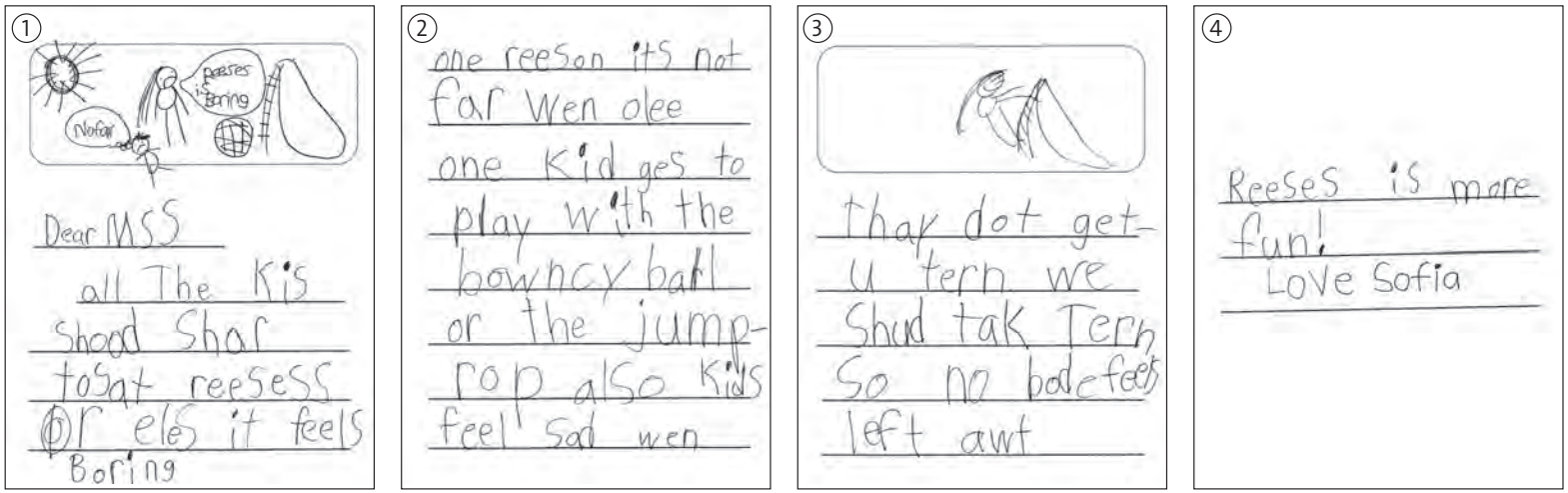


FIG. 2–3 Sofia includes reasons and consequences in speech and thought bubbles in her drawing and in the body of her letter.

SHARE

Sharing Strategies to Make Your Writing Convincing

Channel children to reread their writing, identifying and talking about places where they tried to convince people, highlighting what they did that others could try.

"Writers, it is hard for me to believe that we have only been working for a few days on writing to convince people. You guys are becoming so convincing. Right now, will you meet with your partner? Partner 1, will you show your partner all the things you did in your writing so that you could convince people to really, really listen to you? Put your writing between the two of you, and read it closely. You might even put a star on parts you tried to convince people. Who knows? You and your partner could even get ideas today about how to make those parts even *more* convincing!"

Children talked. After a few minutes, I said, "You all came up with ideas I never even imagined. For example, a few of you added not only speech bubbles but also thought bubbles to show what characters will be thinking. Jack added thought bubbles to show, in his poster, what people will think if you all don't start putting your books away. And he showed what *kids* will think as well. Kids will think, 'I can't find any good books,' because all the books will be on the floor."

Then I said, "Jack may end up learning from Sofia because she first added speech bubbles and thought bubbles to her drawings, but then she went a step farther and added that writing to her actual sentences." I displayed Sofia's book and pointed first to some speech bubbles in her picture. I said to the children, "On this page (see Figure 2–3), Sofia, who is writing about recess, shows what will happen if nobody shares. One person in her picture is *saying* something: 'Recess is boring.' And one is thinking something: 'No fair.'" Then I pointed to the passage under the picture and said, "Look, Sofia made sure to pull those ideas down into her sentences." I read:

> Dear Ms. S,
> All the kids should share toys at recess or else it feels boring. One reason is it's not fair when only one kid gets to play with the bouncy ball or the jump rope. Also, kids feel sad when they don't get a turn. We should take turns so nobody feels left out. Recess is more fun! Love, Sofia

"Do you notice how Sofia's words are talking right to her reader? She used her ideas from her picture to give *lots* of reasons and *lots* of sentences so she can tell her reader exactly what she's thinking and what she wants her reader to do. You could try that in your writing, too."

Professional Development Options from TCRWP

The Units of Study books are a curriculum—and more. Lucy Calkins has embedded professional development into the curriculum, teaching teachers the "why" and "how" of effective reading and writing instruction. The professional development embedded in this series can be further enhanced through the following opportunities.

IN YOUR SCHOOL OR DISTRICT

Units of Study "Quick Start" Days

Through a one-day intensive session, teachers can get started unpacking the series' components, grasping the big picture of effective workshop teaching, and gaining an understanding of how to integrate assessment into the curriculum.

Contact **Judith Chin, Coordinator of Strategic Development**
Judith.Chin@readingandwritingproject.com
Phone: (212) 678-3327

Multi-Day Institute (40–300 educators)

Invite a Reading and Writing Project Staff Developer to work in your school or district, helping a cohort of educators teach reading and/or writing well. Host a "Homegrown Institute" for writing or reading instruction, usually during the summer months for four or five days. Tailored to your district's needs, the instruction and materials are specialized for K–2, 3–5, or 6–8 sections.

Contact **Kathy Neville, Executive Administrator**
kathy@readingandwritingproject.com
Phone: (917) 484-1482

Extended On-Site Professional Development

For deeper, more intensive professional development, schools and districts can work with TCRWP to plan on-site professional development that includes a sequence of 10–25 school-based staff development days, spaced throughout the year.

Contact **Laurie Pessah, Senior Deputy Director**
Laurie@readingandwritingproject.com
Phone: (212) 678-8226

ONLINE FROM TCRWP

Facebook Discussion Groups

Join the Units of Study community on Facebook to learn from educators across the country, including Lucy Calkins and TCRWP Staff Developers, and to share your own experience.

Search Units of Study in Writing TCRWP and Units of Study in Reading TCRWP.

Classroom Videos

These live-from-the classroom videos model the minilessons, conferences, and shares you will engage in as you teach the Units of Study.

View these videos at:
readingandwritingproject.org/resources/units-of-study

Resources

The Project posts important and useful resources throughout the year, including examples of student work.

Visit **readingandwritingproject.org/resources**

Office Hours

In these live webinar sessions, Lucy and her TCRWP colleagues respond to questions from educators on a wide range of topics.

Sign up to receive invitations at:
samplers.heinemann.com/lucycalkins-updates

Twitter Chats

On Wednesdays from 7:30–8:30 PM EST join TCRWP for live chat sessions on topics supporting literacy instruction.

***Follow them at* @TCRWP *or search* #TCRWP Twitter.com/tcrwp**

AT TEACHERS COLLEGE

Multi-Day Institutes

TCRWP offers institutes across the year led by teacher-educators from the project and world-renowned experts.

For registration and application information go to:
readingandwritingproject.org/services/institutes

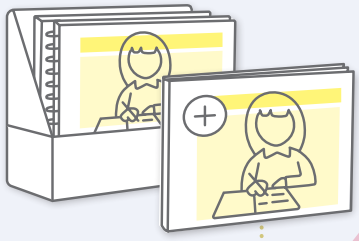
ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Units of Study "Quick Start" Days

TCRWP and Heinemann offer several one-day workshops for teachers and administrators.

For dates, locations, and registration information go to:
readingandwritingproject.org/services/one-day-events/conferences *and* Heinemann.com/PD/workshops

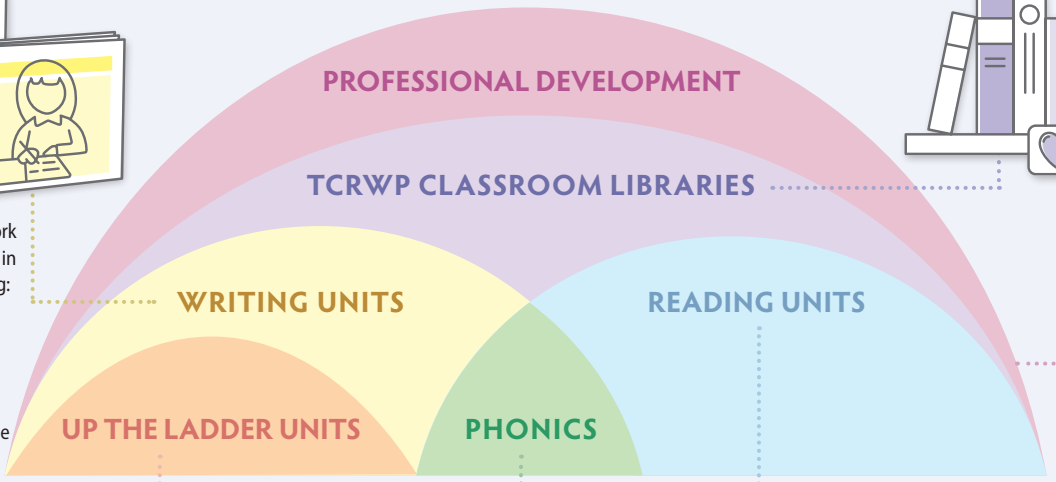
State-of-the-Art Units, Tools, and Methods for Teaching Reading and Writing Workshop

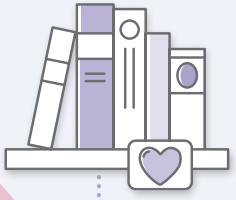


Writing Units

Built on best practices and a proven framework developed over decades of work, the Units of Study in Opinion/Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing:

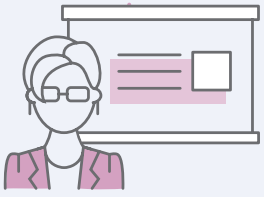
- support explicit instruction in opinion/argument, information, and narrative writing and provide rich opportunities for practice
- help teachers use learning progressions to observe and assess students' writing, to develop students' use of self-monitoring strategies, and to set students on trajectories of growth
- give teachers crystal-clear advice and on-the-job support for teaching efficient and effective writing workshops





TCRWP Classroom Libraries

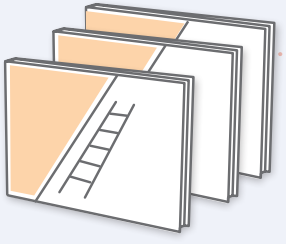
Each of the TCRWP Classroom Libraries is a miniature version of a great bookstore—if you can imagine a bookstore run by the country's greatest readers and the country's greatest teachers—and where every collection has been carefully and thoughtfully designed to lure kids into reading and to move them up levels of complexity.



Professional Development & Professional Books

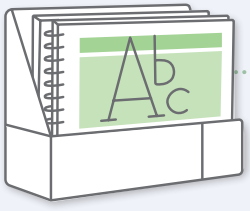
The Project provides a wide range of professional development services to keep teachers, literacy coaches, and building leaders current on best practices to support literacy instruction. Options include in-school staff development devoted to implementation of reading and writing workshops and content-area literacy instruction, day-long workshops, week-long institutes, and year-long study groups.

In addition, Lucy and her TCRWP colleagues have written many professional books to support study groups and individual learning. For a complete list of titles, visit **UnitsofStudy.com**.



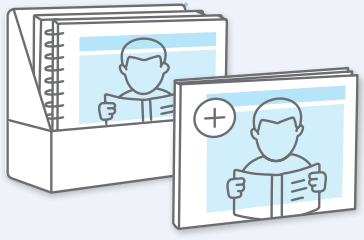
Up the Ladder Units

The *Up the Ladder* units give less experienced writers opportunities to engage in repeated successful practice and to move rapidly along a gradually increasing progression of challenges. Although designed to ramp kids up to the work they will do in the grades 3–6 writing Units of Study, these units can be helpful in any setting where students need a boost in foundational elements of writing workshop.



Units of Study in Phonics

These lean, engaging phonics units are deeply grounded in best-practice research—and are also kid-friendly and fun. Lessons synchronize instruction across the reading and writing Units of Study, allowing opportunities to revisit high-leverage phonics skills across the day in ways that help students become stronger readers and writers.



Reading Units

The Units of Study for Teaching Reading offer a framework for teaching that:

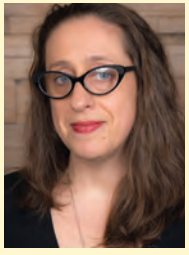
- provides a comprehensive, cross-grade curriculum in which skills are introduced, developed, and deepened
- supports explicit instruction in reading skills and strategies and offers extended time for reading
- provides strategic performance assessments to help teachers monitor progress, provide feedback, and help students set clear goals for their reading work
- gives teachers on-the-job guidance in powerful reading workshop teaching

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Lucy Calkins is the Founding Director of the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project. In that role, Lucy's greatest accomplishment has been to develop a learning community of teacher educators whose brilliance and dedication shine through in the Units of Study books, which have become an essential part of classroom life in tens of thousands of schools around the world. Take in the sheer excellence of their work, and you will understand why Lucy tells everyone that the Project is as dear to her as her own two sons, Miles and Evan Skorpen.

Lucy is the Robinson Professor of Children's Literature at Teachers College, Columbia University, where she co-directs the Literacy Specialist Program. She is the author, coauthor, or series editor of the Units of Study in Opinion/Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing, Grades K–8; Up the Ladder: Accessing Grades 3–6 Writing Units of Study; Units of Study for Teaching Reading, Grades K–8 series; and Units of Study in Phonics, Grades K–2; as well the lead curator of the TCRWP Classroom Libraries, Grades K–8 (all published by Heinemann); and has authored scores of other professional books and articles.

Elizabeth Franco is a Staff Developer, Researcher, and Writer-in-Residence at the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, Columbia University. Her passion is for finding ways to make reading and writing both playful and rigorous. Liz is an author or coauthor, as well as illustrator, of five books in the Units of Study for Teaching Reading series, including *Word Detectives: Strategies for Using High-Frequency Words and for Decoding* (which she coauthored with Havilah Jespersen), and three books in the Units of Study in Opinion/Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing series (all published by Heinemann). Liz is known especially for her state-of-the-art work making tools that help youngsters work with more independence. She supports lead teachers in their own professional development work and teaches advanced sections at TCRWP summer institutes.



Amanda Hartman, Deputy Director for Primary Literacy at the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project at Columbia University, heads up TCRWP's K–2 reading, writing, and coaching institutes, and presents at conferences around the world. Amanda is the author or coauthor of four books in the Units of Study for Teaching Reading series, as well as two books in the Units of Study in Opinion/Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing series. She has also authored the video, *Up Close: Teaching English Language Learners in Writing Workshops* and is the coauthor of *One-to-One: The Art of Conferring with Young Writers* (all published by Heinemann).

Natalie Louis is a Senior Lead Staff Developer TCRWP. She loves teachers. Her deepest desire is to make teaching and learning rigorous and fun for both children and teachers. Natalie is a lead editor and coauthor of five books in this phonics series, and is author or coauthor of two kindergarten books in the Units of Study series: *We Are Readers* and *Writing for Readers*. Natalie leads advanced sections at the TCRWP's summer institutes and does data-obsessed staff development locally, nationally, and internationally. Before joining the Project, Natalie taught grades 1–3 in the New York City public schools. She earned her MA in Teaching and Curriculum from Teachers College and her Reading Specialist license from Fordham University through the Ennis William Cosby Scholarship Program. Her work with lead professor Joanna Uhry helped her gain the skills to support children struggling with literacy.

Elizabeth Moore holds an EdM in Curriculum and Teaching from Teachers College, Columbia University, where she worked for a decade as a Staff Developer at the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project. In that role, she has helped whole schools lift the level of their reading and writing instruction. Beth has led much of the TCRWP's work in a number of areas including spelling, phonics, vocabulary, and content literacy, and is a contributing author to many of the Project's resources and materials. She has also helped the NYC Department of Education with performance assessments in reading. Beth now lives in Jericho, Vermont, but maintains her close affiliation with the TCRWP.

Laurie Pessah is a Senior Deputy Director at the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, where she has responsibility for staffing the Project's work with several hundred schools in New York City and around the country. Coauthor of the DVD *A Principal's Guide to Leadership in the Teaching of Writing: Helping Teachers with Units of Study* (Heinemann 2008), Laurie has special responsibility for leading the TCRWP's work with school leaders and supporting staff developers. In this capacity, Laurie leads study groups, institutes, and a calendar of conference days for superintendents, principals, and assistant principals. She also has a longstanding special interest in primary-level reading and writing workshops. This book draws especially on work with coauthor Beth Moore and with a team of teachers from Theodore Roosevelt Elementary School in Oyster Bay, New York.

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For more than thirty years the **Teachers College Reading and Writing Project** (*readingandwritingproject.org*) has been both a provider of professional development to hundreds of thousands of educators and a think tank, developing state-of-the-art teaching methods and working closely with policy makers, school principals, and teachers to initiate and support school-wide and system-wide reform in the teaching of reading and writing.

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