

Study Guide

K-2 The Big 5 Trainings

Module 5A—Writing in Lower Elementary

OPTIONAL

PREFACE

This study guide is intended to help teachers get the maximum benefit from the five main modules (and two optional advanced modules) that make up the K-2 The Big Five PD Series. Its goal is to provide you with a deeper understanding of the scientifically based reading research (SBRR) contained within and to give you a clear concept of what these strategies look like when implemented in the classroom.

This guide can be used by the individual teacher completing the modules independently as well as by groups of teachers who might be using this professional development series as part of their Professional Learning Community (PLC) time on campus.

This guide discusses reading/language arts skills in great detail. However, it is important to state that these same skills apply across the entire curriculum. There is a lot of truth in the education adage that “All teachers are reading teachers.” This does not mean that we expect content area teachers to be teaching lessons in parts of speech or giving spelling tests to their students. What it does mean is that at the places where science/social studies/math/art/music/PE/health intersect with reading, both the content area and the reading teachers should work together to ensure that their students have the requisite reading “chops” that empowers them to succeed in the content areas. We will point out these areas of intersection and how this collaboration can take place to help all students succeed.

CROSS-CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS



Look for these icons throughout this guide. They indicate places where reading skills intersect with the rest of the curriculum. These will be stopping points where PLC members can discuss how the RLA and content teachers can work together.

Slides 6-8: Handwriting Research

After hearing the research findings on these slides, what stands out to you?

Slide 9: Organization Scaffolds



Model with think-alouds: Open your brain and explain your thought process to your students as you model writing. Show them exactly what is going on in your head and how good writers think and develop ideas.

Provide Graphic Organizers for pre-writing: Simple graphic organizers provide young writers with an easy-to-follow roadmap for their writing. We have included examples of fiction and non-fiction ones on pages 4-5 of this guide.

Use story starters: Sentence starters reduce the cognitive load of beginning writers and allow them to focus on organizing their ideas, rather than on how to frame the beginning of their work.

Start with simple tasks: Start with simple writing tasks of just a single sentence. As students demonstrate proficiency, add complexity to these tasks.

Conference with students: Meet one-on-one with your students. Keep these feedback sessions POSITIVE and SPECIFIC. Student need to hear what they are doing well (to build confidence) and which areas require improvement. Provide students with suggestions on exactly how they can improve that particular part of their writing. Whenever possible, use the other tools outlined above to assist them with their writing.

Narrative Graphic Organizer

BEGINNING

Character(s)

Setting

Problem

MIDDLE

Event #1

Event #2

Event #3

END

Solution

Conclusion

NON-FICTION

GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

Topic

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border and decorative, slightly curved corners, intended for writing the topic.

Facts

A horizontal rectangular box with a black border, featuring a large purple number '1' on the left side and a pointed right end.A horizontal rectangular box with a black border, featuring a large purple number '2' on the left side and a pointed left end.A horizontal rectangular box with a black border, featuring a large purple number '3' on the left side and a pointed right end.

Opinion/Conclusion

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for writing the opinion or conclusion.

Slide 13: Lower Grade Capitalization Expectations

Standards may vary somewhat from state to state, but for the most part students are expected to know the following capitalization rules:

- The first letter of a sentence
- Proper names
- The pronoun “I”
- The names of months and the days of the week
- The salutation and conclusion of a letter

Slide 14: Lower Grade Punctuation Expectations

Standards may vary somewhat from state to state, but for the most part, students are expected to know the following punctuation rules:

- Marks at the end of sentences (. ? !)
- Apostrophes in contractions (won’t)
- Commas in dates (December 7, 1941)
- Commas items in a series (eggs, milk, sugar, flour)

Slides 15: Spelling

What was this child writing? Try your best to re-write the story using conventional spelling.

Slides 23: Persuasive Phrases

The phrases provided below can assist students with their persuasive writing. Be sure to show students how they can incorporate these into their writing. Remember, this list is not exhaustive. Add your own examples. These lists can make for a great anchor chart or bulletin board in your classroom.

POSITIVE

I believe that
We can solve this by
Surely,
Of course
Obviously
Just think about
This will cause
One advantage
Another reason for this is

NEGATIVE

Is it really worth
What would happen if
How unfair
It would be horrible if
We cannot allow
Never
One problem is
The consequences would

Slide 27: Student Writing Sample #1

What are the strengths and weaknesses you notice in this student's writing? Write your thoughts below.

Slide 28: Student Writing Sample #2

What are the strengths and weaknesses you notice in this student's writing? Write your thoughts below.

Slide 29: Writing Sample #3

What are the strengths and weaknesses you notice in this student's writing? Write your thoughts below.

Slides 40: Reflections and Takeaways

Consider the strategies covered in this module and the struggles your students face when writing. Think about which strategy(ies) presented in this module can be applied to help your students overcome that struggle? What is your biggest takeaway from this training? Write your thoughts in the space provided on page 8 of your study guide.