



PLAN POWERFUL UNITS

Boost achievement with the Science of Writing

PRESENTER

DIDI HARRIS
dharris@smekenseducation.com

SPARK YOUR NEXT STEPS

WHAT to teach?



RIGOROUS CURRICULUM

Target 3 areas of writing instruction to include at all grade levels.

TRANSCRIPTION skills are foundational for writing development at all levels. Explicit instruction in transcription skills is essential for writing fluency and literacy development (Institute of Education Sciences, 2012; Sedita, 2017). Skills like handwriting, spelling, grammar, sentence construction, and keyboarding lay the foundation for more complex writing.

GENRE-WRITING INSTRUCTION is crucial for developing purpose-driven communication skills. Effective writing instruction must help students understand the unique goals of each genre, ensuring they can adapt their writing for different contexts and audiences (Graham et al., 2012).

RESPONSE WRITING accelerates content mastery by enhancing comprehension and critical thinking. Writing about reading significantly boosts students' ability to understand and recall content (Graham & Hebert, 2011).

PRIMARY GRADES require all 3 areas of writing instruction, too. Early writing instruction should balance daily transcription practice with genre writing that builds content thinking and structure. Purposeful tasks like storytelling, reporting, and explaining help young writers move beyond scribbles toward structured expression (Graham & Harris, 2009; Graham & Hebert, 2011).

HOW to teach?



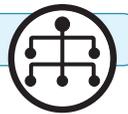
EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION

EXPLICIT WRITING INSTRUCTION is critical for student success (Graham, 2019; Marzano, 2007).

REGULAR PRACTICE and exposure to writing strategies lead to improvement (Graham, 2006; The National Center for Education Statistics, 2011).

Specific, focused, and **TIMELY WRITING FEEDBACK** has a powerful impact on student achievement (Hattie, 2012; Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

WHEN to teach WHAT?



SYSTEMATIC INSTRUCTION

TRANSCRIPTION

Handwriting ↔ Spelling ↔ Keyboarding ↔ Automaticity ↔ Fluency in composition

RESPONSE WRITING

Comprehension → Organization ↔ Evidence ↔ Explanation → Basic to sophisticated

GENRE WRITING

Sustained writing growth requires spiral instruction across the year. Revisiting genres builds "accumulated writing capital" and deepens skill development (Hattie, 2009; Lapp & Fisher, 2010). Effective genre instruction begins with core traits like ideas and organization before addressing conventions (Brindle, Zeni, & Vanneman, 2016).

HOW to juggle with content?



CROSS-CURRICULAR WRITING

It's essential to teach writing **WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF SPECIFIC DISCIPLINES**. Writing skills improve when instruction reflects the unique tasks encountered in subjects like science, history, and math (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008; Graham & Perin, 2007).

WHEN to teach?



INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

The **MORE TIME** students spend writing, the more they are able to develop their communication and cognitive skills (The Carnegie Foundation, 2012).

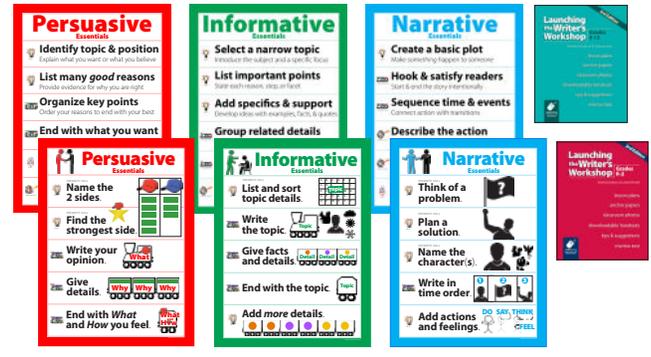
IN-CLASS WRITING TIME, with the teacher present, is essential for developing students' writing skills. It allows students to practice their skills while receiving immediate feedback from both peers and the teacher (Graham and Perin, 2007).

The Science of Writing identifies 3 areas of instruction all students require.

1 LANGUAGE FOUNDATIONS

2 GENRE-WRITING INSTRUCTION

3 READING RESPONSE

<p>STANDARDS & REPORTING CATEGORIES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Foundations: Print Concepts • Writing: Language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Comprehension • Writing
<p>SKILLS & CONCEPTS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directionality • Letter formation • Spacing • Spelling • Grammar • Capitalization • Punctuation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opinion/Persuasive/Argumentative writing • Informative writing • Narrative writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retell/Paraphrase, Summarize • Explain thinking, Support with evidence • Analysis • Research (multiple texts)
<p>RESOURCES & PROGRAMS</p>			
<p>WRITING TOPIC</p>	<p>The specific details of the writing are typically collected by the whole class or provided by the teacher.</p>	<p>The specific details of the writing topic are generated by individuals. Students express their own independent ideas.</p>	<p>The specific details are from a recently-read text. They are generated as a class (often) or individually (sometimes).</p>
<p>COGNITIVE LOAD</p>	<p>The student's cognitive load is on learning letter, word, and sentence-level conventions.</p>	<p>The student's cognitive load is on communicating his own ideas utilizing genre structure & ingredients while applying previously-learned convention skills.</p>	<p>The student's cognitive load is on demonstrating comprehension while applying previously-learned language skills, genre structure, and essential ingredients.</p>
<p>INDEPENDENCE LEVEL</p>	<p>LOW— Students generate similar products that they copy or have dictated to them or practice common examples.</p>	<p>HIGH— Students generate unique products that express their own ideas while honoring their personal levels of language foundations and developmental writing stages.</p>	<p>MODERATE— Students may generate different responses to text, but their ideas often originate from whole-class comprehension discussions.</p>