

Resources for Writing Instruction

Writing Curriculum:

Expressive Writing I & II

Authors: Engelmann, Z., & Silbert, J. (2005)

Publishers: SRA/McGraw-Hill (Columbus, OH) \$137.61 + \$14.91/student

These scripted, direct instruction lessons are intended for poor writers in grades 4-8. The lessons focus on the basics of good writing: writing complete and correct sentences, paragraphs, and short stories. The focus is primarily on the mechanical aspects of writing: correct grammar, capitalization, punctuation, paragraph structure, and verb tense. Student workbook activities provide proofreading exercises and specific practice of other targeted skills. Levels 1 and 2.

Four Square Writing Method.

Authors: Gould, J. S., & Gould, E. J. (1999).

Publisher: Teaching & Learning Co. (Carthage, IL) \$12.95-17.95

This series of books comes in three levels (grades 1-3, 4-6, and 7-9). The authors present an 8-step process for teaching a simple planning sheet (divided into four squares) that aids students in organizing their compositions. The method is very appealing in its simplicity and usefulness across different modes of writing. It can be adapted for expository, narrative, descriptive, and persuasive genres. The books have lots of reproducible worksheets.

High-Performance Writing

Author: Dodds, T. (2005)

Publisher: SRA/McGraw-Hill (Columbus, OH). \$31.17 per unit.

This series of instructional units covers narrative, persuasive, expository, descriptive, and report writing. Each unit contains a series of scripted lessons, graphic organizers for planning a composition, specific skills exercises, and a scoring rubric for evaluating the composition. Each lesson is divided into three parts: Writer's Warm-up, Writer's Workshop, and Writer's Workout. The author also includes instructions for collecting pre- and posttest writing samples.

***Powerful Writing: Helping Students Organize and Share Ideas* (2nd ed.).**

Author: Treat, M. (2001).

Publisher: Curriculum Solutions (Lawrence, KS)

These step-by-step lessons introduce students to the Powerful Writing Tree, a simple graphic organizer for planning a composition. The lessons are comprised mostly of activities requiring analysis of examples and prompted completion of

writing trees on given topics. Levels of planning expand from a short four-sentence paragraph (topic sentence and three detail sentences) to a five-paragraph report.

Rewards Writing

Authors: Archer, A. L., Gleason, M. M., & Isaacson, S. L. (2008)

Publisher: Sopris West (Longmont, CO) \$526.49 (classroom set for 20 students)

This writing program of 75 lessons focuses on sentence refinement. Lessons help students improve their writing by making better word choices and creating more mature and interesting sentences. The program also teaches an editing strategy that helps students polish their paragraphs.

Step Up to Writing (2nd ed.)

Author: Auman, M. E. (1999)

Publisher: Sopris West (Longmont, CO) \$349.95 (classroom kit)

This very popular writing program (sets for both elementary and secondary levels) consists of extensive materials to help students organize ideas and information, write topic sentences and thesis statements, connect key ideas with supporting details, write conclusions, and think creatively while writing. The author presents lots of strategies divided into simple, manageable steps. Included in the manual are dozens of writing examples, reproducible activity sheets, graphic organizers, scoring rubrics, skill sequences, reference materials, posters, and topics for writing projects. Materials are not presented in a lesson-by-lesson format but give teachers lots of ideas for creating and expanding writing lessons across a variety of genres.

Trait-based Mini-lessons for Teaching Writing

Author: Sloan, M. S. (2005)

Publisher: Scholastic (New York) \$18.99

A series of mini-lessons for teaching each of the six primary traits (plus one). The six traits are *Ideas and Content*, *Organization*, *Voice*, *Word Choice*, *Sentence Fluency*, and *Conventions*. The “plus one” trait is *Presentation*. There are about five mini-lessons for each trait. The book includes a chapter on assessment and reproducible think sheets, scoring guides, and student self-assessment checklists.

Write on Track: A Handbook for Young Writers, Thinkers, and Learners

Authors: Kemper, D., Nathan, R., & Sebranek, P. (1996).

Publishers: Great Source Education Group/Houghton Mifflin (Wilmington, MA)

This book is part of a series from the Write Source. It is written as a text for elementary children, but includes lots of valuable information and ideas for teachers. The short lessons cover different aspects of the writing process across a variety of genres (stories, personal narratives, friendly letters, classroom reports, plays, etc.)

and forms (sentences, paragraphs, full-length papers). It is not written for students with learning difficulties and, therefore, needs to be modified to include more examples, teacher modeling, and step-by-step procedures.

Books about Writing Instruction:

Better Answers: Written Performance that Looks Good and Sounds Smart

Authors: Cole, A. D. (2002)

Publisher: Stenhouse Publishers (Portland, ME)

Better Answers is an outgrowth of Ardith Cole's work with students who have not met state standards in writing. She employs a five-step strategy that starts with focusing on and restating the question raised about a topic. The purpose of the strategy is to keep students focused on the task at hand. The step-by-step process begins with teacher modeling, invites increasing amounts of student participation, and eventually moves into independent response writing.

***Creating Writers: Linking Writing Assessment and Instruction* (2nd ed.)**

Authors: Spandel, V., & Stiggins, R. J. (1997)

Publisher: Longman/Addison Wesley (New York)

The authors present the six primary traits of writing as a basis for assessing student writing and guiding writing instruction. The authors introduce the *Six-Trait Analytical Scoring Guide* by which both teachers and students can evaluate compositions. The six primary traits are *ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions*. The book goes on to describe typical problems students can have with each of these traits and what the teacher and writer can do about them.

Informal Assessment and Instruction in Written Language : A Practitioner's Guide for Students with Learning Disabilities

Authors: Mather, N., & Roberts, R. (1995)

Publisher: Wiley

This is an idea book, a broad collection of methods for assessing and teaching writing. Introductory chapters address the writing process and research-based principles of effective writing instruction, but the authors do not present a clearly defined teaching approach or writing curriculum. The book has reproducible planning sheets and evaluation checklists.

Interactive Writing & Interactive Editing: Making Connections Between Writing and Reading

Authors: Swartz, S. L., Klein, A. F., & Shook, R. E. (2001)

Publisher: Domini Press (Carlsbad, CA)

This interesting book begins with ideas for teaching writing to very young beginning writers. Instruction begins with the teacher leading a discussion on points of interest in a preceding story or activity. Then the teacher and children negotiate the wording of sentences about their chosen topic and individual children are chosen to write the sentences on a chart as the teacher prompts and the other students write the words in the air. The procedure incorporates activities to promote phonemic awareness, concepts about print, and analysis of spelling patterns.

Reading and Writing Nonfiction Genres.

Authors: Buss, K., & Karnowski, L. (2002)

Publisher: International Reading Association (Newark, DE)

This book has many good recommendations for teaching the writing of nonfiction genres such as recounts (personal narratives), procedural texts, informational texts, persuasive texts and others. The appendixes have several pages of useful graphic organizers, bibliographies of children's literature, and websites that assist children with nonfiction writing.

Writing Better: Effective Strategies for Teaching Students with Learning Difficulties

Authors: Graham, S., & Harris, K. R. (2005).

Publisher: Paul H. Brookes (Baltimore, MD)

This book is based on Graham and Harris's research on self-regulated strategy instruction. The authors describe specific acronym-guided strategies (such as *PLEASE*) for writing paragraphs, stories, short persuasive essays, and other forms and a five-step procedure for teaching strategies. *Writing Better* also has examples of planning think sheets and editing checklists.

The Writing Teacher's Strategy Guide

Author: Peha, S. (2001)

Publisher: Teaching That Makes Sense (www.ttms.org)

This downloadable text has many nice strategies and graphic organizers for helping students generate writing topics, develop ideas, add detail, sequence narrative events, write good beginnings and endings, and share their writing with others. The *ttms.org* website also has ideas and materials for assessing student writing.

Expressive Writing focuses on the writing and the editing of basic sentences, paragraphs, and stories. Instructional strands include Mechanics, Sentence Writing, Paragraph and Story Writing, and Editing. Expressive Writing helps students learn to express ideas by writing sentences, paragraphs, and stories that articulate precisely what the writer wishes to say. The program addresses essential skills with four instructional strands: Mechanics, Sentence Writing, Paragraph and Story Writing, and Editing. Expressive Writing. A simple, effective way to work through an emotional challenge. (9 ratings) Over the next four days, write down your deepest emotions and thoughts about an emotional challenge that has been affecting your life. In your writing, really let go and explore the event and how it has affected you. You might tie this experience to your childhood, your relationship with your parents, people you have loved or love now, or even your career. Write continuously for 20 minutes. Tips for writing

Expressive writing is personal writing. It expresses and explores the personal feelings of the writer. The piece may attempt to answer a question, state an opinion or recount the writer's personal experiences. Many times, expressive writing does all of these. Unlike most forms of writing, this type of written communication isn't focused on proper spelling, punctuation and grammar.