BASIC CONCEPTS and “KEY WORD” OUTLINES

1. Most students who dislike writing have difficulty partly because they “don’t know what to write about.”

2. Being able to think of something to write should not be a prerequisite for learning how to write.

3. Writing is a complicated process; spelling, handwriting, and composition are entirely different neurological functions. For a student who has difficulty with writing, this complexity must be broken into small, manageable pieces.

4. Imitation, as a critical part of learning anything, is not only okay, but is actually the best way to begin learning to write.

5. If the students do not have to worry about what to write, they can learn how to write. As they gradually gain confidence and competence, they become more comfortable with the task of determining “what to write.”

6. Using a “source text” allows the student to “get content” for writing while reviewing content from subjects such as history, science, literature, geography, etc. Writing should be a part of the study of these subjects rather than a subject unto itself.

7. Just as Benjamin Franklin took “short hints of the sentiment of each sentence” to teach himself to write, our students can use key word outlines to help them get started with writing from simple source texts.

8. Source texts can be fiction or non-fiction. Aesop’s fables work well. Material should be at or below the reading level of the student. Selections of 4–7 sentences are ideal. Try one from a short Aesop’s fable:

The Fox and the Goat

By an unlucky chance, a Fox fell into a deep well from which he could not escape. A Goat passed by and asked the Fox what he was doing down there. “Oh, have you not heard?” said the Fox. “There is going to be a great drought, so I came down here in order to be sure to have water by me. Why don’t you come down too?” The Goat thought this a good idea and jumped down into the well. But the Fox immediately sprang onto her back and by putting his foot on her long horns, managed to hop up to the edge of the well. “Good-bye, friend,” said the Fox. “Remember, be careful of the advice of one who is in trouble.”

I. __________________________________________________________

1. __________________________________________________________

2. __________________________________________________________

3. __________________________________________________________

4. __________________________________________________________

5. __________________________________________________________

6. __________________________________________________________
USE OF THE KEY WORD OUTLINE

Step 1: Verbal Summary
Tell back the information verbally, making complete sentences from the key words. Exact duplication is neither expected nor required.

Note: For many students it may best to do several key word outlines from short, easy to read paragraphs and practice choosing words and telling back content until the process becomes fairly easy.

Step 2: Written Summary - First Draft
Using a key word outline, have the students first verbally tell back the content corporately and then proceed to write down on paper the sentences they said. As the students write, remember:

- Don’t expect great handwriting; do wait until the clean copy to say anything.
- Don’t expect perfect spelling; do be the “human dictionary.” (Never say: “Go look it up.”)
- Don’t worry about neatness; do encourage “no erasing.”
- Don’t overcorrect or lecture; do praise the students’ efforts. (You had children’s efforts.)
- Don’t frown, grimace, or look serious; do smile as much as possible.

Step 3: Clean Copy
After the rough drafts are finished, the teacher edits to correct spelling, syntax, and punctuation. Then the students must neatly copy (or type) a final version. There is no such thing as a “first and only” draft.

Note: These steps should be repeated numerous times until the process has become relatively easy (or at least less painful). Don’t hesitate to help, give suggestions, and even dictate sentences if necessary. When you feel the students have confidence and understand the process, proceed to Step 4.

Step 4: Beginning Dress-Up, Creating a Checklist
Introduce the idea of dressing-up the compositions to make them sound a little more professional. Teach students to add an -ly adverb, and give them a nice list of adverbs to choose from. Do many assignments requiring just one -ly adverb. When that is easy, add a “who-which” clause, and when that is easy, add a “because clause.”

1. -ly adverb The fox effortlessly jumped up on the goat’s back and escaped the well.
2. who-which The clever fox convinced the goat, who jumped into the well.
3. strong verb The fox spun a tale of impending drought.
4. because Because the Fox seemed sincere, the goat believed him.

Create a Composition Checklist for your student, being very specific, and provide word lists to ensure success:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ Title and name on paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Composition double-spaced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Checked for spelling errors</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dress-Up Techniques</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ -ly adverb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ who-which clause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ strong verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ because clause</td>
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</table>
Celebrating the New Year

The celebration of the New Year is the oldest of all holidays. It was first observed in Ancient Babylon nearly 4000 years ago. Around 2000 BC, the Babylonian New Year began with the first new moon after the first day of spring, to celebrate rebirth, planting of new crops, and blossoming. Their celebration lasted for eleven days. Each day had its own special celebration. The Romans continued to observe the New Year in late March, but various emperors tampered with their calendar. Their calendar soon became out of synchronization with the sun. We now celebrate the New Year on January 1st.

I. ___________________________________________
   1. ________________________________________
   2. ________________________________________
   3. ________________________________________
   4. ________________________________________
   5. ________________________________________
   6. ________________________________________
   7. ________________________________________

Composition Checklist

General
☒ Title and name on paper
☒ Composition double-spaced
☒ Checked for spelling errors

Dress-Up Techniques
- -ly adverb ☐
- who-which clause ☐
- strong verb ☐
- because clause ☐
Reaching the Reluctant Writer

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Educational Consultant and Teacher Trainer
Institute for Excellence in Writing
Contact me at JeanN@IEW.com
Or 916.847.0482

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For most writing assignments…

Students lack the tools they need to construct a grammatically correct composition with:

- interesting vocabulary
- a variety of sentence structures
- organized, cohesive paragraphs

Why is this so?
The Defining Problem

“I don’t know what to write!”
“Why would anyone read this?”
“I don’t know what to say!”
“I can’t think of anything!”
When students are stuck trying come up with what to write, they can’t focus on HOW to write.
If students don’t know what to write about, they struggle to put words on paper.

The Blank Brain

The Blank Page
We can reach the reluctant writer by mirroring the way children acquire language.
Children Learn Language By Imitation

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INSTITUTE FOR Excellence in Writing
An effective method for teaching writing skills
Modeling Through Imitation

- Helps students memorize patterns of correct syntax verbally first, and then within the context of writing.
- Teaches students to rewrite sentence patterns and structure.
The Fox and the Goat

By an unlucky chance, a Fox fell into a deep well from which he could not escape. A Goat passed by, and asked the Fox what he was doing down there. "Oh, have you not heard?" said the Fox, "There is going to be a great drought, so I came down here in order to be sure to have water by me. Why don't you come down too?" The Goat thought this a good idea, and jumped down into the well. But the Fox immediately sprang on to the Goat's back, and by putting his foot on the Goat's long horns, managed to hop up to the edge of the well. "Good-bye, friend," said the Fox, "Remember, be careful of the advice of one who is in trouble."
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1. fell, well, escape
2. G passed, asked, “doing?”
3. F: “heard? drought, water!”
4. “You, too?”
5. G, thought, idea, ↓
6. F, back, horns, edge
7. _______________________________
What Did We Just Do?

✔ Learned how to take notes on a passage
  • An important skill for students to learn as they move through grades

✔ Increased reading comprehension
  • Forces student to read differently, slow down, think, process.
  • Meaning is not lost.
  • Helps counteract “passive readers.”

✔ Learned to think
  • Discernment of what is interesting or important
  • With practice, students begin to hear the key ideas and learn to streamline ideas.

✔ Increased vocabulary
  • In context (more meaningful), discussion, oral before writing, content specific, authentic opportunity to practice expressive and academic language.
In These Exercises...

The teacher:
- provides source texts at or below students’ grade level.
- presents and models the lesson for the students.
- gives students exercises to practice what they have learned.
- provides coached feedback throughout the process.
- models oral language and academic English.

The students:
- use key words to express complete thoughts and create meaning.
- learn to read, write, and talk about a subject.
- gradually move toward independence.
Next Step: Telling Back

- Construct verbal sentences in own words, from Key Word Outline
- Checks outline
- If you can’t tell it back in complete sentences, you can’t write it
- Helps to imprint the syntax in the brain
_allowed student (and teacher) to hear what he is thinking

Builds public speaking skills

Cements or solidifies language in the brain BEFORE students are asked to write it.

Very effective with students with learning disabilities and English Language Learners.
Key Word Outline (KWO)

The Fox and the Goat

1. fell, well, escape
2. G passed, asked, “doing?”
3. F: “heard? drought, water!”
4. “You, too?”
5. G, thought, idea, ↓
6. F, back, horns, edge
7. ____________________________
Once the structure is sound, students are free to focus on finding their own voice – the element we call “style.”
A new stylistic technique is required when the previous one is mastered because mechanics are taught in the context of style.
Dress-ups Add “Style” and Teach Grammar in Context

- We require specific “stylistic techniques” along with grammar.
- Checklists are given to students so that they know exactly what is expected.
- This provides clear direction to student, rather than just telling them to “add vivid details.”
- We introduce the idea of “dressing up” the composition to make it sound a little more professional and academic.
Strong Verbs and Quality Adjectives

Strong Verbs
Instead of eat:
- Devour
- Consume
- Nibble
- Feast

We “ban” overused, non-specific verbs and adjectives in favor of stronger choices that create a more vivid image or feeling – “a movie in the mind.”

Quality Adjectives
Instead of bad:
- Beastly
- Detestable
- Horrible
- Intrusive

Examples of “banned” words:
- said, eat, go/went
- bad, good, big, little

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Strong Verbs

- Warned
- Announced
- Declared
- Cried
- Bragged
- Taunted
- Admonished
- Advised

We “ban” overused, non-specific verbs and adjectives in favor of stronger choices that create a more vivid image or feeling – “a movie in the mind.”

Examples of “banned” words:
said, ate, went, thought, walked, good, bad, small, big
“Have you not heard?” declared the Fox, “There’s going to be a great drought.”

“Good-bye, friend,” admonished the Fox, “Remember, be careful when listening to the advice of one in trouble!”
Adding an "ly" Adverb

- in/frequently
- continuously
- increasingly
- occasionally
- repeatedly
- regularly
- normally
- constantly
- slowly
- confidently
- gradually
- usually
- steadily
- suddenly
- abruptly
- hastily
- immediately
- directly
Sample “-ly” adverbs

The Fox and the Goat

1. fell, well, escape
2. G passed, asked, “doing?”
3. F: “heard? drought, water!”
4. “You, too?”
5. G, thought, idea, down
6. F, back, horns, edge
7. _______________________

clumsily
carelessly
unhappily
unfortunately
curiously
innocently
cleverly
slyly
politely
foolishly
ignorantly
trustingly
instantly
deftly
rudely
obnoxiously
quietly
__________
The fox ________ly jumped.

The fox (quickly, suddenly, deviously) jumped on the goat’s back and easily escaped the well.

The goat thought this good advice and (impulsively, carelessly, energetically) hopped down into the well.
Quality Adjectives

We “ban” vague, over-used adjectives: good/bad, nice, awesome, cool, etc. in favor of stronger choices to create an image or feeling.

Look for nouns: Fox, Goat, well
  Fox: clever, sly, devious, scheming, sneaky
  Goat: gullible, agreeable, impulsive, easygoing
  Well: deep, dark, slimy, steep-sided, slippery, moss-lined

The sly fox lured the unsuspecting goat into the damp, dark well.
Who/Which Clause

A good way to add details and combine ideas:

The Fox fell into a well, which was deep, dark, and mossy, and could not get out.

A Goat, who passed by shortly afterwards, asked the Fox what he was doing down there.
Because Clause:

Forces student to add details or support an opinion.

The goat hopped down into the well because she thought this was good advice.

The goat believed the fox because of his sincerity.
Clausal (www.asia)
when, while, where, as, since, if, although

Teaches complex sentence construction in context. Helps students add or combine details, and think about relationships between ideas and events.

“Good-bye, Friend,” declared the Fox as he strolled away.

The Fox scampered away while the Goat hopelessly waited at the bottom of the well.
Stylistic Techniques Pacing

• There is no schedule; you don’t have to “finish” the dress-ups before going on to Unit III.

• Techniques should be “dripped” in as they become __________. Example:

Follow the schedule for pacing structure (one per month)
Follow students for pacing style.
These stylistic techniques:

- help students develop a repertoire of stylistic words and foster an academic voice.
- teach grammar in context and at the point of need.
- make grammar concrete.
- provide a direct application of English grammar to writing.
- are more effective than workbook pages.

This is just the beginning. Sentence openers are added to the checklist with the dress-ups. Later on, students learn decorations and advanced techniques.
Feedback: Students compare their writing to a checklist and self-evaluate.

The Checklist:

- allows students to know precisely what is expected of them.
- provides clear criteria for every assignment.
- encourages self-assessment and accountability.
- provides further feedback and coaching.
- gives every student at every level the opportunity to do his or her best.
- allows the teacher to mark papers based on objective criteria (formative assessment).
The Checklist Evolves

• The checklists start simply, with minimal requirements.
• They become more complex as students acquire additional skills and their writings become longer.
• Checklists can be modified to differentiate for student needs.
• Components can be added or omitted to allow for truly individualized instruction.
The Value of Using a Checklist

Name: ____________________________

Date: _______________________________

Source: __________
✓ Composition is double-spaced
☐ Dress-ups marked with underline
☐ Title is underlined and name is on paper
☐ Checklist on top, final draft, rough draft, key word outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dress-ups (underlined)</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>who/which</td>
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<tr>
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<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
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<tr>
<th>Decoration (one per essay)</th>
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<td>question</td>
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<td>conversation/quote</td>
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<tr>
<th>Banned Words:</th>
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Structure & Style
Written Communication Pathway

Essay Writing
(for Science, History etc)

Unit 1: Note Making & Outlines
Unit 2: Summarizing from notes
(Key Words from each sentence)

Unit 4: Summarizing a Reference
(Key words from facts from one source, limit to what is interesting/important)

Unit 6. Library Research Reports
(Key words from facts in multiple sources; topical, fused outline)

Unit 8. Formal Essay
(Research with evaluative introduction and conclusion, also Persuasive essay)

Creative Writing
(For Reading, Literature, etc.)

Unit 3: Summarizing Narrative Stories
(Key words from answers to story sequence chart questions)

Unit 5: Writing from Pictures
(Key words from answers to questions about pictures)

Unit 7. Inventive Writing
(Key words from questions, “notes from your brain”)

Unit 9. Critiques
(Story Sequence Model with background introduction and evaluative conclusion)

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Question: Can switching to Excellence in Writing actually improve students’ test scores?

Answer: YES!

A 2003-2005 study from Rocklin, California shows that 7th grade students who were introduced to the Excellence in Writing process in their 4-6th grade years scored significantly higher than those tested previously.

2001 Excellence in Writing adopted for 4th grade in all nine elementary schools
2002 Initial group of 4th grade students in 5th grade
2003 Initial group of 4th grade students in 6th grade
2004 Initial group of 4th grade students in 7th grade
2005 Second group of 4th grade students in 7th grade

In 2003, 36% of 7th grade students in both schools combined were below proficient in writing, as determined by California State standards.

In 2004 & 2005, only 4-5% were below proficient. Corresponding increases in proficiency levels can be seen, indicating a dramatic overall improvement in students with several years of consistently applied instruction with the process.

A more detailed report and analysis is available at IEW.com/schools/rocklin
Effective Practices
Used in Structure & Style Process

- Clear Learning Objectives
- Teacher Modeling / Demonstrating
- Guided Practice
- Frequent Checks for Understanding
- Formative Assessment

The Benefits of the Methodology:

- Reaches all four quadrants of language acquisition.
- Provides structured and frequent opportunities for speaking and listening.
- Improves reading comprehension.
- Grammar becomes immediately applicable to writing and is taught in context at the point of need.
- Useful for study and writing in content areas.
- Gradual and natural progression toward independence.
Through this process, students

- gain confidence in their ability to write cohesive paragraphs and compositions with style.

- develop a “toolbox” of models and techniques to handle any kind of writing assignment.

- learn to revise their writing through stylistic techniques.

- develop accountability.

- write at ever-increasing levels of sophistication.

- develop independence and a command of writing.

- learn to THINK.
Concrete requirements
- Students create structurally correct and grammatically correct stylistic techniques
- Focus is Accuracy

Develop a Competency

Abstract requirements
- Students choose structural and stylistic skills for artistic reasons.
- Students identify style of writers and imitate them
- Focus is choice

Develop a Confidence

Requirements internalized
- Students integrate content, structure and style to create a complete message
- Focus is on using expression to connect message to audience

Develop a Command

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Scaffolding to Independence

Move to independence during a step in the writing process.

Move to independence at the beginning of the writing process with a source text below reading level.

Move to independence at the beginning of the writing process with source text above reading level.

IEW.com/start
Think, Write, Communicate

IEW's award-winning approach will give you the tools you need to confidently teach EVERY student to write well, think clearly, and express themselves eloquently and persuasively.
Training and Professional Development

- **Teaching Writing: Structure & Style Seminar**
  - Live on-site or regional workshop
  - Training on DVD and live streaming

- **Demonstration and Consultation Days**

- **Observation and Coaching Days**

- **Review and Refinement Day**
Outcome

- Transformed attitudes
- Excellent results!
- Live training or on DVD

For more info...

Visit our website:
IEWSchools.com/Examine-Us

IEW.com/start

IEW.com/2015FDE
For More Information About Training and Instructional Materials

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