Five Steps to Proficient Writing
for Adolescent Language Learners
By Hillary Wolfe, M.A.
March 31, 2018
Introductions
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Grounding: What is culturally responsive instruction?

Overview: Intersecting the ELA/ELD Framework and the CCSS for Writing

Step 1: Break it down for small wins.
Step 2: Link writing to mentor texts.
Step 3: Authentic speaking and listening activities.
Step 4: Rule-based revisions.
Step 5: Formative assessment and progress monitoring.

Summary
Grounding Activity

WHAT IS CULTURALLY RELEVANT PEDAGOGY IMPORTANT?

Turn to a neighbor: What is culturally responsive instruction?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCSS for Writing</th>
<th>ELA/ELD Framework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Text types and purposes</td>
<td>• Culture as asset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Production and distribution of writing</td>
<td>• Content knowledge +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Research to build and present knowledge</td>
<td>language (into and from)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Range of writing</td>
<td>• Integrate domains of communication</td>
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<td>• Scaffolding</td>
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<td>• Evaluating progress</td>
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Text Types and Purposes

- Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

- Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.
Production and Distribution of Writing

• Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.

• Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

• Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.
Research to Build and Present Knowledge

• Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focus questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
• Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
• Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
Range of Writing

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.
Step 1: Break it down for small wins

• Provide explicit definitions of characteristics of each genre.
• Guided practice.
Let’s Try It!

Fun

Fast

Scary
Let's Try It!

Define/Describe
- wood
- ride with cars
- loops and turns
- some run on magnets

Cause and Effect
- if you close your eyes, less scary
- if you eat first, might get sick
- because so fast, might scream

Compare
- like a car
- unlike a carousel
- feels like flying
Step 1: Break it down for small wins

• Provide explicit definitions of characteristics of each genre.
  ○ Define/describe = how does it work? what is it made of? think of sensory words
  ○ Compare/contrast = similar/like, unlike, different
  ○ Cause/effect = if/then, because, result

• Guided practice. You try it -
A rollercoaster is like a car because each one goes fast.

Compare

Adapted from Connecting Content and Language for English Language Learners by Eugenia Mora-Flores, 2011. Huntington Beach, CA: Shell Education.
Step 2: Link Writing to Mentor Texts

• Connect writing to reading comprehension strategies.
• Show how other authors make these same choices.
Step 2: Link Writing to Mentor Texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For a reader to:</th>
<th>The writer must:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visualize</td>
<td>Use descriptive words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect</td>
<td>Include personal details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Provide interesting facts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predict</td>
<td>Offer hypotheses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infer</td>
<td>Give clues to meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarize</td>
<td>Organize information logically</td>
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When we ask the reader to:

“Find main ideas and details...”
Let's Try It!

• Definitions
• Descriptive adjectives
• Interesting facts
• Cause-and-effect
• Comparisons
• Quotes

What’s the Point?
Mentor texts by students
**Let’s Try It!**

**Argument**
- Propaganda/facts
- Claim/counterclaim
- Personal examples

**Narrative**
- Sequence of events
- Character descriptions
- Foreshadowing

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*Why Should We Save Water?*

*Save Our Water, Save the World*

*Elephant Bill and Bandoola's Daring Escape*

---

Then, just as Williams was getting ready for the trek, a group of weary, sick, and half-starved women and children arrived at the camp. Some of the women were pregnant; others were old and frail. Williams felt full of sympathy for them.

They were refugees from Nepal. They were women and children whose husbands and fathers were Gurkha soldiers fighting the Japanese. They were also trying to get to safety in India.

Williams knew that without skilled soldiers leading them, the chances of the refugees surviving the journey were slim. On the other hand, he knew that if he agreed to take them, it would slow down his group and risk their lives.
Tip: Works Across Content Areas

Primary Sources
- Bias
- Format
- Timelines

Labs
- Process steps
- Problem-Solution
- Cause-Effect
Step 3: Authentic Speaking and Listening Activities

- Students practice strategies orally first, in small fun activities.
- Build vocabulary authentically.
Let’s Try It!

If... Then... And... But... So...

Structuring an Argument

Name: ________________________

Community Affair

Directions: Write about a community event in the “If” box. Fill in the “Then” box with the effects of attending the event. In the next box, “But,” list an obstacle that might need to be overcome. Offer a solution to it in the “So” box. An example has been done for you.

If... Then...

You come to the pumpkin patch. You will get to choose as many pumpkins as you can carry.

And... You can play at the petting zoo.

But... So...

You might think you are too small to carry a lot of pumpkins. You can bring a wagon instead.

Now you try it!

If... Then...

And...

But... So...
Step 4: Rule-based revisions

- Embed grammar, vocabulary, and structure in the revision process
- Set explicit revision “rules” and handle one at a time
Albert Einstein was a scientist.

Write a topic sentence that addresses your first main idea. Your sentence must start with a VERB.

Study every day, and you might end up as smart as Albert Einstein.
Step 4: Rule-based revisions

Snakes are reptiles.
They are cold-blooded.
Snakes live in the desert where the air is warm.
Snakes are scary to some people but most snakes are nice.
Snakes are not slimy, even though they look slimy.
### Step 4: Rule-based revisions

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<tr>
<td>They are cold-blooded.</td>
<td><strong>Slithery, slimy</strong> snakes have cold blood, so they live in the <strong>dry, warm</strong> desert.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snakes live in the desert where the air is warm.</td>
<td>Between a snake and hamster, the snake is actually a nicer pet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snakes are scary to some people but most snakes are nice.</td>
<td><strong>Stroke</strong> a snake and you’ll see they are not slimy at all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snakes are not slimy, even though they look slimy.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Sssssss. What is that sound? It’s a snake! Snakes are reptiles. Slithery, slimy snakes have cold blood, so they live in the dry, warm desert. Between a snake and hamster, the snake is actually a nicer pet. Stroke a snake and you’ll see they are not slimy at all.
Revision Rulebook

Circle your transition words
NEW RULE: No repeats!

Highlight all your nouns
NEW RULE: Only two nonspecific nouns allowed!

Underline three random sentences.
NEW RULE: These three sentences must start with prepositional phrases!
Let’s Try It!

Help peers keep track of the elements of strong writing with a Peer Editing Bingo Card. In each square, list one of the criteria. Have students read drafts aloud as the rest of the class checks off each element as they hear it.
Scaffolds for English Learners

Engage Literacy
Practice with more precise language

wrote
drew
colored
scribbled
Step 5: Formative Assessment and Progress Monitoring

Formative Assessment

Analytic Rubrics

Holistic Rubrics
Step 5: Formative Assessment and Progress Monitoring

Formative Assessment

- Checklists
- Peer feedback
- Consider re-teaching prerequisite skills

E.g., If the student had trouble with passive versus active voice....

...Consider practicing with linking verbs and clauses
Rubrics

Analytic
  • Trait-based
  • Portfolio

Step 5: Formative Assessment and Progress Monitoring
Rubrics

Holistic

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Holistic Rubric Example

A supplement to an Assessment101 column, “Rubrics: What Are They Good For? Part II,” from the October 2006 issue of ABET’s Community Matters newsletter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 - Exceeds Criteria</th>
<th>3 - Meets Criteria</th>
<th>2 - Progressing to Criteria</th>
<th>1 - Below Expectations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provides ample supporting detail to support solution/argument.</td>
<td>Provides adequate supporting detail to support solution/argument.</td>
<td>Includes some details, but may include extraneous or loosely related material.</td>
<td>Includes inconsistent or few details which may interfere with the meaning of the text. Little evidence of organization or any sense of wholeness &amp; completeness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational pattern is logical and conveys completeness.</td>
<td>Organizational pattern is logical &amp; conveys completeness &amp; wholeness with few lapses.</td>
<td>Achieves little completeness &amp; wholeness though organization attempted.</td>
<td>Has a limited or inappropriate vocabulary for the intended audience &amp; purpose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses effective language; makes engaging, appropriate word choices for audience and purpose.</td>
<td>Uses effective language &amp; appropriate word choices for intended audience &amp; purpose.</td>
<td>Limited &amp; predictable vocabulary, perhaps not appropriate for intended audience &amp; purpose.</td>
<td>Does not follow the rules of standard English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistently follows the rules of standard English.</td>
<td>Generally follows the rules for standard English.</td>
<td>Generally does not follow the rules of standard English.</td>
<td></td>
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ABET’s Community Matters newsletter: [www.abet.org/newsletter.shtml](http://www.abet.org/newsletter.shtml)
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Any Questions?

Most of all....

HAVE FUN!!

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Writing Strategies for the Common Core

What’s the Point?

Engage Literacy