Writing and the Language Arts

Context Setting:
After reading this chapter, you will be able to

- Identify the stages of writing that children pass through
- Use standards to guide lesson planning in writing
- Use process writing as a model for teaching, learning, and assessment in writing
- Integrate writing with the other language arts

Before We Begin

- What kinds of writing do you do on a daily basis? What role does it play in your daily life? In your opinion, what characteristics do good writers possess?
Writing as a Language Art

Writing is a common occurrence in daily life and a critical skill in which to become proficient. Writing is used for myriad of purposes, from the automatic task of making a grocery list or jotting down a telephone message for a family member to more in-depth tasks such as writing a letter to the editor of a newspaper or writing in a school or business setting. Learning how to use the tools of writing, such as handwriting, spelling, and grammar, is important, but equally important are the content and thinking that go into a piece of writing. This chapter focuses on the processes of writing and the substance and content of writing, whereas Chapter 8, “Language Arts and the Content Areas,” will present the tools of writing.

How do you feel when you need to create a formal piece of writing such as an essay? What process do you engage in to complete the task? Do you brainstorm all of the possibilities and details before actually writing, possibly making an outline or creating a semantic map to organize your thoughts? Do you sit down at the computer and just let the words flow? Do you try out a number of opening sentences focused on capturing just the right one? Do you agonize over the mere thought of writing, or do you approach it with enthusiasm?

The purpose of writing is to communicate with others. The more clearly and convincingly we convey our ideas, the more influence our writing has on people who read what we write. Everything from the legibility of our handwriting to correct spelling and grammatical usage has an impact on the reader, but it is the power of our words that actually carries the new message.

Reflection Journal 4.1

Think of someone’s writing you particularly enjoy reading. What does the writer do to make his or her writing so compelling? What might you learn about writing from this writer?

Examine the following end-of-year self-assessment done by a first-grade student. What kinds of things do you notice?

Dis yer I lrnd meny tings.
Befor I did’t use capatalls and now I do.
Befor I did’t use pryods and now I do.
Befor I did’t use diskrpshun and now I do.
While this is a very insightful self-assessment for a first grader, when asked what this evaluation revealed, many teachers only see the long list of errors in the child’s writing. Perhaps you are thinking the same thing—that writing is either correct or incorrect. Or perhaps you are thinking that if teachers do not correct writing errors immediately, students will internalize incorrect spellings and never learn the “correct” way to spell words. While we strongly advocate for teaching spelling, grammar, punctuation, and handwriting as part of the writing process, it is essential to encourage students to first see themselves as capable writers who enjoy writing and can convey important messages through writing. Students who consistently use standard spelling and apply the grammar rules but who write lifeless pieces only when required are not really learning to write in a way that will serve them well in their lives.

Think about and then discuss with your classmates the variety of experiences you all have had in relation to writing in school settings. What conclusions could you draw about the positive ways to encourage students to become writers?

We must focus on guiding students to get their ideas on paper and not be overwhelmed when approaching a writing task. In minilessons and other learning experiences, you will teach the skills and strategies students need to continually improve their writing. We also focus on ways to teach these skills and strategies effectively.

Reflection Journal 4.2

Are you a good writer? Do you enjoy writing? Is it important for you to feel good about your writing if you are to be a teacher of writing?

Developmental Stages of Writing

From your study of theorists, such as Jean Piaget (1977), you know that although all children pass through the same stages in the development of cognition, they do not pass through these stages at exactly the same rate. This is the same with writing development. Some will have had experiences that are more meaningful with writing than others. Still others may be having their first experiences with
Learning to write in English. Of this latter group, they may fall anywhere along the continuum of very proficient to emergent writers in their first language.

Therefore, as teachers you will need to get a sense of where your students are in relation to the stages of writing and to design learning experiences that help move them forward. From there we repeatedly model good writing for students and nudge them to incorporate new things into their writing.

Numerous conceptualizations of the stages of writing have been developed by school districts, state departments of public instruction, and professional literacy organizations (IRA & NCTE, 1996). The number of stages of writing development identified by these organizations varies greatly, but each version begins with the most emergent (or beginning) level of writing and proceeds to fluent or standard writing in the target language. The most basic stages of writing development are portrayed in Table 4.1 to demonstrate the progression of development. You may wish to check with the schools where you have some connections to see how they have identified the stages of writing.

### Table 4.1 Developmental Stages of Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emergent Writers Generally</th>
<th>Transitional Writers Generally</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Use a combination of drawings and scribble writing</td>
<td>• Write stories with a beginning, middle, and end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understand that oral language can be written down</td>
<td>• Use varied sentence patterns and lengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use random letters or print-like symbols in writing</td>
<td>• Use some descriptive detail and some elaboration of ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use beginning and ending letters of words in English</td>
<td>• Use more conventional than temporary spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• “Read” back own writing (note that although the earliest stages do not yield writing products that others might be able to read, they do reflect what children understand about the purpose of writing and how they view themselves as writers)</td>
<td>• Write most high-frequency words correctly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use mostly correct capitalization and punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Begin to use paragraphs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginning Writers Generally</th>
<th>Fluent Writers Generally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Distinguish between drawing and writing</td>
<td>• Write with creativity and originality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use spaces between words</td>
<td>• Use writing mechanics (punctuation, capitalization, spelling) correctly most of the time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Write phrases or short sentences</td>
<td>• Use varied sentence patterns and lengths that develop and extend the topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Begin to accurately read what they have written</td>
<td>• Use rich, vivid vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use temporary spelling with some phonetic elements</td>
<td>• Use paragraphs consistently and appropriately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Write with some conventional spellings (Mom, Dad, you)</td>
<td>• Show a growing sense of audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use some uppercase and lowercase letters in appropriate places</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTE: Dictated story: “This is my house. It is not fair that it is not big.”

Figure 4.1 Four-Year-Old Writing Sample

Figure 4.2 Five-Year-Old Writing Sample
Developmental Standards in Writing

As in reading, standards for writing have been identified at the national, state, and district levels. Each school or district may have its own unique approach to how teachers are expected to represent the standards in their planning. For example, many building principals require that teachers submit weekly lesson plans with clearly identified standards to be focused on written at the top of each teaching/subject area. In other schools, teachers meet in school- or grade-level groups to determine which standards to emphasize most fully.

Most standards are organized as benchmarks for Grades 4, 8, and 12. This is helpful if you teach at these particular grade levels. For example, if you teach seventh grade, you need to review the eighth-grade standards and determine where seventh-grade students would be on their way to reaching the standards by the end of eighth grade. If you do not, you will need to determine how students can work “toward” these standards at lower grade levels. Many school districts have already done this work and have established benchmarks for each grade from kindergarten through high school graduation.

For example, the Milwaukee Public Schools (2003) express the state standards as Learning Targets at each grade level. The Learning Targets for writing in Grades K–5 are identified in Table 4.2.
Not only do teachers need to plan teaching and lessons based on the school and district benchmarks, they also must focus on state and national standards. How do teachers make this all manageable so they know exactly what to teach and the students know exactly what is expected of them?

**Applying the Standards for Writing: An Example**

The sixth-grade teachers at Greenfield Elementary School, Paula and María, had multiple lists of what they were expected to accomplish in writing, oral language, and media technology with their students but needed to develop a framework that would relate everything in a meaningful manner in their planning. After reviewing the standards and learning targets and searching for logical connections, they decided to use...
writing genres as the organizer and to weave writing-related skills into this format. During the year, they were to focus primarily on persuasive, descriptive, and informational writing. Oral language and media technology standards were logical areas to link to writing.

Paula and María determined the skills and strategies their students would need while developing proficiency in each of the genres. They did this in two ways. First, they brainstormed and researched elements to be expected in good writing from each genre. Second, they examined their students’ writing and discussed how they might organize teaching, learning, and assessment experiences to assist students in “approximating” quality writing in each of the genres. They determined what would be new for many students and where they might make links to already familiar areas. Several aspects of writing, oral language, and media technology emerged repeatedly in their planning, and these areas would receive special focus throughout the year. For example, “clarity” and “conciseness” were necessary elements for nearly every category they devised. Table 4.3 reflects Paula and María’s initial planning efforts.

Once instruction actually begins, however, plans rarely evolve perfectly. It may take longer to teach certain areas than anticipated, students may struggle more than anticipated with certain concepts, and they may need more preliminary skill development than anticipated. The students will always be our real guide and their progress our ultimate standard.

Jay McTighe (1997) outlines “seven principles for performance-based instruction” that may also be used as an effective template in linking standards to instruction:

1. Establish clear performance targets
2. Strive for authenticity in products and performances
3. Publicize criteria and performance standards
4. Provide models of excellence
5. Teach strategies explicitly
6. Use ongoing assessments for feedback and adjustment
7. Document and celebrate progress

Numerous other lesson planning templates and frameworks are available for guiding teachers in aligning instruction and standards. Wiggins and McTighe (1998), Robert Marzano (2003), and Harris and Carr (2001) are some well-known resources on this topic.
### Table 4.3 Paula and María’s Planning Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Frames &amp; Assessments</th>
<th>Writing Learning Target:</th>
<th>Oral Language Learning Target:</th>
<th>Media-Technology Learning Target:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Block I:</strong> 6–8 weeks</td>
<td>Compose detailed,</td>
<td>Apply effective skills and</td>
<td>Communicate using a variety of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summative Assessment:</strong></td>
<td>multiparagraph,</td>
<td>strategies to create, organize,</td>
<td>methods, such as word processing,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present descriptive</td>
<td>organized writing to</td>
<td>and communicate oral</td>
<td>graphics, and e-mail</td>
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<tr>
<td>essays along with digital</td>
<td>communicate for a</td>
<td>presentations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>photos</td>
<td>variety of audiences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and purposes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Genre</strong></td>
<td>Elements of Teaching &amp; Learning</td>
<td>Elements of Teaching &amp; Learning</td>
<td>Elements of Teaching &amp; Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>Use of adjectives</td>
<td>Oral presentation skills</td>
<td>Digital camera skills</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Creation of mental</td>
<td>• Voice projection</td>
<td>• Light</td>
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<td></td>
<td>images in written form</td>
<td>• Eye contact</td>
<td>• Clarity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Clarity of description</td>
<td>• Body language</td>
<td>• Angle</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Conciseness of</td>
<td>• Use of visuals</td>
<td>• Distance</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>description</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Persuasive</td>
<td>Establish a position</td>
<td>Create a mental image with</td>
<td>Support description</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Create an argument</td>
<td>words</td>
<td>with digital images</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Support for a position</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Referencing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fact v. Opinion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Informational</td>
<td>Select a topic</td>
<td>Research report</td>
<td>Computer PowerPoint presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research topic</td>
<td>• Interesting</td>
<td>• Concise</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outline report</td>
<td>• Informative</td>
<td>• Informative</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Sequential</td>
<td>• Clear</td>
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<td>• Accurate</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Add and delete content of a media</td>
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<td>product to improve focus and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>clarity for an intended audience</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Time Frames & Assessments:**
- **Block I:** 6–8 weeks
- **Summative Assessment:** Present descriptive essays along with digital photos
- **Block II:** 6–8 weeks
- **Summative Assessment:** Present oral presentation of position supported by computer-generated graphic organizer
- **Block III:** 6–8 weeks
- **Summative Assessment:** Research report and PowerPoint presentation
Major Approaches to Teaching and Learning Writing

There are two major approaches or methods for teaching and learning how to write. Historically, writing has not held a very prominent position in the curriculum, often being minimized or ignored altogether. If it was taught, teachers focused instruction mainly on writing skills and mechanics, including handwriting, spelling, and punctuation, with very little emphasis on how to write for creative purposes. This is considered the traditional approach to teaching writing.

**Traditional Approach**

Traditional approaches to teaching writing include teachers assigning topics that all students write about, despite their interest or knowledge about the topic. Students receive instruction related to handwriting, grammar, and punctuation skills, and then usually in one short period they produce a piece of writing that is grammatically correct and interesting. This is difficult for writers to accomplish well. This approach still is being used in some classrooms today; however, the other major writing approach, the process approach, is being used more as the method for teaching writing since the late 1970s.

**Process Approach**

The process approach to teaching and learning to write is based on the understanding that a writer works through a process in creating a written piece. This approach began in schools with the work of Donald Graves (1983) and others who worked with young children on creating writing from their own ideas and not through assigned topics by the teacher. Graves suggested that writing instruction should include creating an environment that is conducive to creative writing, emphasizing opportunities to move beyond the traditional approaches. Typically the process approach includes three major components or steps to the process: prewriting, writing, and postwriting.

**Prewriting Stage**

Usually one does not just sit down, begin writing at the top of the page with the first sentence, and continue until the piece is done and then present it to an audience. Most often there are thinking processes that a writer engages in to gather his or her ideas, try out various angles, do research related to the topic, talk with someone to further explore the topic—and this is only at the beginning of the process called prewriting.

**Writing Stage**

Writing begins after the context has been set and the ideas fleshed out. Then the writer begins with pen to paper or fingers to keyboard. This stage includes
many of the same activities, such as thinking about where the piece is headed, fumbling to find the appropriate words, looking up information to keep the piece flowing, as well as many other activities. Writing does not stop once the words are placed on the paper; however, but also includes reading and rereading what was written, revising and editing the words and ideas, and tweaking the details so that the piece is clear and its message apparent to the reader.

**Postwriting Stage**

The postwriting stage consists of sharing one’s writing with others in a variety of formats, including reading the piece aloud, posting it for all to read, or creating a book or other published document from the piece. Writers need response and feedback for their writing, and the postwriting stage is where this occurs, for example, as when students take turns sitting in the author’s chair to celebrate their writing. Another piece of this stage is the goal setting that can take place as the writer reflects on what was learned about writing and what his or her next piece will encompass.

This authentic, meaningful method of writing is messy and includes a number of steps that are not necessarily followed in order. The process approach to teaching and learning writing is an involved yet natural and coherent way to write. Table 4.4 details the processes involved in each stage of creating a piece of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Stage</th>
<th>Writing Processes That Frequently Occur</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prewriting</td>
<td>• Observing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Free writing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Discussion</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Reading for background information</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Brainstorming</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Outlining</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Webbing and creating semantic maps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>• Writing drafts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Conferencing with peers and teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Revising or “reseeing” (Murray, 1994)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Editing or correcting writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postwriting</td>
<td>• Publishing writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sharing in variety of ways and settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Creating books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Setting goals for future writing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The prewriting stage includes the planning, thinking, and preparations for writing. The writing stage occurs as the first and subsequent drafts are written, revised, and edited. The postwriting stage is the final step in the process, where the writing is celebrated and shared with others and future writing is planned.

**Writing Workshop Framework**

A framework that many teachers use for engaging students in process writing is the writing workshop framework. Writing workshop is typically done on a daily basis and lasts 45 minutes to an hour, creating a predictable time when students can plan on working on their writing. Writing workshop begins with a large group gathering where the teacher teaches a minilesson related to a writing skill, strategy, or management technique for which students have demonstrated a need. The group time is followed by independent writing time, where students work quietly on their writing in various stages of the writing process. The teacher does both informal and formal conferencing with students during independent writing time. Teachers circulate about the room while students are writing and ask them to talk about their writing. This is a good time for teachers to note what students are doing in their writing and nudge them to try new things. They could say, for example, “This is a very interesting story. Try to leave a space between each word so that you can read it more easily” or “You say that your mother is a police officer. I think your readers would like to know more about what kind of work she does.” One of these examples focuses more on writing mechanics and the other on content. We can guide students forward in both areas during writing workshop. This may also be a good time to note when students are consistently misspelling a word and give them a Post-it note with the correct spelling that can be referred to as they write. Students may also have a spelling section of their journal where they enter words they are learning to spell.

After a period of time, depending on the age of the students, usually between 10 and 20 minutes, students can work together on revising, editing, and conferencing with their peers. The last component of a writing workshop includes a share time where, in a variety of formats, both small group and large, students will receive feedback and advice on their writing from their classmates. Although writing workshop has a predictable structure, it is a fluid process due to the fact that students are writing on a variety of topics and are at various stages in the writing and publishing process. It is important for teachers to stay in touch with students so that they can monitor the students’ needs and writing development. Chapter 9 fully details the workshop format, including writing workshops and the stages involved in writing, including publishing writing using a variety of formats.

In order to understand more fully what encompasses each component of the writing process, looking at the stages in relation to Cambourne’s (1988) eight conditions for effective learning can be helpful.

**Immersion:** During each stage, students are immersed in thinking about, planning, and engaging in creating writing. Teachers create an environment
where writing is valued and takes place on a daily basis, and thus students are expected to immerse themselves in the process of writing.

**Demonstration:** The direct teaching of writing skills and use of the tools of writing through minilessons and conferencing encompasses the demonstration component necessary to learn to write effectively and creatively. The literature the students read and view in light of the writing style the author uses is an excellent demonstration of quality writing that can be used as a model for their own writing.

**Expectation:** When students are engaged in writing using the process approach, they know they will be writing on a regular basis. They know they are expected to be writers, taking on the many roles of a writer and looking forward to expanding their abilities.

**Response:** It is helpful for writers to receive response from others during all stages of the writing process. In the prewriting stage, students are encouraged to share their preliminary ideas and ask for feedback from their teacher and peers. During writing, students can share their pieces with peers and the teacher to assist with revisions and editing. In postwriting, getting response from others can serve as a celebration of writing and assist students in setting goals for future writing pieces.

**Employment/Use:** After being exposed to many models and demonstrations of effective and creative writing, students are expected to complete their own writing pieces that incorporate new skills and reflect understanding about the writing process.

**Responsibility:** Students are given and take on the responsibility to engage in the planning of their writing, trying out various methods and skills, and working with others. They have the responsibility for taking an idea to a completed or published draft.

**Approximation:** Students try out new ideas and skills in writing. They compare their work to writing rubrics to continually develop writing that resembles quality. Approximation is a key component of the writing process as students practice new understandings throughout all of the stages of writing.

**Engagement:** The process approach is a framework that requires student engagement. These classrooms are set up to encourage and value writing. When writing is valued, it is a central component of the curriculum and students are motivated to stay engaged in the learning.

**Teacher as a Model of Writing**

Teaching and demonstrating writing through shared experiences is an excellent way to model the many processes of writing. This typically occurs with the teacher
as the facilitator leading the whole class or small groups of students who have the same writing needs. Two major experiences supply this kind of group support: shared writing and interactive writing.

**Shared Writing**

In a shared writing activity, the teacher does the writing with oral input from students. Shared writing experiences are good to use when the entire class wants to reflect on learning together, create a collaborative writing piece such as a thank-you letter, or use it as a means for recording classroom events. The teacher elicits ideas and response from students and models putting the ideas into a written format, demonstrating using Standard English, grammar, and writing mechanics. These experiences are often done using large sheets of chart paper on an easel or an overhead projector. It is important that the teacher openly receive students’ ideas, encouraging oral sharing of their thoughts and giving credence to varied viewpoints as the first stage of beginning writing. In a shared writing experience, as teachers model correct usage and writing mechanics, it is beneficial if they do a think-aloud, describing why they are writing, spelling, and formatting in a particular manner. It is through these think-alouds that students are provided demonstrations of applying writing skills to use in their own writing.

**Interactive Writing**

*Interactive writing* is similar to shared writing in that creating a piece of writing is a collaborative activity. However, the difference is that both the teacher and the students share in the physical writing act. This activity should be conducted where all can view the writing, just as with shared writing, but the teacher offers the writing utensil to students at times to add to the writing piece. Often the teacher will have a black pen so that the teacher models are clearly delineated from that of the students, who may use a variety of colors. In interactive writing, students actually come up to the chart paper and do the writing as the teacher oversees and encourages while at the same time the teacher does more of the challenging writing (e.g., name of the company they visited as they are writing a thank-you to their tour guide). Both types of shared writing experiences are a beneficial way to demonstrate and model the many facets of composing a piece of writing and assist with scaffolding the students’ growing knowledge and experience with writing.

**Writing for a Variety of Purposes**

Students are generally writing throughout the day when in school; they write stories and reports, reflect on their learning, take notes, make outlines, and much more. As language arts teachers, we want to make certain that they learn how to write for a variety of reasons, understand how to select the proper type of writing, and are able to self-assess the effectiveness of their writing. Following is a
discussion of the three main purposes for writing with students: writing to learn, writing about reading, and personal writing. Each purpose has unique features and requires students to use a variety of skills and strategies.

Writing to Learn: Content Area Writing

Content area writing provides students with multiple opportunities to clarify and extend their understanding of concepts by exploring them through writing. Writing and note taking can serve as a good resource for students when they need to locate information or review for a test. By using a variety of graphic organizers and writing formats, students may be able to more easily determine relationships and components of concepts.

Students explore the genre of informational or nonfiction writing in their content area subjects. Most students have had extensive experience in writing fictional stories or personal narrative but are lacking in experience with informational writing. As students progress through the grades, the conceptual load of content area classes becomes increasingly complex, and teaching students to organize and extend their learning through content area writing will facilitate their progress with more in-depth learning.

Learning Logs

Learning logs are a record of what is learned and can be used in any subject or content area, including social studies, math, science, and language arts. Not only is it helpful for students to reflect upon what they learn, but it also serves as a helpful assessment tool for the teacher. A learning log can take many forms and include a variety of components. For a reading class, students can document their learning through keeping a list of books read during independent reading or literature circles and lists of favorite authors or genres they are interested in reading. In a math class, a learning log may contain reflections on how word problems were solved or lists of formulas to assist in solving mathematical problems. A science learning log can include the steps taken when completing an experiment as well as scientific hypotheses and observations that are made.

Learning logs used in a language arts class can include lists of grammar and spelling rules studied, topics and ideas for writing pieces, spelling words recently learned, elements of reading or writing genres, criteria devised by students to evaluate reading or writing experiences, and handwriting practice.

Another key aspect of learning logs is their reflective component. Writing one’s goals and reflecting on what was learned in a learning log is an excellent self-assessment tool, allowing the student to assimilate all that was learned and to set goals for future learning on a topic or concept.

Writing Reports/Research Writing

Students of all ages can do research on a variety of topics in all subject areas. As teachers, we must understand the many steps in completing a research report and then guide students through the process in a way that is manageable. Long
before students actually write a report, they must select a topic, find and review sources of information on the topic, compile and organize the information collected, and complete the actual writing of the report. In the writing, the audience must be determined, as well as a structure planned to make the report interesting, informative, and concise.

Research reports often serve as a way for students to extend their knowledge and understanding in content areas. When they have some choice in selecting the topic for their research, they can pursue their personal interests, enabling them to reflect their cultures and experiences.

Teachers can lead students to go beyond merely reporting what they have found in their research activities. Establishing criteria that engage students in using strategies such as applying, analyzing, and making inferences and having them reflect on how they met criteria helps to develop better critical thinking and self-assessment skills. More information regarding engaging students in doing research and the writing that accompanies research can be found in Chapter 8.

**Double-Entry Journals or Two-Column Notes**

Double-entry journals, like many other types of journals, can be used in various subject areas, including language arts. The student takes notes on content and information on one side of the page and places reflective comments and questions on the other side. The purpose of a double-entry journal is to allow students to make solid connections to the content of the subject matter and further their thinking or learning through reflection and questioning. Another method includes the left column as a place to record writing conventions and mechanics related to punctuation and the right-hand side of the page to detail the purpose and situation in which to use the conventions. For example, as readers encounter italicized print, in the left column they note the use of italics in a direct quote from the text, and in the right column they describe the purpose for this format. Table 4.5 is an example of a fourth-grade student’s double-entry journal while reading *The Midwife’s Apprentice* by Karen Cushman (1995), where the left column contains direct quotes from the text that caught her attention and the right-hand column reflects her personal response.

Sometimes it is not enough for students to merely read about new ideas. Journal responses can enable students to graphically display information in a way that helps them to make connections among concepts they may not see otherwise. For example, in a science journal, the left side of the journal page might contain drawings of the planets in order and the right side information about the distance of each from the sun and the differences in temperature. In a social studies journal, a map of the area surrounding the school might be on one side and drawings and/or descriptions of the community helpers needed in this area on the other side. In mathematics, the left side might contain a number line and several problems adding positive and negative numbers, and the right side might feature a listing of when this concept is used in real life.
Writing About Reading

Writing and reading can both be considered acts of composing (Tierney & Pearson, 1983). Writing clearly involves a great deal of composing, but you may not have thought about reading as an act of composing. However, when you consider that reading does not take on meaning until a reader reacts to it or forms an opinion, it clearly is an act of composing. Consider the book The Da Vinci Code by Dan Brown (2003). It seems that people are either completely intrigued by the cleverness of the mystery plot or are horrified by the license the author takes with aspects of Christianity. Are we not composing a response when we formulate our opinions and share them with others?

By having students formulate a response to what they read either verbally or in writing, we are encouraging them to think about what they have read. We might do this by asking them to analyze the author’s craft, react to characters or plot, make comparisons with other books and authors, or relate what they have read to their own lives. There are a number of methods for encouraging student response and engagement with what they read, including using reading response journals and reading logs.

Reading Response Journals

A reading response journal is a place for readers to thoughtfully respond in writing to what they read, be it any genre, including fiction or nonfiction (Routman, 2000). Reading response journals, like many of the other types of journals, can be used when doing reading in all subject areas but are used frequently in language arts and reading classes. The purpose of a reading response journal is to highlight a reader’s personal response and emotion to the content of what is being read. Similar to a double-entry journal, writers respond personally to what they’ve read, although they do not necessarily copy the quotation from the text.

Table 4.5 Double-Entry Journal Example

| Page 15 “Beetle grabbed bottles off the shelf and bunches of dried herbs from the ceiling beams, surprised at how much she knew, how she could recognize the syrups and powders and ointments and herbs from their look and smell.” | I am surprised she can remember the stuff she needs. Can imagine what this room looks like with all the stuff and herbs hanging and in jars. |
| Page 26 “Broken, by God’s whiskers, broken” | I like the way the midwife talks with slang like this. I really feel like the book is in the medieval times with this talking. |
| Page 67 “By the bones of St. Polycarp…” | |

CHAPTER 4 Writing and the Language Arts
Students are encouraged to respond both aesthetically and efferently. Aesthetic response is a very personal and emotive way of responding to what is read, similar to the example in Table 4.5 where the writer makes personal connections from her life and experiences to what she reads. Responding efferently is more matter of fact, focusing on analyzing the content of what was read, such as listing the characters’ names and the specific setting from a novel.

Students can tape to the inside cover of their journals a list of prompts that could be referred to while deciding how to respond. There are generally three angles that readers take in responding to what they have read: personal reactions, links to own life and the world, and links to other things they have read. In reacting personally, the reader can discuss opinions about the characters and their actions:

I am really beginning to like Harry Potter’s friend, Ron. At first I thought he was just a clumsy boy who did things without thinking, but after reading about the chess match I think he is smarter than I thought. Maybe he really likes Hogwarts. He seems to be a very loyal friend, too.

In making links to one’s own life, readers reflect on images and ideas the text makes them think of in relation to themselves or their own world. Helping students make these connections is an important step in ensuring that reading is meaningful for the reader. If we think about reading as a way to learn more about people and the world in which we live, then we need to take the time to encourage students to explore these connections.

The main character in *Number the Stars* was so brave. When the boys were teasing Amalia last week about her new glasses, I told them to leave her alone.

That was sorta brave, but I wonder how brave I would be when there was real serious danger. That makes me think about how dangerous it must be in Iraq.

In all of these areas, the more that students think about what they’ve read, the more they come to understand literature as they grow into becoming critical thinkers. This is especially true of making links to previous reading, as students become more alert to making these connections the more they are encouraged to think about their reading. They note similarities in authors’ styles, character motivations, character types, plot developments, and so on.

I just finished reading *Arthur’s Eyes* by Marc Brown. All of his books are so funny. Arthur always has some problem to figure out. Lots of times he is not happy in the beginning but learns a lesson by the end. D.W. causes a lot of trouble for Arthur just like Fudge does for Peter in *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing*. 
**Reading Logs**

Reading logs are generally used for students to think about what they know about and respond to what they read. These logs might be divided into several sections, such as lists of books read, reflections on reading processes and comprehension, vocabulary lists and definitions, and written and drawn reflections related to readings. Reading logs can become a helpful source of information when students are self-assessing their progress in reading or conferencing with their teacher.

It may seem strange to you at first if you have not done this before, but an important type of written reflection includes students reflecting on how they read. Part of our work as teachers requires us to teach students new content; another aspect requires us to teach students how to use strategies and think critically. This thinking about one’s thinking is called **metacognition**, or the ability to analyze how one learns and communicates that understanding to others. This reflection may contain lists of what students believe they do well in reading and another of areas on which they want to work. For example, students may determine that they do well in using picture clues, making predictions, and rereading parts that are confusing. They may wish to improve reading fluency, thinking about what they already know when reading, and using context clues to figure out new words. Reflection on strategies used while reading and writing helps students self-assess how well they use the strategy at regular intervals. Some teachers have designed reproducible forms that students complete where they circle the strategies they use regularly and reflect on how well they understand what they read and set goals for what they will do to improve comprehension.

In one section of the log, students record the names and authors of books they have read (Cox, 2002), the genre of each, the level of reading difficulty (hard, just right, easy), and whether or not they enjoyed reading the book. Including the beginning and ending dates for reading each book enables students to evaluate the length of time they take to read a book, which may motivate them to try to read a bit more each month. These charts also provide a clear picture about whether they are reading widely or if their books come from the same genre or are written about the same topic. The teacher can use these lists during conferencing with students to assess their growth. If a teacher notices a student reading all mystery books, the teacher can nudge the student to try a different genre to expand reading interests and development. By using reading logs to reflect on what students know about reading and setting goals for future learning, students become partners in their language arts development.

**Innovations on Text**

Innovations on text is a way for students to create a “new” text, or an original version or portion of a text they read, either changing or extending the meaning of the text. An example comes from a second-grade classroom where the teacher read aloud *Charlotte’s Web* by E. B. White (1952). The children rewrote the ending of the story so that Charlotte the spider’s life moves in a different direction.
Their innovation focused on the sequence of events that might have occurred if she would have been able to see her many babies grow up. In order for the innovation to be authentic and believably created around the elements of the genre and not just a fanciful story created using the same characters, students must have solid comprehension of the events and underlying themes.

Innovations on a text are especially useful with emergent readers. Often the original story follows a pattern, as in Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? by Bill Martin Jr. (1967). The pattern of the text moves in this way: "Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see?" "I see a red bird looking at me. Red bird, Red bird, what do you see?" "I see a . . ." In creating the innovation, teachers may wish to link the content to other areas of study. For example, if students are immersed in a study of the ocean, sea creatures may become the focus of the new text. Instead of using the color of each creature, the teacher may focus on size words—small, medium, and large.

Together in a shared or interactive writing experience, the class would create the first innovation, with the teacher writing the pattern on a large sheet of paper: "_____ _____, ____ _____, what do you see?" "I see a ____ ____looking at me." The students might generate a list of sea creatures and their sizes and then complete the pattern for each one. For example, the first page might be “Little seahorse, little seahorse, what do you see?” Each student or pair of students would be given a page to illustrate from the story, and then all of the pages could be compiled to form a class book.

Through innovation on a text, students can more fully explore the structure of stories and how they are organized. When they are given a page of print to illustrate, it affords them the opportunity to try to read the print without pictures. Often teachers choose to make these class books on large sheets of paper to form big books that can be seen by the whole class in a group sharing session. Students enjoy rereading their own books, and because they created them, they are more likely to remember what they wrote.

Collaborative learning is a teaching and learning method that helps students develop social and academic skills within a group. How might you have students use collaborative learning when engaged in writing activities such as the activities discussed within this chapter?

**Writing Sequels**

Sometimes students encounter books and characters they enjoy so much that they cannot get enough of them. Books like this can be good subjects for writing sequels. In writing sequels, students maintain the same characters and/or setting but incorporate their favorite characters in new situations to continue the action. To be effective, the sequels must be true to the personalities of the characters and the type of plot to be expected in these books. However, the writer has greater license to create them than in doing an innovation on a text.
Writing a sequel to a story is actually a fairly high-level activity for students, as it must be a logical extension of previous versions. Prewriting activities such as making character maps of the main characters that include traits that will need to be maintained in the sequel are helpful for planning. Students can outline the new story line and then evaluate whether it is parallel to the original version. Many opportunities for discussion can be built around this creative writing format. As with many new writing experiences, it may be beneficial to write a sequel as a shared writing activity first, as this provides a template for students on how to first plan and then collaboratively write a sequel before they are expected to write on their own.

**Using Reading to Inform or as a Model for Writing**

When students do a lot of reading, they can translate what they learn about the format or genre into their own writing. For example, students who read many fairy tales will pick up the format and may be inclined to write fairy tales themselves. Exposing students to varied examples of a genre of literature can help to create models for their own writing. Although any piece of quality literature can be used as a model for writing, a list at the end of this chapter provides suggested literature you can obtain for your classroom library that students can use as models for their own writing.

Using literature as a model for student writing can be done during the minilesson portion of writing workshop. If, for example, the teacher was doing a minilesson on how to write exciting opening paragraphs that hook readers and make them want to read on, the teacher may read the opening parts of books with good beginnings to illustrate the point. Some authors begin with a question, with a shocking statement, or may jump into the middle of an event, making the reader want to keep reading. After sharing a few samples, students might look through other books selected by the teacher or those they are currently reading independently to determine what authors do before trying on their own to write an effective beginning. In a later minilesson on writing a good ending, the teacher may use some of the same books, comparing the opening and closing paragraphs to illustrate how sometimes the final paragraph mirrors the opening paragraph in some way.

As you are becoming familiar with children’s and young adult literature, can you think of other titles that you might use in your classroom to write about reading? You may want to begin a list of this type of literature for future reference.

**Personal Writing**

In personal writing, students express their opinions and ideas on a variety of topics. A common characteristic of personal writing is choice and allowing students to use their own ideas for creating writing pieces.
In classrooms where teachers are successful in teaching writing, it is difficult to get students to stop writing. Part of this phenomenon is that not only have they gained confidence in themselves as writers, but they also understand that their writing can have an impact on people who read it.

Story writing can be complex; decisions need to be made regarding such things as characters, setting, and plot. Teaching students prewriting skills in planning these elements helps them to think ahead about what they will write. Relating the structure of stories they have read to the stories they are planning to write will help to make connections to the writing of published authors.

Some students, especially in the younger grades, dash off story after story in a relatively short period of time; others spend several days writing single, more involved stories. Allowing and encouraging them to carry writing over from one day to the next will provide time to develop stories more fully. Sharing finished stories with the class or small group provides an authentic audience. Using a writing workshop format on a daily basis in your classroom allows students to engage in all these processes of writing and to develop proficiency in skills over time.

Students enjoy creating classroom publications of their favorite stories. In these instances, they decide how much text to type onto each page and create illustrations to accompany the text. The pages can be bound in some way and placed in the classroom library to share with others. Some schools reserve a section in the library for student-authored books, and many of these books become very popular. See the list at the end of this chapter that includes resources for book making in the classroom.

### Table 4.6 Literature With Openings That Hook Readers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literature</th>
<th>Opening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>The Midwife’s Apprentice</em></td>
<td>“When animal droppings and garbage and spoiled straw are piled up in a great heap, the rotting and moiling give forth heat. Usually no one gets close enough to notice because of the stench. But the girl noticed and, on that frosty night, burrowed deep into the warm, rotting muck, heedless of the smell.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by Karen Cushman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Morning Girl</em> by Michael Dorris</td>
<td>“The name my family calls me is Morning Girl because I wake up early, always with something on my mind.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Birchbark House</em> by Louise Erdrich</td>
<td>“The only person left alive on the island was a baby girl.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Crash</em> by Jerry Spinelli</td>
<td>“My real name is John. John Coogan. But everybody calls me Crash, even my parents.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Community Stories or Round-Robin Storytelling

In this entertaining writing activity, a group of students become the authors of a story, each writing at least one paragraph and then passing it to the next person. To create a story that is purely nonsense, the students fold over the portion written by others, only allowing their own writing to show for the next writer. Another method is to have the writer expose only the last line of his or her writing. The final student should be instructed to construct a conclusion paragraph. This is a fun writing experience that can be completed on a computer, where students hide the previous paragraphs by scrolling down and concealing them. Of importance to note, however, is that some basic ground rules should be set before beginning. Excluding such things as violence, unacceptable language, and the use of classmates’ names often results in a humorous and often surprisingly coherent and flowing story.

Writing Autobiography

What could be more motivating than to write about something that you know so much about—yourself! Children are egotistical, and from age 0 to 5 feel that they are the center of the universe, or should be. Children ages 6–9 finally begin forming a more open mind to their peers and others and are less focused on themselves as they are trying to find their place within the realm of others. Middle school children again are back to being egotistical in nature. Although a child’s life may not contain as many important milestones as that of an adult, they have many experiences about which to write. They may need some assistance to remember memories from their earliest years and understand that daily events in their lives are just as important as the big vacations, parties, or broken legs. The prewriting stage can consist of interviewing family members to help brainstorm the events from students’ lives to include. Writing an autobiography can help a student understand his or her life and experiences in the larger scheme of things.

Personal Journals

Many teachers begin the day by having students write in personal or reflective journals, often selecting their own topics and writing independently for a specified period of time. Younger students generally enjoy illustrating their journal entries; in fact, emergent writers often compose their entries or stories by drawing a picture first. Being that they are concrete in their thinking at this stage, it is often easier for beginning writers to compose something after they have created a visual.

Personal journals can provide insights into students’ interests and their lives outside of school. Cultural practices and values may also be reflected in the entries students make in their journals. Teachers can choose to read students’ journals and respond to them in writing on a consistent basis, for example, each day of the week the teacher reads the same five to six students’ journals. Allowing students to deem certain entries as private and not to be read by the teacher can encourage them to be truly reflective about personal issues but yet have an outlet for their thoughts.
Some teachers reflect a commitment to writing by writing with the students during these sessions and sharing what they have written during group share time. Students enjoy hearing about their teachers, and this serves as another model of writing for them.

Too often students write in journals as a classroom management tool, for example, when entering the classroom in the morning they often take their seats and write in their journals while the teacher completes morning routines such as taking attendance and collecting lunch money. This is productive if students are given some time to share what they have written with their classmates or confer-ence occasionally with the teacher. Otherwise, students see this exercise as a time filler that holds little importance.

**Dialogue Journals**

Dialogue journals are often a favorite among students, as in this format they respond in writing to something that they have read. They discuss their feelings about the actions of the characters and make predictions about what might happen next, and so on. The teacher reads the entries and writes a response related to the ideas the students have about what they are reading but does not empha-size the errors that might be present. This is a personal and private conversation between the student and the teacher, and they enjoy the personalized attention.

After students have an understanding of how to effectively use dialogue journals, they may select a partner to journal with. Ground rules about respectfulness and content of the journal must be established up front so that students are clear on the expectations for their dialogue. Since students share different thoughts with their peers than they would with their teacher, this format can be insightful to both students and the teacher.

Dialogue journals are especially inviting for students who may be very shy and not very anxious to join in whole class discussions. They can also be very effective for struggling or English language learners (ELLs) who are beginning to write in English. These students can compose their thoughts and receive feedback from the teacher but not be uneasy about responding in front of the entire class.

**Letter Writing**

Communication between people in the written form has historically included writing letters. Today letter writing has evolved and includes communicating almost instantaneously by telecommunicating through the Internet and e-mail. There are two basic types of letter writing: friendly letters and business letters. A third type, telecommunicating with e-mail, instant messaging, and general Internet communication, is fast becoming a common and engaging mode of communication.

The format, content, and level of formality varies greatly between friendly letters and business letters, making letter writing a good opportunity for students to explore a variety of purposes for writing. The same considerations of format, content, and formality need to be taught in all three categories of letter writing, along with the technical use of the computer.
Friendly Letters

Writing letters to friends and family has built-in positive reinforcement for students in that they often get return mail. Teachers can engage students in shared or interactive writing activities during the year, thank-you notes to visitors to the classroom, class letters to invite parents to school events, and so on.

Sharing letters and e-mails that you write yourself and that are appropriate for the classroom will demonstrate the purposes for which we communicate with others via letters and messages. The informal style of friendly letters can be explored with students. Although letters are similar to talking, the need to explain what people cannot see and to explain these ideas concisely are two areas students can examine in sample letters and in reviewing their own letters.

Dear Cooks,

We are sorry to say that we are disappointed with the way you cook our food. For instance some of the meat is red on the outside such as mock chicken legs, hamburgers and ground beef. Also on Tuesday March 22, I Found a piece of tin foil in my spaghetti sauce! We would really appreciate it if you would be more careful in the preparation of our schools food. Please respond!

Sincerely,

Figure 4.4  Sample of Fourth Grader’s Letter to the School Cooks

Students may brainstorm a list of reasons for writing letters to friends and family. Making available used and unused greeting cards that you have collected over time can be used to sort by their purposes and the recipient (mother, teacher, friend, grandfather) to teach about audience in letter writing.

In authentic writing activities, students should identify the person they wish to write to and the purpose of the letter. They select the appropriate medium to send the message, using the greeting cards or designing their own or selecting from an assortment of stationery available in the writing center. If possible, students should actually mail their cards and letters. When they receive responses, they may wish to share them with their classmates, as sharing correspondence keeps the interest level high in all writing activities.

Some schools have set up a post office to encourage letter writing where each hallway is given a city name and each classroom a street name. Students write their cards and letters, address the envelopes, and place them in “mailboxes” in the post office. On certain days, student “postal workers” sort the mail and deliver it to the various classrooms. Although this is an enjoyable way to keep students writing, guidelines need to be established regarding appropriateness of content, and consideration should be given to making certain that all students receive mail. One solution to this issue is to assign pen pals within the school or to pair older students with their “reading buddies” in earlier grades.
Business Letters

It is important for students to learn the format and tone of business letters. Without even considering the content, sending an informal letter to a company requesting a refund or to the principal asking to have a detention reconsidered may appear very inappropriate or rude and could elicit a negative response from the recipient. As with friendly letters, in first learning about business letters, students may brainstorm a list of those people we send formal business letters to and reasons for sending them. The class may compose business letters together before writing them on their own to assist them in learning the appropriate letter-writing format. For example, after a unit on nutrition and a review of the school lunch menu, they could compose a letter to the principal requesting less starch and more protein for the hot lunches. In a social studies unit where students each research a different state, business letters could be written to each state’s chamber of commerce requesting information about the state.

Be aware of additional opportunities for students to send authentic business letters that are connected to units of study, classroom activities, or activities that include the community around the school. Using shared writing experiences, the class could write a letter of complaint if materials are purchased for the classroom and are defective. If funding for band or athletics is reduced, students might write letters to the editor of the local newspaper explaining why these programs are essential. If it is not safe for students to ride their bikes to school because there are not enough stop signs on busy streets, students might send letters to the city council and outline their concerns. To help students assess the effectiveness and/or appropriateness of business letters they compose, have them role-play receiving one another’s letters and reacting to the contents as if they were the actual recipient of the letter.

Telecommunicating Through E-mail, Instant Messaging, and Other Internet Communication

Most students today are familiar with e-mail and instant messaging and use it regularly to keep in touch with friends. Students who do not have regular access to the Internet should be given special priority so they are not limited in the world of technology. Lack of access may put students at academic disadvantages in their education and later in life, when many jobs are not available to them because they require demonstration of computer literacy.

A key component of using e-mail is having keyboarding skills. These skills enable students to communicate with greater speed and competency, which may
influence how often students wish to send messages and how much depth they include in each message. Using the hunt-and-peck typing method is very laborious, and students will not wish to continue in this manner for long periods. Other computer skills can also be taught as part of e-mailing messages, including accessing the Internet; using and storing e-mail addresses; replying to, deleting, and forwarding messages; and using proper netiquette (etiquette appropriate while using the Internet).

It is beneficial to make connections with teachers in schools in other cities or states so you can arrange for the students in both classrooms to pair up as pen pals or e-pals. World language teachers may do the same but arrange for students to exchange e-mails (or letters) in the target language. Discussing content for the first letter or e-mail will help students feel more comfortable writing to students they do not know. E-pals may be beneficial for ELLs who have few or no other classmates who speak their home language. Matching them with e-pals who speak their home language will provide them with opportunities to continue developing their L-1, or first language, literacy skills and will also provide the teacher with a sense of the literacy skills they have in that language.

E-mailing is fun for most students; they love to use the computer to send and receive messages. It may serve as a motivator for students who would balk at traditional letter writing activities. Table 4.7 outlines the types of letter writing, some skills that may be taught in letter writing, and the process of teaching students to write letters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Letters</th>
<th>Skills to Be Taught</th>
<th>Process of Teaching Letter Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>Letter formats</td>
<td>Share samples of well-written letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Purposes of letters</td>
<td>Model letter writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail</td>
<td>Computer skills</td>
<td>Shared/interactive letter writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Addressing envelopes</td>
<td>Critiquing letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Write and edit own drafts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Rules for Internet Writing**

Students need to learn that there are rules for respectfully using the Internet and telecommunications. Although there are some similarities between written and oral etiquette when communicating, there are some differences. Table 4.8 is a sampling of rules to share with students; be sure to use a language level that they can understand.
Integrating Writing Within the Language Arts

As previously discussed, the language arts by nature are interrelated. There are a variety of ways to think about connections that can be made between writing and the other language arts. The links between reading and writing are very logical; each area greatly reinforces the other. When examining student writing, it is often easy to identify students who spend a lot of time with books. Whether their parents or guardians read to them often, or whether they read a great deal on their own, these students have internalized large vocabularies from their reading that is reflected in their writing. They notice the patterns of words and punctuation in their reading and transfer that knowledge to their writing. The kinds of reading material that they have been engaged in is reflected in their writing in terms of the content, the types of characters, and the structure of stories.

Examining Authors’ Craft

When students learn to examine an author’s craft and then learn to apply these elements in their own writing, they will have an ongoing system in place for refining their own writing. In class discussions and activities, students may be asked to explore what authors have done to create stories or informational text that they found particularly interesting. For example, a story might be scary, and the students might note that what made it creepy was that it was very suspenseful. We might ask what the author has done to create suspense and then encourage students to find specific examples of the techniques the author uses. Students will not only become more proficient at evaluating quality literature through this

Table 4.8  Rules for Internet Use and Online Telecommunication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Respect others’ privacy and protect your own. Don’t share your password or personal information (your phone number, address, parents’ work phone numbers, or location of your school, etc.) with anyone else without a parent’s or teacher’s consent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Don’t write to others or respond to anything that makes you uncomfortable. Tell your teacher or parents if you receive any e-mail or messages that make you feel this way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Avoid hurting someone else’s feelings. It is sometimes hard to tell when someone is joking in e-mail or when instant messaging. Using smileys or emoticons :) can alleviate this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Always try to look good on the Internet as you would in real life. Use standard spelling and grammar so you can communicate effectively, respect others’ differences, and be friendly and helpful.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table for Internet Use and Online Telecommunication
process, but they will develop a better sense of how to structure their own writing. Table 4.9 provides two examples of examining author’s craft as a way to assist writers in incorporating these characteristics into their own writing.

### Table 4.9 Examining Author’s Craft

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Laura Joffe Numeroff has written a number of popular circle stories about a mouse that wants one thing, but when he receives it, leads to a string of additional requests and finally culminating with the original request. What does Numeroff do to make students want to read these stories?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Author’s style</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How does the author create humor in her book <em>If You Give a Mouse a Cookie</em>? In just one or two lines per page, she keeps the action moving. In this circle story, the plot ends up in the same spot it started. The mouse gets a cookie and then needs a glass of milk and on and on, and results in asking for another cookie on the last page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What about the characters?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mouse is an engaging main character. He is active and does many humorous things. The boy willingly caters to all the wishes of the mouse. He often looks surprised but never seems to get upset by the requests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What about the illustrations?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felicia Bond creates illustrations that really highlight the story and keep the action moving. She does an excellent job of creating simple humor that complements the story line of the book.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think about the highly popular Harry Potter books. What is it that J. K. Rowling does that leaves children and adults alike unable to get enough of this world of wizards?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What about the characters?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The main characters are dynamic. They change over the course of the stories because they are put in adultlike roles and are charged with completing life and death tasks. There are some imaginary characters that are cleverly created and make the plot livelier.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What about the setting?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certainly the setting is integral to the story. Hogwarts Academy is the perfect setting for wizards to be trained and prepared to take their roles in fighting evil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What about the plot?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The plot is very well organized. “Good” is continually confronted by “evil,” whether it is from the bad students of Slithering, the multiheaded monster guarding the Sorcerer’s Stone, or the evils hidden in the Chamber of Secrets. The action is always connected to a dangerous task that must be completed. Good overcomes evil, thus bringing a pleasing conclusion to the stories.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Oral Language and Media Technology

As we saw in the planning example from the teachers Paula and María, there are also logical links between oral language and media technology. Once students write something either alone or with others, opportunities can be made available for them to share their writing in a variety of formats. Presentation skills, including voice projection, eye contact, body language, and use of visuals to support presentation, can be taught in conjunction with writing. A focus on the content of presentations based on student writing pushes students to more clearly demonstrate what they have learned. Additional work in this area will lead them to develop interesting formats for introducing, developing, and concluding their presentations.

Media and technology can also be easily integrated with writing. Paula and María use digital cameras, computer-generated graphics, and PowerPoint presentations to help their students support and expand the influence of their writing. Visual representations of student writing can be very powerful. Even exploring issues such as use of white/negative space and placement of writing on the page or writing surface can help students consider the effect and significance of their work.

Listening

Another link between writing and presentation relates to developing listening skills. As students listen to their classmates present their writing, they not only gain many new ideas for extending their own learning, but they also learn to critique their classmates’ writing and develop effective and courteous ways to provide constructive feedback to aid their peers in refining their writing. Shared writing requires students to listen carefully to how the class writing project is proceeding and to offer appropriate suggestions to continue the piece.

Reflection Journal 4.3

You have just read about a few ways that writing can be integrated with the other language arts. What other links come to mind as you think about making these kinds of connections? Knowing what you do about students’ development and interests, what are some ideas you have for incorporating writing into your teaching at the early grade levels? At the intermediate grade levels? In middle school?

Assessing Writing

Teaching and assessing logically go hand in hand with writing when students are being taught with and use a process approach. Through the process approach, assessment of writing is done during the prewriting and writing
stages as a means for assisting writers through the process. Historically, using a traditional approach, the teacher assesses students’ writing only at the end after the final draft is complete. At this point, the teacher “corrects” the writing, telling students what was done wrong, typically written in red. This, however, takes ownership away from the student as a writer and places revision and editing power in the hands of the teacher, rather than putting the onus on the student. As students engage in writing while using a process approach, there are numerous opportunities for feedback and writing assistance from teachers and peers. By getting help throughout the process of creating a piece of writing, students learn to practice their skills during actual writing time, rather than after they feel they have completed their writing. Following are some appropriate methods for assessing student writing in all stages of the writing process.

**Conferencing**

Working with students on an individual basis as they engage in all stages of the writing process will tell a teacher what students know about writing so that they can be assisted in their areas of need. One method for doing this is through conferencing. A short 2- to 5-minute conference with students can provide them with the amount of support they need or can teach a skill that they need at that precise point in their writing piece. Conferences should be both informal and formal in nature, planned and spontaneous, and should occur as students are engaged in various stages with a piece of writing. As students are working independently on their writing, the teacher should circulate around the room among them, checking on students’ progress. In informal conferring, a brief stop at students’ desks to ask “How are you doing? Do you need any help?” can go a long way in providing support just when it is needed.

Formal conferencing consists of brief periods of discussion with students but may last 5 to 8 minutes. Create a location in your classroom that is set apart from the students doing independent writing so that you can have a brief but uninterrupted time for conferences. A small table, with writing resources such as dictionaries, writing manuals, paper, pens, and highlighters stored nearby, works well for this purpose.

Use the few minutes you have with students conversing about their writing pieces and spending large amounts of time listening to students. In addition to general questions to get students talking about their writing, questions that are more specific can be broached as well to allow students to use metacognition and verbalize their thinking processes as well as to provide clarification of meaning in their writing. See Table 4.10 for suggested conferencing questions and prompts that can be used during formal and informal conferences to assist writers throughout the writing process as well as provide teachers with knowledge of students’ progress and writing needs.
Assessment and Record-Keeping Devices

Some of the record-keeping devices that can be used by both the teacher and students during conferencing and the writing process include anecdotal records, checklists of skills, and student record keeping of what was learned. Getting students involved in self-assessment of their own writing, even at a very young age, can prove to be beneficial in helping them set goals for their writing as well as improve their skills. During formal writing conferences, after learning or reinforcing a new skill, students could add to a list they have in their writing folders titled “Things I am working on in my writing” to document their learning (Table 4.11). Another list they could be taught to use is “What I know about writing” that can be created as the teacher provides feedback about the skills that are evidenced within writing pieces that students already have in place and are using successfully (Table 4.12). These types of record-keeping devices can be helpful during the revising and editing process, as students are encouraged to look over their “What I know about writing” lists and make sure that their current piece of writing adheres to what they know and already should have in place.

Checklists

Checklists are another device that can be used by both the teacher and students and can prove to be helpful “at a glance” assessment tools. To keep track
of when and how students use a writing skill that was taught, a checklist could be
developed listing class names and columns for each skill. As the skill is witnessed
in students’ writing, the teacher would record this and any notations in relation
to how the skill was used and in what context. Table 4.13 is an example of a
teacher-created checklist developed to monitor third-grade students’ use of recent
writing skills taught within the prior 2 weeks. The teacher wanted to determine
their appropriate usage of these skills and reintroduce those that students were
not using or using incorrectly. After a quick check, the teacher can pull these
students together to reteach or reintroduce that skill. Students can also keep lists
of skills they learned and monitor their use of them with a checklist, similar to that
of the teacher. There are many commercially produced checklists to assist in mon-
itoring and assessing students’ writing development, but we also suggest adapting
those or creating checklists that will be helpful for you based on your teaching and
your students’ needs. Checklists can be a helpful tool in that they can be used
quickly and can provide an overview of how students are progressing.

Table 4.11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Writing Skill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 24</td>
<td>I need to remember to put periods at the end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of all of my sentences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 29</td>
<td>Don’t start all of my sentences with “The.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Knowledge About Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 12</td>
<td>Ideas for pieces come from my own life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 15</td>
<td>Every paragraph has a topic sentence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reflection Journal 4.4

Using your state standards for writing as a guide, brainstorm other possible checklists a teacher could use when keeping track of students’ development and progress with writing. Sketch out a sample of one of the checklists. Share your list with a group of your classmates.

Table 4.13  Teacher-Created Checklist to Monitor Student Use of Recently Taught Skills

Directions: Note date and the writing piece the skill was demonstrated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Using Capital Letters</th>
<th>Using Paragraphs</th>
<th>Variety in How Sentences Begin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Samantha</td>
<td>10/12 dog story</td>
<td></td>
<td>10/10 dog story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jaden</td>
<td></td>
<td>10/12 favorite things</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jayme</td>
<td>10/11 trip to Disney</td>
<td>10/11 trip to Disney</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randolph</td>
<td>10/15 food poem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keisha</td>
<td>10/11 my cat story</td>
<td>10/11 my cat story</td>
<td>10/18 park story</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Anecdotal Records

Anecdotal records kept by the teacher are similar to checklists in that they can provide helpful information about students’ progress and development but are not as structured as checklists. Anecdotal records or notes are brief written comments that teachers make as they observe students. These notes can come during kidwatching, an assessment method and concept described by Yetta Goodman (1978) that includes observing students as a way to gather information about them while engaged in learning and activities. Teachers naturally partake in watching students as an informal assessment tool, but Goodman suggests that this form of assessment should be systematic and valued, as much can be learned about students. A possible time to write anecdotal records is after a writing conference with a student as the teacher jots down notes related to the focus of the conference and what transpired (see Table 4.14). Keeping track of these encounters helps to monitor student writing and focus on areas that need development, especially during writing workshop, as each student is engaged in the process at different points and levels.

Student Self-Assessment of Writing

Students reflecting on what they know about writing and setting goals for themselves as writers can be a powerful learning tool. Having students reflect, either in writing or orally throughout the writing process, is helpful to them as well as the teacher in monitoring their writing development.
Another assessment tool that students can use to monitor their use of standard writing skills is through an editing checklist. Developed by the teacher and with direct teaching of its use, an editing checklist can be helpful for improving a piece of writing after it has gone through the prewriting and writing stages. Used effectively in the postwriting stage, students should be taught how to use an editing checklist efficiently to analyze their writing based on the criteria it contains. See Table 4.15 for a sample editing checklist.

The sample editing checklist that follows is not all-inclusive of the skills teachers might expect their students to develop and use. The checklist should evolve throughout the year based on the skills that have been introduced or that students already use, and as new skills are taught and modeled on how to edit, they can be added to the checklist.

**Portfolio Assessment**

As students engage in process writing and writing workshop, they produce many pieces of writing over time. A portfolio that includes a sampling of students’

| Name: ______________________________ | Date: ______________________________ |
| Title of Piece: ____________________ |

Reread your piece. Check off each skill after you are sure you have completed it in your writing piece.

___ I have used capital letters at the beginning of my sentences.

___ I have used correct punctuation at the end of my sentences (periods, exclamation points, question marks).

___ I have checked the spelling of the words I am unsure of.

___ I have used paragraphs.

___ I have read my writing to a partner for feedback.
writing can demonstrate the range of skills and abilities they possess as well as help teachers determine what still needs to be learned. At specified intervals, both student and teacher should lay out all of the writing that the student has done and assess the strengths and needs evidenced. Making lists based on what is observed can be helpful, such as a list of types of writing done, topics of the student’s writing, skills demonstrated within the pieces, things to work on, and goals in future writing projects.

**Author’s Chair**

Part of effective literacy learning is receiving response and feedback in relation to one’s development from others such as teachers, parents, and peers (Cambourne, 1988). This is especially true with writing, as many students welcome an audience for their pieces. Using an “author’s chair” is an effective way to build in this component of the writing process (Graves & Hansen, 1983). An author’s chair is a designated chair (or stool or podium or rocking chair) where the student author sits and orally shares his or her writing with peers. After the reading, the peers provide feedback, making comments on what they liked, compliment the writing in general, and suggest ways to make the writing clearer. Sharing one’s writing and receiving feedback is an important stage in the writing process and allows students to celebrate their success.

**Holistic Writing Assessments and Writing Rubrics**

Writing rubrics are scoring guides that use levels of quality to assess students’ ability in writing. The descriptors of abilities for writing include assessing such things as the ideas that a piece of writing contains, the organization, the mechanics, and voice.

A popular writing rubric, called the 6+1 Traits of Writing, can be used to assess and guide student writing. It is based on determining the extent to which seven common traits of writing are incorporated into a piece of writing. Developed by the Northwest Regional Education Laboratory (NWREL), the 6+1 Traits of Writing rubric includes ideas, organization, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions, with the “+1” being presentation. This rubric is an effective assessment tool but also helpful for students to understand how their writing can progress to more advanced levels.

When using a rubric, it is suggested that students discuss the quality of a piece of writing at each level to make the rubric a meaningful tool for students and to assist them while engaged in writing. See Chapter 8 for examples of writing rubrics that can be used to assess as well as assist in improving student writing.

There are many effective methods for assessing students’ writing development. Table 4.16 suggests the variety of assessment tools that can be used during a writing workshop and other writing activities.
Table 4.16 Assessment Tools to Use During Writing Workshop

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Stage</th>
<th>Teacher-Assessment Approaches</th>
<th>Self- and Peer-Assessment Approaches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment in the <strong>Prewriting</strong> Stage</td>
<td>• Checklists</td>
<td>• Self-assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Anecdotal records—detailing writing topics/ideas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment in the <strong>Writing</strong> Stage</td>
<td>• Checklists of writing skills demonstrated</td>
<td>• Editing checklists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment in the <strong>Postwriting</strong> Stage</td>
<td>• Portfolio assessment—collection of pieces written over time, list of pieces written</td>
<td>• Written self-assessments for each completed piece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Writing rubrics—(e.g., 6+1 Traits of Writing)</td>
<td>• Author’s chair—verbally sharing writing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A View From the Classroom**

Earlier in this chapter you were introduced to Paula and Maria, sixth-grade teachers. The following is an account of their planning for assessing student writing development using standards and benchmarks as their guide. The teachers outlined plans for how they would introduce, reinforce, and assess progress toward the standards in their next steps in planning. The Holdaway (1979) model of teaching was strongly evidenced in their teaching process. First, Paula and Maria would introduce each genre and ask students to speculate on its purpose and would share quality samples of writing in that particular genre. After students were able to confidently identify elements of each genre, the teachers would work with students to create a set of criteria for quality writing in the genre.

With the newly created set of criteria in hand, students would review additional writing samples and use the criteria to judge whether they were weak or strong examples. This enables students to develop a good sense of writing expectations before they are required to write their own drafts. While writing their first drafts, students keep the criteria in mind, and when the draft is complete, they use them to review their own work. They highlight areas that were well done (met the criteria) in one color and areas that were weak in another color. This would help them evaluate their work when they went back to review their writing during the editing/revising process.

Maria and Paula determined the minimum number of pieces they would require.

*(Continued)*
students to write in each genre and how they would develop flexible grouping situations to teach students who needed additional assistance in certain areas. They also looked for ways to link each writing genre to the content areas. For example, descriptive writing would work well in completing reading and science logs, research reports would become a component of the social studies curriculum, and persuasive writing would very logically be linked to issues raised in health education.

Since the teachers had decided to link oral language and media technology standards to writing, they brainstormed effective ways to extend writing experiences to include these additional areas. For descriptive writing, the students would use digital cameras to take a series of photographs around a theme in science. They would write descriptions of the photos and take these descriptions through extensive editing and revisions to ensure that they were creating clear and concise mental images that would be highlighted by the digital photos. In a summative assessment, they would select their best description and photo combination to share with the class.

Prior to the presentations, students would learn and practice effective presentation skills for this type of activity, such as voice projection, eye contact, and pacing.

In persuasive writing, students would develop a list of controversial issues that have relevance and interest for them. They would identify their position on the topics and develop a set of arguments to support their positions. The oral language area would entail position statements where students present an argument and defense on a particular topic. The media technology component would involve the selection and development of a computer-generated graphic organizer to support the student’s position. A research report accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation would link writing, oral language, and media technology for informational writing and serve as the final assessment for this genre as well.

Maria teaches in a fifth-grade Spanish-English bilingual classroom. In her classroom, the students write in both languages. They may be writing at or above grade level in their dominant language and well below that level in their second (or subsequent) language. With intense practice and support, Maria expects that many students will develop quite comparable writing skills in both English and Spanish. She plans her L-2 (Language 2 or second language) writing instruction a bit differently than her L-1 (Language 1 or first language) instruction. In addition to learning about descriptive writing in English, for example, her Spanish-dominant students are expanding their adjective vocabularies in English. Some of the adjectives will have cognates (words from different languages derived from a common original form) in Spanish (cómodo and comical, for example), but many will not. Study of figurative language and the use of idioms may also become essential components to explore during the persuasive writing segment.

However, the important idea to note is that although Maria teaches the students about good writing and the skills and strategies good writers use in only one of the languages, it will be understood for use in both languages. Cummins (2001) has provided evidence for the concept of Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP), in which most of what students understand in one language is available to them in their other
language(s) as well. This notion is often represented as a pair of interlocking triangles (see Figure 4.5). The fringes represent learning that can only be expressed in one of the languages, for example, mathematical tables or religious rituals. The remainder of the figure represents common understanding regardless of language.

Paula, on the other hand, is a monolingual teacher, but many of her students are fluent speakers of Spanish. At the end of the current school year, she sets goals for her teaching for the next school year, many of them related to supporting Spanish literacy development for her bilingual students. She plans to offer opportunities for students to complete writing assignments in Spanish and will collaborate with María in evaluating their work. She also plans to stock her reading corner with more books in Spanish so that students have access in both languages.

This level of planning will provide Paula and María with a solid template for instruction throughout the year. When they are ready to add additional genres of writing, they reevaluate their students’ development and design learning experiences that will build on what they can do well. Aspects of individual and collaborative groupings with students will also need to be figured into the mix. For example, during the descriptive writing lessons, different students may struggle with writing a description that creates a mental image. Others may need help with forming sentences. Still others may not be motivated to write at all. Paula and María will determine which students need help in each of these areas and establish grouping configurations for them. They will form flexible groups that stay together only as long as they need help in a particular area. In this way, students will work with a variety of their classmates throughout the year on those skills in which they need extra instruction.
Home and School Writing Connections

Many of the suggestions for reading can also be made for writing. In many classrooms, students keep logs of their work. Parents or guardians may be invited to make occasional entries in their logs about their children’s work. Encouraging them to find authentic ways for students to write at home, for example, “Leave Dad a note to remind him to meet us at the soccer game tonight,” “Make a list of what you’d like to get at the grocery store,” “Send Grandma a thank-you note for the birthday gift she sent you.” Asking students to share stories or reports they are writing with the family or posting them on the refrigerator highlights the importance of the child’s effort to the family.

With older students, parents can encourage them to keep a record of their videos, video games, music CDs, and so on, creating a rating system that includes written comments. Suggest to parents that they discuss current issues with their adolescent children and encourage them to write letters to the editor (alone or as a shared family writing experience) voicing their opinions.

Suggest that parents have writing and drawing materials (such as pens, pencils, crayons, markers, various types of paper, note cards, and staplers and tape) easily accessible for their children so that they can use them to express themselves when so inclined. As with much teaching and learning, modeling all kinds of writing tasks is a powerful tool a teacher or parent can use to motivate and encourage student writing for authentic purposes.

A View From Home

Eleven-year-old Randy enjoys reading about and watching nature and animal shows on television. After watching a program on penguins, he wanted to learn more, as he was left with a few unanswered questions. Motivated, he visited the Internet and completed a brief search to find all the locations in the world where penguins live. He also wondered how many different kinds of penguins there are and what they are named.

He decided to compile his knowledge from the show with what he learned from his research and write up a “data page,” as he called it, about penguins, including illustrations and charts. Upon showing his father, he suggested that Randy create a whole booklet of data pages about all the animals he has an interest in. Randy liked the idea and immediately began work on his second page related to wombats.
End-of-Chapter Reflection

- When thinking about teaching and assessing writing, what questions or clarification do you still need? With which aspects do you feel comfortable? Which aspects do you feel you need more examples?
- What goals do you need to set for yourself related to teaching and assessing writing with elementary-aged and middle school students?

Planning for Teaching

1. If you are a writer, find some of your own writing that students will enjoy (and that is appropriate) to read to them. What writing skills are represented within your writing that you could use as a model?

2. Keep the business letters that you send or receive for a period of time. Bring them to class to analyze the range of purposes for business letters. Determine if some of them would be useful examples to use in demonstrating how to write business letters. Consider having copies made of these letters for the class.

Connections With the Field

1. Visit a preschool classroom or center. Read a short but interesting story to the children and ask them to “write” something about the story for you when you finish. Bring the writing samples to class and compile them. Arrange the samples from early emergent to the highest level of writing represented. Discuss what these children understand about writing. Discuss what these samples show you about the range of writing ability for this age group.

2. Visit a classroom, preferably one where you already know the students to some degree, and make arrangements to read a short selection to the group. Select something that is interesting, funny, or surprising that the students will find captivating. Ask them to complete a writing activity based on the book. Collect the writing samples and examine them.
   - a. What do the samples tell you about what these students know and can do in writing?
   - b. What stages of writing are they at?
   - c. How varied are the writing abilities of the class?
   - d. What suggestions do you have for extending the writing abilities of this group?
   - e. How do these suggestions correspond to Piaget’s stages of development for the level(s) being examined?

3. Interview an ELL teacher. What languages does the teacher work with? How does the teacher teach the students to write in English? Why is it important for the students to focus on oral language development before beginning to write extensively in English?

4. Visit a bilingual classroom. Ask the teacher how he or she teaches writing in L-1 and L-2. If visiting a classroom above Grade 2, note the literacy skills of the students in both languages.
Student Study Site

The Companion Website for Developing Voice Through the Language Arts

http://www.sagepub.com/dvtlastudy

Visit the Web-based student study site to enhance your understanding of the chapter content and to discover additional resources that will take your learning one step further. You can enhance your understanding of the chapters by using the comprehensive Study Guide, which includes learning objectives, key terms, activities, practice tests, and more. You'll also find special features, such as the Links to Standards from U.S. States and associated activities, Children’s Literature Selections, Reflection Exercises, Learning from Journal Articles, and PRAXIS test preparation materials.

References of Children’s/Young Adult Literature


References of Professional Resources

International Reading Association (IRA) and National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). (1996). *Standards for the English language arts*. Urbana, IL: NCTE; Newark, DE: IRA.


**Other Children’s Literature Resources**

**Literature Models for Reflective Personal Writing**


**Literature Models for Journal Writing and Learning Logs**


**Literature Models for Letter Writing**


**Literature Models for Autobiography and Memoir Writing**


**General Writing Models**


**Literature About Writers**


**Picture Books**


**Poetry**


**Resources for Book Making in the Classroom**

Technology Resources

See questions from some favorite young adult authors:
   http://www.ipl.org/div/kidspace/askauthor
Reference for teen writers and a place to submit their writing:
   http://teenwriting.about.com
Using Weblogs to promote literacy in the classroom:
Epals, largest online community for students: