

EXAMINING THE EFFECTS OF PRACTICE-BASED PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT AND COACHING ON THE DIFFERENTIATION OF
SRSD WRITING INSTRUCTION

By

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For Helena Joy and her namesakes, my perpetually amazing grandmothers.

Be disciplined in mind and extravagant in heart.

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NOTE BENE

This dissertation was written in a journal article format as allowed by Vanderbilt University Department of Special Education. Throughout the dissertation, research assistants are referred to as authors, as they will be publication. For clarity, the author order is: Debra McKeown, Dr. Karen Harris, Mary Brindle, Dr. Steve Graham, Alyson Collins, and Amy Gillespie.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

PBPD = Practice-based professional development

SRSD = Self-regulated strategy development

CAP = Comprehensive assessment program, the statewide standardized assessment

AYP = Annual yearly progress

RTI = Response to intervention

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Classrooms in the U.S. are diverse with students occupying a wide range in ability, culture, and language (Gebeloff, Evans, & Scheinkman, 2009; Lapkoff, 2007). Classroom teachers need better preparation to meet the spectrum of needs as they are not well prepared to individualize materials, activities, and strategies or to effectively collect and utilize student data to inform individualization and differentiation (D. Fuchs, McMaster, Fuchs, & Al Otaiba, in press; U.S. Department of Education, 2011). In no academic area is this more true than in writing. Many school-aged children today lack adequate writing skills (Baker, Gersten, & Graham, 2003). In the most recent National Assessment of Educational Progress, only one in three students met criteria for proficient or advanced writers and the large majority of students did not meet grade-level writing expectations (Salahu-Din, Persky, & Miller, 2008).

Importance of Writing

Writing demands do not stop at school. According to the National Commission on Writing (2005), approximately half of private and government employers reported writing skills impact promotion decisions and American businesses spend as much as \$3.1 billion annually on writing remediation. Such deficits impact the social and economic landscape of our country (National Commission on Writing, 2005) and as such, writing ability is now assessed on almost every state exam for third through twelfth grade (Pederson, 2007). No Child Left Behind (PL 107-110 [NCLB]; 2002) mandates accountability through standardized testing and contains

consequences for schools or districts failing to demonstrate improvement in test scores, including those of students with disabilities. Now that writing is tested, writing scores are part of the overall scores on which school, district, and state adequate yearly progress (AYP) are measured. Schools or districts not meeting AYP can be identified as failing, opening the possibility of radical government intervention and losing flexibility with how to spend government monies ("No Child Left Behind Act," 2001; Pederson, 2007). Despite this recognition of the importance of writing, the majority of elementary grade teachers have reported they are not well prepared to teach writing (Gilbert & Graham, 2010) and writing has not been a priority in research or practice (Harris, Graham, Brindle, & Sandmel, 2009).

Response to intervention

The context is further complicated by the changing models being utilized in schools to support struggling students. The reauthorization of IDEA in 2004 presented a new multi-tiered structure for delivery of instruction typically referred to as response to intervention (RTI). The system was designed to focus on prevention and early intervention. It requires classroom teachers to be expert in adapting curriculum and materials as well as collecting and utilizing data to inform those adaptations, neither of which are they well prepared to do. Given the importance of writing within and outside the school setting and the need to advance teacher preparation in the area of writing instruction, it is worthwhile to explore interventions that address effective methods for improving professional development and instruction for writing in the general education classroom. The purpose of the present study was to expand the existing literature base on the SRSD practice-based professional development model by adding focused content on differentiation during professional development complemented by a coaching component to facilitate teacher differentiation and improve individual, rather than group, student writing

achievement during teacher-implemented Tier 1 SRSD instruction. We also provided Tier 2 tutoring in the writing intervention for students who were classified as writing below average.

Practice-based Professional Development for SRSD

The principles on which practice-based professional development (PBPD) for SRSD are based were recommended by Harris and Graham (1996; Harris, Graham, Mason, & Friedlander, 2008) and the theoretical basis of and elements in Ball and Cohen's PBPD model (1999) were influential (Harris et al., 2012). PBPD allows teachers to enact the skills they are learning in a supportive environment outside the classroom while using the same materials they will use in the classroom. In this model, in contrast to traditional top-down, "sit and get" models where implementation is usually done in isolation, teachers are actively engaged in their learning and are supported afterward during classroom implementation (Ball & Forzani, 2009; Cochran-Smith & Boston College Evidence Team, 2009).

The goals of PBPD for SRSD are for teachers to develop understanding of and skills in effective educational *practice*, not just knowledge about practice. Research and theory point to the following being of importance to practice: (a) collective participation of teachers within the same school with similar needs; (b) situating professional development around the students in the teachers' current classrooms including student characteristics, strengths, and needs; (c) attention to teachers' content knowledge needs; (d) opportunities for active learning including opportunities to see the practice being learned enacted and opportunities to practice all new methods learned; (e) using materials in professional development identical to those they will use in the classroom; and (f) receiving feedback on the performance during the learning phase,

before using the methods in the classroom to insure understandings and skills needed for effective implementation are developed (Harris et al., 2012).

Many studies of professional development for writing instruction do not include student outcome measures (Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon, & Birman, 2002; Penuel, Fishman, R., & Gallagher, 2007), the primary outcome of concern. Thus, there is a need to expand studies of professional development in writing that include valid and reliable student outcomes.

Three-tiered Systems

Under the multi-tiered system, RTI, general education teachers are expected to identify students in their classroom who are struggling and intervene with intensive evidence-based instruction, collect data on student response to the intervention, and then determine if students need additional intervention to succeed. In most tiered systems, there are three tiers. Tier one is the general education classroom. Tier two usually consists of multiple sessions (e.g., 15-20) of small-group intensive tutoring with evidence-based instruction and is utilized if students do not succeed in tier one (L. Fuchs & Fuchs, 2007). Tier three, the most intensive intervention, is reserved for students who respond poorly to the interventions offered at tier two. While these systems are designed to offer students early support and avoid waiting for them to fail, it also places a requirement on classroom teachers, in addition to their normal demands, to have the ability to adapt curriculum, materials, and teaching approaches to meet the needs of diverse, complex students which they are not well prepared to do (D. Fuchs et al., in press; U.S. Department of Education, 2011).

SRSD PBPD and Coaching

SRSD PBPD. Research has demonstrated SRSD to be the writing intervention with the highest effect sizes in elementary aged children (Graham, McKeown, Kiuahara, & Harris, 2011) and initial research indicates it is effective at improving performance on timed writing tests (Kiuahara, Harris, Graham, Brindle, & McKeown, 2011; Sandmel et al., 2011) and that PBPD for general education teachers results in improved writing (Harris et al., 2012; Kiuahara et al., 2011). SRSD, when implemented with fidelity and with appropriate differentiation, can improve student performance with a wide spectrum of students (Sandmel et al., 2011), but teacher-implemented SRSD studies have not focused on improving differentiation to meet the needs of all students and classwide SRSD implementation has not followed the progress of individual students.

There have been two initial studies conducted on PBPD for SRSD (Harris et al., 2012; Kiuahara et al., 2011). In the randomized controlled trial conducted by Kiuahara et al. (2011), 17 teachers were randomly assigned to an SRSD condition or a control condition. Teachers in the SRSD condition received two days of PBPD to learn about SRSD and a new strategy designed for the annual state-mandated test called the Comprehensive Assessment Program (CAP), called Count and Plan FAST. All treatment condition teachers participated in PBPD the same days and all but two teachers had another teacher from their school implementing the strategy as well, so six of the eight treatment teachers had a school-based learning community. Teachers instructed at the Tier 1 level and there were 227 fourth-grade students from six schools included in the study. Results from the study demonstrated the PBPD was effective and when taught by trained teachers, student writing improved (effect size = 1.34 for story elements). Teachers were not interviewed in this study.

Harris et al. (2012) conducted a randomized controlled study on PBPD for SRSD where 20 second- and third-grade teachers were assigned to one of two treatment conditions: opinion

writing using SRSD or story writing using SRSD. Teachers received two days of PBPD. Teachers learned about SRSD and practiced teaching the strategy in a group setting. One teacher, though, had scheduling conflicts and received PBPD individually. The results from the study showed an improvement in student stories from pre-test to post-test with an effect size of 1.82. After intervention, teachers were interviewed in small focus groups (two groups of four and two groups of three).

In one focus group from this study, a teacher explained he did not always feel comfortable to differentiate, despite being encouraged to do so during PBPD, because he was concerned about maintaining adequate fidelity. The other two teachers in the focus group agreed with him which led us to believe the two concepts (fidelity and differentiation) were seen as conflicting in the minds of some teachers, indicating we needed to improve this aspect of SRSD PBPD (McKeown et al., 2011). It is imperative, however, that teachers individualize lessons to make the intervention effective for all students because writing is a complex process and differentiation is necessary to increase effectiveness of SRSD (Sandmel et al., 2009). Furthermore, differentiating is expected under the tiered model of prevention.

Differentiation is the process of “ensuring that what a student learns, how he/she learns it, and how the student demonstrates what he/she has learned is a match for that student’s readiness level, interests, and preferred mode of learning” (Tomlinson, 2004). For example, teachers may need to provide small, more homogeneous, group lessons for some students, attend to student readiness before teaching, or set more advanced goals for some students.

Coaching. Prior SRSD studies have included feedback to teachers but, support needs were either initiated by the teacher (Harris et al., 2012) or support was limited to feedback on fidelity (Kiuahara et al., 2011). Teachers have had access to experts, but rarely took the

opportunity to seek help, support, or even to ask questions (McKeown et al., 2011). Coaching has never been provided in an SRSD study.

Research indicates teachers who received intensive training through coaching increased their ability to organize, plan, and differentiate interventions (Bos, Mather, Narr, & Babur, 1999). Coaching that includes effective performance feedback has been shown to improve teacher implementation (Poglinco & Bach, 2004). Effective feedback should be data- and content-focused and can take many forms including: (a) informal, one-on-one conversations about data (Myers, Simonsen, & Sugai, 2011); (b) email (Hemmeter, Snyder, Kinder, & Artman, 2011); (c) graphed data (DiGennaro, Martens, & Kleinmann, 2007; Gilbertson, Witt, Singletary, & VanDerHeyden, 2007); and (d) feedback on video recorded performances (Stover, Kissel, Haag, & Shoniker, 2011).

Although SRSD practice-based professional development and researcher training have always included discussions about the need to differentiate for individual students, specific content knowledge about differentiation had not been presented. Furthermore, on-going teacher support during classroom implementation had not required feedback after every observed lesson and has usually been teacher-initiated.

To improve student outcomes in a teacher-implemented SRSD intervention by increasing differentiation, approaches to differentiation were provided during professional development. These approaches were limited to student readiness for learning (including background knowledge and current performance) and the use of flexible groups to reteach, re-model, and provide extra practice with individual feedback. In an effort to improve differentiation to meet the needs of varying students, without altering fidelity, a coaching component was also included in the present study.

The Present Study

A mixed methods design was utilized in the present study, combining qualitative observations and analysis for teacher outcomes and single-subject design for student outcomes. The purpose was to understand if practice-based professional development paired with coaching would result in teachers effectively implementing an evidence-based practice with fidelity while also differentiating to meet the needs of varying students in Tier one. Students classified as below average in writing were also given short-term Tier 2 tutoring to determine if the more intensive intervention would impact performance. The present study is a reflection of the needs in SRSD PBPD research. As the literature review indicates, there is a clear need to improve teachers' ability to implement evidence-based writing instruction and to insure teachers differentiate for individual students. Studies have indicated coaching can be used to improve teacher performance and coaching has been identified as a need in SRSD research (Harris et al., 2012). A content component was added to the PBPD model to increase teacher knowledge about differentiation and the ways it can be applied to individualize SRSD-based interventions. Structured teacher support and performance feedback was provided through coaches who were present throughout instruction.

This research was guided by five research questions. The first question was: Does practice-based professional development in SRSD with a differentiation content component paired with coaching result in teachers implementing SRSD instruction in Count and Plan FAST with fidelity and differentiation to support students with varying needs and strengths? Research in other academic content areas has supported the use of practice-based professional development (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Koh & Neuman, 2009; McCutchen et al., 2002; Tienken, 2003), the use of content-knowledge in professional development (Tomlinson, 2005), and the use of coaching to affect change in teaching practice (Garet et al., 2008; Koh & Neuman, 2009;

Neuman & WrightSource, 2010; Tomlinson, 2005). It was hypothesized this intervention would affect change in teacher practice that resulted in use of differentiation in Tier 1. The second question was: Does SRSD instruction in planning and writing a personal narrative story under timed conditions improve students' writing performance on such tests? Prior research supports the efficacy of the Count and Plan FAST writing strategy (Kiuahara et al., 2011), when implemented by teachers and we expected positive results as well. The third research question was: Do SRSD instructed students show visible evidence of strategy use in baseline and post-intervention? It was not expected that students would show evidence of strategy use in baseline. However, visible evidence of strategy use was expected in posttesting, after students had learned the strategy, when to use it, and how to use it to write complete stories in response to a prompt under timed conditions. While use of the strategy was expected post-intervention, students were not expected (or required) to use every step of the strategy all the time. Prior research indicates students internalize the strategies after frequent use as they become more fluent in writing and no longer need to write down each step (Harris et al., 2009). The fourth question was: Do students who scored below the 25th percentile on the TOWL improve writing performance when involved in Tier 2, short-term, small-group tutoring? It was hypothesized, based on prior research on tiered interventions (Harris, Graham, & Adkins, 2011; Harris, Lane, et al., 2011), students should improve writing performance when they receive intensive individualized instruction. The final question that guided the present study was: Do teachers and students view SRSD instruction to be socially valid? Based on previous SRSD research (Harris, Lane, et al., 2011; Harris et al., 2012; Lane et al., 2009; Lane et al., 2008), it was hypothesized teachers and students would view SRSD instruction to be socially valid as student writing improvement was expected.

CHAPTER II

METHODS

Setting

Located in the Southeastern United States, the school district is one of the largest in the state. The district's student body is composed of approximately 45% African American, 33% White, 17% Hispanic, and 4% Asian/Pacific Islander students. Seventy-five percent of the student body is considered economically disadvantaged, 13.6% are classified as having limited English proficiency, and 12.3% are students with disabilities. Notably, approximately 60% of white children in the district attend private schools (Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, 2011; US Census Bureau, 2010).

The study took place in three different schools within the same district. The first school (A) was located in an outlying area and served 775 students. The student population was approximately 50% African American, 25% Hispanic, 20% White, and 4% Asian/Pacific Islander. Eighty percent of the students were considered economically disadvantaged. The second (B) and third schools (C) were located in an urban area of the district. The second school had 480 students, approximately 34% of whom were African American, 56% White, 8% Hispanic, and 2% Asian/Pacific Islander. 68% of the students were considered Economically Disadvantaged. The third school had 210 students, approximately 95% of whom were African American, 3% White, and 1% Hispanic. The district reported more than 95% of the student body at school C was economically disadvantaged. None of the schools had met AYP.

Participants

Participants were three fourth-grade teachers and four students from each of their three inclusive classrooms, for a total of 12 students (2 students from each classroom were identified as average writers, and two from each classroom were identified as below average, or struggling writers). Teachers were volunteers identified by administrators in the district as having an interest in improving their writing instruction. Neither teachers nor students had prior knowledge of or experience with SRSD.

The class from school A had 22 students and was an inclusion environment with three English learners, two students who received Exceptional Education support, and three students who were being referred for support. Fifteen of the 22 students received free lunch and more than half were classified as minorities. Iris, Rose, Jasper, and Reid were our target students (See Table 1). The class A teacher was certified in elementary education and as a Reading Specialist and held a BS in Elementary Education and MA in Reading. She had been teaching for 8 years. She had moved up to fourth grade this year with her third grade class, and had taught about half the students the previous year.

The class from school B had 15 students none of whom received additional services. The teacher reported that several students in the class had significant behavior issues, although no students were formally identified. Seven of the 15 students received free lunch and more than half were classified as minorities. Violet, Heather, Pierce, and Ivy were our target students (see Table 1). The teacher for class B was certified in Elementary Education. She held a BA and two MS degrees (Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment; Reading and Mathematics Specialization). She had been teaching for 8 years.

The class from school C had 16 students with four students who received exceptional education services (4 in language and reading, 3 in math). All of the students received free lunch and all were classified as African American. Clay, Flora, Leif, and Daisy were our target students (see Table 1). The class C teacher was certified in Pre-K through 4th. She held a BA in History and Political Science and had earned her teaching certificate through alternative means. She was working toward an MA degree during the time of this study.

Screening Selection Procedures

All students in the teachers' classes participated in the classwide SRSD, but data were collected for only four target students in each class (see Table 1). These students were selected using screening procedures. All students for whom we received parental consent and student assent were screened on four criteria: (a) score on the Test of Written Language – 4 (TOWL) Story Construction subtest where “average” writing ability was defined as those who scored between 34th to 66th percentiles and “below average” writing ability was defined as those who scored in the 25th percentile and below; (b) teacher confirmation of writing ability as average or below average; (c) teacher report that student was not an English language learner and; (d) teacher confirmation that student could independently write a complete sentence. Two students in each classroom were randomly selected from the pool of students who met all four criteria in the average range and two students in each classroom were randomly selected from the pool of students who met all four criteria in the below average range (see Table 1).

Table 1. Target Student Demographic Data

Student	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	EE	Free/Red. Lunch	TOWL %	Writing Ability
Class A							
Iris	9.10	F	H		Yes	50	Avg
Rose	10.4	F	AA		Yes	63	Avg
Jasper	10.0	M	H	Ref	Yes	16	Below
Reid	10.0	M	AA	Ref	Yes	16	Below
Class B							
Violet	9.10	F	AA		No	37	Avg
Heather	10.0	F	C		No	37	Avg
Pierce	10.1	M	C		Yes	2	Below
Ivy	10.4	F	H		Yes	5	Below
Class C							
Clay	10.5	M	AA		Yes	37	Avg
Flora	10.5	F	AA		Yes	63	Avg
Leif	10.0	M	AA	L, M, R	Yes	5	Below
Daisy	9.9	F	AA	L, M, R	Yes	16	Below

Note: C=Caucasian; AA=African American; H=Hispanic; EE = Receiving Exceptional Education Services; R = Reading, M = Math, L = Language; Ref = Referred for Exceptional Education Services; Avg = Average writing ability according to screening measures; Below = Below average writing ability according to screening measures

Story construction subtest of the TOWL-4. The Story Construction subtest was used to evaluate the relative quality of student writing by providing scores for students' narrative writing ability for the purposes of participant screening. The Test of Written Language – 4 (Hammill & Larsen, 2009) is a norm-referenced diagnostic test of written expression. This test is used to identify students who need special assistance in writing, to determine students' strengths and weaknesses in writing, to document student progress in writing, and to measure writing in research. The TOWL-4 was normed on 2,505 individuals from 18 states and whose demographic information represented the population of the U.S. in 2005. Stories were evaluated on several characteristics including vocabulary, plot, prose, character development, and interest to the reader. The test was evaluated according to standardized procedures outlined in the manual. Students were asked to write a brief story in response to a picture. Standardized instructions and procedures were utilized by teachers who gave the assessment in their classrooms. Teachers were assessed on their fidelity to the testing instructions. Two researchers were trained to score the stories and each scored every story. Inter-rater reliability was .72 (.79 during training).

English language learners. Teachers identified students who scored in the average or below average range on the TOWL-4 as receiving or not receiving support for English language learning. Those who were identified as receiving support for English language learning were not selected for this study to avoid introducing an additional issue in the interpretation of the data and results. However, they participated in the classwide intervention activities.

Descriptive Measures

Survey of classroom writing practices. Teachers completed the Survey of Classroom Writing Practices (Cutler & Graham, 2008) prior to beginning instruction to determine the writing practices they implement in the classroom. There were three sections to the survey. The

first section consisted of 41 questions based on an 8-point Likert scale. In the second section, teachers described their writing program in narrative form (e.g., traditional writing approach, process writing, Writer's Workshop, combination). The third section required teachers to identify and describe any writing instruction practices related to strategies instruction (e.g., using self-statements, setting goals) or taking timed writing tests such as the state writing. The coefficient alphas for the survey instrument range from .62 to .85.

Observation of classroom writing practices. Trained research assistants completed two 25-minute observations of teachers' writing instruction practices prior to teachers beginning SRSD instruction. The observations provided a description of teachers' writing instruction practices and confirmed teachers were not implementing practices associated with the intervention prior to implementation in their classroom.

The teacher observation of classroom writing practices measure (Graham, Harris, Fink-Chorzempa, & MacArthur, 2003) contained two sections (see Appendix A for all measures). In section one, research assistants checked items observed during classroom writing instruction. The targeted items are related to skills and strategies taught (9 items), common instructional activities in process writing (12 items), instructional and assessment procedures (10 items), alternative modes of writing (2 items), and other (activities completed by the teachers or students not listed). In section two (7 items), trained research assistants checked items if they observed instruction related specifically to strategies instruction or to taking timed writing tests such as the CAP. The reliability for process writing activities is .84 and .87 for the skill instruction activities (Agate, 2005; Graham et al., 2003). No teachers were observed using any steps associated with SRSD in their writing lessons during baseline.

Writing Outcome Measures

Student writing was measured using writing prompts based on the CAP writing test. Stories were scored for the number of story elements, length, and if students used the Count and Plan FAST strategy to plan and write the story.

Writing prompts. Writing prompts came from the list of CAP writing prompts found on the state Department of Education website or were developed to match the style and genre of those prompts. The CAP required students to write a creative story with self as main character. One example of a prompt is “Suppose one day you found a flying carpet. Think about where you would go and what you would do. Now write a story about your day after finding the magic carpet.” All prompts included the phrase “think about” (or “think of”) followed by a list of 1- 4 ideas to think about before writing (e.g., where you would go, what you would see).

Each prompt was reviewed and components provided in the prompts were analyzed (e.g., prompts might provide students with the who, when, where, beginning, or middle). The writing prompts were used in prior research and were found to be appropriate (Kiuvara et al., 2011; Sandmel et al., 2011), although the elements given to the students in the state-created prompts ranged between 4 and 10. For example, one prompt reads, “Writing Situation: Pretend your friend called you and said, “You aren’t going to believe what I found!” You rushed over to your friend’s home. Directions for Writing: Before you begin to write, think about what your friend found and what happened. Now write a story about what happened when your friend found something.” This prompt provided another character in addition to self (friend), a location (friend’s house), a “sparkle” word (rushed), and three actions (i.e., friend called, friend said, you rushed). It also provided dialogue and there were two think abouts included for a total of nine elements. This can be contrasted with another state prompt that reads, “Writing

Situation: Pretend your class was on a field trip to the zoo on a day the animals got loose.

Directions for Writing: Before you write, think about what might happen on your field trip. Now write a story about what happened the day the animals got loose at the zoo.” This prompt provided an additional character (class), a location (zoo), and two actions (go on field trip, animals get loose) for a total of four elements.

Prompts were numbered and a random number generator was used to assign prompts randomly to baseline, during instruction, and post-instruction assessments for each class (e.g., baseline 1 for all classes, class B post-test 3). Students were tested twice during instruction (after Lessons 2 and 4), however, because SRSD is a complex intervention involving gradual release of control, a rise in scores was not expected until after students had completed instruction. The probes during instruction were to make data-based teaching decisions for individual students as well as to provide guidance for whole-class instruction. Prompts given during instruction were scored and analyzed by the first author who offered each teacher the detailed data as well as suggested teaching groups and topics for additional instruction.

Administration of writing prompts. Teachers, supervised by a trained research assistant, administered writing prompts at baseline, during intervention, and after intervention (post-intervention) using identical procedures and reading from a script based on the state writing assessment (See Appendix A for script). In cases where the teacher was absent, a trained research assistant administered the prompts. Fidelity checklists were completed to insure every administration of writing prompts was consistent. Fidelity of test administration by teacher was 100% for teachers A and C and was 93% for teacher B.

Students were given 35 minutes to complete the story, were encouraged to plan the story, and told they would not receive any help. When finished, students were told they could sit

quietly or read a book. Student stories were stripped of identifying information, and typed correcting for spelling, capitalization, and punctuation errors to avoid bias in scoring caused by surface-level features. The typed versions were checked for accuracy. Finally, the typed stories were scored for story elements, use of strategy, and length.

Story elements. Stories written by students in response to the prompts were scored for number of elements present on a 43-point rubric (See Appendix A for rubric). Elements included: character, location, time, starting event, sequence of actions, ending, emotion, and sparkle words (effective vocabulary). The elements character, location, and time were scored 1 point for being present and 1 point for an additional example of the element (e.g., an additional character, an additional location). The elements starting event and ending were scored 0-2 points where 1 point was for being present and 2 points was for being interesting or unique. Points were also given for any actions leading up to the beginning or rounding out the ending (0-3 points). The sequence of actions (the middle) counted for 0-10 points, depending on the number of actions included and students could earn extra points (0-2) for sequences that were logical, interesting, or that flowed smoothly from start to finish. Between 0 to 4 points were given for including emotions and students could earn from 0-8 points for including interesting vocabulary or rich description in their story. Students were given credit for responding to each think about included in the prompt, but since the number varied across prompts, the scoring was adjusted (for 1/3 a score of 1, for 1/2 or 2/3 a score of 2, and for responding to all think abouts, a score of 3). Because the rubric is based on 43-point scale, small increases or decreases should not be viewed as being of significance.

Three researchers were trained to reliability ($> .80$) on the scoring rubric. Interrater reliability during training was .85 and .83. The primary scorer, who was blind to the purpose of the study and condition in which stories were written, evaluated all stories while the two

additional scorers conducted reliability on the scores. Fifty-six percent of the stories were scored for reliability. Interrater reliability between the primary and each reliability scorer was .92 and .93. When the raters differed by two or more points, they were asked to independently confirm their score. If they still differed by more than two points, they were asked to resolve the difference. The resolved score of the primary rater was used as the student score, but original, unresolved scores were used to calculate inter-rater reliability. If differences uncovered a conceptual misunderstanding of the rubric, training was conducted to avoid similar mistakes in the future.

Evidence of strategy use. Each writing prompt was scored for evidence of planning and strategy use. Two trained research assistants scored for evidence of: (a) on the prompt instruction sheet, topic to write about was underlined, “think about” or “think of” was circled, each think about or think of was underlined and numbered; and (b) on the planning sheet, the letters F, A, S, T were written, notes were written near each letter, items were checked or marked off to show they were used in the story. Students received a score of 0 or 1 for each piece of evidence for a total score of 9 possible points. Inter-rater reliability was 100% during training. After scoring all stories, inter-rater reliability was .96.

Length. The length of student stories was determined by counting the number of words written. Trained research assistants used the word count tool in MS Word to determine story length. The length of the story was recorded and checked for reliability by another trained research assistant with 100% accuracy.

Social Validity Measures

After they completed instruction, teachers were interviewed by a researcher trained in interview methods with over ten years of experience with qualitative methods. Teachers were

asked questions about how the program could be improved including: (a) the professional development experience, (b) the strategy, (c) the lesson plans, (d) the coaching, and (e) the overall experience. Teachers were also asked about their experience using groups for instruction both before and during intervention as well as their experience working with the coaches. Finally, teachers were asked if they believed the intervention helped their students (and how and why, if so) and if they and if they would teach the strategy next year. During the interview teacher responses were video recorded and notes were taken. Responses across teachers were synthesized to form overall conclusions.

Students were also interviewed by one of the researchers trained in interview methods to determine social validity. They were asked if they found the strategies helpful, in what ways they were helpful, if they would use them in the future, and what they would like changed. Responding to the theory of emergent design, we also asked students if they believed some prompts were easier or harder than others, what made them easier or harder, and what prompts were easy or hard for them. A response sheet was completed for each student. Results were compiled to determine an overall trend for the study, each class, and across the targeted participants.

Fidelity of Professional Development Treatment and SRSD Lessons

Fidelity of professional development treatment was collected using a checklist on the researcher-delivered professional development to insure each repetition of the professional development contained the same essential elements. Fidelity was 100% for all three teachers. Fidelity was also collected on teachers implementing the lessons in their classrooms. Each lesson had an associated fidelity checklist of essential steps to complete. Although each lesson usually took more than one instructional period, there were steps that crossed all lessons. Teachers

indicated which steps from a lesson were planned to be covered in a given instructional period. Fidelity was collected on those steps: teachers were held accountable only for steps they planned to teach. Fidelity of treatment for teachers was calculated by dividing number of steps completed by number of steps possible. A second observer was present at 44% of the teacher fidelity observation sessions to conduct reliability of fidelity. Interobserver agreement (IOA) was calculated by dividing the number of agreements by the total number of steps scored.

Research Design

A mixed methods design (see Calfee & Sperling; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004) was employed to determine if practice-based professional development paired with coaching improved the writing outcomes of students who were average and below average achieving in writing. The use of intensive, short-term tutoring was also tested to determine if students whose writing was below average would improve under the more individualized conditions. Because this study involved examination of professional development, both teacher and student outcomes were measured.

Teacher outcomes. A qualitative approach utilizing observation and teacher interviews was used to determine teacher response to professional development. Qualitative research designs, also known as emergent designs, are flexible and allow for adjustments as the research advances. Emergent design was employed to be responsive to data collected. For example, student interview questions were added to the initial set after we saw intra-student variation in the single-subject results (student outcomes) that seemed to be associated with the prompts. Also, after realizing teachers were not spontaneously differentiating to the level desired, we added interview questions to explore the reasons why. To increase confidence in findings, both researchers and data were triangulated. Three researchers observed and analyzed data that

included classroom observation, video recordings of classroom performance, and interviews. The constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was used to continually assess the codes and categories created from the data analysis.

Student outcomes. A multiple baseline across participants design (Horner & Baer, 1978) was used to evaluate the effects of the intervention on students classified as below average writers (n=6) and students who were classified as average writers (n=6). The multiple baseline design was chosen because an academic, non-reversible behavior was being measured and multiple baseline allows for measuring behaviors that have a delayed response to intervention, and the independent variable is staggered. The multiple baseline design had three experimental conditions: baseline, intervention, and post-intervention. Additionally, the students classified as below average writers had an supplementary condition, short-term Tier 2 tutoring, that followed posttesting.

The introduction of the intervention was staggered to control for history and maturation across students. Students in baseline continued to receive typical writing instruction. Student story writing was evaluated based on the number of story elements, evidence of strategy use, and number of words. Students were measured concurrently. Together, the two methods provided a means to measure the impact of the professional development on both teachers and students.

Teacher-level Intervention Procedures

Practice-based professional development in present study. The essential principles of PBPD for SRSD were followed in this study, except teachers did not learn in a community. Because we used a single-subject model, teachers received professional development alone and in a staggered manner. They were also without a school-based learning community; their support

through implementation was limited to the research team and coach. Analysis of the raw interview data from a previous SRSD study indicated that teachers found PBPD in SRSD to be more beneficial when they already knew their students' individual writing needs (Harris, Graham, et al., 2011). Therefore, professional development was scheduled in December, January, and February for teachers A, B, and C respectively, and each began instruction approximately two weeks following the PD. Teachers attended the two-day, 12-hour professional development session to learn about SRSD and the Count and Plan FAST intervention. Before PD, teachers were given two practice-oriented journal articles to read that highlight classroom implementation and differentiation of SRSD strategies (Harris, Graham, & Mason, 2003; Sandmel et al., 2009).

The two-day practice-based professional development was conducted by two trained members of the research team meeting with one teacher at a time. For a more detailed account of SRSD practice-based professional development see (Harris et al., 2012). In addition to the standard procedures in SRSD practice-based professional development, teachers also reviewed information on differentiating for writing including strategies for grouping and feedback. Differentiating instruction in this study was primarily identifying student readiness and working with flexible groups based on common needs. The use of student readiness data (e.g., what parts of the strategy were students using and not using) to create instructional groupings was discussed with teachers during PBPD.

Day one consisted of introductions: detailed discussions of the teacher's writing practices, experiences with writing and teaching writing, and beliefs about writing and teaching writing. Detailed information about student writing abilities across their classroom was shared as well. Teachers watched a commercially produced video about SRSD and strategies instruction (ASCD, 2002) where they learned the components and saw SRSD being implemented classwide.

Teachers were given all materials needed for their classrooms including a set of lesson plans and a set of materials for each of their students (i.e., strategy flash cards, genre chart, graphic organizer, a sheet for vocabulary/sparkle words, self-monitoring rockets, copies of exemplar stories with markup, simple and complex goal-setting sheets, and a sheet to record self-statements). Teachers used these materials during PBPD, as is recommended. Teachers in the past have indicated having all the materials needed for teaching and learning provided is helpful (Harris, Lane, et al., 2011). Teachers watched the facilitators model a lesson; then the teacher practiced teaching the lesson to a facilitator using the required materials and received feedback throughout practice. Discussion also focused on adaptations for students in their classroom and any issues or questions the teachers raised. This was repeated for Lessons 1-3 in day one.

On day two, the same format was followed (facilitator models, teacher practices teaching, discussion, focus on differentiation) for the rest of the lessons (4-7). Then, the research design, procedures, pacing calendar, and other housekeeping items were discussed.

Coaching. Two coaches worked with the teachers during instruction (the first and third authors). The purpose of coaching was to support teachers to achieve high levels of fidelity while also individualizing lessons for students whose needs varied. Both coaches were former teachers with eight and six years experience, respectively, in both general and special education classrooms and had extensive training and knowledge of SRSD and practice-based professional development, as well as experience leading professional development.

Once teachers began instruction, teachers met with their coaches at least once per week to discuss the lessons, receive feedback on fidelity, and discuss and plan for differentiation. The first author worked primarily with teachers A and C and the third author worked primarily with teacher B, but each coach provided some support to each teacher, especially in cases when the primary coach was not present for a session and the teacher had a question or concern. Coaches

tried to facilitate reflection rather than dictate answers and relied on rapport developed during professional development. All three teachers reported throughout the study they felt “very comfortable” with the research team, especially the coaches.

The coaching sessions occurred through email, phone, and face-to-face, and included both formal and informal discussions. The face-to-face sessions occurred while students were being tested, at recess, during teacher planning time, at lunch, after the lessons, and before or after school. Teachers did not schedule a set time to talk weekly. Instead, coaches worked with teachers to determine the most convenient time to discuss the intervention, keeping in mind the length of time required. For straight-forward feedback, less time was required and might could be completed during teacher transition times (e.g., walking students to lunch) while more complex feedback required longer time periods (e.g., recess).

Coaches gave teachers feedback after every observed lesson and followed a protocol to insure support provided was consistent across teachers. The coaching protocol included providing positive feedback, accurate fidelity feedback with corrective feedback when necessary, discussion of students who needed additional support, and then developed a plan of action based on the discussion. Each coach kept notes on what was discussed, decisions made toward action, and the teacher response to the action. Coaches did not model lessons in the classroom.

Fidelity was also collected on the coaching protocol based on notes taken on each of the coaching interactions. Fidelity was calculated by dividing the number of completed steps by the number of steps expected in each interaction (usually four: positive feedback, fidelity feedback with corrective feedback when necessary, discussion of students in need, plan of action). Both coaches had 100% fidelity.

Coaches collected and scored the stories students wrote for test prompts given during instruction (after Lessons 2 and 4). Scores were analyzed for story elements (e.g., location,

ending), use of strategy, as well as any individual issues (e.g., not using paragraph form, not responding to the prompt). Lists were created for each teacher grouping students with similar needs together. Sometimes, students were included in more than one group. Data were collected twice during instruction (following Lessons 2 and 4), so groups were formed based on data from the most recent performance. These data were provided to the teacher to inform her decisions about how to differentiate for individual student needs, including student readiness.

Student-level Intervention Procedures

After teachers participated in the PBPD on implementing the intervention for the Count and Plan FAST strategy, they began instruction in their classroom. Students were taught planning and writing strategies to create a story in which the student is the main character in a fictional story, referred to as a “story about me” (SAM). This genre was used by the state to test the writing ability of elementary students. Detailed descriptions of SRSD instruction are available in the literature and the complete lessons plans can be found in Appendix B, thus the description of instruction and SRSD below are brief.

SRSD. SRSD is an instructional model containing six recursive instructional stages through which students progressed based on reaching criterion. The steps of SRSD are: (a) Develop background knowledge: students acquired the knowledge and skills necessary to apply the strategies to their own writing tasks and they learned the first strategy step, Count; (b) Discuss it: teachers and students continued to talk about good writing, memorizing the tricks, taking notes, and analyzing writing; students learned FAST; (c) Model it: teachers modeled the writing process using Count and Plan FAST; they started with analyzing the prompt, planned the story, and wrote the story all while using self-statements; (d) Memorize it: teachers supported students in practicing and memorizing the strategy; this stage occurred from the first lesson; (e)

Support it: teachers provided support and assistance as students began to use the strategy and self-regulation procedures; sometimes included peer support as well; (f) Independent performance: students used the strategies to write a SAM that included all the elements without teacher support. Students were taught self-regulation strategies that included setting goals, self-monitoring, self-instructions, and self-reinforcement. These strategies helped to regulate their writing behavior. Students were also taught the knowledge (e.g., genre knowledge, vocabulary) and skills needed to use the writing and self-regulation strategies when they write. The SRSD model included procedures to encourage positive attitudes toward writing and for promoting maintenance and generalization of knowledge and skills.

The strategy Count and Plan FAST was used to teach students to analyze the writing prompt to find the required elements given in the prompt (see Appendix B for complete lesson plans). The state writing prompts usually included a starter event and some story elements. The story elements were: (a) who is the story about? (b) who else is in the story? (c) when does the story take place? (d) where does the story take place? (e) what do the main characters want to do? (f) what happens when the main characters try to do it? (g) how does the story end? (h) how do the main characters feel? (i) include exciting descriptive vocabulary (sparkle words). Using the first part of the strategy, Count, students learned to identify the given story parts from the prompt and then to make notes for each element of the SAM. The steps of Count were: (a) underline what you have to write about, (b) circle the phrase “think about” or “think of”, and (c) count and number the think abouts/think ofs.

After students learned to analyze the prompt, they used the second part of the strategy, Plan FAST, where the mnemonic FAST stood for: (a) figure out how your story starts, (b) add a sequence of events to make a storyline, and tie it up with a good ending, (c) sparkle words, note some and think more as I write, and (d) take time to check the prompt after writing. Students

learned to set goals for improving their stories (e.g., keep the audience in mind, including more descriptive details), utilizing their planning notes, and writing a complete story in response to the writing prompt.

Lesson overview. There were seven lessons in total and each lesson took one to four days to complete. One lesson did not equal one teaching period or one day. In Lesson 1, teachers focused on developing background knowledge and introducing the Count strategy. Teachers began by talking about the CAP writing test, taking timed tests, and explaining the SAM genre. Then, teachers introduced the Count strategy and talked about good stories and the parts needed to make a good story. Finally, teachers demonstrated how to use the Count strategy by modeling its use on several prompts and students practiced memorizing the steps of the strategy. This lesson usually took about 90 minutes to teach.

Starting with Lesson 2, every lesson had the same structure: (a) review previous instruction, (b) discuss why it is important to memorize the steps and what makes a good story, (c) test the steps of the strategy (d) explicit instruction, (e) practice memorizing the steps of the strategy, (f) wrap up lesson by stating students will be quizzed on the strategy steps the next day and emphasize they have learned two strategies for writing better stories about me on timed writing tests. Only the explicit instruction will be explained below since it is the only step that differs between lessons.

In Lesson 2, teachers introduced the FAST strategy. The focus of FAST is to learn to plan a story and take brief notes using the mnemonic. Teachers introduced “sparkle words” which was another way of saying exciting vocabulary and descriptive words and “caveman talk” which was a way of describing the brief phrasing used for note-taking. After discussion, teachers modeled the use of FAST by reading a story written by another study (provided) and then making notes on a FAST graphic organizer, noting the beginning (F), sequence of events and

ending (A), sparkle words (S), and checking to see if the student responded to all the parts in the prompt (T). This lesson usually took between 90-120 minutes.

In Lesson 3, the focus was on insuring stories make sense. Teachers read and took notes on a silly story written intentionally to have all of the story parts, but not make sense. Students saw, again, the teacher modeling taking notes, discussing story parts, and using the strategy. This lesson usually took about 60 minutes.

Lesson 4 was the most difficult lesson for many teachers because in this lesson they had to begin using self-statements, a key component of SRSD. In Lesson 4, teachers modeled using Count and Plan FAST from start to finish. They analyzed a prompt using Count, made a plan using FAST, and then wrote the story using their notes. Teachers were encouraged to use self-statements, to make errors and correct themselves, and to intentionally get stuck in the process and talk to themselves to move forward to complete the task. Teachers used statements like, “I know my teacher taught me this. I know how to do this,” “You can’t start something and not finish it,” and “I’m not intimidated by this at all because I have a good plan.” After they finished writing the story, teachers modeled using the rocket graphing sheets to evaluate their stories. They also gave students a self-statements sheet and asked them to talk about and write down any of the self-talk they heard during the modeling session. Teachers emphasized students could use other people’s self-statements or make up their own. Finally, teachers and students graphed the story together. This lesson usually took at least 120 minutes and could be repeated as whole class, small group, or individually.

After modeling the use of the strategy in Lesson 4, teachers focused on using the strategy collaboratively with students in Lesson 5. Teachers led the process, but asked students to participate like asking them what the steps of the strategy were, for ideas to write about, or suggestions for sentences. Teachers also introduced goal setting at this point and talked about

how strategies could be used in other academic areas. This lesson usually took at least 120 minutes and could be repeated multiple times either as whole class, small group, or individually. Students could also be paired to use the strategy to write a story collaboratively with the teacher providing support only when needed.

In Lesson 6, teachers released students to work independently. At this stage, while most of the class worked on using the strategies to write a story independently, teachers worked with some students who needed additional support repeating Lesson 5 or addressing individual needs. This lesson usually took about 60 minutes, but was often repeated across 2-4 days. Lesson 7 was the final lesson and was a mock CAP writing test prefaced with a discussion about how to manage time during the exam. This lesson took about 60 minutes.

Tutoring. Students who were classified as below average writers participated in short-term (e.g., 5-6 sessions) Tier 2 tutoring after classroom instruction had concluded. Teachers were not aware tutoring would be offered until after instruction was complete. Students met with one of two tutors who was trained to criterion in SRSD and the Count and Plan FAST strategy. Both tutors were previously special education teachers and were comfortable in the small group setting. Jasper and Reid, from class A, met with the first author after their class instruction ended and the students from classes B and C met with the fifth author. Tutoring sessions were held for two students at a time for five to six days, approximately an hour per session in a quiet location outside the classroom (usually the library).

The tutors started sessions by reviewing the strategy followed by a guided discussion about each individual's areas for improvement in writing. Collaborative planning occurred frequently and brainstorming for good ideas was also modeled and practiced together. Tutors asked students to write a story every session and the stories were used as teaching material the next session so students learned from their own errors and successes. For example, the tutor and

student read through a story the student had written and identified all the story elements included. Then, they talked about what other elements could be added (e.g., another character, a better ending, more description, emotions). Students made edits on their paper and set a goal to include the needed elements in the next story. Finally, students wrote a story to a new prompt. Scores on stories produced in tutoring were based on the unedited, first draft versions of the stories.

Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis

Using persistent classroom observations and video recordings, instances of differentiation in teacher-student interactions were recorded during the teaching performance by researchers trained in qualitative methods. Three researchers were involved in the analysis of these data: the first and sixth authors were the primary observers and the third author was the reliability observer. The first, third, and sixth authors had eight, six, and five years teaching experience in K-12 classrooms respectively and all had been trained in and had experience in qualitative methods.

Differentiation was narrowly defined for the purposes of this study to include instances where a teacher used grouping or pairs, gave individual instruction, or used data on student readiness to inform instruction. Two approaches were used to identify instances of differentiation: classroom observations and video recordings of teaching performance. These observations, called “qualitative observations,” were conducted for half of all teaching sessions for each teacher and sessions were observed from the beginning, middle, and end of instruction (i.e., there was a qualitative observation for every lesson except Lesson 1 because we wanted teachers to spend the first day of instruction in a more relaxed environment with no observers present). The first author was present at all qualitative observation sessions while the sixth author was either present or viewed the video from at least half of the qualitative observation sessions

from each teacher (i.e., 25% of all teaching sessions). Because many students from class B did not assent to being video recorded, video was not used in that class, so the sixth author observed half of the qualitative observation sessions from class B in person. Observers took extensive field notes. The qualitative observation sessions were video recorded (except in class B) and recordings were used by the first and sixth authors to confirm, refine, and expand on the field notes taken that were based on classroom observation. In addition, the sixth author relied on the video to observe sessions she did not attend in person and created field notes from the video viewing. Video recordings were also utilized to test reliability of the qualitative codes.

The frequent presence of the observers in the classrooms allowed the observers to blend into the daily routine of the classroom, reducing observer effect. In each class, students engaged with observers naturally and often viewed the team as another resource with whom they shared stories or from whom they asked for help. For example, students from all three classes asked observers how to spell words, to help with word choice, and frequently wanted to share their ideas and written stories. This consistent contact, observation, and interaction decreased the likelihood of distortion and enabled thick description of the classroom environment and interactions. Observations were targeted to instances of differentiation as defined in this study (i.e., individual or small group instruction, instruction based on student readiness, added lesson components), but other notable or interesting observations were recorded as well (e.g., instances of discipline) to capture the “feel” of the classes. Differentiation observations were conducted separately from fidelity observations; no observer viewed a class for both fidelity and differentiation at the same time.

To control for bias, the two primary observers talked openly about our impressions of the lessons, the teacher response to coaching, the treatment of students in classrooms, and about our own teaching experiences and beliefs about teaching that could influence interpretations. For

example, class B often struggled when starting a writing task because they did not have materials and there was not a system in place to handle frequent daily needs (e.g., sharpened pencils). Both classes A and C had systems for preparing to work, including having materials available to the class as a whole. To control for potential bias, the two primary observers, upon witnessing the delay of student productivity several times, talked through differences in the teachers' and our own classroom management approaches as well as the differences in teaching styles to better understand strengths and weaknesses in all teaching approaches.

Primary observers also recorded their own thoughts in the field notes to separate personal impressions from classroom activities (e.g., from an observer's field notes when a teacher was sitting at her desk with students standing in line for her to read their stories, "It's good interaction, but it's funny that I find the desk a barrier and would not interact that way around writing... Why not share the stories with the whole class? Or conference one at a time so other students can continue to be productive?"). By recording personal thoughts, they could be separated from the data for analysis.

Each of the primary observers independently read through their own field notes taken during observations (either from in-person or video recording). The field notes were analyzed for instances of differentiation, broadly. Then, each observer attempted to classify the instances of differentiation into categories. When the categories were established by each, the two observers met to discuss their independent findings. The initial meeting was held after class A had finished instruction and class B had completed Lesson 3. This allowed for enough data to be collected to begin forming categories, but the categories needed to be tested again with the remaining lessons from class B and all of class C to determine if they continued to apply across lessons and across teachers. These two steps were repeated for all observed sessions for all classes (reading the field notes for instances of differentiation then classifying them under categories).

During this process, the primary observers used peer debriefing to explore emerging hypotheses and to test working hypotheses (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993). For example, after independently observing class A and a portion of class B, the first and sixth authors met to discuss the working categories, but instead had to discuss a mutual concern that we were seeing neither the number of instances nor the variety of differentiation we had hoped, based on our theory. In this case, we were in agreement about what we were *not* seeing and proceeded to use grounded theory to determine what we *were* seeing.

In response, both observers presented broad categories representing the small number of instances seen in the classrooms (e.g., use of grouping, adding lesson elements, role playing as a student). The observers were in agreement on the categories; both had seen the same instances of differentiation and agreed they could be categorized. We tested the categories against our notes and talked through the boundaries of the concepts and determined if the categories needed to be further defined (e.g., instances of grouping were further defined as teacher choice of group, student choice of group, or convenience grouping). Once we established working categories, we continued to observe the classroom interaction, using the categories established while continually testing them with new data. After analyzing the data using constant comparison and an additional discussion of findings between the two primary observers, a coding manual was created. Once the codes were established, each observer independently reviewed all their field notes and the videos once again to test the established codes.

Codes. Observers built the coding manual through grounded theory and peer debriefing. The codes were established to capture only targeted aspects of the teaching performance, namely instances of differentiation as defined in this study, not the myriad of activity and nuance present in a classroom setting. The codes included: (a) adding to the lesson plans, anything not included in PD or coaching; (b) role play; (c) grouping – further defined as teacher assigned, student

chosen, or convenience grouping; (d) individualizing – any attempt made to address an individual problem with the lessons or writing. We also coded classroom climate because, after discussions between observers, we determined there was a notable difference between classrooms and believed the differences could have an impact on outcomes. We coded statements about writing, discipline, or other and noted if they were generally positive or not.

Inter-observer agreement. Once the codes were refined and confirmed by the primary observers, they were released to the third author, the reliability observer, to code a selection of video or field notes for reliability. The third author used the codes to analyze four sessions for each teacher, one from the beginning, one from the middle, and two from the end of intervention. Because Lessons 5 and 6 had the greatest opportunity for differentiation, we sampled two of those lessons to insure we documented from the richest opportunities. The coding results documented by the third observer are reported, enriched with examples collected from the observations that led to the creation of the codes. Agreement between the primary and reliability observers was high, with perfect agreement on instances of differentiation and their respective codes (e.g., adding to the lesson, role play).

Single-subject Data Collection and Analysis

During baseline, students were administered writing probes as a whole class. Immediately after administration, the probes of four purposefully selected students were scored for number of story elements present, length, and use of strategy. After a minimum of three consecutive writing probes were administered, visual inspection was conducted on the graphed results of students in the first class to determine if a stable baseline was established. When the story elements were stable for all four students and were not increasing, the teacher started the

intervention. When the story elements were not stable (i.e., Legs 2 and 3), additional probes were administered until a stable baseline was reached.

Students in the intervention phase received instruction for approximately 15 days (range of 15-17). Teachers provided instruction on the intervention at least four days per week for at least 45 minutes, but all three teachers often taught for an hour, five days per week. The Class C teacher frequently taught for 1.5 hour periods as her students were accustomed to longer writing times. Teachers A and C taught for a total of approximately 20 hours while teacher B taught for approximately 15 hours.

After teachers completed Lesson 7, students were probed at least three times during the post-instruction phase. Immediately following the administration of the writing probes, they were scored for the number of story elements present, length, and use of strategy. A visual inspection of the number of story elements was conducted. Following the post-test phase, students who were classified as below average in writing participated in 5-6 days of tutoring with a trained research assistant. Students were probed three times during the tutoring sessions (sessions 1, 3, and 4). Students were interviewed after instruction ended to determine if they found the intervention to be useful and also to follow-up on queries we had about the single-subject data since there was high intra-student variability, possibly attributable to the prompts.

Mixing Methods

In this study, two methodologies were used, qualitative and single-subject, and the data from each informed the other. In mixed methods study, the addition of a methodology is only justified if it will enhance what can be learned, otherwise, the sacrifice of competing theoretical bases is not worthwhile (cf., Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003) . In this study, the data from the single-subject design informed the qualitative design and the data from the

qualitative design helped in the interpretation of the single-subject design. For example, when the intra-student variability began to show itself across classes and students who scored below average on the TOWL and were classified as below average writers by their teachers scored higher than expected on story elements, we decided to ask the students about their experience with the prompts. We added questions to the student interviews that included: (a) Were some prompts easier or harder than others?; (b) Which prompts were easier?; (c) Which prompts were harder; (d) What makes a prompt easy/hard? This allowed us to explore the data more holistically by querying students about their performance and their own feelings toward given prompts. The student responses to these questions allowed us to interpret their scores in a different manner, which effectively led us to question the validity of the prompts themselves.

We also took advantage of mixing methods when we saw teachers were not generalizing the use of differentiation, were not systematically collecting and using student data, and were not responding to coaching. In response to these data, we added questions to the teacher interviews to inquire about how they used differentiation and grouping in the past, how they analyze or score student writing (and subsequently use those data to inform their teaching), and what barriers there were to responding to the coaching suggestions. Teacher responses to these questions helped us understand how the intervention fit into the rest of their teaching responsibilities as well as how we can improve the teacher support in the future. In sum, we learned more about the teachers, students, and their data by using both methods in conjunction.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Treatment Fidelity

Overall, 66% of sessions were observed and evaluated for fidelity (43% of class A, 77% of class B, and 77% of class C sessions were observed) and 44% of observed sessions also had a second observer for reliability of fidelity (43% for class A, 30% for class B, and 60% for class C). The number of reliability sessions for class B were lower because the teacher chose not to teach a sessions previously planned, thus reducing the overall number of sessions. Overall fidelity was .96 and overall reliability of fidelity was .97. Reliability for each class A, B, and C was 1.0, .91, and 1.0 respectively and reliability of fidelity was .98, .94, and .99. SRSD was implemented with a high level of integrity across classes.

Teacher Differentiation Outcomes

As explained earlier, half of all teaching sessions were observed by the primary observers and reliability was conducted on four sessions per teacher (80% of all qualitative observation sessions). The reliability coding provided by the third author is reported here (unless otherwise noted) since those codes were applied independently and the lessons chosen were the same for all teachers, so the opportunity to differentiate was equal. The data from the reliability-coded sessions will be referred to as the “coded sample.”

Based on the coded sample, all three teachers made adaptations to the lessons for their whole class, but it was rare for a teacher to differentiate for an individual or a group of students

who had a specific need, unless the teachers were coached to do so. For example, all three teachers added the use of whole-class choral reading to the lesson plans during the memorization phase of the strategy. All three teachers used role play, pretending to be a student, when demonstrating the use of strategy to the whole class. Since these approaches were not included in the PBPD for SRSD, they were identified as differentiation for whole class and coded as “additions.” Making accommodations for a small group of students with a shared writing need or a single student was not as common as adapting for whole-class instruction.

Teacher A. Positive statements, a focus on being good writers, and a spirit of cooperation were present in class A in every observation. “We know who good writers are: we are! We know who authors are: we are!” she told them. There was constant positive reinforcement for these students as learners, writers, and classroom citizens. “You have learned Count. You have learned Plan FAST. You have them memorized. You KNOW this. You are almost ready to do this by yourself.” She used positive discipline practices including proximity, redirection, planned ignoring, and both an individual behavior system and a classwide system such that if the class got a compliment, they earned a token that could be saved up to earn a brownie party. She often gained compliance by following instructions with “Who can I brag on?” The atmosphere in this classroom was warm and seemed a safe place for students to take risks in learning.

Differentiation observed. Teacher A made several additions to the lesson plans for the whole class. She made the first addition during professional development. Teacher A wanted a mnemonic for her students to remember the important story parts, so she used knowledge she knew the students already had (the 5 W’s) and altered it to be WWWEE (who, where, when, what, emotion, ending). We passed this addition on to the next two teachers and teacher C used it as well.

During classroom implementation, teacher A gave her students suggestions for improved study skills and time management (e.g., “When cutting the [Plan FAST flash] cards, it was a good idea to study at the same time”). Student choice was presented in her class when appropriate (e.g., “You can tie up the bow any way you like” in reference to the hand motions the class did when saying “tie it up with a good ending”) and she used role playing by pretending to be a student and using different voices for emphasis or humor. There were six instances of adding to the lessons recorded in the sample coded by the reliability observer.

Teacher A used pairs for memorization practice and used groups when coached to do so. Grouping was identified once in the coded sample which was a group formed by teacher choice (the teacher determined the group members). The coach suggested using a small group for targeted instruction and re-teaching and also named whom the group members should be based on student data. While teacher A used pairs for memorization practice as noted in field notes (not in the coded sample), flexible groups based on writing needs were formed only when suggested by a coach.

Response to coaching. Teacher A responded to coaching positively and implemented all suggestions from the coach. These suggestions included moving a student to help improve his attention during whole group instruction, refining her modeling of the use of the strategy to meet the needs of particular students, spotlighting students who did not grasp the day’s lesson, identifying groups of students who needed support with the same concept, and identifying what lessons or parts of lessons should be repeated and with whom. According to the coaching notes, this teacher utilized and acted on all coaching suggestions. Teacher A frequently voiced her appreciation for the suggestions and the support offered by the coaches, but although the suggestions were implemented, the use of the suggestions was neither generalized nor sustained.

The teacher did not continue to collect data and use those data to make additional decisions about differentiating instruction and using groups for instruction.

Teacher B. A focus on behavior and CAP standards were present in class B along with elements of fun such as snapping for doing well and “The 7’s,” a series of seven claps of seven to a rhythm the class did in unison. Teacher B believed the intervention “needs to hit more than one thing, not just prompt writing” and so she incorporated what she believed was important.

Differentiation observed. Teacher B was concerned about insuring her students were exposed to as many of the state-tested standards as possible and wove several language lessons into the SRSB lessons she taught. In fact, all four additions she made to the lessons noted in her coded sample were incorporating grammar and writing skills (e.g., verb tense, combining sentences). Teacher B also reported during professional development and in the interview that her class had difficulty getting along, so she felt she had to spend a lot of time managing their behavior. Our observations confirmed this as teacher B had, on average, five instances of behavior management during a single writing lesson.

In the coded sample, teacher B had one individualizing interaction with a student where she worked in a sustained manner to help the student understand the concept and used grouping eight times, most of which were not purposeful groupings. Four of those groups were student-selected groups, three were groups of convenience (i.e., location), and one was a teacher-chosen group. In the teacher-chosen grouping, she divided the class into three groups. The first group of the three was created by her coach and was made of students who needed additional support for using the strategy based on student data. The coach requested she work with those students in the small group. The teacher formed the other two groups. One group was made of students who told her they understood the strategy and were ready to move forward (though she did not have data

to substantiate this and the next day had to reincorporate them into the group lesson based on data her coach provided) and the third group were those who did not fall into the first two groups.

Response to coaching. Teacher B received suggestions from her coach on how to structure lessons for her class (e.g., incorporate movement, break the lesson up into smaller chunks), what students needed additional support, pacing of lessons, and strategies for her to stay on target with the sequence of steps in the lesson plans (i.e., use the fidelity checklist) because her fidelity was relatively low for SRSD implementation (.91). While she received positive feedback for her success at implementing some of these suggestions, there were numerous times when teacher B did not respond to the coaching suggestions. For example, from the coach's notes, "We walked in and she said she had met with all students earlier and she was moving on. So, she is doing lesson 7 today, which is not what I had coached her to do yesterday." Another example from the coach's notes read, "This [lesson 6] is being done as a whole class. I thought she was going to pull a small group of students to work with on a collaborative lesson again, as we had discussed."

In sum, based on the coach's notes (not just the coded sample), there were six instances where the teacher did not implement the plan agreed upon in coaching. When queried about this in the interview, the teacher said she had to make her own decisions based on what her students needed. She told us about the group suggestions made by the coach, "Academically, they may need to be together, but they can't be together personality-wise." She also pointed out that working with the coach was "helpful, but it was hard with you coming in but not seeing the overall picture. You don't know the class or what we had been through that day. Something could have happened at lunch that set everyone off, but you don't see that."

Teacher C. In class C students were accustomed to planning, using peers to edit their work, and publishing their work, complete with illustrations. In fact, the class invited the

community to hear them read their stories and sold their work for a quarter per story. These students (and their teacher) wrote frequently and enjoyed writing. They knew they had a voice and that it would be heard; writing was valued.

Differentiation observed. Teacher C made several classwide additions to the lesson plans that included discussions of writing skills and grammar as well as clever ways to easily see who knew what. Of the five additions in her coded sample, two addressed writing skills (i.e., start a new paragraph with dialogue, transition words). She also used the WWWEE addition from teacher A. Teacher C also changed the way students handled adding sparkle words (descriptive or exciting words) on the Plan FAST organizer. Our instruction suggested students write words they want to include next to the “S” in FAST on their planning sheet. Teacher C, though, taught them to write the words next to what they wanted to describe. For example, if a student wanted to describe a dog as friendly in the beginning of their story, they were taught to write friendly above the word “dog” in their plan. Finally, when having students practice the memorization of the mnemonics, teacher C sometimes asked students to write the steps on poster paper. She instructed them to write what they knew by heart in one color and to write what they had to look up in another color. “You aren’t in any trouble if you need to look, it just means you’re using your resources,” she added. In an instant, she could look around the room and see who knew what steps just by observing the colors. Although not included in the lessons sampled for coding, teacher C also added a step after they wrote their story. She required them to read the story all the way through to insure it made sense. This was a carry-over from her Writer’s Workshop instruction where it was a required step before they met with their peer editors.

Teacher C utilized groups twice in her coded sample, one of which was student-chosen and the other was teacher-chosen. The teacher-chosen group was created from data-based suggestions from her coach. Although she did not readily form flexible groups based on data

unless prompted by her coach, teacher C did circulate frequently and offer *individual* assistance where needed. Teacher C, in contrast to the other two teachers, circulated while students were writing, read carefully what they were writing, and gave suggestions on the spot to guide where needed. This teacher had an understanding of how to read student work, identify needs, and respond to those needs immediately by giving feedback to students on issues with content, process, or skills.

Response to coaching. Teacher C received guidance from her coach on writing areas where students needed additional support along with suggestions for grouping students to reteach. In addition, her coach offered support on pacing, lesson structure, along with positive feedback. Teacher C implemented all suggestions made by her coach, but did not generalize or sustain the use of flexible, data-based groupings.

Summary of teacher differentiation outcomes. Teachers A and C responded well to all coaching suggestions and implemented every suggestion made. Teacher B responded to coaching proposals, but also resisted implementing many of the ideas including plans for pacing the lessons, grouping, and re-teaching lessons or parts of lessons. In general, coaching was effective, but especially in regard to creating data-based flexible groups, teachers did not generalize or sustain this aspect of differentiating for student needs.

Writing Outcomes: Students with Below Average Writing Performance

Story elements. A stable or declining trend was established across at least three data points in baseline for all six students and is reported in Figure 1. Figure 2 shows the same scores median lines and Figure 3 shows the same scores with trend lines.

Jasper (class A) had 100% non-overlapping data points (PND). His variability in baseline was 7 points (range=14-21) and 4 points in posttesting and tutoring (range=24-28) with a median score of 17 in baseline, 24.5 in posttesting, and 25 in tutoring. During instruction, he scored 20 both times. Jasper's overall writing scores increased and variability decreased so he was writing more consistent stories.

Reid (class A) had 100% PND. His variability in baseline was 15 points (range=9-24) and 9 points in posttesting and tutoring (range=26-35) with a median score of 20 in baseline, 30.5 in posttesting, and 27 in tutoring. During instruction, he scored 12 and 23. Reid's overall writing scores increased and variability decreased.

Pierce (class B) had 57% PND. His variability was 13 points (range=11-24) in baseline and 9 points in posttesting and tutoring (range=19-28) with a median score of 14 in baseline, 26 in posttesting, and 22 in tutoring. During instruction, he scored 22 and 24. Pierce had a high score in baseline (24) that was seven points higher than any other baseline score he earned. This was a prompt on which another student (Heather) also earned her highest score, possibly indicating a bias in the prompt. Pierce had consistent performance for his first five tests following intervention, but in the last two, he began to succumb to writing fatigue. Pierce volunteered in student interviews that he grew physically tired from writing so much so often. Additionally, his tutor reported he was distracted during the last two prompts in tutoring as they followed a particularly difficult weekend for him. Pierce also missed four instruction sessions as he was picked up early from school. His teacher reported that he left early frequently because his family was homeless and transportation was problematic for them. Although Pierce had a low PND due to the outlying baseline score, his median scores changed noticeably from baseline to post-intervention and variability decreased as well.

Ivy (class B) had 88% PND. Her variability was 12 points (range=8-20) in baseline and 14 points in posttesting and tutoring (range=17-31) with a median score of 16 in baseline, 24 in posttesting, and 27 in tutoring. During instruction, she scored 18 and 20. Ivy's writing scores increased over baseline except for the one outlying low score (17) in posttesting which also affected her variability in posttesting.

Leif (class C) had 100% PND. His variability was 13 points (range=7=20) in baseline and 3 points in posttesting and tutoring (range =23-26) with a median score of 16 in baseline, 23 in posttesting, and 26 in tutoring. During instruction, he scored 0 and 17. Leif received the zero score on a prompt that asked to write about realizing you were in a video game. He wrote a story about being in a football game, but did not state it was a video football game. Leif's overall writing scores increased and variability decreased.

Daisy (class C) had 14% PND. Her variability was 17 points (range=10-27) in baseline and 28 points in posttesting and tutoring (range=0-28) with a median score of 19 in baseline, 21 in posttesting, and 26 in tutoring. During instruction, she scored 15 and 11. Daisy had an outlying story in baseline (27 points) that was 5 points higher than any other story in her baseline. Daisy also had an outlier in posttesting with a score of zero because she did not address an important component of the prompt (Imagine you had a watch that could stop time). She wrote a strong story with interesting elements and vivid language, but the watch in her story never stopped time, thus her story was scored a zero by both raters. Had this story been scored, it would have ranked a score of approximately 23, in line with her posttest scores and above most of her baseline scores (not including the outlier). Daisy's writing performance was variable in both baseline and posttesting. She did show a slight improvement in median score from baseline to posttesting, but more meaningful growth came in tutoring where her scores improved and were stable.

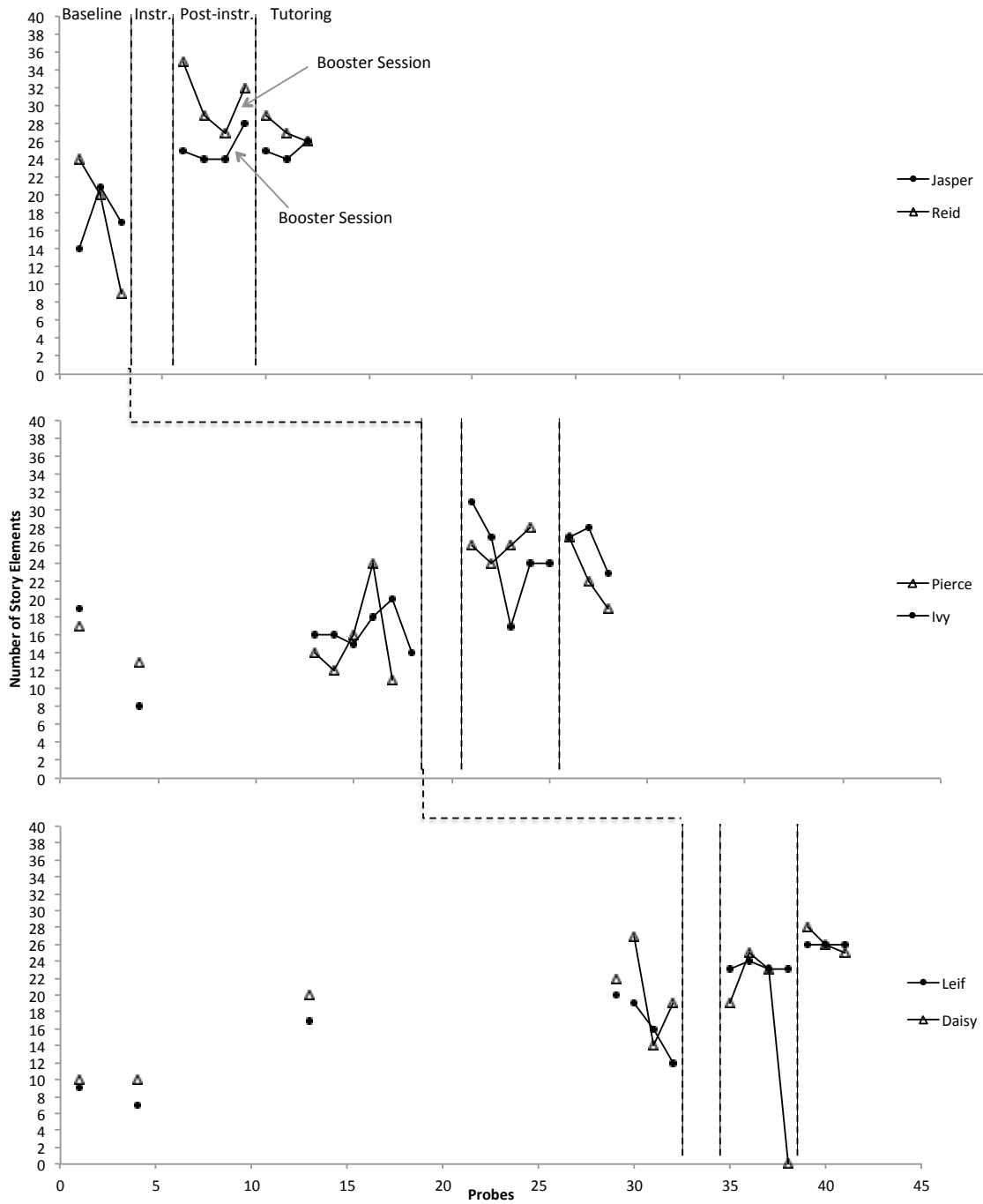


Figure 1. Story elements for students with below average writing performance.

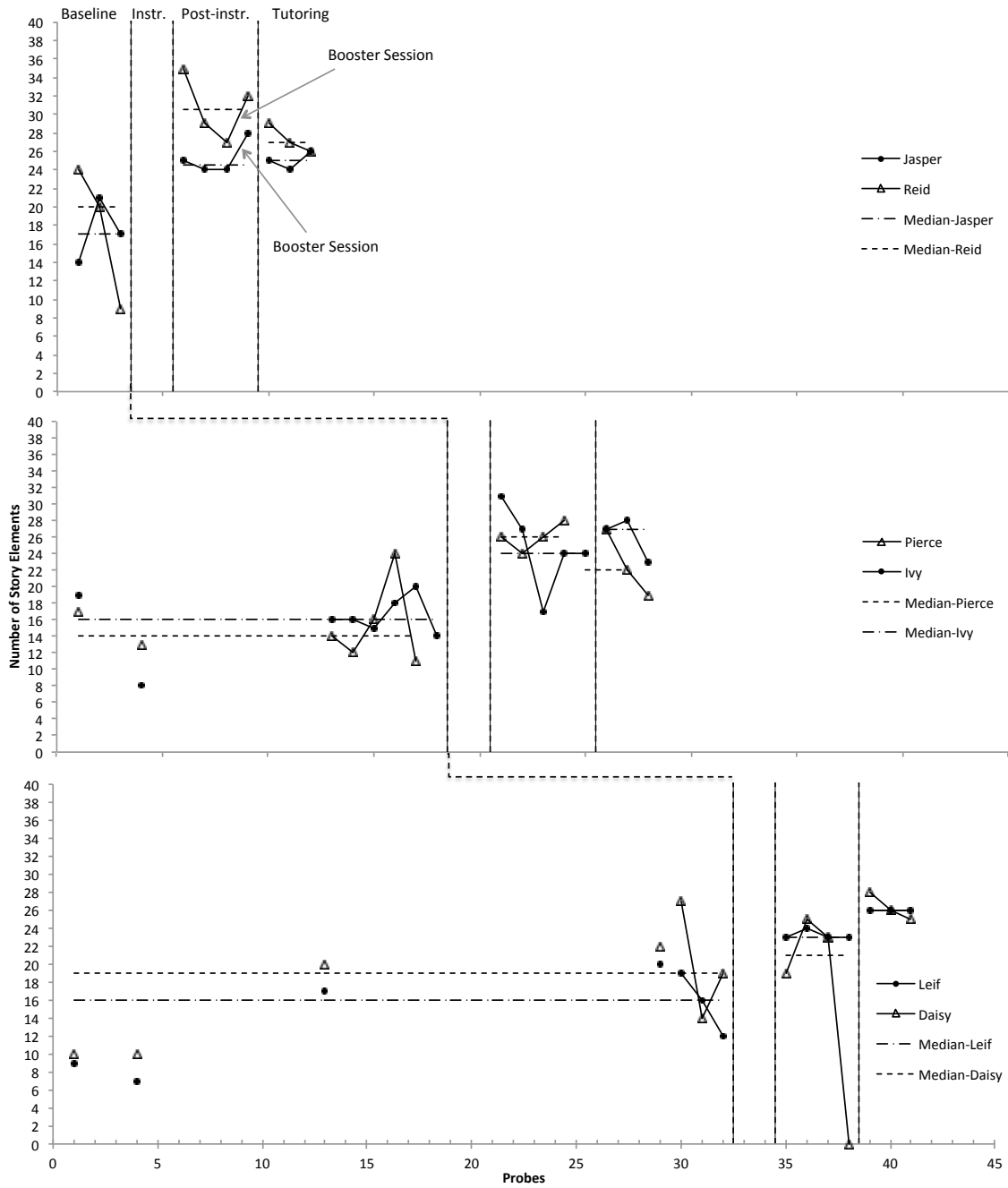


Figure 2. Story elements with median lines for students with below average writing performance.

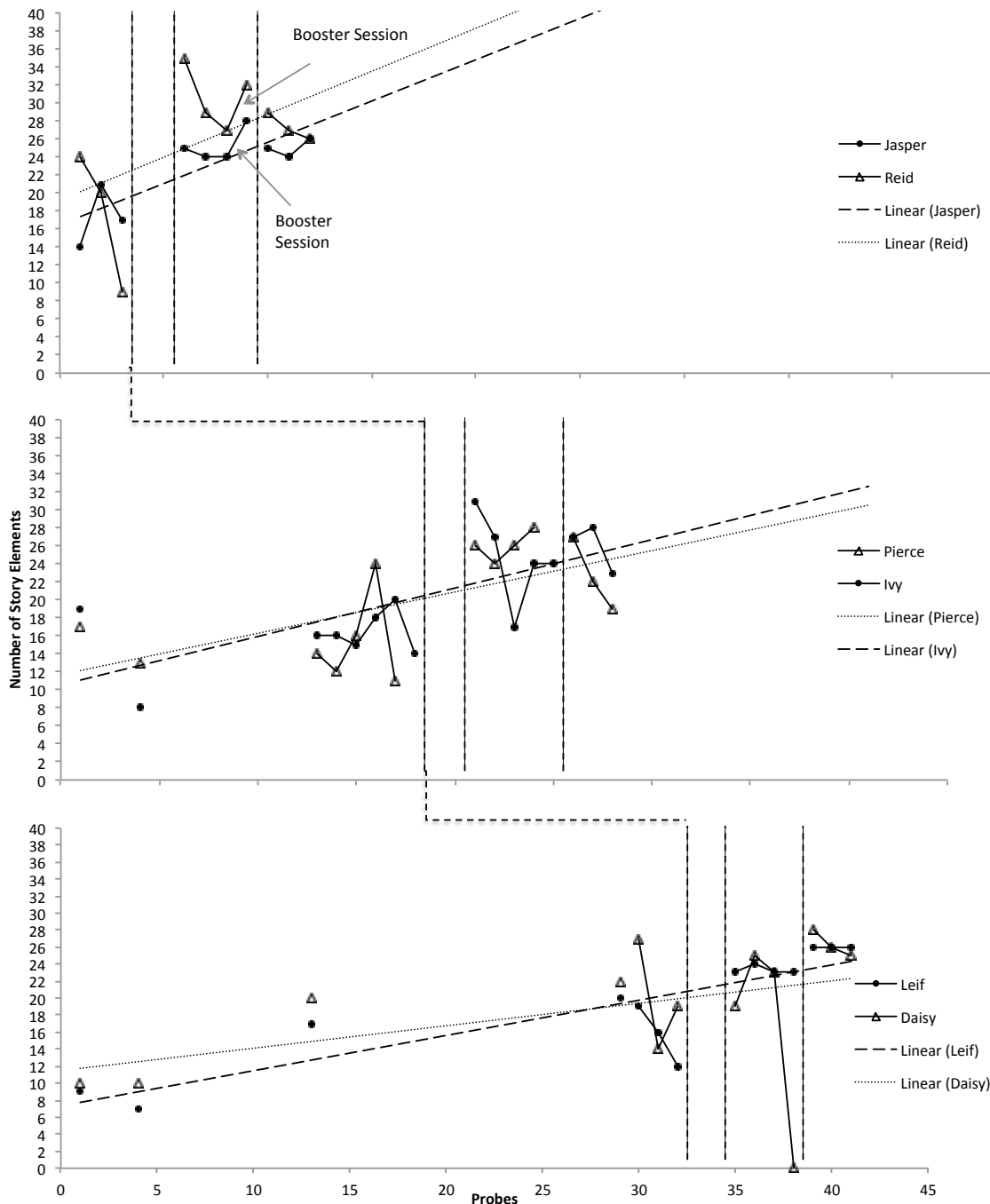


Figure 3. Story elements with trend lines for students with below average writing performance.

Use of strategy. As expected, students did not use the strategy in baseline. Reid, Pierce, Ivy, and Daisy all used parts of the strategy in the probes administered during instruction, although none of them used the complete strategy (range=0-5 out of a possible 9 points). All students used the complete strategy for all three tutoring probes. Jasper used eight of the steps for

all four of his posttests (8 points each test) because he did not number the think abouts (the last step in the Count strategy). Reid made the same mistake on two of his posttests, but used the complete strategy on the other two (8, 8, 9, and 9 points). Pierce used the complete strategy once, did not use Count once, did not use the last step of Count once, and did not use any part of the strategy once (0, 9, 5, and 8 points). Ivy used the complete strategy in two out of her five posttests and did not count the number of think ofs three times (9, 8, 8, 8, and 9 points). Leif used the complete strategy once, did not take time to check the prompt twice, did not use the story parts mnemonic twice, and did not count the think abouts once (9, 8, 6, and 8 points). Daisy did not number the think abouts three times and did not check the prompt four times (7, 7, 7, and 8 points).

Length. All students except one (Ivy) wrote their longest story in baseline. In baseline, Jasper, Reid, Pierce, Ivy, Clay, and Daisy wrote on average 78 words (range=74-80), 86 words (range=30-136), 114 words (range=85-182), 118 words (range=78-157), 102 words (range=54-140), and 241 words (range=157-327), respectively. During instruction, Jasper, Reid, Pierce, Ivy, Clay, and Daisy wrote on average 80 words, 103 words, 144 words, 132 words, 82 words, and 233 words. Following instruction, Jasper, Reid, Pierce, Ivy, Clay, and Daisy wrote on average 128 words (range=109-144), 271 words (range=210-307), 121 words (range=92-134), 147 words (range=108-149), 94 words (range=71-124), and 122 words (range=99-132) respectively. In tutoring, Jasper, Reid, Pierce, Ivy, Clay, and Daisy wrote on average 99 words (range=95-106), 131 words (range=102-166), 115 words (range=84-171), 183 words (range=149-220), 95 words (range=92-98), and 130 words (range=90-154) respectively. Four students received tutoring after CAP and just before school let out for summer (Pierce, Ivy, Clay, and Daisy). Of the four students, three wrote stories that declined in length each time they wrote in tutoring (Pierce, Clay, and Daisy).

Writing Outcomes: Students with Average Writing Performance

Story elements. A stable or declining trend was established across at least three data points in baseline for all six students and is reported in Figure 4. Figure 5 shows the same scores median lines and Figure 6 shows the same scores with trend lines.

Iris (class A) had 100% PND. Her variability in baseline was 9 points (range=19-28) and 4 points in posttesting (range=30-34) with a median score of 28 in baseline and 31 in posttesting. Iris' overall writing scores increased slightly and her variability decreased slightly.

Rose (class A) had 0% PND. Her variability in baseline was 7 points (range=30-37) and 3 points in posttesting (range=33-36) with a median score of 32 in baseline and 34 in posttesting. The first story Rose wrote in baseline was her most outstanding with a score of 37 and her highest score in posttesting was a 36. Both her overall writing performance and variability improved slightly.

Violet (class B) had 75% PND. Her variability in baseline was 13 points (range=13-26) and 2 points in posttesting with a median score of 19 in baseline and 27 in posttesting. Violet had an outlier in baseline, a score of 26, that was 4 points higher than any of her other stories in baseline and one of her stories from posttesting (a score of 25) was lower than this outlying baseline score. Violet's writing performance improved and her variability decreased in response to intervention.

Heather (class B) had 100% PND. Her variability in baseline was 14 points (range=8-22) and 1 point in posttesting with a median score of 16 in baseline and 19 in posttesting. Heather had an outlying low score of 8 in baseline, 7 points lower than any other story in her baseline, causing greater variability in her baseline scores. Even without this outlier, however, her scores were still more stable after intervention. Heather's writing performance improved slightly and

variability decreased.

Clay (class C) had 0% PND. His variability in baseline was 31 points (range=0-31) and 3 points in posttesting with a median score of 28 in both baseline and posttesting. Clay had an outlying score (0) in baseline because he did not respond to a key aspect of the prompt (Imagine you went to a museum and the people in the pictures came to life). His story included an art museum, but the people in the pictures never came to life, so it was scored a zero. Without the outlier, his variability would have been 9 instead of 31, but variability in posttesting still would have been lower. Clay's writing performance did not show improvement, but his variability decreased.

Flora (class C) had 75% PND. Her variability in baseline was 10 points (range=15-25) and 7 points in posttesting with a median score of 23 in baseline and 26 in posttesting. Flora's writing performance improved slightly and variability decreased marginally.

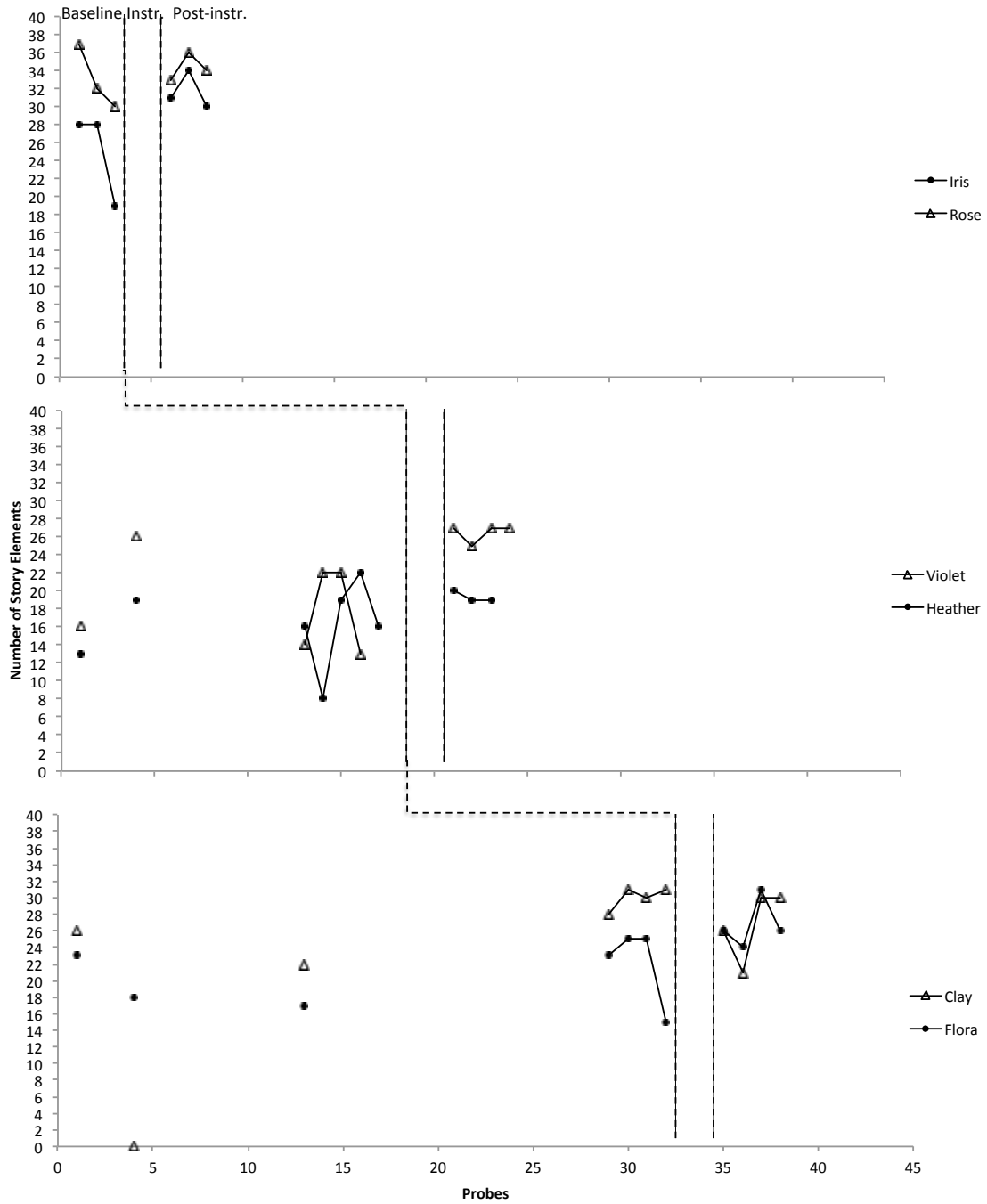


Figure 4. Story elements for students with average writing performance.

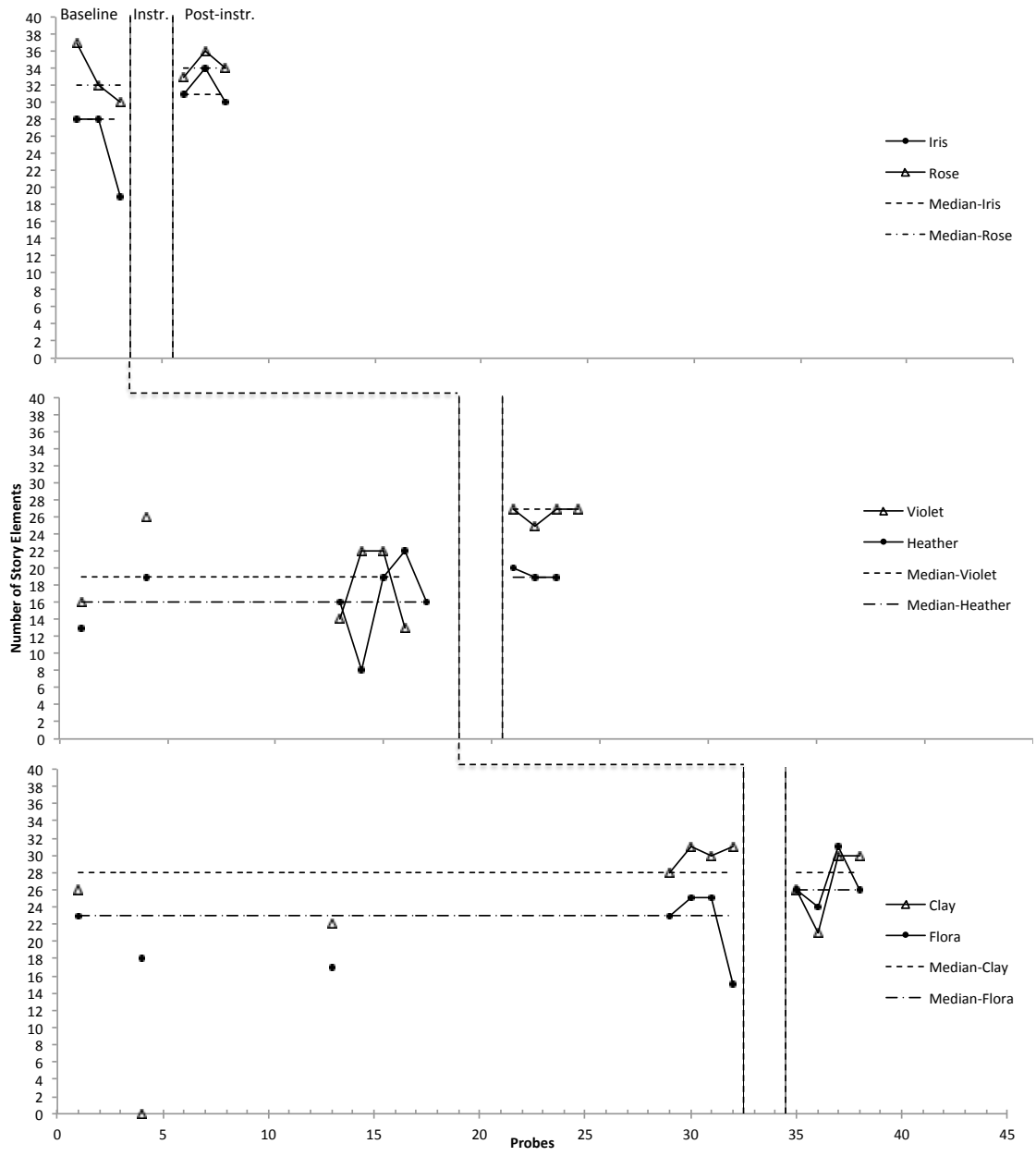


Figure 5. Story elements with median lines for students with average writing abilities.

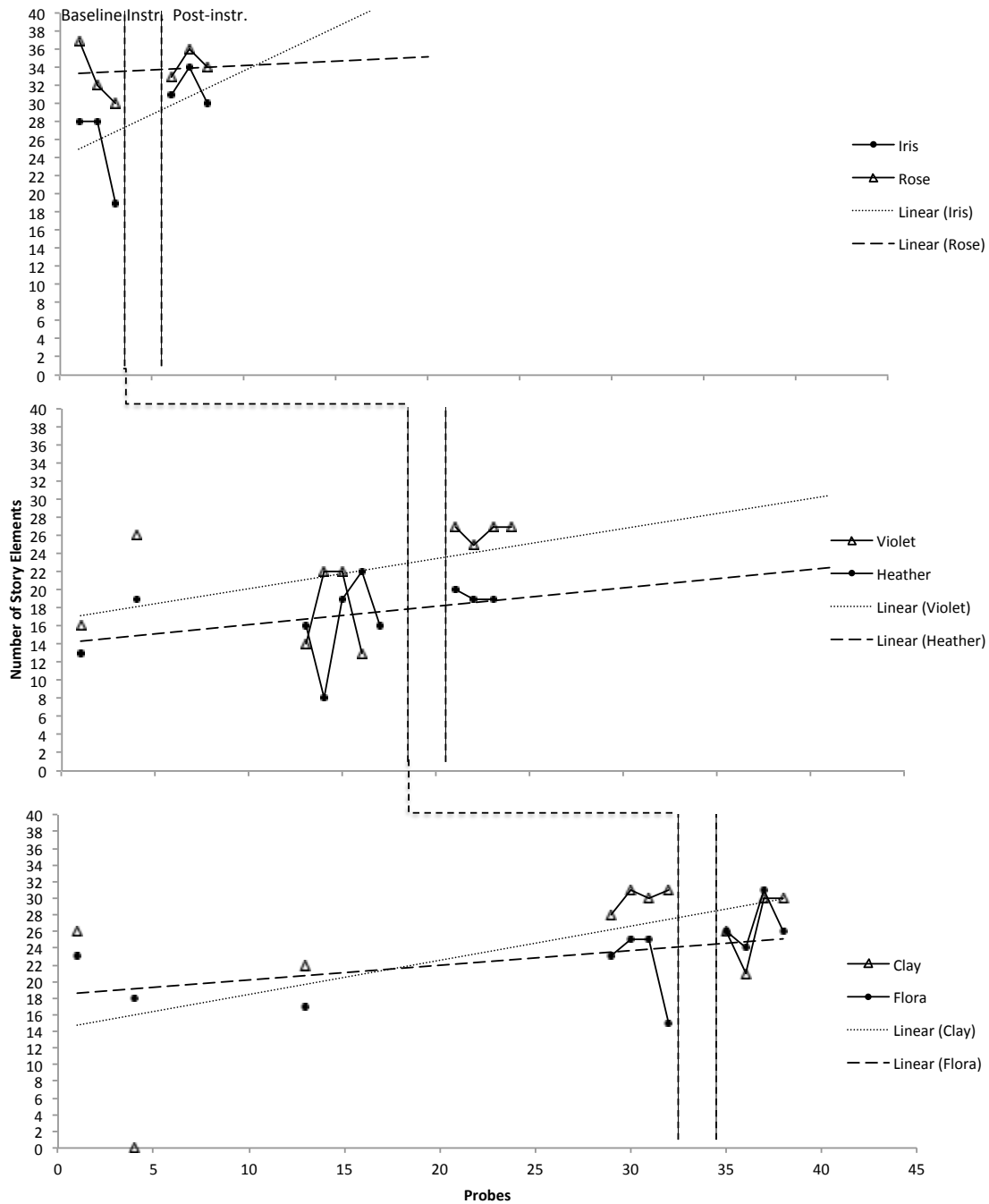


Figure 6. Story elements with trend lines for students with average writing performance

Use of strategy. Iris, Rose, Violet, Heather, Flora, and all used part of the strategy in the probes administered during instruction, although none of them used the complete strategy (range=0-7). Iris and Rose were the only students who used the full strategy on all posttest

prompts (3 posttests, 9 points each). Violet used the complete strategy once, forgot to number the think abouts twice, and once, she used only half of the Count strategy and did not use FAST at all (9, 8, 2, and 8 points). Heather used the complete strategy three out of four times in posttesting, but once, she did not use the Count strategy but did plan her story using FAST (9, 5, 9, and 9 points). Clay used the complete strategy once and did not check the prompt three times (8, 8, 8, and 9 points). Flora did not check the prompt in any of her posttests (8 points on all four posttests).

Length. All students save one (Violet) wrote more in baseline than post-instruction. In baseline Iris, Rose, Violet, Heather, Flora, and Leif wrote an average of 183 words (range= 167-196), 280 words (range=251-306), 99 words (range=49-125), 125 words (range=66-348), 316 words (range=213-386), and 147 words (range=117-195). During instruction, Iris, Rose, Violet, Heather, Flora, and Leif wrote on average 176 words, 305 words, 164 words, 63 words, 278 words, and 115 words. Following instruction, Iris, Rose, Violet, Heather, Flora, and Leif wrote on average 174 words (range=134-201), 196 words (range=170-239), 127 words (range=115-142), 74 words (range=66-86), 160 words (range=115-260), and 121 words (range=110-134).

Social Validity

Both teachers and students were interviewed after instruction ended to determine the social validity of the intervention. All three teachers indicated they thought SRSD helped their students improve their writing. Teachers cited improved beginnings and endings, improved vocabulary, and said students knew what to do and no longer got stuck at the beginning of a writing task. All three said they would teach the strategy next year even without researcher support.

Students were interviewed after instruction to determine if they viewed the intervention as helpful to their writing. All students said they thought Count and Plan FAST was helpful and that their writing improved. “At first my story didn’t have a when and a where. Now, I remember.” All of the students said they would use the strategy in the future, including on the 5th grade CAP writing test. Students said the strategy helped them to get started, to plan better, and to add detail and sparkle words. “It’s good to use when writing stories. It’s a good way to write.” “Using Count and Plan FAST makes it easier.”

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

We asked five research questions in this study: (a) Does practice-based professional development in SRSD with a differentiation content component paired with coaching result in teachers implementing SRSD instruction in Count and Plan FAST with fidelity and differentiation to support students with varying needs and strengths?; (b) Does SRSD instruction in planning and writing a personal narrative story under timed conditions improve students' writing performance on such tests?; (c) Do SRSD instructed students show visible evidence of strategy use in baseline and post-intervention?; (d) Do students who scored below the 25th percentile on the TOWL improve writing performance when involved in Tier 2, short-term, small-group tutoring? and (e) Do teachers and students view SRSD instruction to be socially valid? Each question will be addressed below.

Teacher Outcomes

Fidelity. As predicted, teachers implemented SRSD with high fidelity, although teacher B had lower fidelity at .91 than the other two teachers who had perfect implementation. Teacher B regularly skipped steps in the lesson introduction or wrap-up (which were the same across lessons) and twice she skipped seven steps in a lesson. Teachers A and C used the fidelity checklist to guide their lesson and they wrote their own notes on the checklists as reminders. Teacher B used the fidelity checklist only once, at the suggestion of her coach, and it was written in the coach's notes that it made a positive difference in her performance and the teacher was praised for using it. Teacher B did not choose to use the checklist again, despite her success in using it. These results indicate teachers who are willing to use an abbreviated lesson plan, such

as the fidelity checklists provided in this study, are more apt to maintain high fidelity during instruction.

Response to coaching. Teachers A and C responded positively to coaching and implemented all suggestions. Teacher B demonstrated some resistance to implementing suggestions from the coaches. She made plans with her coach during the coaching meetings, but did not implement, or did not implement fully, the agreed upon plan six times out of eight. Although there was a rushed timeline for all teachers, teacher B exhibited the most concern about time, and this could have been among the reasons for her frequent changes of plan. In addition, her instruction was held in the month prior to state testing, a time when teachers often feel the most pressure.

Differentiation. Teachers in this study were comfortable adapting lessons for the class as a whole (e.g., adding to the lessons), but less likely to adapt for individual students. Examples of teacher-initiated differentiation for individuals were not observed, except in the case of teacher C who circulated through the class as students wrote, giving individual feedback. All instances of using small groups to differentiate for individual students (e.g., re-teaching, modeling) were instigated by the coach and these efforts were neither generalized to other lessons that followed nor sustained throughout instruction. All three teachers were concerned with the welfare and learning of their students and all were under extraordinary pressure due to a newly implemented teacher evaluation system as well as district-wide emphasis on CAP results that affected their careers. Under those conditions, all three teachers did state they wish they had more time to devote to the intervention and differentiation, but other subjects (i.e., reading and math) took priority because the CAP results from writing only counted in grade 5, not grade 4.

Teachers A and B also did not display adequate data collection skills to inform instructional decisions. While they used the student data provided, they did not collect additional

data themselves. None of the teachers used the student data provided to them as well as needed to teach effectively at Tier 1. The professional development component on differentiation was not adequate for teachers to implement the skills. These teachers needed guidance in both data collection and the utilization of those data to make instruction decisions for individual students.

These conclusions are based on a small number of teachers (n=3), thus, the findings can not be generalized to other teacher populations. To better understand the barriers to teachers implementing differentiated evidence-based practice as well as how best to prepare them, more research is needed.

Writing Outcomes

Students with below average writing performance. By visual inspection and by comparing the median scores across conditions, students who were categorized as below average writers improved their writing performance and decreased variability after instruction. Jasper, Reid, Pierce, Ivy, and Leif all improved their median scores from baseline to posttest by at least 7 points (range = 7-12). While small increases on the 43-point scale should not be interpreted as meaningful, these students made improvements following intervention. Daisy's median score rose only 2 points from baseline to posttesting, indicating she did not respond as well to the intervention as we hoped. However, a close inspection of her stories showed she did not use the story form in her baseline stories. Instead, she used the imperfect subjunctive tense to write them, relying on the conditional "if" to answer the prompt. Although her responses did include elements and referred to the subject matter in the prompt (which is why our scorers rated it) they were not technically stories and would have been scored zeros by CAP scoring guidelines.

Following instruction, Daisy wrote in story form, an outcome of which both she and her teacher were very proud.

The variability of student stories decreased after instruction for all but one student (Ivy). This result indicates students had more consistent stories following instruction. Ivy's variability was higher during posttesting because of one outlying low score on a story about a robot, which she indicated in student interviews she did not like to write about. Decreasing variability in student responses is an important goal of writing interventions because it indicates students are responding consistently and applying the strategy reliably.

Tutoring. Students classified as having a below average writing performance participated in Tier 2, short-term tutoring instruction following the conclusion of classwide instruction. In tutoring, all students improved their median scores from baseline (range=7-11) indicating these students benefitted from the Tier 2 tutoring. However, four of the students' stories (Reid, Pierce, Ivy, and Daisy's) showed a declining trend in tutoring. These students started strong with the first testing during tutoring and then each subsequent story decreased in score. Only Jasper and Reid had an upward trend during tutoring.

This declining trend could be explained by the timing of tutoring (it was at the end of the school year, after the state exam) combined with writing fatigue. Students in this intervention wrote between eight and 18 stories under timed writing conditions which can be fatiguing and demotivating for students (Sandmel et al., 2011). Another factor that could have impaired student growth is the length of the Tier 2 intervention. Tier 2 interventions usually take place across 15-20 weeks while these tutoring sessions were for 5-6 days, essentially one week. It is possible student performance would increase after additional sessions. The tutors for these students noted that all of the students could have improved with additional small-group sessions targeted to individual writing needs.

As a whole, students identified as writing below average responded positively to the instruction, with positive median gains from baseline to posttesting. Student growth was further supported by short-term tutoring, but all students could have benefitted from more small-group sessions targeted at individual writing needs. Questions are being raised about the cost-benefit of tiered models where students with exceptional needs participate in the Tier 1 instruction before receiving Tier 2 intervention but might could be better served by spending their time primarily in Tier 2 (D. Fuchs et al., in press). In cases of complex and demanding tasks, such as writing, students may be too fatigued by the time they reach Tier 2 and so the intervention may not reach its full benefit with each student. Given the time needed to work through Tier 1 to reach Tier 2, we must question how best students should spend their time when Tier 2 may be of more benefit to them. Future writing research is needed to clarify which students benefit from initial Tier 1 instruction and who would be better served by initially entering more intensive, Tier 2, support for writing.

Students with average writing performance. Students classified as average writers responded variably to the intervention. Based on PND, two students improved their writing performance over baseline with 100% PND (Iris and Heather), two students improved over baseline with 75% PND (Violet and Flora), and two students did not improve at all with 0% PND (Rose and Clay). Looking at median scores from baseline to posttesting, every student, save one (Clay), improved, although most gains were marginal (range= 2-8). Only Violet stood out as making marked improvement. She had a median score of 19 in baseline and a median score of 27 in posttesting resulting in an 8-point difference following instruction.

Although median scores did not improve greatly in the students classified as average writers, their variability decreased. Violet and Clay represent this improvement. Violet had a change of 9 points in variability (baseline was a 13 point range and posttesting a 2 point range in

scores). Clay's scores moved from a 31 point range in variability to a 3 point range, due to a score of zero in baseline (with the null score removed, his baseline range would have been 6 points, still an improvement in posttesting). The variability of student scores decreased after intervention indicating students classified as having average writing ability can achieve greater stability in story elements after SRSD instruction. Violet was a good example of a student who responded well to the structured lessons and the strategies. In student interviews, she said using the strategies helped her "very much" because "instead of thinking, I just pre-write [plan] the story, look at it [the plan] and write!"

These findings are critical to inform research, policy, and practice at the Tier 1 level. Even when receiving evidence-based instruction delivered with high fidelity, some students who performed in the average range did not improve their scores which means that for some tasks, they may also benefit from more individualized attention to achieve their full potential. It is imperative, then, that focus be placed on supporting teachers in using evidence-based practice and using student data to inform their practice of differentiating instruction.

Use of Strategy

As predicted, prior to instruction, students did not use the writing strategy to plan and write their story. Following instruction, however, all students used the strategy most of the time, although students did not always use all of the steps. Students from other studies whose scores improved did not always use all the steps of the strategy because they internalized the strategy to varying degrees (Harris et al., 2009). Requiring students to document their use of the strategy was not part of this study because it would limit the external validity as students are not required to plan on the CAP writing test. Future research is needed to understand if requiring students to document all steps of a strategy improves performance or if fluency to the point of

internalization of steps is more beneficial.

Length

Overall, students from both groups wrote more in baseline than after intervention, however, with closer inspection, it was clear their stories contained less extraneous information (which was not scored). Also, length was not a goal in this instruction, however, future research might address length as a goal after students demonstrate initial mastery of the strategy.

Social Validity

Both teachers and students believed the SRSD strategy Count and Plan FAST helped to improve student writing. Teachers reported they would teach the strategy again and students reported they would use the strategy on the CAP writing test the following year. Perhaps the most important outcome is that many students said the strategy made it easier for them to get started and to finish writing a complete story with all the parts.

Writing Prompts: Issues and Concerns

The within-student variability in the story elements results may be linked to the writing prompts. The elements provided in the prompts varied considerably ranging from four to ten given elements. Additionally, some prompts were problematic for certain students. For example, one prompt asked students to write about a sunbathing fish, but many students did not know what “sunbathing” was. Sometimes prompts were written vaguely or unclearly resulting in surprising student responses that could be scored as zero on the state exam. For example, the prompt “Pretend one day your favorite book pulled you into the story” elicited many stories

about video games rather than books. When queried about this choice in interviews, students confirmed there were books about their video games, so their choice was justified.

A prompt asking students to tell a story about visiting a farm and seeing a creature they had never seen before also garnered unexpected student responses. While the prompt was asking students to describe a mythical creature (because the genre is personal narrative with a fictional element), some students responded with common animals one might expect to see at a zoo (e.g., panther). Students said they had never seen the animal they used in their story, so it qualified as an accurate response. Perhaps the most surprising student responses were from a prompt that asked students to write about a strange woman giving them a box on their birthday. Several students responded by writing that they would not take anything from a stranger, would run to tell their mother, and similar responses. Their stories were quite short because there was no story to tell once they handled the central problem: do not take anything from strangers.

Two prompts did not fit the genre well. They were, “Suppose you woke up one cold winter morning. To your surprise, everything outside was covered in fluffy white snow” and “Forgetting can cause problems. Think about a day when you forgot something. Before you begin to write, think about what you forgot and what happened. Now, write a story about what happened the day you forgot something.” Students who have experience with snow and snow days would be well prepared to respond to this prompt based on personal experience and every child has forgotten something. In both cases, it is possible students could write a true personal narrative. All other prompts contain an element that no student would have experienced (e.g., pretend you were a raindrop, pretend you found a flying carpet).

Some prompts did not have broad appeal. One prompt (imagine you found a lamp with a genie in it), for example, was noted in student interviews most frequently as a “hard” prompt. While another (imagine you had to babysit your friend’s pet monkey) was often listed as an

“easy” prompt. One student said she didn’t know what a genie was and another explained, “I couldn’t figure it out. I don’t spend time thinking about it [genies] that much. I read non-fiction and history and I love animals. That’s what I like to write about.” Another student explained why the snow prompt (mentioned above) was harder than a prompt about babysitting a monkey, “When I’m at home, I don’t really think about the snow as much and so basically, I don’t really do nothing in the snow, but I draw and everybody knows about monkeys...it’s kinda funny to babysit a monkey more than playing in the snow.”

Data are only as good as the measure. With variable prompts written vaguely and without adequate consideration for student background, it is questionable whether our data or the state’s data are an accurate measure of student writing ability.

Limitations and Future Research

There are several limitations in this study and the results raise many questions that need to be addressed in future research. This study did not include students who were English language learners, limiting its external validity, given the large numbers of these students in our schools. Future research in PBPD and SRSD should incorporate evidence-based practice for teaching English language learners.

Students in this study did not receive external reinforcement for participation, although prior research with students who are at risk for emotional or behavior problems has demonstrated benefit to using external reinforcers (Lane et al., 2009). Future SRSD research needs to be conducted to understand the role of reinforcers and student writing outcomes.

Students in this study volunteered in student interviews that writing often (as required by the single-subject design) made them tired. Future research should explore the role of writing fatigue and student writing achievement.

Because we used a single-subject design, teachers participated in professional development alone to avoid confounding the study. They also had to instruct with no school-based community around them for support as is recommended to promote increased involvement (Borko, 2004) because implementation was staggered.

All three participant teachers had access to other professional support in their classroom (e.g., paraprofessional, student teacher), but because only the teachers received professional development, only they could implement the instruction. Future studies should include ways to offer professional development to the team of professionals who work with students in the classrooms.

In other studies on classwide implemented SRSD (Harris et al., 2012; Kiuahara et al., 2011), teachers taught the strategy for periods of time up to 45 minutes per session usually three days a week for between 6 and 12 weeks. While the instructional time is roughly equivalent between the two prior studies and the present study, the instruction was more condensed in the present study. Future research needs to address the question of time and intensity of implementation and its impact on student performance.

Choices on when and how to differentiate instruction must be based on student data, but two teachers had difficulty collecting data on which to base decisions and all three teachers formed data-based groups only when prompted to do so by the coach. Future studies should include professional development on how to collect and use student data. Additionally, lesson plans should include the systematic collection and analysis of student data throughout instruction.

While data were collected and exact instructional responses to the data were provided to each teacher, the implemented responses were rushed and not sustained over time.

Future research needs to be conducted on teachers who implement SRSD a second year. It is likely that by reducing the initial cognitive load of learning the complex intervention, teachers would differentiate more, even without the support of a coach.

The three teachers and classrooms in this study were different from each other. Teachers A and C reported they wrote for pleasure and teacher C had been a journalist prior to teaching. Their belief that writing was valuable was apparent through all of their instruction and the skills students had prior to intervention (e.g., the students from class B classified as average and below average did not differ markedly from each other in their baseline scores, but there was a clear difference in scores between the two groups in classes A and C). While all three teachers reported implementing Writer's Workshop, teachers A and C had attended professional workshops and conferences to further their knowledge about using the approach in their classroom and teacher C gave writing more time in her curriculum. Students in classes A and C identified themselves as authors.

The classes also differed in regard to classroom management. Teachers A and C had few behavior issues during instruction and both had classroom procedures for managing transitions (e.g., gathering work tools and organizing materials). Class B had numerous instances of behavior management recorded during instruction and did not have procedures for managing transitions. Students from class B were among the lowest scorers at baseline, which could indicate the writing instruction they were receiving was not adequate. Future research is needed to determine what teacher and classroom traits might impact the implementation of evidence-based writing instruction. Questions remain about whether having a strong writing program in

place might improve the effect of other evidence-based practices, such as SRSD, and whether classroom management significantly impacts implementation and student outcomes.

Although students used the strategy after instruction, only Iris and Rose had perfect use of the strategy every time following instruction and they also had the highest median scores in posttesting. This might indicate perfect use of strategy predicts higher median scores. Yet, students who participated in tutoring used the complete strategy on every tutoring test, but not all median tutoring scores were higher than posttest scores where students did not use all the steps of the strategy. Prior research has shown students frequently internalize steps of a strategy after they gain fluency with no deleterious effect on their scores (Harris et al., 2009). Future research should investigate why students do not show their use of the strategy and if requiring students to always demonstrate use of the strategy affects writing outcomes and if so, in what ways.

Conclusion

While the results of this study are mixed, the variability of the data was expected in the Tier 1 implementation. What was more surprising was the weak effect of the Tier 2 tutoring on student performance. These data indicate the need for further exploration and consideration of how students spend their time in instruction. Using evidence-based practices are essential, but we also need to use them in a structure that suits student needs. This study highlights how students with average writing abilities might benefit from more individualized instruction. We also documented the need for teacher professional development to improve their ability to collect and use student data to inform the differentiation of evidence-based practices.

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APPENDIX A - MEASURES

1. TOWL Score sheet
2. Sample writing prompt
3. Teacher Survey of Classroom Writing Practices
4. Observation of Classroom Writing Practices
5. Sample fidelity checklist
6. Sample writing prompt test administration directions

Story Construction Subtest of the Test of Written Language, Fourth Edition (TOWL-4)

Subtest 7. Story Composition

Item	Scoring Criteria	Score
1.	Story beginning 0 = abrupt, weak 1 = serviceable, somewhat interesting 2 = grabbing, exceptionally engaging	<input type="text"/>
2.	Definitely refers to a specific event occurring before or after the picture 0 = no 1 = yes	<input type="text"/>
3.	Story sequence 0 = a series of random, disjointed, or rambling statements 1 = has some sequence 2 = moves smoothly and coherently from start to finish	<input type="text"/>
4.	Plot (storyline) 0 = uninteresting, dull, flat 1 = interesting, logical, acceptable 2 = intriguing, well-crafted	<input type="text"/>
5.	Characters show feelings/emotions 0 = no 1 = some mild or subtle emotion (upset, smiling, laughing, excited, happy) 2 = strong emotion evident in at least one character (anger, love, terror, ecstasy)	<input type="text"/>
6.	Story action or energy level (pace) 0 = plodding, stumbling, none 1 = interesting, sustained 2 = exciting, compelling, exceptional	<input type="text"/>
7.	Story ending 0 = abrupt, weak 1 = logical, definite ending 2 = clever, inventive	<input type="text"/>
8.	Writing style is 0 = immature, dull, undistinguished 1 = serviceable, matter-of-fact 2 = artful, stylish, exceptional	<input type="text"/>
9.	Story is 0 = immature; merely describes picture 1 = straightforward, coherent, interesting 2 = engaging, unique, grabbing	<input type="text"/>
10.	Story vocabulary - one point for each of the 14 choices 0 = 0-3 1 = 4-7 2 = 8 or more items	<input type="text"/>
11.	Overall vocabulary used in story 0 = sparse, immature 1 = serviceable, adequate, competent 2 = rich, mature, figurative	<input type="text"/>
Total Raw Score		<input type="text"/>

Form A (accident)		Form B (storm)	
street/road	dog (or specific breed)	grass/yard/backyard	lightning
car/SUV/truck	leash	fence/sidewalk/hydrant	rain/rainstorm/storm
license plate	sidewalk/grass	house/houses/window	hose/water hose
police car	dog's owner	tree/fire/flames/burning	cell phone/woman
hydrant	student driver/driver	dog/leash/cat	boy/girl
water	police officer/man/woman	birdcage/bird	car(s)/auto(s)
driver's ed instructor/teacher	ticket/police report	cloud/storm cloud	people/man/men/neighbors

Sample Personal Narrative Writing Prompt

Writing Situation: Pretend your friend called you and said, “You aren’t going to believe what I found!” You rushed over to your friend’s home.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin to write, think about what your friend found and what happened.

Now write a story about what happened when your friend found something.

Teacher Survey of Classroom Writing

Practices

Please complete the following survey about your classroom writing practices. It should take you about 15 minutes to complete.

Section 1

1. Circle how often you conference with students about their writing.

Never Several Times a Year Monthly Several Times a Month Weekly Several Times a Week Daily Several Times a Day

2. Circle how often students conference with their peers about their writing.

Never Several Times a Year Monthly Several Times a Month Weekly Several Times a Week Daily Several Times a Day

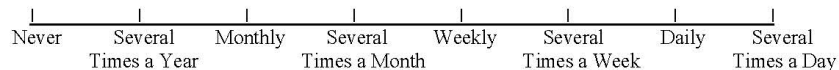
3. Circle how often students select their own writing topics.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Never Half The Time Always

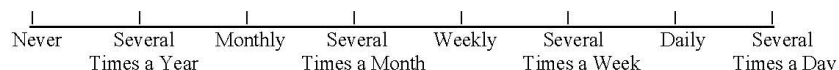
4. Circle how often your students engage in “planning” before writing.

Never Several Times a Year Monthly Several Times a Month Weekly Several Times a Week Daily Several Times a Day

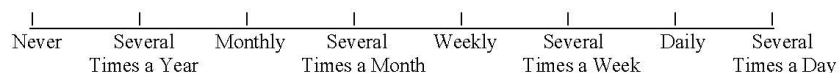
5. Circle how often your students “revise” their writing products.



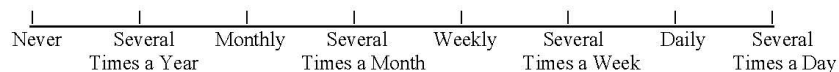
6. Circle how often students share their writing with their peers.



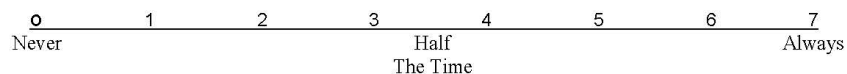
7. Circle how often your students “publish” their writing. (Publish means to print or write it so that it can be shared with others.)



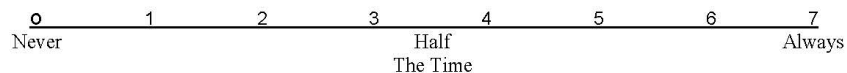
8. Circle how often your students help their classmates with their writing.



9. Circle how often students are allowed to complete writing assignments at their own pace.



10. Circle how often you encourage students to use “invented spellings” at any point during the writing process.



17. Circle how often you teach **spelling skills**.

Never Several Times a Year Monthly Several Times a Month Weekly Several Times a Week Daily Several Times a Day

18. Circle how often you teach **grammar skills**.

Never Several Times a Year Monthly Several Times a Month Weekly Several Times a Week Daily Several Times a Day

19. Circle how often you teach **punctuation skills**.

Never Several Times a Year Monthly Several Times a Month Weekly Several Times a Week Daily Several Times a Day

20. Circle how often you teach **capitalization skills**.

Never Several Times a Year Monthly Several Times a Month Weekly Several Times a Week Daily Several Times a Day

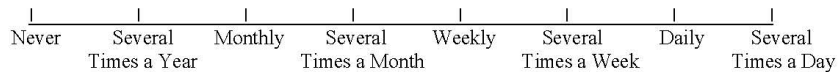
21. Circle how often you **provide mini-lessons on writing skills or processes students need to know at this moment--skills, vocabulary, concepts, strategies, or other things**.

Never Several Times a Year Monthly Several Times a Month Weekly Several Times a Week Daily Several Times a Day

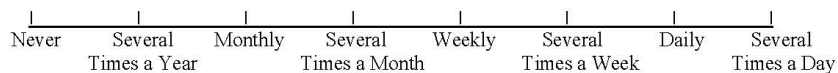
22. Circle how often you **overtly model writing strategies**.

Never Several Times a Year Monthly Several Times a Month Weekly Several Times a Week Daily Several Times a Day

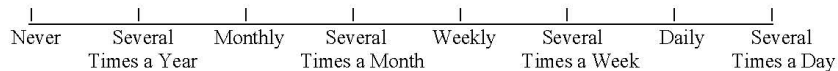
23. Circle how often you **model the enjoyment or love of writing** for students.



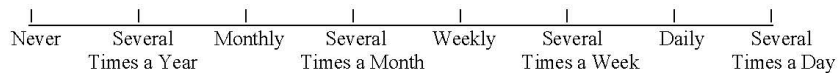
24. Circle how often you **reteach** writing skills or strategies that you previously taught.



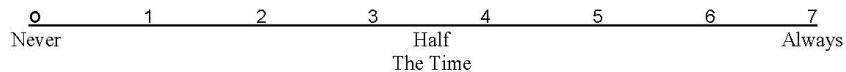
25. Circle how often you assign **writing homework** to students in your class.



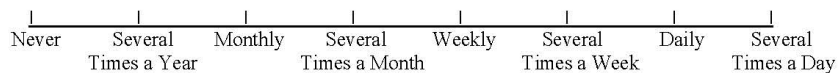
26. Circle how often your students work at **writing centers**.



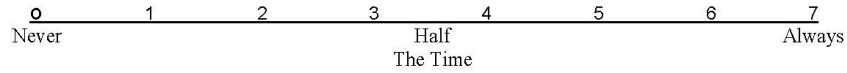
27. Circle how often your writing lessons have **multiple instructional goals**.



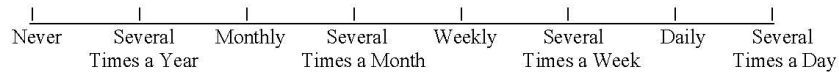
28. Circle how often you use a **writing prompt** (e.g., story starter, picture, physical object, etc.) to encourage student writing.



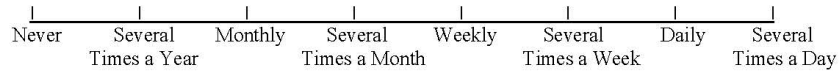
29. Circle how often your students use a **graphic organizer** (e.g., story map) when writing.



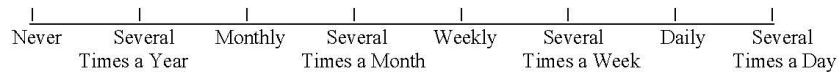
30. Circle how often you **monitor the writing progress** of your students in order to make decisions about writing instruction.



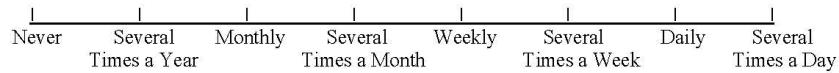
31. Circle how often you encourage **students to monitor their own writing progress**.



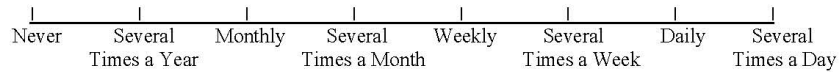
32. Circle how often students use **rubrics** to evaluate their writing.



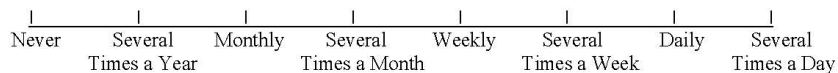
33. Circle how often students in your classroom use **writing portfolios** (add material to a portfolio, look at material already in it, and so forth).



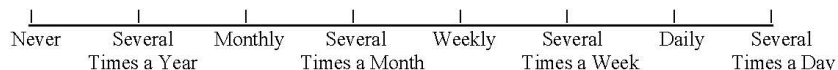
34. Circle how often you ask students to **write at home with parental help**.



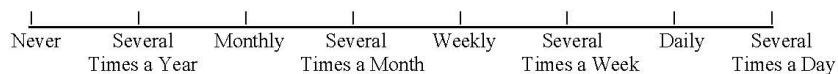
35. Circle how often you ask **parents to listen** to something their child wrote at school.



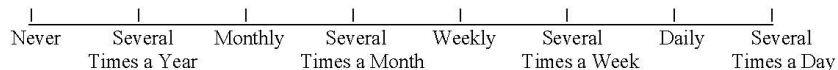
36. Circle how often you **communicate with parents** about their child's writing progress.



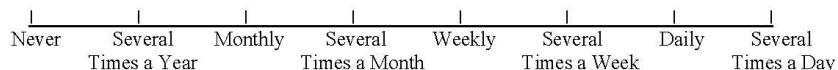
37. Circle how often you allow one or more students in your classroom to write by **dictating** their compositions to someone else.



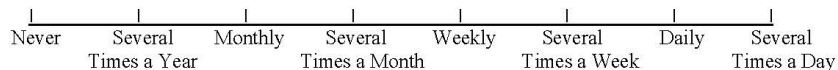
38. Circle how often you allow one or more students in your classroom to use **computers** during the writing period.



39. Circle how often students use **writing to support reading** (e.g., write about something they read).



40. Circle how often students use **reading to support writing** (e.g., read to inform their writing).



Section 3

Please put a check inside the box if you have done any of these activities below this year. For each activity, briefly describe what you have done.

- Students taught a strategy for timed writing.

- Students taught a strategy for planning a personal narrative story.

- Students taught the parts of a personal narrative story.

- Students set a goal to include all personal narrative story parts in their paper.

- Students assess their use of personal narrative story parts in their paper and graph results.

- Students taught to use self-statements.

- Students taught how to write for the Tennessee State or District Writing Tests.

OBSERVATION INSTRUMENT OF CLASSROOM
WRITING PRACTICES

OBSERVATION OF CLASSROOM WRITING PRACTICES

1. Observer:

2. Date:

3. Classroom:

Before conducting the classroom observation, please complete items 1 – 3 above. For classroom, please write assigned code number for the class.

Directions for Section 1.

If you observe any of the behaviors or activities noted in Section 1, place a mark through that behavior or activity. The behaviors and activities are divided into the following sections:

- 1. Skills and Strategies Taught (9 items)**
- 2. Common Instructional Activities In Process Writing (12 items)**
- 3. Instructional and Assessment Procedures (10)**
- 4. Alternative Modes of Writing (2 items)**
- 5. Other**

If you observe any activity that is not included in first four sections above, write a brief description of it.

Directions for Section 2.

If you observe any of the behaviors in Section 2, circle that activity. These activities are similar to the procedures used in the Self-Regulated Strategy Development Model.

SECTION 1

Teacher

- Teacher Conferencing with Students
- Encouragement to use Invented Spellings
- Teacher Model Enjoyment of Writing
- Assigned Homework
- Teacher Assessment
- Goals of Instruction Stated

Teacher (T+)

- Planning Strategies
- Revising Strategies
- Sentence Construction
- Capitalization
- Punctuation
- Grammar
- Spelling
- Handwriting
- Text Organization
- Re-teaching Skills/Strategies
- Mini-Lessons
- Model Writing Strategies

Student

- Students Select Own Writing Topic
- Students Revising a Paper
- Students Helping Each Other
- Students Publish a Composition
- Graphic Organizers
- Students Conferencing with Each other
- Students Planning a Paper
- Students Sharing a Paper with Peers
- Student Assessment
- Computer
- Dictation

Environmental

- Writing Centers
- Writing Portfolios

**Section 2: Activities Included in the Self-Regulated Strategy
Development Model – circle any activities that you observe and provide
a brief note on what happened**

Students taught a strategy for timed writing.

Students taught a strategy for planning a personal narrative story.

Students taught the parts of a personal narrative story.

Students set a goal to include all personal narrative story parts in their paper.

Students assess their use of personal narrative story parts in their paper and
graph results.

Students taught to use self-statements.

Students taught how to write for the Tennessee State or District writing tests.

Lesson 1 – Intro Count
Day of intervention ____

Count and Plan FAST

Instructor _____ Completed by: _____

Date: _____

Time Started: _____ Time Stopped: _____ Total time: _____ min.

1= step done, 0 = step not done/completely, 7= not scored; A= taught to all, whole class; SG=small group; I = Individual

	Complete	Group		
1			Set the context for learning (tricks, TCAP, timed writing, story about me)	1...2...3...4...5 NA
2			Discuss tricks (used to plan and write)	1...2...3...4...5 NA
3			Discuss timed writing test (contrast to class writing, important aspects of timed tests)	1...2...3...4...5 NA
4			Introduce and discuss each part of COUNT a. Underline what you have to write about b. Circle think about/think of c. Count think about/think of	1...2...3...4...5 NA
5			Practice using COUNT	1...2...3...4...5 NA
6			Discuss and identify what makes a good story (e.g., has important parts, has a storyline, is fun to read and write, includes sparkle words, and makes sense)	1...2...3...4...5 NA
7			Practice memorizing the COUNT strategy (<i>if time permits</i>).	1...2...3...4...5 NA
8			Wrap up lesson (announce test, remind students they have learned the first of two “tricks”/strategies)	1...2...3...4...5 NA

1=Fell Well Short of Expectations, 2=Fell Short of Expectations, 3=Met Expectations, 4=Exceeded Expectations, 5=Greatly Exceeded Expectations

DIRECTIONS FOR ADMINISTERING WRITING PROBES TO THE CLASS

Materials: prompt for each child, lined paper for each child, extra pencils, timer, stapler

Hi everyone.

I am going to ask you to plan and write a story. You will write a story about a specific topic. I will pass out a piece of paper in a moment that has the writing topic or prompt on it. I will also pass out several sheets of lined paper that are stapled together for you to write on. (pass out the writing prompt and lined paper)

Does everyone have a pencil to write with? (pass out pencils to those who need them).
The first thing that I would like to ask you to do is to write your first and last name on each of the pieces of paper that I just gave you.

Ok, now please put your pencil down while I tell you what you are going to write your story about. Please look at the single page of paper I gave you. This page tells you about the topic of your story (hold up the prompt sheet so that each child can see it).

I want you to read the prompt on this page silently to yourself as I read it aloud.
Read the prompt aloud.

Writing Situation: Suppose one day you found a magic hat.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin to write, think about what the magic hat can do and what would happen if you put it on.

Now write a story about your day when you found a magic hat.

You may repeat the prompt as many times as necessary. Note: Prompts must not be discussed or vocabulary words defined.

You will have 35 minutes to plan and write your story.

REMEMBER TO WRITE ONLY ON THIS TOPIC.

Before you start to write your story, spend some time thinking about the topic and planning your story. You can write your notes or plans on the writing topic page we

just read together (hold the prompt sheet up for students to see). **If you need additional space to write your notes or plans, please do this on the first page of the lined pages that are stapled together.**

When you write your story, please write it on the lined sheets of paper that are stapled together that I gave you (show them the lined paper). **You will receive no other paper. Write neatly. Do not skip lines.**

Express your thoughts clearly and make your story interesting to the reader.

Remember you have 35 minutes to plan and write your story. I will tell you when you have five minutes remaining. I cannot help you as you write your story.

Do you have any questions? Answer questions on testing only. If students ask questions as they work, just say, “I cannot help you. Just do your best.”

When students are ready to start, say:

When you finish writing your story, put your pencil down on your paper and sit quietly (if a student finishes and is unable to set quietly, go up to him and quietly tell him/her he may draw something on the back of his paper – only do this if necessary).

Now, you may begin planning and writing. (start timer)

If a student asks how to spell a word or for any other type of help, say: **Do the best you can**

When five minutes remain (at the 30-minute mark), say:
You have five minutes to complete your writing.

At stopping time, say:

Stop writing. I will now collect your story and the material I gave you.

APPENDIX B - LESSONS

Count and Plan FAST Lesson Plans (Lessons 1 – 7)

COUNT & Plan FAST

Lesson One: Developing Background Knowledge and Introducing the COUNT Strategy
(this lesson may take 1-2 days)

Lesson Overview

1. The first strategy, COUNT, will be introduced in this lesson.
2. The teacher will introduce the form of the writing probe and the COUNT strategy for analyzing the probe.
3. Students will practice the COUNT strategy.
4. Students will be familiar with the following terms: ***strategy or trick, TCAP writing test, timed writing, story about me, writing prompt, topic of the prompt, storyline, sparkle words.***

Materials	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COUNT and Plan FAST chart • Writing Prompt handout • Good Story About Me handout • Strategies Memorization Sheet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COUNT cue cards (optional) • Colored pencils/markers • Scratch paper • Important Story Parts cue cards

Set the Context for Learning

Explain to students that they are going to learn two ***tricks or strategies*** that will help them plan and write a good story for the ***TCAP writing test***. Explain that 5th grade students take a ***timed writing test***; students in 4th grade begin preparing to take this test and take a practice test. Explain what this means – that students will start the test together and must stop working when the time they are given is up. They will have 35 minutes for the TCAP writing test. Explain that for the TCAP writing test, they will have to write a story where they are the main character. We call this ***“a story about me.”*** Explain that the directions for writing the story will also tell them other things that must be in their stories.



Note to teachers: In order to get a passing or higher score on the TCAP writing test, students must write a story that includes them self as the main character, responds to each thing they are asked to think about/think of when writing the story, and that contains any other information given in the prompt. In addition, the story must be organized and coherent, clearly explain or illustrate key ideas, and show at least adequate facility in language use. Each of these essay/story characteristics are addressed in the COUNT and Plan FAST strategies. In addition, however, to pass the test, the student’s story should include few errors in mechanics, usage, or sentence structure. These last characteristics are not addressed in the strategies taught here and should be addressed during regular instruction.

Step 1: Develop Background Knowledge and Discuss the TCAP Writing Assessment

are familiar with. When discussing storylines, help students identify all of the important parts in good stories noted above.

- *Good stories are fun to read, fun to write, have all their important parts, include sparkle words and make sense.*
- *Good stories also use exciting, colorful, or “**sparkle**” words. These are words that help the reader see just what you mean and help capture the reader’s attention. Provide examples of sparkle words (e.g., In the story, a girl may be the main character, but could be described as a friendly girl with curly brown hair; instead of being angry, a character might be furious). Have your students help you think of more sparkle words. Sparkle words can be single words or they can be a set of words, such as curly brown hair (a phrase).*

Teachers may read a story aloud and ask students to hold up “important story parts” cue cards when they hear the corresponding parts

Step 5: Practice memorizing the COUNT Strategy (if time permits)

You can have students:

- Write out the COUNT strategy on scratch paper and state each step
- Quiz each other in partners or small groups
- Respond chorally to the teacher
- Use the COUNT cue cards to quiz each other

Teachers may want to use ideas from the [Strategies Memorization Sheet](#)

Wrap-Up

1. *Announce test next session! Tell students they will not be graded. Tell students you will check to see if they remember the three steps in COUNT next time.*
2. *Tell students they have learned the first of two tricks, or strategies, for writing better “stories about me” on a timed-writing test. During the next lesson, they will continue practicing the COUNT strategy and learn the second strategy for writing a good story about me. This next trick will help them create a good story from the writing prompt.*

Teachers may ask students as a class or in partners to reflect on what they have learned about COUNT (i.e., What have you learned about COUNT? What have you learned about the parts of a good story?)



Determine if some of your students need a little more help with understanding and using COUNT, and plan for this as possible. A second sheet of practice prompts is attached which can be used as needed to complete this lesson a second time or provide extra practice as homework.

COUNT and Plan FAST

COUNT

1. **Underline** what you have to write about
2. **Circle** the phrase, "think about" or "think of," then **underline** each think about/think of
3. **COUNT** and **number** the think abouts/think of

and Plan FAST

Figure out how your story starts

Add a sequence of events to make a storyline,
and tie it up with a good ending

Sparkle words - note some, think of more as I write

Take time to   the prompt after writing

Writing Prompt Practice 1.1

1. **Writing Situation:** Pretend one day that you arrived at school and the principal told you that you were the substitute teacher for the day.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin writing, think about what might happen when you are in charge. Now write a story about the day you were a substitute teacher at school.

2. **Writing Situation:** Pretend one day you found a time machine.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin writing, think about where you would go, what you would see, and what you would do. Now write a story about the day you found a time machine.

3. **Writing Situation:** Pretend you woke up one rainy morning. To your surprise, everything was flooded outside.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin writing, think about what you might do on the rainy day. Now write a story about the rainy morning you woke up and everything was flooded outside.

4. **Writing Situation:** Pretend one day you and your friends walked up to an old and abandoned house.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin writing, think about what you find and what you would do. Now write a story about the day you and your friends walked up to an old abandoned house.

Writing Prompt Practice 1.1

Answer Key

1. **Writing Situation:** Pretend one day that you arrived at school and the principal told you that you were the substitute teacher for the day.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin writing, think about¹ what might happen when you are in charge. Now write a story about the day you were a substitute teacher at school.

2. **Writing Situation:** Pretend one day you found a time machine.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin writing, think about¹ where you would go, ² what you would see, and ³ what you would do. Now write a story about the day you found a time machine.

3. **Writing Situation:** Pretend you woke up one rainy morning. To your surprise, everything was flooded outside.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin writing, think about¹ what you might do on the rainy day. Now write a story about the rainy morning you woke up and everything was flooded outside.

4. **Writing Situation:** Pretend one day you and your friends walked up to an old and abandoned house.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin writing, think about¹ what you find and ² what you would do. Now write a story about the day you and your friends walked up to an old abandoned house.

Writing Prompt Practice 1.2

1. **Writing Situation:** Pretend one day you walked outside and saw a huge tree. You noticed there was a small door in the side of the tree and you opened the door.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin writing, think about where you went and what you saw. Now write a story about when you walked outside and saw a huge tree with a small door in the side of the tree.

2. **Writing Situation:** Pretend you found a magic wallet where you could take out any amount of money.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin writing, think about what you would do with the money. Now write a story about when you found a magic wallet where you could take out any amount of money.

3. **Writing Situation:** Pretend one day as you walked down the hallway at school, you heard some strange music coming from the custodian's closet.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin writing, think about what happened when you opened the closet door. Now write a story about the day you heard strange music coming from the custodian's closet.

4. **Writing Situation:** Pretend you went to the movies and the actors jumped out of the movie screen.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin writing, think about what might happen at the movies. Now write a story about when you went to the movies and the actors jumped out of the movie screen.

Writing Prompt Practice 1.2

Answer Key

1. **Writing Situation:** Pretend one day you walked outside and saw a huge tree. You noticed there was a small door in the side of the tree and you opened the door.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin writing, think about¹ where you went and what you saw². Now write a story about when you walked outside and saw a huge tree with a small door in the side of the tree.

2. **Writing Situation:** Pretend you found a magic wallet where you could take out any amount of money.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin writing, think about¹ what you would do with the money. Now write a story about when you found a magic wallet where you could take out any amount of money.

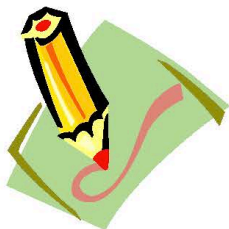
3. **Writing Situation:** Pretend one day as you walked down the hallway at school, you heard some strange music coming from the custodian's closet.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin writing, think about¹ what happened when you opened the closet door. Now write a story about the day you heard strange music coming from the custodian's closet.

4. **Writing Situation:** Pretend you went to the movies and the actors jumped out of the movie screen.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin writing, think about¹ what might happen at the movies. Now write a story about when you went to the movies and the actors jumped out of the movie screen.

A good Story About Me is...



- ...Fun to read
- ...Fun to write
- ...Includes sparkle words
- ...Makes sense
- ...Has all the important parts

What are the important parts?

- ★ Tells the reader who the story is about and who else might be in the story
- ★ Where the story takes place
- ★ When the story occurs
- ★ What happens in the story
- ★ Emotions/Feelings of the characters
- ★ How the story ends





Strategies Memorization Sheet

- Students could unscramble the strategies cut-up sentence strips or typed pieces of paper and place the strategies in order. The same activity could be done on a computer in PowerPoint or with SMARTboard software.
- Teachers shrink a list of steps and tape it to students' desks for reference until they have memorized all of the steps.
- Create a fill in the blank page where students only complete parts of the steps. (For example, _____ what you have to write about.)
- Students create a chant or song to remember the steps.
- Students could be audio or video recorded doing a chant or song to remember the steps. This could be posted on a class website or available for students to listen to in the classroom as a review.
- Students select motions that correspond with each step.
- Students draw pictures to depict the action of each step.
- Students write out the steps on a blank piece of paper.
- Students teach a younger peer buddy the steps to COUNT and Plan FAST.
- Copies of the cue cards are available for students to quiz each other during centers/stations, morning jobs, when they finish work early, etc.
- When waiting in line, whisper to a partner the steps of COUNT and Plan FAST.
- Play concentration with the cue cards.
- Play jeopardy to review all the steps. (For example, "You do this to identify what you have to write about." Answer: What is underlining?)
- Students create charts of the steps to post around the classroom.

The COUNT Strategy Cue Cards

<p>1</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Underline...</u></p>	<p>2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Circle...</p>	<p>3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">COUNT...</p> <p style="text-align: center;">123</p>
<p>1</p> <p>Underline what you have to write about</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you underline enough information so you know what to write about? 	<p>2</p> <p>Circle the phrase "think about" or "think of" and underline each think about/think of</p>	<p>3</p> <p>COUNT and number the think about/think of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you underline each one?

The Important Story Parts Cue Cards

1 Who and who else	2 When	3 Where	4 What happens
5 How the story ends	6 Emotions or feelings	7 Sparkle words	

Count and Plan FAST Cue Cards

<p>COUNT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Underline what you have to write about 2. Circle the phrase, "think about" or "think of," then underline each think about/think of 3. COUNT and number the think abouts/think ofs <p>and Plan FAST Figure out how your story starts Add a sequence of events to make a storyline, and tie it up with a good ending Sparkle words - note some, think of more as I write Take time to check the prompt after writing</p>	<p>COUNT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Underline what you have to write about 2. Circle the phrase, "think about" or "think of," then underline each think about/think of 3. COUNT and number the think abouts/think ofs <p>and Plan FAST Figure out how your story starts Add a sequence of events to make a storyline, and tie it up with a good ending Sparkle words - note some, think of more as I write Take time to check the prompt after writing</p>	<p>COUNT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Underline what you have to write about 2. Circle the phrase, "think about" or "think of," then underline each think about/think of 3. COUNT and number the think abouts/think ofs <p>and Plan FAST Figure out how your story starts Add a sequence of events to make a storyline, and tie it up with a good ending Sparkle words - note some, think of more as I write Take time to check the prompt after writing</p>	<p>COUNT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Underline what you have to write about 2. Circle the phrase, "think about" or "think of," then underline each think about/think of 3. COUNT and number the think abouts/think ofs <p>and Plan FAST Figure out how your story starts Add a sequence of events to make a storyline, and tie it up with a good ending Sparkle words - note some, think of more as I write Take time to check the prompt after writing</p>
<p>COUNT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Underline what you have to write about 2. Circle the phrase, "think about" or "think of," then underline each think about/think of 3. COUNT and number the think abouts/think ofs <p>and Plan FAST Figure out how your story starts Add a sequence of events to make a storyline, and tie it up with a good ending Sparkle words - note some, think of more as I write Take time to check the prompt after writing</p>	<p>COUNT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Underline what you have to write about 2. Circle the phrase, "think about" or "think of," then underline each think about/think of 3. COUNT and number the think abouts/think ofs <p>and Plan FAST Figure out how your story starts Add a sequence of events to make a storyline, and tie it up with a good ending Sparkle words - note some, think of more as I write Take time to check the prompt after writing</p>	<p>COUNT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Underline what you have to write about 2. Circle the phrase, "think about" or "think of," then underline each think about/think of 3. COUNT and number the think abouts/think ofs <p>and Plan FAST Figure out how your story starts Add a sequence of events to make a storyline, and tie it up with a good ending Sparkle words - note some, think of more as I write Take time to check the prompt after writing</p>	<p>COUNT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Underline what you have to write about 2. Circle the phrase, "think about" or "think of," then underline each think about/think of 3. COUNT and number the think abouts/think ofs <p>and Plan FAST Figure out how your story starts Add a sequence of events to make a storyline, and tie it up with a good ending Sparkle words - note some, think of more as I write Take time to check the prompt after writing</p>

COUNT & Plan FAST

Lesson Two: Introducing the FAST Strategy (this lesson may take 1-2 days)

Lesson Overview:

1. The first strategy, COUNT, will be reviewed in this lesson.
2. The second strategy, FAST, will be introduced in this lesson.
3. Students will practice the COUNT and FAST strategies.
4. Students will be familiar with the following term: *making notes*.

Materials	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COUNT and Plan FAST chart • Writing Prompt • Story About Me • FAST Notes sheet • COUNT cue cards (optional) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAST cue cards (optional) • Sparkle Word List • Colored pencils/markers • Scratch paper

Set the Context for Learning

Remind students we are learning 2 tricks for writing that will help them plan and write a good story for the timed TCAP writing test. The first “trick” was COUNT. COUNT helps us understand the writing prompt. Today we will learn the second “trick”/strategy, FAST. The FAST strategy will help you plan and write a good story for a timed-writing test. Remind students good stories about me have all their parts, a storyline that makes sense, is fun to write and fun to read.

Ask the students why it is important that they memorize each step of these tricks (Answers should include: I won’t have a paper with the steps on it when I take the test; it will help me remember what to do; it will help me pass the test, and so on).

Remind students that good stories are fun to read, fun to write, include sparkle words, make sense and have all their important parts. Ask students to tell you what these parts are:

- they tell the reader who the story is about and who else might be in the story
- where the story takes place
- when the story occurs
- what happens in the story
- the emotions/ feelings of the characters
- how the story ends.

Step 1: Test and Review the Count Strategy

Test the students to see if they remember the 3 steps of the COUNT strategy. Give students a copy of the writing prompt you will be using in

Teachers may have the steps cut into strips and ask students to put them in order.

Students may use colored markers to mark up the different parts.

class (writing prompt 2.1, attached with answer key). Ask the students to use the COUNT strategy on the prompt. Help as necessary.

Check student work together by reviewing the steps of COUNT as a class and discuss what items they underlined and circled.

Repeat with writing prompt 2.2 (attached, with answer key) if you feel this is necessary.


Step 2: Discuss Making Notes

Discuss the concept of notes.

- a) *Discuss examples of when and why someone would make notes. Examples include: teachers use notes when they create webs on the board, parents use notes when they write things on a calendar or when they make a grocery list. Have students generate some examples of when they might make notes on their own.*
- b) *Explain to students that good writers plan and make notes before writing. Discuss with students that notes are short phrases to help us remember what we want to write. We can change our notes later to add or change details or events in our story.*
- c) *Discuss with students that making notes is faster than writing whole sentences.*
- d) *Ask students how making notes before they write will help them when they need to write a story for a timed-test (Answers should include: they will help me remember my ideas, they will help me write faster, they will help me be sure I have all my parts).*

Step 3: Describe and Discuss the Strategy FAST

Tell students FAST is a trick that will help you plan and write a better story about me. Discuss each part of FAST.

 Note to teachers: This can be done several ways: Write each part on the board or overhead as you discuss it, make a poster or overhead and uncover each part as you discuss it, give each student a copy of the chart, or another technique you are comfortable with.

- a) *Discuss with students: The F in FAST stands for **Figure out how your story starts**. Explain to students that we can grab the reader's attention by making a good start for our story.*

Teachers may test students in pairs, small group, or chorally with the whole class.

Test could be a fill in the blank or sentence starter test .

Teachers may decide to use prompt 2.2 later with students having trouble, or use this prompt as homework

Teachers may choose to have students: draw a picture or make a list of a situation in which you make notes BEFORE discussing as a whole group

Teachers may pass out sticky notes and allow each student to write 1 situation in which you make notes and then create a class or small group list

For reflection, discuss why notes are useful/ important? Name 1 thing you like about making notes. Name 1 thing that is difficult about making notes.

Use writing prompt #1 to review COUNT. Ask the students to identify the topic of the writing prompt. Remind students that writing prompts provide the topic. Ask students for ideas on how they might start a story with this topic. Give examples of different topics the students may write about (e.g., riding on a magic carpet, going to the zoo, and setting the animals free, etc.).

- b) Discuss with students: The A in FAST stands for **Add sequence of events and tie it up with a good ending**. Ask the students to share ideas for the storyline or sequence of events. What can happen in the story? What kinds of detail need to be included from the prompt or can be added to the storyline so we can write a good story? What important parts should your story include? (Tell the reader who the story is about and who else might be in the story, where the story takes place, when the story occurs, what happens in the story, the emotions/ feelings of the characters, and how the story ends.)

Explain to students in addition to grabbing the reader with a good start and a sequence of events which make sense and are fun to read, we need to have a good ending that ties the whole story together. Tell students when they are writing the end, they can ask themselves: Does the final event wrap up the story? Does the ending make sense with the storyline? Give an example of a storyline from a book or movie the students may already be familiar with. Discuss with students about what happens at the end of a story. For example, the characters may solve their problems, become friends, or take home a new pet. Ask students about a story they are familiar with (e.g., Shrek, The Lion King, etc.) or about a story they have read in class and identify the end of the story.

- c) Ask students what questions they can ask themselves to help them plan and write a good story that has all the important parts (e.g., when the story occurs, where the story takes place, who is in the story – there may be additional characters besides “me,” emotions/feelings of characters, how the story ends, makes sense, is fun to read and write, and includes “sparkle” words.
(Answers should include: Does the sequence of events make sense and is it easy to follow? Did I include details from the prompt? Do I have all the important parts? Does my ending tie it all together?)



Note to teacher: You may want to post these questions in the room as well.

Explain to the students that they will make notes to help them remember what they want to write. Explain to students that while planning, the ideas they develop for the storyline will provide an outline for their story. As they write, they should look for places to add more details.

- d) Discuss with students: The S in FAST stands for **Sparkle words - note some, think of more as I write.**

Review “sparkle” words. Ask students what this means and why it is important?

(Answers should include: Sparkle words are good words that grab the reader’s attention and tell what we mean. They can be words that we don’t hear or use all the time. They are words that are just right for what the writer is saying. Sparkle words make the story or sentence more exciting and interesting to the reader and help the reader imagine in his/her head the characters, when the story happens, where the story takes place, the emotions/feelings the characters experience and the sequence of events in the story.)

Ask students for examples of sparkle words the writer can use to capture the reader’s attention. Discuss some examples with students. For example, they can use freezing instead of cold, or terrified instead of scared, or the phrase “hot, steamy day” instead of “hot day”

Explain to students that sparkle words can be used to describe people, places, things, and actions. For example, students can include descriptions of what the characters look like (e.g., brown hair, blue eyes, tall, skinny), the clothes they wear (e.g., blue jeans and red t-shirt, fancy dress), or the character’s personality (e.g., bossy, know-it-all, helpful, generous, shy). Ask students to share some “sparkle” words they might use to describe people, places, things, and actions

- e) Discuss with students: The T in FAST stands for **Take time to ✓ check the prompt.** Explain to the students that it is important to check the prompt to make sure they included all the parts given in the prompt. Check off each “think about” part to make sure you included all of the “think about” parts in your story.

Ask students to recall “sparkle” words with a partner before discussing with the entire class

Post sparkle word posters in the room for people, places, things, and actions; Allow students to add to lists

- f) *Remind students that the prompts do not tell you all of the important parts that should be in a story. It is important that you think about all of the important parts and include any the prompt leaves out.*

Step 5: Use COUNT and FAST in Writing Prompt and Story About Me and Make Notes on Graphic Organizer

- a) *Explain to the students you will read and examine a story about me that another student wrote. While you are reading, they will look to see if the writer used the parts of FAST in the story.*
- b) *Re-read the writing prompt and review the topic and think abouts identified earlier in the lesson. Remind students these parts need to be in the story this student wrote.*
- c) *Introduce the graphic organizer, FAST Notes. Tell the students you will make notes together for each part of FAST on the graphic organizer. Explain to the students this is how writers plan before they write. Remind them that notes are short phrases with enough words to help capture the parts of the prompt and our ideas. These are NOT full sentences. Tell students the notes are written like **CAVEMAN TALK**. Write an example of **CAVEMAN TALK** using a part from the prompt (e.g., friend found treasure map, rush to house). Students can help with the next part and suggest what should be written down in **CAVEMAN TALK**.*



Note to teachers: this can be done using the overhead, chart paper, on the board, or so on.

- d) *Read aloud the story about me. You may want to give students a copy of the story to follow along. Go through each step of FAST (i.e., Let's see how the writer started his story, What is the starting event in this story?, etc.).*
- *Figure out how this story starts. Make notes in the graphic organizer using **CAVEMAN TALK**. Emphasize notes are NOT full sentences, but just enough words to help you remember your ideas.*
 - *Add sequence of events and tie it up with a good ending. Have students identify the sequence of events. Ask students if the sequence of events makes sense.*

To help with memorizing important parts students can use a checklist to check for all of the important parts.

Teacher may share how sometimes we have to reread the story to find all of the important parts.


Discuss how **CAVEMAN TALK** is not complete sentences, BUT you must write enough to understand your notes

<p>Remind them that the storyline needs to make sense to the reader. Make notes for each part (sequence of events and ending) in CAVEMAN TALK. Discuss how the ending makes sense with the storyline and what happened in the story and that tying it all together gives it a good ending.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sparkle words – add some, think of more as I write.</i> Have students identify sparkle words. Read through the story and discuss what words were very descriptive and captured the students’ attention. Circle the sparkle words. Look for words that could have been changed to have more “sparkle.” Note the sparkle words on the graphic organizer and ask students to suggest different words/phrases they might use. <p>Pass out the <u>Sparkle Word List</u> form. Tell students they will keep a list of sparkle words they might like to use, and they can add words to the list each time they read a story about me or think of exciting and interesting words.</p> <p>If students did not identify words that describe emotions or feelings of the characters, remind them that a good way to add “sparkle” words and help grab the reader’s attention is to let the reader know what emotions the character(s) feels. Telling the reader how the character(s) feels allows the reader to connect to the character(s). If not already included, have students identify feelings of the character(s), circle or underline the feelings, and help write notes in CAVEMAN TALK for the feelings the characters had. Ask students for other sparkle words for feelings/emotions that they might like to use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Take time to check the prompt.</i> Check for all of the parts. Read through the notes to see whether or not all of the parts from the prompt are present in the story. As you identify each part from the story in your notes, check off that the part was present. Emphasize it is important to read through the notes BEFORE we write to make sure that all of the parts from the prompt are included. <p>Step 6: Practice memorizing COUNT and FAST (if time permits) <i>You can have students:</i></p>	<div data-bbox="1096 577 1295 829"> <p>Have students write the sparkle words from the story. Ask students for other exciting or interesting words they could use and have students record them on the Sparkle Word List</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1096 835 1295 997"> <p>Students can also write down sparkle words they find when they are reading or when doing homework.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1096 1008 1295 1197"> <p>If there are multiple sparkle words in the story, you can begin with having struggling students only find 2 sparkle words.</p> </div>
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- *Write out the COUNT and FAST strategy on scratch paper and state each step*
- *Quiz each other in partners or small groups*
- *Respond chorally to the teacher*
- *Use COUNT and FAST cue cards to quiz each other*

Wrap-Up

1. *Announce test next session! Tell students they will not be graded. They will be asked to demonstrate how well they know the three steps of COUNT, the four steps of FAST, and how to use the tricks for writing a "story about me."*
2. *Tell students they learned two strategies for writing better stories about me on a timed-writing test. During the next lesson, they will continue practicing the COUNT and Plan FAST tricks.*
3. *Discuss the purpose of why they are learning it and why they have to memorize it.*

 Determine if some of your students need more help with this lesson and plan for this as possible. If you need to redo this lesson, additional prompts and stories are available in the prompt bank. The prompts and stories can also be used as homework for additional practice.

Students and teachers may make a cheer/chant or motions to help remember the steps of COUNT and plan FAST.

Teachers may ask students what they learned today.

Writing Prompt 2.1

Writing Situation: Pretend your friend called you and said, “You aren’t going to believe what I found!” You rushed over to your friend’s home.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin to write, think about what your friend found and what happened.

Now write a story about what happened when your friend found something.

Writing Prompt 2.1

Answer Key

Writing Situation: Pretend your friend called you and said, “You aren’t going to believe what I found!” You rushed over to your friend’s home.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin to write, think about ¹ what your friend found and ² what happened.

Now write a story about what happened when your friend found something.

Story About Me 2.1

It was Saturday afternoon and I was sitting at home doing nothing. I was really bored. The phone suddenly rang. “Ring, ring!” I jumped to the phone, and it was my friend Julie. She yelled, “You have to get over here! You aren’t going to believe what I found!” I ran upstairs to ask my mother if I could go to Julie’s house. I was so excited and curious to see what she found! My mom said I could go over to Julie’s for a little bit. I rushed downstairs and ran out to the garage to grab my blue bike. I pedaled like I have never pedaled before and was quickly at Julie’s house.

I anxiously knocked on the door. I heard Julie scream, “Hurry up! We have to get to my room.” I followed her upstairs, and we ran into her room. She said she was digging in the dirt and found something. Then, Julie pulled out a real treasure map. She whispered, “Do you believe it? It is a real treasure map. It must be at least 5,000 years old!”

Julie took my hand, and we went downstairs to ask her mom if we could go outside and search for the treasure. Then, Julie and I ran outside to study the map and to find the secret treasure. We searched around the yard, found the spot, and started digging. As we were digging, we hit something hard. Quickly, we uncovered the treasure chest, broke the lock on it, and opened it up. We were both excited when we saw the treasure chest was full of gold and jewels.

Story About Me 2.1

Answer Key

It was Saturday afternoon (**WHEN**) and I (**WHO**) was sitting at home (**WHERE**) doing nothing. I was really bored (**FEELING**). The phone suddenly rang. “Ring, ring!” (**SPARKLE**) I jumped to the phone, and it was my friend Julie (**WHO**). She yelled, “You have to get over here! You aren’t going to believe what I found!” I ran upstairs to ask my mother if I could go to Julie’s house (**WHERE**). I was so excited (**FEELING**) to see what she found! My mom said I could go over to Julie’s for a little bit. I rushed downstairs and ran out to the garage to grab my bike. I pedaled like I have never pedaled before and was quickly at Julie’s house.

I anxiously (**SPARKLE**) knocked on the door. I heard Julie scream, “Hurry up! We have to get to my room.” I followed her upstairs, and we ran into her room. She said she was digging in the dirt and found something. Then, Julie pulled out a real treasure map. She whispered (**SPARKLE**), “Do you believe it? It is a real treasure map. It must be at least 5,000 years old!”

Julie took my hand, and we went downstairs to ask her mom if we could go outside and search for the treasure. Then, Julie and I ran outside to study the map and to find the secret (**SPARKLE**) treasure. We searched around the yard, found the spot, and started digging. As we were digging, we hit something hard. Quickly (**SPARKLE**), we uncovered the treasure chest, broke the lock on it, and opened it up. We were both excited (**FEELING**) when we saw the treasure chest was full of gold and jewels (**END**).

Writing Prompt 2.2

Writing Situation: Pretend you arrived at school early. In the hallway, you found a huge backpack as tall as the ceiling, and it started to move.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin to write, think about what happened when the large backpack started to move.

Now write a story about your adventure the day the huge backpack started to move.

Writing Prompt 2.2

Answer Key

Writing Situation: Pretend you arrived at school early. In the hallway, you found a huge backpack as tall as the ceiling, and it started to move.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin to write, think about¹ what happened when the large backpack started to move.

Now write a story about your adventure the day the huge backpack started to move.

Story About Me 2.2

My mom woke me up really early the other day. She had an important meeting and said I needed to go to school early. I was very tired as I got dressed and ate my breakfast. My mom packed my lunch and backpack and told me to get in the car. She dropped me off at school, and I slowly walked to the door. I didn't know if anybody would be there that early. I was kind of nervous to go in alone.

I opened the front door and walked down the hallway to my locker. I didn't see or hear anyone. Then, I turned the corner and there was a huge backpack that stretched to the ceiling in front of me. I took a few steps back and just stared. I was scared and in shock. Suddenly, the backpack began to move. I jumped high into the air and ran around the corner.

I leaned against the wall and started thinking. Why was that backpack there? What was in it? I peeked around the corner. The backpack kept moving, and I could hear students shouting. I must not have been alone. Then, the bag started falling in my direction. BOOM! The bag fell over and candy of all kinds came pouring out. I saw other students running over the bag to get the candy. I jumped into the big pile of candy, grabbed everything I could and stuffed it into my pockets.

I asked another student where all of the candy came from. She didn't know but told me to keep grabbing candy and that we might have enough candy to eat forever. I got my backpack, dumped my books, and stuffed my backpack with candy. I was happy that I came to school early. This was going to be a great day!

Story About Me 2.2

Answer Key

My mom (**WHO**) woke me (**WHO**) up really early the other day (**WHEN**). She had an important meeting and said I needed to go to school early. I was very tired (**FEELING**) as I got dressed and ate my breakfast. My mom packed my lunch and backpack and told me to get in the car. She dropped me off at school, (**WHERE**) and I slowly walked to the door. I didn't know if anybody would be there that early. I was kind of nervous (**FEELING**) to go in alone. (**BEGINNING**)

I opened the front door and walked down the hallway (**WHERE**) to my locker. I didn't see or hear anyone. Then, I turned the corner and there was a huge backpack that stretched to the ceiling in front of me. I took a few steps back and just stared (**MDW**). I was scared and in shock (**FEELING**). Suddenly (**MDW**), the backpack began to move. I jumped high into the air and ran around the corner.

I leaned against the wall and started thinking. Why was that backpack there? What was in it? I peeked (**MDW**) around the corner. The backpack kept moving, and I could hear students shouting. I must not have been alone. Then the bag started falling in my direction. BOOM! (**MDW**) The bag fell over and candy of all kinds came pouring out. I saw other students running over the bag to get the candy. I leaped into the big pile of candy, grabbed everything I could and stuffed it into my pockets. (**MIDDLE**)

I asked another student (**WHO**) where all of the candy came from. She didn't know but told me to keep grabbing candy and that we might have enough candy to eat forever. I got my backpack, dumped (**MDW**) my books, and stuffed my backpack with candy. I was happy (**FEELING**) that I came to school early. This was going to be a great day! (**END**)

FAST Notes

F (Figure out how your story starts)

A (Add sequence of events and tie it up with a good ending)

S (Sparkle words- add some, think of more as I write)

T (Take time to   the prompt)

COUNT & Plan FAST

Lesson Three: A Story About Me Must Make Sense
(this lesson may take 1-2 days)

Lesson Overview:

1. Students will review the steps of COUNT and FAST.
2. The teacher and students will collaboratively use COUNT and FAST to analyze a writing prompt and story about me. In this story, the parts do not always make sense!

Materials	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COUNT and Plan FAST chart • Writing Probe • Story About Me • FAST Notes planning sheet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COUNT and FAST cue cards (optional) • Sparkle Word List • Colored pencils/markers • Scratch paper

Set the Context for Learning

Tell students today they will continue working with the writing “tricks”/strategies that will help them write a good story about me for the state timed writing test. First, they will test to see if they remember each trick including their parts. Then, they will use the tricks to analyze a prompt and a story about me written by another student.

Ask students why it is important to memorize the tricks and their parts.

(Answers should include: I won’t have the tricks on paper when I take the test, they will help me remember what I need to do, they will help me remember all my parts, they will help me write faster so I can finish my paper - so I can pass my test!)

Step 1: Test and Review COUNT and FAST

Ask the students if they remember the strategy that will help them analyze a writing prompt (COUNT). Ask the students to tell you the three steps of the COUNT strategy. Help as necessary. Ask if they remember the strategy that will help them write a good story about me (FAST). Ask the students to explain what each letter in FAST means. Help as necessary.

This can be done orally to save time or by giving them a piece of paper and having them write the name of the trick (COUNT and FAST) with or without the steps.

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT STUDENTS MEMORIZE THE TRICKS. SPEND A FEW MINUTES REVIEWING AND MEMORIZING THE TRICKS

Step 2: Use COUNT to analyze Writing Prompt

1. Read the writing prompt aloud. *You may want to have the prompt*

Students may use colored markers to mark up the different parts.

Students may use cue cards in pairs to practice memorizing the tricks.



written on the board, overhead, or chart paper; you may also want to give students a copy to follow along as you read and mark their copy of the prompt.

2. Ask students which trick should be used when analyzing the writing prompt - COUNT. (You may want to pass out a copy of the chart to students or have the chart on the board, poster, overhead or chart paper for reference.) Ask students to identify the first step in COUNT - "Underline what you have to write about." Ask them what they think you should underline. Discuss the topic with the students. Underline and/or have students underline the topic on the writing prompt.
3. Ask students what is the second step - "Circle the phrase, 'think about' or 'think of,' then underline each think about/think of." Complete this step with students.
4. Ask students what is the third step, "Count and number the think about/think of" parts. Complete this step with students. (There are 2 "think of" parts in this prompt.)

Teachers may have students discuss questions with a partner or small group (i.e., "Whisper to a partner and tell them what step comes next?")

Step 3: Use FAST Notes planning sheet with Story About Me

1. Ask students about the second trick we learned to help us plan and write a good story about me for a timed writing test - FAST.
2. Tell students you will read aloud a story another student wrote and then will help them examine the story looking for the parts of FAST. While you are reading the story, they will look for each part of FAST. Briefly review the parts of FAST (Figure out how your story starts; Add sequence of events and tie it up with a good ending; Sparkle words- add some, think of more as I write; and Take time to check the prompt).
3. Explain to students we will be using the FAST Notes planning sheet. We will make notes on this sheet as we find the parts. This will help us check to see if it is a good story. Briefly discuss with students that notes are short phrases, not full sentences (CAVEMAN TALK), to help us remember our ideas and that they will help us when we begin to write our own stories.
4. Read aloud the story about me (3.1). Go through each step of FAST (i.e., let's see how the writer started his story, or what is the sequence of events in this story, do they make sense?, etc.).
5. Figure out how your story starts. Have students identify the parts and help write notes in the graphic organizer using CAVEMAN TALK.

Teachers may want to give students a copy of the story to follow along.

Teachers may have students copy what the teacher is writing on their graphic organizer OR watch the teacher model how to complete the graphic organizer

6. *Add sequence of events and tie it up with a good ending. Have students identify the events and the actions or details that happened in each part of the story. Ask students if the sequence of events make sense. Remind them that the storyline/sequence of events need to make sense to the reader. Discuss with students if these events make sense. What doesn't make sense? What events or details need to be changed so the story makes sense? Continue making notes on the planning sheet to reflect a storyline that makes sense.*
7. *Sparkle words – note some, think of more as I write. Have students identify sparkle words. Read through the story and discuss what words were really exciting and captured the students' attention. Circle the sparkle words. Look for words that could have been changed to have more "sparkle." Have students help write notes and ask students to suggest different words. Remind students about the Sparkle Word List. Remind students they will keep a list of exciting sparkle words and will add words to the list each time they read a story about me or think of sparkle words. Have students write the sparkle words from the story.*
8. *Take time to check the prompt. Check for all of the parts. Read through the notes to see if all of the parts from the prompt are present in the story. Emphasize it is important to read through the notes before we write to make sure that all of the parts from the prompt are included. As you identify each part from the story in your notes, check off that the part was present. Also, emphasize that we need to make sure the events and details in the story **make sense** with the storyline.*
9. *Ask students if the notes they wrote make sense. Emphasize that in order to capture your reader's attention and keep them interested in the story, the events and details need to make sense.*

Step 4: Practice memorizing COUNT and FAST (if time permits)

You can have students:

- *Write out the COUNT and FAST strategy on scratch paper and explain what each step or letter means to a partner*
- *Quiz each other in partners or small groups*
- *Respond chorally to the teacher*
- *Use COUNT and FAST cue cards to quiz each other*

Wrap-Up

1. *Announce test next session! Tell students they will not be graded. They will tell the three steps of COUNT and the four steps of FAST.*
2. *Tell students they learned two strategies for writing better stories about*

Teachers may use the assessment to help determine who needs additional time and how much time needs to be spent practicing the tricks for memorization

Teachers may want to look at the strategy memorization handout for more / different ways to practice

me on a timed-writing test. During the next lesson, they will continue practicing the COUNT and Plan FAST tricks.

Determine if some of your students need a little more help with this lesson and plan for this as possible. If you need to redo this lesson, additional prompts and stories (including a story that does not make sense) are available in the prompt bank. The prompts and stories can also be used as homework for additional practice.

Writing Prompt 3.1

Writing Situation: Pretend that today you are taking an imaginary trip.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin to write, think of a special place you would like to go and what you would like to do there.

Now write a story about an adventure you have in your special place.

Story About Me 3.1

Today is a special day. I am going on an imaginary trip. I pack my backpack with different things I will need. I need to take the kitchen sink, a map, hat, lunch, and a coat. I am going to Antarctica! I better take my sandals because it is very cold there. This is going to be the greatest trip ever!

After I pack my bag and say goodbye to my mom, I go to the train station to catch the next airplane to Antarctica. It is a long train ride. I fall asleep on the airplane and dream of all the different animals, plants, and trees I will see when I arrive to the rain forest.

Finally, I arrive. I am so tired from the long train ride I start looking for a hotel. To my surprise, there are no hotels. I begin to feel upset and hot. I should have packed better. I walk around and all I see is ice and snow.

I walk and eat and crawl and run. Suddenly, there is a large group of penguins in front of me. One penguin walks up and starts talking! I am surprised! The alligator takes me by the hand and tells me not to worry. He says that they can help me get home. I feel a little better. I ask the penguin if she has any food that I can eat. I am so thirsty. She gives me a cardboard box to eat.

When I finish eating, the penguin takes me to where the horses live. She tells me I am going to have a special trip home. She hands me a space suit and says I will ride the horse under water to get back home. I put on the suit, hop on the horse, and the cow dives under water. WOW! Space is amazing underwater! I love this trip! I hold on tight and the horse swims through the oceans and rivers to arrive back to my house.

Finally, I arrive home. I am exhausted after such a long trip. I hug my mom, get ready for bed, and eat breakfast. This was an awful day.

Story About Me 3.1

Answer Key

Today (**WHEN**) is a special day. I (**WHO**) am going on an imaginary trip. I pack my backpack with different things I will need. I need to take the kitchen sink, a map, hat, lunch, and a coat. I am going to Antarctica (**WHERE**)! I better take my sandals because it is very cold there. This is going to be the greatest trip ever!

After I pack my bag and say goodbye to my mom, I go to the train station (**WHERE**) to catch the next airplane to Antarctica. It is a long train ride. I fall asleep on the airplane and dream of all the different animals, plants, and trees I will see when I arrive to the rain forest.

Finally, I arrive. I am so tired (**FEELING**) from the long train ride I start looking for a hotel. To my surprise, there are no hotels. I feel upset and hot (**FEELING**). I should have packed better. I start walking around and all I see is ice and snow.

I walk and eat and crawl and run. Suddenly, there is a large group of penguins in front of me. One penguin walks up and starts talking! I am surprised (**FEELING**)! The alligator takes me by the hand and tells me not to worry. He says that they can help me get home. I feel a little better. I ask the penguin if she has any food that I can eat. I am so thirsty. She gives me a cardboard box to eat.

When I finish eating, the penguin takes me to where the horses live. She tells me I am going to have a special trip home. She hands me a space suit and says I am going to ride the horse under water to get back home. I put on the suit, hop on the horse, and the cow dives under water. WOW! Space is amazing underwater! I love this trip (**FEELING**)! I hold on tight and the horse swims through the oceans and rivers to arrive back to my house.

Finally, I arrive home. I am exhausted (**FEELING**) after such a long trip. I hug my mom, get ready for bed, and eat breakfast. This was an awful day. (**END**)

COUNT & Plan FAST**Lesson Four: Modeling COUNT and Plan FAST**
(this lesson may take 3-4 days)**Lesson Overview:**

1. Students will review and practice COUNT and FAST.
2. The teacher will model planning and writing a story using COUNT and FAST.
3. The students will rehearse the strategy using the cue cards.
4. Students will be familiar with the following term: *self-statements*

Materials	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COUNT and Plan FAST chart • Writing probe • Story About Me • FAST Notes Planning Sheet • COUNT cue cards (optional) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAST cue cards (optional) • Self-Statement List • Sparkle Word List • Colored pencils/markers • Scratch paper

Set the Context for Learning

Tell students today they will continue working with the writing “tricks”/strategies that will help them write a good story about me for the state timed writing test. First, you will test to see if they remember each trick, and then they will learn how to use COUNT and FAST to write a good story about me for the timed writing test.

Ask students why it is important to memorize the tricks and their parts. (Answers should include: I won't have the tricks on paper when I take the test, they will help me remember what I need to do, they will help me remember all my parts, they will help me write faster so I can finish my paper - so I can pass my test!)

Remind students that good stories are fun to read, fun to write, include sparkle words, make sense and have all their important parts. Ask students to tell you what these parts are:

- they tell the reader who the story is about and who else might be in the story
- where the story takes place
- when the story occurs
- what happens in the story
- the emotions/ feelings of the characters
- how the story ends.

Step 1: Test and Review COUNT and FAST

Ask the students if they remember the strategy that will help them analyze a writing prompt (COUNT). Ask the students to tell you the three steps of the COUNT strategy. Help as necessary. Ask if they remember the strategy that will help them write a good story about me (FAST). Ask the students

This can be done orally to save time; by having them write the name of the trick, COUNT and FAST, on scratch paper and then have them explain each part; allow students to quiz each other, etc.

to explain what each letter in FAST means. Help as necessary.

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT STUDENTS MEMORIZE THE TRICKS. SPEND A FEW MINUTES REVIEWING AND MEMORIZING THE TRICKS IF NEEDED; IF SOME STUDENTS STILL DO NOT HAVE THEM MEMORIZED, CONSIDER HOW TO PROVIDE THEM WITH EXTRA PRACTICE

Step 2: Model planning a story with COUNT and Plan FAST using self-statements

In this step, you will model how to use the strategies to analyze the writing prompt and make notes for writing a story about me. You may want to model using the COUNT and Plan FAST chart or cue cards to show your students how these tools help you as you plan and write. Throughout modeling, use problem definition, planning, self-evaluation, self-reinforcement, and coping statements as you work. Use statements you believe your students would need or find useful when they write.

1. Say, *“I am going to show you how to use COUNT and Plan FAST together to plan and write a good story about me. You might be able to help me! When I write, I talk myself through the writing process; normally I do this in my head, but today I will talk aloud so you can hear how I talk myself through the planning and writing process. For example, when I look at my writing prompt (show students the prompt), I might think in my head, what is it I have to do? I know! I have to write a good story about me. I need to make sure I understand the writing prompt, include all the important parts, include sparkle words, and write a story that makes sense and is fun to read and write.”*
2. Read the prompt (4.1 or 4.2) aloud (display it on chart paper or on the board). Say, *“First, I need to understand the writing prompt to make sure I understand what I’m supposed to write my story about. That means I need to use COUNT.”*
3. Say, *“The first step of COUNT is, ‘Underline what you have to write about.’ Let me see...I can find this information in the first part of the prompt...I did that! This is easy to do.” (You can ask students to help you remember steps as you go.)*
4. Say, *“Okay, now step two! Let’s see.. it says: Circle the phrase, ‘think about or think of,’ then underline each think about/think of. So in this prompt I can circle ‘think about.’” Read each one, then underline it.*
5. Say, *“Step 3 says, ‘Count and number the think abouts/think ofs.’ Let’s see...there’s the first one, and there’s a second one. I need to*

Teacher may repeat this lesson in small groups to reteach students struggling with applying the strategies

number each one. There are two 'think abouts' in the writing prompt that I need to be sure to include in my story."

6. Say, *"That's great! I just completed the three steps of COUNT, and I know what I'm supposed to write about. Now I'm ready to plan my story about me."*
7. Say, *"Now I need my FAST planning sheet. The first letter in FAST is F, and I know that stands for 'Figure out how your story starts.' How do I know how my story is supposed to start? (You may choose to have students help you answer this question.) I know! I need to look back at the writing prompt and make notes using caveman talk." Model statements you might say to yourself when you do this. For example, "I have to let my mind be free." "Take my time. A good idea will come to me." "Think of ideas related to what I underlined in the writing prompt." You can also start with a negative statement and model how a coping statement can help get you back on track. For example, "I can't think of what to do with this topic. That's okay, I'll take my time." "If I just take my time, a good idea will come to me." (Then, write down the idea on your Fast Notes planning sheet, showing students how to write it in note form)*

Say, *"Now that I know how my story is going to start, I can do 'A: Add sequence of events and tie it up with a good ending.'" Model statements you might say to yourself when you are considering adding a sequence of events. For example, "What am I supposed to do next? I know. Look at the parts I numbered in the prompt." "Remember my events need to make sense." Make notes for a sequence of events, letting your students help you with this. Be sure that you use all the numbered think abouts/think ofs in the prompt, and that you check to make sure the sequence makes sense. Check to be sure that your story has all the parts: **who the story is about and who else might be in the story, where the story takes place, when the story occurs, what happens in the story, the emotions/feelings of the characters, and how the story ends.** Use statements such as: "What do my characters look like or what emotions/feelings would I have in this situation?" "Did I include all the events? Do I want to add any events?" "Now I need to tie up my story with a good ending." "My readers will like this."*

8. Say, *"Let's see, I have completed F and A. I am almost ready to write! Now for 'S: Sparkle words – note some, think of more as I write.'" Model statements you might say to yourself. For example, "I can think of good words to describe what my characters are doing." "Maybe I should tell more about what the day was like." "I can think of good words to describe the day. On a chilly, calm*

day... That is great!" "I want to describe the school. A sparkle word to do that is..." *Students can help.*

9. After generating notes F, A, and S, identify the last letter of FAST, "T: Take time to check the prompt." State, "Now I can look back at my notes and see if I remembered to use all the parts from my prompt and if my parts make sense. I can also look to see if there is anything else I can add to make my story more interesting and fun." Model adding more notes (e.g., an extra feeling, adding detail, adding to the sequence of events, changing the ending, changing a word so that it sparkles a little more).

Step 3: Model Writing a Story About Me using COUNT and Plan FAST

Keep the COUNT and Plan FAST chart or cue cards and your FAST Notes planning sheet out. Using the notes, model the entire process of writing a story from the notes. Do this on the board, chart paper, etc., so that students can follow along. Students can help you as you go.

1. State out loud, "I think these are very good notes, and I will be able to write a good story. As I write my story, I can add more detail and other good ideas."
2. Talk yourself through writing the story. Refer to the notes as you model adding details and making sure your story has all of its parts. Say, "How shall I start? I know I can look at my notes for an idea." Then look at your notes and point out that you already made notes on how you wanted your story to start. "Here are my notes on how I want to start my story (i.e. mom woke me), now I need to expand my idea and really grab my reader's attention." Show the students how you take a note and expand it into an interesting sentence. State what you will write and then write the sentences. *Students can help.*
3. Use **self-statements** and cross off the parts on the FAST Notes planning sheet as you write. For example, "Wow, that was easy. Now that I have written my starting event, I can cross it off to show myself that part is done." or "This is easy! I have all my parts right here." "I think I'm going to change this part and make it better." "How can I add more detail here?" "How can I make this part more exciting?" "I'm almost done!" Model writing the sequence of events. Continue crossing off each part as you add it to the story or make changes to improve your story. Continue to use self-statements to show students how you keep yourself motivated and encourage yourself.
4. Add 1-2 sparkle words as you write each part.

Teacher may repeat this lesson and plan longer / more complex stories with more confident students and shorter / simpler stories with students struggling with writing

Teachers may use more/less sparkle words depending upon students'

5. Model evaluating your story. *“Okay, I think I’m done! I better read my story to be sure it is fun to read, makes sense, and has all the important parts: (who the story is about and who else might be in the story, where the story takes place, when the story occurs, what happens in the story, the emotions/feelings of the characters, and how the story ends).” Be sure to include each think of/about from the prompt.* Read the story out loud and model checking to see that you have all of your parts and that you have included all of the think abouts/think ofs. For example, you might say, *“Do I have all the events?” “Does my story make sense?” “Have I shown the reader what emotions/feelings the character(s) experienced?”* When finished, state, *“Good work. I’m done. The reader of this story will be very impressed. This story would definitely get me a good score on the writing test.”*

Step 4: Self-Statements: To Think of Good Ideas, While You Work, and To Check Your Work

1. Pass out the Self-Statement List. Tell students they will write down things they can say to themselves (called self-statements) to help them through planning and writing. If students have trouble developing their own statements, let them “borrow” one of yours or get help from each other. Discuss why each self-statement matters and how it helps.
 - a. Ask students if they can remember some of the things you said to yourself **to get started**. Have students put 1-2 self-statements they would like to use when they write on their self-statement sheet. For example, *“What is it I have to do? I have to write a story using COUNT and Plan FAST. A good story about me has a storyline and sequence of events and details that make sense.”*
 - b. Ask students if they can remember some of the things you said to yourself **while you worked** (*try to get some statements about remembering the parts, self-evaluation statements, and creativity statements, like “let my mind be free, good ideas will come!”*). Have students add 1-2 statements of their own to say **while I work**.
 - c. Ask students if they can remember some of the things you said to yourself **when something was hard**. Have students write 1-2 statements they can say **when something is hard**; these statements should help them stick with it and keep working.
 - d. Ask students if they can remember some of the things you

Teacher may use cue cards or a checklist when modeling rereading and checking for all the important parts

Teacher may write down examples of self-statements and post in the classroom or Create a bulletin board/chart for students to add helpful self-statements

said to yourself **to check your work**. Have students add 1-2 statements of their own to say **to check my work** when you're finished such as, *"Did I remember all my parts? Does my story make sense? This is great! The reader will enjoy this story."*

Step 5: Introduce Graphing Sheet/Graph the Story

1. Pass out the COUNT and Plan FAST graphing sheet (Rockets). Have students write their names on their sheet.
2. Explain that each rocket has 7 squares. Each square on the rocket gets colored for each step of COUNT and FAST that was used. Say, *"Let's see if we can color in each square."* Go back and look at the prompt to see if you completed each step in COUNT. Color three squares for completing COUNT. Have students color in their rocket as well. Then, look at your story to see if you completed each part of FAST. Color in the four squares for completing FAST.
3. Explain that each rocket is shooting toward the moon. The moon has 5 parts. They are for five of the story parts: who/who else, where, when, what, end. Color in the parts of the moon for each part included in the story. Have students do the same on their rocket.
4. Explain that each rocket also has stars. The stars are to record the emotions and sparkle words used in the story. Say, *"We will color in one star for each sparkle word in the story and for each unique emotion included."* Demonstrate coloring the stars and have the students do the same for their rocket.
5. Once students have colored the squares and stars, remind students their goal is to fill in each square on the rocket each time they write and to color in stars, too. Have students date the rocket and circle the phrase "with teacher" on their graphing sheet.

Wrap-Up

1. Announce test next session! Tell students they will not be graded. They will be asked to demonstrate how well they know the three steps of COUNT, the four steps of FAST, and how to use the tricks for writing a "story about me."

Determine if some of your students need a little more help with this lesson and plan for this as possible. If you need to redo this lesson, additional prompts are available in the prompt bank. Additional prompts and stories can also be used as homework for additional practice.

Writing Prompt 4.1

Writing Situation: Forgetting can cause problems. Think about a day when you forgot something.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin to write, think about what you forgot and what happened.

Now write a story about what happened the day you forgot something.

Writing Prompt 4.2

Writing Situation: Pretend you are sitting under a large tree. A squirrel hits you on the head, starts laughing at you, and begins to talk.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin to write, think about what you would do and what you would say to the squirrel.

Now write a story about your experience with a talking squirrel.

My Self-Statements

Things to say to myself to get started:

Things to say to myself while I work:

Things to say to myself when something is hard:

Things to say to myself to check my work:

COUNT & Plan FAST**Lesson Five: Collaborative Writing***(This lesson contains an optional goal setting component)**This lesson should be repeated as necessary (this lesson may take 3-4 days)***Lesson Overview:**

1. Students will review and practice COUNT and FAST.
2. Students will engage in collaborative practice, planning and writing a story using COUNT and FAST.
3. Students will graph their performance of a previously written story about me (*optional*).
4. Students will set individual goals for writing and using self-statements (*optional*).
5. Students will be familiar with the following terms: **goal setting, transfer.**

Materials	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COUNT and Plan FAST chart • Writing Prompt (5.1/5.2/5.3) • FAST Notes planning sheet • Self-Statement List • Sparkle Word List • Goal Sheet A and or B (optional) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretest Writing Probe (student copies if desired) • Colored pencils/markers • Scratch paper • COUNT Cue Cards (optional) • FAST Cue Cards (optional)

Set the Context for Learning

Tell students, *"Today we will continue working with the writing "tricks"/strategies that will help you write a good story about me for the state timed writing test. First, I will test to see if you remember each trick, and then we will use COUNT and Plan FAST to write a good story about me for the timed writing test."*

Ask students why it is important to memorize the tricks and their parts. (Answers should include: I won't have the tricks on paper when I take the test, they will help me remember what I need to do, they will help me remember all my parts, they will help me write faster so I can finish my paper - so I can pass my test!)

Remind students that good stories are fun to read, fun to write, include sparkle words, make sense and have all their important parts. Ask students to tell you what these parts are:

- they tell the reader who the story is about and who else might be in the story
- where the story takes place
- when the story occurs
- what happens in the story
- the emotions/ feelings of the characters
- how the story ends.

Step 1: Test the Students

Ask the students if they remember the strategy that will help them analyze a writing prompt (COUNT). Ask the students to tell you the three steps of the COUNT strategy. Help as necessary. Ask if they remember the strategy that will help them write a good story about me (FAST). Ask the students to explain what each letter in FAST means. Help as necessary.

Please refer to the Strategies Memorization Sheet (p. 12) handout for ideas

Step 2: Collaborative Writing

1. Tell students we will work together to analyze a writing prompt and write a story about me. You may want to give students their own copy of the writing prompt and have them get out their COUNT and Plan FAST chart.
2. Read Writing Prompt 5.1 aloud with the students. Ask students what should be done first. The first step of COUNT is – Underline what you have to write about. Let students lead the process as much as possible. Help as needed. If students have their own copy, have them do this on their own sheets as you underline the topic. Ask students why this step is important - we need to understand the writing prompt so we know what to write our story about.
3. Ask students what should be done next. The second step of COUNT is – Circle the phrase, “think about” or “think of,” then underline each think about/think of part. Ask why it is important to do this step – it helps focus their attention to the events that need to be included in their storyline.
4. Ask students what the final step of COUNT is – Count and number the think about/think of part. Ask students why it is important to do this - because each think about/think of part must be included in their storyline.
5. Remind students that COUNT and Plan FAST are tricks for writing a good story about me on a timed-writing test. Then say, “*Now that we’ve analyzed the writing prompt using COUNT, we need to use the Plan FAST trick to help us plan our story quickly.*”
6. Using the COUNT and Plan FAST chart and/or the COUNT and Plan FAST cue cards, have students help you make notes on the Fast Notes planning sheet using CAVEMAN TALK. Ask students to help you generate ideas for each step of FAST.
7. Ask students, *What is the first step in FAST? F: Figure out how your story starts. Great! Let’s think of some ideas of how our story could start and then put one into CAVEMAN TALK. Remember part of writing a good story is grabbing the reader’s attention.*

Teachers may repeat this lesson utilizing small groups to differentiate instruction for students with different levels of writing ability; some groups may work independently, while others may return to modeling

8. Ask students, *What do we need to do next? A: Add sequence of events and tie it up with a good ending. Okay, let's look at the events that need to be included from our prompt and figure out where they belong in the story. We also need to decide what other events might happen in our story. We need to remember that each event needs to make sense. Are we done with A? NO, we still need to tie up our story with a good ending. How do you think our story should end?*
9. Ask students, *What is the next step in FAST? S: Sparkle words - note some, think of more as I write. Remember sparkle words are words that we don't use very often and help the reader imagine what we are saying. They can also be a short phrase that describes something to the reader. What are some good sparkle words for our character(s) and storyline.*
10. *What do we do now? The last step of FAST is T: Take time to check the prompt. Have students look back at the notes and see if they have included all of the think abouts/think ofs from the prompt. Ask students if they are missing any parts and if they can include more details or add more sparkle words.*
11. *What do we do now? Remind students they now have to write their story about me. They can also add more ideas as they write. Refer students to their self-statements to say while they work. State, "What is it I have to do here? I have to write a good story about me. Good stories are fun to read, fun to write, include sparkle words, make sense, and have all their important parts." Ask students to tell you what the important parts are: They tell the reader who the story is about and who else might be in the story, where the story takes place, when the story occurs, what happens in the story, the emotions/feelings of the characters, and how the story ends. Write the story. Allow students to help as appropriate with transforming the notes into a story.*

Step 3: Graph the Collaboratively or Individually Written Story About Me

1. Pass out or have students get their COUNT and Plan FAST graphing sheet (Rockets).
2. Remind students each rocket has 7 squares. Each square on the rocket gets colored for each step of COUNT and Plan FAST they used. Say, "Let's see if we can color in each square," go back and look at the prompt to see if you completed each step in COUNT. Have students color three squares for completing COUNT. Then look at your story to see if you completed each part of FAST. Have

students color in the four squares for completing FAST.

3. Remind students that each rocket is shooting toward the moon. The moon has 5 parts. They are for five of the story parts: who/who else, where, when, what, end. Color in the parts of the moon for each part included in the story. Have students do the same on their rocket.
4. Remind students that each rocket also has stars. The stars are to record the emotions and sparkle words used in the story. Say, “*We will color in one star for each sparkle word in the story and for each unique emotion included.*” Demonstrate coloring the stars and have the students do the same for their rocket. Have students look at the class/group/individual story to determine how many stars to color. Help as needed.
5. Once students have colored the squares and stars, remind students their goal is to fill in each square on the rocket each time they write and to color in stars, too. Have students date the rocket and circle the appropriate phrase below the rocket on their graphing sheet.

Step 4: Guidelines for Sharing the Students’ Stories About Me

(Author’s Chair; optional for stories written individually or in small groups; this can be done in small groups rather than each student sharing with the whole class if necessary)

1. Have student read aloud the story about me.
2. The other students and teacher comment on one thing they liked (e.g., the sparkle words, the actions in the story, the cohesive storyline, the details describing an event, etc.).
3. The other students and teacher suggest one way to make the story better (e.g., “You could use huge instead of big.” “You could combine these two sentences to make the story a little more interesting.” “I was not sure what the feeling was in the middle, can you clarify that.”)
4. Allow the next student to share the story. Repeat steps 2 and 3.

Step 5: Analyze the Pretest Writing Prompt (optional)

Each student should have a copy of the pretest writing prompt. Have students use COUNT to analyze the writing prompt. You can do this collaboratively or have students work in small groups or pairs and assist as needed.

Teachers may assist students or have students work in pairs

1. Ask students why we are learning these tricks/strategies. (Answers should include the following: help me pass the timed TCAP writing test, write better stories, remember what I have to write about, etc.)
2. Ask students if they can think of other times when they can use COUNT and Plan FAST. Identify times the students can use COUNT (e.g., a district or state writing test, practice TCAP test, TCAP test). Discuss with students how this trick can also help them with other writing tasks (always stop and think about what you need to write before you write, even if it is not a story; always use sparkle words, and so on). Identify times the students can use FAST (e.g., school newspaper, writing a story about something true that happened to them, a book report, writing a creative story).
3. Ask students to be thinking about other times when they can use these tricks and try to use them if they can, and let you know when they do!

Step 9: Practice memorizing COUNT and FAST (if necessary and time permits)

You can have students:

- Write out the COUNT and FAST strategy on scratch paper and state each step
- Quiz each other in partners or small groups
- Respond chorally to the teacher
- Use COUNT and FAST cue cards to quiz each other

Teachers may want to consult the [Strategies Memorization Sheet](#) for more

Step 10: Wrap-Up

1. Announce test next session! Tell students they will not be graded. They will tell the three steps of the COUNT and the four steps of FAST.

Determine if some of your students need a little more help with this lesson and plan for this as possible. Additional prompts are available in the prompt bank. When redoing this lesson, you may want to consider the following story writing options:

- Students can offer suggestions of what to say in a class-wide story.
- Students can work in small groups, one student can write the composition, and the other students can offer suggestions of what to say in the composition. Help as needed
- If the students are ready, each student may write their own story. Help as needed.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share each composition when done and help each other improve them. <p>2. Additional prompts and stories can also be used as homework for extra practice.</p>	
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Writing Prompt 5.1

Writing Situation: Pretend your class was on a field trip to the zoo on a day the animals got loose.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin to write, think about what might happen on your field trip.

Now write a story about what happened the day the animals got loose at the zoo.

Writing Prompt 5.3

Writing Situation: Suppose one day you found a flying carpet.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin writing, think about where you would go, what you would see, and what you would do.

Now write a story about your day after finding a flying carpet.

Goal Sheet A

Name _____

I will use each step of COUNT and Plan FAST when I write.

In addition, my goals are (pick 1, 2, or 3):

- I will add more characters to my story.
- I will describe my characters in more detail for the reader.
- I will describe where the story takes place better for my reader.
- I will add more details to what happens in the story.
- I will add more emotions and feelings for my characters.
- I will use more sparkle words that make my story fun for the reader.
- I will make the ending of my story more interesting for the reader.

Goal Sheet B

Name _____

I will use each step of *COUNT* and Plan *FAST* when I write.
In addition, my goals are (pick 2 or 3):

- I will use my notes to make sure my storyline/sequence of events is very clear and easy to follow.
- I will elaborate on things like location, time, and characters by using well thought out details.
- I will use more sparkle words that describe in captivating ways.
- I will bring my characters to life using different emotions in the beginning, middle, and end of the story.
- I will use a variety of types of sentences like long, short, questions, exclamations, and so on.
- I will use dialogue in my story where it helps make my story more fun to read.
- I will check my story for proper spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and word choice.

Step 6: Graph Students' Prior Performance *(optional)*

Pass out students' pretest story. Remind students that they wrote this story about me before learning the tricks for writing a good story about me for a timed writing test so they may not have all the important parts or elements that make a good story. (Make sure they understand it is okay if they don't have all the parts because they hadn't learned the strategies yet!). Walk around and help students as needed.

1. Have students analyze their own story to see if they have each part of FAST.
2. Ask students to graph their parts. You might have the class discuss common missing parts or what they would do differently now that they are learning COUNT and Plan FAST.
3. On the graphing sheet, point to the rocket where the collaborative story was written. Tell students one of their goals is to fill in each square of the rocket each time they write, and now that they know the tricks to help them write good stories about me, they can meet their goal each time they write.

Teachers may decide to skip this or delay completing this for all or some students depending on their writing abilities and how they respond to this type of feedback

Step 7: Introduce Goal Setting *(optional)*

There are two different goal sheets, which can be used. Goal sheet A has initial goals, while the goal B contains advanced goals. You may want to use different goal sheets for different students or start with the initial goals and move students towards the advanced goals.

1. Ask students why making goals is important. (Answers can include: they help us, so we know what to work towards, to help us do something better, to help us do something new, etc.)
2. Pass out goal sheets. (If all students receive the same goal sheet, read through the goals with the students.)
3. Have each student look over the goal sheet and select 1 to 3 goals to work on in addition to using each part of COUNT and Plan FAST each time they write. Help students select appropriate goals as needed.
4. Teachers can instruct students to write in class goals to align with other writing instruction (grammar, spelling, sentence structure, etc.) or individual goals that specific students may need to address. For instance, if they did not have all of the parts, one goal should be to include all of the important parts.

Teachers may have students brainstorm ideas in pairs

Step 8: Introduce Transfer

COUNT & Plan FAST

*Lesson Six: Independent Writing (introduce/continue goal setting)
(this lesson may take 2-3 days)*

**THIS LESSON IS REPEATED AS NECESSARY FOR INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS TO
MOVE FROM SUPPORTED WRITING TO INDEPENDENT WRITING**

Lesson Overview:

1. Students will review and practice COUNT and FAST.
2. Students will write independently, using a COUNT and FAST planning sheet they create.
3. Students will graph their performance.

Materials	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COUNT and Plan FAST chart • Writing Probe 6.1 (6.2 if needed) • Story About Me 6.1 • Story Rocket graphing sheet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal sheet (optional) • Colored pencils/markers • Scratch paper

Set the Context for Learning

Tell students today they will continue working with the writing “tricks”/strategies that will help them write a good story about me for the state timed writing test. First, they will test to see if they remember each trick, including their parts, and then create their own graphic organizer like they would for the timed writing test. They will use COUNT and Plan FAST to write a good story about me for the timed writing test.

Ask students why it is important to memorize the tricks and their parts. (Answers should include: I won’t have the tricks on paper when I take the test, they will help me remember what I need to do, they will help me remember all my parts, they will help me write faster so I can finish my paper - so I can pass my test!)

Remind students that good stories are fun to read, fun to write, include sparkle words, make sense and have all their important parts. Ask students to tell you what these parts are:

- they tell the reader who the story is about and who else might be in the story
- where the story takes place
- when the story occurs
- what happens in the story
- the emotions/ feelings of the characters
- how the story ends.

Step 1: Test the Students, if needed
Ask the students if they remember the strategy that will help them analyze

a writing prompt (COUNT). Ask the students to tell you the three steps of the COUNT strategy. Help as necessary. Ask if they remember the strategy that will help them write a good story about me (FAST). Ask the students to explain what each letter in FAST means. Help as necessary.

Step 2: Introduce Goal Setting (if needed)

There are two different goal sheets, which can be used. Goal sheet A has initial goals, while Goal sheet B contains advanced goals. You may want to use different goal sheets for different students or start with the initial goals and move students towards the advanced goals.

1. Ask students why making goals is important. (Answers can include: they help us, so we know what to work towards, to help us do something better, to help us do something new, etc.)
2. Pass out goal sheets. (If all students receive the same goal sheet, read through the goals with the students.)
3. Have each student look over the goal sheet and select 1 to 3 goals to work on in addition using each part of COUNT and Plan FAST each time they write. Help students select appropriate goals as needed.
4. Teachers can instruct students to write in class goals to align with other writing instruction (grammar, spelling, sentence structure, etc.) or individual goals that specific students may need to address. For instance, if they did not have all of the parts, one goal should be to include all of the important parts.

Step 3: Introduce creating the FAST Planning Sheet/Graphic Organizer

Remind students one of the reasons we have been working to memorize the tricks is because we won't have the COUNT and Plan FAST chart or the FAST Planning Sheet when we take the test. We are going to practice making our own sheet to help us on the test.

1. Ask students to write the trick for analyzing a writing prompt across the top of their papers (COUNT). Ask students what the steps of COUNT are (review verbally, do not ask students to write these steps out: Underline what you have to write about; Circle the phrase, think about/think of; then underline each think about/think of; Count and number the think abouts/think ofs). Ask students how COUNT helps us respond to writing prompts. (It helps us understand what we need to write about and what we need to include in our story.)

Please refer to the Strategies Memorization Sheet (p. 12) handout for ideas

Teachers may allow students to practice making their own graphic organizers in pairs.

2. Ask students to write the trick for making notes for the timed writing test down the side of their paper (FAST). Ask students what each letter stands for (**Figure** out how your story starts; **Add** sequence of events and tie it up with a good ending; **Sparkle** words-add some, think of more as I write; and **Take** time to check the prompt). Ask students how FAST helps us write a good story about me for the timed writing test (helps me remember what I need to write; will help me write my story faster; will help me write a good story which is fun to read, fun to write; will help me include sparkle words; will help me be sure my story makes sense and has all the important parts). Ask students to tell you what the important parts are: **They tell the reader who the story is about and who else might be in the story, where the story takes place, when the story occurs, what happens in the story, the emotions/feelings of the characters, and how the story ends.**

Step 4: Introduce Independent Writing

1. Tell students they will write a story about me independently and will make their own FAST Notes planning sheet/graphic organizer.
2. Give students writing prompt 6.1 (or 6.2 if repeating the lesson) and three blank pieces of paper. Tell students they can either use the writing prompt page or notebook paper for notes.

Step 5: Practice Independent Writing

1. Ask students what they should do first. **THEY MUST WRITE COUNT** across the top and **FAST** along the side **ON THE WRITING PROMPT OR NOTEBOOK PAPER – HELP THEM TO DO SO IF THEY HAVE DIFFICULTY**. Circulate around the room and do steps 2-4 below. If all of the class is having trouble with any step, you can pull the whole class together to review and help. Otherwise, assist individuals or small groups as needed.
2. Wait and see if students continue. If some students do not, ask these students what they need to do next. Prompt and help only as necessary. They need to use **COUNT** to analyze the writing prompt, and they need to use **FAST** to make notes for each part. When they are done writing notes, remind them they can think of more ideas as they write. Encourage students to use self-statements when you think they are needed. *It is okay if students aren't using self-statements out loud.*
3. Wait and see if students continue. If some students do not, ask these students what they should do next. Prompt students to write their

Teachers may collaboratively brainstorm of start writing a story with struggling students and allow them to finish independently

Teachers may continue prompting struggling students at each step until the process is complete and they are able to prompt themselves

story, as needed. Let students work independently as much as possible, but help them if needed so they have a complete, good story. The goal is for these students to become more independent with practice.

4. Once students complete their writing, wait and see if students read their paper to check if the story makes sense and has all the important parts, and if they make any changes to parts of their story (e.g., adding sparkle words, details, or more story ideas). Encourage or help students do this if they don't do it on their own.

Step 6: Graph the Independently Written Story About Me

1. Pass out or have students get their COUNT and Plan FAST graphing sheet (Rockets).
2. Remind students that each rocket has 7 squares. Each square on the rocket gets colored for each step of COUNT and FAST that was used.
3. Remind students each rocket is shooting toward the moon. The moon has 5 parts. They are for five of the story parts: who/who else, where, when, what, end. Color in the parts of the moon for each part included in the story. Have students do the same on their rocket.
4. Remind students that each rocket also has stars. The stars are to record the emotions and sparkle words used in the story. Say, "*We will color in one star for each sparkle word in the story and for each unique emotion included.*" Demonstrate coloring the stars and have the students do the same for their rocket. Have students look at the class/group/individual story to determine how many stars to color. Help as needed. Remind students that if we use even more sparkle words we can bust our rocket.
5. Once students have colored the squares, moon, and stars, remind students their goal is to fill in each square on the rocket each time they write.
6. Tell students they won't have the rockets sheet when they take the TCAP test, but they can still check to see that they have completed COUNT and Plan FAST and that they have written a story that is fun to read, fun to write, includes sparkle words, makes sense and has all the important parts.

Step 7: Guidelines for Sharing the Students' Stories About Me (Author's Chair)

1. Have a student, or each student, read aloud their story about me, if/as time allows. (Or, you might consider posting stories, or students could share their stories in pairs, etc.).
2. The other students and teacher comment on one thing they liked (e.g., the sparkle words, the actions in the story, the cohesive storyline, the details describing an event, knowing the characters' emotions, etc.).
3. The other students and teacher suggest one way to make the story better (e.g., "You could use humongous, a sparkle word, instead of big." "You could combine these two sentences to make the story a little more interesting." "I was not sure what the feeling was in the middle, can you clarify that?")

Teachers may have students share whole, group, with a partner, small group, or with the teacher depending on time and student needs

Step 8: Lesson Wrap Up

1. Remind students they will take a practice test and they can use the tricks for the test.



Determine if some of your students need a little more help with this lesson and plan for this as possible. You may need to work with some students individually or in small groups, going back to collaborative, supported writing if necessary. There are additional prompts in the prompt bank if you need to redo this lesson or want to send one home as homework for extra practice.

*****REPEAT THIS LESSON UNTIL STUDENTS CAN WRITE INDEPENDENTLY. SELECT FROM REMAINING PROMPTS IN PROMPT BANK*****

Writing Prompt 6.1

Writing Situation: Pretend you are asked to spend the afternoon baby-sitting Howie, a pet monkey.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin to write, think about the fun and adventures you have with Howie, the monkey.

Now write a story about what happened the afternoon you baby-sat Howie, the monkey.

Writing Prompt 6.2

Writing Situation: Pretend you had to stay after school to help your teacher. In her classroom, you found a huge crayon drawing on the wall.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin to write, think about what happened when you saw the crayon drawing and what you did.

Now write a story about your adventures the day there was a huge crayon drawing on the classroom wall.

COUNT & Plan FAST

Lesson Seven: Discuss Test Directions, Test-Taking Strategies, and Practice Writing Under Timed Writing Conditions

This lesson should be repeated as necessary (this lesson may take 2-3 days)

Lesson Overview:

1. Students will discuss the TCAP test directions and test-taking strategies.
2. Students will practice writing under timed-writing conditions.

Materials

- Copies of Test Directions sheet
- Story Rocket graphing sheet
- Stapled blank pages for Practice Test
- Practice Timed-Test Prompt

Set the Context for Learning

Tell students today they will continue working with the writing “tricks”/strategies that will help them write a good story about me for the state timed writing test. First, we will discuss the test directions and some test-taking strategies. Then, we will practice taking a timed writing test.

Step 1: Test the Students, if needed

Ask the students if they remember the strategy that will help them analyze a writing prompt (COUNT). Ask the students to tell you the three steps of the COUNT strategy. Help as necessary. Ask if they remember the strategy that will help them write a good story about me (FAST). Ask the students to explain what each letter in FAST means. Help as necessary.

Ask students why it is important to memorize the tricks and their parts. (Answers should include: I won’t have the tricks on paper when I take the test, they will help me remember what I need to do, they will help me remember all my parts, they will help me write faster so I can finish my paper - so I can pass my test!).

Step 2: Discuss Test Directions

Remind students that 5th grade students take a timed writing test; students in 4th grade begin preparing to take this test and take a practice timed test. Tell students you are going to look together at the directions for taking the test. Give each student a copy of the Test Directions (attached). Read the directions aloud as students follow along. Ask the following questions about the directions:

- a. *What topic do you have to write about? (You cannot change this!)*
- b. *How much time do you have to take the test?*

Please refer to the Strategies Memorization Sheet (p. 12) handout for ideas

- c. *Where should you plan? (on the back of the directions sheet – write down COUNT and FAST to help you plan; ask students to do this now, check that students are doing this right, demonstrate if necessary)*
- d. *What type of warning does the teacher give you?*
- e. *Can you write your story on the prompt sheet?*
- f. *How can you make your writing clear and interesting?*
ANSWER: USE COUNT AND PLAN FAST!

Step 3: Test-Taking Strategies

1. Ask students why managing their time well during a timed writing test is important.
 (Answers may include: 35 minutes is not much time and the time goes by fast; I need to be sure I have time to write the story I planned; I may not pass the test if I do not finish my story.)

Tell students it is important to plan their writing, but they should not spend too much of their time planning. Emphasize planning will help them write a good story, but the planning is not scored. Discuss with students things they should be aware of or do while taking the test, including:

- How much total time they have to write (35 minutes)
 - How much time they should devote to planning their story (about 5-10 minutes)
 - How much time they should devote to writing their story (15 to 20 minutes)
 - How much time they should leave for editing their story (3 to 5 minutes)
 - Wear a watch to keep track of the time or check the clock in the classroom
2. Remind students they will be given a warning when they have 5 minutes remaining to complete their writing test. Ask students what they should do during the last 5 minutes (e.g., they should finish up writing their story, make sure they completed each step of the tricks, make sure they included all the parts and check their story to see if they forgot something or need to change something).
3. Review with students that good stories are **fun to read, fun to write, include sparkle words, make sense, and have all their important parts**. Ask students to tell you what these parts are: **They tell the reader who the story is about and who else might be in the story, where the story takes place, when the story occurs, what happens in the story, the emotions/feelings of the characters, and how the story ends.**

Teachers may want to create a poster or chart illustrating for students how to spend their time students can refer to as they are learning to pace themselves

4. Remind students that they have set goals for their writing and that they should try to meet their goals on the timed practice test just as they have on all of their other stories.

Step 4: Independent Writing Under Timed-Writing Conditions

1. Say, "*Now let's practice taking a timed writing test.*" Emphasize this is a practice test to help students understand how to use the planning and writing tricks they have been learning and how to manage their writing time.
2. Remind students that when they take the actual test, no one will remind them to use the tricks they learned.
3. Pass out the writing prompt 7 and three pieces of writing paper for each student. Begin timing when you direct students to start writing.
4. Announce when students have 5 minutes remaining.
5. After the 35 minutes is up, tell students to stop writing.
6. Discuss with students what they were doing when you announced there was only 5 minutes remaining. Did this seem like enough time or did they run out of time? Discuss any other issues that arose.

Step 5: Graph the Independently Written Story About Me

1. Pass out or have students get their COUNT and Plan FAST graphing sheet.
2. Remind students each rocket has 7 squares. Each square on the rocket gets colored for each step of COUNT and FAST that was used.
3. Remind students each rocket also has stars. Remind them to color in one star for including each of the following: characters other than me, when the story occurs, where the story takes place, the emotions/feelings of the character(s) and one for each sparkle word. Help as needed. Remind students that if we use even more sparkle words, we can bust our rocket.
4. Once students have colored the squares and stars, remind students their goal is to fill in each square on the rocket each time they write.

Teachers may want to prompt some students to move on as they practice or give the whole class time warnings

5. Tell students they won't have the rockets sheet when they take the TCAP test, but they can still check to see if they have completed COUNT and Plan FAST and if they have written a story that is fun to read, fun to write, includes sparkle words, makes sense and has all the important parts.

Step 6: Guidelines for Sharing the Students' Stories About Me (Author's Chair)

1. Have a student, or each student, read aloud their story about me, if/as time allows. (Or, you might consider posting stories, having students share their stories in pairs, etc.)
2. The other students and teacher comment on one thing they liked (e.g., the sparkle words, the actions in the story, the cohesive storyline, the details describing an event, knowing the characters' emotions, etc.).
3. The other students and teacher suggest one way to make the story better (e.g., "You could use humongous, a sparkle word, instead of big." "You could combine these two sentences to make the story a little more interesting." "I was not sure what the feeling was in the middle, can you clarify that?").

Step 7: Lesson Wrap Up

For students who are having trouble planning and writing in 35 minutes, have another practice timed test (use the prompt bank and these same test directions); this time, tell them to start and then tell them when 10 minutes has passed to help them know how long 10 minutes is and the amount of planning they can get done in this time. This lesson can be repeated, using different prompts from the prompt bank, with individuals, small groups, or the whole class, until all students are comfortable planning and writing in 35 minutes.

Teachers may want to prompt students to draw their own rocket on the prompt page to remind them to reread their writing to check for all their parts

DIRECTIONS FOR ADMINISTERING WRITING PROBES TO THE CLASS

Materials: prompt for each child, lined paper for each child, extra pencils, timer, stapler

Hi everyone.

I am going to ask you to plan and write a story. You will write a story about a specific topic. I will pass out a piece of paper in a moment that has the writing topic or prompt on it. I will also pass out several sheets of lined paper that are stapled together for you to write on. (pass out the writing prompt and lined paper)

Does everyone have a pencil to write with? (pass out pencils to those who need them).
The first thing that I would like to ask you to do is to write your first and last name on each of the pieces of paper that I just gave you.

Ok, now please put your pencil down while I tell you what you are going to write your story about. Please look at the single page of paper I gave you. This page tells you about the topic of your story (hold up the prompt sheet so that each child can see it).

I want you to read the prompt on this page silently to yourself as I read it aloud. Read the prompt aloud.

Writing Situation: Suppose one day you found a magic hat.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin to write, think about what the magic hat can do and what would happen if you put it on.

Now write a story about your day when you found a magic hat.

You may repeat the prompt as many times as necessary. Note: Prompts must not be discussed or vocabulary words defined.

You will have 35 minutes to plan and write your story.

REMEMBER TO WRITE ONLY ON THIS TOPIC.

Before you start to write your story, spend some time thinking about the topic and planning your story. You can write your notes or plans on the writing topic page we just read together (hold the prompt sheet up for students to see). **If you need additional space to write your notes or plans, please do this on the first page of the lined pages that are stapled together.**

When you write your story, please write it on the lined sheets of paper that are stapled together that I gave you (show them the lined paper). You will receive no other paper. Write neatly. Do not skip lines.

Express your thoughts clearly and make your story interesting to the reader.

Remember you have 35 minutes to plan and write your story. I will tell you when you have five minutes remaining. I cannot help you as you write your story.

Do you have any questions? Answer questions on testing only. If students ask questions as they work, just say, “I cannot help you. Just do your best.”

When students are ready to start, say:

When you finish writing your story, put your pencil down on your paper and sit quietly (if a student finishes and is unable to set quietly, go up to him and quietly tell him/her he may draw something on the back of his paper – only do this if necessary).

Now, you may begin planning and writing. (start timer)

If a student asks how to spell a word or for any other type of help, say: **Do the best you can**

When five minutes remain (at the 30-minute mark), say:

You have five minutes to complete your writing.

At stopping time, say:

Stop writing. I will now collect your story and the material I gave you.

Writing Prompt: 7

Writing Situation: Suppose one day you found a magic hat.

Directions for Writing: Before you begin to write, think about what the magic hat can do and what would happen if you put it on.

Now write a story about your day when you found a magic hat.