

First Steps Writing Stages of Development

Conventional Phase

Conventional writers demonstrate control over the conventions of writing and most components of the writing process. While composing, they take responsibility for adjusting the language and content to suit specific audiences and purposes. Conventional writers craft a variety of literary and informational texts, such as biographies, web pages and documentary scripts. In this phase, writers use an increasing bank of known words and select from a wide vocabulary. They integrate a range of strategies to spell unknown words.

Key Indicators

USE OF TEXTS

- Crafts a wide range of texts, demonstrating control over all elements.
- Composes texts by retrieving, recording and organising information appropriate to purpose and audience.

CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING

- Explains why a particular text form may be more appropriate to achieve a purpose for an intended audience.
- Adjusts the language and ideas to include in own texts to suit purpose and audience.
- Selects ways to represent characters and events to create specific effects in literary texts.
- Selects ways to represent people and ideas to create specific effects in informational texts.
- Uses devices when attempting to influence the reader, e.g. flattery, humour.

CONVENTIONS

- Selects vocabulary to create precise meaning.
- Spells and uses a large bank of known words correctly.
- Knows and uses less common letter patterns correctly, e.g. aisle, reign.
- Writes a variety of simple, compound and complex sentences using correct punctuation.
- Develops a paragraph by writing a topic sentence and including supporting information.

PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES

- Draws upon semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge when writing, e.g. world and cultural knowledge, linguistic features.
- Selects appropriate strategies to use throughout the writing process.
- Selects appropriate strategies to spell unknown words.
- Plans for writing in a range of ways, e.g. graphic organisers, storyboard.
- Independently proofreads, edits and revises own writing.
- Selects appropriate publication formats to enhance audience understanding and impact.

ENVIRONMENT AND ATTITUDE

- Create a supportive classroom environment that nurtures a community of writers.
- Foster students' enjoyment of writing.
- Encourage students to experiment with different facets of writing, e.g. manipulating forms, use of devices.
- Encourage students to value writing as a social practice.

USE OF TEXTS

- Continue to expose students to a range of text forms and discuss the features of each.
- Provide opportunities for students to craft a range of texts for authentic purposes and audiences.
- Encourage students to experiment with the manipulation of elements to compose a text.
- Foster students' sense of 'personal voice' and individual writing style.
- Continue to teach students the metalanguage associated with writing and encourage its use.

CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING

- Provide opportunities for students to explain their choice of text, information and ideas included or omitted, and devices used.
- Encourage students to represent characters and events to create specific effects in literary texts.
- Encourage students to represent people and ideas to create specific effects in informational texts.
- Encourage students to select devices to influence a particular audience.
- Encourage students to use writing to influence change about social issues that concern them.
- Continue to discuss how writers' and readers' knowledge, experiences and perspective affect the composition and interpretation of texts.

CONVENTIONS

- Provide opportunities for students to develop, refine and use new vocabulary.
- Continue to build the bank of words students can automatically spell and use, e.g. technical terms.
- Continue to build students' knowledge about words and word parts, e.g. derivatives and word origins.
- Extend students' knowledge of the use of punctuation, e.g. colons, hyphens.
- Extend students' knowledge and use of parts of speech and their relationships, e.g. active and passive verbs.
- Continue to teach students to construct and manipulate a variety of sentences.
- Teach students different ways to develop cohesive paragraphs.
- Continue to build knowledge of different text forms.
- Build knowledge of texts where combinations and adaptations of text structure and organisation have been used.

PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES

- Continue to build students' semantic, graphophonic and syntactic knowledge, e.g. orthographic knowledge, cultural knowledge.
- Continue to teach strategies used throughout the writing process.
- Consolidate known spelling strategies.
- Encourage students to discuss the effectiveness of various ways they plan for writing.
- Encourage students to use proofreading, editing and revising to refine their writing.
- Continue to encourage students to select and use publishing formats that best suit purpose and audience, e.g. website, video, portfolio.
- Encourage students to evaluate their effectiveness in retrieving, recording and organising information from texts and to critique own texts.
- Model how to reflect on the writing process and products and encourage students to do the same.