

# Meeting the New Writing Expectations

Preparing Teachers  
and Students for Success



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# Meeting the New Writing Expectations: Preparing Teachers and Students for Success

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# The Common Core State Standards

When the CCSS were released In 2010, many were surprised to find that writing has been elevated to an equal status with reading and math. In ELA:

- There are 10 reading standards; there are also 10 writing standards
- There are three reading-related language standards, but there are also three writing-related language standards
- All students are expected to engage in research—which combines reading with writing—as they learn science, social studies, and literature



# The Challenge Presented by the New Writing Expectations

- The quantity and rigor of the new writing expectations are commensurate with those in reading and math
- Allocated instructional time for writing, and teacher expertise in teaching writing, typically lag significantly behind those in the other two areas
- So, writing is the area of the curriculum that has the furthest to go to meet the new standards



# A Strategy for Success in Writing



# ***Increase the Quantity of Writing throughout the School Day***

1. Overcome student reluctance to write
2. Elicit quick writes across the school day
3. Have students write, share, and store first drafts



# *Overcome student reluctance to write*

- Can't Stop Writing
- The Four/Five Steps (Fisher, 1991)
- Engaging and doable writing activities



## *Elicit quick writes across the school day*

- Quick writes after learning
- Quick writes before learning
- Quick writes during learning





## *Have students write, share, and store first drafts*

- Elicit personal writing
- Use prompts to elicit writing about content you are teaching
- Use prompts to elicit attempts to write opinion pieces, informational pieces, or narratives



# Sample Prompts

- We have recently studied the poem, “Casey at the Bat.” Write a story with Casey as the main character. Have your story begin the next day after he struck out.
- Polonius told Laertes, “To thine own self be true.” In his Nobel Lecture, Elie Wiesel asked himself whether he had been true to the young Jewish boy he was during the Holocaust. Decide whether there is a contradiction between being true to yourself and self-improvement. Explain and defend your choice.



# *Increase the Quantity of Writing throughout the School Day*

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## Q&A:

Increasing the quantity of writing  
throughout the school day



# *Help Students Improve Writing by Analyzing Complex Texts*

- Find one or more well-written examples of the type of writing/purpose you are teaching students to write
- Use an exemplar text to teach the instructional vocabulary you plan to use with your students as you help them plan, write, and revise
- Rewrite an exemplar text to remove particular features you want students to attend to and then have them compare the original with your rewritten version





## Q&A:

Helping students improve writing by  
analyzing complex texts



# ***Make the Writing Process a Vehicle of Instruction***

- Teach students how to plan
- Teach students how revise
- Teach students how to edit

# Teach students how to plan

- Teach them to read the writing prompt (assignment) closely and unpack it
- Help them study a mentor text
- When they are writing from sources, help them learn to take notes and organize them for writing
- Engage them in individual planning to determine how their paper will be unique, i.e., different from every other student's in the class





# Teach students how to revise

- Research supports the use of guidelines for revision tied either to content or the type of writing they are learning how to do (MacArthur, 2007)
- Guidelines help students evaluate their own drafts for lacks and for opportunities to make them stronger (Hayes, 2004)
- The CCSS and similar sets of writing standards list grade-appropriate characteristics for the principal types of writing such as opinion pieces, informational writing, and narratives
- These lists provide excellent guidelines for students to follow to revise some of their writing



# Teach students how to edit

- Research also supports giving students specific guidelines for editing (Hillocks, 1986)
- The CCSS and similar sets of language standards list grade-appropriate conventions in standard English language usage and writing mechanics
- These lists provide excellent guidelines for students to follow to edit some of their writing



# ***Make the Writing Process a Vehicle of Instruction***

- Teach students how to plan
- Teach students how revise
- Teach students how to edit





**Q&A:**

**Making the writing process a vehicle  
for instruction**



# *Teach Opinion Piece and Informational Piece Writing across the Curriculum*

1. Use a prompt-based writing lesson to elicit first drafts
2. Have students select from three or more first drafts the one they are going to revise
3. Provide students with revision guidelines for the content or the type of writing (If both, have them revise the content first)



# A Sample Prompt

Choose a Founding Father and write a biography of him.



# Prompt-Based Writing Lesson

## *I. Prewriting Segment*

1. Teach or review background knowledge needed to understand the prompt
2. Present the prompt and answer questions about it
3. (Optional) Have the students read one or more sources, refer to ones they have read previously, or examine some objects
4. Have students individually plan their writing

## *II. Writing Segment*

5. Have the students independently write in response to the prompt

## *III. Sharing Segment (Optional)*

6. Have volunteers share what they have written by reading it aloud



# Guidelines for Revision (Opinion Pieces)

1. Clearly introduce the topic, book, or other text you are writing about.
2. State your opinion about the topic, book, or other text.
3. Give good reasons for your opinion.
4. Use linking words to connect your opinion with your reasons.
5. Have a conclusion.





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***THANK YOU!***

**Final Q&A**

