

Learning Difficulties Australia

Learning Difficulties Australia is an association of teachers and other professionals dedicated to assisting students with learning difficulties through effective teaching practices based on scientific research.



www.ldaustralia.org



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[@LD_Australia](https://twitter.com/LD_Australia)



Laura Glisson

Laura is a Certified Practising Speech Pathologist (Speech Pathology Australia), with over 13 years' experience working with school-aged children and young people with language, literacy and social-emotional difficulties.

Laura is the Co-Director and Co-Founder of Tracks to Literacy, where she provides training and coaching to teachers and speech pathologists on oral language and literacy instruction, intervention and assessment. Laura also works as a clinician providing Tier 3 intervention to primary and secondary aged students with language and literacy difficulties. She is the Language and Literacy Specialist at Teach Well in Perth where she works as part of a multidisciplinary team providing training and coaching to teachers on high-impact instructional practices.

Laura is an active member of the Language and Literacy in Young People Research Lab at Curtin University, and her research interests include DLD, Rtl, school-based intervention, oral narrative and writing.



Think it, Say it, Write it! The Fundamentals of Written Expression

Session 6: The Writing Rope – The Big Ideas

Presented by Laura Glisson (BaSc, MPhil Speech Pathology)
Co-Director and Co-Founder, Tracks to Literacy



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laura@trackstoliteracy.com



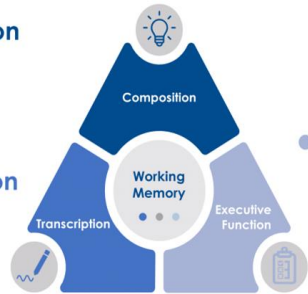
Session 1

• Composition

Ideas
Words
Sentences

• Transcription

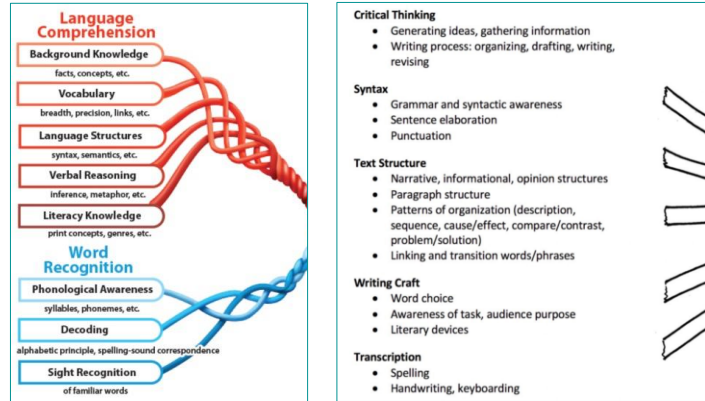
Handwriting
Typing
Spelling



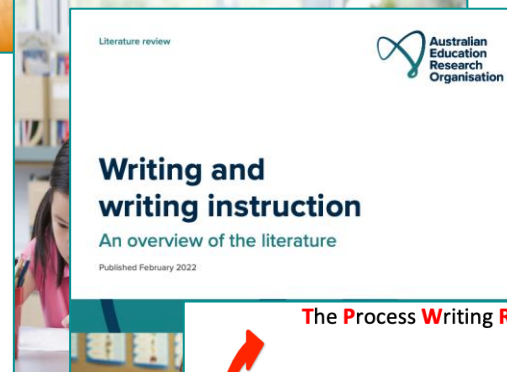
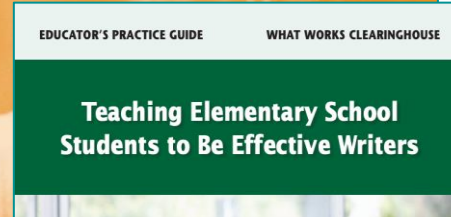
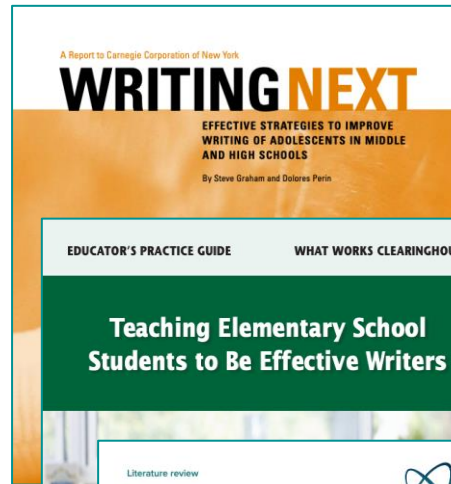
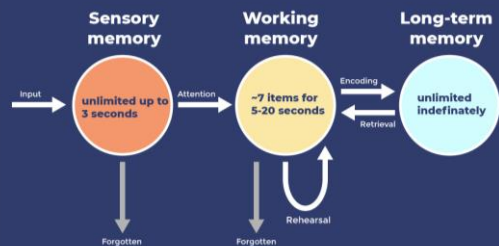
• Executive Function

Planning
Motivation
Reviewing

Language, reading & writing



Information Processing Model



The Process Writing Routine

Think

- Identify audience and purpose
- Brainstorm the topic
- Gather information
- Take notes

Plan

- Organize ideas
- Use a planning guide

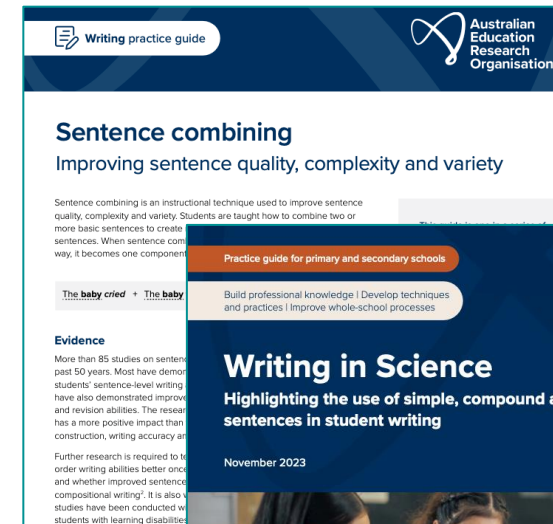
Write

- Follow the guide
- Translate ideas into sentences and paragraphs

Revise

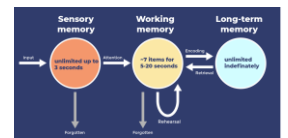
- Review the content
- Proofread for conventions
- Rewrite

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Writing Instruction – Set of first principles

- Process approach** to writing – think, plan, write, revise
- Metacognitive** and **metalinguistic** instruction
- Explicit teaching of text (macro)structure**
- Organising information using **graphic organisers** for both comprehension and expression
- Building background knowledge** using read alouds and text analysis
- Oral to written**
- Repeated opportunities** for telling, retelling and generating stories
- Moving from **retell** to **generation**
- Contextualised **vocabulary**, **syntax** and **punctuation** instruction
- Self-regulated strategy development (SRSD)**



motivation

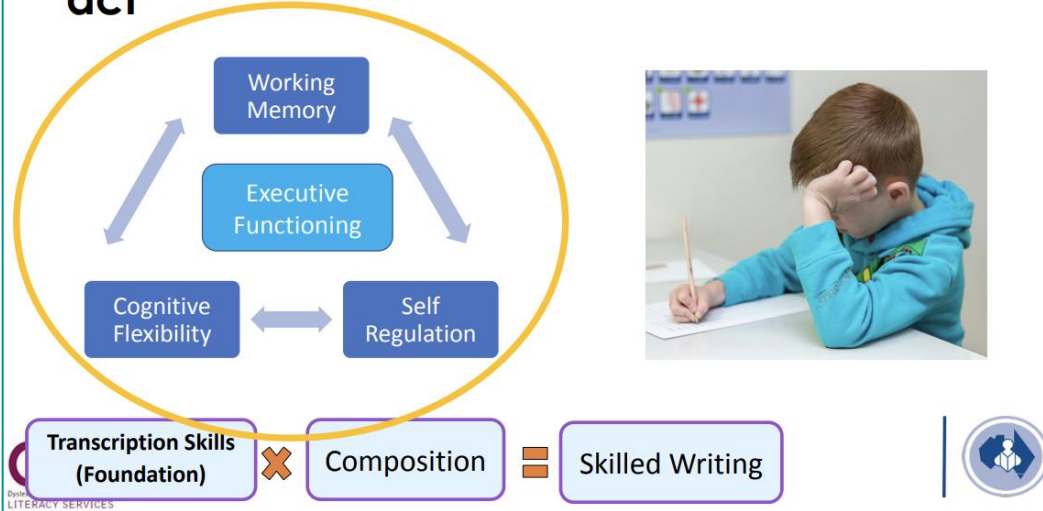
participation

I do, We do,
You do



Session 2

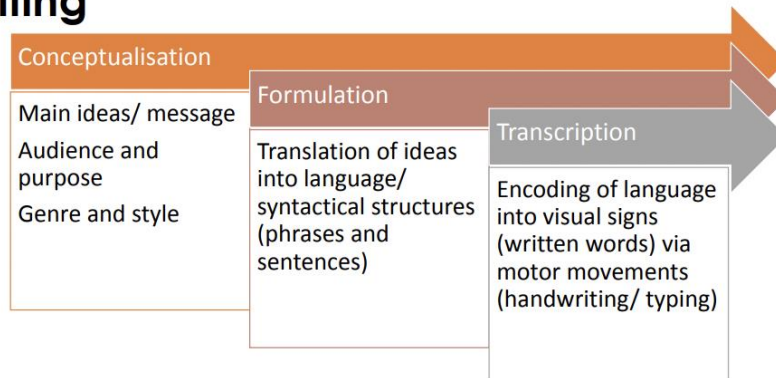
Writing is a mental (cognitive) juggling act



Effective instructional practices

- **Human cognitive architecture is limited**
- **We think using:**
 - Working memory – limited storage, limited time
 - Long-term memory – unlimited storage, unlimited time
- **Aim to reduce cognitive load by:**
 - Reducing the amount of conscious processing needed by breaking the task down and reducing distractions (*reduce WM load*)
 - Using dual coding – effective combination of language and visual images to teach (*support WM*)
 - Building knowledge 'schemas' and automatising basic skills (*increase reliance on LTM*)

Cascading and parallel processes of writing



Topic, plan, translate, revise



Session 3



Every **verb** gives you the opportunity to **upgrade** it.

Every **noun** gives you the opportunity to **enhance** it.

Adverbs: The "Foot Soldiers" of Verbs

- Adverbs are important because they add more detail and information to the main verb.
- They can make the difference between a boring sentence and an interesting sentence that resonates with the reader.
- Fronted adverbials require a comma after them.

Connectivity for Establishing...

Reason

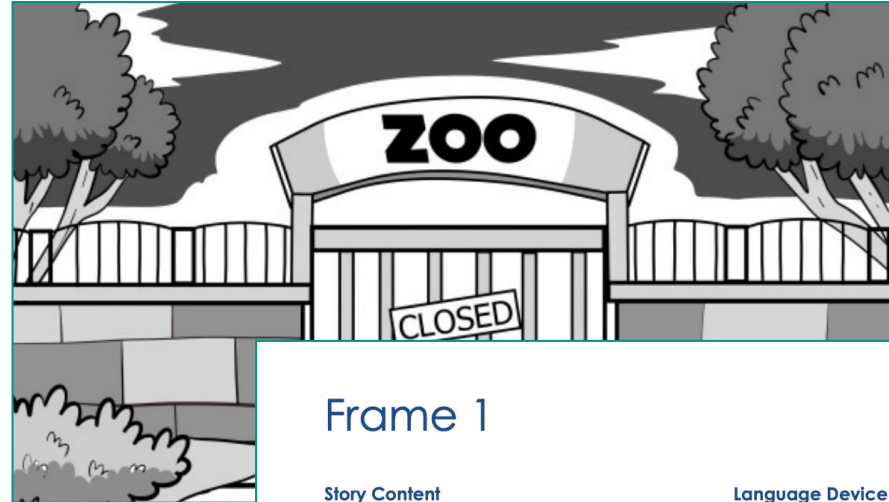
Consequence

Adversity

Time

Condition

Addition



Frame 1

Story Content

1. Late one evening when the **Perth Zoo** had **closed** for the day,
2. **all** the **sleepy** animals were **settling down**
3. in their **enclosures**
4. and getting ready for a **good night's**

Language Device

1. Adverb of time + Adverb of time + Proper nouns (Perth Zoo) + Upgraded verb (closed)
2. Upgraded adjective (sleepy) + upgraded verb (settling down)
3. Adverb of place + Upgraded noun (enclosures)
4. Connection of addition (and) + String of

Prepare to Write

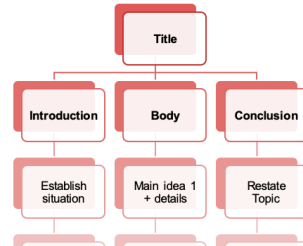
- 1. Say your sentences inside your head – maybe just one at a time.
- 2. Rehearse them a few times; change anything that doesn't make sense or doesn't sound right.
- 3. Practice telling your partner what you want to write.
- 4. Download your sentence from your head to your page.
- 5. Read it as you write it.
- 6. Read it when you have finished it.
- 7. Change if necessary.



Session 4

Informational Writing

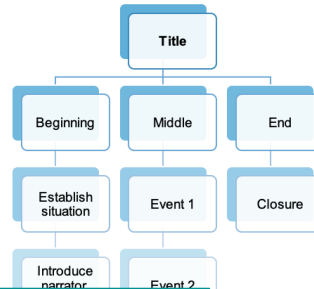
- **What it does:** examines previously learned information or provides new information
- **Text Structure:** organised into sections and subsections that include paragraph main ideas: tends to be organised hierarchically



(Sedita, 2023, p94)

Narrative Writing

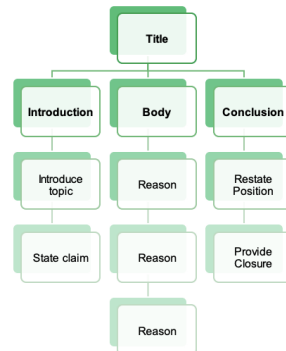
- **What it does:** tells a story (real or imagined) of an experience, event, or sequence of events
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Opinion/Argument Writing

- **What it does:** Gives an opinion or makes an argument to convince the reader that a point of view is valid or to persuade the reader to take a specific action
- **Text Structure:** organised around specific text components – claim, reasons, evidence, counter-claim, rebuttal

(Sedita, 2023, p94)



Should Children Have to Go to School?

Kids need to go to school. One reason why it is important to go to school is **because** at school you make friends. You meet kids from other classes that may not be in your neighborhood. Another reason why school is **important** is **because** this is where you learn a lot. You learn to read and write. You also learn about science and history. One more reason why kids should go to school is **because** school can be a lot of fun. Kids get art and gym and recess that are all fun. Kids go on field trips in school. I know that some kids might say, "No school!" But I say, "School is fun, it helps you make new friends, and teaches you what you need to know."

Elements of Opinion

Points of View
1st or 3rd Person

State your claim

Reason 1

Evidence (examples, facts, statistics, expert opinions)

Reason 2

Evidence (examples, facts, statistics, expert opinions)

Reason 3

Evidence (examples, facts, statistics, expert opinions)

Conclusion

Restate, summarise, and provide closure

Author's Purpose:
To convince or persuade

Transition Words
also, another, because,
finally, in addition, in fact

Opinion Writing Template

1. Introduce your claim (the position you are taking). State your claim: <u>Kids should go to school.</u>	
2. Determine the reasons and evidence to support your claim.	
Reason	Evidence (examples, facts, statistics, expert opinion)
1. <u>You make friends.</u>	<u>Meet other kids that may not be in your neighbourhood.</u>
2. <u>You learn a lot.</u>	<u>read, write science, history</u>
3. <u>It is fun.</u>	<u>art, gym, recess</u>
3. Provide a conclusion that restates your claim. Restate your claim: <u>Some kids might not agree, but...</u>	
Summarise your reasons: <u>fun, friends, teaches you</u>	
Provide some closure: <u>"Quote"</u>	
4. Use transition words and phrases. also, another, because, finally, for example, in addition, in fact, likewise, most importantly	



Session 5 – Writer's Craft

Co-construct writer's moves

- Co-constructing understanding is essential to connect audience and purpose.
- 'We do' enables students develop and apply understanding to write coherently (not copy).
- Explicit instruction of writer's craft develops an internalised flexible framework to write appropriately for what is required in task, for different purposes and audiences.
- Shared writing uses this framework and model to students how to express their understanding effectively.



Teacher models the writing.

- Co-construct understanding and the teacher models writing.



Between the sea and the sky, was a velvet valley hiding a tiny village of peculiar houses: dusty, crooked steps, round doors and crumbling chimneys that stooped like an old man.



Explicitly teach the writer's craft

- Identify example in the model text that includes the writer's move to be taught.
- E.g. Place the reader in the setting and pile up the description

On an enormous table, someone had set out a great feast: slices of golden chicken, huge bowls of fresh salad and scarlet strawberries like glowing embers in an open fire.

Prepositional phrase, introduce what the list is about: describe the things —, — and — simile (or other figurative language).



Students practise the writer's craft

- Students use the sentence structure and teacher modelling to support writing and development of writer's craft.

Deep in the silent woods, was a solitary graveyard: cold, granite headstones, decaying bodies and a tree with branches like a creature's wiry hand.

With thanks Dandenong North Primary School

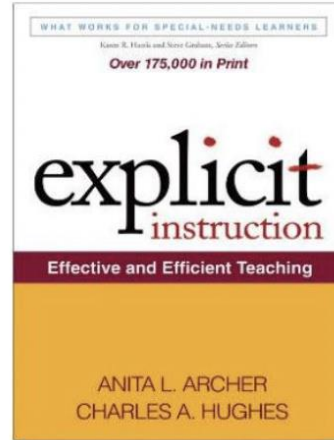


Session 5 - Spelling

How should spelling be taught?

Explicit instruction

- Well sequenced lessons
- Clear and concise language
- Guided practice
- Independent practice
- Feedback and correction
- Frequent student responses
- Cumulative review



How to plan Tier 1 spelling instruction at the primary level

Considerations:

- You need a scope and sequence - state what is to be taught, and in what order
- How is spelling instruction related to reading/writing instruction?
- Will you use a published spelling program?

The Components of Spelling

- **Triple Word Form Theory**
 - Phonology
 - Orthography
 - Morphology
- **Etymology**

Published programs

Considerations for choosing a published program

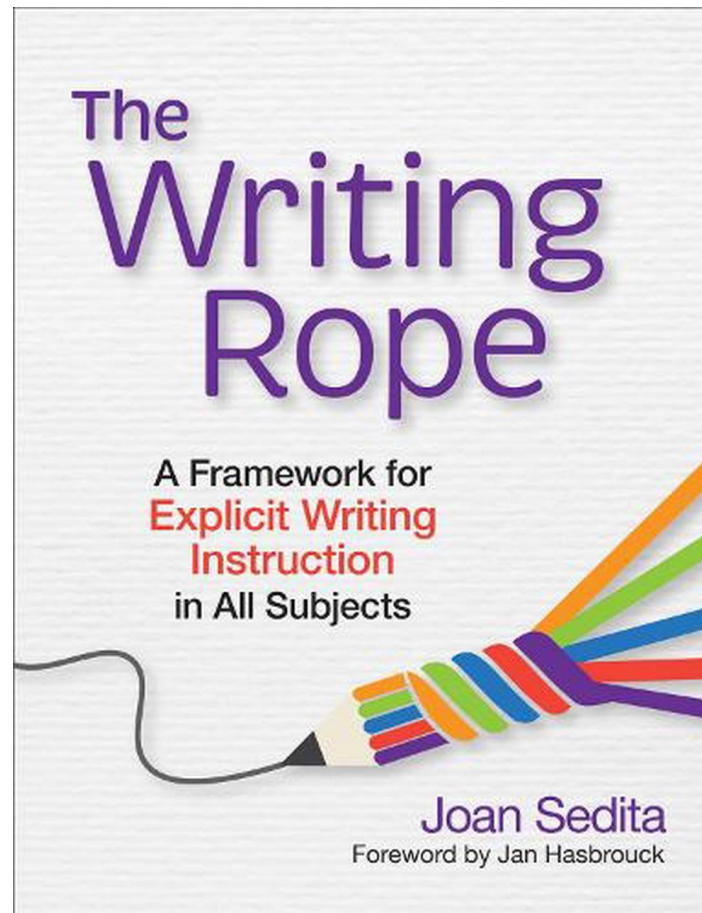
1. Is the program evidence-based?
2. Are there any efficacy/effectiveness studies on this specific program?
3. Does the program include a research rationale?
4. Does the program use a language-based approach to teaching spelling?
5. Does the program use effective teaching techniques?
6. Does the program include a clear scope and sequence?
7. Does the program include clear links between assessment and instruction?



Session 6

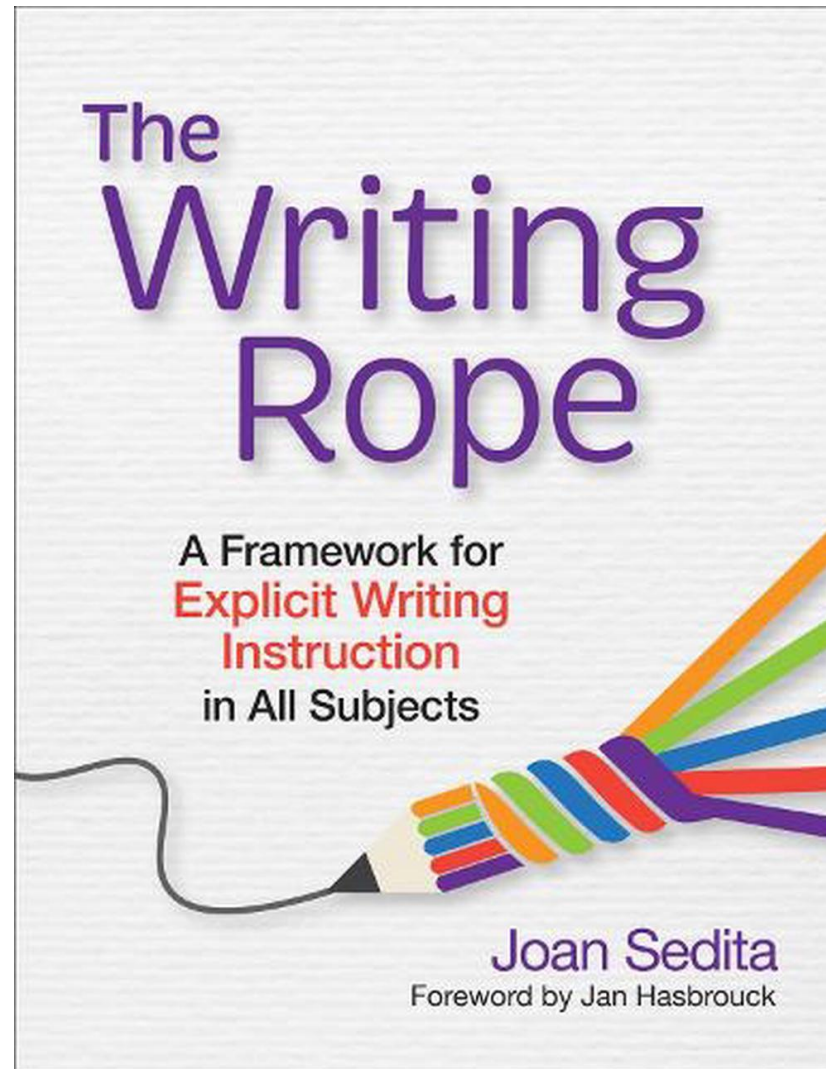


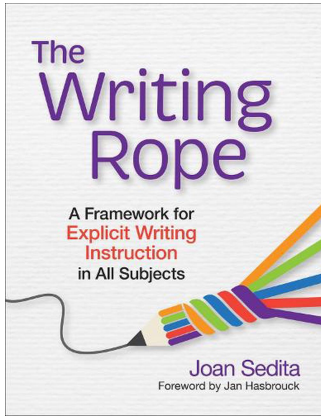
Putting It All Together: The Big Ideas



Content writing
promotes and deepens
content learning.

Teachers in any subject
area can support
writing.

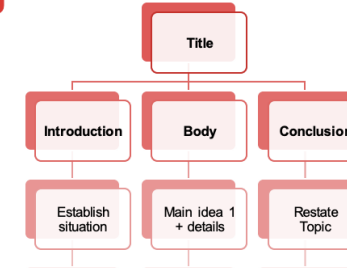




Being able to write information, opinion/argument and narrative texts are critical.

Informational Writing

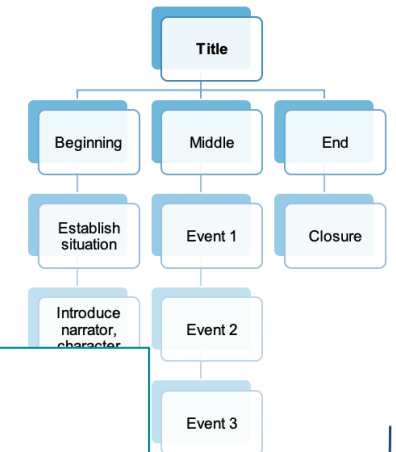
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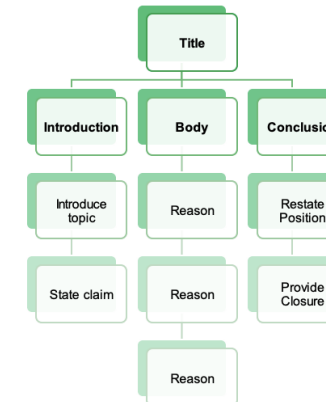
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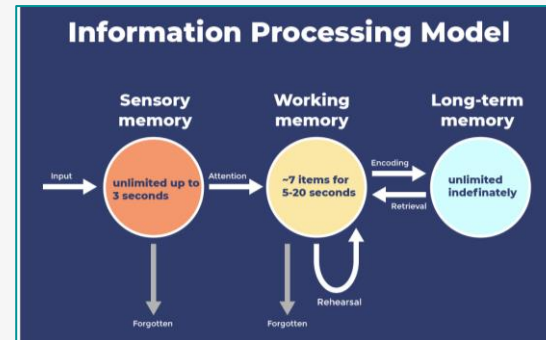
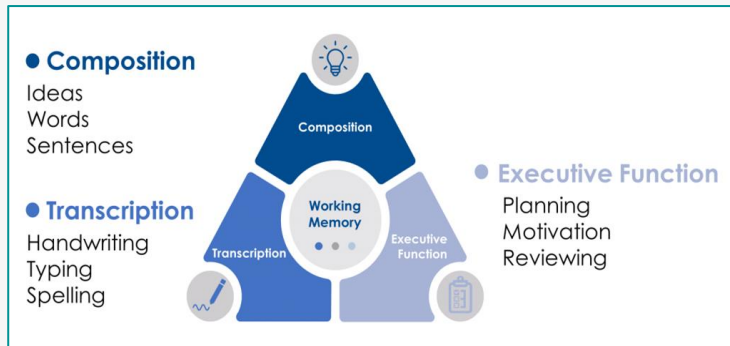
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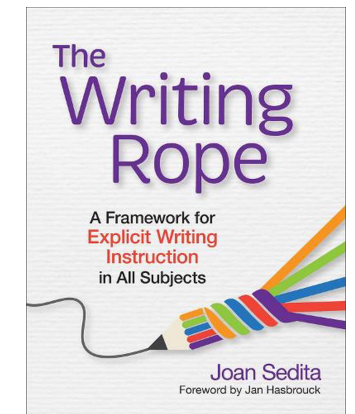


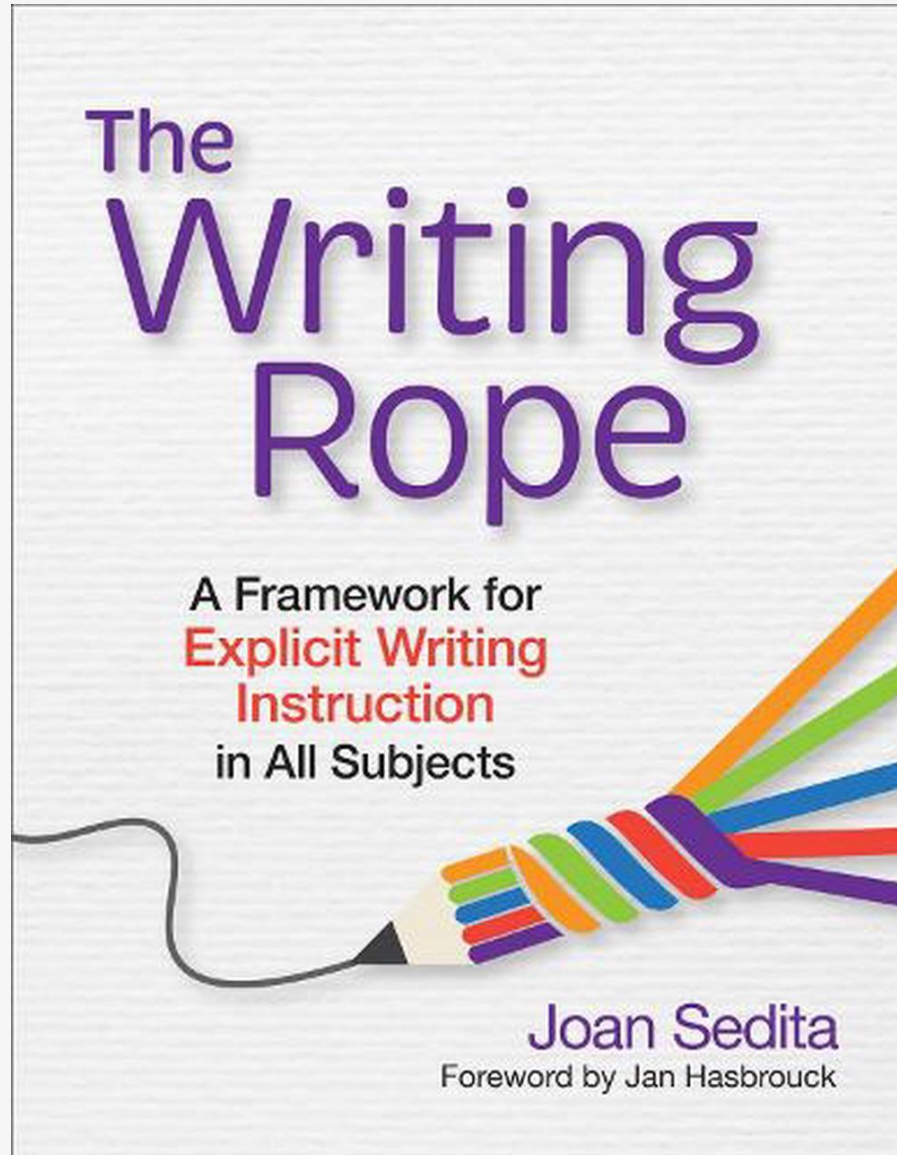


Writing is complex and requires students to integrate many different skills and strategies

Effective instructional practices

- **Human cognitive architecture is limited**
- **We think using:**
 - Working memory – limited storage, limited time
 - Long-term memory – unlimited storage, unlimited time
- **Aim to reduce cognitive load by:**
 - Reducing the amount of conscious processing needed by breaking the task down and reducing distractions (*reduce WM load*)
 - Using dual coding – effective combination of language and visual images to teach (*support WM*)
 - Building knowledge 'schemas' and automatising basic skills (*increase reliance on LTM*)





Consider how difficulties with transcription (spelling, handwriting, keyboarding) might affect students' writing.



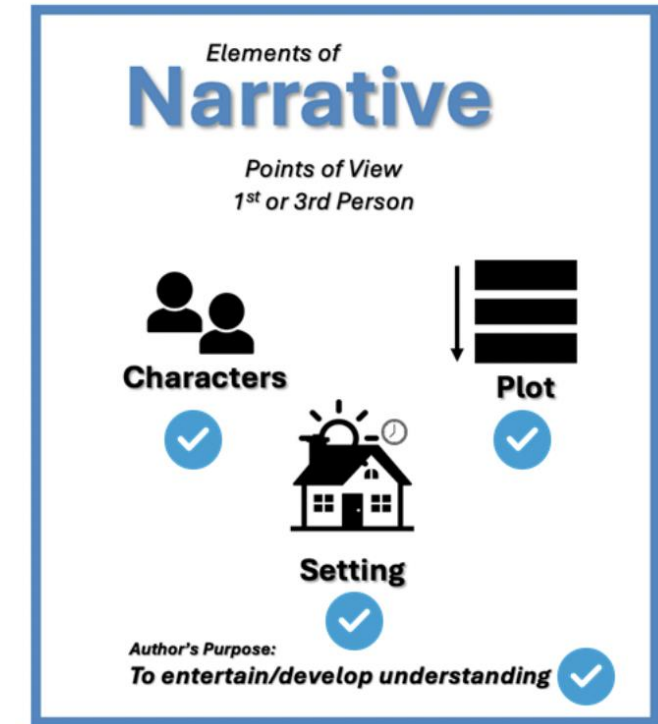
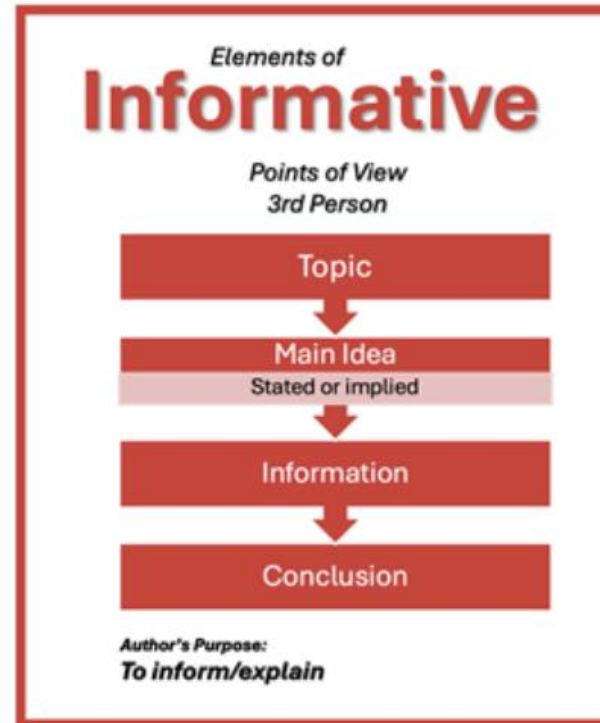
Students should consider the TAP for any writing task

TAP

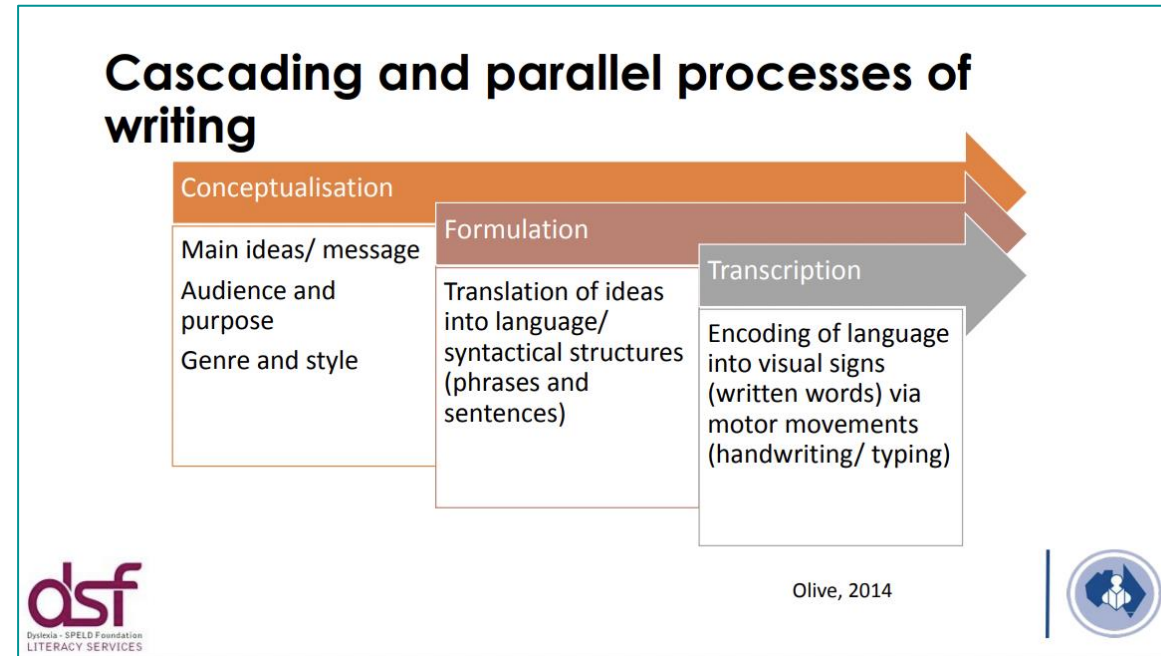
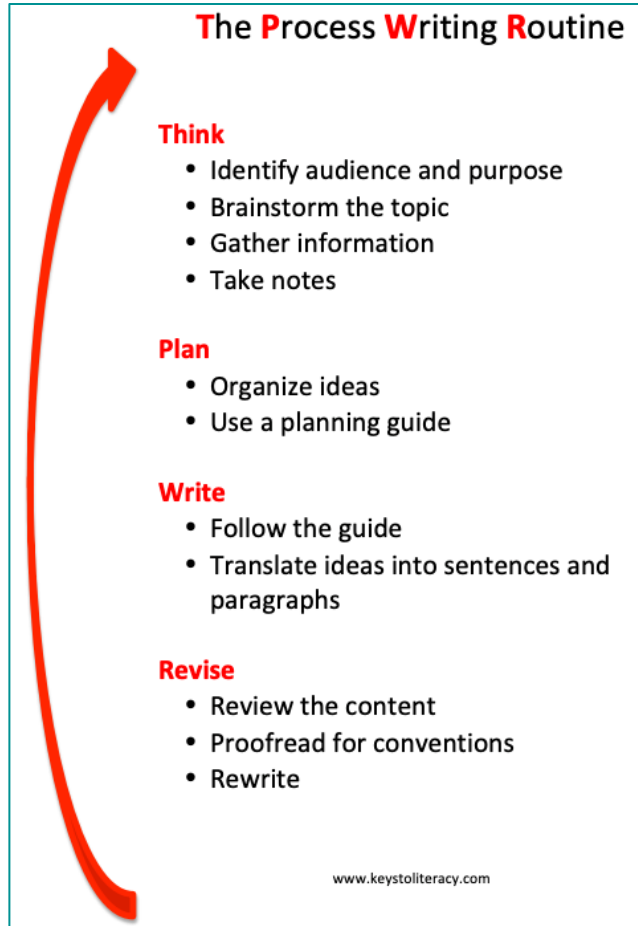
- Task
- Audience
- Purpose

GAPS

- Genre
- Audience
- Purpose
- Structure



Explicitly teach students strategies and skills to support all stages of the writing process



Topic, plan, translate, revise



Sentences and paragraphs are the building blocks of writing, and students benefit from explicit instruction that helps them produce quality sentences and paragraphs.



Writing practice guide



Australian
Education
Research
Organisation

Sentence combining

Improving sentence quality, complexity and variety

Sentence combining is an instructional technique used to improve sentence quality, complexity and variety. Students are taught how to combine two or more basic sentences to create more interesting, sophisticated and varied sentences. When sentence combining is taught explicitly and in a sustained way, it becomes one component of successful writing instruction.

The baby cried + The baby was hungry = The hungry baby cried

Evidence

More than 85 studies on sentence combining have been conducted over the past 50 years. Most have demonstrated that sentence combining improves students' sentence-level writing across years and ability levels. Some studies have also demonstrated improvement in students' overall writing quality and revision abilities. The research also indicates that sentence combining has a more positive impact than traditional grammar instruction on sentence construction, writing accuracy and writing quality¹.

Further research is required to test whether students can focus on higher-order writing abilities better once sentence-level writing is mastered and whether improved sentence-level writing translates to students' compositional writing². It is also worth noting that many of the more recent studies have been conducted with small sample sizes and often with students with learning disabilities, rather than the more general student

This guide is one in a series of practice guides on evidence-based writing instruction in the classroom. It is intended for use across year levels and discipline areas.

For this guide, AERO has synthesised the most rigorous and relevant evidence-based practices and is informed by our [literature review](#). AERO has rated these sources of information against its Standards of evidence, focusing on evidence generated in an Australian context where possible.

Our focus on sentence combining, and more broadly teaching writing, aligns with the [Australian Curriculum Content Descriptions](#) and the [National Literacy Learning](#)

Learning Objective



We are learning to combine and punctuate sentences using subordinate conjunctions.



Concept Development- re-explanation

1. Circle the subordinate conjunction
2. Underline the independent clause



Butterflies remain in their chrysalis until they are ready to emerge.

Mum made some cookies which everyone enjoyed.

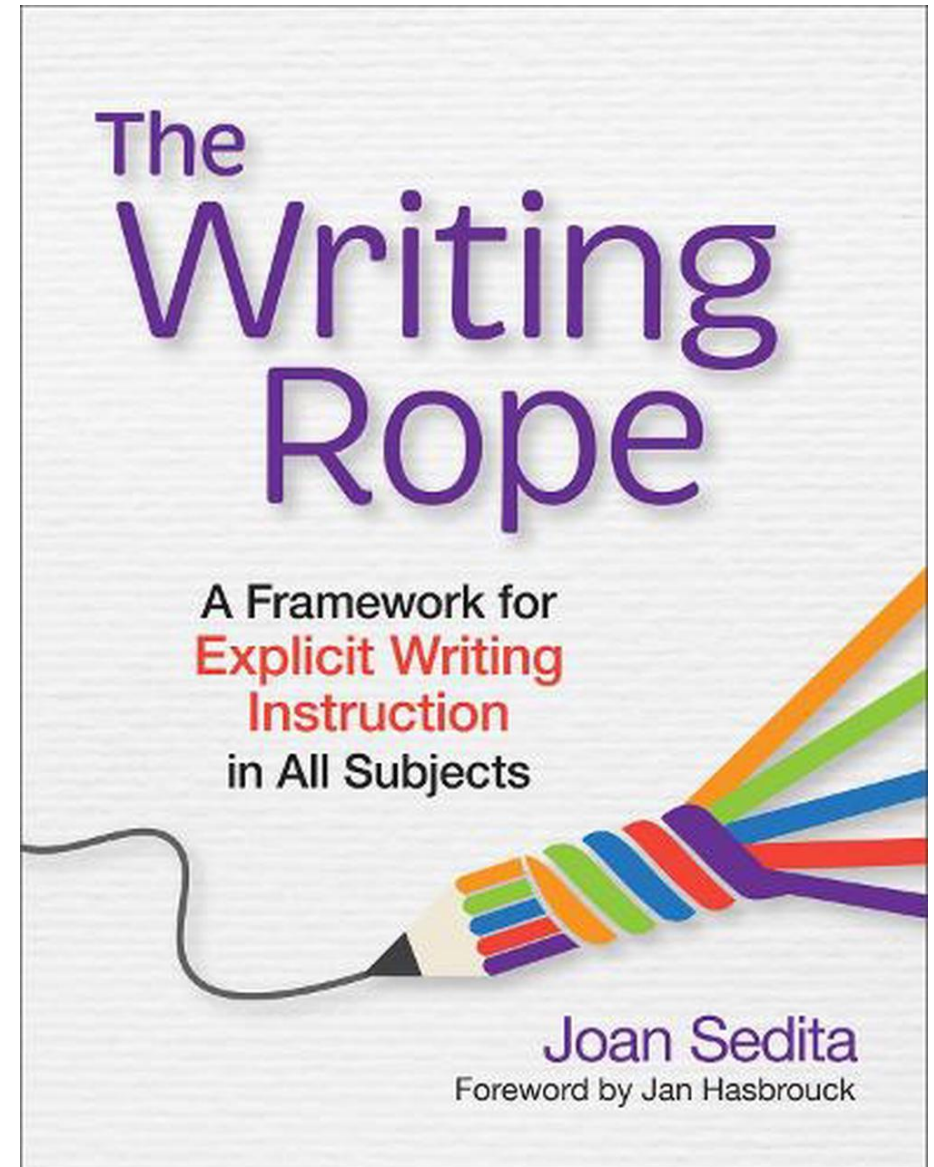
Since we moved house, I have made a lot of new friends.



CRU:

- What's the subordinate conjunction?
- Why is 'because' the dependent clause?

Writing-to-learn tasks (summarising, writing assignments) that require students to respond to a narrative or informational text supports content learning and critical thinking.



Basic Comprehension of Text

Guiding Questions for Responding to Informational Text

- What is the central idea of the whole text?

Questions for Responding to Narrative Text

Overall personal response

- What did you feel as you were reading?
- Is there something that reminds you of yourself or people you know?
- Is there something that reminds you of something that happened?
- Is there a confusing part of the story?
- What do you agree or disagree with?
- What do you like and dislike about the story?
- Is there something you wonder about?
- Is there something you wish had happened differently?

Response to theme

- What do you think is important about the story?
- What is the theme of the story?
- Is there a message in the story?

Response to characters

- What is your opinion of the characters?
- Did the main character change throughout the story?
- What was the main character's problem? How did they solve it?
- Do you agree with the actions of the characters? Would your actions be different?

Response to setting

- What is your reaction to the setting(s) in the story (including time and place)?
- How does the setting fit into the story, and why is it important?

Response to the author

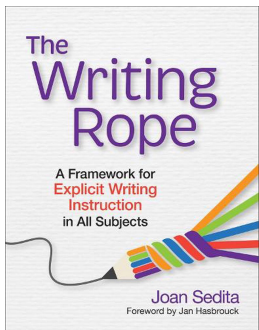
- Why do you think the author wrote this story?
- What do you think about the author's choice for the title?
- Does the author make you feel that you are part of the story? How does the author do this?
- What did you like about the author's writing?
- Did you learn something you might try in your writing?

Available with
purchase of The
Writing Rope

Read text more than 1x

1st read = overall
understanding of the text

Use questions to support
comprehension

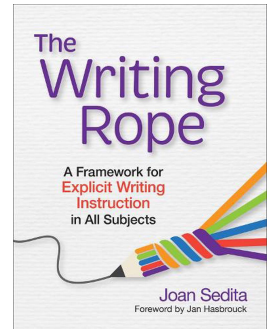


Text Annotation

- **2nd read = search for relevant information and annotate the text**
- **Annotations:**
 - margin notes
 - highlighting/underlining
- **‘Reading with a pencil’**

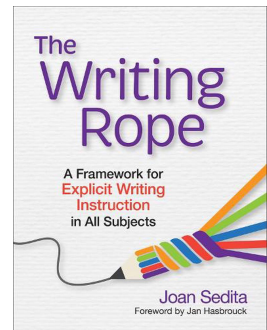
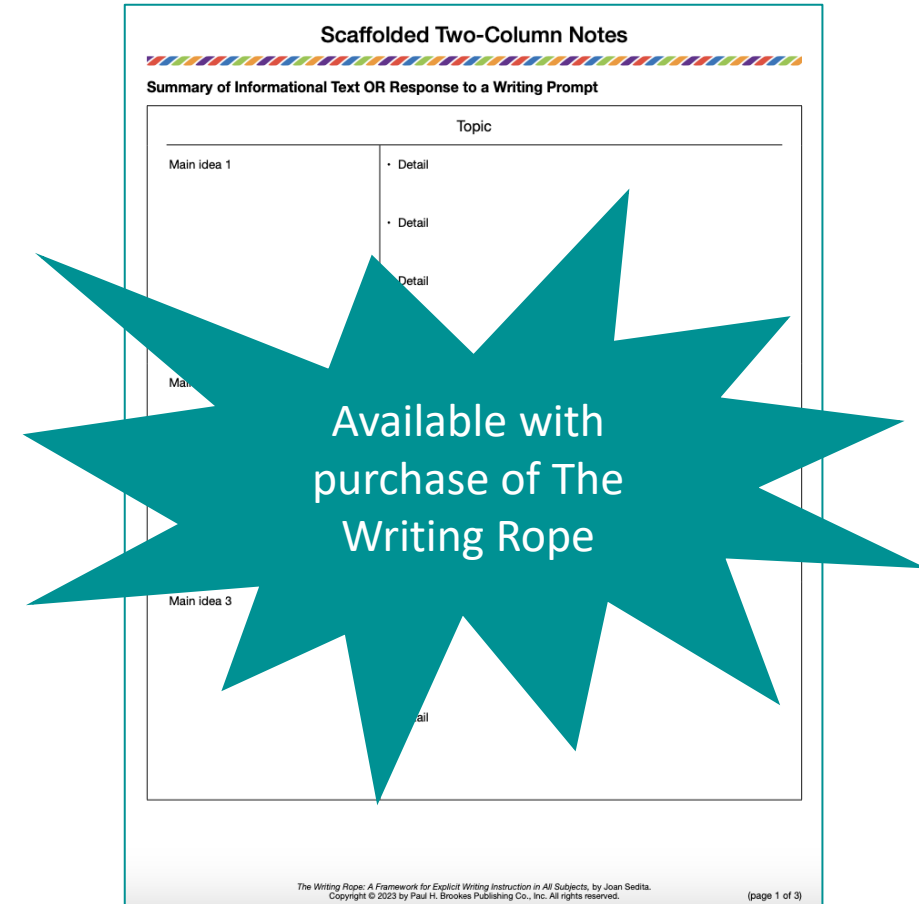


- **Tips:**
 - underline/highlight info relevant to writing task
 - use more than 1 colour – 1x for main idea, 1x for supporting info
 - connect ideas with lines & arrows
 - use symbols (*, #?)
 - notes in margin to clarify meaning/thinking, ask questions
 - paraphrase key phrases from text



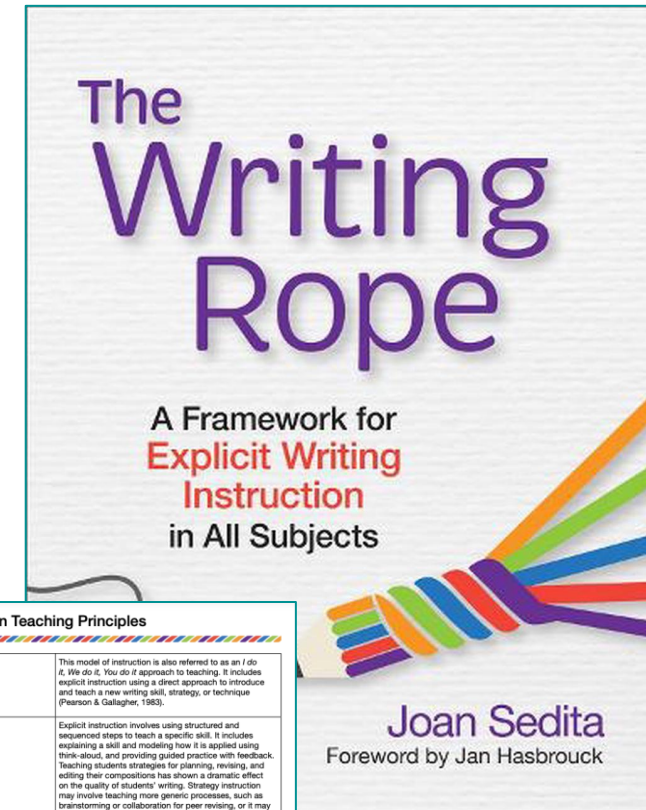
Two-Column Notes

- Two-line column for organising information from multiple sources
- Vertical line down the length of the page
- Horizontal line near the top
- Left column = big ideas
- Right column = supporting details
- Completed prior to writing a response to a writing prompt



Seven Teaching Principles

1. Gradual release of responsibility when teaching a skill, using an ***I do it, we do it, you do it*** approach
2. Explicit instruction of writing strategies, using a **think-aloud** approach
3. **Differentiated instruction** to meet individual student needs
4. **Scaffolding** to support learning of new skills
5. Opportunities for **collaboration with peers**
6. Use of **mentor text** as models for writing
7. **Increasing the amount** students write in all subject areas



Seven Teaching Principles	
Gradual release of responsibility	This model of instruction is also referred to as an <i>I do it, We do it, You do it</i> approach to teaching. It includes explicit instruction using a direct approach to introduce and teach a new writing skill, strategy, or technique (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983).
Explicit instruction of writing strategies	Explicit instruction involves using structured and sequenced steps to teach a specific skill. It includes explaining a skill and modeling how it is applied using think-aloud, and providing guided practice with feedback. Teaching students strategies for planning, revising, and editing their compositions has shown a dramatic effect on the quality of students' writing. Strategy instruction may involve teaching more generic processes, such as brainstorming or collaboration for peer revising, or it may involve strategies for accomplishing a specific type of writing task, such as writing an opinion or argument piece (Graham & Perin, 2007).
Differentiated instruction	Differentiated instruction calls for designing instruction to suit individual student needs rather than using a standardized approach to instruction that assumes all students learn to write the same way.
Scaffolding	Scaffolding is assistance offered by a teacher or a peer to support learning a writing skill that a student is initially unable to grasp independently, and then removal of the assistance once the skill is learned. This is not the same as doing the work for the student. Scaffolding is a hallmark of differentiated instruction.
Opportunities for collaboration	Writing is a social activity and students benefit from collaborative writing. Collaborative writing involves students working together to plan, write, and edit their compositions.
Mentor text as models for writing	Mentor texts are examples of writing that students can study and use as models for their own writing.
Increasing the amount students write in all subjects	Writing is a skill that improves with practice. Increasing the amount of writing that students do in all subject areas, including content areas, is essential for developing writing proficiency.

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purchase of The
Writing Rope



1. Gradual release of responsibility when teaching a skill, using an *I do it, we do it, you do it* approach

- A direct approach to introducing and teaching a new writing skill, strategy or technique.

The Syntax Project

Year 0 - Term 3

Fogarty Foundation

Sentence expansion – when, who, what, where
(written)

Jonelle

<https://zvKxML/>

Year 1 - Term 3

Fogarty Foundation

Identify and define adverbs of manner and match
to common verbs

Other useful phrases

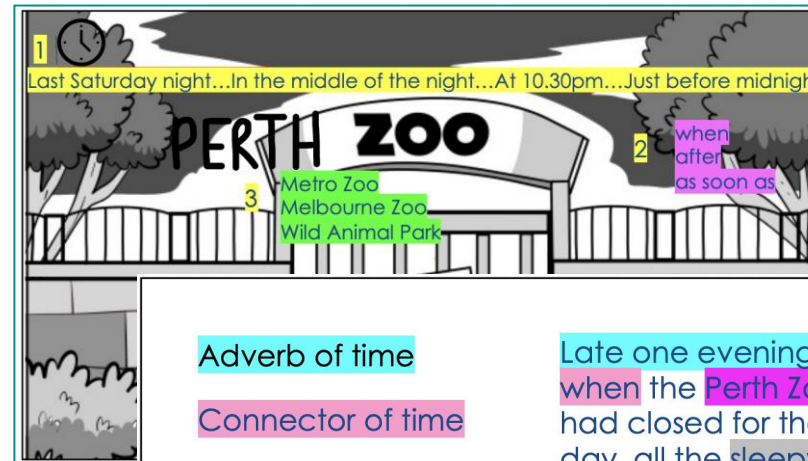
Australia is home to fascinating animal species.

For example, two of the only known monotremes – echidnas and platypuses – are native to Australia.

Monotremes lay eggs, like reptiles and birds, but their young are fed on milk, like mammals.

The isolation of Australia as an island continent may be why it is home to such unique animals.

dsf
Dorinda - SPED Foundation
LITERACY SERVICES



Adverb of time

Connector of time

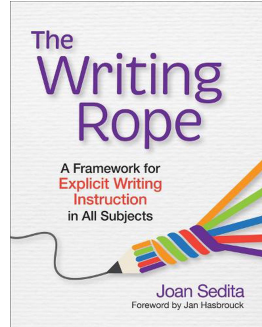
Proper noun

Upgraded adjective

Adverb of place +
Upgraded noun

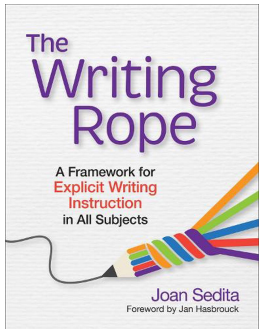
String of adjectives

Late one evening
when the Perth Zoo
had closed for the
day, all the sleepy
animals were
settling down in
their enclosures
and getting ready
for a good night's
sleep.









2. Explicit instruction of writing strategies, using a **think-aloud** approach

- **Structured and sequenced steps to teach a specific skill.**
- **Explain the skill, model how to apply the skill using think-alouds, provide guided practice with feedback.**
- **Include:**
 - strategies planning, revising, and editing compositions.
 - generic processes – brainstorming, collaborating, peer revising
 - specific writing tasks – writing opinion or argument








3. Differentiated instruction to meet individual student needs

- Designing instruction to suit individual student needs rather than using a standardised approach.













		
		

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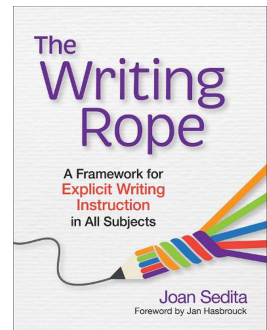
Narrative Story Board Level 1

Narrative Story Planner Level 1

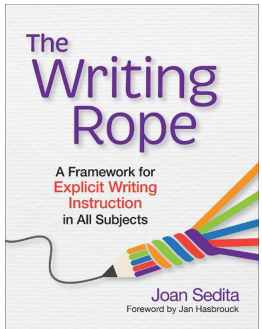
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	

Narrative Story Planner Level 4



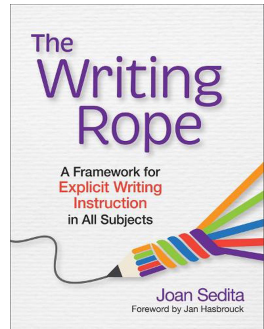
4. **Scaffolding** to support learning of new skills

- **Assistance offered by teacher or peer.**
- **To support learning a writing skill that a student is unable to grasp independently.**
- **Remove assistance once skill is learned.**
- **Not the same as doing the work for students.**
- **A hallmark of differentiated instruction.**



5. Opportunities for **collaboration with peers**

- Writing is a social activity and best learned in community.
- Collaborative writing had been found to have a significant effect on improving student writing.
- Includes opportunities for students to plan, draft, revise and edit their writing pieces.



Feedback Checklist: Personal Response to Narrative Text

Scale: 1 = minimal, 4 = significant

Quality and completeness of response	1	2	3	4
Meets the requirements of the writing task.				
Responses to questions are complete and organized.				
Language is precise and clear.				
Critical thinking	1	2	3	4
Demonstrates comprehension of the text.				
Demonstrates knowledge of main characters.				
Demonstrates knowledge about the setting.				
Demonstrates knowledge about the plot.				
Demonstrates knowledge about the theme.				
Personal reflection	1	2	3	4
Shows evidence of personal response.				
Makes a connection to personal experience.				
Demonstrates interest and poses questions.				
Additional comments or suggestions:				

Available with
purchase of The
Writing Rope

Peer- or Self-Feedback Checklist

What I like about this writing piece:

	Yes	No
Is there a good introduction?		
When you read the piece, does it sound good to you?		parts that are
Are the ideas in the writing clear?		
Is the piece organized?		
Is there enough information?		
Is there enough interesting and varied vocabulary?	Put the letter V in places where the vocabulary was used well.	Put the letter V with suggestions in places where the vocabulary could be improved.
Were transitions used to make connections?	Circle transition words and phrases that were used effectively.	Put the letter T in places where a transition would be helpful.
Is there a good conclusion?		
Other:		


Additional comments or suggestions:



6. Use of **mentor text** as models for writing

- Used to show students what good writing look like.
- Students can emulate style, language and structure of the text.

Where to Obtain Model Texts from

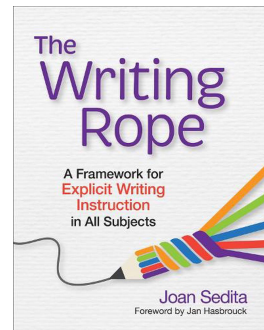
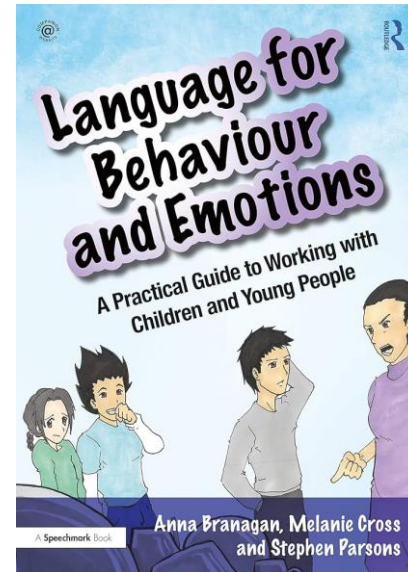


- Write them yourself
- Use Chat GPT
- Purchase scripted programs:

Text Express:
<https://www.trackstoliteracy.com/product-page/text-express-narrative-model-texts>

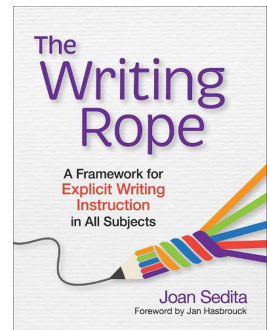
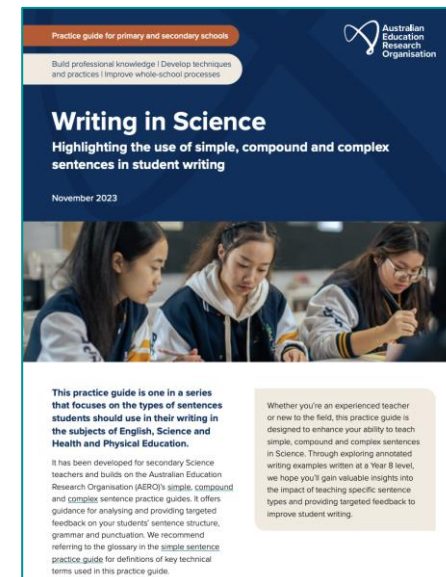
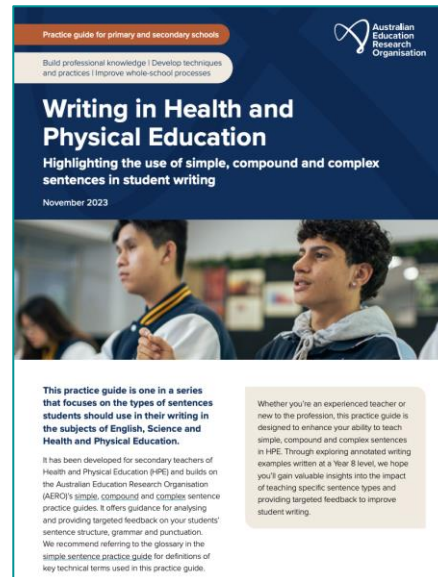
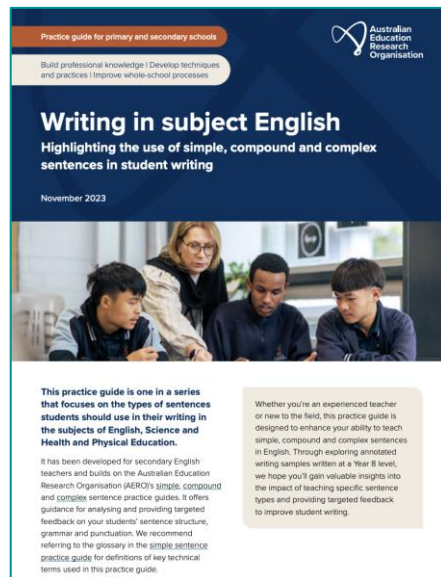
Evidence Based Narrative Intervention:
<https://www.speechlanguageillustrated.co.nz/product/evidence-based-narrative-intervention/>

Formulas for Frames:
<https://www.freespeech.com.au/product-page/complete-story-package>



7. Increasing the amount students write in all subject areas

- Adequate time is essential.
- Can occur during content instruction.
- Writing can extend critical thinking about a subject-area topic.
- Writing in subject areas can include short- and long-term writing tasks.



Summary and thanks



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