1. Focus (15 minutes)

Refer to the Informational Reports anchor chart displayed in your classroom. Review it with students, especially the terms topic, topic sentence, and main idea.

Remind students of what they have been learning in the previous lessons. Say: We learned that we can read books to find facts about a topic. We can write the facts on a graphic organizer. Then we can use the graphic organizer to help us write our reports. Today we’ll read about a new topic and write new reports.


Read aloud the chapter title on page 6. Say: We learned that a chapter title often gives a clue to what the topic of a chapter is. What do you think the topic of this chapter might be? (Allow responses.) What do you think a savanna is? (Allow responses.) Let’s find out!

Read aloud pages 6 and 7. Ask: What is the topic of this chapter? (Allow responses.) Who has an idea for our title? Allow responses.

Display a copy of BLM 2 on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources. Distribute a copy of BLM 2 to each student. After discussing suggested titles for the report, write a title on the graphic organizer and ask students to copy it on their individual graphic organizers, for example, “Savannas.”

Say: Now let’s think about the main idea of this chapter and what ideas we have for our topic sentence. I think the chapter is mostly about the kind of habitat that a savanna is. The chapter tells us it is a grassland habitat. What notes should we write on the graphic organizer? Allow responses.

Ask students to write notes on their graphic organizers as you write notes on your graphic organizer, for example, “grassland habitat.” Then ask students to help you use the notes to write a topic sentence. Record it on chart paper.

A savanna is a grassland habitat.

Sample Topic Sentence

Tell students they will work on the rest of the graphic organizer and the report independently. Say: Today I’d like you to find facts to support this topic sentence and then write some sentences to support it.
2. Rehearse (5 MINUTES)

Say: Let’s read the topic sentence again: “A savanna is a grassland habitat.” Now talk to your partner about facts you remember from the book that tell about grassland habitats. Think about what pictures you would like to add to your report and share your ideas with your partner.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring (20 MINUTES)

Distribute students’ writing folders. Say: Write notes on your graphic organizer and write the pages where you find your facts. After you complete your graphic organizer, use your facts to write some fact sentences for a report. Remember that we have already written the topic sentence together. Today you just need to write the sentences that tell about the topic sentence. Ask questions as needed to help students remember and record facts on their graphic organizers. Check that they cite page references. As students begin writing their report sentences, support them in applying the skills and strategies they’ve learned. Use the Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to help you provide differentiated support to individual students.

4. Share (5 MINUTES)

Point out and celebrate examples of facts and drawings on graphic organizers and in written sentences that provide information about the topic sentence you and the students wrote together. You may wish to provide additional modeling based on your observations during Independent Writing and Conferring.

Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to Support and Scaffold Writers

Goal Oriented
- My sentence needs to have facts that tell about the topic sentence.
- I will write a sentence about this fact.
- I will check for uppercase letters and end punctuation.

Directive and Corrective Feedback
- What is the topic sentence? What facts could you write about this topic?
- What did you learn about ______? What could you write about it?
- How could you describe ______?

Self-Monitoring and Reflection
- Did you write a fact? Does your fact give more information about the topic sentence?
- How could you write that? How could you fix it?
- Tell me what you looked for when you edited your sentences.

Validating and Confirming
- You wrote some facts you learned about ______!
- You asked yourself questions. That’s something strong writers do.
- You wrote the word ______! I like the way you worked that out.
- I liked the way you went back and fixed ______. Strong writers always fix up their writing to make it better.

Teacher Tip
Keep the Informational Reports anchor chart on display in the classroom and encourage students to refer to it both as a writing tool and as a checklist for editing and revising their writing.