Evaluate Your Ideas to Narrow the Focus

1. Focus

**Explain the Process**

**Say:** After we’ve brainstormed ideas for a procedural text, we need to decide which one we like best. How can we do that? One way is to ask ourselves questions about each idea. Then we can use our answers to choose the best one. When we choose our best idea from all the ones we’ve brainstormed, we’re narrowing our focus for writing. Let me show you how asking questions helps me choose my very best idea.

**Model Evaluating Your Ideas to Narrow the Focus**

Display a procedural ideas evaluation chart like the one shown here on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources. Read aloud each evaluation question. Use the sample topic ideas on the chart or substitute ideas of your own to model thinking aloud to narrow the focus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideas for Writing a Procedural Text</th>
<th>Do I like this idea for a procedural text?</th>
<th>Do I want to share this with others?</th>
<th>Do I think someone might want to learn how to do this?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>making a milkshake</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>addressing an envelope</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ordering at a restaurant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>folding a paper fan</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Sample Procedural Text Ideas Evaluation Chart (BLM 2)**

**Read aloud first evaluation question. Say:** I do like this idea for a procedural text. I love making milkshakes because I love to drink them—and I make them often for myself and for my family. I’m going to answer “yes” to this question.

**Read aloud second evaluation question. Say:** I know how to make a really good milkshake. Everyone thinks it’s the best ever. I’d like to write a procedural text to explain to someone else how to make one, so I’ll write “yes” to this question, too.

**Read aloud third evaluation question. Say:** Almost everyone likes a good milkshake. If I write how to make one in a very clear way, I’m sure other people would follow my directions to make milkshakes of their own, so the answer to this question is also “yes.”

**Ask:** I answered “yes” to all three questions, so do you think this is a good idea for me to write about? (Allow students to respond.) Yes, it would be a very good
choice. But what if I’d answered “no” to any of the questions? Do you still think it would be a good idea for me to choose? (Allow responses.) No, probably not. The best ideas to write about are the ones we can answer “yes” to all the way across the chart.

Continue modeling how to evaluate your ideas as time allows. Make sure to include some “no” answers so students understand how to narrow their ideas.

Explain that as students evaluate ideas, they might end up with two or more ideas in which they have answered “yes” to the questions. If this happens, encourage students to use the following questions to help them choose between the ideas:

- Which procedure would be most useful for people to know?
- Which procedure do I understand best?

2. Rehearse

Practice Narrowing the Focus

 Invite students to work with a partner and apply the evaluation chart to one idea they have for writing a procedural text. If your class includes English learners or other students who need support, use “Strategies to Support ELs.”

Share Ideas

Bring students back together and invite volunteers to share an idea they evaluated and how they answered the questions. Ask students to discuss how the process worked for them.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We just learned a strategy for narrowing our focus to choose our best idea for writing a procedural text. You can use this same chart to evaluate your ideas during independent writing time.

Make BLM 2 available to students who are ready to select their procedural text topics during independent writing time. During conferences, reinforce students’ use of this and other strategies using the prompts on your conferring flip chart.

4. Share

Bring the class together. Invite any students who have finished evaluating their ideas to share the topics they have chosen for their procedural texts.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning
Work individually with beginning EL students to help them answer the three questions on the evaluation chart.

Intermediate
Model the following sentence frames students will need as they evaluate their idea with a partner:

- I like/do not like this idea because ______.
- I do/do not want to share this idea because ______.
- I think/do not think someone would want to learn how to ______.