Write a Book Review

1. Focus (15 minutes)

Display the cover of *The Enormous Watermelon*. Read aloud the title. **Say: Today I will retell this story while you listen. Think about whether there is a part of the story you don’t enjoy. Think why you don’t like this part of the story. Maybe this part disappoints you. Maybe you wish the author had used different words. Maybe you wish something else had happened.**

Retell the story from memory and in your own words. Then **say: My least favorite part of the book is when Old Mother Hubbard finds out her cupboard is bare. I think that is sad! Then she has to wait until the watermelon grows before she can eat. I will write my opinion about my least favorite part. Remember that an opinion is part of a book review.**

Write an opinion on chart paper, for example, “I think it’s sad when Mother Hubbard finds out her cupboard is bare.” As you write, model the following:

- Emphasize the concepts about print that students still need to practice.
- Continue to model how to say a word slowly and use letter/sound relationships to write words. For words with higher-level spelling patterns, **say: Remember that if you don’t know how to spell a word, you can just write the letters for the sounds you hear.**
- Tell how you remember to write those words you see often in print, such as *I*, *the*, and *my*.
- Model rereading after each word by pointing to the words you’ve written so far and then pointing to where the next word should go. **Say: We’re ready for the word ______.** Then discuss and write the word.
- Model adding end punctuation and checking for the correct beginning and end to your sentence.

Ask students to reread your sentence with you. Then **ask: What is another part of my book review besides my opinion? (Allow responses.) That’s right! It’s important that I include a reason for my opinion. I need to tell why I don’t like that part of the story.**

Write a reason, for example, “She must be really hungry!” Model applying the strategies listed above as you write.

Ask students to help you reread to check your sentences. Then **say: Now I want you to write which part of the story is your least favorite. Then write why that part is your least favorite. Remember that an opinion and a reason are two of the most important parts of a book review!**
NOTE: Although the mentor big book teaches four parts of a book review—title and author, opinion, reason, and recommendation—these kindergarten lessons focus on the opinion and reason.

For students who need more challenge, continue to display the book reviews in the mentor big book so they have models to refer to. Later you may also want to add the title/author and a recommendation to your modeled book reviews (while emphasizing that students need write only an opinion and a reason) to help reinforce the four parts.

2. Rehearse (5 minutes)

Invite students to talk to a partner about the part of the story they like the least. Say: Tell your partner which part of the story you plan to write about. Remember to tell why that part is your least favorite.

If your class includes English learners, you may wish to model using the following oral sentence frames to support their partner talk:

- My least favorite part of the story is ______.
- I don’t like this part because ______.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring (20 minutes)

Distribute students’ writing folders. Invite students to write their book reviews. Ask questions as needed to help students develop their sentences, and remind them to reread after each word. Continue to ask students to say words slowly, write the sounds they hear, and write the high-frequency words they know. Reinforce the editing and revising strategies taught in the Journal Writing unit, such as adding adjectives, using an uppercase letter for the word I, and checking for the correct beginning and end on each sentence. Encourage students to get ideas from one another as well.

Use the Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to help you provide differentiated support to individual students based on your observations.

4. Share (5 minutes)

Invite two or three students to share their book reviews. Point out and celebrate examples of opinions supported by information from the text. You may wish to provide additional modeling based on your observations during Independent Writing and Conferring.