1. Focus (15 minutes)

Display the cover of a read-aloud you have previously used during the year. Read aloud the title. Say: We have read this book before. I will read it again today. As I read, think about what you like about the book and what you don’t like about it. Read the book aloud in a fluent, expressive voice. Follow students’ lead in discussing the illustrations as you pause after each spread or page.

Close the book and say: Think about the characters. Think about the story events. Think about the illustrations and other features of the book. What do you like? Why? (Allow responses.) Is there anything you don’t like? Why? (Allow responses.) It sounds as though some of you like/don’t like ______. Now I will write our opinion about the book. What can I write? Allow responses, and then write a “We like ______” or “We don’t like ______” sentence on chart paper. As you write, model the following:

- Continue to 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 the sentence with you to check it. Then ask: What do we need to write after our opinion? (Allow responses.) Yes! We need to tell why we like/don’t like the ______. What can I write?

Write a simple sentence supporting the reason for the opinion. Model applying the strategies listed above as you write.

Ask students to help you reread to check the sentence. Then say: Now I want you to think of something different to write about the book. You can write about a character, a story event, or an illustration or other feature of the book. Tell something you like or something you don’t like. Then tell why.
Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to Support and Scaffold Writers

Goal Oriented
• I like ______ because ______. I don’t like ______ because ______.
• I will say the word ______ and listen for the first sound.
• I will use the word ______ to describe ______ from the story.

Directive and Corrective Feedback
• Which part of the book will you write about? Why?
• How could you change this sentence to make it better?
• What words could you use to describe ______?

Self-Monitoring and Reflection
• What words were difficult to write? What strategies did you use to help you write them?
• A review includes opinions and reasons for the opinions. Have you given a reason for each opinion? Show me.

Validating and Confirming
• You made me think about the ______ in a new way!
• You wrote the word ______! You worked that out!
• I like the way you asked yourself questions to help you write about your opinions.

Teacher Tip
Continue to use a simple checklist students can refer to as they edit and revise their writing, such as:

_____ Begin with an uppercase letter.
_____ Use an uppercase letter for the word I.
_____ Use a describing word.
_____ Put a period or exclamation point at the end of each sentence.

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 book. Make sure the read-aloud is available so students can refer to it if needed. Say: Tell your partner what part of the book you’re going to write about. Remember to tell why you like or don’t like this part of the book.

If your class includes English learners, you may wish to model using the following oral sentence frames to support their partner talk:
• I like ______ because ______.
• I don’t like ______ 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. 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.