Write an Informational Report

1. Focus (10 minutes)

Display the cover of *Animals in Their Habitats*. Read aloud the title and author. **Say:** Nonfiction report writers gather information about their topic. They become an expert on their topic so that they can share their knowledge with their readers. Many report writers get their facts and information from books. Today, I want you to imagine that you are a nonfiction report writer. You are researching information about Animal Habitats. I will read aloud part of this book, and you are going to pay careful attention so that you can learn information to use in a report. Are you ready? Listen as I read. Ask yourself, “What is the main idea of this text? What is it mostly about?” Pay attention to the facts that support the main idea.

Read pages 4–5 aloud in a fluent, expressive voice. Discuss the photographs, caption, and labels. Depending on the needs of your students, you may wish to reread the text. **Ask:** What is the topic of these two pages? (Allow responses.) *That’s right, these pages are about animal habitats. What could we use as a title of our report?* (Allow responses. If necessary, make a suggestion.) “Animal Habitats” can be the title of our report.

Close the big book and write the title on your chart paper. **Ask:** What did you learn about animal habitats? (Allow responses. Generate a list of students’ ideas on the chart paper. Reread them aloud.) *Today you will think of a topic sentence and some facts that support your topic. Remember that a topic sentence is the main idea of your report. It tells what your report is mostly about. The facts you write should give more information about your topic sentence.*

2. Rehearse (5 minutes)

Invite each student to talk to a partner about his or her idea for a topic sentence. Some students may need support to figure out that all animals live in habitats. **Say:** Tell your partner your topic sentence. Then tell your partner a fact about your topic sentence. After you talk about the topic sentence and fact, draw a picture.

If your class includes English learners, you may wish to model using the following oral sentence frames to support their partner talk:
- *I learned that _____.
- *Animals live _____.
- *Animals need _____.
- *Some animals _____.
3. Independent Writing and Conferring (25 MINUTES)

Distribute students’ writing folders and invite students to begin writing their reports. For students who have difficulty coming up with a topic sentence, say: Sometimes you can use a sentence from the text to get an idea for your topic sentence. (Turn to page 4 in the big book.) The first sentence in the Introduction explains that animals live in habitats. That is the main idea of this section. I can make a good topic sentence from this information. Ask questions as needed to help students remember and state a fact they learned about the topic. Continue to support students as they say words slowly, write the sounds they hear, write the high-frequency words they know, reread after each word, and revise and edit. Encourage students to get help and 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 the progress they have made on their reports. Point out and celebrate examples of drawings, topic sentences, and facts that are based on information from the text. You may also 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
• I learned that ______.
• When I write a topic sentence for a report about a text, I look for the main idea in the text.

Directive and Corrective Feedback
• Try rereading sentences from the text to find the main idea. Use this to help you write your topic sentence.
• Tell me what the text was mostly about. Now write that as your topic sentence.
• How will you start your sentences? What will you put at the end of each sentence?

Self-Monitoring and Reflection
• Does your topic sentence tell something you learned? Does your fact give more information about the topic sentence?
• Tell me why you chose the fact that you did.
• What did you check when you reread?

Validating and Confirming
• Your picture of ______ helps me understand your fact.
• I noticed you asked yourself questions about the text. Strong writers do this to find a main idea.

Teacher Tip
Continue to reinforce the concept of a topic by reading short informational newspaper articles aloud and asking students to help you figure out the topic of each one. Point out that writers often reveal the topic in the title and/or first sentence of the article. If the article includes photographs, explain that these often support the topic as well.