Develop Ideas: Ask and Answer Questions

1. Focus (15 MINUTES)

On chart paper, write the words Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How. Read the words aloud and say: Yesterday we learned that these are question words. We see these words in many nonfiction texts. We can use these words to ask ourselves questions, too. Hold up one hand and touch your thumb with the other hand, saying Who. Then touch your other fingers in turn, saying What, When, Where, and Why. Finally touch your palm and say How. Ask students to practice this remembering technique with you.

Display the cover of The Life Cycle of a Frog. Read the title and author. Then turn to the table of contents and point out that the three chapter headings all start with a question word. Ask: Do you see the question mark at the end? The writer uses the words How and What to ask questions.

Take students through a book walk, pointing out the question mark at the end of each sentence phrased as a question and helping them locate the following question words:

- page 6: How (chapter heading)
- page 8: How (chapter heading)
- page 9: What (Sequence of Events sidebar)
- page 10: What (chapter heading)
- inside back cover: How, How, What, What (text)
- back cover: Where, What (blurb)

Display page 6 of the big book. Ask: What are some questions we can ask ourselves about these photographs? Encourage students to share questions, such as “How big are the eggs?” and “How many eggs does a frog lay?” Say: I will write some questions. You can answer these questions by looking at the photographs on this page. Then you can use your answers to write a report. Let’s call the report “Frog Eggs.”

Write the title on your chart paper. Write the following questions below it, and read the questions aloud:

- Where does a frog lay eggs?
- What do the eggs look like?
2. Rehearse (5 MINUTES)

Invite students to talk to a partner about the questions. Say: *Talk about these questions with your partner. Use your first answer to think of a topic sentence. Use your second answer to think of two facts about your topic sentence. After you talk about the topic sentence and facts, 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:

- A frog ______.
- The eggs ______.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring (20 MINUTES)

Distribute students’ writing folders. Invite students to write a topic sentence and facts to go with their picture. Remind them that the answer to the first question can be a topic sentence and the answer to the second question can provide their facts. 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. Use the Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to help you provide differentiated support to individual students based on your observations.

Sample Informational Report

A frog lays its eggs in water.
The eggs float in the water.
They look like tiny black balls.

4. Share (5 MINUTES)

Invite two or three students to share their reports. Point out and celebrate examples of drawings, topic sentences, and facts that answer the questions you posed. 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 will ask questions to help me find the topic.
- I will check the start and end of each sentence I write.
- Notice how answering questions helps me write about ______.

**Directive and Corrective Feedback**
- What will you write for your topic sentence? What facts will you write?
- Think about how you and your partner answered the questions. Now try writing your topic sentence again.
- How will you start your sentences? What will you put at the end of each sentence?

**Self-Monitoring and Reflection**
- Does your topic sentence answer the question? Do your facts give more information about the topic?
- How did thinking about questions help you write your topic sentence and facts?
- How could you fix that?

**Validating and Confirming**
- You wrote an interesting fact about ______. It certainly tells more about the topic!
- You wrote the word ______! You worked that out!
- You answered the questions. You used your answers to write a report!

Teacher Tip
Using short newspaper articles, continue to reinforce the concept that readers can figure out a topic through the title, headings, first few sentences, and photographs.