Develop Concepts About Print

Objectives

Concepts About Print
• Understand that words carry meaning, are comprised of letters, go from left to right, and have spaces between them.
• Begin writing at the left.
• Begin a sentence with an uppercase letter.
• End a sentence with a period or exclamation point.

Oral Language and Grammar
• Share a message orally.
• Use a complete sentence (subject and verb).

Purposeful Phonics Connections
• Listen for beginning and ending sounds.
• Recognize sound/symbol relationships.
• Write some high-frequency words.

Reflecting Reading in Writing
• Develop genre awareness.
• Visualize; match text to picture.
• Reread by returning to the beginning of the sentence.
• Demonstrate one-to-one correspondence.

Writing
• Draw and write a journal entry.

Materials
• Chart paper and markers
• Familiar shared reading big book

1. Focus (10 MINUTES)

Display an inviting spread of a familiar shared reading big book, making sure it has examples of all the points mentioned below. Discuss the picture and read the sentence together. Invite students to share some of the things the author did as a writer.
• Did the author begin writing at the left? Point to the first word.
• Did the author begin the sentence with an uppercase letter? Point to the uppercase letter.
• Did the author leave spaces between the words? Point to the spaces.
• How did the author show where the sentence ended?
• Did the author write “who” the sentence is about? Did the author write an action?

Say: We’re authors, too, so let’s keep practicing what writers do! Today I’m going to think of a time I was excited. I’ll draw it in my journal and write a sentence.

Model how to close your eyes and visualize an exciting experience. Use the think-aloud below as an example of how to select important details about the event.

Say: When I was young, my family got a new refrigerator. It came in a huge box! I asked my mom if I could have the box. I made it into a secret hideout! I painted “Keep Out!” on the outside and put all my favorite things in it. When my friends came over, I let them play in the box with me. I was so excited to have my own special place!

Model drawing the event on chart paper, pointing out that a rough sketch is all you need to record the most important ideas you visualized.

Tell students what you will write. Say: I want to write the sentence “We played in the box.” Model writing each word in the sentence.

NOTE: As you model this week, emphasize the concepts about print that students still need to practice based on your analysis of last week’s writing samples and your daily informal observations.

Write We. Say: I know how to write the word we. Where should I begin my sentence? (Allow responses.) That’s right! I need to begin writing at the left side of the paper. What kind of letter should I use to start the word? (Allow responses.) I need to use an uppercase letter. What do I do after I write a word? (Allow responses.) Yes! I leave a space.

Write played. Say: Let’s reread what we have so far and then point to where the next word should go. I will write played after We. The word played tells
what we did. I hear two sounds at the beginning of played that blend together: /p/ and /l/. I will write p and l. Next I hear /æ/. In the word played, we use the letters a and y for this sound. In played, we use the letters e and d for the /d/ sound at the end. Remember that if you don’t know how to spell a word, you can just write the sounds you hear.

Write in, the, and box. Continue by having students reread the sentence and tell where the next word should go. Guide students to help you write the words. Remind students that if they don’t know how to spell a word, they should just write the sounds they hear. Help students decide on the end punctuation. Then ask students to help you reread the entire sentence.

2. Rehearse (5 MINUTES)

Invite students to close their eyes and picture a time they were excited (or any other event) to draw and write about in their journals. Say: Tell your partner about your memory. Be sure to say a complete thought.

If your class includes English learners, you may wish to model using the following oral sentence frames to support their partner talk:
• I was excited when ______.
• One time I ______.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring (15 MINUTES)

Distribute students’ journals. Invite each student to draw a picture of the event he or she described to a partner and to write a message. Allow students who change their minds to draw another event. Support students as they determine the most important details to include. Continue to validate and encourage students in any attempts to scribble write, record the sounds they hear in words, and write high-frequency words. Provide support as students apply concepts about print and try to write complete sentences.

4. Share (5 MINUTES)

Invite two or three students to share their drawings and written messages. Point out and celebrate examples of applying concepts about print and writing complete thoughts.

Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to Support and Scaffold Writers

Goal Oriented
• I was excited when ______. I will draw the part about ______.
• I will say the word ______ and listen for the first sound I hear in the word.
• I will start my message at the left (pointing).

Directive and Corrective Feedback
• Think about a time you were excited. Tell me your memory.
• Say the word ______. What sound do you hear at the beginning of ______?
• Check that you put spaces between the words.
• Tell me “who” or what your sentence is about.

Self-Monitoring and Reflection
• Did you use an uppercase letter at the beginning of your sentence?
• What did you see in your mind as you got ready to draw and write?
• What can you add to show that you’ve reached the end of your message?

Validating and Confirming
• Your message matches your picture!
• You heard the sounds ______ and wrote the word!
• I notice that you put spaces between your words. That’s an important part of writing.
• You wrote your message from left to right. Strong writers do that to make their writing easy to read.

Teacher Tip

Continue to observe students as they say words slowly and write what they hear. Add check marks above students’ writing for the sounds and high-frequency words they wrote correctly.

NOTE: Continue jotting down notes about each student’s writing, paying special attention to concepts about print. Use this information to help plan next week’s instruction.