Write Important Details

1. Focus (15 minutes)

Say: We have learned that visualizing is a good way to get ideas for our journals. After we visualize, we choose the most important details to draw and write about. Choosing details is an important part of planning our writing. Today I’m going to think about something that happened at school this week. Then I will show you how I choose the most important details to draw and write about in my journal.

Model how to close your eyes and decide on a memory. Then use the think-aloud below as an example of how to select important details about the event and your feelings.

Say: I always bring my book bag to school. One day, I couldn’t find my bag. I looked everywhere for it. “I’m so forgetful!” I thought. “I must have left it in the car.” I went out to my car to look for my book bag, but it wasn’t there, either. I felt really worried because I thought I’d lost it. It turns out I really was forgetful—I’d left it at home! Now I need to decide what to draw from my visualization. I can’t draw every detail about my book bag adventure. I’ll draw a picture of me looking for my book bag in the car. I’ll look worried!

Model drawing the scene on chart paper. Remind students that a rough sketch is fine and is just a way to remember the most important details you have visualized. Then share what you want to write.

Say: I want to add a message to this journal entry. Each sentence will be a complete thought. I will write “My book bag was at home. I was afraid I had lost it!” As you write your journal entry, model the following:

- Emphasize the concepts about print that students need to practice based on your daily informal observations and notes. (See list in Objectives.)
- Tell how you remember high-frequency words. For example, say: I know how to write My: M-y. I have seen this word many times in books.
- Model how to say the other words slowly and use letter/sound relationships to help you write them. For words with irregular or higher-level spelling patterns, say: Remember that if you don’t know how to spell a word, you can just write the sounds you hear.
- 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.

Ask students to reread the journal entry with you to check it. Then say: I wrote the most important details from my visualization. I used complete sentences, too. I also tell how I felt when I thought I’d lost my book bag.
2. **Rehearse** (5 minutes)

Invite students to close their eyes and visualize an event that happened at school this week to draw and write about in a journal. **Say:** Tell your partner about your memory and how you or others felt. When you’re ready to draw and write, you will choose the most important details to use.

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

- This week I ______.
- ______ felt ______.

3. **Independent Writing and Conferring** (20 minutes)

Distribute students’ writing journals. Invite each student to draw a picture of the event he or she described to a partner and to write as many sentences as possible. Remind students to focus on the most important details about what happened and how they felt. Support and encourage students in their attempts to record the sounds they hear in words and to write high-frequency words.

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

4. **Share** (5 minutes)

Use the Share time in one of the following ways depending on your observations of students during Independent Writing and Conferring:

- Students will be at different stages of writing. Invite several students who have completed their drawings to show and talk about them. Ask other students who have completed their drafts to read aloud what they wrote. Discuss with students the importance of the different stages of writing: thinking of ideas, visualizing what happened, drawing what happened, and writing about what happened.

- Work with a small group of students who have difficulty listening for sounds in words and then writing the letters. Provide practice in simple CVC words and words that students are having difficulty with in their writing.

- As students listen to others read aloud their journal entries, ask them to notice what they liked best about the writing.

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**Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to Support and Scaffold Writers**

**Goal Oriented**

- Notice how I start my sentence with an uppercase letter.
- I listen for sounds in words and I write what I hear.

**Directive and Corrective Feedback**

- Think about something you did or saw at school this week. What happened? How did you feel? Use what you told me to help you draw and write.
- What sound do you hear at the beginning? In the middle? At the end?

**Self-Monitoring and Reflection**

- Does your message match your picture?
- What could you do to help you write that word?
- How did you decide which words to use?

**Validating and Confirming**

- You wrote the letter for the ______ sound! Strong writers listen for sounds to help them write the words.
- You wrote the word ______!
- You used the most important details in your drawing and message. Good thinking!
- I notice that you put spaces between your words. That’s an important part of writing.

**Teacher Tip**

Continue to monitor students’ attempts to put spaces between words. For students who struggle with this concept, demonstrate how to place your finger on the paper after a word and leave it there as you start the next word on the other side of your finger. Then encourage students to create their own “finger spaces” as they write their messages.