Write Important Details

1. Focus (15 MINUTES)

Say: So far we have mostly been drawing and writing about things that have already happened. These events are experiences that we remember. But sometimes we write in our journals about things that haven’t happened yet. We can visualize something that’s going to happen and how we will feel. Then what do we do? (Allow responses.) We choose the most important details to draw and write about. Today I’m going to think of something that will happen in the future. I’ll also think about how I might feel when it happens. Then I’ll 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 an event. Then use the think-aloud below as an example of how to select important details about the event and your feelings.

Say: My dog gets excited when I come home. She runs to the door and jumps in the air and wags her tail. Next week I have a meeting after school, so I will be home late. My dog will really miss me. She’ll be extra happy to see me that evening! She’ll run and jump and wag like crazy. That will bring a big smile to my face! Now I will decide what to draw. I’ll draw a picture of my dog waiting for me by the door.

Model drawing the scene on chart paper. Remind students that a rough sketch is just a way to remember the most important details you have visualized. Tell students what you’ll write.

Say: I want to add a message to this journal entry. Each sentence will be a complete thought. I will write “I will get home late. My dog will miss me!”

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.

Objectives

Concepts About Print
• Write from left to right.
• Begin a sentence with an uppercase letter.
• Use an uppercase letter for the pronoun I.
• Put spaces between words.
• Use end punctuation correctly.

Oral Language and Grammar
• Share a message orally.
• Use a complete sentence.

Purposeful Phonics Connections
• Listen for and record beginning, middle, and end sounds in words
• Write some high-frequency words.

Reflecting Reading in Writing
• Develop genre awareness.
• Visualize.
• Determine importance.
• Demonstrate one-to-one correspondence through pointing.

Writing
• Draw and write a journal entry.

Materials
• Chart paper and markers
Ask students to reread the journal entry with you to check it. Then say: I wrote the most important details. I used complete sentences, too. In the first sentence, the word I tells “who” the sentence is about and the words will get home late tell what will happen. In the second sentence, the word dog tells what the sentence is about and the words will miss me tell what my dog will do and how she will feel.

2. Rehearse (5 MINUTES)

Invite students to close their eyes and think of an event that might happen someday to draw and write about in a journal. Say: Tell your partner about your event. Tell how you or others might feel, too. When you’re ready to draw and write, you will choose the most important details to use. Tell “who” or what your sentence is about and act out the action to make sure you have 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:
• Someday I ______.
• ______ will feel ______.

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. Validate the decision of any student who chooses to draw and write about something else. Remind students to focus on the most important details about what will happen and how they might feel. 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)

Invite two or three students at different stages of writing development to share their drawings and written messages. Point out and celebrate examples of important details and complete thoughts. 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**
• The most important details are ______.
• I will remember to use punctuation at the end of each sentence I write.

**Directive and Corrective Feedback**
• Think about something that might happen someday. What will you do? How will you feel?
• What sound do you hear at the beginning? In the middle? At the end?
• Point to each word in your sentence. Did you leave spaces between the words?

**Self-Monitoring and Reflection**
• How did visualizing help you decide what to draw and write?
• What did you do to work out how to write that word?
• Read your journal entry. Did you tell “who” or what your sentence is about and an action?

**Validating and Confirming**
• You used uppercase and lowercase letters correctly.
• I like the way you wrote about your feelings.
• 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**

Although the Journal Writing unit does not include a specific lesson on how to hear and record sounds in words, continue to ask students to say words slowly and write what they hear. In addition encourage students to keep a list of high-frequency words they learn to write. Celebrate each gain in sound/symbol relationships and known words.