Evaluate Your Ideas to Narrow the Focus

1. Focus

Explain the Process of Narrowing Your Procedural Text Ideas

Say: Once we’ve brainstormed several ideas for writing a procedural text, we need to narrow our focus by deciding which ideas we like best. Sometimes that can be hard to do because we like several of our ideas. Asking ourselves questions about each idea can help us determine which one will work best. Let me show you how I do that before I choose a topic for writing a procedural text.

Model Evaluating Procedural Text Ideas to Narrow Your Focus

Display a procedural text ideas evaluation chart like this one on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources. Use the sample topic ideas on the chart or list ideas of your own to model thinking aloud to narrow the focus. Read aloud the evaluation questions and answer them for the topics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideas for Writing Procedural Text</th>
<th>Do I like this idea for a procedural text?</th>
<th>Do I want to share this idea with others?</th>
<th>Do I want to learn more about this procedure?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>make a bed</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>train a dog to shake hands</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>draw flowers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>catch a ladybug</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Sample Procedural Text Ideas Evaluation Chart (BLM 2)

After first question. Say: Hmmm, do I like this topic? If my answer to this question is “no,” is this a good idea for me to write about? (Allow responses.) Well, I really don’t like this idea anymore—I think it’s kind of boring. So, I’m just going to write “no” in the first column and move on the next idea. (Read aloud the second topic idea.) I do like this idea, so I’m going to write “yes” in the first column. I think it’s something that would be fun to write about since I have a dog of my own. Continue down the rest of the ideas and fill in the first column for each one.

After second question. Say: I’m going to look at one of the topics I wrote “yes” in the first column for. It’s fun to see a dog shake hands. A lot of people who have dogs would love to train their dogs to do it. I know I would! I’m going to write “yes” in the second column, too, because I think this idea is something that would be good to share with other people who would also like to train their dogs.
After third question. Say: I really do want to learn more about training a dog. If my procedural text is going to be good, I need to make sure I know exactly what to do to teach my dog to shake hands. I think learning all the steps for training her will be very interesting. I’ll write “yes” in the last column, too.

Continue modeling how to evaluate your ideas as time allows. Make sure to include some “no” answers so students understand how to narrow their ideas.

Explain that as students evaluate ideas, they might end up with two or more ideas in which they have answered “yes.” If this happens, encourage students to use the following questions to help them choose between the ideas:

- Which procedure do I think others would most like to learn?
- Which procedure would I most like to learn more about?

2. Rehearse

Practice Evaluating Procedural Text Ideas to Narrow Your Focus

Invite students to work with a partner and apply the evaluation questions on the chart to one idea they have for a procedural text. If your class includes English learners or other students who need support, use the ideas in “Strategies to Support ELs.”

Share Ideas

Bring students together and invite volunteers to share ideas they evaluated and how they answered the questions. Ask students to discuss how the process worked for them.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We just learned a strategy for narrowing our focus as we select an idea for a procedural text. You can use this same chart to evaluate your ideas during independent writing time.

Make BLM 2 available to students who are ready to select their procedural topics during independent writing time. During conferences, reinforce students’ use of this and other strategies using the prompts on your conferring flip chart.

4. Share

Bring students together. Invite students who have finished evaluating their ideas to share the procedures they have chosen to write about in their procedural texts.

Strategies to Support ELs

- **Beginning**
  
  Work individually with beginning ELs to answer the three questions on the evaluation chart.

- **Intermediate**
  
  Write and model the following sentence frames students will need as they evaluate their idea with a partner:
  
  I know how to/I do not know how to ______.
  I do/I do not like this idea because ______.
  I do/I do not want to learn more about how to ______.

- **All Levels**
  
  If you have ELs whose first language is Spanish, share these English/Spanish cognates: decide/decir; evaluate/evaluar.