Develop Concepts About Print

1. Focus (10 MINUTES)

Display page 12 of the mentor big book, using the big book or interactive whiteboard resources. Discuss the picture and read the first sentence together. Use the prompts below to have students share what they notice about the boy as a writer.

- Where does the boy begin writing his message? What is the boy’s first word?
- What kind of letter does the boy use to begin his sentence?
- What does the boy put between the words?
- What does the boy use at the end of his sentence?

Say: Good job! You have learned a lot about what strong writers do. This week we will keep practicing the things writers do to write a sentence. I’m going to think of something I have seen and show you how I draw and write a sentence about it in my journal.

Model how to close your eyes and visualize a memory. Use the think-aloud below as an example.

Say: Once I was at a park with my family. I saw a man who was juggling. He had bright clothes and a green wig. He had a mask, too! I was little, and I was kind of scared of that mask. I liked the juggling, though. Now I will draw that scene so I can remember it.

Model drawing your memory on chart paper. Remind students that journal drawings don’t have to be works of art. Then model word for word how to write the sentence “The man had a mask.”

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 The. Ask: Where should I begin my sentence? (Allow responses.) That’s right. I need to begin writing on the left side of the paper. I know how to write the word The: T-h-e. I have seen this word in books many times. Remember that if you don’t know how to spell a word, you can just write the sounds you hear. What kind of letter should I use to start my sentence? (Allow responses.) Good remembering! I need to use an uppercase letter. Now what do we remember to do after we write a word? (Allow responses.) That’s right! We leave a space.

Write man. Say: Let’s reread by pointing to the word we have so far and then pointing to where the next word should go: The ______. I need to write man after the word The. The word man tells “who” my sentence is about. Say the word man slowly with me: /m/ /a/ /n/. What sound do you hear at the beginning of man? (Allow responses.) That’s right. The word man begins with /m/, so I will write the letter m. I hear /a/ in the middle of the word. I will write...
the letter a. What sound do we hear at the end of man? (Allow responses.) We hear the sound for the letter n at the end of the word. We wrote man!

Write had, a, and mask. Continue by having students reread the sentence so far and determine where the next word should go. Explain that the words had a mask complete the thought and tell what the man had. Point out that the word a is a familiar word. Guide students to match sounds to letters to write the words had and mask. 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 visualize an experience that they could draw and write about in their journals. Say: Tell your partner what you plan to draw and write about. When you’re ready to draw and write, you can choose the most important details to use. Remember to tell “who” your sentence is about and what the person did.

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

3. Independent Writing and Conferring (15 minutes)

Distribute students’ journals. Invite each student to draw a picture of the experience he or she described to a partner and to write a message. Some students will just be starting to hear the sounds in words, while others may be able to write some high-frequency words and semiphonetic spellings. Praise students for attempting to use concepts about print.

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 to share their drawings and written messages. Point out and celebrate examples of applying concepts about print and writing complete thoughts. You may 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 draw the part about ______.
- I will start my message at the left (pointing).

Directive and Corrective Feedback
- Say the word ______. What sound do you hear at the beginning of ______?
- Can you reread what you have so far and show me where the next word should go?

Self-Monitoring and Reflection
- What did you see in your mind as you got ready to draw and write? How did that help you?
- What did you notice about the (beginning, end) of that word?
- What can you add to show that you’ve reached the end of your message?

Validating and Confirming
- Your message matches your picture!
- You wrote the word ______! 
- You told “who” your sentence is about and what that person did. Good job!
- 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 modeling concepts about print during shared and guided reading. To help reinforce the ideas of directionality and one-to-one correspondence, encourage students to point to and “read” environmental print in your classroom.