

Writing Mini-Lessons

Learning to write more, including
expanded and complex sentences,
with coherence and cohesion



Students in Groups G and H
on the WwATC



About these cards:

These cards are designed to support you to implement writing mini-lessons with conventional writers. They aren't the only things you can do as mini-lessons - but these are designed to give you some structure to get started.

I suggest that you print them and work through them with your student(s). You will probably need to use each card more than once as the student(s) develop the skills addressed on the card. You can, of course, add your own lessons in as you become used to the format, based on what your student(s) need.

Student(s) at this level should be able to put together most of their sentences independently and should need minimal co-construction, except when you are introducing a new concept.

For student(s) who are learning to write more with coherence and cohesion, we run mini-lessons on a wide range of topics. These include ideas and language, spelling, end punctuation, capital letters, editor's checklist and diversifying sentence types. Once the student has finished writing, teacher-student conferences tend to focus on language as student(s) should be spelling intelligibly at this stage. If a word is intelligible but not correct, you can say "can I show you how I would write this word?" - and then if the student agrees, you would write it on a post-it note or a separate piece of paper.

As always, have fun writing!

Jane Farrell

The Goal:

The student is learning to a) Compose a message (b) independently (c) that is understood by the intended audience and (d) achieves a meaningful goal.

(Erickson & Koppenhaver, 2013)

And remember:

Sentences are the building blocks of all writing.

(Hochman and Wexler, 2017)

Simple sentences

3 to 6 words, grammatically correct. For example:

I like dogs.

I go to school on Monday.

Expanded sentences

6 or more words, grammatically correct. For example:

The hyenas were chasing the zebras for hours.

The Swedish chef shouldn't cook popcorn any more.

Complex sentences

A sentence with two or more clauses. Clauses are a group of words in a sentence that have a subject and a verb. There are two types of clauses, independent and dependent clauses. This sentence consists of two clauses: "I went to the shops because we needed milk."

An independent clause is a complete thought and can stand alone as a sentence e.g. "I went to the shops". A dependent clause doesn't express a complete thought e.g., "because we needed milk".

Basic Components of Writing Instruction for Transitional and Conventional Writers

Part 1

Mini-lesson
from an adult
(modelled
writing) on an
aspect of
writing

Part 2

Student writes
(Student-
teacher
conference
before student
writes if needed)

Part 3

Teacher-student
conference to review
writing.
Student shares
writing with others at
least once a week.

Remember to use AAC in your “Think Aloud”



Making language visible will help all your students.

For student(s) who struggle to use little words in their writing, and for student(s) who are struggling to generate ideas and language in writing, using AAC to show them language is an invaluable tool - and will reduce their cognitive load.

Writing Mini-Lesson 01

Writing Expanded Sentences: Expanding with Two or more Describing Words

Once student(s) can write simple sentences intelligibly, then we teach them how to expand them to more than 6 words. Not all student(s) will need all lessons in this area.

This mini-lesson is going to be slightly different because you are going to start with some simple sentences already written - and then talk about how to expand them with describing words. Use simple sentences from student writing books or from your own writing.

We are cooking pasta.



**We are cooking lots of
yummy pasta.**

Mini-Lesson:

1. Start with the simple sentence e.g. "We are cooking pasta".
2. In your think aloud, talk about a choice of describing words you could use e.g. I could use a tastes word and a shape word or a size word. Hmm - I think I'll write "We are cooking lots of yummy pasta"
3. Now write your expanded sentence. Repeat steps 1 - 3 with another three sentences e.g. We went in the car, I am building a tower and The car is on the truck.
4. Now it is the student's turn. Encourage them to find a simple sentence in their writing book or you can have a few ready. They turn it into an expanded sentence using two or more describing words.

Writing Mini-Lesson 02

Writing Expanded Sentences: Expanding with Two Describing Words

Once student(s) can write simple sentences intelligibly, then we teach them how to expand them to more than 6 words. Not all student(s) will need all lessons in this area.



The long, red train is slow.

This lesson is about writing an expanded sentence with two describing words.

Mini-Lesson:

1. Show the writing topic picture and then “think aloud”.
2. In your think aloud, start by using AAC to find describing words you could use about the picture. e.g. red, slow, long.
3. Pick two and use them in an expanded sentence. Write it in front of the student(s). (If using a comma, just model, don’t think aloud about it.)
4. Now it is the student’s turn. Don’t be concerned if they write simple sentences or a partial expanded sentence - just continue modelling. If they only use one (or no) describing words in their sentence, show them how they could have used them in the teacher-student conference after they have written.

PODD 60 Expanded in The Grid



Writing Mini-Lesson 03

Writing Expanded Sentences: Expanding with Conjunctions: And

Once student(s) can write simple sentences intelligibly, then we teach them how to expand them to more than 6 words. Not all student(s) will need all lessons in this area.



There's "and".

This lesson is about looking for expanded sentences in books that use the conjunction "and".

Mini-Lesson:

1. Show a page of a text and talk about how the author has written expanded sentence(s) using the word "and".
2. In your think aloud, talk about looking for "and" and then finding it and reading out the sentence.
3. Hand out texts to the student(s) and ask them to find sentences with "and".
4. Show them how these are usually expanded sentences (6 or more words)

Writing Mini-Lesson 04

Writing Expanded Sentences: Expanding with Conjunctions “and”

Once student(s) can write simple sentences intelligibly, then we teach them how to expand them to more than 6 words. Not all student(s) will need all lessons in this area.

This mini-lesson is going to be slightly different because you are going to start with some simple sentences already written - and then talk about how to combine them.



**It is a fast and
grey Holden car.**

Mini-Lesson:

1. Use some simple sentences that you or your student(s) have previously written e.g. It is a Holden car. It is a gray car. It is a fast car.
2. In your think aloud, talk about how you could use “and” to combine the sentences. e.g. Hmmmm, I could write “It is a fast and grey Holden car” or I could write “It is a Holden car and it is fast and grey”.
3. Pick one and write it.
4. Now it is the student’s turn. Encourage them to pick a sentence from their earlier writing that they can expand with “and”.

Writing Mini-Lesson 05

Writing Expanded Sentences: Expanding with Conjunctions “and”

Once student(s) can write simple sentences intelligibly, then we teach them how to expand them to more than 6 words. Not all student(s) will need all lessons in this area.

This lesson is about writing an expanded sentence using “and”.

Mini-Lesson:

1. Show the writing topic picture and then “think aloud”.
2. In your think aloud, talk about a choice of words you would use for the picture e.g. favourite, yummy, healthy, crunchy, vegetable.
3. Pick two and write. Avoid writing a complex sentence with two clauses at this stage
4. Now it is the student’s turn. Don’t be concerned if they write simple sentences or a partial expanded sentence - just continue modelling. If they don’t use “and” in their sentence, show them how they could have used it in the teacher-student conference after they have written.



**Broccoli is a crunchy
and yummy
vegetable.**



Writing Mini-Lesson 06

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Modelling how to handle mistakes

Once student(s) can write simple sentences intelligibly, then we teach them how to expand them to more than 6 words. Not all student(s) will need all lessons in this area.

This lesson is about modelling how to handle making mistakes. You can actually do this in any mini-lesson, along with another target. This has been very helpful when working with student(s) who think they have to write perfectly all the time.. You will need a helper for this one.

PODD 60 Complex in TDSnap



**I like chokalat
and srtwberri
donuts.**

Mini-Lesson:

1. Show the writing topic picture and then “think aloud”.
2. In your think aloud, talk about a what you could write. Include some trickier, multisyllabic words.
3. Deliberately struggle with spelling one or two words and make mistakes, sounding them out. If a student interrupts you to tell you that you have made a mistake, respond with “That’s ok - we’ll look at that at the end”.
4. After you have written ask another adult “Can you show me how you would write it”. Take their model positively and say “Thanks.. We’re all learning”



Groups G and H

Writing Mini-Lesson 07

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Focus on Tell Me More

Once student(s) can write simple sentences intelligibly, then we teach them how to expand them to more than 6 words. Not all student(s) will need all lessons in this area.

Many student(s) at this level are now ready to write more than one sentence - and we want them to learn how to do this with autonomy. The research says the only prompt we should give them is “tell me more”. Anything else, pushes their writing in the direction we want it to go in, rather than the direction they want.

Mini-Lesson:

1. Use a funny video for this lesson. Watch it with the student(s) and then “think aloud”. (A link to an example is above the image.)
2. In your think aloud, talk about writing one expanded sentence, and then say you think it the topic needs a second one. e.g. I could write “The round zebras are drinking water.”
3. Write the first sentence, then say “I think I can say more. I’ll write: ”The crocodile wants to eat them.”
4. Now it is the student’s turn. If they only write one sentence say “tell me more” and get them to write a second one. If the student really struggles with this, then just continue modelling writing two sentences in your mini-lessons.

Rollin Safari on YouTube



**The round zebras
are drinking water.
The crocodile
wants to eat them.**

Proloquo



Writing Mini-Lesson 08

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Focus on Full stops

Once student(s) can write simple sentences intelligibly, then we teach them how to expand them to more than 6 words. Not all student(s) will need all lessons in this area.

<https://vimeo.com/112478308>



**The turtles are
doing amazing
ice skating. I
think it's fake.**

Many student(s) at this level are now ready to write more than one sentence - and we want them to learn about the most common form of end punctuation so that we know where one sentence ends and the next one begins.

Mini-Lesson:

1. Use a funny video for this lesson. Watch it with the student(s) and then “think aloud”. (A link to an example is above the image.)
2. In your think aloud, talk about writing more than one sentence. e.g. I could write “The turtles are doing amazing ice skating. I think it’s fake.” Make sure one is an expanded sentence.
3. Write your two sentences, emphasising the full stops.
4. Now it is the student’s turn. If they only write one sentence say “tell me more” and get them to write a second one. If they don’t use full stops show them how they could have in the teacher-student conference after they’ve written.



Writing Mini-Lesson 09

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Beginning Capital Letters

Once student(s) can write simple sentences intelligibly, then we teach them how to expand them to more than 6 words. Not all student(s) will need all lessons in this area.

Many student(s) at this level are now ready to write more than one sentence - and we want them to learn about using capital letters at the beginning of each sentence.

Mini-Lesson:

1. Show the writing topic picture and then “think aloud” before you write.
2. In your think aloud, let the student(s) know that you are going to write two sentences again today e.g. “The hippo looks funny. I think he has been swimming for too long.” Make sure one is an expanded sentence.
3. Write your two sentences, emphasising capital letters.
4. Now it is the student’s turn. If they only write one sentence, say “tell me more” and get them to write a second one. If they don’t use capital letters show them how they could have in the teacher-student conference after they’ve written.



The hippo looks funny. I think he has been swimming for too long.

PODD 60 Complex in TD Snap



Writing Mini-Lesson 10

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Writing is About Telling Things

Once student(s) can write simple sentences intelligibly, then we teach them how to expand them to more than 6 words. Not all student(s) will need all lessons in this area.

This lesson is about modelling that we write about topics that we think other people are interested in.

Mini-Lesson:

1. “Think aloud” before you write.
2. In your think aloud, let the student(s) know that you are thinking of a topic that you know about, and that you think will be interesting to others. You can have a brainwave and say “Hmmm. what has happened to me lately? I know! I went to the snow. I’m going to write about the snow, and then you can write about something you know about, that other people are interested in.
3. Now write one or two sentences, including one expanded sentence, about your topic. Student(s) write next as always, followed by teacher student conference.



**At this level you
don’t always need a
picture.**

Groups G and H

Writing Mini-Lesson 11

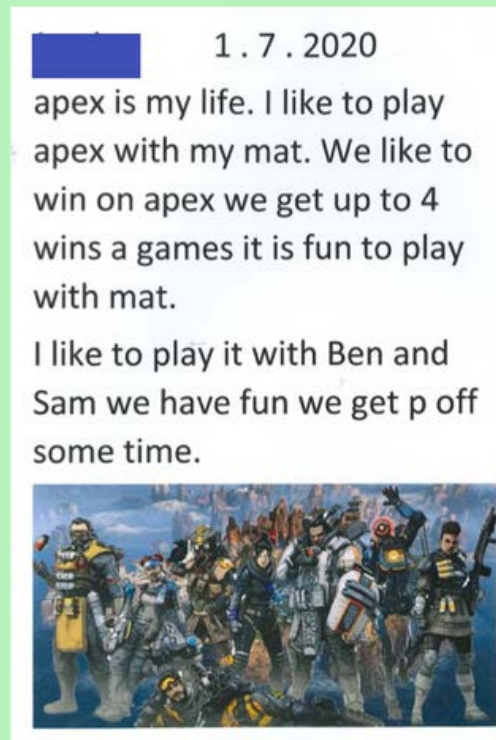
Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Read Writing from Other Students

Once student(s) can write simple sentences intelligibly, then we teach them how to expand them to more than 6 words. Not all student(s) will need all lessons in this area.

This lesson is about reading other student's writing and talking about why the student(s) wrote about that topic.

Mini-Lesson:

1. Present a piece of writing from a student from another class or previous year.
2. Discuss with the student(s): Why do you think the student chose to write about that?
3. Discuss that we often write about times with strong emotions or special times - or recent experiences. They are often fresh in our minds - which might make them easier to write about.
4. Remind them that we also write about things other people might find interesting. Talk about whether the student's writing is interesting to them or not.



Writing Mini-Lesson 12

Writing Complex Sentences: Joining Two Clauses with a Conjunction “and”

Once student(s) can write expanded and simple sentences intelligibly, then we teach them how to join two clauses to make a complex sentence.



**I went shopping and I
bought new shoes.**

This lesson is about joining two clauses or ideas with the conjunction “and”. Use a photo or a short video, or write about an experience, where you can use two ideas.

Mini-Lesson:

1. Show topic setter and then “think aloud” before you write.
2. In your think aloud, talk about a two different ideas you have had. Then talk about combining them with and. e.g. I could write “I went shopping” or I could write “I bought new shoes”. Oh - I’m going to write both of them in one sentence and use “and”.
3. Write your sentence.
4. Now it is the student’s turn. If they do a sentence with one idea say “tell me more” and get them to write a second one. If they don’t use and show them how they could have in the teacher-student conference after they’ve written.

Proloquo



Writing Mini-Lesson 13

Writing Complex Sentences: Joining Two Clauses with a Conjunction “because”

Once student(s) can write expanded and simple sentences intelligibly, then we teach them how to join two clauses to make a complex sentence.



**We went to the beach
because it was hot
yesterday.**

This lesson is about joining two clauses or ideas with the conjunction “because”. Use a photo or a short video, or write about an experience, where you can use two ideas.

Mini-Lesson:

1. Show topic setter and then “think aloud” before you write.
2. In your think aloud, talk about a two different ideas you have had. Then talk about combining them with and. e.g. I could write “We went to the beach” or I could write “It was hot yesterday”. Oh - I’m going to write both of them in one sentence and use “because”.
3. Write your sentence.
4. Now it is the student’s turn. If they write a sentence with one idea say “tell me more” and get them to write a second one. If they don’t use because show them how they could have in the teacher-student conference after they’ve written.

Proloquo



Writing Mini-Lesson 14

Writing Complex Sentences: Joining Two Clauses with a Conjunction “but”

Once student(s) can write expanded and simple sentences intelligibly, then we teach them how to join two clauses to make a complex sentence.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TK27aknWVI4>



The elephant jumped high but he didn't break the trampoline.

This lesson is about joining two clauses or ideas with the conjunction “but”. Use a photo or a short video, or write about an experience, where you can use two ideas.

Mini-Lesson:

1. Show topic setter and then “think aloud” before you write.
2. In your think aloud, talk about a two different ideas you have had. Then talk about combining them with and. e.g. I could write “The elephant jumped high” or I could write “He didn’t break the trampoline”. Oh - I’m going to write both of them in one sentence and use “but”.
3. Write your sentence.
4. Now it is the student’s turn. If they write a sentence with one idea say “tell me more” and get them to write a second one. If they don’t use but show them how they could have in the teacher-student conference after they’ve written.

Proloquo



Writing Mini-Lesson 15

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Adding more with Questions

Once student(s) are writing expanded and complex sentences independently and intelligibly, then we are going to teach them to write more by adding more.

This lesson is about teaching student(s) that there are questions they can ask themselves to help them write more by adding further information.

Mini-Lesson:

1. Use a photo or video you know will interest your student(s).
2. Write a simple (and boring) sentence about it e.g. “It is a plane”.
3. Encourage the student(s) to ask questions.
4. If student(s) struggle to come up with questions, suggest they use the questions in their AAC system or get other adults in the room to model.
5. Depending on the photo, questions might be: “where is it”, “what happened”, “who was in the crash”, “when did it crash”, “why did it crash”
6. Now pick one or two of the questions and use them to expand your writing by adding another sentence.
7. Now it is the student’s turn. During the teacher-student conference you can prompt them to ask themselves questions to help them to come up with more language (they don’t have to write it)



**It is a plane.
It crashed near
Adelaide last week.**

PODD 60 Complex in TD Snap



Writing Mini-Lesson 16

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Adding more with Questions

Once student(s) are writing expanded and complex sentences independently and intelligibly, then we are going to teach them to write more by adding more.

This lesson is about teaching student(s) that there are questions they can ask themselves to help them write more by adding further information.

Mini-Lesson:

1. Put up a picture of yourself and then think aloud, talking through each of the 5Ws. For example, "Who. Hmmm - who is in this photo. This is my friend Helen and myself! I think I will say "Helen and I". What - What are we doing? We're sitting with Paddington! I think I'll say "are sitting with Paddington". Continue with the other Wh questions. It may help if you use a visual organiser while you do this.
2. Now use 3 or more of the responses to the 5Ws to write 2 or more sentences.
3. Now it is the student's turn. They do not have to write using all the 5ws, but encourage them to plan ahead of time. If they don't want to plan, then go through their writing with the visual afterwards.



Pack of resources
for the 5Ws

Writing Mini-Lesson 17

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Adding more with Questions

Once student(s) are writing expanded and complex sentences independently and intelligibly, then we are going to teach them to write more by adding more.

This lesson is about teaching student(s) that there are questions they can ask themselves to help them write more by adding further information.

Mini-Lesson:

1. Use a simple sentence that you wrote previously and then think aloud, talking through each of the 5Ws.
2. Use 3 or more of the responses to the 5Ws to expand your original writing to two or more sentences.
3. Ask your student(s) to go through the writing and pick a piece of writing with a single sentence (if possible) that they can then expand using the 5Ws.
4. Encourage them to use a 5Ws visual and generate answers to at least four of the questions. Do not prompt them with extra language - just stick to the questions “Who, what, when, where and why”. Now ask them to write two or more sentences.



It is very dry.

It is very dry in the desert. He is sweating and looking for water.

SimPODD 60 Complex



Writing Mini-Lesson 18

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Using the 5Ws to plan and write

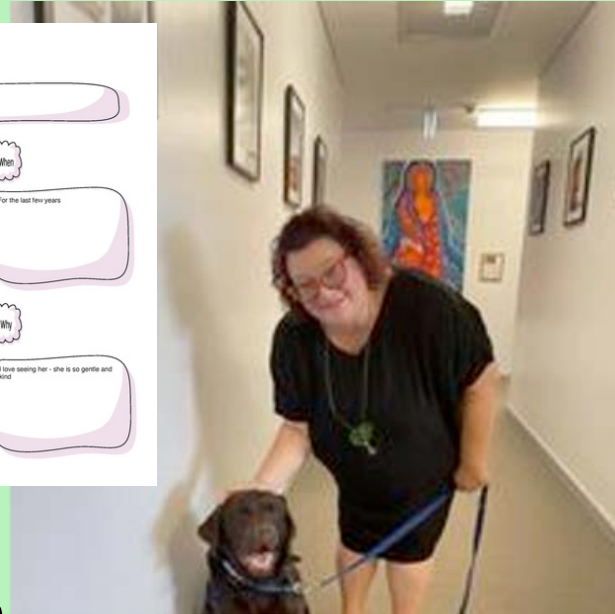
Once student(s) are writing expanded and complex sentences independently and intelligibly, then we are going to teach them to write more by adding more.

This lesson is about teaching student(s) that there are questions they can ask themselves to help them write more by adding further information.

Mini-Lesson:

1. Show the picture and then “think aloud” before you write, making notes about each of the 5ws.
2. Write three sentences using the information from the 5Ws. You don’t have to use all of it. Make sure at least one is an expanded or complex sentence.
3. Now it is the student’s turn. Encourage them to do planning of the 5Ws and then write. If they go straight to writing then use the 5Ws to review their writing at the end. Please note: if the student uses the fillable version of the planning or types 5Ws planning directly - then you can leave it available as they write. If you write down their ideas for them, then you need to remove them so they can’t copy.

Who	Inka and Inka	
What	When	
Where	Why	
How		



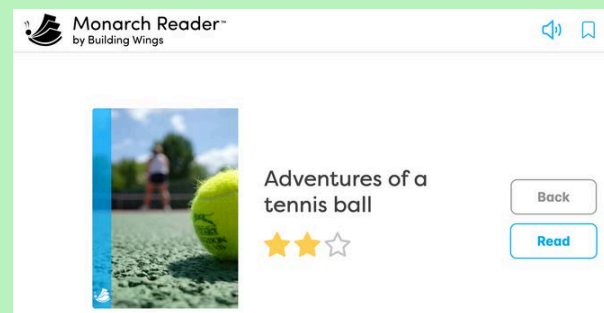
I went to Bullimbal school in Tamworth. They have a dog called Inka. I love seeing her!

Writing Mini-Lesson 19

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Using the 5Ws to plan and write a sequel

Once student(s) are writing expanded and complex sentences independently and intelligibly, then we are going to teach them to write more by adding more.

Adventures of a Tennis Ball on
Monarch Reader



**Tennis ball was wet. The dog
was covering him in saliva.
Finally, tennis ball got so wet
that he fell out of dog's mouth
He could breathe again. He lay
on the fresh, green grass
until.....**

This lesson is about teaching student(s) that there are questions they can ask themselves to help them write more by adding further information.

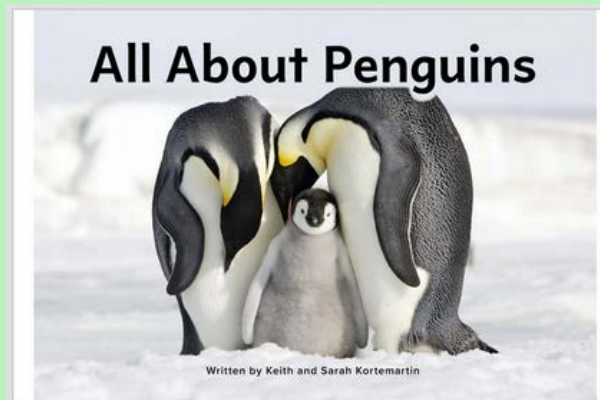
Mini-Lesson:

1. Read a simple text e.g. Adventures of a Tennis Ball on Monarch Reader
2. Write up the list of 5W questions, and answers, and then start writing a sequel to the text. Write three sentences using the information from the 5Ws. You don't have to use all of it. Make sure at least one is an expanded or complex sentence.
3. Review your writing with the student(s) - checking to see which of the 5Ws you have covered. Talk about any you might have missed.
4. Now it is the student's turn. They can use the 5Ws planning sheet or write directly and then review and edit as needed.

Writing Mini-Lesson 20

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Using the 5Ws to write about....

Once student(s) are writing expanded and complex sentences independently and intelligibly, then we are going to teach them to write more by adding more.



You can use the 5Ws to write about fiction or non-fiction - pretty much any topic. You could watch a short informational video, read a non-fiction book or write about another person. Many students will need lots of practice with different topics. A single photo may not give them enough information to generate answers to the 5Ws, so make sure whatever you set gives them enough information.

Example topics:

1. Curriculum areas
2. Simple non-fiction texts e.g. All About Penguins from Reading A-Z
3. Short videos e.g. videos on National Geographic Kids YouTube channel
4. Biographies of known people and famous people
5. Explaining a sport or a game
6. Anything else you come up with!!

Writing Mini-Lesson 21

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Give Me Five

As student(s) write more, having a bank of favourite topics or writing ideas can be a good idea.



On free writing days, some of your student(s) may struggle to come up with a topic to write about. Give me Five is about creating a list of topics that they can choose from.

Mini-Lesson:

Give Me 5: My Favourite Foods

1. Chocolate
2. Snow peas
3. Carrots
4. Bread
5. Chicken

1. Give Me Five is an activity aimed at creating a group of topics that student(s) might like to write about
2. In Give Me Five, student(s) create a document or notebook to store their answers in, that they can refer back to as needed.
3. Each time you do Give Me Five, you pick a topic e.g. sport, movies, food. Now you list your 5 favourite things under that topic. Model this yourself first and then get student(s) to do the same.
4. Then the next time they struggle to come up with a topic for writing, then you can suggest they look at their Give me Five lists for inspiration.

Writing Mini-Lesson 22

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Word Wall and Sounding Out

Once student(s) are learning to write more, we can start modelling strategies to support their word intelligibility as they move to more complex words. Our modelling focuses on the word wall, on sounding out and on reading the room.

Mini-Lesson:

1. Let student(s) know that you are going to write about an upcoming event at school. Think aloud and model using both the word wall and stretching words out to sound them out. For example:
2. Our school will ("will is on the word wall"- look at word wall and write will) have ("have is on the word wall so I can just look up there to spell have") a sports (stretch out sports and write letters as you say the sounds) day. We will (glance at word wall) play (word wall) games. You will ("that word on the word wall is really helpful") come (word wall) to the sports (stretch it out) in the school colours (stretch it out).
3. Now it is the student's turn. They do not have to write on the same topic or even use the strategies we modelled - we just need to make sure we model them.

Groups G and H

Writing Mini-Lesson 23

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Read the Room

Once student(s) are learning to write more, we can start modelling strategies to support their word intelligibility as they move to more complex words. Our modelling focuses on the word wall, on sounding out and on reading the room. Read the Room is where we teach them that they can use words in the room to write.

Mini-Lesson:

1. Let student(s) know that you are going to write about the week. Make sure you have the days of the week displayed around the room. Think aloud and model using the days of the week chart, the word wall and stretching words out to sound them out. For example:
2. On Monday (look at calendar to help you write Monday) we go to the library (stretch it out).
3. On Tuesday (look at calendar to help you write Tuesday)....
4. Now it is the student's turn. They do not have to write on the same topic or even use the strategies we modelled - we just need to make sure we model them.

Writing Mini-Lesson 24

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Read the Room

Once student(s) are learning to write more, we can start modelling strategies to support their word intelligibility as they move to more complex words. Our modelling focuses on the word wall, on sounding out and on reading the room. Read the Room is where we teach them that they can use words in the room to write.



January is hot. We go swimming and we cool down. We have a long holiday from school.

Mini-Lesson:

1. For this mini-lesson make sure you have a display in the room that has the months of the year on it. Use this display to write down January and then ask the student(s) to brainstorm words for January. Write down the list they generate. Do the same with a few other months, then pick one and write three sentences using the information from the 5Ws. You don't have to use all of the 5Ws., but make sure you use at least one expanded or complex sentence.
2. Now it is the student's turn. They do not have to write on the same topic or even use the strategies we modelled - we just need to make sure we model them.

Groups G and H

Writing Mini-Lesson 25

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Stretch Out Words

Once student(s) are learning to write more, we can start modelling strategies to support their word intelligibility as they move to more complex words. Our modelling focuses on the word wall, on sounding out and on reading the room. Stretching out words is something student(s) should have learned in their phonics instruction - and in this lesson we encourage them to do it in writing as well. Some student(s) will already be doing this.



I love planes. I want to travel around the world and visit lots of countries. I want to fly lots!

Mini-Lesson:

1. For this mini-lesson pick a topic, use the 5ws and then write three sentences using some of the information from the 5Ws. Use some words that you can model sounding out - slightly less high frequency but not on the word wall. Use any of the strategies that your student(s) have learned in their phonics program e.g. imagining a rubber band stretching as they stretch the sounds.
2. Now it is the student's turn. They do not have to write on the same topic or even use the strategies we modelled - we just need to make sure we model them.

Groups G and H

Writing Mini-Lesson 26

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Editing

The ultimate purpose of writing is to publish - so we are going to start teaching student(s) to edit to get their writing ready for publishing. Please see the addendum on editing for more information about introducing and using the editor's checklist. Talk about how you want to start publishing some work e.g. to Monarch Reader or school library. Explain to the student(s): "Before publishing we have to check our work is ready. This is called editing. We will use an editor's checklist for this".

Mini-Lesson:

Jane

Captain Cook sailed a ship. He made maps. He sailed to lots of places. He put up flags and said that the land was his. The people living on the lands did not get asked. Many people now see him as an invader.

1. For this mini-lesson use a piece of writing from a previous mini-lesson, or write something new. As recommended, we are going to start the student(s) editing a piece of your writing - and then transition them to editing their own.
2. Introduce the first (or next) item on the editor's checklist
3. Get the student(s) to use the editor's checklist to check your writing
4. Now it is the student's turn. They don't have to use the new item on the editor's checklist on their writing today - but let them know they will need to start using it next week.
5. Have them check your writing using the new item on the editor's checklist all week, then they will do both your writing and their writing next week and onwards.

Writing Mini-Lesson 27

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Editing

The ultimate purpose of writing is to publish - so we are going to start teaching student(s) to edit to get their writing ready for publishing. Please see the addendum on editing for more information about introducing and using the editor's checklist. Talk about how you want to start publishing some work e.g. to Monarch Reader or school library. Explain to the student(s): "Before publishing we have to check our work is ready. This is called editing. We will use an editor's checklist for this".

Jane 23/7

Adelaide is the city where I live. The Kaurna people lived first. The Kaurna people didn't build cities, instead they lived on the land. They walked around in family groups, to find food and water and knew land well.

Mini-Lesson:

1. For this mini-lesson use a piece of writing from a previous mini-lesson, or write something new.
2. Introduce the next item on the editor's checklist
3. Get the student(s) to use the editor's checklist to check your writing
4. Now it is the student's turn. They don't have to use the new item on the editor's checklist on their writing today - but let them know they will need to start using it next week.
5. Have them check your writing using the new item on the editor's checklist all week, then they will do both your writing and their writing next week and onwards.

Writing Mini-Lesson 28

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Diversifying Sentence Types

Most student(s) have already been writing lots of statements. Some of them will have diversified into using other sentence types - but this is a series of mini-lessons to encourage them to use different options to make their writing more varied.

Mini-Lesson:

1. For this mini-lesson you are going to introduce student(s) to the four different sentence types we would like them to use in their writing. These are: statements, commands, questions and exclamations.
2. Do a piece of writing that covers all four - and then show student(s) the four different options within the writing.
3. Show the student(s) that there is a command ("Close your eyes") that directs the reader to do something. A question (Do you see...?) that asks the reader for information. Two statements (I see dots... and They never...) which give the reader information and finally, an exclamation (I find it amazing!) that highlights something interesting.
4. Now it is the student's turn. Ask them to aim to use two of the different sentence types in their writing.

Jane 30/8

Close your eyes. Do you see anything when you close them? I see dots when I close my eyes. They never look the same. I find it amazing!

Groups G and H

Writing Mini-Lesson 29

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Diversifying Sentence Types: Statements

Most student(s) have already been writing lots of statements. Some of them will have diversified into using other sentence types - but this is a series of mini-lessons to encourage them to use different options to make their writing more varied.



January is hot. We go swimming and we cool down. We have a long holiday from school.

Mini-Lesson:

1. For this mini-lesson you are going to pick a previous piece of writing and show the student(s) that it is made of statements.
2. Talk to student(s) about the fact that we use a lot of statements in our writing. Get them to look at some of their old writing and find three different statements that they have made.
3. Make a list of statements as student(s) find them and read them out.

Groups G and H

Writing Mini-Lesson 30

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Diversifying Sentence Types: Commands

Commands are used a lot in certain types of writing, such as instructions. Let the student(s) know that you are going to practice writing commands by giving them instructions to do something straight away.

Mini-Lesson:

Simon Says

Simon says stand up.

Simon says sit down.

Simon says jump three times.

Shut your eyes.

Simon says blink twice.

1. For this mini-lesson you are going to model commands by playing Simon Says in written form.
2. Let the student(s) know that you will write a command on the board/screen and then they need to do it.
3. Now ask the student(s) to write three commands for Simon Says themselves. Once written, the whole class can follow the commands of the student(s) in this writing group, as long as they start with Simon Says of course!

Groups G and H

Writing Mini-Lesson 31

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Diversifying Sentence Types: Commands

Commands are used a lot in certain types of writing, such as instructions. Let the student(s) know that you are going to practice writing commands by giving them instructions to do something you are very familiar with.



**Put water in the kettle.
Put the kettle on to boil.
Get a coffee cup.
Put one teaspoon of
coffee in the cup.
When the kettle boils, fill
the cup with hot water.
Stir and drink.**

Mini-Lesson:

1. For this mini-lesson you are going to think aloud about something you are very familiar with that you could write instructions for.
2. Let the student(s) know what the topic is and then write the instructions in front of them. Think aloud about the steps and what you need.
3. Now ask the student(s) to pick something they are really familiar with, and then ask them to write the instructions for it using only commands. Be prepared with some suggestions for your student(s) to write about e.g. packing your bag, making a sandwich, using a swing, a game they play, etc.

Writing Mini-Lesson 32

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Diversifying Sentence Types: Commands

Commands are used a lot in certain types of writing, such as instructions. Let the student(s) know that you are going to practice writing commands by giving them instructions to do something you are very familiar with.



**Go to the windows.
Count to the third
window from the front.
Lift up the lid of the red
box.
Hold up what you find
inside.**

Mini-Lesson:

1. For this mini-lesson you need to hide something in the classroom before the mini-lesson begins. Let the student(s) know that you are going to give another adult written instructions to find something you have hidden.
2. Write the instructions, using only commands, for the other adult to follow.
3. Now ask the student(s) to write directions to somewhere or something in the school or classroom. Ask them not to tell their reader what they are looking for - just ask them to write them up a series of commands.
4. If possible, get other student(s) to follow the commands.

Groups G and H

Writing Mini-Lesson 33

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Diversifying Sentence Types: Questions

Questions can be used in any type of writing - and are often used to break a piece of writing up or to involve the reader. Sometimes they are, of course, part of a piece of dialogue. Make sure you emphasise the use of a question mark as you model questions in your mini-lessons.



I love this Christmas Tree. I would like one just like it in my home. What animal do you think would make a good Christmas tree?

Mini-Lesson:

1. For this mini-lesson you can use any topic you like, as long as you can write a question as part of it.
2. Write a mixture of statements and/or commands and/or questions in your mini-lesson. Just make sure there is at least one question and emphasise writing the question mark at the end of the question.
3. Now ask the student(s) to write about a topic, using one or more questions, along with statements and commands, and using a question mark as appropriate.

Groups G and H

Writing Mini-Lesson 34

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Diversifying Sentence Types: Questions

Questions can be used in any type of writing - and are often used to break a piece of writing up or to involve the reader. Sometimes they are, of course, part of a piece of dialogue. Make sure you emphasise the use of a question mark as you model questions in your mini-lessons.



I was born in Melbourne in 1969. I had two brothers and two lovely parents. Do you have any brothers or sisters?

Mini-Lesson:

1. For this mini-lesson you are going to start an “About Me” book.
2. An About Me book, lists information about the author and then finishes each page with a question to engage the reader.
3. Put up a photo of yourself (as a baby if you have one) and then write a couple of statements about it, followed by a question.
4. If possible, prepare a few pages ahead of time so that they can see the way the book flows - finishing each page with a question.
5. Now, let students know that they will be working on their own About Me book for several days. They can write about themselves or about another person.
6. Make sure you use the editing checklist and publish the About Me books.

Writing Mini-Lesson 35

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Diversifying Sentence Types: Questions

Questions can be used in any type of writing - and are often used to break a piece of writing up or to involve the reader. Sometimes they are, of course, part of a piece of dialogue. Make sure you emphasise the use of a question mark as you model questions in your mini-lessons.

Mini-Lesson Ideas:



Why is he in the hole?

1. Use the KWL structure in comprehension instruction. You can write the list of what student(s) know about the topic (K) but once you move onto “what you want to learn” (W) ask students to write this as a question.
2. Ask the student(s) to write a question that they want to ask a peer.
3. If the student(s) need to go to the office, ask them to write their request as a question.
4. Put up a picture that inspires questions and ask the students to write a question about it.
5. Tell them that they have been asked to look after an animal from the zoo. Get them to write questions they want to ask the zookeeper.

Writing Mini-Lesson 36

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Diversifying Sentence Types: Exclamations

Exclamations are used to emphasise something in writing, often something funny or silly. You should use this as an opportunity to model different sorts of sentences, and include an exclamation. You should also use an exclamation mark of course!



Do you want to hear my favourite lion joke? OK, here goes. Why don't lions like fast food? Because they can't catch it!

Mini-Lesson:

1. Use a picture or video that invites the use of an exclamation - or two!
2. Think Aloud as you write, modelling thinking like a writer.
3. Write three or more sentences, including at least one expanded or complex sentence. Make sure you use an exclamation point to mark the exclamation in your writing. Use questions, statements and commands as well if you can.
4. Now ask the students to take a turn. Provide them with a photo or video that invites the use of exclamations as their writing prompt.

Groups G and H

Writing Mini-Lesson 37

Writing Expanded & Complex Sentences: Diversifying Sentence Types: Exclamations

Exclamations are used to emphasise something in writing, often something funny or silly. You should use this as an opportunity to model different sorts of sentences, and include an exclamation. You should also use an exclamation mark of course!

Mini-Lesson Ideas:



Why is he in the hole?

1. Watch a funny video on YouTube and write about it, using at least one exclamation with an exclamation mark.
2. Write about something funny you have seen, using at least one exclamation with an exclamation mark.
3. Write about something silly you have done, using at least one exclamation with an exclamation mark.
4. Find a funny picture or comic and write about it, using at least one exclamation with an exclamation mark.

Model the above in a mini-lesson and then ask students to write. Emphasise the use of exclamation marks.

Groups G and H

Addendum: The 5Ws

Writing - using the 5Ws

Once a student can write one simple sentence of 3 to 6 words, independently (language, spelling, ideas, etc) then we ask them to write more.

The 5Ws is a shorthand term for the 5 questions we teach a student to ask themselves when learning to write more. The 5W questions are:



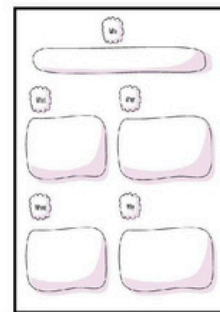
The 5Ws can be used to support students to write richer sentences and to be more aware of the information others might need to understand their writing. Students can also use them to write multiple sentences or to work on a paragraph within a larger topic.

It is really important that the 5Ws are questions that the student asks themselves. If you are prompting the student, make sure you only ask the basic question. Do not add anything to it, or you may reduce their developing autonomy as a writer. For example if a student is writing about going to the park on the weekend, they can learn to ask themselves "who" and then write about the "who" that is relevant to them. However, if the person supporting them asks "who did you go with?" we may change the direction of their writing. If left without the extra prompt they might have wanted to write about who they saw at the park or who didn't come to the park - not who they went with.

Writing - using the 5Ws

We also want the student to learn to ask themselves the 5Ws so that ultimately they learn to write independently.

As with all conventional writers, you would begin every writing session by writing yourself at the same level that the student is learning to write at e.g. an expanded sentence, or three sentences. This is called a mini-lesson. Pick a topic that is similar to the student's topic - and then think out loud about using the 5ws to come up with ideas.



You can use a chart like this one to make your planning visible to students. If you are modelling an expanded sentence, then you might only use two or three of the 5Ws - and it is great to model this for students. If you are modelling three or more sentences then you would use all of the 5Ws.

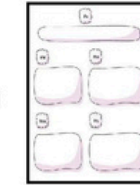
As you use the 5Ws yourself, make sure you model that you can use them in any order. You could cut up the visual to demonstrate this - or you could do your planning on post-it notes and move them around as you think out loud. Once you have written at the level the student is learning to write at, then it is their turn.

If needed, encourage them to plan their writing before they start - and have a student-teacher conference around this. They can use a similar chart to the one above. Once they have finished their planning, then ask them to write. Be specific about how much they should write - although they are always welcome to write more!

Writing - using the 5Ws

Resources you can download to support the introduction of the 5Ws.

[Planning Graphic of the 5ws for printing](#)



[Electronic fillable version of the planning Graphic of the 5ws](#)



[Writing More graphic](#)



(click on the graphics above to download a pack of 5Ws resources)

Writing using the 5Ws for Groups G & H

Page 1

Addendum: Editing

Teaching student(s) to edit their work should be a gradual process. The field suggests that you get student(s) to start editing your writing, before they move onto theirs. To put this in perspective, think about a time when you have expended a lot of effort writing something, for example an assignment when you were a student. The last thing you want to do is read it again and edit it! This is the same for many of our student(s) - they have put so much effort into writing that the thought of editing it is painful!!

So - you will start by getting them to check your writing - and then they will move onto theirs.

The other part of taking it gradually is that we introduce one item at a time on the editor's checklist - then, once a student feels confident with the first item, we add the second one. Then we do the same again. We introduce the second item, wait until the student feels confident with it, and then introduce the third. Keep going in this way until the student is using the full editor's checklist. This process should take around 12 months.

The Editor's Checklist is provided across a number of pages, with an additional item added each time, for this reason. Name and Date is the first item on the checklist - and it is deliberately easy to help student(s) start editing with confidence. Please don't skip it! This is the only item that you would do for just one week before introducing the next one. The other items will need more time.

Editing for Groups G and H

Page 1

Addendum: Editing

 Editor's Checklist

☐

Name and Date

☐

Sentences make sense

☐

Ending punctuation - .?!

☐

Beginning capital letters

☐

Circle misspelt words

☐

Capital letters for names and places

☐

Stays on topic

Editor's Checklist

Name and Date  

Sentences make sense 

Ending punctuation 

Beginning capital letters 

Circle misspelt words 

Capital letters for names and places 

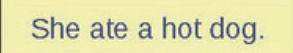
Stays on topic 

Editor's Checklist

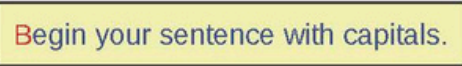
☐

Name and Date  

☐

Sentences make sense 

Ending punctuation 

Beginning capital letters 

Circle misspelt words 

Capital letters for names and places 

Stays on topic 

Click here or on the images above to download four different versions of the Simple Editor's Checklist (grade equivalent to Years 1 & 2)

Editing for Groups G and H

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Addendum: Topics

Make sure you use a diverse range of topics to keep student(s) engaged with writing. Too often, student(s) get bored with writing as we give them the same options repeatedly. Avoid writing about the weekend every Monday - lots of student(s) do the same thing every weekend and don't learn much about writing when writing about the same items every week. Or they can disengage as they have nothing new to write about.

One of the mini-lessons included in these cards is Give Me 5. This is a way to create lists of things your student(s) are interested in, which can then be used as a resource when student(s) need to pick a writing topic.

Other topics could be:

- Curriculum areas;
- Photos of them and of other people or animals or places;
- Videos, including funny videos, informative videos and imaginative videos. Create a list of short videos you can use e.g. The Swedish Chef Cooks Popcorn, Sea Cucumber Poop, What's an Engineer?;
- pranks and jokes;
- recounts;
- anything else you can come up with that they will enjoy and engage with.

And remember, every student needs to write about any topic at their writing level.

Topics for Groups G and H

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Addendum: Sentence Types

There are four sentence types we can help students learn to write. Lessons for these are included in the mini-lesson cards for this level.

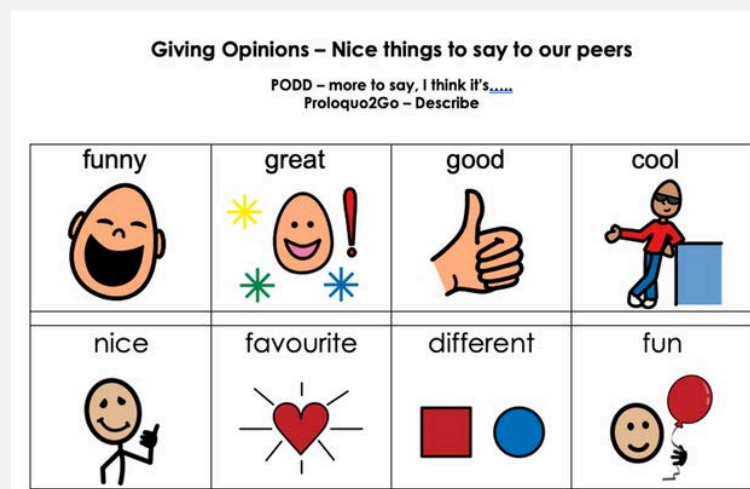
- ① Statement: The most common, the statement of an idea or opinion. e.g., Metal is shiny. Student(s) will have been writing these already.
- ② Command: Gives advice or instructions, or expresses a request or command e.g., Tell me something made out of metal.
- ③ Question: Asks a question and ends with a question mark. E.g. Have you used a metal object today?
- ④ EXCLAMATION Expresses force or a strong emotion and can end with an exclamation point. E.g. My favourite metal is gold!

Addendum: Author's Chair

Students at this level should get an opportunity to share their writing regularly. This could happen in a number of ways, including publishing their writing on a school board, in a school newsletter, sharing it with their team on SeeSaw (or a similar app). Another option is Author's Chair (sometimes called Writer's Chair).

Author's Chair can happen as frequently as you need to. It could be daily or weekly - and it is an opportunity for a student to share their writing with their peers. Students would take it in turns to stand up, read their piece of writing out, and then other students can comment or ask questions about it. If the student uses AAC you might want to work with them to pre-store their writing in their system so they can present it more easily.

Author's Chair sometimes needs us to set it up to make sure it is a positive experience. You might start by sharing writing from students in previous years - and then spend time practicing positive comments that can be made and questions that can be asked. Some classrooms start a chart of positive comments and questions to be used in writer's chair.



Often Author's Chair is written up as also involving a special "chair" for the author to sit in. This is a nice idea if you can manage it - but the really important part is that students get to share their writing with an audience.

Author's Chair for Groups G and H

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