The Language of Writing: Creating a Writing Program that Fosters Communication, Collaboration, and Composition

Amy Staples  Evette Edmister  Gayle Porter  Linda Burkhart

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Today’s Agenda

• Reflect on your writing program
• Review two complementary process models for writing;
• Share research on writing, particularly as it relates to individuals with CCN;
• Discuss a variety of writing activities that support aspects of the writing process;
Today’s Agenda Cont’d

• Share ways to support student access to the composition process;
• Talk about how one might monitor AAC use and writing development; and,
• Help participants examine their own writing program and consider how it might better support communication (both in process and the resulting written product).

First You

• Think of a child or two with whom you work. Quickly write down what the student’s writing program currently involves (across settings):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journal (10 min)</td>
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• What instructional or learning goals have been prioritized?
Writing Research

• Novice writers, even young children, are capable of sophisticated thought around writing (Fitzgerald & Stamm, 1990, 1992)

• Social settings are important for writing (Boyle, 2011; Larkin, 2009; Wiseman, 2003)

Guiding Frameworks

• Emergent literacy (Teale & Sulzby, 1986)
  – Concurrent development of reading, writing, listening, and speaking

• Cognitive process model (Flower & Hayes, 1981)
  – Recursive, hierarchical, metacognitive endeavor that requires juggling multiple constraints

• Social interactive models (Nystrand, 1986)
  – Quality is influenced by the interaction between reader, writer, and text
A Concurrent View of Literacy and Language Development

(Koppenhaver, Coleman, Kalman, & Yoder, 1991 – adapted from Teale & Sulzby, 1989)

The Writing Process
(Hayes and Flower, 1980)

Task Environment
- Topic
- Audience Constraints
- Text

Writing Processes
- Generating
  - Goal Setting
  - Organizing
- Planning
- Translating
- Reviewing
  - Evaluating
  - Revising

Long term memory
- Topic, Audience, Writing Plans

monitor
Social Interactive Process of Writing

*(Nystrand, 1986)*

**Text**

**Reader** ➔ **Writer**

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Research on Writing and Complex Communication Needs (CCN)

- Children with complex communication and/or learning challenges can grow in their literate profiles *(Broderick & Kasa-Hendrickson, 2001; Erickson & Koppenhaver, 1995; Klawer & Landis, 1999)*.

- Additional support of technology is sometimes required *(Erickson & Koppenhaver, 2007)*.

- Ensuring that access, participation and supports are addressed for all students during the class day is important *(DEC/NAEYC, 2009)*.
Research on Writing and Complex Communication Needs (CCN)

- Writing development supports reading as well as communication skills (Foley & Staples, 2003; Koppenhaver, Coleman, Kalmar, & Yoder, 1991; Teale & Sulzby, 1989; Wollak & Koppenhaver, 2011).

- Research related to Flower and Hayes cognitive process model focused more on translating and less on the overall cognitive process (Koppenhaver & Williams, 2010).

- Some preliminary evidence for both the cognitive process (Flower & Hayes, 1981) and social interaction (Nystrand, 1989) models of writing has been documented in young children with and without disabilities (Staples, Tidwell, & Huber, 2014; Staples & Edmister, 2012).

Considerations Moving Forward

- Reframe thinking about writing – writing suggests product. Think composition so acknowledge and support the process leading to the product.

- Cognitive demands – writing is a cognitive process that requires language. How do we facilitate/support without interrupting flow?

- Interactions throughout the composing process and written products provide an opportunity to assess/monitor language and composition skills.

- Honoring the author – presume they have thoughts, experiences, and ideas to draw from in their writing.

- Authors with CCN need opportunities to learn to use a comprehensive communication system within and outside the writing process.
Types of Writing Scenarios

**Teacher Directed**

- Predictable Chart
- Writing from Topic/Photo
- Rewriting Story
- Writing New Ending
- Writing using particular structure/genre (letter, poetry, narrative, expository)
- Sentence combining
- Story critique or Book Review

**Child Constructed**

- Big Paper
- Journaling
- Paired/Collaborative Writing
- Writer’s Workshop
  - Peer conferencing

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**Teacher Directed – Predictable Chart**

- Pattern for initial text
  - I like to eat __________.
  - In the winter we __________.
  - Plants need __________ to grow.
- Each child offers a sentence
- Teacher writes sentence as child dictates it, writing child’s name at end of sentence in parentheses
- Child reads his/her sentence
- Children read all the sentences
Predictable Chart

Teacher Directed - Sentence Combining

- Instructional activity with research base for improving the quality and complexity of written work.
- Example:
  - He has a big dog.
  - He has a brown dog.
  - He has a big, brown dog.
- Combination types include series and conjunctions
Child Constructed - Journaling

- Child-constructed with possibility of teacher direction
- Dialogue journal
- Topic journal

Child Constructed - Big Paper

- Large piece of newsprint/butcher paper
- Children seated at a table or on the floor
- Range of writing implements available
- Paper is replaced with new sheets as needed
- Children typically write/draw/compose on topics of their own choosing
- Length of writing session is primarily dictated by children
Methods of Documenting Growth

• Process
  – Methods
    • Anecdotal records
    • Digital/video of work process and product
  – Purpose
    • Note participation in own or other’s process
    • Language complexity during composition interactions
• Product
  – Writing artifacts (apply scale, rubric [including language complexity])

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Interaction</th>
<th>Conclusions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alex April -</td>
<td>Content was graphic and text Designs, letter strings, some</td>
<td>She interacted with peers, often wouldn’t say what she was writing until</td>
<td>Understands composition is a message and her messages got more complex –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>may</td>
<td>cursive like writing, more writing in varied ways to accompany image.</td>
<td>done. For reading text that was written complete sentence some difficulty</td>
<td>“that’s a happy birthday card.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Speed cursive. Letters in name appear frequently in letter strings.</td>
<td>with comparatives (i.e. “Because it is so much pretty”). Directed others,</td>
<td>See planning, reviews and reflects on writing i.e. isn’t that pretty</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Added, revised. Read her work to others.</td>
<td>commented on her work and others.</td>
<td>Serves as monitor for peers – commenting on others work</td>
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<td>Translation appropriate for age emerging with graphics and letters.</td>
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Adapted Emergent Writing Stages

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>0.5°</td>
<td>One or two light marks or dots on a page°</td>
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<tr>
<td>0°</td>
<td>Alt. Pencil-1-3 letters selected°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1°</td>
<td>Randomly placed scribble°</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alt pencil- repeats letters in alphabetical order (does not have to include each letter sequentially)°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2°</td>
<td>Left to right scribbling°</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alt pencil-repeated letters but not always in ABC order°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3°</td>
<td>Mock letters- can be conventional shapes or personal shapes°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4°</td>
<td>Strings of letters°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alt. Pencil-strings of letters (very few repeats)°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5°</td>
<td>Groups of letters°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alt pencil (must be sure child has option to choose space)°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6°</td>
<td>Labeling pictures with one (usually first) letter sound of objects name°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alt pencil-single letters with spaces representing sound of word student is spelling°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7°</td>
<td>Environmental Print- writes words (mostly spelled correctly that the student sees in his environment (often names but could also be words on word wall, engaging words to student. i.e. Pacman°</td>
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<tr>
<td>8°</td>
<td>Letter-Word representation: uses first letter of a word to represent entire word°</td>
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Instructional Considerations and Conclusions
Promote Independence without Stifling Productivity

- Reframe thinking about writing – writing suggests product. Think composition and acknowledge and support the process leading to the product.
- Be mindful of cognitive processes (in head) and social aspect of readers and writers around the text to improve quality of text
- Cognitive demands – writing is a cognitive process. How do we facilitate/support without interrupting flow?
- Interactions throughout the writing process and written products provide an opportunity to assess/monitor language and composition skills.
- Use assessment to prioritize instructional efforts

Promote Independence without Stifling Productivity

- Honoring the author – presume they have thoughts, experiences, and ideas to draw from in their writing.
- Authors with CCN need opportunities to learn to use a comprehensive communication system within and outside the writing process.
References


