Reading & Writing Strategies Across the Curriculum

How Writing About a Text Can Lead to Comprehension!
Writing to Read

Evidence for How Writing Can Improve Reading

A Report from Carnegie Corporation of New York

2010

Steve Graham and Michael Hebert: Vanderbilt University
Outcomes

Participants will

1. Access three writing recommendations to support student comprehension of content area texts used.

2. Review strategies based on the three recommendations.
I. **HAVE STUDENTS WRITE ABOUT THE TEXTS THEY READ.** Students’ comprehension of science, social studies, and language arts texts is improved when they write about what they read, specifically when they

- Respond to a Text in Writing (Writing Personal Reactions, Analyzing and Interpreting the Text)
- Write Summaries of a Text
- Write Notes About a Text
- Answer Questions About a Text in Writing, or Create and Answer Written Questions About a Text

II. **TEACH STUDENTS THE WRITING SKILLS AND PROCESSES THAT GO INTO CREATING TEXT.** Students’ reading skills and comprehension are improved by learning the skills and processes that go into creating text, specifically when teachers

- Teach the Process of Writing, Text Structures for Writing, Paragraph or Sentence Construction Skills (Improves Reading Comprehension)
- Teach Spelling and Sentence Construction Skills (Improves Reading Fluency)
- Teach Spelling Skills (Improves Word Reading Skills)

III. **INCREASE HOW MUCH STUDENTS WRITE** Students’ reading comprehension is improved by having them increase how often they produce their own texts.
Writing to Read Note-Catcher

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations &amp; Instructional Practices</th>
<th>Regularly</th>
<th>Sporadically</th>
<th>Not Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Have students write about the texts they read.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Respond to a Text in Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Write Summaries of a Text</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource: Summarizing Strategies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Write Notes About a Text</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource: Note Taking Strategies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Answer Questions About a Text in Writing or Create and Answer Written Questions About a Text</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource: Text Dependent Question Guide</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Teach Students the Writing Skills and Processes That Go into Creating Text</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Teach the Process of Writing; Text Structures for Writing; Paragraph or Sentence Construction Skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource: Text Structure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Teach Spelling and Sentence Construction Skills (Fluency)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource: A Checklist for Evaluating A Spelling Program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Teach Spelling Skills (Word Reading)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Increase How Much Students Write</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next Steps:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I. **HAVE STUDENTS WRITE ABOUT THE TEXTS THEY READ.** Students’ comprehension of science, social studies, and language arts texts is improved when they write about what they read, specifically when they

- Respond to a Text in Writing (Writing Personal Reactions, Analyzing and Interpreting the Text)
- Write Summaries of a Text
- Write Notes About a Text
- Answer Questions About a Text in Writing, or Create and Answer Written Questions About a Text

II. **TEACH STUDENTS THE WRITING SKILLS AND PROCESSES THAT GO INTO CREATING TEXT.** Students’ reading skills and comprehension are improved by learning the skills and processes that go into creating text, specifically when teachers

- Teach the Process of Writing, Text Structures for Writing, Paragraph or Sentence Construction Skills (Improves Reading Comprehension)
- Teach Spelling and Sentence Construction Skills (Improves Reading Fluency)
- Teach Spelling Skills (Improves Word Reading Skills)

III. **INCREASE HOW MUCH STUDENTS WRITE.** Students’ reading comprehension is improved by having them increase how often they produce their own texts.
Recommendation #1

Students’ comprehension of science, social studies, and language arts texts is improved when they write about what they read.
I. HAVE STUDENTS WRITE ABOUT THE TEXTS THEY READ. Students’ comprehension of science, social studies, and language arts texts is improved when they write about what they read, specifically when they

- Respond to a Text in Writing (Writing Personal Reactions, Analyzing and Interpreting the Text)
- Write Summaries of a Text
- Write Notes About a Text
- Answer Questions About a Text in Writing, or Create and Answer Written Questions About a Text

II. TEACH STUDENTS THE WRITING SKILLS AND PROCESSES THAT GO INTO CREATING TEXT. Students’ reading skills and comprehension are improved by learning the skills and processes that go into creating text, specifically when teachers

- Teach the Process of Writing, Text Structures for Writing, Paragraph or Sentence Construction Skills (Improves Reading Comprehension)
- Teach Spelling and Sentence Construction Skills (Improves Reading Fluency)
- Teach Spelling Skills (Improves Word Reading Skills)

III. INCREASE HOW MUCH STUDENTS WRITE. Students’ reading comprehension is improved by having them increase how often they produce their own texts.
Writing About Text Proved to Be Better Than Just…

- Reading It
- Reading and Rereading It
- Reading and Studying It
- Reading and Discussing It
- Receiving Reading Instruction
Instructional Practice

• Respond to a Text in Writing
  o Writing Personal Reactions
  o Writing to Analyze and Interpret the Text
I. HAVE STUDENTS WRITE ABOUT THE TEXTS THEY READ. Students’ comprehension of science, social studies, and language arts texts is improved when they write about what they read, specifically when they

- Respond to a Text in Writing (Writing Personal Reactions, Analyzing and Interpreting the Text)
- Write Summaries of a Text
- Write Notes About a Text
- Answer Questions About a Text in Writing, or Create and Answer Written Questions About a Text

II. TEACH STUDENTS THE WRITING SKILLS AND PROCESSES THAT GO INTO CREATING TEXT. Students’ reading skills and comprehension are improved by learning the skills and processes that go into creating text, specifically when teachers

- Teach the Process of Writing, Text Structures for Writing, Paragraph or Sentence Construction Skills (Improves Reading Comprehension)
- Teach Spelling and Sentence Construction Skills (Improves Reading Fluency)
- Teach Spelling Skills (Improves Word Reading Skills)

III. INCREASE HOW MUCH STUDENTS WRITE. Students’ reading comprehension is improved by having them increase how often they produce their own texts.
Summarizing Text Proved to Be Better Than Just...

Simply Reading the Text

Reading and Rereading the Text

Reading and Studying the Text
Instructional Practice
Write Summaries of a Text

Readers must recognize:

- which ideas are indispensable to the original text.
- which ones can be dropped altogether or combined.
- the need for paraphrasing the text using their own words.
Summary Handout

1. Skim the handout in your group.
2. Choose an summary idea that would work for your classroom.
3. Choose one person to be the spokesperson for your group.
I. HAVE STUDENTS WRITE ABOUT THE TEXTS THEY READ. Students’ comprehension of science, social studies, and language arts texts is improved when they write about what they read, specifically when they

- Respond to a Text in Writing (Writing Personal Reactions, Analyzing and Interpreting the Text)
- Write Summaries of a Text
- **Write Notes About a Text**
- Answer Questions About a Text in Writing, or Create and Answer Written Questions About a Text

II. TEACH STUDENTS THE WRITING SKILLS AND PROCESSES THAT GO INTO CREATING TEXT. Students’ reading skills and comprehension are improved by learning the skills and processes that go into creating text, specifically when teachers

- Teach the Process of Writing, Text Structures for Writing, Paragraph or Sentence Construction Skills (Improves Reading Comprehension)
- Teach Spelling and Sentence Construction Skills (Improves Reading Fluency)
- Teach Spelling Skills (Improves Word Reading Skills)

III. INCREASE HOW MUCH STUDENTS WRITE. Students’ reading comprehension is improved by having them increase how often they produce their own texts.
Writing Notes About Text Proved to Be Better Than Just…

- Reading
- Reading and Rereading
- Reading and Studying
- Reading and Underlining Important Information
- Receiving Explicit Instruction In Reading Practices
3rd – 5th Grade
Have Students Write Notes About Text

The act of taking written notes about text material should enhance comprehension. This writing practice involves sitting through a text to determine what is most relevant and transforming and reducing the substance of these ideas into written prose or key words. Intentionally or unintentionally, note takers organize the abstracted material in some way, connecting one idea to another, while blending new information with their own knowledge, resulting in new understandings of texts.

Writing to Read

Without proper instruction in note taking, students may just write down words or phrases word for word, without thinking about what it the text says. Successful note takers summarize the meaning, leading to better chances of successful note takers summarize the meaning, which they are much more likely to retain this information later.

Adapted from Mazzaro/Noterig, 2005
In order to get students to respond either personally or to analyze or interpret, questions are needed.

I. HAVE STUDENTS WRITE ABOUT THE TEXTS THEY READ. Students’ comprehension of science, social studies, and language arts texts is improved when they write about what they have read, specifically when they

• Respond to a Text in Writing (Writing Personal Reactions, Analyzing and Interpreting)
• Write Summaries of a Text
• Write Notes About a Text
• Answer Questions About a Text in Writing, or Create and Answer Written Questions About a Text

II. TEACH STUDENTS THE WRITING SKILLS AND PROCESSES THAT GO INTO COMPOSING TEXT.

Students’ reading skills and comprehension are improved by learning the skills and processes that go into creating text, specifically when teachers

• Teach the Process of Writing, Text Structures for Writing, Paragraph or Sentence Construction Skills (Improves Reading Comprehension)
• Teach Spelling and Sentence Construction Skills (Improves Reading Fluency)
• Teach Spelling Skills (Improves Word Reading Skills)

III. INCREASE HOW MUCH STUDENTS WRITE. Students’ reading comprehension is improved by having them increase how often they produce their own texts.
Instructional Practice

- Answering Questions About a Text in Writing
- Creating AND Answering Written Questions About a Text

Effective for low achieving students.

If coupled with EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION
What Should Guide Question Development?

- **Grade level reading standards**
  They provide useful guidance for appropriate questions to frame writing responses to text.

- **Asking higher level questions**
  They push readers to think deeply about the texts.
I. HAVE STUDENTS WRITE ABOUT THE TEXTS THEY READ. Students’ comprehension of science, social studies, and language arts texts is improved when they write about what they read, specifically when they

- Respond to a Text in Writing (Writing Personal Reactions, Analyzing and Interpreting the Text)
- Write Summaries of a Text
- Write Notes About a Text
- Answer Questions About a Text in Writing, or Create and Answer Written Questions About a Text

II. TEACH STUDENTS THE WRITING SKILLS AND PROCESSES THAT GO INTO CREATING TEXT. Students’ reading skills and comprehension are improved by learning the skills and processes that go into creating text, specifically when teachers

- Teach the Process of Writing, Text Structures for Writing, Paragraph or Sentence Construction Skills (Improves Reading Comprehension)
- Teach Spelling and Sentence Construction Skills (Improves Reading Fluency)
- Teach Spelling Skills (Improves Word Reading Skills)

III. INCREASE HOW MUCH STUDENTS WRITE. Students’ reading comprehension is improved by having them increase how often they produce their own texts.
Recommendation #2

Teach students the writing skills and processes that go into creating text.

Students’ reading skills and comprehension are improved by learning the skills and processes that go into creating texts.
I. **HAVE STUDENTS WRITE ABOUT THE TEXTS THEY READ.** Students’ comprehension of science, social studies, and language arts texts is improved when they write about what they read, specifically when they

- Respond to a Text in Writing (Writing Personal Reactions, Analyzing and Interpreting the Text)
- Write Summaries of a Text
- Write Notes About a Text
- Answer Questions About a Text in Writing, or Create and Answer Written Questions About a Text

II. **TEACH STUDENTS THE WRITING SKILLS AND PROCESSES THAT GO INTO CREATING TEXT.** Students’ reading skills and comprehension are improved by learning the skills and processes that go into creating text, specifically when teachers

- Teach the Process of Writing, Text Structures for Writing, Paragraph or Sentence Construction Skills (Improves Reading Comprehension)
- Teach Spelling and Sentence Construction Skills (Improves Reading Fluency)
- Teach Spelling Skills (Improves Word Reading Skills)

III. **INCREASE HOW MUCH STUDENTS WRITE.** Students’ reading comprehension is improved by having them increase how often they produce their own texts.
Instructional Practices

• Teach the Process of Writing
• Teach Text Structures for Writing
• Teach Paragraph or Sentence Construction Skills
The writing process consists of steps the writer should take when producing written language that conveys meaning.

Retrieved from: www.illinoisliteracyinaction.org Select a grade level, click on writing and then find standard 4/5..
Students’ reading skills can also be enhanced by teaching them how to use text structure as an aid for writing text.

Crowhurst, 1991

K-5 Resource:
http://www.readingrockets.org/article/how-teach-expository-text-structure-facilitate-reading-comprehension
**Text Structure**

### Text Structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Signal Words</th>
<th>Graphic Organizers</th>
<th>Summary Questions</th>
<th>Paragraph Frames</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
<td>The author explains a topic, idea, person, place, thing, event, or concept by using characteristics, features, and examples. Results are on one thing and its components.</td>
<td>For example: Characteristics and Their Uses, Concepts of Importance.</td>
<td>Focus map.</td>
<td>What specific person, place, thing, event, or concept is being described?</td>
<td><em>A ______ is type of ________.</em> It is made up of ________ and looks like ________. Some ________ have ________ such as ________. For example, ________.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sequence</strong></td>
<td>The author tells or depicts events in numerical or chronological order. Describes the order of events or how to do or make something.</td>
<td>First, second, third, fourth, fifth. Then, after, before, prior to, following.</td>
<td>Timeline.</td>
<td>What sequence of events is being described?</td>
<td>There is how a ________ is made. First, ________. Next, ________. Then, ________. Finally, ________.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compare and Contrast</strong></td>
<td>The author explains how two or more things are alike and/or how they are different.</td>
<td>Differ in ________ and/or ________.</td>
<td>Venn diagram.</td>
<td>What items being compared? What is about them that is being compared? Both ________ and ________ are alike, and ________ as well. Both also ________ and ________ and ________ similar. Both are ________ as well as ________. On the other hand, one way they differ is ________. Another difference is ________. In what way are these items different?</td>
<td>________ and ________ are alike in ________. Both ________ and ________ are similar. Both also ________ as well. ________ although they share ________ only ________ is the ________.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teaching students how to write more sophisticated sentences by learning how to combine less complex sentences into more complex ones, requires modeling and strategy instruction.
Bryan sat by the fire. Bryan read a book.

“Bryan sat by the fire and read a book.”

Jan performed poorly on her science test. She forgot to study.

“Jan forgot to study and performed poorly on her science test.”
Sentence Combining

Teacher models how to
combine simpler sentences into more complex ones.

Students practice
combining similar sentences.

(Hunt and O’Donnell, 1970)

Resource: Reading Rockets
Strategy, mentor texts, research…

http://www.readingrockets.org стратегии/предложение_объединение
I. HAVE STUDENTS WRITE ABOUT THE TEXTS THEY READ. Students’ comprehension of science, social studies, and language arts texts is improved when they write about what they read, specifically when they

- Respond to a Text in Writing (Writing Personal Reactions, Analyzing and Interpreting the Text)
- Write Summaries of a Text
- Write Notes About a Text
- Answer Questions About a Text in Writing, or Create and Answer Written Questions About a Text

II. TEACH STUDENTS THE WRITING SKILLS AND PROCESSES THAT GO INTO CREATING TEXT. Students’ reading skills and comprehension are improved by learning the skills and processes that go into creating text, specifically when teachers

- Teach the Process of Writing, Text Structures for Writing, Paragraph or Sentence Construction Skills (Improves Reading Comprehension)
- Teach Spelling and Sentence Construction Skills (Improves Reading Fluency)
- Teach Spelling Skills (Improves Word Reading Skills)

III. INCREASE HOW MUCH STUDENTS WRITE. Students’ reading comprehension is improved by having them increase how often they produce their own texts.
Instructional Practice

Teach Spelling and Sentence Construction Skills

(Improves Reading Fluency)
I. **HAVE STUDENTS WRITE ABOUT THE TEXTS THEY READ.** Students’ comprehension of science, social studies, and language arts texts is improved when they write about what they read, specifically when they

- Respond to a Text in Writing (Writing Personal Reactions, Analyzing and Interpreting the Text)
- Write Summaries of a Text
- Write Notes About a Text
- Answer Questions About a Text in Writing, or Create and Answer Written Questions About a Text

II. **TEACH STUDENTS THE WRITING SKILLS AND PROCESSES THAT GO INTO CREATING TEXT.**

Students’ reading skills and comprehension are improved by learning the skills and processes that go into creating text, specifically when teachers

- Teach the Process of Writing, Text Structures for Writing, Paragraph or Sentence Construction Skills (Improves Reading Comprehension)
- Teach Spelling and Sentence Construction Skills (Improves Reading Fluency)
- **Teach Spelling Skills** (Improves Word Reading Skills)

III. **INCREASE HOW MUCH STUDENTS WRITE.** Students’ reading comprehension is improved by having them increase how often they produce their own texts.
Spelling Resources

Florida Center for Reading Research Student Activities

http://www.fcrr.org/curriculum/SCAindex.sh.tm

Center on Instruction: Spelling Video

https://vimeo.com/72895477

I. HAVE STUDENTS WRITE ABOUT THE TEXTS THEY READ. Students’ comprehension of science, social studies, and language arts texts is improved when they write about what they read, specifically when they

- Respond to a Text in Writing (Writing Personal Reactions, Analyzing and Interpreting the Text)
- Write Summaries of a Text
- Write Notes About a Text
- Answer Questions About a Text in Writing, or Create and Answer Written Questions About a Text

II. TEACH STUDENTS THE WRITING SKILLS AND PROCESSES THAT GO INTO CREATING TEXT. Students’ reading skills and comprehension are improved by learning the skills and processes that go into creating text, specifically when teachers

- Teach the Process of Writing, Text Structures for Writing, Paragraph or Sentence Construction Skills (Improves Reading Comprehension)
- Teach Spelling and Sentence Construction Skills (Improves Reading Fluency)
- Teach Spelling Skills (Improves Word Reading Skills)

III. INCREASE HOW MUCH STUDENTS WRITE. Students’ reading comprehension is improved by having them increase how often they produce their own texts.
Recommendation #3

Increase how much students write.

Students’ reading comprehension is improved by having them increase how often they produce their own texts.
Increasing the Amount of Writing
Biggest Enemy

If you can read everything your students write, you’re not assigning enough writing!
How much time should students engage with writing in a school day?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Time Per Day Spent in Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>30 Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st - 5th Grades</td>
<td>30 Minutes: Teaching Writing Strategies, Techniques and Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30 Minutes: Writing Practice (students apply the skills they learned from instruction)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This includes writing practice for all subjects.

*Teaching Elementary School Students to Be Effective Writers* (What Works Clearinghouse)
What new strategy, resource or concept from the *Writing to Read* research do you want to implement?
THANK YOU

- Kathi Rhodus krhodus@isbe.net
- Jill Brown jbrown@isbe.net
References

• Graham, S. (2012). Address given at UIRA Conference, Ogden, Utah
• Shanahan, T. *Thank Goodness the Writing Scores are Going to Drop*. Retrieved August 1, 2013, from http://www.shanahanonliteracy.com