

Writing Foundation Skills Common Core State Standards

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Big Idea: The ability to compose written products is dependent on foundation skills

Outcome: Writing Opinions, Informational Texts, Narratives

The diagram consists of two rectangular boxes. The top box is yellow and contains the text 'Outcome: Writing Opinions, Informational Texts, Narratives'. The bottom box is gray and contains the text 'Example Foundation Skills: reading, expressive vocabulary, word usage, fluent handwriting or typing, spelling, grammar, capitalization, punctuation, sentence formation, sentence sense, paragraph formation'. Five black arrows point from the bottom box to the top box, indicating that the foundation skills listed below are necessary for achieving the outcome listed above.

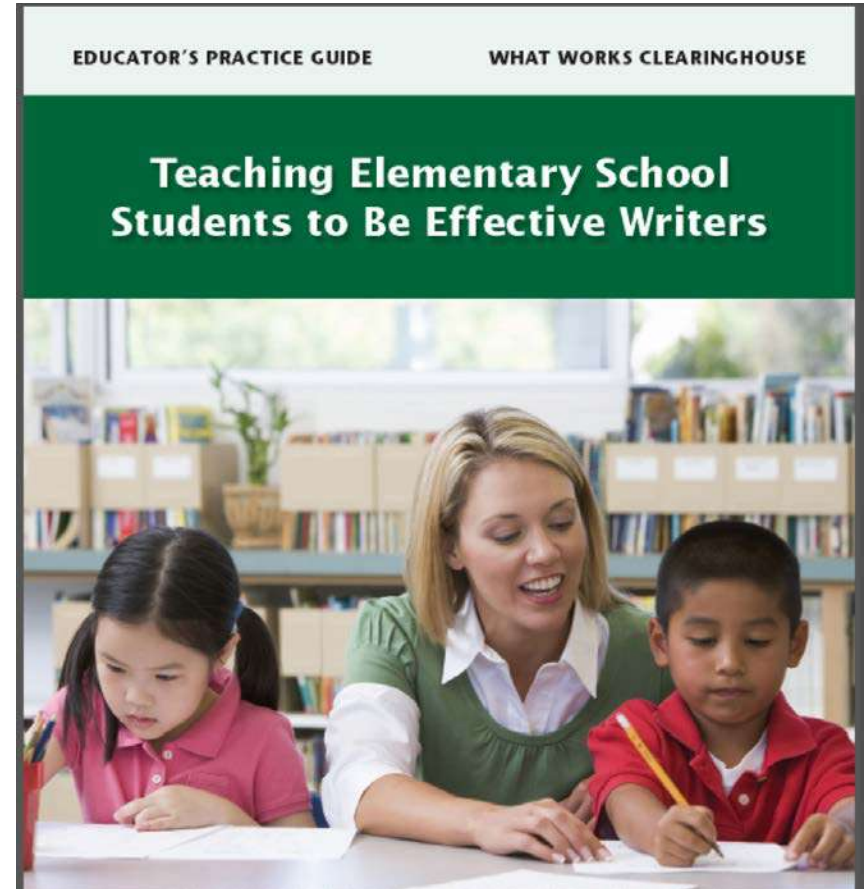
Example **Foundation Skills:**

reading, expressive vocabulary, word usage, fluent handwriting or typing, spelling, grammar, capitalization, punctuation, sentence formation, sentence sense, paragraph formation

Effective Writing Instruction

Standards

- + Research on Instruction
- + Research on Writing



Teaching Elementary School Students to be Effective Writers *IES Practice Guide*

Recommendation 1. Provide daily time for students to write.

Recommendation 2. Teach students to use the writing process for a variety of purposes.

Recommendation 3. Teach students to become fluent with handwriting, spelling, sentence construction, typing, and word processing.

Recommendation 4. Create an engaged community of writers.

Elementary Writing Practice Guide

What Works Clearing House - Institute of Education Sciences

“Recommendation: Teach students to become fluent with handwriting, spelling, sentence construction, typing, and word processing.

When basic writing skills become relatively effortless for students, they can focus less on these basic writing skills and more on developing and communicating their ideas. However, younger writers must typically devote considerable attention to acquiring and polishing these skills before they become proficient.”

Automaticity of foundation skills needed for higher order skills

When _____ is automatic...

Space available in working memory to

When handwriting (or keyboarding) is automatic

Space available in working memory to plan, compose, edit, and revise product

When spelling is automatic

Space available in working memory to plan, compose, edit, and revise product

When capitalization and punctuation are automatic

Space available in working memory to plan, compose, edit, and revise product

When sentence construction is automatic

Space available in working memory to plan, compose, edit, and revise product

Topics

- **Handwriting**
 - Letter Formation – Accuracy
 - Handwriting and Keyboarding – Fluency
 - Word Processing
 - Appearance of products
- **Spelling**
 - Spelling - Regular Words
 - Spelling - Irregular Words
 - Spelling - Rules for Combining
- **Sentences**
 - Sentence Frames
 - Sentence Expanding
 - Sentence Combining
 - Sentence Construction
- **Paragraphs**
 - Paragraph Frames
 - Paragraph Construction

Writing Foundations - Handwriting - Importance

- “Children who experience difficulty mastering this skill may **avoid writing** and develop **a mindset that they cannot write**, leading to arrested writing development.” (Graham, Harris, & Fink, 2000)
- If students have to struggle to remember letter forms, their ability to express themselves suffers. Handwriting must be **automatic**. (Graham, 2007)

Writing Foundations – Handwriting Importance

- Fluent, accurate letter formation and spelling are associated with students' production of **longer and better-organized compositions**. (Berninger, Vaughan, Abbott, Abbott, Brooks, Rogan, Reed, & Graham, S.,1997)
- Measures of **handwriting speed** among elementary students are **good predictors** of quality and quantity of written products in middle school. (Peverly, 2007)
- **Students benefit from explicit instruction on how to form and fluently write letters of alphabet.**

Writing Foundations – Handwriting Letter Formations

Introduction of letter form

I do it.

- Model the letter formation.
- Stress orientation to the lines.
(Hair line. Belt line. Foot line.)
- Model letter formation a number of times. Use verbal prompts.

Watch me make a lower case p. I start at the belt line. Touch down. Touch around. Watch again. Touch down. Touch around. Say it as I write a lower case p. Touch down. Touch around.

Writing Foundations – Handwriting Letter Formations

We do it.

- Guide students in forming the letter using verbal prompts.
(*“Touch down. Touch around.”*)
- Monitor the students letter formation.

You do it.

- Have students continue writing the letter as they say the prompt OR the letter sound.
- Continue until the letters are consistently formed correctly.

Writing Foundations – Handwriting Letter Formations

- Carefully **monitor** handwriting practice.
- Provide **feedback**.
 - Teacher feedback.
 - *This is your best letter p. It starts at the beltline and goes straight down and then around.*
 - Self-evaluation.
 - Model the process.
 - *Watch me examine my letters. (Circle your best p.) This is my best p. It starts at the beltline, goes straight down and goes around.*
 - Have students evaluate their work and circle their best formed letters.

Writing Foundations - Handwriting - Letter Formations

After initial practice, provide on-going retrieval practice that is distributive and cumulative.

- Dictate sounds.
- Have students write letters on slates (with permanent lines) or paper.
- Provide feedback by showing example.

Remember:

Mastery plus cumulative review = retention

Writing Foundations - Handwriting - Letter Formations

Feedback on legibility in upper grades.

Have students:

- Exchange papers with their partners.
- Circle all of the letters that they cannot recognize.
- Return papers to your partners.
- Fix-up circled letters to be sure that all letters are legible.

Writing Foundations - Handwriting - Fluency

- Handwriting fluency can be increased by
 - Having students **write frequently**.
 - Involving students in **“repeated writings”**.
(Graham, Harris, & Fink, 2000)

Mean Handwriting Speeds: Letters per Minute

	Girls	Boys
Grade 1	21	17
Grade 2	36	32
Grade 3	50	45
Grade 4	66	61
Grade 5	75	71
Grade 6	91	78
Grade 7	109	91
Grade 8	118	112
Grade 9	121	114

Writing Foundations – Handwriting – Fluency (Assessment based on work of Steve Graham)

- Ask students to copy a passage for one minute and 30 seconds.
- Stress that they should write neatly and quickly.
- Determine the number of letters correctly formed in one minute.
- Students will need additional help if:
 - **1st grade** (7 below mean)
 - **2nd grade** (13 below mean)
 - **3rd grade** (14 below mean)
 - **Older students** (20 below mean)

Writing Foundations – Handwriting Fluency

- **Repeated Writing**

- Student writes the same paragraph or material on consecutive days.
 - Materials - Paragraph in reader.
 - Adages, proverbs, sayings
- Tries to increase the number of letters or words written in a 2 to 5 minute timed session.
- Student graphs number of letters or words written.

Writing Foundations – Keyboarding Fluency

- Teach students “touch typing” without looking at the keyboard.
- By the end of 2nd grade, students should type as fast as they can write by hand.

Writing Foundations - Spelling Importance

- Learning to read and spell rely on much of the **same underlying knowledge** (letter-sounds, affixes, etc.) (Moats, 2007)
- Spelling instruction can be designed to help children better understand key knowledge resulting in **better reading**. (Ehri, 2000)

Writing Foundations – Spelling Importance

- Writers who must think too hard about how to spell **use valuable cognitive resources** needed for higher level aspects of composition. (Singer & Bashir, 2004)
- 80% of employment applications doomed if poorly written.
- 15 to 20 minutes a day

Writing Foundations - Spelling Regular Words

Regular Words

- 400,000 words in dictionary
- Only 13% are truly irregular (memorize)
- Focus spelling instruction on patterns that generalize

Writing Foundations – Spelling Regular Words

- Letter-sound associations
- Single syllable patterns (e.g., cvc, ccvc, cvcc, cvvc, cvce)
- Multisyllabic words
 - Inflectional endings
 - Prefixes, suffixes, common roots
 - Base words
 - Word relatives: wild, wilderness
- Rules for combining forms

Writing Foundations - Spelling Regular Words

- Selection of words
 - Words that will be used in writing.
 - **Words taught in decoding strand of reading program.**
 - Words taught in spelling program.

Caution - The word lists are the strength of most spelling programs. Many of the practice exercises in spelling books have little value in building spelling skills.

Writing Foundations – Spelling Word Dictation

Dictation

- a. Teacher says the word.
- b. Teacher says the word in a sentence.
- c. Students repeat the word.
- d. Teacher and students put up one finger for each sound in the word. OR
Teacher and students put up one finger for each part of a multisyllabic word.
- e. Students say the sounds/parts to themselves as they write the word.

Feedback

- f. Teacher writes the word and displays it on the board or screen.
Students compare their word to model.
- g. If a student has made an error, the student crosses out the word and rewrites the word.

Writing Foundations – Spelling Sentence Dictation

Dictation

- a) Teacher says the entire sentence.
- b) Students repeat the sentence.
- c) Teacher dictates the first part of the sentence.
- d) Students repeat the first part of the sentence.
- e) Students write the first part of the sentence.
- f) Teacher circulates and provides feedback.
- g) Teacher dictates the second part of the sentence.
- h) Students repeat the second part of the sentence.
- i) Students write the second part of the sentence.
- j) Students reread their sentence and check the spelling of the words.

Feedback

k) Teacher gives feedback on each word. Students awarded points for correct spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. The points are designed to make the students more interested in the task and more careful.

Writing Foundations – Spelling Rules

Teach rules explicitly.

1. Introduce rule.
2. Illustrate rule with examples and non-examples.
(I do it.)
3. Guide students in applying the rule to examples and non-examples.
(We do it.)
4. Check understanding using examples and non-examples.
(You do it.)

Writing Foundations – Spelling Rules

Introduce the rule.

We are going to learn a spelling rule about adding suffixes when the word ends in *e*. Listen to the rule.

When a word ends in a *vowel-consonant-e* and you want to add a suffix that begins with a vowel, drop the *e*. When a word ends in a *vowel-consonant-e* and you want to add a suffix that begins with a vowel, drop the __. *e*

Writing Foundations – Spelling Rules

Illustrate the rule with examples and non-examples.

ride + ing

Here I have the word **ride** and I want to add the suffix **ing**. **Ride** ends in a *vowel-consonant-e* (Teacher points to each letter i-d-e.), and the suffix **ing** begins with a vowel (Teacher points to the letter *i* in *ing*.), so I drop the *e*. (Teacher crosses out the letter *e* on *ride* and writes *riding*.) Everyone, spell **riding**. *R-i-d-i-n-g*.

fame + ous

I have the word **fame** and I want to add the suffix **ous**. **Fame** ends in a *vowel-consonant-e* (Teacher points to each letter a-m-e.), and the suffix **ous** begins with a vowel (Teacher points to the letter *o* in *ous*.), so I drop the *e*. (Teacher crosses out the letter *e* on *fame* and writes *famous*.) Everyone, spell **famous**. *F-a-m-o-u-s*.

Writing Foundations – Spelling Rules

excite + ing

I have the word _____ *excite* and I want to add the suffix _____ *ing*. **Excite** ends in a *vowel-consonant-e* (Teacher points to each letter i-t-e.), and the suffix **ing** begins with a vowel (Teacher points to the letter *i* in *ing*), so I drop the *e*. (Teacher crosses out the letter *e* on *excite* and writes *exciting*.) Everyone, spell **exciting**. *E-x-c-i-t-i-n-g*.

excite + ment

I have the word _____ *excite* and I want to add the suffix _____ *ment*. **Excite** ends in a *vowel-consonant-e* (Teacher points to i-t-e.), but the suffix **ment** does NOT begin with a vowel, so I DO NOT drop the *e*. (Teacher writes *excitement*.) Everyone, spell **excitement**. *E-x-c-i-t-e-m-e-n-t*.

Writing Foundations – Spelling Rules

Guide students in analyzing examples and non-examples using the critical attributes.

use + ing

Let's do some together. We have the word _____ *use* and we want to add the suffix _____ *ing*. Does **use** end with a *vowel-consonant-e*? Yes. Does **ing** begin with a vowel? Yes. Do we drop the *e*? Yes. Write the word **using**. (Teacher writes *using* on the overhead.) Check the spelling of **using**. (Pause.) Everyone, spell **using**. *U-s-i-n-g*.

use + ful

We have the word _____ *use* and we want to add the suffix _____ *ful*. Does **use** end with a *vowel-consonant-e*? Yes. Does the suffix **ful** begin with a vowel? No. Do we drop the *e*? No. Write **useful**. (Teacher writes *useful* on the overhead.) Check the spelling of **useful**. (Pause.) Everyone, spell **useful**. *U-s-e-f-u-l*.

Writing Foundations – Spelling Rules

Guide students in analyzing examples and non-examples using the critical attributes.

see + ing

We have the word _____see and we want to add the suffix _____ *ing*. Does **see** end with a *vowel-consonant-e*? *No*. Do we drop the *e*? *No*. Write **seeing**. (Teacher writes *seeing* on the overhead.) Check the spelling of **seeing**. (Pause.) Everyone, spell **seeing**. *S-e-e-i-n-g*.

Writing Foundations – Spelling Rules

Check students' understanding using examples and non-examples.

slice + ing

Now, it is your turn. Here is the word _____ *slice* and we want to add the suffix **ing**. Write **slicing**. (Teacher monitors

(When students are done, the teacher provides feedback.) Does **slice** end with a *vowel-consonant-e*? *Yes*. Does **ing** begin with a vowel? *Yes*. Do we drop the *e*? *Yes*. (Teacher writes *slicing* on the overhead.) Check the spelling of **slicing**. (Pause.) Everyone, spell **slicing**. *S-l-i-c-i-n-g*.

Continue with additional words.

shameful

shamed

freeing

shapeless

Writing Foundations - Spelling - Irregular Words

- Irregular words
 - Teach 3 to 5 per week
 - Focus on the most common (Moats, 2003)

Writing Foundations - Spelling - Irregular Words

- Teach students a strategy for independently studying irregular words.
- **Copy Cover Write Check**

Writing Foundations – Spelling Independent Writing

- When monitoring students as they write, give feedback on spelling words **visually** (e.g., Write the word down for the student.)

Sentence Expansion
Sentence Combining
Sentence Frames
Paragraph Frames

Writing Foundations – Sentence Expansion

- Students can learn the structure of sentences and gain “sentence sense” through sentence expansion exercises.
- Students add words or phrases to sentences that answer questions such as when, where, why, and how.

Sentence Expanding

What Words Clearinghouse Practice Guide

The teacher provides a short sentence. Students expand the sentence using different parts of speech.

The dog napped.
↓
The brown dog napped.
↓
The brown dog napped on the couch.
↓
The lazy, brown dog napped on the couch.
↓
The lazy, brown dog napped on the couch while I read a book.

- 1. Introduce a short sentence.**
- 2. Model how to add to the sentence using different parts of speech, and demonstrate appropriate capitalization and punctuation as the sentence is expanded.**
- 3. Have students provide suggestions for different parts of speech (e.g., subjects and predicates) to add to the short sentences.**
- 4. Have students work independently or in pairs to expand a sentence.**
- 5. Encourage students to share their expanded sentences in small groups, providing feedback to their peers.**

Writing Foundations – Sentences

Sentence Expansion

Expand each sentence using three of the following question words: **who**, **what**, **when**, **where**, **why**, and/or **how**.

Start Sentence: *The children raced.*

When: *one spring day*

Where: *down the road*

Why: *celebrate the last day of the school year*

Create Sentence: *One spring day, the children ran down the road to celebrate the last day of the school year.*

Writing Foundations – Sentence Expansion

Expand each sentence using three of the following question words: *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why*, and/or *how*.

Start Sentence: I attended a writing inservice.

When: _____

Where: _____

Why: _____

Create Sentence: _____

Writing Foundations – Sentence Combining

- ◆ Has positive effect on students' writing.
(Evans, Venotuzzi, Bundrick, & McWilliams, 1988; Howie, 1979; Kanellas, Carifio & Dagostino, 1998; Pedersen, 1977; Saddler & Graham, 2005; Stoddard, 1982)
- ◆ Students start with a stem sentence and combine it with one to four other sentences.

Sentence Combining

What Words Clearinghouse Practice Guide

Students combine two or more sentences into one simple, compound, complex or compound-complex sentence.

My dog is brown. My dog is big.



My brown dog is big.

The boy was riding his bike.
The boy was careless.
The boy ran into a tree.



The boy was careless while riding his bike, so he ran into a tree.

1. Choose sentences for combining.
2. Model how to combine the sentences using several examples; with older students, introduce moving, deleting, and adding words or parts.
3. Have students rate the quality of the new sentence, provide alternatives to the new sentence, and discuss which sentences sound better and why.
4. Encourage students to work in pairs to combine sentences, creating several new possibilities and rating the quality of their new sentences.

Writing Foundations – Sentences

Sentence Combining

(Examples taken from ***REWARDS Writing – Sentence Refinement*** published by *Sopris Learning*)

Start: Linda grabbed a seat.

Add: Bobby grabbed a seat.

Add: The seats were adjoining.

Add: The seats were on the bus.

Add: The bus was crowded.

Create: _____

Writing Foundations – Sentences

Sentence Combining

(Examples taken from ***REWARDS Writing – Sentence Refinement*** published by Sopris)

Start: As the cubs grow fur, they spend periods of time outside the den.

Add: The fur is thicker.

Add: The periods of time are short.

Add: The den is warm.

Add: The den is protective.

Create: _____

Writing Foundations – Sentences

Sentence Combining

(Examples taken from *REWARDS Writing – Sentence Refinement* published by Sopris)

Start: Jared will finish shopping for school supplies.

Add: He will shop this afternoon.

Add: He will shop at the mall.

Create: _____

Sentence Frames - Why

Sentence frames are used to:

Give students a framework to support thinking and writing

Encourage use of content vocabulary

Provide scaffolding for academic language

Increase oral language proficiency

Sentence Frames

What Words Clearinghouse Practice Guide

Activity	Description	Examples	How the Teacher Can Implement the Activity
Sentence Framing	Teachers provide sentence frames to guide students' sentence writing.	I like _____. I like to _____ and _____. My _____ is _____. When I _____, I like to _____. She didn't go to _____ because _____.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Develop a sentence frame for students to use.2. Model the use of the of the sentence frame.3. Have students use the sentences frame to construct their own sentences.4. Have students share their sentence with peers and discuss their word choices.5. Slowly fade the use of sentence frames during instruction until students can write sentences independently.

Sentence Frames - Examples

Compare and Contrast

**Compare = same
different**

Contrast =

_____ and ____ are both similar because they both _____.

There are several major differences between _____ and _____. The most notable is _____.

Paragraph Frames

Summary - Informational Text

Chapter: _____ Topic: _____

This chapter conveyed information about _____ >

First, the authors stated that...

This was important because...

Next, the authors mentioned that...

Furthermore, they indicated...

This was critical because...

Finally, the authors suggested that...

Summary – Narrative Frame

The title of this story was

The setting of the story was

..... was the main character of the story.

In the story, we learned that was

His/her main problem/conflict/goal was ...

At first, ... tried to resolve this problem/conflict/goal by ...

Later, he/she tried to resolve the problem/conflict/goal by...

In the end, the following happened: ...

Summary – Narrative Example

The title of this story was *My Summer Vacation*. The setting of the story was a cattle ranch in Texas during summer vacation. Wallace was the main character of the story. We learned that Wallace was a young city boy who was spending his summer with the crew on the ranch. His main problem was that he had to learn all of the skills of a wrangler such as how to move the cattle from one location to another and use a lasso properly. At first, Wallace tried to resolve this problem by carefully observing the ranch hands and mimicking their behaviors. Later, he tried to resolve the problem by asking the other wranglers, the ranch manager, and even the cook to teach him ranch skills. In the end, the following happened: Wallace stopped a stampede.

Compare and Contrast

Although...and...are different, they are alike in some interesting ways.

For example, they both...

They are also similar in

The...is the same as...

The ...resembles...

Finally they both...

Explanation

There are a number of reasons why

The most important reason is...

Another reason is ...

A further reason is ...

So you can see why...

Process

To ..., you need to follow these basic steps.

First, you need to ...

Next ...

Then...

When you finish, you should have

Opinion

I think that ...

I feel this way because ...

Another reason I feel this way is...

Most importantly, I think ...

For these reasons, I believe that ...

Opinion

Though not everybody would agree, I want to argue that...

I have several reasons for arguing this point of view.

My first reason is ...

A further reason is...

Furthermore...

Therefore, although some people might argue that ...

I have shown that ...

Description

When describing ..., the word that comes to mind is ...

One reason is ...

Another reason is ...

Finally, ... is ... because ...

Thus, ... is the best description of ...

Character Analysis

The character ... in ... can best be described as ...

This is evident when ...

... also shows this trait when he/she...

Further, his/her...is evident when ...

Thus, ... is a good way to describe ...

Character Analysis

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Big Idea: Teach the foundation skills to mastery.

Outcome: Writing Opinions, Informational Texts, Narratives

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Example **Foundation Skills:**

reading, expressive vocabulary, word usage, fluent handwriting or typing, spelling, grammar, capitalization, punctuation, sentence formation, sentence sense, paragraph formation

Writing Foundations

Writing is not caught.

Writing must be taught.

How well we teach = How well they learn.