The Complete Writing Program

— The Workshop Approach —

by David S. Dye M.ED.

MODEL CITIZEN PUBLICATIONS

Table of Contents

Preface 1

CHAPTER 1: Writing Assessment 3
- Introduction 4
- Overview of the Assessment Program 5
- Outline of the Assessment Program 9
- How the Assessment Program Works 10
- One Step Beyond Assessment 20
- Alternative Rubric 21
- Sample Lesson Plan for Teaching the Assessment 27

CHAPTER 2: Helping Students Write Everything They Are Expected to Write 29
- Pre-Writing 30
- Essay and Prompt Writing 31
- Clustering 32
- Listing 35
- Grade-by-Grade Expectations 38

CHAPTER 3: Helping Students Write Sentences That Show, Not Tell 47
- Show-Not-Tell: Introduction 48
- Teaching a Show-Not-Tell Lesson 49
- Show-Not-Tell Lessons and Summaries 50
- Show-Not-Tell: Overview 51
- Show-Not-Tell: Paragraph Review (A student worksheet) 52
- Show-Not-Tell: Emotions 54
- Show-Not-Tell: Excited 56
- Show-Not-Tell: Scared 59
- Show-Not-Tell: Angry 62
- Show-Not-Tell: Sad 65
- Show-Not-Tell: Setting 67
- Show-Not-Tell: Characterization 73
- Show-Not-Tell: Poems 78
- Show-Not-Tell Words (Senses) 82
- Show-Not-Tell “Said” 84
- Show-Not-Tell “Dead Words” 85

CHAPTER 4: Helping Students Develop a Strong Vocabulary 87
Vocabulary Lessons and Summaries 88
Picture Dictionary 89
Power Vocabulary 92
Let Me Count the Ways 97
Paraphrasing 103
Context Clues 106
Student / Teacher Game 107

CHAPTER 5: Writing Tricks That Add Style
to Your Students' Writing 109
Writing Tricks Introduction 110
Teaching the Writing Tricks 111
Comma Rules as Writing Tricks (Student Worksheets) 113
Parts of Speech as Writing Tricks (Student Worksheets) 135
Poetry Terms and More as Writing Tricks (Student Worksheets) 153
Follow-Up Writing Trick Assignments 174

CHAPTER 6: Helping Your Students Improve Spelling and Grammar 175
Spelling: Introduction / List of Techniques 176
Spelling List: Plurals 177
Daily Spelling Schedule 181
Spell Checker 186
Root Words 187
Rules of Thumb 188

CHAPTER 7: Putting It All Together 189
Bulletin Boards as Teaching Tools 190
Keeping a Writing Folder 191
Sample Lesson Plan for the First Year of Writing 192

CHAPTER 8: Extras 195
How to Teach Story Writing (Long Version) 196
Scary Story Lesson Plan 199
How to Teach Story Writing (Short Version) 201
Letter Writing: A Lesson Plan 203
The Research Paper: A Lesson Plan 212

APPENDIX 217

Preface

My first year of teaching, I had to plan an effective writing program for my middle school students. I had no clue where to begin. As I prepared for those seventh grade students, I had to ask several important questions. What should they be able to do by now? What should they be able to do by the end of the year? How do I get them there? What resources are available to help me figure this out?

Just as I began to get a handle on the seventh grade, I was transferred to the fourth grade, and the entire process started again. To help prepare myself for what I should be teaching I begged, borrowed, and stole ideas from other teachers. I collected and created material. I scribbled lesson ideas on napkins at restaurants and on the back of church bulletins while the pastor preached (no doubt creating a false impression in his mind that I was a diligent note taker, absorbing every word of his sermon.) After eight years of trial and error, I finally had a writing program that I was proud to present.

Why was I proud of this program? It clearly worked. I finally had the tools I needed to measure the writing ability of my students in September and apply the same measurement in June to rate the amount of progress they had made. I finally had a vehicle in which the students were required to apply writing and grammar skills into their writing. I must say that, as a teacher, it is so exciting to see my students apply skills on a daily basis when so many other students forget each skill as soon as the teacher stops focusing on it. Lastly, my excitement over this writing program grows stronger every year because I can see that my students are developing good writing habits that will last them the rest of their lives.

The hardest part of the program for me is the knowledge that I only have ten months with my students to put them on the path of great writing. This is a big reason why I have placed an emphasis in this program on homeschool parents. They are the ones who can see their students evolve and develop the most within this program. There is enough information in this book to last their children a lifetime. True, the worksheets may be finished in a year or two, but the beauty of this program is that any new writing skill discovered can simply be incorporated into the program as easily as adding another shelf to a closet. Consider this program the closet. The worksheets that follow are the start of your wardrobe. Through your creativity and the other resources you find, you will give your students such a depth of writing knowledge that their "closet" will become a garage.

It is my tremendous pleasure to offer this program to you. I sincerely pray that you will enjoy the success that I have had. Let's start building that closet...

Introduction

When I was in the third grade, my teacher gave a writing assignment. I sat in my seat and worked as hard as I could to make it the greatest piece of writing a third grader could create. With my heart full of pride and a smile stretching from ear to ear, I made the trek to the teacher's desk, awaiting the praise I was sure would be given. She scanned my brown, fat-lined paper and with a dry, expressionless face said, "Make it better."

"Make it better? How can I make it better?" I wondered as I stumbled back to my seat. I did the best job I could on the first draft. For the next ten minutes I sat and studied my writing without a clue about how to "make it better."

I've played this scene in my head for many years while creating this writing program. I swore that I would never ask students to "make it better" without giving them the tools to do it. I would be specific as to what I wanted. I would be clear about how they should do it. Most of all, I would show my students specifically why their changes made their writing better.

As Ecclesiastes says, "There's nothing new under the sun." This can be said about my writing program. I've studied close to a hundred writing rubrics from school districts all over the country, and I've studied numerous other writing programs. While none of them accomplished specifically what I wanted, many of them contained great ideas.

When my writing program was finally in place, I realized that I had a program that was uniquely my own. The students knew exactly what it took to be a great writer. They were learning to recognize text that had the elements of great writing. They were going back to their first drafts and rewriting sentences, adding or deleting sentences, and changing vocabulary based on what they already knew about great writing.

Your students will do the same thing. Take your time getting comfortable with this chapter. Once you have a solid understanding of the Writing Assessment Checklist, the rest of the program will fall into place much more easily. Have fun.

Chapter 1
Writing Assessment

This chapter will:

1. Explain the heart of this writing program - The Writing Assessment Checklist.

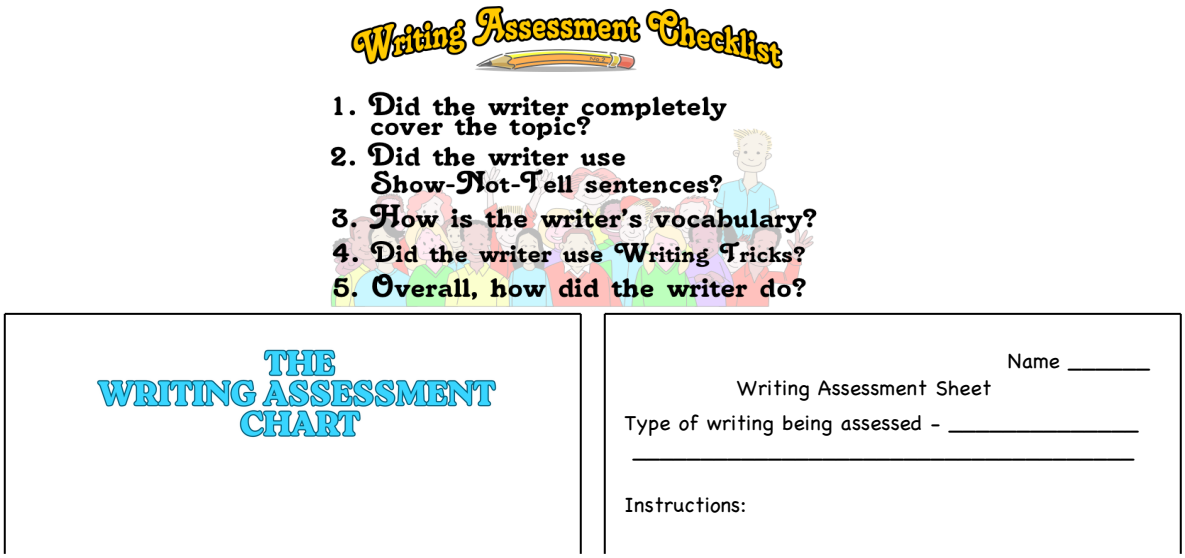
2. Prepare you to teach your students how to improve in all genres of writing.

3. Prepare students to critique their own writing intelligently as well as the writing of others.

4. Begin developing good writing habits that will last a lifetime.

* This section will begin by explaining <u>how this writing program works</u> and will close with a sample lesson plan about <u>how to begin</u> teaching it to your students.

** The following chapters give you the tools you need to make all five parts of the Writing Assessment Checklist work for your students.



Overview

Take a moment to review the three sheets above (also located on the next three pages). Tell your students, "These three papers will be your best friends this year." Go on to explain that these sheets will guide them to knowledge about writing that they never knew they could achieve. After a few more motivational words, proceed to explain the papers, one at a time.

Do this near the beginning of the school year. You will be able to identify your highly motivated students just by looking into their eyes. These are the students who are sitting up straight, eyes wide, ready to assess the writing in front of them. These are future teachers in the making who will be your outstanding assistants for the next several months.

First, explain the Writing Assessment Checklist. It explains the five things that great writers do. The second paper is the Writing Assessment Chart. It tells them what score to give each part of the Writing Assessment Checklist. The third paper is the Writing Assessment Sheet that keeps track of the scores and explains the reason for each.

Note: If you just study the three sheets for a few minutes, you can probably get the idea about how the program will work. The rest of the chapter gives a detailed explanation of the program, samples of student writing that have been assessed, and tricks of the trade.

These three sheets work together to give students a basic concept of good writing. Everything we do in class is designed to strengthen each aspect of the Writing Assessment Checklist. Consistent growth in these five areas of writing will prepare our elementary and middle school students for the challenges of high school, college, and beyond.

THE WRITING ASSESSMENT CHART

6 Spectacular

- *The writing went way above and beyond expectations.*
- The sentences paint a picture in the mind as if watching it happen in front of me.
- **Advanced Vocabulary**
- The writer used advanced "writing tricks". (i.e. Metaphors, Compound Sentences, Introductory Phrases, etc.)

5 Skilled

- *The writing went above and beyond expectations.*
- Many show-not-tell sentences were used.
- **Strong Vocabulary**
- The writer used many "writing tricks". (i.e. Metaphors, Compound Sentences, Introductory Phrases, etc.)

4 Capable

- *The writing was organized and covered the topic.*
- The sentences were well written and described the topic clearly.
- **Good Vocabulary**
- The writer used a few "writing tricks". (i.e. Metaphors, Compound Sentences, Introductory Phrases, etc.).

3 Growing

Thank you for previewing *The Complete Writing Program.*

Name _____

Writing Assessment Sheet

Type of writing being assessed: _____

_____

Instructions:

1. Read through the writing once. Edit by checking for spelling and punctuation errors.
2. Check the writing for the five items below. Write the score that best describes the writing in the box to the right.
3. In the space on the right, explain why you gave the author the score listed in the box.

	Score	Explain the Score
1. The writer completely covered the topic.		
2. The sentences were well written and had <u>show-not-tell</u>.		
3. Vocabulary		

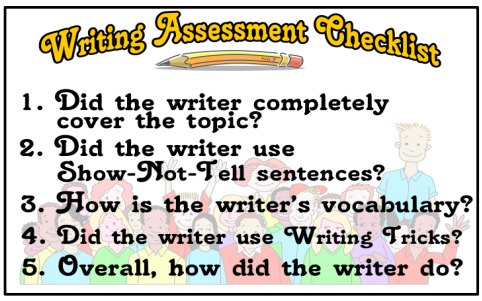
Thank you for previewing *The Complete Writing Program.*

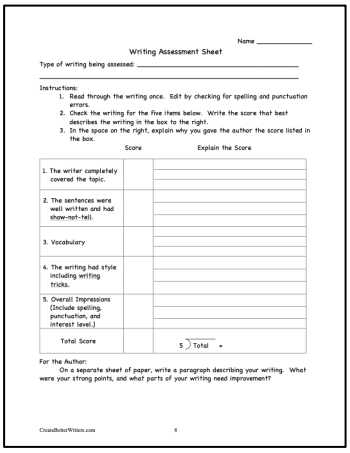
Teaching Students How to Assess Writing

Outline

Before taking the time to learn each step of the program, it would be helpful to become comfortable with the steps involved. It may seem overwhelming as you read the detailed explanation of the program, but teaching students to assess each other's writing can be broken down into five steps. You will have the students:

1. **Memorize the Writing Assessment Checklist.**
   In this step, your students will become comfortable with the five elements of great writing.





Name _____

Writing Assessment Sheet

Type of writing being assessed: _____

_____

Instructions:
1. Read through the writing once. Edit by checking for spelling and punctuation errors.
2. Check the writing for the five items below. Write the score that best describes the writing in the box to the right.
3. In the space on the right, explain why you gave the author the score listed in the box.

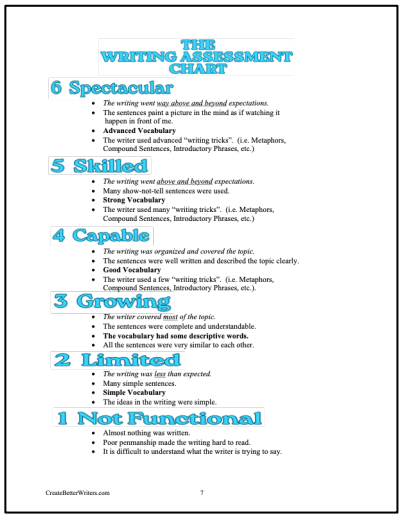
	Score	Explain the Score
1. The writer completely covered the topic.		
2. The sentences were well written and had show-not-tell.		
3. Vocabulary		
4. The writing had style including writing tricks.		
5. Overall Impressions (Include spelling, punctuation, and interest level.)		
Total Score		5) Total =

For the Author:
On a separate sheet of paper, write a paragraph describing your writing. What were your strong points, and what parts of your writing need improvement?

CreateBetterWriters.com 8

2. **Learn to use the Writing Assessment Sheet.**
   Your students will learn to search for each element of great writing within their partners' writing.

3. **Learn to score each of the five elements of great writing using the Writing Assessment Chart**.



THE WRITING ASSESSMENT CHART

6 Spectacular
- *The writing went way above and beyond expectations.*
- The sentences paint a picture in the mind as if watching it happen in front of me.
- **Advanced Vocabulary**
- The writer used advanced "writing tricks". (i.e. Metaphors, Compound Sentences, Introductory Phrases, etc.)

5 Skilled
- *The writing went above and beyond expectations.*
- Many show-not-tell sentences were used.
- **Strong Vocabulary**
- The writer used many "writing tricks". (i.e. Metaphors, Compound Sentences, Introductory Phrases, etc.)

4 Capable
- *The writing was organized and covered the topic.*
- The sentences were well written and described the topic clearly.
- **Good Vocabulary**
- The writer used a few "writing tricks". (i.e. Metaphors, Compound Sentences, Introductory Phrases, etc.).

3 Growing
- *The writer covered most of the topic.*
- The sentences were complete and understandable.
- **The vocabulary had some descriptive words.**
- All the sentences were very similar to each other.

2 Limited
- *The writing was less than expected.*
- Many simple sentences.
- **Simple Vocabulary**
- The ideas in the writing were simple.

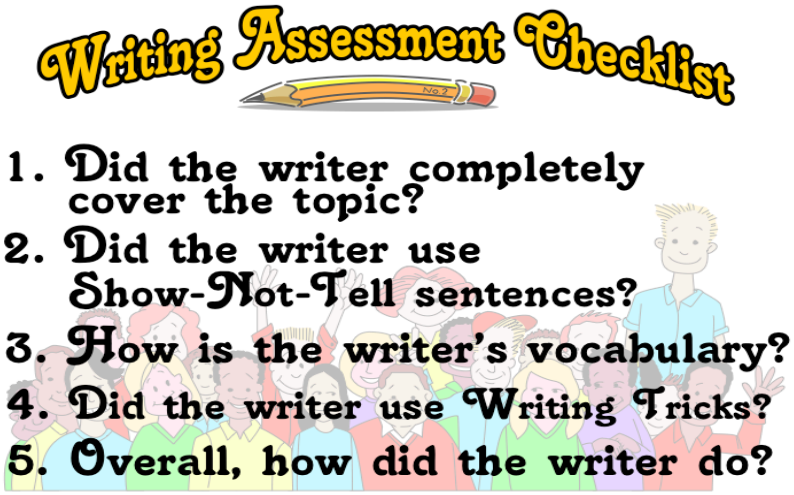
1 Not Functional
- Almost nothing was written.
- Poor penmanship made the writing hard to read.
- It is difficult to understand what the writer is trying to say.

CreateBetterWriters.com 7

4. **Give the writing an over-all score.**

5. **Use the Writing Assessment Sheet as a guide to improve their own writing.**
   The students will use this worksheet to spot areas of their writing that need to be revised. Most of this book contains lessons that help build students' skills in the five areas of great writing. The students will use the lessons you've taught to help improve their writing.

How It Works:



Before you try to understand how this program works, read the five items on the Writing Assessment Checklist above …

… read it again …

… read it again …

… read it one more time …

The Writing Assessment Checklist is the heart of this writing program. It takes the guesswork out of deciding what makes a good piece of writing. Also, it specifically tells the students what they are doing well and what parts of their writing need work. Many of my older students like the fact that it takes much of the subjective bias out of grading their writing. Students will often challenge their scores which provides me with a great "teachable moment". I am able to give clear explanations to a student eager to learn.

Thank you for previewing *The Complete Writing Program.*

Author's Name: _____ Editor's Name: _____

Writing Assessment Sheet

Type of writing being assessed: _____

Instructions:

1. Read through the writing once. Edit by checking for spelling and punctuation errors.
2. Check the writing for the items listed below. In the box to the right, write the score that best describes the writing.
3. In the space below each section, explain why the writer received that score.

Narrative

1. The Writer Covered the Topic Completely **Score**

4 – The writing went above and beyond expectations.

3 – All expected elements were included and done well.

2 – Some expected elements were included or done fairly well.

1 – Many of the elements were missing.

Explain the Score: _____

_____

_____

2. Show–Not–Tell **Score**

4 – The many show-not-tell sentences helped me picture the story in my mind perfectly.

3 – Several show-not-tell sentences helped me picture the story in my mind very well.

2 – There were many good sentences, and I could picture some parts of the story.

1 – Many simple sentences were used creating a simple picture in my mind.

Explain the Score: _____

_____

_____

3. Vocabulary **Score**

4 – The writing had strong vocabulary.

3 – The writing had good vocabulary.

2 – The writing had some descriptive words.

1 – The writing had simple vocabulary.

Explain the Score: _____

_____

_____

4. Writing Tricks **Score**

4 – The writer used many writing tricks.

3 – The writer used a few writing tricks.

2 – All the sentences were very similar to each other.

1 – The ideas in the writing were simple.

Explain the Score: _____

_____

_____

5. Overall, how did the writer do? **Score**

4 – There were few spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors. It was a very entertaining story.

3 – There were some spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors. It was a good story.

2 – The spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors made the story difficult to understand. More details would have made the story better.

1 – The story was too difficult to read or understand.

Explain the Score: _____

_____

_____

Author's Name: _____ Editor's Name: _____

Writing Assessment Sheet

Type of writing being assessed: _____

Instructions:

1. Read through the writing once. Edit by checking for spelling and punctuation errors.
2. Check the writing for the items listed below. In the box on the right, write the score that best describes the writing.
3. In the space below each section, explain why the writer received that score.

Expository

1. The Writer Covered the Topic Completely **Score**

4 – The writing went above and beyond expectations.

3 - All expected elements were included and done well.

2 – Some expected elements were included or done fairly well.

1 – Many of the elements were missing.

Explain the Score: _____

_____

_____

2. Show–Not–Tell / Supporting Sentences **Score**

4 – Each paragraph had a strong topic sentence and strong supporting details.

3 – Each paragraph had a good topic sentence and strong supporting details.

2 – Most paragraphs were about one main idea.

1 – More supporting sentences are needed to explain the topic.

Explain the Score: _____

_____

_____

3. Vocabulary **Score**

4 – The writing had strong vocabulary.

3 – The writing had good vocabulary.

2 – The writing had some descriptive words.

1 – The writing had simple vocabulary.

Explain the Score: _____

_____

_____

Thank you for previewing *The Complete Writing Program.*

Chapter 2
Helping Students Write Everything They Are Expected to Write

This chapter will:

1. Help students cover all the details they are expected to include in their writing.

2. Help students organize their thoughts before writing.

3. Help homeschool parents understand what is expected at each grade level.

4. Provide writing samples for homeschool parents to use as a guide to compare with their children's writing.

6th Grade Expectations

1. See 5th grade expectations.
2. Mastery of the five-paragraph essay.
3. Grammar and spelling errors should be minimal on first drafts, nonexistent on final drafts.
4. Research papers should show thorough knowledge of the topic as well as critical thinking about the relevance of the topic.
5. Student's writing voice and style should be clearly present.

*** 6th grade writing samples:**

Average

Advice for a New Kid at School

As a new student at our school, you might have a few problems getting adjusted. I am going to help you get through this awkward, beginning phase and help you solve some problems you might have.

One problem you might have right away is people calling you names. When people say things like, "Hey, look who's here. It's Banana Brain!" don't burst into tears and hang your head low. Just ignore them or tell the teacher. Don't punch them or start a fight because you don't want to get into trouble in your first week of school.

Another problem you will have is that you won't have many friends. Now you're probably asking, "How do I get friends?" Well, to get friends you have to have a nice attitude. Also, sharing is a good way to get to know people. Before you know it you'll be trading things like necklaces, bracelets, pencils, erasers, and even some toys. However, if it takes longer to make friends than it should, cheer up, you've still got one friend, ME.

Finally, you might find yourself having a problem making friends because you develop a teasing habit. Believe me, you don't want to tease. Some people start doing it because they think they're being cool. Ask yourself, how does it feel to be teased? If you find yourself developing this habit, stop it immediately.

If you follow this advice I've given you, you should have no problems adjusting to our wonderful school. There are terrific people here who would love to be your friend if you just give them a chance.

High

Advice for a New Kid at School

So, you're a new student in school, and you're having a few problems getting adjusted to your new environment, huh? Well, that's to be expected. It just takes some people more time than others to fit in, but I assure you, if you take my advice, you'll fit right in.

First of all, you can't let yourself become intimidated by all your shortcomings. Expect to be teased, but when it happens, don't overreact. Play along with it like it's no big deal. It might help to even play along. If your braces are the target of the day, laugh it off and say, "These will be gone next year, but your teeth will still be yellow." If you're still alive, you've probably become one of the crowd. Kids our age love a good put down.

Next, you might have a problem with people calling you names. When people call to you and say, "Hey, look who's here. It's Banana Brain!" don't burst into tears and hang your head low. This would be like putting a target on your back and handing everyone bows and arrows. The best thing to do is to smile and show them that you are a boring target.

Finally, once you've been accepted into the pack, don't start acting like the top dog. Remember, the nail that sticks out gets hammered down. You're still the new kid on the block, and if you develop an attitude, get used to hearing, "Who does this person think she is?" or "Go back to your home planet, weirdo!" Just be as nice as possible, and people will respect you for it. You'll find that once the kids here get to know you, life will be great.

Well, I hope this advice has been helpful. Just be sure to keep in mind all the wise words I've told you. Don't panic when you get teased because you know that's going to happen. Also, when people call you names, don't burst into tears. Lastly, once you've been accepted, stay a nice person. Good luck and have fun, Banana Brain! Just kidding.

Chapter 3
Helping Students Write Sentences That Show, Not Tell

This chapter will:

1. Help students write descriptive sentences that paint pictures with their words.

2. Provide the teacher with lesson plans for teaching several show-not-tell concepts.

3. Teach students how to expand their writing beyond the who, what, where, when, and how.

Show-Not-Tell Lessons
and Summaries

1. **Show-Not-Tell**

Overview ..... The Overview is the first page in my students' writing folders. They use it as a quick reference for all the show-not-tell concepts we learn. You can use this as your first lesson to introduce your students to the concept, or jump ahead to other lessons. I will be teaching more detailed lessons on most of the topics on this worksheet, so this page will work as a review later when the students begin to perfect the show-not-tell techniques presented here.

2. **Show-Not-Tell**

Emotions ..... These lessons always elicit great reactions from the students. They get to act out emotions and write about kid-friendly topics. Also, they give the students dozens of ideas on how to paint pictures with words on very common ideas.

A. Excited
B. Scared
C. Angry
D. Sad

3. **Show-Not-Tell**

Setting ..... Great stories, as well as research papers, should give the reader a good sense of the setting. These lessons show the students how to give the reader a visual idea about where stories take place. Also, these skills help students involve the reader in the story.

4. **Show-Not-Tell**

Poems ..... This section provides poem formats to help your students practice show-not-tell techniques. Some of the poems are stories, some are settings, and some allow students to express their feelings.

5. **Show-Not-Tell**

Words ..... This section includes a list of show-not-tell words for sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell as well as better words for "said." These word lists serve as warm-ups for journal writing and are a resource for the students when they write stories.

There is also a list of "dead words." These are words that are over-used by many students. I encourage the students to use the word lists to find more creative ways of expressing themselves.

Show-not-Tell
Setting

How to present these lessons:

A good time to teach these lessons is after teaching prepositions. Many prepositional phrases provide good support information about locations in a story and help involve the reader in the writing. (See Appendix for a complete list of prepositions.) Some examples are:
... in the _____, ... toward the _____, ... around the _____,
...between the _____, ... above the _____, ... across _____.

These make good "mini lessons" during writers' workshop, or you can teach this concept separately. Directions are included in the lessons. Once you've taught the concepts, require that your students use them in the next few assignments. If you don't do this, most of your students won't retain these skills.

Besides requiring that your students use the show-not-tell setting skills learned in the next few writing assignments, display a poster at the front of the class showing the show-not-tell skills they have learned. In this way, when you review the Writing Assessment Checklist, the students can see all of the skills they've learned, and they know that they have the tools they need to improve their scores.

Setting Introduction

I tell my students this story when I first teach a setting lesson and remind them of it whenever I teach other setting lessons. It helps remind them of the purpose for adding setting to their writing.

"What is the first image you see at the beginning of every episode of The Brady Bunch? They show a picture of the Brady house. Then they begin the story. Why do they do that? Because the show is really being recorded at a TV studio, and they want you to think that you are watching a real house and a real family. In television, this is called an "establishment shot." Every time the setting changes, they show you an establishment shot to make you feel like you are there. On Happy Days, when the guys are at the restaurant, Arnold's, they show you Arnold's before the action begins.

Good writers do the same thing. To show setting, sometimes we write a whole paragraph. Sometimes we only need a phrase. Involve your readers in the story by describing the setting. Let me show you how..."

SETTING PARAGRAPHS

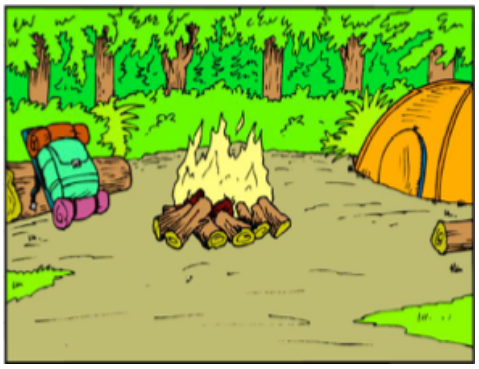
Name_____

Directions:

1. List details that you might hear, smell, or feel in each picture.
2. Write a show-not-tell: setting paragraph about each picture below. Begin each paragraph by explaining <u>where</u> and <u>when</u> the scene is taking place.

Example: In the early evening as the sun is setting behind the trees deep in the Ozark Mountains, a family prepares for their first night of camping.

1.



Hear: _____

_____

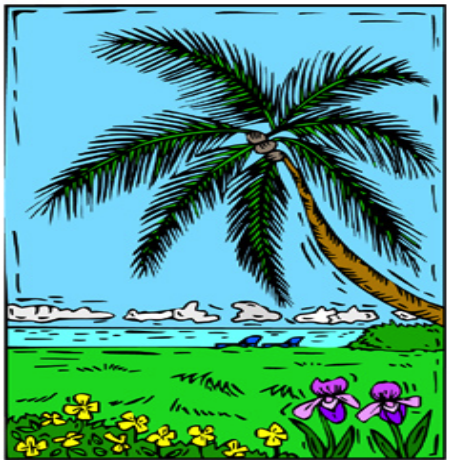
Smell: _____

_____

Feel: _____

_____

2.



Hear: _____

_____

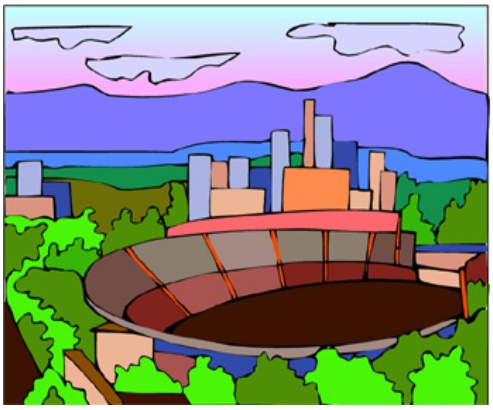
Smell: _____

_____

Feel: _____

_____

3.



Hear: _____

_____

Smell: _____

_____

Feel: _____

_____

4.

Hear: _____

_____

_____

Smell: _____

_____

_____

Feel: _____

Thank you for previewing *The Complete Writing Program.*

Extension: Select any setting paragraph from this worksheet. Write an entire story using the setting paragraph as the opening paragraph of your story.

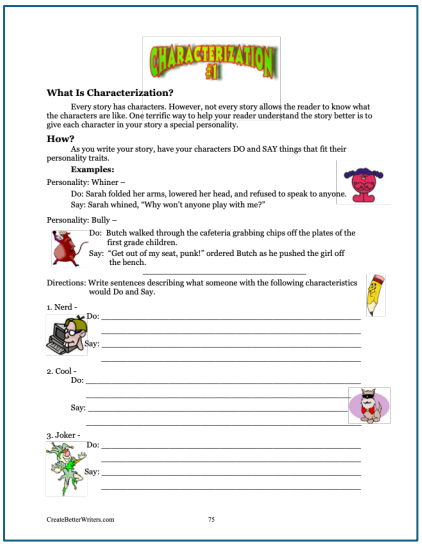
Characterization

Show-Not-Tell: Characterization Introduction

Most states have reading standards that ask students to examine how characterization affects a story. There are writing standards as well that ask students to develop characters within their stories. With these worksheets, you will have a powerful tool to meet both of these standards.

The personality of a character greatly impacts the direction of a story. Many professional writers have stated that they develop their characters first and allow the personality of the characters to drive their stories.

After completing these worksheets, never again will your students write a story without thinking about the characters. By inventing the personalities of the characters ahead of time, your students will add depth to their stories that is very rare in pre-college writing.



CHARACTERIZATION #1

What Is Characterization?

Every story has characters. However, not every story allows the reader to know what the characters are like. One terrific way to help your reader understand the story better is to give each character in your story a special personality.

How?

As you write your story, have your characters DO and SAY things that fit their personality traits.

Examples:

Personality: Whiner –

Do: Sarah folded her arms, lowered her head, and refused to speak to anyone.

Say: Sarah whined, "Why won't anyone play with me?"

Personality: Bully –

Do: Butch walked through the cafeteria grabbing chips off the plates of the first grade children.

Say: "Get out of my seat, punk!" ordered Butch as he pushed the girl off the bench.

Directions: Write sentences describing what someone with the following characteristics would Do and Say.

1. Nerd -

Do: _____

Say: _____

2. Cool -

Do: _____

Say: _____

3. Joker -

Do: _____

Say: _____

CreateBetterWriters.com 75

Worksheets

The first worksheet (right) asks students to describe what certain personality types would do and say. This will help make them comfortable with the idea that writers have the power to create personalities by making the characters do and say things that influence a story.

The students will be given seven personality traits. They will then write a sentence that shows a character doing and saying something that fits that personality. By writing sentences, students will be less intimidated than if we ask them to develop characters within an entire story.

This second worksheet will begin to prepare students for actual story writing. First the students write sentences describing what different personality types would say and do. After they have collected this information, they will practice writing one paragraph stories that focus primarily on developing a character.

Thank you for previewing *The Complete Writing Program.*

CHARACTERIZATION #2

Part I – List two things a character with the personality traits below would Do and Say.

Example: Serious –

Say: It's time to quit fooling around and get back to work.

Do: Charles kept his nose in that book with his eyebrows crumpled in concentration for well over an hour.

A. Tattle-Tale

Say: 1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

Do: 1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

B. Know-It-All

Say: 1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

Do: 1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

Part II – Repeat the activity above on a separate sheet of paper for the following characteristics:

C. Teacher's Pet D. Intelligent E. Sneaky F. Clumsy

Part III – Write a short story (one paragraph) for any three (3) characteristics above. Show a character in your story displaying that characteristic.

Chapter 4
Helping Students Develop a Strong Vocabulary

This chapter will:

1. Provide a variety of classroom tested techniques that help your students develop a strong vocabulary.

2. Guide you through some of the theory behind vocabulary development.

3. Help your students become life long learners of vocabulary by showing them simple, easy techniques to quickly learn new words.

Introduction

A strong vocabulary is critical to academic success, but vocabulary development takes a great deal of time and practice, and students tend to forget many of the words presented in each unit of study. For this reason, I included vocabulary in the Writing Assessment Checklist. It holds students accountable for using the words they learn in class. The lessons in this section foster retention and practical application of new vocabulary. They help students learn, retain, and employ new vocabulary when they write.

Vocabulary Lessons
and
Summaries

1. Picture Dictionary

The picture dictionary does several things. First, it helps students develop long term memory of their vocabulary words. Next, it creates a "bank" of words that they've studied, giving them a valuable collection of words that they can use in their writing. A great side effect of the picture dictionary is that it teaches an important study skill which can be applied to other areas of study. Finally, the picture dictionary does a great job helping students develop thinking skills. They are forced to give careful consideration to the definition in order to create the proper picture.

2. Power Vocabulary

I call this concept "Power Vocabulary" because it accomplishes several goals very effectively. Not only does this technique firmly plant definitions in the students' minds, it also provides powerful background information that helps prepare them for upcoming units of study. This front-loading strategy is a great way to begin any language arts, social studies, science, or any other unit of study.

3. Let Me Count the Ways

This lesson, which can be repeated as often as you like, helps build student vocabulary by giving students a variety of ways to say the same word. Knowing full well that the words we use help paint a picture, teaching this lesson is like giving students a set of different shades of the same color. A picture of the ocean would certainly be more realistic if the artist used several shades of blue rather than just one. In other words, this lesson helps the students use just the right word to describe exactly what they mean. For example, all students are familiar with the word "walk." We build around this word and add words like amble, stroll, march, saunter, and stride.

4. Paraphrasing

This is another lesson that forces students to carefully analyze, not only the meaning of the vocabulary word, but the meaning of the sentence as well. Combined with the picture dictionary or on its own, this is a powerful way to help students understand the meaning of difficult words in the context in which they are used.

5. Context Clues Worksheet

Most state language arts standards require the analysis of the text surrounding unknown words to determine their meaning. This worksheet will help your students learn to use context clues. Students record unknown words, infer their meaning based on context, verify accuracy using a dictionary and find synonyms. This technique works well with literature units, book reports, or read-alouds

6. Student/Teacher

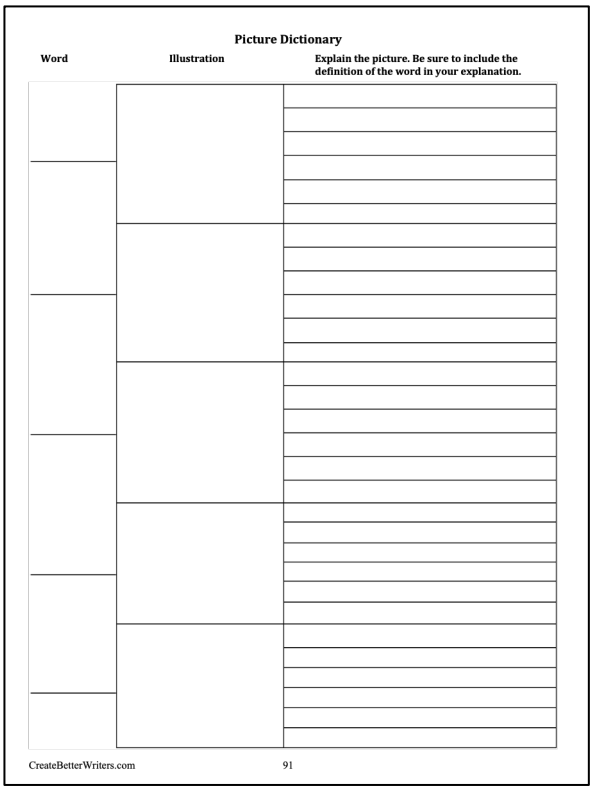
A vocabulary game that helps students review each other, peer tutor, and have fun learning vocabulary.

7. Sample schedule of a vocabulary unit.

Vocabulary
Picture Dictionary

About the picture dictionary:

Here is what the picture dictionary looks like. Use it with vocabulary units to help build retention. Punch holes in the margins so students can keep their finished work in their writing folders. They can use the picture dictionary while working on writing assignments, especially during the revising part of the writing process. This can be a very effective tool in your classroom. On vocabulary tests alone, 75% of my students receive A's. The ones who do not get A's are the ones who fail to do the picture dictionaries properly. For English learners, this is an especially effective tool.



Picture Dictionary

Word	Illustration	Explain the picture. Be sure to include the definition of the word in your explanation.

CreateBetterWriters.com 91

Name: _____

Let Me Count the Ways Vocabulary

How many ways can you say:

_____

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

4. _____ 5. _____

What kind of _____ is this?
Put the word from the top line here.

New Word Specific Definition of the New Word

1. _____ - _____

_____

_____

Sample Sentence: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. _____ - _____

_____

_____

Sample Sentence: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Let Me Count the Ways

Said

1. whispered – A quiet form of said.
2. protested – The way you say something when you don't agree.
3. expressed – The way you say something when you're sharing an idea.
4. uttered – To briefly say something.
5. harangued – To give a long, long persuasive speech or lecture.

Crazy

1. delirious – Acting crazy because of an illness or hallucination.
2. demented – Criminally insane behavior.
3. imbecilic – Idiotic kind of crazy.
4. insane – Medically crazy.
5. maniacal – An evil kind of crazy.

Thank you for previewing *The Complete Writing Program.*

Name _____

Let Me Count the Ways
Test

_____ 1. whispered	A. Idiotic kind of crazy.
_____ 2. delirious	B. A shy kind of afraid.
_____ 3. cackle	C. Smart humor; Cleverly humorous.
_____ 4. chuckle	D. A quiet, mean laugh because of someone's misfortune.
_____ 5. witty	E. A good healthy laugh.
_____ 6. expressed	F. Skillful, clever, and smart in different circumstances.
_____ 7. maniacal	G. An evil kind of crazy.
_____ 8. aghast	H. A quiet form of said.
_____ 9. jeer	I. Smart in hand-eye coordination.
_____ 10. apt	J. To briefly say something.

Thank you for previewing *The Complete Writing Program.*

Chapter 5
Writing Tricks That Add Style to Your Students' Writing

This chapter will:

1. Show you how to teach your students to write in a variety of intelligent styles.

2. Provide worksheets that will help your students master over a dozen writing techniques.

3. Help you create a system to help your students master writing skills and apply them in all writing situations.

4. Reinforces grammar skills by applying grammar rules within the context of writing.

What are Writing Tricks?

Writing tricks are specific writing skills that help the author communicate more intelligently. There are thousands of techniques writers use to communicate more effectively. By giving these techniques a name, your students can now identify specific ways to improve the quality of their sentences.

Here are a few examples of writing tricks:

* With a terrier in hot pursuit, the cat ran up the tree, through the branches, and onto the roof. - **Prepositional Phrase**
* What would you do if you won the lottery? - **Attention Getter**
* My dad whispered in my ear, "Son, I've never been prouder." - **Dialogue**

Why Writing Tricks?

I wanted a system that would not only teach my students writing skills but would allow them to apply the skills in their everyday writing and retain them for a lifetime. Giving the skill a name enables the students to identify it and use it on a regular basis. Before creating this program, I was leery of teaching grammar rules such as appositives because I felt that only a handful of students would retain the skill. By treating it as a writing trick and naming it "Appositives," my students learned to identify the appositive as a specific way to improve their writing. They also retained the rules of grammar that apply to it.

I keep a list of the writing tricks I've taught during the year at the front of the classroom for my students to use as a reference while they work on writing assignments. Also, while we read stories together in class, the students are quick to point out the writing tricks used in the book. Because the writing tricks and the Writing Assessment Checklist are posted in the class, my students regularly identify good writing skills when they see them. Therefore, the writing trick system trains students recognize great writing, which will surely help them become better writers.

About this section:

This section helps you teach dozens of specific skills your students will use for a lifetime. It will also help them recognize effective writing when they see it because they will have a way of categorizing the sentences that they know create better writing. There are enough writing tricks here to keep you busy for a couple of years. I've never been able to teach more than twelve in one year, but you may find time for more. For home-schooling parents, you may eventually run out, but I encourage you to start creating writing tricks of your own.

Teaching the Writing Tricks:

This chapter contains dozens of worksheets I've created over the years. Some were designed specifically for third graders, and some for seventh graders. Therefore, review the worksheets carefully before giving them to your students. You can easily modify many of the worksheets to match the grade level of your students.

Another important thing to consider is that many of the worksheets are meant to be used AFTER background information is taught. For example, before teaching the adjectives writing trick, I teach a short unit on adjectives. My students have no problem with the worksheet because they already know about adjectives. You will be the best judge of how much background information your students will need before each worksheet is assigned.

In any case, here is a sample lesson plan on how I help these writing tricks become an integral part of my students writing:

Step 1 - Teach any background knowledge needed for the writing trick. (Example: Before assigning the worksheet on prepositions, teach the students the definition of a preposition and have them write a few prepositional phrases of their own.

Step 2 - Teach the worksheet. Check for understanding. If several students don't grasp the skill, stop, review the skill, and try again. (I've had to do this from time to time. With persistence, most of my students do just fine.)

Step 3 - Follow up the worksheets by giving assignments that require students to use the trick in their writing. Do this several times until class understands the skill. Here are a few ideas:

Journal Writing: Example - Use the writing trick "adjectives" to write five sentences about different people you know.

Homework: Example - Write a paragraph about a pet you or a friend owns. Use the writing trick "adjectives" at least 2 times. Use any two other writing tricks we've learned at least once. Skip lines and underline the tricks.

Class Writing Assignment: Example - Write an essay about a character in the book we are reading. Be sure to use the writing trick "adjectives" at least three times, and use any three other writing tricks at least once. Skip lines and underline the writing tricks.

Here is an example of a practice assignment:

"There's a snake in my bed!" screamed Sarah as she began pounding furiously on
(Attention Getter and Dialogue)

her sleeping bag. My heart pounding, I raced into her tent like a bolt of lighting. There was
(Introductory Phrase) **(Simile/Metaphor)**

hissing coming from somewhere, so I grabbed Sarah's skinny, trembling arm and pulled her
(Adjectives)

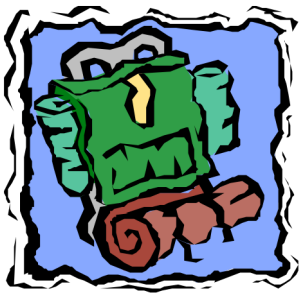
outside the tent. By now Mom, Dad, and my two brothers surrounded the space where the serpent
(Lists)

lurked, each carrying a weapon to pound its evil head. "On the count of three be ready to strike!"
(Dialogue)

yelled my father like a general going to war. On "three" the sleeping bag came up, and we all
(Simile/Metaphor)

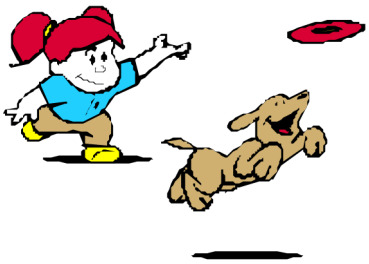
pounded that snake with all our might. When the dust settled, we were all embarrassed to find

that we had just killed my sister's old, leaky air mattress.
(Adjectives)



I can't begin to tell you how exciting it is to see students write like this when just a few months before, they were barely writing complete sentences. I enjoy watching their faces as I make a big deal about their writing assignments. They know I'm telling the truth about how much they've improved because they can compare their current work to writing samples from the beginning of the year. Because they've learned to use the Writing Assessment Checklist, they recognize effective writing techniques when they see them, especially in their own writing. This builds a tremendous amount of confidence which is important for young writers.

Comma Rules as Writing Tricks



1. Dialogue
2. Introductory Phrase / Introductory Clause
3. Appositives
4. Interrupter
5. Direct Address
6. Words in a series
7. Phrases in a series

Writing Tricks
Dialogue

Three Ways to Write Dialogue:

1. "Clean your room, or no dessert for you," said Mom.
2. "Clean your room," said Mom, "or no dessert for you."
3. Mom said, "Clean your room or no dessert for you."

Directions:

Re-write the following sentences so they include writing tricks. Write each sentence two (2) times, using two (2) different styles.

1. Dad told me to rake the leaves.

A. _____

_____

B. _____

_____

2. Pat asked me to go to the movies.

A. _____

_____

B. _____

_____

3. I yelled for the zookeeper to watch out for that big, ugly gorilla about to grab him.

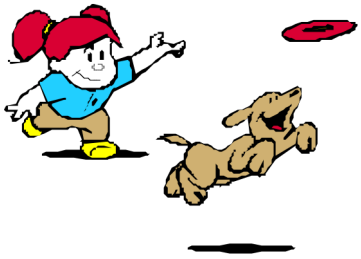
A. _____

_____

B. _____

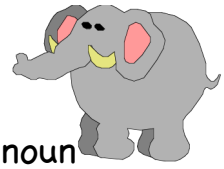
_____

Parts of Speech as Writing Tricks



1. Adjectives
2. Vaunting Verbs
3. Ly-How Adverbs
4. Prepositional Phrases

Writing Tricks
Adjectives



Definition: Placing 2 or 3 adjectives are placed in front of a noun counts as a writing trick.

Example: The boy with the voice asked the teacher a question.

The small, handsome boy with the high, squeaky voice asked the teacher a question.

Instructions: Use the Adjectives Writing Trick to change the sentences below. You can add adjectives to one or all underlined nouns.

1. The man had a mole under his right eye.

_____

_____

2. My sister spilled juice on my shirt.

_____

_____

3. The athlete slammed the ball into the basket.

_____

_____

4. A dog was in our garbage ripping the trash into pieces.

_____

_____

5. The sky was filled with clouds.

_____

_____

Writing Tricks
"Ly-How Adverbs"
#1

Directions: Change the following adjectives into adverbs by adding "-ly". For the words with a * , you will need to change the spelling of the word when adding "-ly".

1. quiet = _____

2. cautious = _____

3. careful = _____

4. safe = _____

*5. happy = _____

*11. crazy = _____

12. ignorant = _____

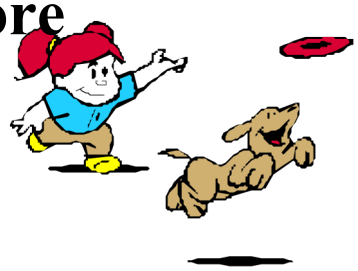
13. ridiculous = _____

14. beautiful = _____

*15. noisy = _____

Thank you for previewing *The Complete Writing Program.*

Poetry Terms and More as Writing Tricks



1. Simile/Metaphor
2. Hyperbole
3. Idioms
4. Personification
5. Onomatopoeia
6. Where/When

Writing Trick Idioms

Have you ever heard someone say, "Go fly a kite," or "It's as easy as pie?" Well, these are idioms.

An ***idiom*** is an expression that may, or may not, make sense when you read it. However, it does have a certain meaning when used properly. Idioms give your writing personality. Use this list to practice. Keep your ears open, stay on the ball, and I bet you'll find a bunch more to put into your bag of tricks.

Directions: Below is a list of idioms and their meanings. Write 15 sentences. Use an idiom in each sentence that fits the meaning of the expression.

Ace up Your Sleeve = a special advantage that is not used until the very last moment *(Everyone thinks that Rosy will win the contest, but Rachel has an ace up her sleeve.)*

Achilles' Heel = the one weakness or flaw in something or someone that is very strong *(I have no problem staying away from candy, but chocolate is my Achilles' heel.*)

Add Fuel to the Fire = to make a bad situation worse *(The boys were fighting and Tom just added fuel to the fire by making faces.)*

All Ears = ready to listen carefully *(When you're ready to talk, I'm all ears.)*

All Thumbs = clumsy *(It seems like I'm all thumbs because I drop whatever I pick up.)*

Ants in Your Pants = extremely restless; can't sit or stand still *(All of your wiggling makes you look like you've got ants in your pants.)*

At the End of Your Rope = not able to take it any more *(I'm at the end of my rope with all your complaining.)*

Backseat Driver = someone who gives advice that is neither asked for nor wanted *(I can fix my bike by myself. I don't need a backseat driver.)*

Bark Is Worse than Your Bite = to sound more unpleasant or dangerous than one really is *(My dad may yell a lot, but his bark is worse than his bite.)*

Chapter 6
Helping Your Students Improve Spelling

This chapter will:

1. Help you improve your students' spelling.

2. Provide procedures to teach spelling.

SPELLING PLURALS

Rule #1

If a noun ends in "y", preceded by a consonant, change the "y" to "i" and add "es".

country - countries	spy - spies	cry - cries	fly - flies
hobby - hobbies	beauty - beauties	lady - ladies	try - tries
melody - melodies	injury - injuries	sky - skies	copy - copies
mystery – mysteries	berry - berries	supply - supplies	

Rule #2

If a noun ends in "y", preceded by a vowel, just add "s" to make the word plural.

chimney – chimneys turkey – turkeys

valley – valleys birthday - birthdays cowboy - cowboys

Rule #3

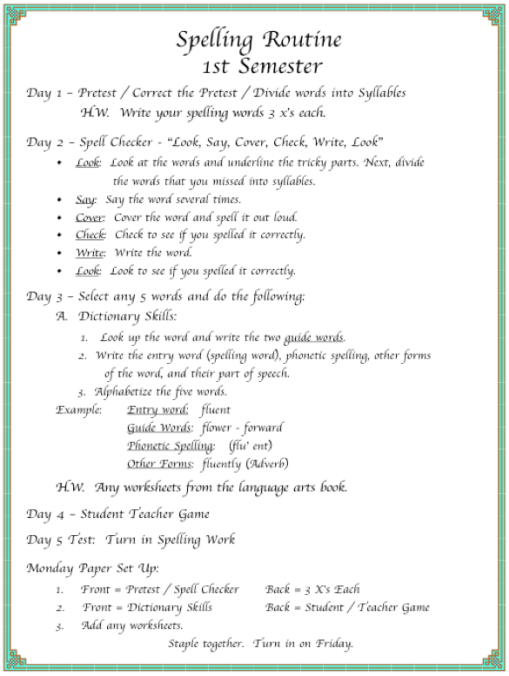
If a noun ends in "f" or "fe", the "f" or "fe" is usually changed to "v" and "es" is added to make it plural. <u>Chief</u> and <u>belief</u> are two exceptions.

half - halves	thief - thieves	loaf - loaves	life – lives
wolf - wolves	leaf - leaves	self - selves	knife - knives
calf - calves	wife - wives	elf - elves	shelf - shelves

Thank you for previewing *The Complete Writing Program.*

Daily Spelling Schedule:

First Semester



Spelling Routine
1st Semester

Day 1 – Pretest / Correct the Pretest / Divide words into Syllables
HW. Write your spelling words 3 x's each.

Day 2 – Spell Checker - "Look, Say, Cover, Check, Write, Look"
- Look: Look at the words and underline the tricky parts. Next, divide the words that you missed into syllables.
- Say: Say the word several times.
- Cover: Cover the word and spell it out loud.
- Check: Check to see if you spelled it correctly.
- Write: Write the word.
- Look: Look to see if you spelled it correctly.

Day 3 – Select any 5 words and do the following:
A. Dictionary Skills:
1. Look up the word and write the two guide words.
2. Write the entry word (spelling word), phonetic spelling, other forms of the word, and their part of speech.
3. Alphabetize the five words.

Example: Entry word: fluent
Guide Words: flower - forward
Phonetic Spelling: (flu' ent)
Other Forms: fluently (Adverb)

HW. Any worksheets from the language arts book.

Day 4 – Student Teacher Game

Day 5 Test: Turn in Spelling Work

Monday Paper Set Up:
1. Front = Pretest / Spell Checker Back = 3 X's Each
2. Front = Dictionary Skills Back = Student / Teacher Game
3. Add any worksheets.

Staple together. Turn in on Friday.

For a spelling program to work, it must be done consistently. Also, because there are so many topics to teach during our language arts time, having a spelling program that makes the most of every minute is a big advantage.

On the left is a picture of my classroom's spelling schedule. This schedule not only helps the students master the spelling concept of the week, it also helps meet several other standards. In addition to learning spelling words, students practice syllabication, dictionary skills, alphabetizing, prefixes / suffixes, and writing skills.

With these routines students know what to expect every day. By the third week of school, they automatically begin to work on their spelling with a minimum of teacher direction. Little time is wasted, and the fifteen to twenty minutes spent are used efficiently.

In my class, students work on spelling during Smart Start, the time when they first enter the classroom and work on spelling, grammar, and journal writing. Day 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 is simply a pacing guide. Students who complete the list are welcome to use their extra time for other activities such as silent reading, homework, or math practice. It is quite common to have several students working on other activities on Day 4 while the others are playing the Student-Teacher review game.

Here is how the weekly spelling program works:
(All the student worksheets follow the explanation of the eight steps below.)

Day 1 –

1st Semester – Pretest / Check Pretest / Divide Words into Syllables

2nd Semester – Pretest / Check Pretest / 3 Vocabulary Words

Begin the spelling unit by giving a pretest. This provides students the opportunity to see how well they know the words of the week. It also prepares them for the spelling tasks you will assign. Most school districts have spelling lists specific to each grade level. For homeschool teachers, contact your local school for a list that fits your needs. If you have a list of recommended words for your students' grade level, add three words from the list to your words of the week. If you prefer, you can add words from other subjects. For example, in science you might add "photosynthesis" or "biodegradable"

Follow the same procedure for giving the pretest as you do for giving the spelling test:

A. Say the word, say the word in a sentence, say the word again.

B. Correct the pretest. The students are to point to each letter as you spell the word. Make them put a dot above the letter as you say it so you know they are following along. They may circle any parts of the word where they spelled incorrectly.

Chapter 7
Putting It
All Together

This chapter will:

1. Show you how to use your bulletin boards as teaching tools.

2. Help keep the newly learned writing skills fresh in your students' minds.

3. Generate ideas for the layout of your learning environment.

4. Provide a year long schedule to make the most of all the writing techniques in this book.

A Sample Lesson Plan
for the First Year of Writing

I've given so much information that you may not know where to begin. Here is a sample of how my year of writing works. Parents who homeschool are fortunate to have the opportunity to complete the program and utilize it to its fullest potential. Good luck and feel free to adjust the program to fit the needs of your students.

First Month

* Teach the Writing Tricks - "Adjectives" and "Dialogue" (Ch. 5)
* Teach Show-not-Tell "Setting" (Ch. 3)
* Begin Let Me Count the Ways and Root Words vocabulary program. (Ch. 4)
* Master the paragraph.
    ** Be sure to give homework practice on writing tricks, paragraph work, and show-not-tell.

Second Month

* Teach Writing Tricks - "Simile/Metaphor" and "Onomatopoeia" (Ch. 5)
* Teach Show-not-Tell "Scared" (Ch. 3)
* Finish mastering the paragraph.
* Give a 45/60 minute timed writing assessment. (See Appendix)

Thank you for previewing *The Complete Writing Program.*

Chapter 8
Extras

This chapter will:

1. Help you teach your students how to write a story.

2. Give samples of writing activities you can do with your students.

3. Give projects that will reinforce the concepts taught in this book.

Story Writing
(Domain of Writing: Narrative)

Here are two ways to teach story writing. The first one takes several weeks, but you get to teach so many concepts while you teach it that it is worth the time. Once the students understand what it takes to write a story, teach them the shorter version, and put them to work. As a result, they will write several stories during the year and strengthen their writing skills with each one.

A. Story Writing: The Long Version

** See the lesson plan for "Scary Story" in the following pages for a day-to-day lesson plan for writing these kinds of stories.

Step 1: Begin by teaching the <u>elements of a story.</u>
(This also helps tremendously during reading lessons.)

A. Give the students the definitions of each element of a story. Write them on an overhead or the chalkboard for the students to copy. (See Appendix for master sheet with definitions.)

B. Read a story with your class. Identify each element of the story - introduction, conflict, rising action, climax, resolution, and epilogue.

C. Have the students memorize the elements of a story and continue to discuss them during reading lessons.

Thank you for previewing *The Complete Writing Program.*

Scary Story
Lesson Plan

Before starting this lesson, teach show-not-tell setting.

Day 1

Have students fill out the Scary Story sheet. Put this on the board:

Samples: Don't take candy from strangers. (Or) Obey your parents.	A kid is kidnapped and taken to Dracula's castle (or) A kid trick or treats without parents permission.	graveyard	vampire
Themes "Lessons"	Conflicts "Problems"	Settings	Characters

- Divide the class into groups of four.
- Have the students copy the four items above on a piece of paper.
- Give them 15 minutes to think of ideas. After 15 minutes, one person from each group writes their best ideas in the columns.
- Vote on the best theme as a class. Then, as a class, select a conflict based on the theme. Students may choose their own if they like.
- Give the students the Story Writing worksheet. They write the class theme and conflict on that paper.

Day 2

- Review the theme and conflict.
- Select a resolution.
- Students fill out the rest of the Story Writing worksheet.

Thank you for previewing *The Complete Writing Program.*