Strengthening Writing Instruction Through Formative Assessment

Sponsored by Critical Thinking for Life! Mentoring Minds
Liana Heitin
Associate editor, Education Week Teacher

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Strengthening Writing Instruction Through Formative Assessment

Expert Presenters:

Kathleen Curran, 4th grade teacher, Margaret A. Neary Elementary School, Southborough, Mass.

Leslie Laud, facilitator, Hill for Literacy Inc., and author of Using Formative Assessment to Differentiate Middle School Literacy Instruction
An on-demand archive of this webinar will be available at www.edweek.org/go/webinar in less than 24 hrs.
Formative Assessment and Writing Instruction

Nov 6, 2013 Webinar
Education Week Teacher

Dr Leslie Laud, Facilitator, HILL for Literacy
Kathleen Curran, Teacher, Southboro Public Schools
Students who write proficiently?

- 67%
- 33%
- 50%
- 25%
How are students most often asked to show what they know?
Why Formative Assessment?

• 20-30 X as impact as other initiatives
• 10 X as effective as reduced class size
• 6-9 months more growth per year
• Students learn 4 X as fast
• Almost free!
Formative Assessment

- Where am I?
- Where am I going?
- What is my plan?
I think that children like us are responsible enough to choose something that is not inappropriate for their age. Also, your parents could watch one of the sets to definitely make sure it's ok. I would learn some new things like new words and things about animals and things about the Earth. Even if your sister or brother could supervise you, we would choose E, P, and PG. If you have an older sibling you could ask them what channels we're good or not.

C

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CL

No, I think children shouldn't be able to choose whatever they eat. It's unhealthy, you could get really sick, and you would have way too much energy. It's not good for children to choose their own food because it's wrong that children are just going to choose unhealthy foods. Kids will choose all junk foods like sticky, Goldea, candy, creamy ice cream, sweet lollipops, gummy candies and a lot more! Also, they will be eating it constantly.

Another reason why I think children should not choose their own foods is because they'll get sick. They will have a huge sugar high and then have a stomach ache from all the unhealthy foods. Also, children don't know what they eat and what if they're allergic.

Finally, the last reason why children should not be allowed to choose what they eat is that it's unhealthy. Kids would have way too much sugar, they couldn't be able to sleep and bothering their parents too much. Then the next day, they would be so tired and not do anything. So, my opinion is that I think children should not be able to choose what they eat.
Enter: Self-regulated Strategy Development
Self-Regulated Strategy Development: 6 Stages

- **Stage 1**: Activate Background Knowledge
- **Stage 2**: Discuss it
- **Stage 3**: Model it
- **Stage 4**: Memorize it
- **Stage 5**: Support it
- **Stage 6**: Independent Practice
SRSD 6 Stages

- **Stage 1**: Activate Background Knowledge
- **Stage 2**: Discuss it
- **Stage 3**: Model it
- **Stage 4**: Memorize it
- **Stage 5**: Support it
- **Stage 6**: Independent Practice
Stage 1
Activate Background Knowledge

Why write your opinion?

What is an opinion?

Can you find the parts in an opinion piece?
Stage 1
Activate Background Knowledge

POW
P Pick my Idea
O Organize my Notes
W Write and Say More

TREE

TOPIC Sentence
Tell what you believe!

REASONS - 3 or More
Why do I believe this?
Will my readers believe th

ENDING
Wrap it up right!

EXAMINE
Do I have all my parts?
I believe that recess should take place after lunch. Having recess after lunch would let children work off all of the calories that they just ate. Also, children will have more energy to play fun games after they have had some food. Finally, if children finish their lunch early they can begin playing instead of just having to wait for everyone else so they will get more exercise time. These are the reasons that I believe children should have recess after lunch.
SRSD 6 Stages

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- **Stage 6:** Independent Practice
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SRSD 6 Stages

- **Stage 1**: Activate Background Knowledge
- **Stage 2**: Discuss it
- **Stage 3**: Model it
- **Stage 4**: Memorize it
- **Stage 5**: Support it
- **Stage 6**: Independent Practice
Stage 3
Model it
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TREE Parts</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Point</th>
<th>Self</th>
<th>Peer</th>
<th>Adult</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic Introduction</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduce a topic clearly (previewing 3 reasons)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State an opinion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reasons</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason #1</td>
<td>Reason is present</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Link opinion and reasons with words and phrases</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reason supported by facts and/or details</td>
<td>1 o 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason #2</td>
<td>Reason is present</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Link opinion and reasons with words and phrases</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reason supported by facts and/or details</td>
<td>1 o 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason #3</td>
<td>Reason is present</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Link opinion and reasons with words and phrases</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>1 o 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ending</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide a concluding statement related to opinion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes/Recommendations:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
<th>Self</th>
<th>Peer</th>
<th>Adult</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging hook (sound, question, starting fact, humor)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2/2</td>
<td>1/2</td>
<td>1/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tells what is coming, weaving in prompt's key language</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2/2</td>
<td>2/2</td>
<td>2/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elements (Note: score only first three reasons)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linking word or device used to introduce reason</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>1/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich language: descriptive sensory images and/or vivid vocabulary (verbs/adjectives)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2/2</td>
<td>2/2</td>
<td>2/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linking word or device used to introduce reason</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>1/1</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
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<td>1/1</td>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>1/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2/2</td>
<td>2/2</td>
<td>2/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wraps up with key prompt language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL | 31  | 15  | 15  | 15  |
Critical Thinking for Life!
mentoring minds

- Online & Print
- Compact Guides
- Professional Development
- Apps
- Supplemental Resources
- Flip Charts
- Wheels
“Students no longer line up at my desk for feedback on their writing. They self and peer score it since they understand the criteria for evaluating it.”

Sue Teixeira, 4th grade teacher, Worcester Arts Magnet School, Worcester MA
Class went from 20% CCSS mastery to 75%.
Writing and Formative Assessment

• Feedback about writing effect sizes*:
  – Adults: .87
  – Peers: .58
  – Self: .62
  – Computers: .38

0.20 = small effect
0.50 = medium effect
0.80 = large effect

SRSD 6 Stages

- **Stage 1:** Activate Background Knowledge
- **Stage 2:** Discuss it
- **Stage 3:** Model it
- **Stage 4:** Memorize it
- **Stage 5:** Support it
- **Stage 6:** Independent Practice
Stage 4
Memorize it

- How do Stages 1-3 fundamentally differ from Stages 4-6?

- Why would students need to memorize the strategy steps?
SRSD 6 Stages

- **Stage 1**: Activate Background Knowledge
- **Stage 2**: Discuss it
- **Stage 3**: Model it
- **Stage 4**: Memorize it
- **Stage 5**: Support it
- **Stage 6**: Independent Practice
I can write this story!

I think I can write lots of stories!

I Can finish this story!
5/6/12 3:14 13

Aliyah went swimming.

Ms. Boucher and Mrs. Corsow were outside riding their bikes. But then they were hot so they decided to swim. Then they were cold so they decided to watch a movie. They had so much fun!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parts</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Engaging hook (sound, question, startling fact, humor)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weaves in prompt’s key language</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tells what is coming, in a way that ignites anticipation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uses at least once instance of figurative language to hook reader’s attention</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1 pt for each use, up to 2 pts possible)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction reasons</td>
<td>Subtle link, at start or end of reason</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Little story” is detailed, spirited and engaging</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rich language: descriptive sensory images that portray a sensory experience via sight, sound, touch, smell or taste</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rich language: vivid, unusual and/or precise vocabulary (i.e verbs/adj/adverbs etc) used to give the reader a sharp sense of the idea being written about</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rich language: figurative language (similes, metaphors, hyperbole etc are used to bring the writing alive)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 pt for each use – up to a total of 2 pts possible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Logical sentence variety, used for careful effect. This includes some simple, compound and complex sentences.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommendations:

The adrenaline was pumping through my veins. I quickly wiped my sweaty face with a towel. Heart pumping quickly in my chest, I ran. "Pass! Pass!"

I yelled. The ball seemed to get up and fly into my feet from the other side. I dribbled the ball and twisted, flipped, and turned through a million defenders blobbing out at my feet. "GOAL!!! I screamed as the ball soared over the unsuspecting goalie's head. My teammates cheered for me. "I love this game. My teammates cheered for me. You can tell now that I told you this story just to show you how SOOCER is, right? Are you convinced? I hope so!
SRSD 6 Stages

- Stage 1: Activate Background Knowledge
- Stage 2: Discuss it
- Stage 3: Model it
- Stage 4: Memorize it
- Stage 5: Support it
- Stage 6: Independent Practice
My Self Instruction Plan

- I will use positive self-talk statements to encourage myself when I begin writing.
- I will write notes in the corner of the page to help me organize and outline my thoughts.
- I will write the mnemonic in the margin.
- While writing, I will ask myself if I am remembering to use all the parts and check off those I have used.
- I will take a deep breath to remind myself to go slowly and think about what I am writing.
- When I am finished, I will check over my work to ensure I included everything and to see if there are any improvements I can make.
- I will reread it pretending I’m another person to make sure it makes sense.
What’s next?
• kc.vanderbilt.edu/projectwrite/
• www.hillforliteracy.org/
Writing’s Largest Purposes?

Writing fosters heritage, purpose, understanding of the world and self, maintains connections, provides psychological benefits, persuades and can enhance the human experience in many ways.

(Summarized from Harris et al, 2009)
Critical Thinking for Life! ™

Mentoring Minds
motivation reading & motivation math

- Support the implementation of curriculum aligned to the Common Core State Standards
- Include engaging activities and high-interest content
- Offer flexible usage for a variety of classroom settings
- Complement existing reading and mathematics programs
motivation benchmark assessments for reading and math

• Increase student performance by using benchmark assessments for pre-, mid-, and post assessment

• Address the Common Core Standards for reading and math including selected response, short constructed response, and extended response

• Help monitor students’ progress and provide valuable feedback about students’ understanding of the Common Core Standards
• Emphasizes formative assessment

• Builds a common language about a balanced assessment system

• Offers strategies, techniques, and a wealth of information to improve the teaching and learning process

• Helps collect evidence of student learning and incorporates successful formative assessment practices in your classroom
Formative Assessment Professional Development: A Focus on Student Learning

- Is offered as full, half day or webinar training
- Provides information needed to adjust teaching and learning while they are still happening when incorporated into classroom practice
- Helps you understand assessment for learning
- Guides the use of formative assessment in the classroom to make a positive impact on future instruction
mentoringminds.com/edweek
An on-demand archive of this webinar will be available at www.edweek.org/go/webinar in less than 24 hrs.
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Required Reading from *Education Week*:

**Teaching Now Blog**
*Education Week Teacher* covers the latest in teaching, from the inspirational to the infuriating, from practical classroom tips to raging policy debates, and from news you can use to news of the weird.

**What Works in Writing Instruction**
Evidence-based practices for teaching writing, including the use of formative-assessment techniques, can dramatically improve students' skills, writes Leslie Laud in a guest post on *Education Week Teacher*. 