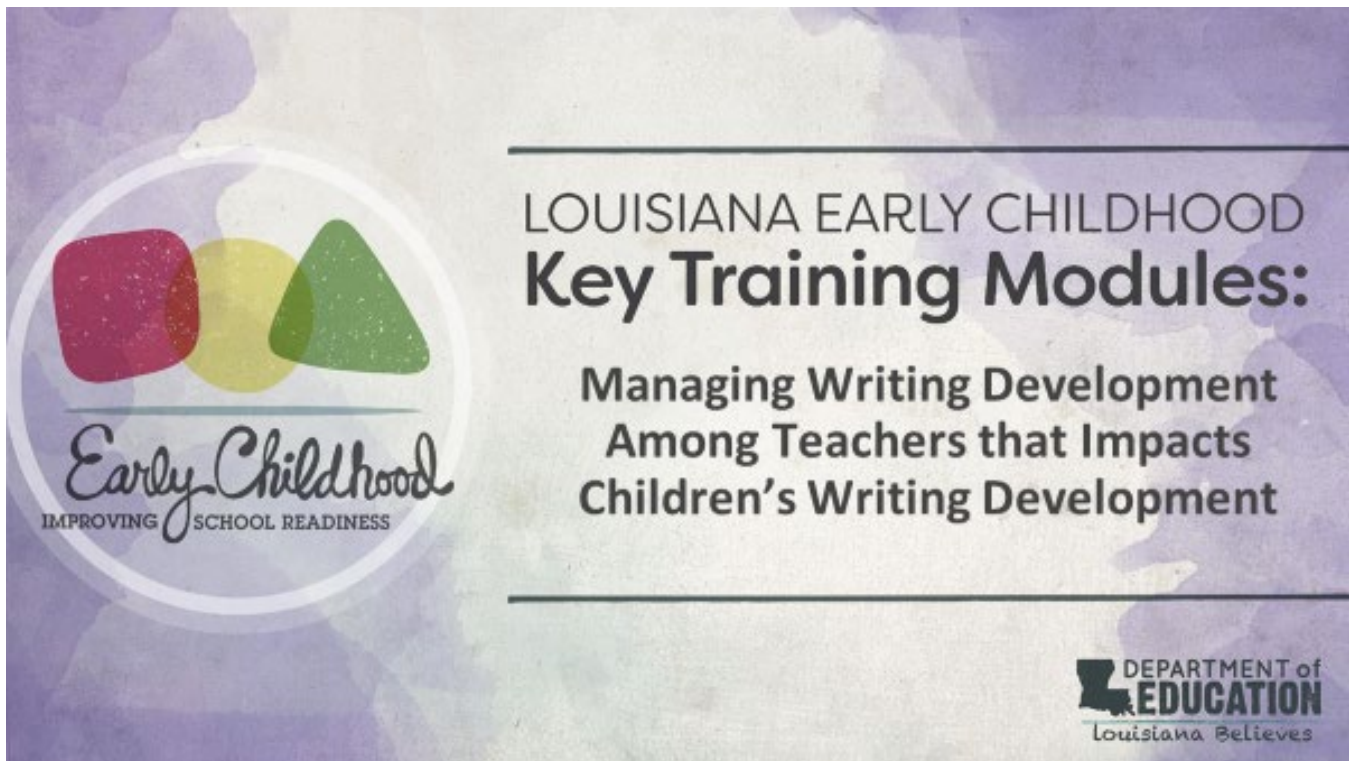


## Module 3E: Outline & Manual

*Managing Writing Development Among Teachers  
that Impacts Children’s Writing Development*

### Contents

Module Description .....	2
Learning Outcomes .....	3
Training Agenda .....	3
Training Manual .....	4



## Module Description

This training module is designed to assist school administrators and center directors in increasing understanding of the stages of writing development. Writing development is part of overall literacy development. This module encourages administrators to provide professional development in writing that augments teachers' knowledge of language interactions, the importance of being read to, and shared reading

### Pre-Work

- For Stages of Writing Development activity, create four large pieces of chart paper labeled "Level 1: Emerging," "Level 2: Pictorial," "Level 3: Pre-communicative," and "Level 4: Semi-phonetic early writing."

### Materials

- Chart paper and markers
- Copy paper or note paper
- Pencils or pens for participants
- Sticky notes
- Highlighters
- Handouts
  - *Conventions of Writing Development Scale*
  - *Recording Protocol*
  - *Examples of Effective Writing Communication Prompts*
  - *Comprehensive List of Activities that can be Utilized During Stages of the Writing Process*
  - *Before-During-After Teacher Prompts*

- *Read Aloud Texts that Encourage Writing in Response to Reading (Participants generated as an activity)*
- *Children’s Books as Models to Teach Writing Skills*
- *Tips for Teachers of Young Children to Promote Writing as a Frequent Activity in Early Childhood Classrooms*
- *Pre- and Post-Assessment*

## Learning Outcomes

*Candidates who actively participate in this session will be able to...*

- Recognize the stages of writing development, and be able to assess how to help students advance to each subsequent stage
- Develop a general understanding of the writing process as a developmental process
- Identify appropriate strategies teachers can use to improve capacity in the teaching of writing
- Increase understanding of the types of classroom activities they should encourage to support improvements in both teaching writing and learning to write

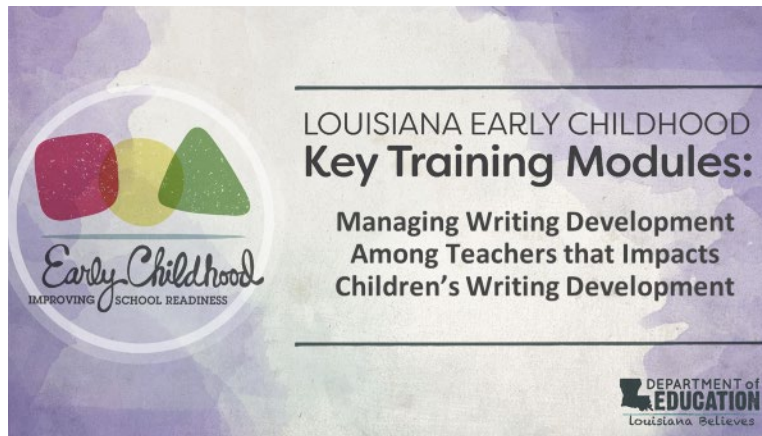
## Training Agenda

Total Content Time: 1.75 hours

Total Session Time: 2.75 hours

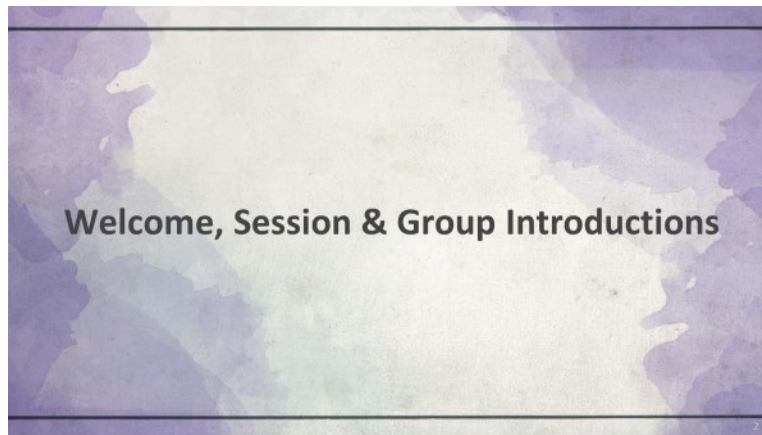
Item	Time/Duration
Registration/Sign-In	30 minutes prior to course start <i>(not included in total course time)</i>
Welcome, Session & Group Introductions	20 minutes
Reflecting on Writing Development Activity	10 minutes
Stages of Writing Development Overview	25 minutes
Sharing Student Writing	25 minutes
Incorporating Guided Writing	25 minutes
Session Closing & Post-Assessment	15 minutes <i>(not included in total course time)</i>
Individualized Q&A	15 minutes following course completion <i>(not included in total course time)</i>

# Training Manual



*Distribute the Pre-Assessment Evaluation as participants enter the training.*

- *Ask them to complete the Pre-Assessment Evaluation and return to you*
- *Briefly review the forms to identify the group's needs*
- *Emphasize the learning objective(s) identified by the group as needing support*
- *Modify the session to spend more time on knowledge, skills, and abilities needed by the group*



Good morning/afternoon. This is a presentation of the Louisiana Early Childhood Key Training Modules. I am (insert name) and I will be your trainer today.

This morning/afternoon, we will begin by getting to know a little bit about one another, and also review what you will be learning today.

First, I want to welcome and thank you for taking the time to join us today. I appreciate your dedication to young children in Louisiana. Your efforts to grow will help them grow, so thank you.

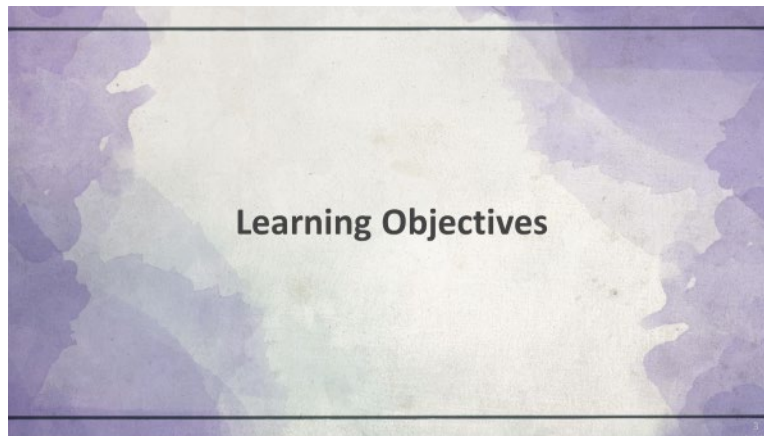
*Invite participants to introduce themselves to you and each other and share their current work with young children.*

This session is designed to assist school administrators and center directors in increasing their understanding of the stages of writing development. In this session, participants will engage in four major activities:

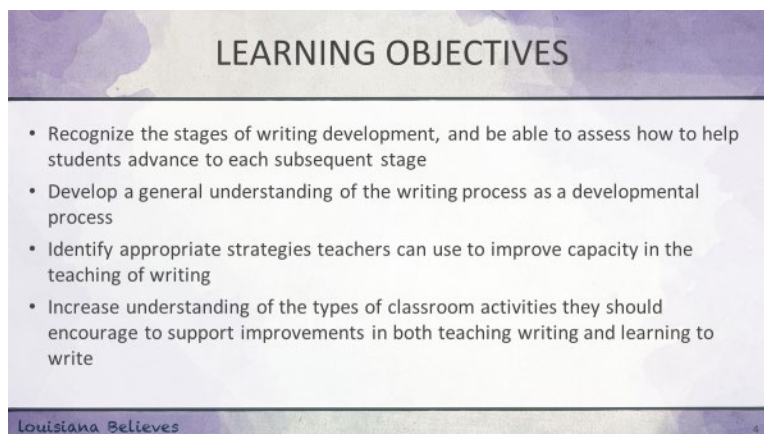
- First, participants will examine the stages of writing development.
- Second, strategies for sharing writing will be presented and discussed in an effort to promote a culture of reflection.
- Third, appropriate methods of assessment and evaluation of young children’s writing will be discussed.
- Fourth, writing in response to read aloud will be presented and discussed. Participants will also be encouraged to utilize various genres when reading with their students to encourage a diversity of writing styles.
- Finally, simple ways to increase writing in early childhood classrooms will be shared.

Writing development is part of overall literacy development. This session encourages administrators to provide professional development in writing that augments teachers’ knowledge of language interactions, the importance of being read to, and shared reading.

It is incumbent upon early learning centers to provide effective, practical, and differentiated writing professional development to their teachers given that early childhood education is a fundamental building block in a child’s educational trajectory.



Next, we will examine our learning objectives.

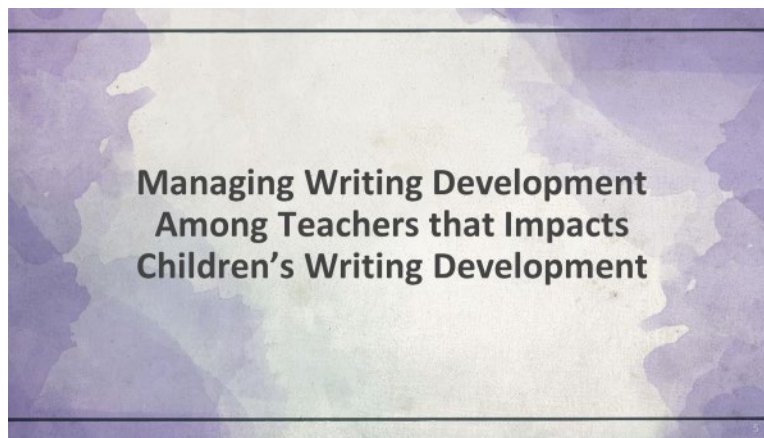


Read each learning objective aloud.

- **Recognize the stages of writing development, and be able to assess how to help students advance to each subsequent stage**
- **Develop a general understanding of the writing process as a developmental process**
- **Identify appropriate strategies teachers can use to improve capacity in the teaching of writing**
- **Increase understanding of the types of classroom activities they should encourage to support improvements in both teaching writing and learning to write**

Are there any additional points we should add to our list of objectives for today?

Record responses on chart paper.



- How does research suggest writing should be taught and assessed?
- How do you currently teach and assess writing at your site?

Encourage participants to reflect on the ways they teach and assess writing. Distribute copy paper and pens or pencils.

**Turn and talk** with a partner about the following questions:

- **How does research suggest writing should be taught and assessed?**
- **How do you currently teach and assess writing at your site?**

Record your responses on the copy paper I handed out to you.

When participants finish their brief discussion, have them share their current writing practices with the larger group. Record group responses on chart paper.

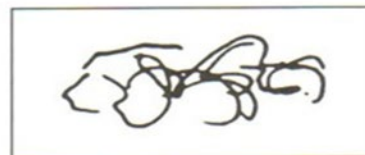
These initial ideas will be used again later to reflect on new ideas about writing that emerge from the training.



We will now go over a brief overview of the **Stages of Writing Development** and the Conventions of Writing Development Scale. This was developed by Feldgus and Cardonick in a 1999 book called *Kid Writing*. You may already be familiar with how writing develops in stages, but we will do a quick review in case it has been a while since you have engaged in the stages of writing.



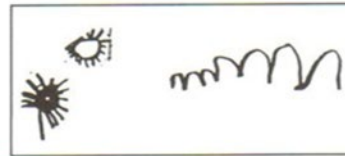
- Makes uncontrolled or unidentifiable scribbling



**Level One: Emerging or Scribble – makes uncontrolled or unidentifiable scribbling.**



- Imitates writing
- Makes somewhat recognizable pictures
- Tells about the picture



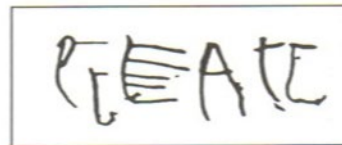
The flower is growing.

### Level Two: Pictorial

- Imitates writing
- Makes somewhat recognizable pictures
- Tells about the picture



- Writes to convey a message
- Uses letter-like forms and/or random letter strings
- Prints own name or occasional known words



There are webs in Spidertown.

### Level Three: Pre-communicate

- Writes to convey a message
- Uses letter-like forms and/or random letter strings
- Prints own name or occasional known words





- Correctly uses some letters to match sounds
  - May reverse some letters
- May use one beginning letter to write a word
- Usually writes left to right



I have a goldfish called Arielle.

#### Level Four: Semi-Phonetic

- **Correctly uses some letters to match sounds (may reverse some letters)**
- **May use one beginning letter to write a word**
- **Usually writes left to right.**

The caption for this writing sample is "I have a goldfish called Arielle." *Encourage participants to turn to their seat partner and discuss briefly how some letters match sounds or entire words.*

The first word "I," is correct. The second word, "have," is represented by an "F" and we recall both "V" and "F" sound similar, and the third word, "A" is spelled correctly. The word "goldfish" is represented by three consonants: "G," "D," and "F." The word "called" is simply represented by a "D," and the name Arielle is written as an "A."

It is typical for children who are learning to write to use a single letter, either what they hear at the beginning or end of a word to represent the entire word.

Also note that this child has used all capital letters. This is typical – children tend to copy what they see and all signage, also called environmental print, is in capital letters.



- Represents beginning and ending consonant sounds
- Spells some high-frequency words correct in sentences
- Includes some vowels
- Writes one or more sentences

#### Level Five: Phonetic

- **Represents beginning and ending consonant sounds**
- **Spells some high-frequency words correct in sentences**

- **Includes some vowels**
- **Writes one or more sentences**

While this stage of writing is typically beyond what is produced among children in pre-kindergarten settings, it is useful to know how children will continue to develop beyond preschool and for what expectations early childhood teachers are preparing students.

Note the gradual progressing of skills or spiraling of skills.



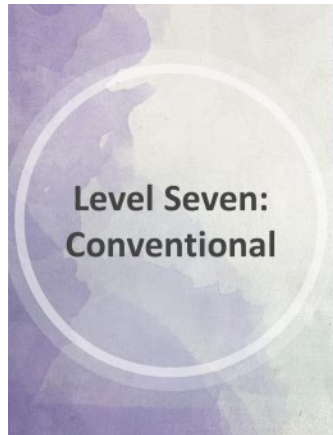
- Correctly spells many high-frequency words in sentences
  - May not be correct sentences
- Uses vowels in most syllables
- Begins to use simple punctuation
  - Periods, question marks
  - May not be punctuation
- Writes more than one sentence

#### **Level Six: Transitional**

- **Correctly spells many high-frequency words in sentences (may not be correct sentences)**
- **Uses vowels in most syllables**
- **Begins to use simple punctuation (periods, question marks; may not be punctuation)**
- **Writes more than one sentence**

While this stage of writing is typically beyond what is produced among children in pre-kindergarten settings, it is useful to know how children will continue to develop beyond preschool and for what expectations early childhood teachers are preparing students.

Again, note the gradual progressing of skills or spiraling of skills. In this stage, we particularly see more correctly spelled high-frequency words, more sentence production, and students at this stage begin to use simple punctuation marks, indicating their acquisition of and understanding of the sign system of punctuation.



- Correctly spells most high-frequency words
  - More than one sentence
- Uses larger correctly spelled vocabulary
  - May use phonic spelling for advanced words
- Uses more complex and varied sentence structure
  - Capitalizes beginning word in sentence
  - Uses lowercase appropriately
- Spaces words correctly

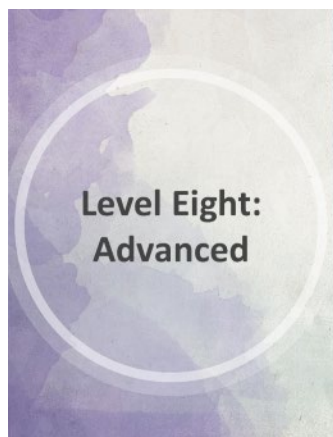
### Level Seven: Conventional

- **Correctly spells most high-frequency words (more than one sentence)**
- **Uses larger correctly spelled vocabulary (may use phonic spelling for advanced words)**
- **Uses more complex and varied sentence structure (capitalizes beginning word in sentence, uses lowercase appropriately)**
- **Spaces words correctly**

Again, this stage of writing is typically beyond what is produced among children in pre-kindergarten settings. However, it is useful to know and to remember how children will, again, continue to develop beyond preschool and for what expectations early childhood teachers are preparing students.

For the first bullet, students typically generate more than one sentence at this level.

Again, note the gradual progressing of skills or spiraling of skills. In this stage, we particularly see mostly correctly spelled high-frequency words, an increase in vocabulary, more complex and varied sentence production, and students at this stage capitalize in a conventional manner and use lowercase levels appropriately.



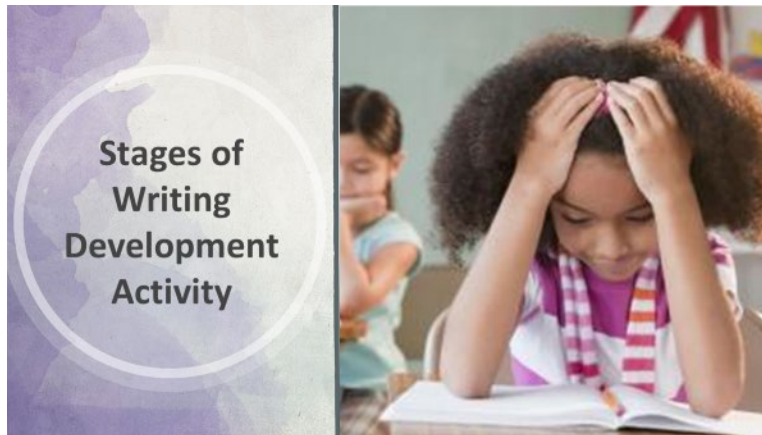
- Has accumulated rich body of written vocabulary
- Uses advanced print conventions accurately
- Organizes writing into appropriate paragraphs

It all starts in preschool. This is the level to which we aspire to provide children the foundation while in preschool. As adults, this is where we function as writers.

**Level Eight: Advanced**

- **Has accumulated rich body of written vocabulary**
- **Uses advanced print conventions accurately**
- **Organizes writing into appropriate paragraphs**

In the second bullet, the word “convention” is used. Conventions are also called mechanics. In this case, examples would be quotation marks and commas. Again, it all starts in preschool and this is the eventual goal.



*Divide participants into small groups of three to four individuals, assign a level (1-4) to each group and ask them to create lists on sticky notes (one issue per note) of how what they just reviewed differs from how writing is being taught and assessed at their center or school in terms of the stages of writing development.*

*As participants discuss, post four large pieces of chart paper labeled “Level 1: Emerging,” “Level 2: Pictorial,” “Level 3: Pre-communicative,” and “Level 4: Semi-phonetic early writing.” As groups finish, ask participants to post their notes on the corresponding chart paper.*

*Have volunteers read the notes aloud by levels, or invite participants walk around to each chart to read answers and discuss comments.*



*Trainer Note: For this section of the workshop, participants will first share their student writing samples that they have brought with them and determine at what stage students are operating.*

If we want children to develop as writers, as teachers of young children, we need to use practices that invite children to write frequently.

## How to Incorporate the Writing Process in the Classroom

### ENCOURAGING THE WRITING PROCESS IN THE CLASSROOM

- Enjoyment by the adult at what the child(ren) produce(s) should be reciprocal
- Frequent writing celebrations should take place
- Ex.: placing samples of student writing from every child on a dedicated classroom space and at specific intervals



Louisiana Believes

19

### ENCOURAGING THE WRITING PROCESS IN THE CLASSROOM

- Other ways to celebrate writing is to facilitate regular periodic sharing sessions where the adult selects three or so children's writing samples, and the child shares their writing with the group, "reading" their writing
- An important element of writing instruction is to ensure students experience success and celebrate writing success often

Louisiana Believes

20

As with oral language development, when children are writing, the warmth of interactions between the adults and children encourages writing development, creativity, and expression.

**Enjoyment by the adult at what child(ren) produce(s) should be reciprocal.**

**Frequent writing celebrations should take place.** Celebrating writing can take many forms and is found throughout the literature in writing development.

For instance, as examples of celebrating writing and providing continual emotional support, some teacher will **place samples of student writing from every child on a dedicated classroom space and at specific intervals**, such as every two weeks or every month, placing new writing samples over the previous one.

This dedicated space to celebrating writing then becomes a record of what each child is accomplishing as they develop as writers. This technique can also be used as a gallery walk, where the entire class walks by the new writing samples and comments to each other what they are observing and thinking about one another's writing. Conducting a gallery walk at these two-week to one-month intervals when a new sample of writing from each child is posted encourage students to talk about writing and provides and an opportunity to celebrate writing.


**Other ways to celebrate writing is to facilitate regular periodic sharing sessions where the teacher selects three or so children's writing samples, and the child shares their writing with the group, "reading their writing."** Like any public sharing, after each child shares, the teacher then leads the children in clapping hands or finger snapping to show appreciation. It is important that writing development language or terms be used during celebrations, such as referring to children as authors and illustrators.

Praising children's attempts at writing (think back to the levels) is important. Teachers can praise any aspect of writing whether it is something simple like appropriate behaviors or some element of the actual student writing samples produced. For example, teachers could praise behaviors such as working independently or working without bothering one another or putting materials away when finished. As another example, teachers could praise what children are actually producing as their writing.

**An important element of writing instruction is to ensure students experience success and celebrate writing success often.**

MANAGING THE WRITING PROCESS

- Managing time, behavior, and activities are important to encouraging writing development among young children
- This management extends to writing development in that the teacher is responsible for facilitating writing development



Louisiana Believes 21

## MANAGING THE WRITING PROCESS

- In writing development, what the adult says and does while either demonstrating writing or encouraging writing with individual children and groups of children provides a rich picture of what is expected of children
- Here is one example of how teachers can manage their classroom spaces to encourage writing development
  - The term *provisioning for writing* means children have free access to a variety of writing materials within the classroom and that writing is structured as opportunities for individual expression

Louisiana Believes

22

**Managing time, behavior, and activities is important to encouraging writing development among young children.**

**This management extends to writing development in that the teacher is responsible for facilitating writing development. In writing development, what the teacher says and does while either demonstrating writing or encouraging writing with individual children and groups of children provides a rich picture of what is expected of children.**

For example, researchers in the field of writing who have worked with young children and adults who work with young children, discuss the importance of how adults can set up opportunities within the classroom that both facilitate and encourage writing development. In the same way, teachers might set up a classroom library so children have free access to books and rotate different books to encourage choice, center directors and principals can also encourage teachers to facilitate writing development.

**Here is one example of how teachers can manage their classroom spaces to encourage writing development. The term provisioning for writing means children have free access to a variety of writing materials within the classroom and that writing is structured as opportunities for individual expression.**

In your teachers' classroom centers, teachers may have a designated writing center, or may incorporate writing into various play activities such as a restaurant center, a grocery shopping center, or a kitchen center.

Writing materials should be varied and appealing to children. For example, in a designated writing center, teachers should include a variety of paper types and styles. Avoid lined paper to allow children to attempt any degree of letter formation, then, as they mature and become more skilled, children will learn to fit letters to line spaces.

Also, providing a variety of writing instruments appropriate to the children in each class is important. Different kinds of writing instruments encourage choice and expression, and although this may seem quite simple, it can be motivating when children have the opportunity to select what they want to use to write and what paper best suits their ideas. This may include colored pencils, paints, and crayons as well as different sized paper, different colored paper, and even differing pads of paper.

*Ask participants the following questions:*

- How many of you have a favorite pen or preferred type of pen?
- How many of you feel more motivated to write when you have that favorite pen or preferred kind of paper?

- How many of you have a preferred kind of computer or another device such as an iPad that you use when you write?

If you are motivated by a particular kind of pen or marker or computer, the same concepts hold true to young children. Teachers of young children can **provision for writing by allowing children free access to a variety of writing materials within the classroom, structured as opportunities for individual expression.**

PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR STUDENTS TO SHARE THEIR WRITING

- Demonstrations of writing should be occurring frequently and as the adult demonstrates writing (or drawing), they talk through what they are doing and thinking with the sample they are using as the basis of the demonstration
- An important element of writing instruction is to scaffold students' thinking as suggested by Dorn and Soffos (2001)
- Using simple language such as "first, I am going to" and "next, I will" and then "I decided to end my writing because" conveys to the children that writing follows a structure that can be compared to the structure of many books
- Talking through a writing piece also allows children to hear how an adult is thinking about writing

Louisiana Believes 23

PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR STUDENTS TO SHARE THEIR WRITING

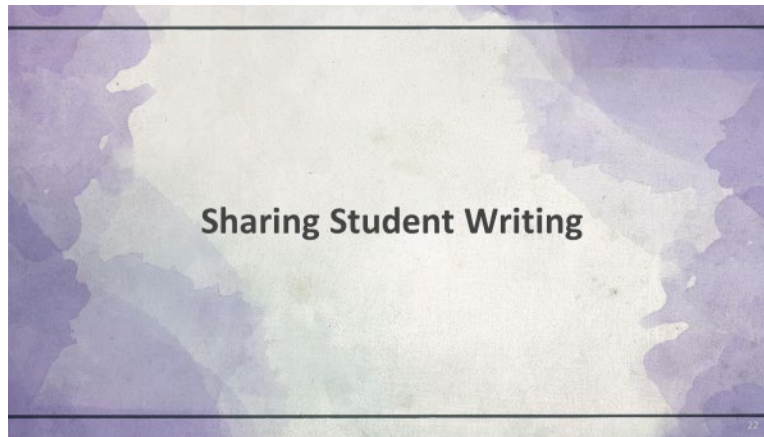
- Using simple language such as "first, I am going to" and "next, I will" and then "I decided to end my writing because" conveys to the children that writing follows a structure that can be compared to the structure of many books
- Talking through a writing piece also allows children to hear how an adult is thinking about writing

Louisiana Believes 24

Many **demonstrations of writing should be occurring frequently and as the teacher demonstrates writing (or drawing), they talk through what they are doing and thinking with the sample they are using as the basis of the demonstration.** Writing researchers advocate that drawing is precursor to writing, and that children learn to "make marks" and draw as they develop writing skills.

**An important element of writing instruction is to scaffold students' thinking as suggested by Dorn and Soffos (2001). Using simple language such as "first, I am going to," and "next, I will," and then "I decided to end my writing because" conveys to the children that writing follows a structure that can be compared to the structure of many books. Talking through a writing piece also allows students to hear how a teacher is thinking about writing.**

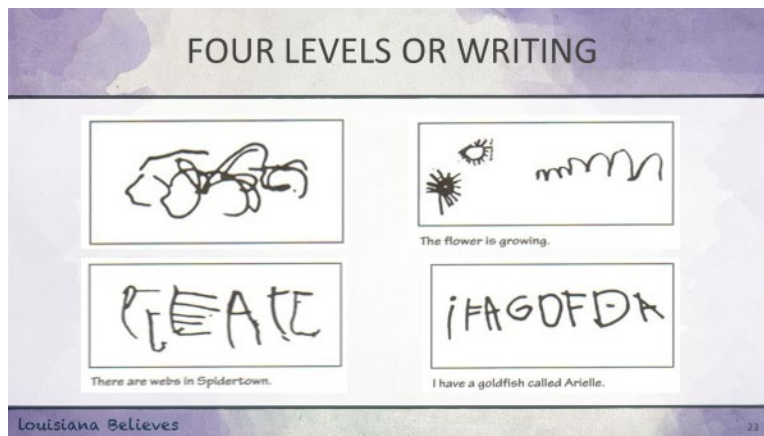




Please take out the student writing samples you were asked to bring to this session.

*Distribute the Conventions of Writing Development Scale handout.*

*Divide participants into groups of three and invite them to share their student writing samples by identifying at what stage students are performing.*

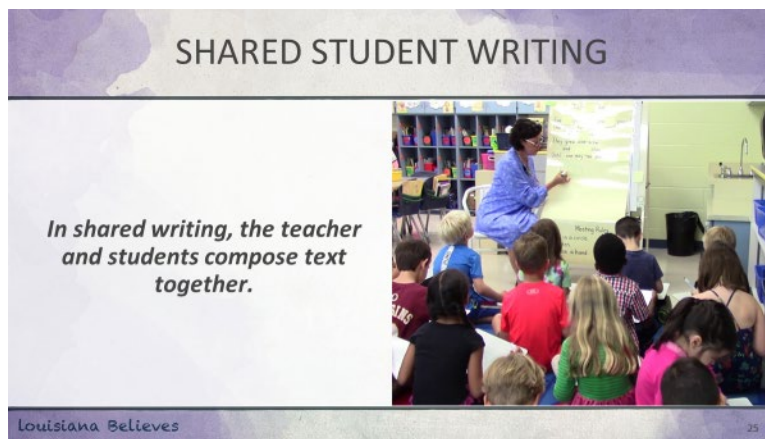


*Keep this slide up while participants are sharing writing samples for participants to use as a reference point for discussions.*

*Encourage discussion by inviting participants to compare student writing samples with the levels displayed on the screen. You may want to circulate among the groups to drop and listen.*



Now we are going to briefly examine a technique called “Shared Writing.”



McKenzie (1985) defined shared writing as a collaborative process between teacher and children in which they create a piece of writing together. The teacher supports the process acting as a kind of scribe who records what is said and facilitates ongoing discussion regarding the writing process.

In much the same way, children learn to speak to adults and engaging in “talk,” children also learn about written language through social interactions with adults in reading and writing contexts. The research of Teale and Sulzby (1986) supports McKenzie’s findings, emphasizing how talking through writing with children and collaborating with them as a piece of writing is created provides a powerful demonstration.

Shared writing is taught to small groups or a whole class in briskly-paced, 5-minute lessons.

**In shared writing, the teacher and students compose text together**, with both contributing their thoughts and ideas to the process, while the teacher acts as a scribe, writing the text as it is composed.

During shared writing, the teacher transcribes the entire text while engaging students in a rich discussion about how the text should be composed.



**Step 1:** Develop and extend children’s background and language knowledge on a topic or experience of interest.

**Step 2:** Establish a purpose for the writing.

**Step 3:** Write the entire text yourself in front of students while requesting input from students regarding aspects of the writing.

**Step 4:** Read the completed text to students.

**Step 1:** First, **develop and extend children’s background and language knowledge on a topic or shared experience of interest.** You could talk about the class pet, or a recent field trip, or lunch. The teacher should discuss this first.

For example, if it is the class pet, they should ask students to name the pet, discuss what kind of pet it is, describe the pet and so on by asking questions such as:

- What does it look like?
- What color is it?
- What does the pet usually do?

In this manner, everyone has background in the event or experience and can potentially contribute to the shared writing.

**Step 2: Establish a purpose for the writing** as an intellectually engaging opportunity for students to apply new learning. As teachers, we should state explicitly, a statement such as: “Today we are going to write a story our class pet.” Then, the teacher asks a question such as: “What kind of pet do we have and what is the pet’s name?”

**Step 3: Write the entire text yourself in front of students** (using chart paper or a document viewer) **while requesting input from students regarding aspects of the writing** where they can expand thinking. As the children respond, stating what kind of pet they have and the pet’s name, the teacher writes a sentence and reads it as they write each word, while the children observe.

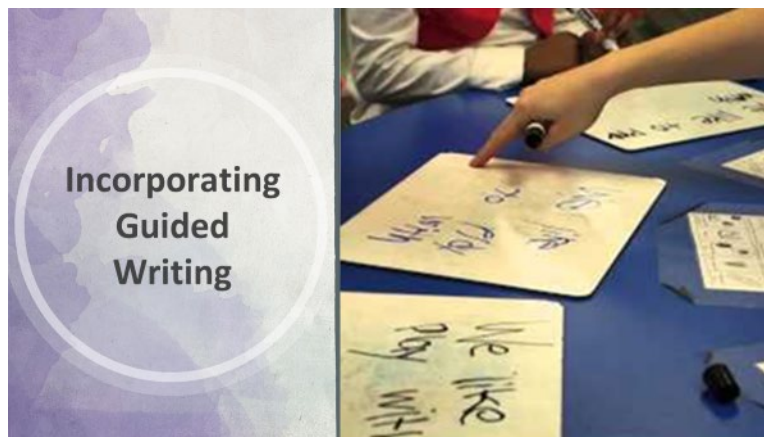
**Step 4: Read the completed text to students.** Once the text is written, the teacher reads the entire piece to the students.



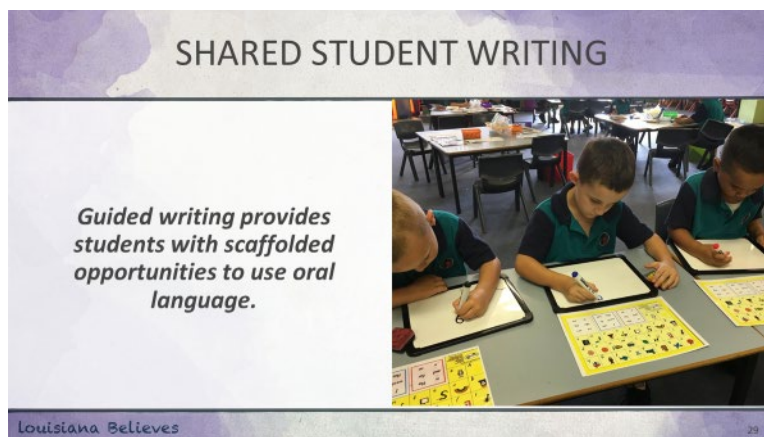
*Play the video linked on the slide. (Duration 5:24)*

*Video link: <https://youtu.be/o9nX2laB9q0>*

*Expand to full screen view so all participants can easily view the content.*



Now we will briefly examine guided writing.



**Guided writing** instruction provides students with scaffolded opportunities to use oral language conversation about a topic as direct support for their own writing. Students learn how to communicate information of interest, stimulated by discussion of a shared text.



**Step 1:** Brief discussion about a shared experience.

**Step 2:** Discussion of strategies behavior for writing.

**Step 3:** Provide time for students to write a new text each day with immediate teacher encouragement.

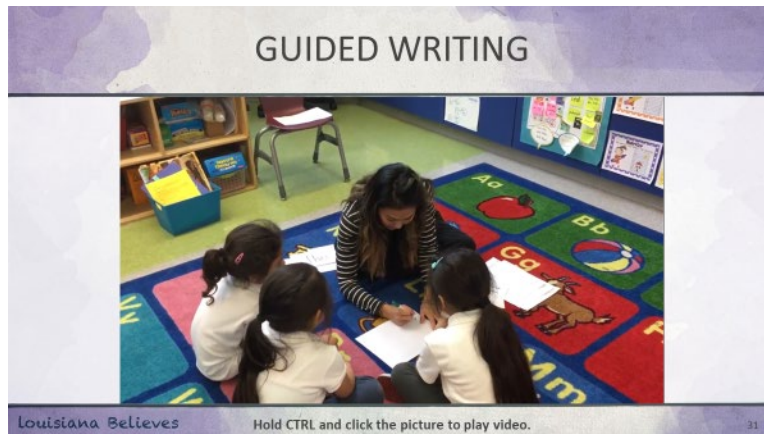
**Step 4:** Sharing.

**Step 1:** The first step is a **brief discussion about a shared experience**. Again, you are focusing on oral language as a starting point. Think about a shared experience all children in class have such as a recent guest to the center or school, or perhaps a favorite playground spot, or even a discussion about a class pet. The point is to discuss a shared experience prior to writing.

**Step 2:** The second step is a **discussion of strategic behavior for writing**. This corresponds to any management strategy you have used. For example, maybe you want everyone to write on their own paper without bothering a neighbor, or maybe you want everyone to focus on their favorite piece of play equipment. Whatever the shared experience, discuss it freely and encourage wide participation so that each of the children are engaged. Asking students to question a peer's response is another way to extend a discussion. For example, if one student states the slide is so high, ask another student if they think it is also high, or ask what else if that high.

**Step 3:** The third second involves establishing a set time **to write a new text each day with immediate teacher encouragement**. This means that writing daily is an activity that is teacher-directed instead of just a center option that happens within the classroom. At the beginning of a school year, this may happen every other day until children build what is called writing stamina, meaning they can write for an extended amount of time. Many teachers recognize that students thrive on a routine, so they set a certain part of a day as writing time.

**Step 4:** The last step is taking time to share writing. This does not mean that every child shares every day, but it means that sharing happens after each writing session. *Remind participants that sharing writing is teacher and the class's chance to celebrate writing.*



This is a kindergarten class, but still very appropriate in terms of pedagogy. *Encourage participants to jot down notes about what they are viewing, and to focus on what the adult is saying and doing.*

*Play the video linked on the slide. (Duration 2:05)*

*Video link: <https://youtu.be/X2FqAnFO7RQ>*

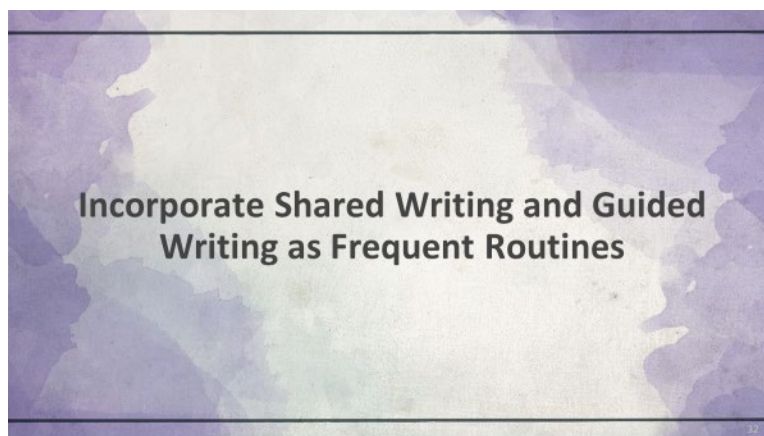
*Expand to full screen view so all participants can easily view the content.*

Did you notice that the teacher used writing development language, by the calling the three girls “authors?” *Pause to allow participants to respond.*

Let’s discuss what else she did. What else did you notice? *Move quickly through responses, thanking participants for answering.*

*Encourage participants to briefly share their thoughts on guided writing with a partner.*

*As participants discuss, distribute the Recoding Protocol handout.*





*Explain to participants that they should try to meet with each child once a week, more often if possible, for a writing conference. Use writing development language by referring to these meetings as “writing conferences.”*

*Refer to the Recording Protocol handout. Here is a tool you can use systematically keep track of student writing development progress. You can use it as-is, or you can modify the tool and children develop.*

Meeting with children systematically and recording their progress as writer is important to writing development. When you meet, children will share their latest piece of student writing and discuss it with you. The teacher records the date and any important information.

I am going to distribute two additional handouts that can be used to encourage young children to write, and to encourage independence.

*Distribute the Examples of Effective Writing Communication Prompts handout.*

This handout is Examples of Effective Writing Communication Prompts. These writing prompts can be used by teachers as either whole group or small group prompts to foster independence. These are phrases you can say to encourage writing development among young children.

*Distribute the Comprehensive List of Activities that can be Utilized During Stages of the Writing Process.*

This handout is the Comprehensive List of Activities that can be Utilized During Stages of Writing Process. This list contains suggested verbal, thinking, and writing activities that teachers can use when working through the steps of the writing process with young children. This is adapted from the work of Graves (1983), who suggested that if we use the writing process, children develop stronger writing skills.

We have adapted his five steps to just three, appropriate for young children. Note that prewriting is the first step. With young children, that involves talking, thinking, and possibly drawing. The second step is drafting, when students are actually writing. This could be shared writing, guided writing, or independent writing. The third and final step is shared writing. As stated earlier in the session, sharing writing should be an act of celebration.



*Ask participants to share their thoughts, ideas, questions, and comments, and record responses on chart paper.*

*Distribute the Before-During-After Read Aloud Teacher Prompts handout.*

***Trainer Note:** The handout addresses writing in response to reading. These are additional, specific prompts beyond the three posted questions that teachers can use to stimulate thinking and conversation when conducting a read aloud followed by writing in response to reading. These can be used with a whole group, a small group, or when reading one-on-one with young children.*

*Encourage participants to take two to three minutes to briefly skim over the handout. Then, have participants discuss the handout with a partner, as well as the efficacy of reading aloud to children. Each participant should estimate how many times per day they read aloud to their students.*

We are going to finish this module with examining how writing in response to reading aloud to children is a beneficial, developmental writing practice. We know that reading to children is one of the most powerful literacy practices we can implement in the early childhood classroom. Let us think for a minute about the benefits of reading to children.

When we read to children:

- We model language,
- We build vocabulary,
- We model fluent reading, including expression and intonation, or what literacy researchers call prosody,
- We both introduce and strengthen concept development,
- We provide them with a structure for writing, and that is conveyed in how books are typically organized and arranged.

Narrative or fiction books tell a story, so children who are read to on a regular basis understand that books have a beginning, a middle, and an ending structure, and that there is usually a problem, then a solution presented. We call this the plot.

Narrative books begin predictably. For example, as a group, please finish this phrase: “once upon a...” *Participants will likely say “time.”* Yes, the phrase is “once upon a time.”



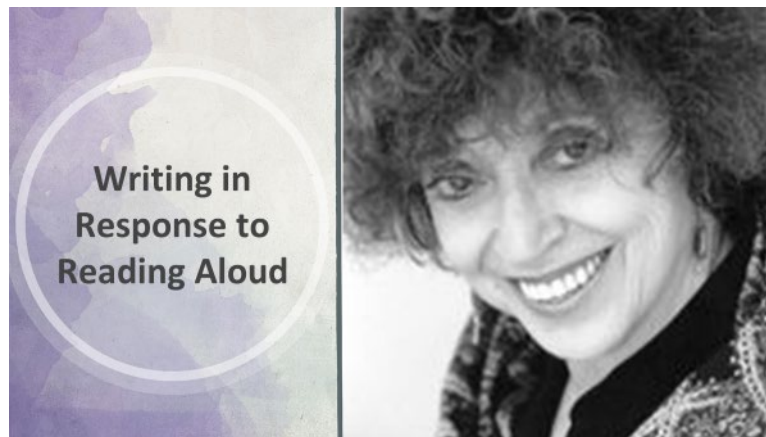
Here is another example. As a group, please finish this phrase: “long, long ago, and...” *Participants will likely say “far, far away.”* Yes, the phrase is “long, long ago and far, far away.”

How did you know that? Because you have read hundreds, if not thousands, of books and the beginning of the structure is predictable.

Narrative or fiction books typically end similarly. As an example, please finish this phrase as a group: “and everyone live...” *Participants will likely say “happily ever after.”* Yes, the phrase is “and everyone lived happily ever after.”

Informational, expository, or non-fiction text follows structures as well, but as educators, we tend to read these aloud less frequently. The text structure of informational texts also helps children to write about informational topics, and become more skilled as they have more read to them, and write in response to them. Typically, they are very descriptive. Description is the primary structure of informational texts.

Today, we will focus more on expository or informational text. We will delve into why it is such good literacy teaching practice to write in response to books.



Tana Hoban, who is pictured on the slide, is a photographer and children’s author whose work can be used to encourage writing in response to having an adult reading a book aloud to children. Her photographs have been exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and in galleries around the world. She has won many gold medals and prizes for her work as a photographer and filmmaker.

Earlier, we discussed the differences in kinds of books for children. From early childhood on, children will be fed a steady diet of narrative text. Concept and label books for young children are typically the kind or genre of book called expository text – they are informational texts that can expose children to concepts in their world.

Sometimes these kinds of books are actually wordless children’s books, sometimes they contain simple pictures with the picture labeled accurately. For example, a book about colors would have objects in the same color and perhaps, the name of the color, like red, on the page.

It is a sound practice to use both kinds of books with young children, both narrative “once-upon-a-time” books and informational or expository books.

Here is an idea that can encourage writing, while demonstrating the behaviors expected in school settings when being read aloud to as children while also introducing content. Tana Hoban photographed all kinds of content, in many cases shapes, concepts – such as opposites, colors, environmental print found in objects like street and building signs, and other forms of written language to which children have exposure.



*Orient participants back to kinds of books – narrative or fiction and informational or expository. Explain how informational books can be read to children, and then children can write about what they remember.*

*Demonstrate with a page or two from the first book.*

The following slides show three of Hoban’s books. The first is simply about colors. So, if you were to use such a book, again, referred to as a concept or label book, as you are reading it to children, they are building really important knowledge in two areas:

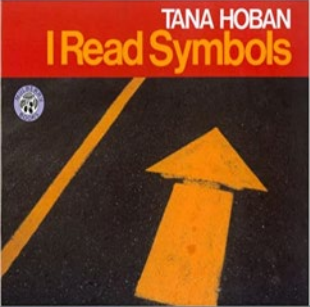
- The concept behind colors, and
- That books are something to be shared together, talked about, and written about.

You would read such a book to children, then, perhaps as a whole group, small group, or one-on-one, ask them to write about something they read. Whether the students scribble in red, drew an apple, or attempted to use letters to convey a message, all children would be internalizing writing.

If you were to do this as a regular or routine activity, your students would generate many writing samples. Every time you ask children to write, ask them to put their name on their paper. This is a simple writing skill they will use from where they are in their educational journey to adulthood. That is powerful writing in itself. Writing one’s name is often considered the first sign of writing literacy.

You could then quickly analyze what children are writing at what level – level one, scribbling at the emerging level, or level four, using letters at the semi-phonetic level. This would allow you to possible group children into groups for some targeted instruction.

**“I READ SYMBOLS”**



Louisiana Believes

- Introduces children to signs and symbols frequently seen along the highway
- How can we use this book to help students write in response to reading aloud?


37

Hoban’s next book is about symbols, all photographed from real life. Again, a book like this, a concept book, could be read and shared with children first. Then after reading, the teacher can ask children to write about what they remembered, liked, wondered about, or have seen from the book. The concepts behind symbols such as an arrow, is again, knowledge children will acquire and use for their entire lifetimes.

So, if you use a book like this, you are again, building knowledge while encouraging writing. Using the same procedure internalizes the process as well – read, discuss, write in response to the text.

**“SHAPES, SHAPES, SHAPES”**

- How many circles, squares, stars, triangles, hearts, and rectangles can you see?
- How can we use this book to help students write in response to reading aloud?



Louisiana Believes

38

Hoban’s third book is about shapes. Children love this book, and as you read and show pictures and discuss, you can note which children recognize which shapes and what children may need more exposure to the concepts of different shapes.

There are hundreds of children’s books. These are just some examples of developmentally appropriate books for young children who are developing language.

*Ask participants to take out the children’s book that they brought with them that they enjoy reading aloud to children.*

Reading to children is also a springboard to writing in response to literature. Writing in response to literature is a literacy skill that children will use throughout their academic careers from preschool through twelfth grade and beyond to post-secondary education.

Three simple questions can be used to extend reading a book aloud into writing in response to that reading:

- What happened in this book?
- What was your favorite part?
- What might happen next?

*Divide participants into groups of three. Each group member will share the children's book they brought in about one minute.*

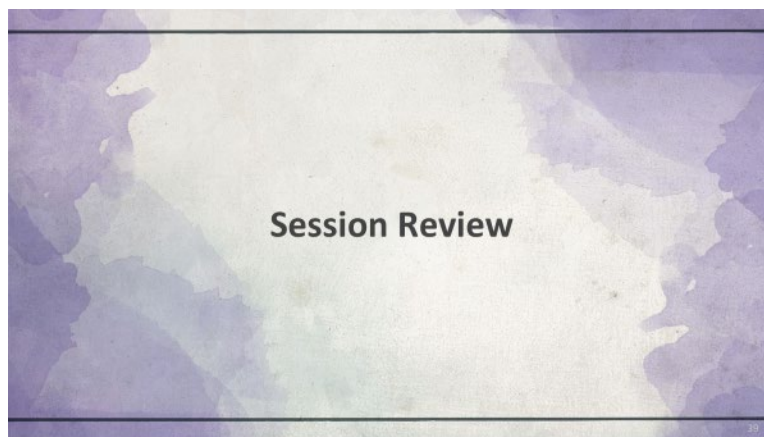
*While participants are discussing, post three separate sheets of chart paper and write each of the three following questions on the three sheets, one question per sheet:*

- *What happened in this book?*
- *What was your favorite part?*
- *What might happen next?*

Take your sticky notes and write the title of your book and author on it. Then, stick it to one of the questions on the chart where you feel it fits best. You should be asking yourself which books make good choices if you want students to write about:

- What happened in this book?
- What was your favorite part?
- What might happen next?

*As participants discuss, circulate among the groups to drop and listen as they discuss the merits of their book and how it is appropriate for writing. When time is up, explain that participants will receive an electronic copy of each question with attached books. With participant input, generate a list and record on chart paper, on the screen, etc..*



## REVIEW LEARNING OBJECTIVES

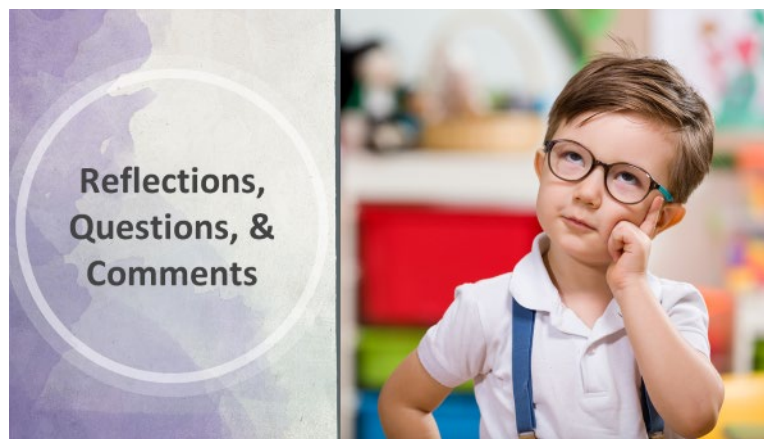
- Recognize the stages of writing development, and be able to assess how to help students advance to each subsequent stage
- Develop a general understanding of the writing process as a developmental process
- Identify appropriate strategies teachers can use to improve capacity in the teaching of writing
- Increase understanding of the types of classroom activities they should encourage to support improvements in both teaching writing and learning to write

Louisiana Believes 40

*Review Learning Objectives.*

*Explain that for each statement, they will show a “thumbs up” if they think we covered the objective, a “thumbs down” if we did not cover the objective, and a “sideways thumb” if we partially covered the objective.*

- **Recognize the stages of writing development, and be able to assess how to help students advance to each subsequent stage**
- **Develop a general understanding of the writing process as a developmental process**
- **Identify appropriate strategies teachers can use to improve capacity in the teaching of writing**
- **Increase understanding of the types of classroom activities they should encourage to support improvements in both teaching writing and learning to write**



*Open the floor for participants' comments and questions.*



That brings us to the end of our time. Thank you so much for your attention and hard work today.

I also have two post-activities for you. *Distribute the Children’s Books as Models to Teach Writing Skills handout and the Tips for Teachers of Young Children to Promote Writing as Frequency Activity in Early Childhood Classrooms handout.*

The first handout is an article called “Children’s Books as Models to Teach Writing Skills.” It is from the journal *Reading Teacher*. It is a very brief article, but is important in that it furthers the conversation about using children’s literature and reading aloud as a means to encourage writing. Please read it on your own time as a post-activity.

The second handout contains research that supports name writing and is intended as a post-activity as well. Name writing is important. Writing one’s name creates a sense of pride and accomplishment among young children. Being able to write your name builds confidence, and along with drawing, is considered the first kind of writing in which children engage. Attaching your name to what you create is really a lifelong skill. This slide highlights some easy ways teachers of young children can encourage name writing and ways teachers can explicitly promote writing through their actions.

Before you go, please complete the Post-Assessment Evaluation.

*Distribute the Post-Assessment Evaluation.*

When you have completed the evaluation, please fold it and leave it in the center of your table before you leave. I hope this has been valuable! If you have any additional questions, I will be available to talk further.

Thank you.

#### *Post-Assessment Evaluation Guidance*

- *Review the forms to identify the group’s responses*
- *Compare the results and identify the areas in which participants expressed greatest growth and the areas in which participants might still need support*
- *Share results with Louisiana DOE representative to inform local continuing professional development efforts*