

# Effective Practices in Writing Instruction at the Secondary Level

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# Getting Into the Room

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What does writing instruction currently look like in your classroom/school/district?

# For this session...

## Outcomes:

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- Know some of the concerns about teaching writing
- Know ways to improve students' writing skills
- Incorporate writing across the curriculum
- Be aware of ways to assess writing

## Agenda:

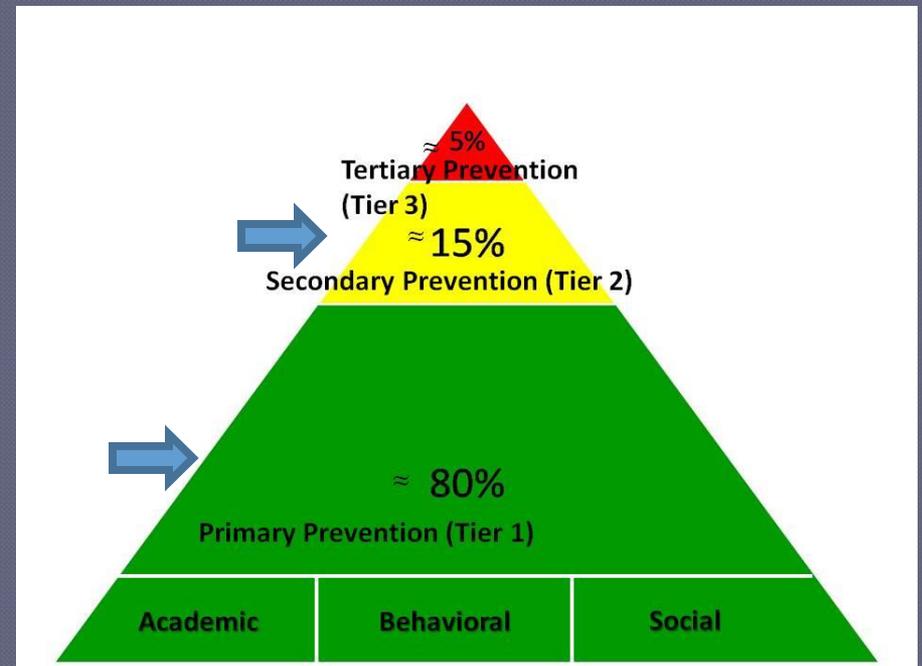
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- Identify concerns and ways to improve writing
- Examine various strategies for teaching writing
- Incorporating writing across the curriculum
- Investigate assessment tools and how the state scores them

# Organization for Today

- Summer Conference- Weebly has materials for today
- Twitter- #allmeansall16
- Parking Lot- post its on chart paper to capture questions.

- Notes Page



# Where are you in the implementation process?

Adapted from Fixsen & Blase, 2005

## Exploration & Adoption

- We think we know what we need so we are planning to move forward (evidence-based)

## Installation

- Let's make sure we're ready to implement (capacity infrastructure)

## Initial Implementation

- Let's give it a try & evaluate (demonstration)

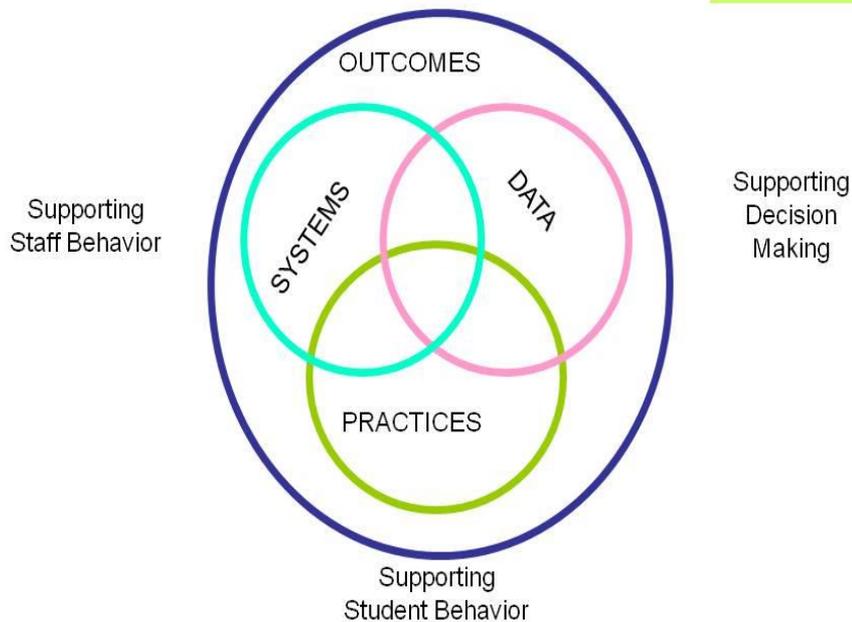
## Full Implementation

- That worked, let's do it for real and implement all tiers across all schools (investment)
- Let's make it our way of doing business & sustain implementation (institutionalized use)

# Evidence Based Practices

Supporting Social Competence &  
Academic Achievement

**SW PBS**



- Think about how this session fits into your implementation of CI3T.

# What Does the Research Tell Us about Writing Success?

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- Seventy percent of students in grades 4-12 are poor writers
- Poorly written applications doom candidates' chances for employment
- Many adolescents who can meet average reading demands have severe difficulty writing
- Writers formulate their own thoughts, organize them, and create a written record using the conventions of spelling and grammar

# Why Do All Teachers Need to Teach Reading and Writing

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- Reading and writing go hand in hand
- Practicing writing results in improved writing
- Through writing, students discover what they think and believe
- Writing helps the brain organize the information for storage in long-term memory
- When students summarize their knowledge, the teacher has greater insight into their understanding of concepts being taught
- Writing allows students to take greater responsibility for their own learning

# Why Do All Teachers Need to Teach Reading and Writing

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- Content area writing provides students with opportunities to become familiar with the application of writing in other fields of study
- Writing promotes reflective thinking and questioning, and enhances critical thinking
- Writing helps students make connections among events, people, and ideas

# Why Do All Teachers Need to Teach Reading and Writing

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- “Writing facilitates learning by helping students to explore, clarify, and think deeply about the ideas and concepts they encounter in reading.”  
(Richard Cacca)
- Writing helps students learn better because  
“Writing is thought on paper.” (*Neglected R*, 14)

# Top Concerns About the Teaching of Writing According to Kelly Gallagher

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- Students are not doing enough writing
- Writing is sometimes assigned rather than taught
- Struggling writers and English Language Learners are asked to write less than others
- Grammar instruction is ineffective or ignored

# Top Concerns About the Teaching of Writing According to Kelly Gallagher

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- Students are not given enough practice for timed writing instruction
- Some teachers have little or no knowledge of district and state writing standards
- Writing topics are often mandated without thought about student interest
- Teachers are doing too much work. Students are not doing enough

# Eleven Ways to Improve Students' Writing

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- ① 1. Teach strategies (effect size 0.82)
  - Explicitly and systematically teaching steps necessary for planning, revising and/or editing text
- ② 2. Teach summarization (effect size 0.82)
  - When students are taught and frequently practice distilling the essence of a piece of writing

# Eleven Ways to Improve Students' Writing

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- ③ 3. Have students write collaboratively (0.75)
  - When students work in pairs or small groups to plan, draft, revise, and edit their compositions
  
- ④ 4. Set Goals (0.70)
  - Telling students the purpose of writing assignments and assigning students specific, reachable goals for their writing

# Eleven Ways to Improve Students' Writing

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## ⑤. Use word processing (0.55)

- Allowing students to word-process their writing is helpful at every stage of the writing process. It is especially effective for struggling writers (0.70 for struggling writers)

## ⑥. Practice sentence-combining (0.55)

- Teaching students to construct more complex and sophisticated sentences from shorter, simpler material enhances the quality of writing

# Eleven Ways to Improve Students' Writing

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## 7. Use prewriting (0.32)

- Having students create a prewriting organizer before their first draft improves the quality of writing

## 8. Inquiry activities (0.32)

- “Involving students in writing activities designed to sharpen their inquiry skills improves the quality of their writing,” says the Carnegie Study.

# Eleven Ways to Improve Students' Writing

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## 9. Use process writing (0.32)

- “Emphasizing real audiences, extending opportunities for writing, and improving opportunities to self-reflect” are keys to improving writing

## 10. Look at exemplars (0.25)

- It helps students look at models of good writing in different genres and consciously emulate them in their own writing. But if students read exemplars quickly and superficially, it doesn't help. “Instead, students need to tear the examples apart until they can identify the specific tools the writers used to build the strong pieces of writing,” says the study

# Eleven Ways to Improve Students' Writing

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## 11. Write in the content areas (0.25)

- Writing in social studies, science, and math is helpful

# Guidelines to Teaching Writing Strategies

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- Select strategies that are used by readers and writers of the subject in real life.
- Strategies should be taught over time during the year
- Teach one strategy at a time
- Strategies need to be explicitly taught in the context of reading the content
- Each new strategy needs to be modeled and explained

# Guidelines to Teaching Writing Strategies

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- Supported, structured practice of each strategy needs to be provided (scaffolding)
- Plenty of individual practice must be provided for each strategy
- Students need to learn that reading and writing are highly personal because it is a reflective and internal process
- Strategies need to be taught and used throughout the school day in all content areas to show how they are effective in any subject

# Levels of Support

Level of Support	Writing
High	<b>Shared Writing:</b> Teacher guides and acts as scribe for students' group and individual compositions
	<b>Interactive Writing:</b> Teacher guides composition of a group text, inviting students to participate at various levels of text construction
	<b>Guided Writing:</b> Teacher provides support for individual students' writing
Low	<b>Independent Writing:</b> Students write independently

# Recommendations on Teaching Writing

<b>+ Increase</b>	<b>- Decrease</b>
+ Student ownership and responsibility	- Teacher control of decision-making
+ Writing whole pieces	- Isolated drills on “sub skills” - One-step assignments lacking context or purpose
+ Teacher modeling writing process	- Teacher never writes or shares own work
+ Learning in context	- Isolated lessons
+ Writing for a real audience	- Teacher as only audience
+ Classroom as supportive setting	- Devaluation of students’ ideas
+ Writing across the curriculum	- Writing taught only during “language arts”
+ Constructive and efficient evaluation	- Evaluation as negative burden

# Great Writing Strategies You Can Use in Your Classroom

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- Writing Breaks \_ Free Writing
- Pre-reading and Post-reading writing
- Exit Slips or Ticket Out the Door
- Admit Slips
- Priming the Pump
- Class Dictionary
- Sticky Note Reading
- Completion
- Lead Sentence

# More Great Writing Strategies You Can Use in Your Classroom

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- Non-Thought Warm-up
- Rewording
- Word bank
- Debriefing
- RAFT
- Writing Centers/Stations
  - Paragraph Sequence
  - Topic Sentence Match
  - Picture Prompt
  - Choose-a-Chart
  - Story Packets

# More Great Writing Strategies You Can Use in Your Classroom

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- What Bugs Me
- Partial-Choice Assignments for Persuasive Compositions: The Four-Sided Argument
- Free Response
- Pass-the-Reflection
- SDQR Chart
- Purpose Packets
- Writing a Summary “Burrito” Method of Writing a Topic Sentence

# More Great Writing Strategies You Can Use in Your Classroom

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- Find the Fib
- Pre-Writing Brainstorming
- Answering Chapter Questions
- Sentence Frames for Reflecting on Mathematical Thinking
- Color Writing Strips
- Probable Passages
- Open Response Questions
- Four Column Method for Answering Open-Ended Questions

# More Great Writing Strategies You Can Use in Your Classroom

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- Somebody Wanted But So (SWBS)
- One Sentence Summary
- Two-Column Notes
- Signal Words 5W's & H (Who, What, When, Where, Why, How)
  - Summarizing Strategy
- Combining One Sentence Summary and Signal Words

# Activity working with strategies

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1. Take a moment to review the writing strategies in your handout packet
1. Choose 2-3 strategies that resonate with you and could be used with students in your classroom/school/district
1. Share these strategies with a shoulder/table partner

# Let's Go Deeper: Matching strategies to 11 ways

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1. How might the strategies in your handout packet fit with the 11 ways to improve student writing?

For example, which strategies might fit with #2:  
Teaching Summarization?

# Key Words to Use in Your Writing Assignment

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Determine what you want your students to do and then use certain words in your prompt or question

<b>Desired Result</b>	<b>Key Word(s)</b>
analysis	analyze, examine, show how, explain why, in what ways
compare/contrast	compare, contrast, discuss, similarities and differences
description, definition, identification	tell about, identify, what is/are
evaluation	in your opinion, in your judgment, evaluate, pros and cons
explanation	discuss, explore, explain
summary	trace, summarize, outline

# Suggestions for Dealing with Writing Assignments

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- Relate the assignment to the big picture – the specific objectives of the assignment
- Make the format of the writing fit the purpose
- Note all aspects of the task clear – provide complete written instructions – specify the format you desire (documentation, headings, page setup. Etc.)

# Suggestions for Dealing with Writing Assignments

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- Break the assignment down into manageable steps (reading, researching, writing)
- Include grading criteria (rubric) on the assignment sheet \_ note specific skills that will contribute to the final product \_ discuss what constitutes strong, average, or weak papers

# More Suggestions for Dealing with Writing Assignments

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- If it is a write to learn assignment, you may not need to mark any grammatical mistakes because the writing is designed to be informal and flowing.
- For more formal work, try putting the responsibility for proofreading on the writer.

# Suggestions for Dealing with Writing Assignments - continued

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- Make students responsible for editing their own paper
- Use peer editing
- Consider most writing a work in progress
  - Too many critical comments are counter productive
  - Focus on one or two important areas for improvement determined by your own criteria for the assignment
- Make one or two positive comments about the writing assignment
- Use check sheets and rubrics so students can see quickly where their strengths and weaknesses are as writers for this particular assignment

# How to Motivate Students to Write

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- Do prewriting – use graphic organizers
- Share examples of good writing
- Write with your students
- Give students freedom to select topic – feel ownership – when possible
- Don't bleed all over the paper
- Practice, practice, practice, the more students write, the more fluent they become

# Writing Across the Curriculum

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## ● Math

- Create word problems and solve recording how you solved
- Write an essay on how math is used in everyday living
- Keep a journal that details what you know about math concepts; or store your weekly math reflections
- Describe math terms without using a dictionary
- Keep a vocabulary journal, or work with vocabulary words using Frayer model or kwl model

# Writing Across the Curriculum

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## ● Science

- Keep a science journal – citing your understanding of key concepts
- Write a lab report
- Create reports on articles or related television shows
- Prepare research papers
- Make a set of directions for using various lab equipment
- Develop a story using the point of view of a leaf, shark, seashell, or planet etc.

# Writing Across the Curriculum

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## ● Social Studies

- Consider a current event and write about it from two points of view
- Develop an argument for a debate
- Write about your community
- Summarize news stories
- Write an editorial or letter to an elected official
- Pretend to be a famous historical figure and write about your life
- Write an obituary for your favorite world leader
- Interview a person in your family from another decade and compare to the present
- Write reviews for songs about America

# Writing Across the Curriculum

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## ● For Any Class

- Classroom note taking
- Compile a list of tips for students coming from the preceding grade/class
- Keep notebooks or journals
- Use writing as a reflection or beginning of class focus – essential questions
- Thank you notes for speakers, teachers, administrators, parents, etc.

# Writing in Response to Reading

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- This is really about reading comprehension \_ only in WRITTEN form!
- Writing in response to reading helps students think critically about the material
- It helps them to make connections between what they are reading and other pieces of text or even their world
- It helps students process information presented in the text in different or unexpected ways

# Types of Prompts That May Be Used

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- If you were writing the next part of the story, what would happen?
- Complete a story map in your notebook, include the following:  
Character, Setting, Plot/Problem, Solution
- What text-to-world or text-to-text connections did you make while reading the story? Describe your connections in detail.

# Types of Prompts That May Be Used

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- If you were the author, how would you change the story?
- Compare this story to another story or movie.
- Predict what will happen next in the story. Support your prediction with parts in the story that led you to come to these conclusions.

# Technology

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- Intel site
- Publishing sites
- Google
  
- Other ideas?

# Assessment Tools

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## ◎ Checklists

- Students don't have to remember all the steps in assignment
- Save time
- Students know what is expected of them
- Help edit/revise own/peers assignment

# Assessment Tools - continued

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## ● Rubrics:

- Rubrics enable teachers to evaluate students' performance in situations that more closely replicate real life than an isolated test
- Rubrics also help teachers to focus their own attention to the key concepts and standards that the students must obtain
- Students know exactly what is expected of them
- Rubrics encourage students to think about their own thinking and possibly about their own criteria for what is "good"
- Parents appreciate the use of rubrics because they allow teachers to justify why a certain grade was assigned to his/her child
- Allows for more objective grading
- <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/>

## Wrap Up

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What are you going to Implement?

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