

# Structured Response

**Research Basis:** Structured response formats are instructional practices that can be incorporated into daily lessons and allow all students to participate productively (Heward, 2006). Carefully planned structured response routines can ensure that every student participates in a lesson, and that participation remains focused and on task. They also allow for immediate feedback to support correct answers and to address incorrect ones.

## Structured Response

**Purpose:** To support all students in participating actively in daily lessons.

### Choral Responses

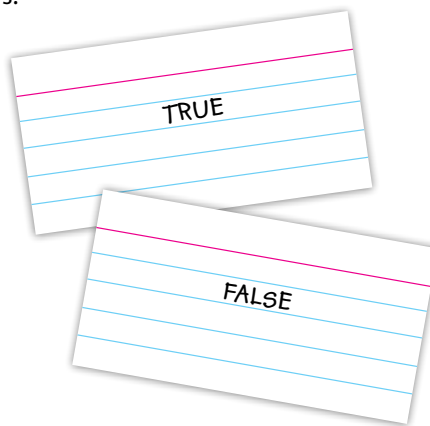
Choral responses allow students to join in on important academic words, expressions, or ideas. They allow the teacher to determine immediately which students understand a presentation.

- 1. Cue students in advance.** Use an established spoken cue (e.g., *Everybody; Look at me; Eyes up*) to focus students' attention.
- 2. Give a prompt or ask a question.** Use prompts or questions that can be answered with one or two words or an academic phrase.
- 3. Allow wait time.** Use a visual cue (e.g., holding up a hand as a "stop sign," then dropping it quickly) to provide wait time for students to think before they answer (and to keep some students from blurting out the answer). This use of wait time allows students to think about and form their answers and increases their confidence to join in class interactions.
- 4. Provide feedback.** Acknowledge correct responses. For example: *That's right. Good work, everyone!* If some students give the wrong answer or say nothing, provide immediate corrective feedback. For example: *The correct answer is \_\_\_\_\_. Let's all say that together.*

### Response Cards

Response cards can be used to ensure participation by every student. Response cards work best when the answer is short; for example, students are asked to change a verb in a sentence from present to past tense. Response cards can be index cards, small white boards, or small pieces of paper.

- 1. Use simple prompts.** Give students a prompt or ask them a question that can be answered with one or two words, *yes/no*, or *true/false*.
- 2. Allow wait time.** Tell students to think about their answers. Silently count to 5, then say: *Write your answer.*
- 3. Students display their cards.** After students have had time to write, say: *Hold up your cards.*
- 4. Give feedback.** Quickly check all of the cards and provide feedback, such as: *Good work! Almost everyone wrote true, which is the correct answer.* If some students give an incorrect answer, provide immediate corrective feedback, such as: *I see some of you wrote Sammy, which is the name of the main character in the passage. The correct answer is \_\_\_\_\_. Say it with me, \_\_\_\_\_.*
- 5. Continue with other prompts and questions.**



**Research:** Expert writers make many decisions as they write. Students may not understand all of the decisions involved. Interactive writing makes these decisions part of the conversation between teacher and students. It also demonstrates for students how expert writers think about word choice and constantly review to maintain syntax and meaning as they write (Fisher & Frey 2007).

## Writing Routine 5

### Reteaching Writing

**Purpose:** Use a collaborative composition to reteach a writing skill or trait.

- 1. Introduce the activity.** Provide a RAFT that allows for focused practice of the skill or trait being reviewed.
- 2. Review the skill.** Give a brief overview of the writing skill or trait. For example: *Writing has fluency when the sentences are varied. It also sounds natural when read aloud.*
- 3. Talk through the text.** Lead a discussion with students about how to word each sentence, and then support individual students as they write sentences on the board or chart paper. For example: *How will we begin? ... Good, Alana. Can you come up and write that for us?* Continue the discussion having different members of the class take turns writing.
- 4. Practice.** Use questions or prompts to help students practice the skill or trait as they write. For example: *Let's read the first two sentences we've written aloud. We want to vary our sentences so how should we begin the next sentence?... Good idea, Duwayne, let's start with an adverb... Can you come up and write the next sentence?*
- 5. Reread frequently.** Reread the entire message after each sentence is added. This will help students see how a skill or trait is being applied in each sentence.



**Research:** Most elementary students need continued support as they become independent writers. They are most successful when the teacher provides effective prompts, a collaborative context, and effective coaching (Fisher & Frey 2007).

## Writing Routine 4

### Independent Writing

**Purpose:** Provide support to help students achieve success as independent writers.

- 1. Provide appropriate writing prompts.** Make sure that writing prompts are motivating and appropriate. Prompts should:
  - Encourage a variety of responses
  - Allow for a range of writing abilities
  - Be appropriate for the writers' experiences
  - Include topics that interest students.
- 2. Use RAFTs.** Have students use the RAFT structure to make sure writing assignments have a clear purpose and authenticity. Students should understand their Role, Audience, Form, and Topic before they begin to write. Here is a sample RAFT:
  - Role:** A student who wants to clean up a vacant lot
  - Audience:** Neighbors who could help clean up the lot
  - Form:** An email message
  - Topic:** A gathering on Saturday to help clean up the lot
- 3. Support peer response.** Teach students how to be effective peer reviewers of each others' writing.
  - Use the language frames from the Writing Projects to scaffold conversation.
  - Have writers invite responses from peers, but don't compel them.
  - Encourage students to talk with each other as readers, not as critics. If something makes them laugh, or feel sad, or catches their interest, they should tell the writer so. If something isn't clear, they should tell that, too. However, details of word choice, organization, sentence structure, etc. are best dealt with in teacher-student conferences.
- 4. Conference.** Confer with students about their writing. Conferences should be short and focused. Include the following steps:
  - **Inquiry:** Ask about the topic, how the work is coming, and areas of difficulty.
  - **Decision:** Based on student responses, decide on the focus for the conference.
  - **Instruction:** Choose a point for teaching. This may be any of the writing traits, writer's craft, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. Refer to records of student performance on grammar, revising and editing, and spelling lessons and assessments. Writing Rubrics for conferences are provided in the Assessment section of each Teacher's Edition.
  - **Recording:** Record anecdotal notes of the conference for follow-up. Include next steps for the writer.



**Research:** Young writers need to spend time constructing sentences. Generative writing provides specific practice, discussion, and instruction about word relationships. This draws students' attention to several key features of effective writing, including vocabulary, syntax, and semantic meaning (Fearn & Farnan 2001, Fisher & Frey, 2007).

## Writing Routine 3

### Generative Writing

**Purpose:** Provide specific practice for structuring grammatically-correct sentences.

- 1. Provide a prompt.** Give students a directive about the position of a word or part of speech in a sentence. For example: *Write a sentence with the noun magma in the third position.*
- 2. Have students write.** Ask students to write their sentences and underline the word that addresses the prompt.
- 3. Respond to writing.** Check students' work. If the word is in the wrong position in the sentence, guide the writer to rework it to meet the prompt. If the word is used incorrectly in the sentence, reteach the grammar skill to help the writer understand the concept.
- 4. Provide additional prompts.** For further practice, give directives that have students use the same part of speech in different positions in different sentences.
- 5. Have students write independently.** Encourage students to use their generative sentences as the beginning of paragraphs they write independently.

*The bubbling magma exploded from the volcano.*



**Research:** Many students may not understand the process of recording their thoughts or conversation in writing. Modeled writing demonstrates the process of how language is represented in written form. Modeling the process often is effective in improving students' attitude towards writing as well as their writing skills (Fisher & Frey 2007). Modeled writing also helps deepen vocabulary, language, and concept development through frequent exposure to clear models and think-alouds.

## Writing Routine 2

### Modeled Writing

**Purpose:** Model the process of composing to help students learn the writing process, writing strategies and writer's craft.

- 1. Model thinking about the first sentence.** Think aloud as you decide what you will include in your first sentence.
- 2. Write the first sentence.** Read aloud what you have written.
- 3. Continue thinking aloud as you write.** Think aloud to model how you plan and write additional sentences.
- 4. Involve students.** Encourage students to help write additional sentences. Discuss their ideas with them, and add the new ideas to the writing as appropriate.

Think Aloud	Write
<i>I want to tell about some new puppies that were born last week. I'll write a news article to tell about the puppies. I'll begin by telling the most important facts.</i>	Last week, six new puppies were born on Davis Street.
<i>Next I'll tell what the puppies looked like.</i>	The puppies were brown and white and had soft fur. Their eyes were closed.
<i>What else do people want to know about the puppies?</i>	They were born under the porch of the Marino's house. Mrs. Marino fixed a bed for the puppies and their mother in the hall.

### Puppies Born

Last week, six new puppies were born on Davis Street. The puppies were brown and white and had soft fur. Their eyes were closed. They were born under the porch at the Marino's house. Mrs. Marino fixed a bed for the puppies and their mother in the hall. Mrs. Marino said she would look for new homes for the puppies in a few weeks.

# Writing

**Research:** Research shows that expert writers write longer strings of words before stopping to think than less skilled writers. Power writing practice helps students learn to get their words down on paper quickly. It also helps them overcome the tendency to stall before starting to write (Fisher & Frey 2007). While power writing can focus on any word or concept, this routine is most effective when key words and ideas relate to the topic or theme of a unit.

## Writing Routine 1

### Power Writing

**Purpose:** Develop students' writing fluency; provide an opportunity for students to record their progress in writing fluency.

- 1. Display a word or picture.** Choose a word or picture that will be motivating for students to write about. Invite them to think about the word or picture and what they know about the word or concept. Activate prior knowledge or experiences: *What do you think of when you hear/see \_\_\_\_\_?*
- 2. Set the timer.** The timer is usually set for one minute. In some cases you may want to vary the amount of time.
- 3. Have students write.** Ask students to write as much as they can, as well as they can in one minute.
- 4. Check work.** Have students check their spelling and grammar and circle any mistakes.
- 5. Count words.** Have students count the number of words they wrote and record the number on their papers.
- 6. Repeat the procedure.** If time allows, have students create more than one passage. Repeat steps 2–5 one or two times.
- 7. Record results.** Have students record their best result and create a writing fluency graph. Over time, the graph will show students' growth in fluency and help motivate their progress as writers.
- 8. Adjust the time.** To develop fluency further, vary the amount of writing time from 30 seconds to two minutes or more in separate Power Writing sessions.

