



Guided Drafting

*Composing Cohesive Essays
One Component at a Time*



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an Oklahoma Writing Project Presentation by L. Alicia Lacy

Whether fostering creativity and student buy-in with descriptive and narrative writing or promoting critical thinking with informative essays and arguments, middle-school teachers must scaffold their students through the writing process. This presentation focuses specifically on guiding young writers step-by-step through drafting essays – interspersing mini-lessons, writing time, and mini-conferences with peers and the teacher. Leave with ideas, inspiration, ready-to-use templates for multiple mini-conferences, and more.



Resources available online via OneDrive:

<https://tinyurl.com/lacyowp-guideddrafting>

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Presentation Objectives

During this presentation, participants will learn to:

- Create frequent opportunities for students to learn from each other through peer review and discussion during mini-lessons and mini-conferences during the drafting process.
- Embed time for independent practice between these bursts of collaborative learning.
- Differentiate instruction via “chunking” – a strategy touted by experts in adolescent brain research, special education, English language learning, and more.

OAS Correlations

The following Oklahoma Academic Standards are addressed through the activities and assignments discussed during this presentation:

- ELA 8.2.W.1: Students will apply components of a recursive writing process for multiple purposes to create a focused, organized, and coherent piece of writing.
- ELA 8.2.W.4: Students will edit and revise multiple drafts for organization, transitions to improve coherence and meaning, sentence variety, and use of consistent point of view.

The Writing Process

Writing is a process consisting of five dynamic stages: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. These stages are not a linear progression of steps; writers move in and out of them as needed in a recursive, cyclical manner.

- Prewriting: Generate and organize ideas
- Drafting: Put ideas into sentences and paragraphs (writer-centered)
- Revising: Add, delete, move, and replace text (reader-centered)
- Editing: Correct grammar, usage, and mechanics
- Publishing: Share with authentic audience

“Schools should not be run based solely on the biology of the brain. However, to ignore what we do know about the brain would be equally irresponsible. Brain-based education offers some direction for educators who want more purposeful, informed teaching. It offers the possibility of less hit or miss in the classroom.”

— Eric Jensen, former teacher and professor, trainer, keynote speaker, researcher, author of *Teaching with the Brain in Mind*

“Kids can listen only for a short time – probably 15 minutes max, maybe 20. And you’ve got to find innovative ways to change the psychological state of your learners about every 20 minutes: Get them up on their feet, change the environment using music, have them interact with each other.”

— Raleigh Philp, longtime teacher and trainer, author of *Engaging Tweens and Teens: A Brain-Compatible Approach to Reaching Middle and High School Students*

“By chunking, or breaking a task into manageable parts, it helps scaffold students into longer and more complex tasks. At the same time, careful chunking can help students learn to strategize their approach to academic tasks. This helps build executive function, the ability to intellectually structure and plan a series of behaviors, like writing a paper or completing a complex assignment.”

— Jerry Webster, special education expert with more than 20 years of classroom setting experience who writes for *ThoughtCo*.

Sentence Analysis

Directions: Number the sentences in your quick write and complete the chart below.

#	SENTENCE BEGINNINGS First five words of sentence	SENTENCE LENGTHS Total # words in sentence	What patterns do you notice in your sentence beginnings ?
1			What patterns do you notice in your sentence length ?
2			
3			
4			What patterns do you notice in your sentence structure ?
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

Bibliography

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Standen, Amy. "Understanding How Adolescents Think: An interview with Raleigh Philip, author of *Engaging 'Tweens and Teens*." *Edutopia*, George Lucas Educational Foundation, 1 Feb. 2007, www.edutopia.org/inside-teenage-brain.

Webster, Jerry. "Chunking: Breaking Tasks into Manageable Parts." *ThoughtCo*, 14 Jun. 2018, thoughtco.com/chunk-breaking-tasks-into-manageable-parts-3110858

The Oklahoma Writing Project, an affiliate of the National Writing Project, is a network of programs dedicated to improving the quality of composition instruction in elementary and secondary schools. The Oklahoma Writing Project is sponsored by the University of Oklahoma, the College of Education, the National Writing Project, the State Regents for Higher Education, and the State Department of Education.

If you are interested in scheduling professional development for your institution or district, contact Audra Plummer, Co-Director of Inservice, at owpcodirector@yahoo.com.

If you are interested in becoming a certified teacher consultant with the Oklahoma Writing Project, you must participate in the Invitational Summer Institute at the University of Oklahoma. For more information, visit the OWP Website at <http://www.ou.edu/education/centers-and-partnerships/owp> or inquire via email at owp@ou.edu.