Composition

The student will develop and apply the writing process to communicate in writing for a variety of purposes.

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Describe a Personal Experience

One stop on the road to literacy…

LEVEL 3
WC1

The Outcome

With assistance, the student will write a personal experience using correct punctuation and spelling.

Why Go There?

Explain to your student that a good writer communicates personal experiences with correct punctuation and spelling so that the reader's comprehension is not impaired.

How To Get There

Get your student writing with these activities:

Steps to Writing (pages 188-191)

Your Turn! (pages 192-193)

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Steps to Writing

Materials: pages 189-191

Directions:

Show your student the blank graphic organizer (page 189) and explain that it is used to record ideas for writing.

Show your student the sample graphic organizer (page 190) and discuss how the writer organized her information and wrote ideas without using complete sentences.

Ask your student to read the sample piece of writing (page 191). Compare the information on the graphic organizer to the final piece.

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Supporting Details:

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The Best Meal Ever

I was so excited when I learned that my husband had made us reservations at a steak house for our tenth wedding anniversary. My sister kept the kids so it was just the two of us.

My meal ended up being as special as the occasion. It started with my salad. It was crispy and fresh. It had salty bacon bits and great dressing which made it yummy. My steak was delicious, too. It was tender and cooked to a perfect medium rare. It melted in my mouth. The baked potato was warm and buttery. I added salt and pepper which made it even more delicious. My husband and I shared a large slice of chocolate cake. The filling was creamy and sweet. That was a great meal on our special day.

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Your Turn!

Materials: pages 189 and 193

Directions:

Give your student the blank graphic organizer (page 189). Brainstorm with your student a personal experience about which he wants to write. Topic ideas can be found on page 193.

Ask him to tell you about his experience, asking for more details where needed.

Instruct him to fill out the graphic organizer, giving assistance with organization. Tell your student that spelling on a graphic organizer is not important. What is important is to get ideas down.

Review it when he is done and encourage him to add additional details if necessary.

Have him write a rough copy of his story.

Have him read through the story with you, making note of content changes and spelling and punctuation corrections.

Finally, encourage your student to rewrite a clean copy.

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Topic Suggestions

∴ Choose a memorable event. Narrate the events to show readers why the event was so memorable.

∴ Choose an important "first" in your life. Explain why it is important to you.

∴ Think about the best meal you have ever eaten. Describe it so the reader sees why it was so good.

∴ Write about a personal goal you set and achieved. Why did you make that goal? How did you achieve it?

∴ Write about the best or worst job you ever had.

∴ Think of a friend who has been important to you. How did you meet this person? Why is this person important to you?

∴ Write about a dream you had that you haven't forgotten. Was it a good dream or a nightmare? Why do you think you still remember this dream?

∴ Write about a song that has personal meaning for you. What song did you choose? Why is it important to you?

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Write a Paragraph on an Assigned Topic

One stop on the road to literacy…

LEVEL 3
WC2

The Outcome

With assistance, the student will write a paragraph on an assigned topic, using a topic sentence and details.

Why Go There?

Explain to your student that a good writer uses topic sentences and details to organize information to make the meaning clear for the reader.

How To Get There

Materials: pages 195-196

Directions:

Assign your student a topic of interest to write about.

Invite your student to organize his information by using the graphic organizer on page 195. Refer to page 196 for topic suggestions.

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TOPIC

PARAGRAPH 1

MAIN IDEA

SUPPORTING DETAIL

SUPPORTING DETAIL

SUPPORTING DETAIL

PARAGRAPH 2

PARAGRAPH 3

PARAGRAPH 4

PARAGRAPH 5

PARAGRAPH 6

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Topic Suggestions

- What are some good qualities you look for in a boss? Give specific details and examples.

- Do you think teenagers should work while they are in school? Support your opinions with details and examples.

- Do you think children watch too much TV? Support your opinions with details and examples.

- In order to raise test scores, do you think schools should cut out physical education, art, and music to concentrate on reading, writing, and math? Support your opinions with details and examples.

- Do you think talk show hosts go too far? Support your opinions with details and examples.

- Do you think the media pays too much attention to the personal lives of famous people? Support your opinions with details and examples.

- Do you prefer to eat at home or eat in restaurants? Support your opinions with details and examples.

For more topics and ideas for writing better, check out these websites:

www.writersdigest.com
www.thewritesource.com

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Compose a Formal Letter

One stop on the road to literacy…

LEVEL 3
WC3

The Outcome

With assistance, the student will compose a correctly punctuated and constructed formal letter.

Why Go There?

Explain to your student that a good writer knows how to write a formal letter. A properly written letter gives a good impression of the writer.

How To Get There

Materials: pages 198-199

Directions:

Assign your student to write a formal letter for an authentic purpose. For example, if your student's goal is to get a better job, invite him to write a formal letter of inquiry to a prospective employee.

Show her the format (page 198).

Then show her the sample letter.

Invite her to write her letter following the same format.

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[Your address]

[Receiver's name]
[Receiver's title, if applicable]
[Organization name, if applicable]
[Receiver's address]

Today's Date [Day Month Year, ex. March 24, 2008]

Dear Sir or Madam [or use the person's name and title if you know it],

The first paragraph should state the reason for your letter. This paragraph should be short.

The rest of the letter should contain more detailed information about your question, complaint, or request. The middle paragraphs may be longer, however, don't make the letter longer than necessary.

The last paragraph should tell the receiver what you would like them to do, for example, send you more information or answer your question. This paragraph should also be short.

Sincerely,

[your signature]

[your typed name]

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Jane Doe
123 Pine Street
Greensboro, NC 27408

John Smith
Volunteer Coordinator
Reading Connections
122 N. Elm Street, Ste. 520
Greensboro, NC 27401

March 24, 2008

Dear Mr. Smith,

I noticed your advertisement asking for volunteers in the Daily Record last week. I know a little bit about Reading Connections and would like to volunteer as a tutor.

I am a retired high school teacher and could use my teaching experience to work with students at Reading Connections. I love meeting new people and using my skills even though I am retired.

I would appreciate receiving more information about your program, including upcoming dates for tutor training. Please send the information to the enclosed address. You may also contact me by phone at (336) 555-5555. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Jane Doe
Jane Doe

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Combine Simple Sentences

One stop on the road to literacy…

LEVEL 3
WC4

The Outcome

The student will combine simple sentences using commas and conjunctions to form complex sentences.

Why Go There?

Explain to your student that a good writer uses varied sentences to keep the reader's interest.

How To Get There

Materials: page 201

Directions:

Explain to your student that one way to make her writing more interesting is to vary sentences. This is done by combining simple sentences (one subject and one verb) into complex sentences (two or more subjects and verbs) by adding a conjunction (*and, or, but, for, yet,* and *so*).

Complete page 201 together.

Then encourage her to apply the skill to other writing assignments.

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Complex Sentences

Combine the sentences below by using commas and conjunctions. Some conjunctions are *and, or, but, for, yet,* and *so*. The first one is done for you.

1. I laughed at the girl who had fallen. I didn't feel good about laughing at her.
I laughed at the girl who had fallen, yet I didn't feel good about it.

2. The birthday party went off without a hitch. Everyone had a good time at the party.

3. My aunt Mildred wasn't feeling well. I took Aunt Mildred some hot soup.

4. Nobody wanted to give their speech first. I gathered up my courage. I raised my hand.

5. It looked like a terrible car accident. We went up to the car. No one was hurt.

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Record Thoughts in a Journal

One stop on the road to literacy…

LEVEL 3
WC5

The Outcome

The student will record thoughts, experiences, and reminders in a journal.

Why Go There?

Explain to him that journals are records kept on a regular basis. They can be shared between tutor and student or they can remain private.

Why journal?

- to link writing and learning in all areas
- to increase reading skills
- to model good writing skills

Keep in mind…

- Journals are not finished products. They shouldn't be graded or corrected. If you see consistent errors, make a note to yourself to teach those skills in the future but do not point them out to your student.
- Allow your student choice in writing topics.
- Encourage your student to reread his journals.
- Celebrate progress.

How To Get There

Materials: journaling notebook, page 203

Directions:

Explain journaling to your student. Share page 203 for a description of different types of journals.

Invite your student to select a type of journal and assist him with getting started.

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☙ Dialogue Journals

These are private, written conversations between tutor and student. This is an excellent opportunity for the tutor to model good writing.

☙ Learning Logs

These records can be used in any subject being studied. Students keep a log on what they are learning, how they are learning, and what other topics they want to learn. It's the place for questions, observations, lists, etc.

☙ Reader Response Journals

Journals of this type provide a means for students to respond to books they are reading.

☙ Writer's Notebook

This notebook is for storing ideas and thoughts about what to write.

☙ Themed Journals

Themed journals are thoughts and ideas based on a topic, such as:

- My Book of Lists
- My Goals (And How I Plan To ReachThem!)
- Good Things
- What's Important to Me
- Spiritual Strength
- Important Information
- My Family

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Use Word Processing Tools on the Computer

One stop on the road to literacy…

LEVEL 3
WC6

The Outcome

The student will use word processing tools when composing on the computer.

Why Go There?

Explain to your student that when a good writer composes on the computer, she uses computer tools to aid the writing process. Also, explain to your student that she may want to use a computer to create a resume or cover letter, or fill out a job application.

How To Get There

Teach the following basic computer skills:

Using Microsoft Word (2000, 2003, 2007)

- Creating a document
- Saving a document
- Using functions such as cut/paste
- Using the spelling and grammar check features
- Inserting a header and footer
- Using other Microsoft programs such as Power Point and Excel

Using the Internet:

- Surfing the Internet
- Using a search engine
- Setting up an e-mail account
- Sending and receiving e-mail
- E-mail etiquette

Some simple tutorials on these subjects are offered by GCF Learn Free and are found at www.gclearnfree.org.

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