USING SELF-REGULATED STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT TO TEACH MIDDLE SCHOOL WRITING

by

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A capstone project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Teaching

Hamline University
Saint Paul, Minnesota
December, 2018

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For my capstone project, I created a series of lesson plans designed to teach expository essay writing to middle school students. At the end of this lesson series, students produce a five paragraph essay that answers the prompt: Tell me three things people might not know about you. This capstone project sought to answer the question: *How can the teaching of self-regulated skills be integrated into lessons focused on developing the expository writing of middle school students?*

These lessons were based, in part, on self-regulated strategy development, which is a framework that pairs deliberate, explicit academic instruction with components designed to increase the motivation, confidence, and positivity of students who struggle with writing (Harris, Graham, Mason, & Friedlander, 2008). For example, an SRSD approach might include using a specific academic strategy alongside the creation of self-instructions designed to push students past initial stages of frustration.

For my project, I utilized the SRSD six stage instructional framework: Develop Background Information, Discuss It, Model It, Memorize It, Support It, Independent Performance (Harris, Graham, Mason, & Friedlander, 2008). My lessons also incorporated the use of SRSD self-regulation techniques, such as modelling how to work through academic frustration (Harris, Graham, Mason, & Friedlander, 2008). Finally, the lessons were informed by what I have learned, through my review of current literature, about the academic, social, and emotional developmental needs of adolescents.

All lessons worked toward the Common Core State Standard 7.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content (The NGA Center/CCSSO, 2010). The
end goal of these lessons was to scaffold students toward the creation of a five paragraph expository essay.

My project was created for use in my 7th grade English classroom. My classes typically consist of 28-34 students, and they are a mix of gifted, general education, and special education students. I typically teach one honors English class (primarily gifted students), three regular English classes (mix of general education, special education, and gifted students), and two Extended English courses (a remedial reading course for non-special education, non-English learner students who test below grade level on standardized assessments).

I intend to use my project in my three sections of regular English. Extended English is a supplementary class, meaning that Extended English students also are enrolled in a regular English class. Therefore, if needed, I could also use SRSD with my Extended English students if they required more support. This past year, in total, I had twenty-four special education students in my classroom, including students with general learning disabilities (LD), emotional behavioral disorder (EBD), and autism spectrum disorder (ASD). My classes are forty-six minutes long.

My target audience for this capstone project was my professional learning community, or PLC, which consists of the two other English teachers at my school who also teach 7th grade English. The purpose of a PLC is to investigate and analyze data to make our teaching practices stronger, so my PLC is the ideal place to implement and analyze the results of using this strategy. Provided we see success implementing the strategy in our English classes (for example, noting that our students exhibit less reluctance to tackle a writing task), my target audience might expand to include teachers of other subject matters, who could help develop and use the self-regulatory skills in their own classes as well. In particular, social studies teachers might also
benefit from using SRSD in their classes, given the amount of writing their students tend to complete.
Table 1

**Scope and Sequence of Lesson Plans**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>SRSD Phase</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SWBAT = Students will be able to...</td>
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<tr>
<td>Day 1</td>
<td>*Discuss their own relationship with writing&lt;br&gt;*Discuss the relevance of writing skills in today’s world&lt;br&gt;*Begin learning the writing strategies POW + TREE</td>
<td>Developing Background Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day 2</td>
<td>*Begin memorizing POW+ TRE&lt;br&gt;*Analyze several expository essays looking for parts</td>
<td>Developing Background Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day 3</td>
<td>*Understand and discuss the essay prompt&lt;br&gt;*Analyze example writing based on essay prompt</td>
<td>Discuss It</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day 4</td>
<td>*Review and memorize POW + TREE&lt;br&gt;*Observe, analyze, and discuss teacher modelling of the strategy&lt;br&gt;*Begin coming up with their own self-reinforcements.</td>
<td>Model It / Memorize It</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day 5</td>
<td>*Brainstorm ideas for their own essays&lt;br&gt;*Practice using their individual self-reinforcements&lt;br&gt;*Complete a graphic organizer based on their own ideas and the POW + TREE strategy</td>
<td>Support It</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day 6</td>
<td>*Observe, analyze, and discuss teacher modelling of using the graphic organizer to begin writing&lt;br&gt;*Begin writing their essays using their self-reinforcements and graphic organizers, utilizing teacher support as needed</td>
<td>Support It</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day 7 &amp; moving forward</td>
<td>*Practice and review skills with a variety of writing assignments throughout the year&lt;br&gt;*Decrease scaffolding and support as needed</td>
<td>Independent Performance</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Lesson: Day 1

**Standard 7.7.2.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information

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<tr>
<td>*SWBAT discuss their own relationships with writing.</td>
<td>Developing Background Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*SWBAT discuss the relevance of being able to write well.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*SWBAT begin to learn the strategies POW + TREE.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Materials:**

- Digital class copy of sections of *Coming into Language* by Jimmy Santiago Baca (1991) (to be projected on a SmartBoard or similar device for class viewing)
- Student copies of POW + TREE Handout for distribution

**Procedures:**

1. Begin by asking students to discuss with their partners (Think-Pair-Share) the following two questions:
   - Why it is important to learn how to write well? In other words, where and when will you use writing skills in your life?

2. After each question, encourage volunteers to share with the class. Make a list on the board of reasons students should learn how to write well. Be sure the list includes high school, college, applications, resumes, emails, etc.

   - Highlight Baca’s life story, and how he credits language with giving him power and voice in a way he never felt before.
   - Discuss ways that students too have more power and voice because of their ability to read and write (Ex: writing to the principal to change a school policy, writing to a legislator to protest an unfair law, understanding the news and what’s going on in the world, etc.)

4. Give each student a POW + TREE Mnemonic Chart for their binders.
   - Explain each part of the mnemonic. Explain that the TREE Mnemonic is meant to help students remember all of the parts that go into a quality body paragraph.
○ The end goal is that students will write a 5 paragraph essay, including 3 of these body paragraphs. The other two paragraphs will be an introduction and a conclusion.

5. Have students work with their partners to practice with the mnemonics:
   ○ POW: Have students practice coming up with ideas to answer the following prompts. Ask students to aim for three ideas per prompt. They can share orally with their partners:
     ■ Describe a family celebration that has special meaning for you. (For example, Christmas is special to my family because 1) We cook a specific meal, 2) I see relatives I do not normally see, and 3) I get to open presents.)
     ■ Describe a sport you like and why you like it.
     ■ Explain how different modern life would be without computers. (Prompts from Learning Express Writing Team, 2003).
   ○ Students can spend remaining class time working with their partner to begin memorizing the parts of POW + TREE and what the acronyms stand for. They will need to have these mnemonics memorized later in the week.
POW + TREE Mnemonic Chart

**POW**

**P**ick my idea.

**O**rganize my notes.

**W**rite and say more.

**TREE**

**T**opic Sentence

Tell what you believe! Why do I believe this?

**R**easons (3 or more)

Will my readers believe this?

**E**xplain Reasons

Say more about each reason.

**E**nding

Wrap it up right!
Lesson: Day 2

**Standard 7.7.2.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*SWBAT continue discussing &amp; work toward memorizing the writing strategies POW + TREE. *SWBAT analyze several expository essays looking for parts.</td>
<td>Developing Background Knowledge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Materials:**
- Extra copies of POW + TREE Handout, for absent students or students who lost their copy.
- Copies of Example 1, Example 2, Example 3, and Example 4 for each student (on paper or digitally)
- Digital copies of all 4 Examples to be projected on SmartBoard

**Procedures:**

1. Students complete a Think-Pair Share:
   - What do the mnemonics POW + TREE stand for?
   - When do we use these mnemonics?

   Work as class until the students have successfully pieced together the meaning. Have students then get out their POW + TREE Handout.

2. Explain that, today, students will be looking at example essays and determining whether or not all essay parts are included.
   - **Class Example:** Project Example 1 on the SmartBoard. Read the example aloud. Students should also have the example in front of them.
     - Identify the thesis statement (from previous review lesson). Identify the topic sentence, reasons, explanations, and ending sentence (TREE) for each body paragraph. Be sure to note the conclusion paragraph, even though they are not working with that one.
     - Have students highlight or mark the text to distinguish the parts from each other. Determine whether all necessary parts are in the essay.
     - Ask students where or how the author could have made the essay stronger.
   - **Partner Example:** Students should work to identify and mark the thesis statement, as well as the topic sentence, reasons, explanations, and ending sentence for each body paragraph in Example 2.
   - **Partner Example:** Do the same with Example 3
○ **Individual Example:** Time permitting, have students analyze and mark-up Example 4 individually.

**NOTE:** Following each partner or individual analysis, have a class discussion and demonstration to be sure students are correctly identifying the parts.

3. Any extra time can be used to review the POW + TREE mnemonic. Explain that students will need to have this mnemonic memorized in two days.
Example 1

Imagine walking into a classroom full of four year olds. You see a mountain of glitter on the floor, more glitter flying at your face like you’re in a sparkly snowstorm, and the little boy in the blue shirt is eating it like fun dip! You may be wondering, “When would that ever happen?” Unfortunately, that happened to me just last Sunday. Three things people might not know about me are I teach kids how to read and write Hebrew, I was born in Hungary, and I love playing volleyball.

First, I volunteer at Sunday school and teach four and five-year-olds how to read and write Hebrew. I can’t say that I haven’t walked in and seen them eating the glitter that was meant for our macaroni art project, but I can say it’s a lot of fun. The more I hang out with kindergarteners, the more I realize how boring teenagers are. I also tutor them individually, that way I can focus on each kid and make sure the glitter stays away. I volunteer for about three hours on Sundays, and it's often the best time of my week.

Next, I was born in the small country of Hungary. Both my parents were born in Hungary too. I can also speak partial Hungarian( like basic sentences). Mostly my entire family lives in Hungary so it's very helpful to be able to speak Hungarian. Reading is a bit more of a struggle as it's hard to constantly switch between English and Hungarian. I’m glad to have this experience, since it’s cool to be able to understand a different language.

Finally, I love playing volleyball. Volleyball is a very fun sport to play; watching it is boring, but playing volleyball is fun. The rush of hitting the ball over the net is amazing; it makes you have more confidence. It is also a fairly easy sport to learn how to play. Learning the basics(sets and bumps) is not that difficult or hard to do once you get the hang of it.

In summary, I have shared that I teach kids how to read and write Hebrew, I was born in Hungary, and I love playing volleyball. I wouldn't trade these three things for anything in the world. I’m glad that my classmates will now know a little bit more about me!
Example 2

Have you ever had to go or move to a place you did not want to go? Well that happened to me a few years back. I came home and saw my family's clothes packed. At that moment I knew I was moving.

First, people don't know that I've lived in Chicago, IL. I lived there for about one in a half years but I go there a lot currently and before I moved. My favorite color back then was green. Moving was a huge change. The people were a bit different but school was really different. My school called South Loop was behind in teaching. When I got here, I had a hard time keeping up. I think I'm getting the hang of it now though.

In addition, I am a huge pet lover. I have had a total of 9 pets in my life. I have had 2 fish that died of age, 1 bird that flew away, 1 bunny that also died of age, 4 baby bunnies that couldn't survive without their mother, and now we have a cat. It took me years to convince my mom to get me a cat and finally she got fed up of my complains and got me one. My brother (who is 21 years old) moved out for 2 years and he has 3 cats and a lizard; I think this is totally unfair!

Finally, I love the sport of basketball. Being able to run up and down the court dribbling, shooting, and passing to my friends is a lot of fun. The pressure of trying to make quick decisions is nerve-wracking and exciting at the same time. I also love traveling to different cities with my team; it is always so exciting when we get to do other activities outside of basketball together. Basketball is definitely my favorite sport.

Three things people may not know about me is that I've lived in Chicago, I am a huge pet lover, and I love playing basketball. THE END!!!
Example 3

Do you like going outside? I don’t. Three things people might not know about me are that I am a Marvel fan, my life goals, and that I don’t really like being outside.

First something not many people may know are some of my life goals and why. The first one would probably have to be to stop thinking so negative, because I think it'll make a big difference. Another life goal would be to stop being so insecure about myself. This would most likely be the hardest one for maybe reasons. I think too much about it and what other people think other then would I think. I would really like this to happen so I can feel better about myself and not so stressed all the time.

Also, I am a Marvel fan! I have to admit, I am a nerd! Especially when it comes to Marvel or superheros. My dad grew up being a nerd, so I guess I take it from him. I am pretty sure I even like Marvel more than my two little brothers, and they like Marvel a lot! The way I got into Marvel was when we watched “Guardians of the Galaxy” as a family. After I saw that, I told my dad that I want to see all the new Marvel movies with him. Recently, I saw “Thor Ragnarok” with my family, and it was AWESOME!!! I love Marvel!

Finally, people might not know that I don’t really like going outside. I’m more of an indoor person than an outdoor person. When my brother and I go outside, my brother always wants to play catch. But whenever I have to throw the ball, I would hit my brother in the face or someplace random on his body. I really don’t like to play sports. I prefer staying inside just listening to music or playing computer games.

In summary, I have life goals, I am a Marvel fan, and I don’t like going outside. I might change more as I get older, but I think these things will stay the same. When we get to know each other a little bit better, everyone’s lives might improve.
Example 4

“Don’t judge a book by the chapter you walked in on.” People don’t know much about me especially these three things. If you didn’t know, I like writing, I have lots of hobbies, and Christmas is my favorite holiday.

First, I absolutely enjoy writing, yes I love writing. I can write for hours even though my hand gets tired and I run out of ideas on what to write. Writing helps with my feelings. I have a writing journal where I just write whatever I feel. Even though my hand tends to hurt writing is a way to express myself. This will sound dumb but writing makes me feel safe. My thoughts and I alone.

Second, some of my hobbies. One of my hobbies is mountain biking. One time I did a 25 mile race with my dad and I thought it was going to be easy! Boy was I wrong. I wanted to puke halfway through, but with some encouragement I powered through and also managed to place 33 place out of 100 people! I thought that was pretty cool. Another one of my hobbies is painting, just after finishing one of my biggest paintings yet I reach out to stretch and “bump” and I watch as the white paint flows all over the painting because I had forgotten to close it. I had to paint most of it again, goes to show that you shouldn’t celebrate too quick!

Last, but not least, Christmas is my favorite holiday. Christmas is my favorite holiday because you get a bunch of presents. Last year I got a TV for christmas. Most of the times we’ve celebrated christmas is when we have family get togethers at multiple house if not then one. Last year we went to are grandpa & grandma’s for a family get together.

In conclusion, I love to write, I have lots of hobbies, and Christmas is my favorite holiday. I’m really excited to share these things about me with my readers. I hope you have stuff you like to do too!
Lesson: Day 3

Standard 7.7.2.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
   a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*SWBAT understand and discuss the essay prompt.</td>
<td>Discuss It</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*SWBAT analyze example writing based on essay prompt.</td>
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Materials:

- Humans of New York Handout
  *Note: This handout can be created by going to [http://www.humansofnewyork.com/](http://www.humansofnewyork.com/) and selecting different profiles for students to read. These profiles typically consist of a picture and a brief reflection on life detailed by that person. As a middle school teacher, I am discerning with the stories I put on my handout, as some stories are more raw and emotional than I am comfortable showing my students. I try to select a variety of stories, ones that I think my students will connect with, and I am sure to select a mix of child, teen, and adult profiles.
- Drawing Connections Handout
- Pre-organized groups, if necessary

Procedures:

1. Think-Pair-Share: Students should review the POW + TREE mnemonic. Ask if anyone has it memorized yet. Be excited and celebratory if anyone does have it memorized. They must have it memorized by tomorrow.

2. Explain that students will use POW + TREE in the next few days to create a 5 paragraph essay that responds to the prompt: *Tell me three things people might not know about you.* Suggest that writing can be a way of revealing parts of ourselves to the world. Today, students will read stories of people from the blog, Humans of New York. Alleviate student nerves by ensuring that, although some of the stories on the blog are personal, students will not be required to share anything overly personal in their own writing.

3. Pass out Humans of New York Handout & Drawing Connections Handout. In groups of four, students should:
   ○ Read through all of the profiles.
Based on similarities in life experiences they read about, groups should create categories on the Drawing Connections Handout to organize the profiles and stories. For example, one category could be Parents were absent during childhood.

Groups should be prepared to share at least one category with the class.

4. Bring the class back together. Ask for each group to share one category with the class. Write the categories up on the board.

5. Think-Pair-Share with partner:
   ○ Which story resonates with you most?
   ○ Explain that resonating doesn’t have to mean you had the same life experience. It could just be a story that really made you think, feel, etc. Scroll through the Humans of New York stories, asking students to raise their hand when you say the one that they resonated with most.

6. Draw a connection once again between the activity and the writing piece students will be completing: Tell me three things people might not know about you. Once again, student samples do not need to be overly personal.

7. For remaining class time, students should continue memorizing POW + TREE. These should be memorized for tomorrow’s class.
Group Member Names: ______________________________

**Directions:** Read and examine the profiles given to you. Analyze the profiles to search for similarities between people. Then, group people together based on similar life experiences. List the categories and the people below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category #1</th>
<th>Category #2</th>
<th>Category #3</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Category #4</th>
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Lesson: Day 4

Standard 7.7.2.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
   a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information
   b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples
   f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

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<tr>
<td>*SWBAT review and memorize POW + TREE.</td>
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<tr>
<td>*SWBAT observe, analyze, and discuss teacher modelling of the strategy.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>*SWBAT begin coming up with their own self-reinforcements.</td>
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Materials:
- Self-Reinforcement Sheet
- Digital POW + TREE Graphic Organizer to use on the SmartBoard

Procedures:

1. Begin by asking students to recite the memorized mnemonics POW + TREE. Have students do so in front of the class. Be celebratory. Insist that anyone who does not have it memorized do so tonight.

2. Explain that today, students will be watching the teacher model using POW + TREE to create her own essay. Students should watch and listen carefully. Ask students to pay close attention to what the teacher says and does when she gets stuck.

3. Get out POW + TREE Graphic Organizer. Use this to model planning your essay. Explain that students will receive this same graphic organizer tomorrow. See script for an example model.

4. After modelling, ask students to share the following with their partner:
   - What kind of things did I (the teacher) say to myself when I got stuck?
   - What was the most challenging part of writing my outline for me?
   - What do you think will be the most challenging part for you?

5. Ask students to think about times in life that are frustrating. Ask them to brainstorm strategies for what they do when they get frustrated. Share as a class. Make a list on the board. (For example, students might include: take a deep breath, count to 10, talk to a friend / family member, think and talk positively to myself, take a break, take a walk,
etc.) Explain that writing, like all academic tasks, can be frustrating, but working through the frustration is rewarding and grows us as humans and students.

6. Hand out Self-Reinforcements Sheet. Explain that students will be drafting helpful statements to themselves for each part of the writing process. Give examples. Students should then fill out the Self-Reinforcements sheet on their own.
Example Modelling Script

Self-talk that models self-regulation ideas and/or strategies are written in italics.

Okay. So the first thing I need to do is begin with POW. P- Pick my idea. This is sometimes the trickiest part. Have you guys ever sat and stared at a blank piece of paper and have no idea where to begin? Yeah, me too. Sometimes that’s the hardest part for me, but these are all things that have to do with me, so I just have to brainstorm about that a little bit. O- Organize my notes- this graphic organizer is going to help me do that. And W- Write a bit more. That’s where my explanations are going to come in handy.

So the prompt says Tell me three things people might not know about you. I’m going to start by brainstorming my three things, so those will be my three topic sentences. Well, I know I want to pick things that are important to me, and I want to pick things that I can say a lot about. I have to write a whole body paragraph about each thing, and I know that’ll be tricky if I don’t have a lot to say about one of the things I pick.

Okay, so what do I like to do? I like to play soccer. I played soccer a lot actually growing up. I was on teams and things, so I think I have a lot to say about that one. So I’m going to start by writing that on my Graphic Organizer as my first Topic Sentence. Topic Sentence- that’s the T in TREE.

TS (Topic Sentence) 1: I like to play soccer.

There’s one. Okay, so two more. Hmmm…. Well, I’m thinking about other things people might not know about me.

Boy, I’m kind of stuck. I don’t know what to write about. Okay, but I’m not going to panic. I’m just in the brainstorming stage, so just take a deep breath. I’m going to think about stuff I’ve done in the past that’s been really fun or exciting, since I probably can write a lot about that.

I’ve got something! So not everyone knows that I went to Ireland for a study abroad trip when I was in college. That was really fun and exciting, and I have a lot of stuff I could say about that trip. There’s my second topic sentence.

TS2: I lived in Ireland for five months.

Last one. I’m almost there. Hmmm. Maybe I’ll think about some of my favorites. Those are usually easy to talk about. Favorite food… spaghetti, favorite holiday… Christmas, favorite movie, favorite TV show… Hmm… You know, I think I could write the most about my favorite food.

TS3: My favorite food is spaghetti.
Nice! So the big topics are taken care of. Okay, now I have to think about reasons for each one, which are really just details. That’s the R- Reasons and the E- Explanation in TREE. When I’m trying to come up with details, I like to ask myself the 5 W’s: Who? What? When? Where? Why? I’ll show you what I mean.

My first body paragraph is about soccer. Let me think about that. Who did I play with? Well, I played travelling soccer in middle school, and I played with a recreation league in high school. I made a lot of friends on both teams. I really didn’t like my coach in middle school, but I loved my high school coach. That answers the who, what, and when. Although the what-- I could add my position. I played right midfield most. That was my position. I hated and was terrified of playing goalie. Where? I played soccer in Sioux Falls and Georgia, which is where I lived in middle and high school. Why? I loved being part of a team, making friends, and the thrill of scoring a goal or making a great play. It was exhilarating. I miss it now.

I think I have enough. Here we go; I’m just going to organize the information on my graphic organizer now. I don’t have to write in complete sentences since this is an outline, but I do want to have enough information that I know what I was talking about later on.

A. TS1: I like to play soccer.
   a. R1 (reason 1): Played in middle and high school
      i. Explanation: Didn’t like middle school coach (He was an ex-army sergeant, and he scared me). Loved high school coach.
   b. R2: Made lots of friends
      i. Explanation: Both times, played with people from school. Great way to meet people and make friends to hang out with.
   c. R3: I miss it now.
      i. Explanation: Never forget the thrill of scoring a goal or making a great pass. Loved celebrating with the team afterward.

So the only thing I still have for this body paragraph is my E- Ending, Wrap it Up sentence. I want something that relates to my topic, but still kind of makes it clear that I’m done talking about that thing. Let’s see.

End (Wrap it Up): I know there are adult soccer leagues, so I might investigate those one day!

There, that works. I don’t know if I love that last sentence, but I can always come back and fix it later, if I think of something better. It’s better to write something down and come back then to let it get me stuck.

Next body paragraph. Boy, this is a lot of work. That’s okay though. I have time, so I don’t want to rush. And if I plan it out now, it’ll make the writing part easier.

My second body paragraph is about Ireland. Here we go-- what sticks out about that trip? Well, I went there with friends from college, and I made friends on the trip too. I got to travel a bunch
while I was there. My favorite place I went while travelling in Europe was the Czech Republic. It was so beautiful-- it looked like a fairytale. Ireland was so green, just like people envision. It does rain all the time; I didn’t love that part. I held a lamb while I was there, and I went to all sorts of castles, so that was cool. I also was able to walk a lot of places instead of driving, and I liked that. Okay, I think I have enough to start.

B. TS2: I lived in Ireland for 5 months.
   a. R1: I studied abroad there.
      i. Explanation: Went with college friends, but also met people. Good friends from Ohio and Alaska.
   b. R2: I travelled in Europe while there.
      i. Explanation: Favorite place → Czech Republic. So beautiful-- looked like a fairytale.
   c. R3: Did lots of fun things.
      i. Explanation: Memories that stick out-- holding a lamb and climbing different castles.

Okay, I’m at the last sentence again. My least favorite part, because it’s kind of tricky to think of. I think of it as one final thought... what’s the last thing I want people to think about?

End (Wrap it Up): Living in a foreign country was exciting, but challenging, and I think I grew as a person because of it.

Awesome! Almost there. Last full body paragraph! This one is on spaghetti. I was careful with this one, because sometimes topics like favorite food, you don’t really have enough to say. But I think I do with this one because it’s associated with some good memories for me. When I first think of loving spaghetti, I think about what kind I like the most. I love spaghetti with meatballs, or really any kind of spaghetti with a tomato sauce, especially spicy sauce.

Spaghetti has kind of a special meaning for me because my grandpa was Italian. He passed away when I was little, but my memory of him always reminds me of those old-school Italian guys, and that makes me feel happy, to think about him. My mom always does the cooking in my house, especially when I was growing up, but the one time my dad would cook, his specialty, so to speak, was to make this meatball spaghetti. So that makes me think happy things too, because it was always a treat to eat Dad’s spaghetti. He also would play this Italian music every time he made it and dance around the kitchen, and I loved that growing up. The smell too, of spaghetti…. Mmmm! Okay, I think I have enough.

C. TS3: My favorite food is spaghetti.
   a. R1: Favorite is spaghetti with meatballs
      i. Explanation: Love tomato sauce, the spicier the better.
   b. R2: Spaghetti reminds me of my Grandpa.
      i. Explanation: Old school Italian guy, passed away when I was little.
   c. R3: Dad made spaghetti as his “specialty” dish
i. Explanation: House would smell so good. He’d play Italian music and dance. I loved it.

End (Wrap it Up): Spaghetti reminds me of special memories with my family, and it’s delicious, so it’s a win-win in my book!

Hey! It was a lot easier coming up with that last sentence. *I’m getting the hang of this!*

Yes! I’ve got my three body paragraphs outlined now. Awesome. The last few things then are just a lot of repeating, kind of the “fluff” stuff, so to speak. My thesis statement is easy to write, because I’ve done the hard work of thinking of stuff already. All I have to do is make sure my three points are in order.

**Thesis Statement:** People might not know that I like to play soccer, I lived in Ireland for five months, and my favorite food is spaghetti.

Easy! Next is my Summary Statement sentence. So that’s just like the thesis, but in different words. It’s going to be the first sentence in my conclusion paragraph. How can I rephrase it, but keep my points the same? This is where I have to be a little bit of a wordsmith. Hm…. here we go.

**Summary Statement:** It might surprise my students to learn that I like to play soccer, I lived in Ireland for five months, and my favorite food is spaghetti.

Okay, now my least favorite part of this whole thing. *I hate coming up with my first and last sentence. It’s a lot easier to do now, though, I think, that I know what my essay will be about. I think I get nervous because I’ve gotten used to staring at a blank sheet of paper, and that always makes me nervous. I can do this though, I know it. I’ve done the hard work, so I’ve just got to take a deep breath and feel confident.* Okay. First sentence. I want to make people keep reading, and it should connect somehow to what I’m going to talk about. Okay, how about this?

**Introductory Sentence:** We all have personal characteristics that other people might not know about us. When we let people get to know us, though, we build connections and share our lives with those around us.

Not bad! And final sentence. This will be the last sentence in my entire essay.

**Concluding Sentence:** When people get to know each other better, they might find similarities with people they considered very different from themselves.

Awesome! I’ve got a good outline here, so my essay should be pretty easy to write. Excellent!
POW + TREE Graphic Organizer

Pick my idea     Organize my notes     Write and say more

Outline

Introduction Paragraph

Hook: __________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

Thesis Statement (in order!): ____________________________________

______________________________________________________________

TREE- Body Paragraphs

Topic Sentence 1: ______________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

Reason 1 + Explanation: _________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

Reason 2 + Explanation: _________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

Reason 3 + Explanation: _________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

Ending Sentence 1: _____________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

Topic Sentence 2: ______________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

Reason 1 + Explanation: _________________________________________
**Reason 2 + Explanation:** ________________________________________________

**Reason 3 + Explanation:** ________________________________________________

**Ending Sentence 2:** ______________________________________________________

**Topic Sentence 3:** ________________________________________________________

**Reason 1 + Explanation:** ________________________________________________

**Reason 2 + Explanation:** ________________________________________________

**Reason 3 + Explanation:** ________________________________________________

**Ending Sentence 3:** ______________________________________________________

**Conclusion Paragraph**

**Summary Statement:** ______________________________________________________

**Clincher Statement:** ______________________________________________________
Self-Reinforcement Sheet

As I begin, I am most concerned/anxious about…

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

When I get frustrated, I can (list at least 3 strategies / statements) …

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

While writing, I should remember to…

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

Self-Check:
Introduction Paragraph
   ____ Hook
   ____ Thesis statement contains three points, listed in order of presentation
   ____ Thesis statement is in the last sentence of the first paragraph

Body Paragraphs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#1</th>
<th>#2</th>
<th>#3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>____ Topic Sentence</td>
<td>____ Topic Sentence</td>
<td>____ Topic Sentence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>____ 3 Reasons</td>
<td>____ 3 Reasons</td>
<td>____ 3 Reasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>____ Explanations</td>
<td>____ Explanations</td>
<td>____ Explanations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>____ Ending Sentence</td>
<td>____ Ending Sentence</td>
<td>____ Ending Sentence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion Paragraph
   ____ Summary statement is located in the first sentence of the conclusion paragraph
   ____ Summary statement lists three points in order
   ____ Summary statement is different than Thesis statement
   ____ Clincher Statement
Lesson: Day 5

Standard 7.7.2.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
   a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information
   b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples
   f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>SRSD Phase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*SWBAT brainstorm ideas for their own essays.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*SWBAT practice using their individual self-reinforcements</td>
<td>Support It</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*SWBAT complete a graphic organizer based on their own ideas and the POW + TREE strategy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Materials:
- POW + TREE Graphic Organizer
- Student Self-Reinforcements (created yesterday)

Procedures:

1. Think-Pair-Share (Review from yesterday):
   - Yesterday, you watched me plan an essay of my own. What did I really struggle with? How did I help myself when I got stuck?
   - Get out your Self-Reinforcements sheet. Share with a partner. Which statement and/or strategy do you think will help you most when you get stuck?

2. Script: Today, you guys are going to be planning your own essays. We are going to work together, and we are going to help each other when someone gets stuck. Remind me, what does the P in POW stand for? Right, Pick your idea. Start by talking to your partner. Think about things you really enjoy or could talk about for awhile. What ideas do you have for answering the prompt: Tell me three things people might not know about you?

3. Encourage students to fill out the POW + TREE graphic organizer. They can work with their partners as they do so, helping each other, but their ideas should be their own. Circle the room as they work, helping students who get stuck. When a student gets stuck, encourage them first to use their Self-Reinforcements, and remind them of the strategies POW + TREE. Anyone who does not finish the graphic organizer in class should strive to finish it before class tomorrow.
Lesson: Day 6

Standard 7.7.2.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
   c. Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
   d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
   e. Establish and maintain a formal style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>SRSD Phase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*SWBAT observe, analyze, and discuss teacher modelling of using the graphic organizer to begin writing. *SWBAT begin writing their essays using their self-reinforcements and graphic organizers, utilizing teacher support as needed.</td>
<td>Support It</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Materials:
- Copy of digital Graphic Organizer from Lesson 4
- Notebook paper for students

Procedures:

1. Ask students to get out their completed POW + TREE Graphic Organizer. Have them share the finished versions with their partner.

2. Today, the teacher will model how to take the ideas on the Graphic Organizer and put them into essay form. Students should watch carefully and listen. Ask them to observe, once again, how the teacher handles it when she gets stuck. Also, ask them to figure out how the essay and the Graphic Organizer are different.

3. Model taking the ideas from the Graphic Organizer and put them into essay form. The teacher should emphasize the following:
   - Addition of transition words like First, Second, Finally, etc. as you move from idea to idea
   - The use of complete sentences, as opposed to the phrases used in the Graphic Organizer
   - The ease of writing, now that the hard thinking has been completed in the Graphic Organizer
   - The use of self-reinforcements when the teacher gets stuck

4. Think-Pair-Share: After modelling, ask students to discuss what they observed.
   - What did the teacher say when she got stuck?
   - How did the essay differ from the Graphic Organizer?
○ How do they feel getting started with their essay? Confident? Worried?

5. Students should begin writing their essays. Their Graphic Organizer, Self-Reinforcement sheet, and notebook paper should all be on their desk. The atmosphere should be quiet, to allow students the concentration to work effectively. If they get stuck, encourage them to use their Self-Reinforcements first, then ask a partner for help, then raise their hand. The teacher should circle the room and help as needed.

After completion of the lesson series:
○ Allow more writing time in class, as needed
○ Students should complete a self-review and peer-review of their papers. Editors should focus primarily on identifying the inclusion of various essay parts in the paper.
○ Students should be assessed via the Assessment Rubric.
○ Students should complete the Writing Skills Survey.
○ Use POW + TREE and versions of the self-reinforcements throughout the year. If desired, have students graph and chart their writing growth over the course of the year.
**Assessment Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Thesis statement and hook are missing.</td>
<td>Essay may be missing either the hook OR the thesis statement.</td>
<td>Hook is included, but may be weak OR main points are listed in the thesis statement, but are out of order.</td>
<td>Introduction contains a creative and intriguing hook. Thesis statement contains three points in the CORRECT order they are to be discussed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body Paragraphs</td>
<td>Essay does not contain three main points.</td>
<td>Essay contains 3 main points but may not have enough reasons and explanation.</td>
<td>Essay contains 3 main points and reasons for each main point, but may not have enough explanation.</td>
<td>Essay contains 3 main points, sufficient reasons, and explanations for each main point.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>Conclusion is missing both a summary statement and a clincher statement.</td>
<td>Conclusion is missing either a clincher statement OR a summary statement.</td>
<td>Essay contains a summary statement and clincher statement. Summary statement may be out of order.</td>
<td>Essay contains a summary statement in which 3 points are listed IN ORDER. Should be different than thesis statement. Conclusion also contains a clincher statement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>Essay has numerous grammatical errors that make reading and understanding difficult.</td>
<td>Essay shows some evidence of proofreading, but contains numerous grammatical mistakes.</td>
<td>Essay shows evidence of proofreading, but compound sentences are incorrectly written.</td>
<td>Essay shows clear attention to grammar. Includes correctly written compound sentences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_____ Student used strategies POW + TREE while writing

_____ Student used self-statements and coping skills when/if frustrated
Writing Skills Survey

**Directions:** On a scale of 1-5, please express your comfort level with the following tasks related to writing.

1- not confident at all     3- somewhat confident     5- very confident

I can brainstorm usable ideas for a 5 paragraph essay.

1  2  3  4  5

I can write a clear thesis statement that gives my reader a preview of the ideas to follow.

1  2  3  4  5

I can write a thorough body paragraph that contains support and details for the main point.

1  2  3  4  5

I know strategies for coping when I am frustrated with a writing task.

1  2  3  4  5

I can work through frustration and be successful with my writing.

1  2  3  4  5
References


