

Word Work: Working Across the Lesson

Patsy Conner
University of Arkansas at Little Rock
Reading Recovery Teacher Leader
pjconner@ualr.edu

"If any one faculty of our nature may be called more wonderful than the rest, I do think it is memory. There seems something more speakingly incomprehensible in the powers, the failures, the inequalities of memory, than in any other of our intelligences. The memory is sometimes so retentive, so serviceable, so obedient - and at others so bewildered and so weak - and at others again, so tyrannical, so beyond control!"

Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park*

*"As children get better at finding the links they look for more opportunities to engage in these activities. To make progress you must **learn some rules** about scanning the printer's code. Only then can you direct your language and visual perception to the problem of extracting a message from text."*

Literacy Lessons 1 p. 1

Our Goal?

Self Regulation

"The capacity to plan, guide, and monitor his or her behavior within and flexibly according to changing circumstances"

Diaz, Neal, and Amaya-Williams
1990, 130)

"The first step in any intellectual development resides in awareness."

Clay, M.M. 1998 *By different paths to common outcomes*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse



Literacy Lessons 1 - Marie Clay

"One thing is particularly important.

Children must learn to hear the sounds in words they want to write and find appropriate ways to write these sounds down.

The writing knowledge serves as a resource of information that can help the reader.

However,

this reciprocity

does not occur spontaneously.

The teacher must remember to direct the child to use what he knows in reading when he is writing and vice versa.

How do I teach this across the lesson?

Suggestion #1

In Familiar Reading or New Book Introduction:

➤ Either before or after reading ask, "I see a word that you know how to write. Show me one you can write."



Level 4 RW 40

"I can jump,"
said the grasshopper.

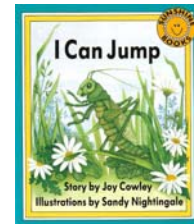
"I can't jump,"
said the snail.

Level 1 RW 24

I am eating.

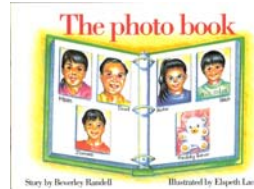
I am laughing.

I am crying.



Have the child write the word(s) by offering:

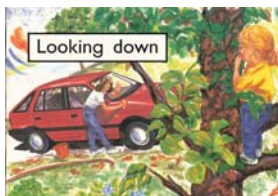
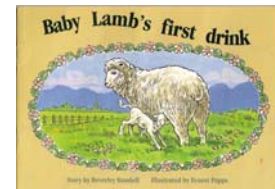
- the magnetic letters for the word
- a small white board and marker
- an opportunity to go to the easel and write it big.



Level 3 RW 50
'Here' occurs 5 times
'is' occurs 11 times
'the' occurs 7 times

Level 4 RW 62

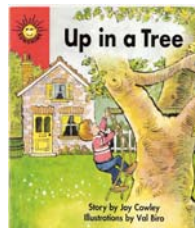
'Here/here' occurs 6 times
'is' occurs 8 times
'the' occurs 3 times



Level 3 RW 70
'see' occurs 7 times
'the' 4 times
'can' occurs 7 times

Level 4 RW 47

'see/sees' occurs 9 times
'what' occurs 3 times



Suggestion #2

Variations on a theme:

In the Writing Section

When working on a new word that he has just read

give the child the magnetic letters to make the word.

This helps him note the sequence of letters.

Take that word immediately to the practice page to write several times.

Open the book and ask the student to find the word in the text.

Are you emphasizing the words that the student is reading daily in texts?

"During the writing slot of the lesson teachers can prompt the child to search his reading knowledge by saying 'I think you could write that word. You read it yesterday,' showing the child his earlier work if necessary. Or she might say "You wrote it in this other story," taking him back to a text he wrote and having him read it. Children have to know that reading and writing can contribute to each other during early literacy."

LL II p. 54

What words are you taking to fluency?

➤ Have you taken into consideration the words he wrote "at entry"?

Does he *really* know these words in every way?

How can you use these words to help build new reading or writing vocabulary?

How can you use these words to help build new reading or writing vocabulary?

Suggestion #3

During the writing portion:

You notice that he writes a word from his initial WV fluently (Example: 'my')

After he has finished writing the story there is a brief opportunity for some word work.

Ask him to write 'my' on the practice page.

Point right under the word 'my' that he has just written on the practice page and ask,

"Can you think of another word that begins with the same letter as 'my'?"

What words are you taking to fluency?

➤ Are you sure that your student is firm with all the words in the blue box on page 41 LL II?

Child's name, I, like, see, is,
the, in, am, to, come, my, we, and, at,
here, on, up, look, go, this, it, me

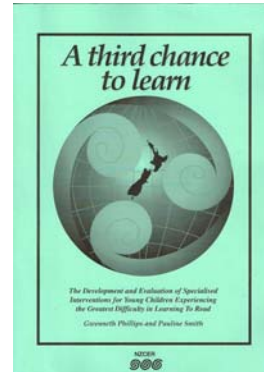
How can we check?

Observe how quickly the child writes the word during writing.

- ? Does it flow out of the marker independently, just like you might write it?
- ? Can the student quickly locate the word in a book after writing it?

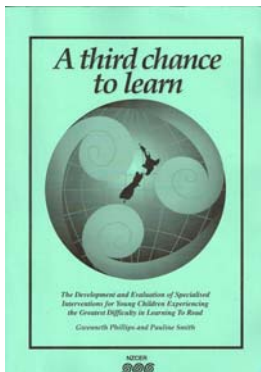
OR

- ? Does he need to articulate the sound?
- ? Does he spell out the word?



Writing Vocabulary check (5 minutes)

- ✓ Test words the child has worked on in the last week
- ✓ Check on other known words.



Progress Monitoring

Writing Vocabulary check

For new learning that had occurred in any other areas of word work, e.g.,

Solving words by analogy

Generating new words from root words

Taking words to fluency during writing.

- ✓ Have you explained to the child that this is a word that he needs to learn so that he can read it and write it whenever he wants?
- ✓ Early in lessons did you provide the model at first but quickly moved to asking HIM to recall what the word looks like and to write it correctly, without a copy?
- ✓ Did you instruct him to look at it carefully?
- ✓ Did you instruct him to write it a few times on various parts of the working page?

(LL II p. 58)

they they they

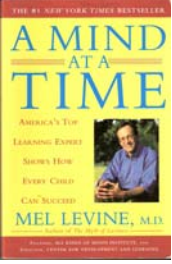
they thay they

 they they

•they
•they
•they

A Mind At A Time Mel Levine, M.D. P. 55

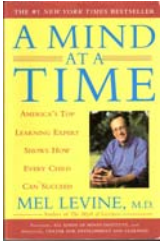
Writing is often a seemingly insurmountable threat to kids with attention problems, as it takes strong attention controls to conduct the orchestra needed to express thoughts on paper.



A Mind At A Time Mel Levine, M.D. P. 55

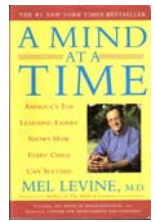
You have to slow down, plan, organize your thinking, pace yourself, watch what you're putting on paper and pay attention to all kinds of small details all at once (such as punctuation, spelling, capitalization, and use of grammar). These demands can be tough for those with weak attention controls.

Writing is one of the largest orchestras a kid's mind has to conduct.

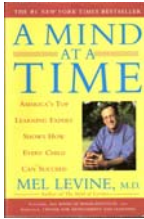


A Mind At A Time Mel Levine, M.D. P. 55

So often I see a child with reduced memory capacity stigmatized as "dumb" or "slow" when, in reality, he or she possesses fine intellectual faculties but a flawed information filing system.



A Mind At A Time Mel Levine, M.D. P. 55



Nothing is ever learned without tapping into some component of memory. A child may be able to understand a fact, process, or concept as it is being explained or demonstrated, but without memory, none of it can be retrieved and applied.

So, how do we help our students?

Suggestion #4

If all else has failed go to
Literacy Lessons 2 page 176
"Develop a way of studying words"

This is the way I do it.
With guidance from LL2 p. 176

During the writing part of the lesson:
PROBLEM

The student needs to write the word 'said' in his story. Explain that we learn to write words by learning to look at them carefully when we read. "I am going to show you how to make this word your very own."

Teacher provides the word either with magnetic letters or written on the board.

said

said

- ✓ Tell the student to look at the word. I run my finger under the word and say it slowly.
- ✓ Ask the child to say it slowly and/or run his finger across it. "Look at it carefully."
- ✓ Ask if they have it in their head.

said

- ✓ Ask him to close his eyes and see it. Walk him through the sequence of letters in the word. "Can you see the first part? The next part? The last part?"
 - ✓ Ask him to open his eyes and look again. "Run your finger under it and say it slowly."
 - ✓ Ask "can you write it without looking?"
- If he is hesitant tell him he can peek if he needs to.

said

Provide a place where the student can write:

On a small white board

At the easel

On the table

Or on the practice page.

Make sure you keep the model available but covered and don't hesitate to let him peek if necessary.

He should say it slowly as he writes.

Get the motor running!

When at the easel make sure the student is not resting his hand on the board, the student is using his whole arm to move the marker in big bold strokes.

Prompting to help the student make connections.

Using his reading knowledge:

Prompt

"You can read a word that looks like that."
(you might show him the book)

"You can read a word that starts like that."

"Have you heard another word that starts that way?"

"Have you heard another word that sounds like that?"

The secret of successful instruction

Having a teacher who knows how to help a child 'hear' the sounds singly or in clusters, and how to 'see' the letter forms and recurrent patterns.

The teacher guides the child to the most efficient links between letters and sounds, or clusters of letters and patterns of sound.

Literacy Lesson 2 p. 81

Are you prompting to help the child make links to what is known?

Would it be helpful to make the link to

his name?

A word he can already write?

A word in his reading?

Suggestion #5

Making the Link

The student is trying to write a word with 'er' in it.

The teacher writes on the practice page a couple of words that he has read frequently saying, "Here are a couple of words that you read in this book that have that /er/ chunk." (Teacher either provides the book or writes 'mother', 'father')

Asks "What two letters would you need to make the /er/ in your word?"

Monitor the use of time throughout the lesson.

Are you running out of time?

Two things are happening:
either you are teaching too much
or
everything you are doing is too hard.

How the brain functions

Language involves lots of brain parts working together as a symphony and some learning is (about) how to feed new minor parts into the ongoing symphony.

Clay quoting Dr. Larry Squires

LL II p. 102

After I write
the words My
teacher cut it up
in a puzzle. At the
end of the lesson I
read a new book.