Writing for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

KANSAS
STATE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
www.ksde.org | #KansansCan

Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.

Writing Matters

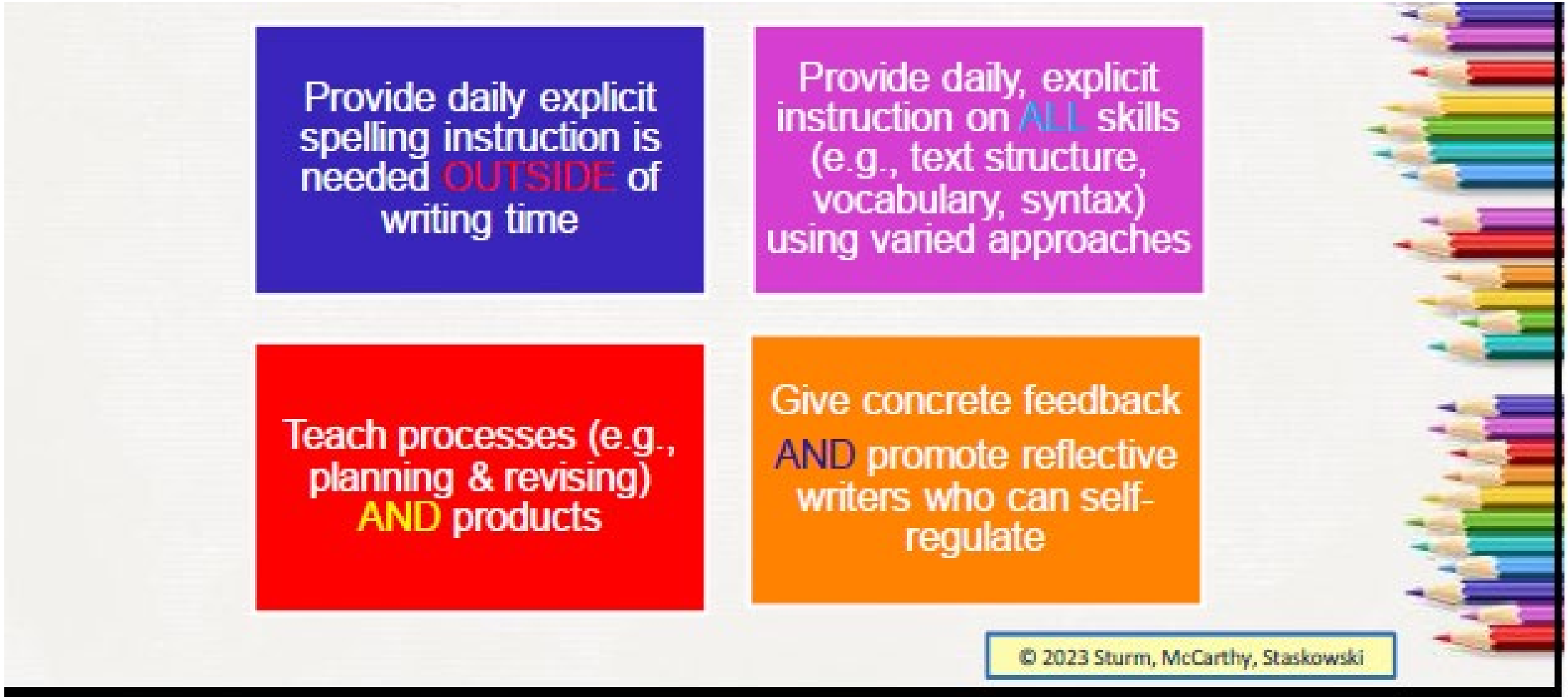
Writing should happen early & should start at the same time as sound instruction

AND phonological awareness

AND phonics

AND spelling

Science of Writing



Shared with permission

Predictable Chart Writing

KANSAS
STATE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
www.ksde.org | #KansansCan

Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.

What is Predictable Chart Writing?

- Entry point to introduce writing for meaning with emerging writers
- It is a multi-step approach to structured shared writing
- It has no prerequisites
  - Don't need to show interest in print or the ability to engage in print
- They do need daily access to the ability to engage in writing activities that match their strengths, mobility, and accessibility needs
- Modeling and demonstrating the writing process and incorporating the use of AAC, pictures, and other implements of writing (technology, paper, markers, pencils, alternate pencils
- Intended to support student interests and introduction to writing

Reading & Writing for All

5 –Day a Week Routine

- Day 1: Write the chart
- Day 2: Re-read/work the chart
- Day 3: Work with cut up sentences
- Day 4: Be the sentence
- Day 5: Make the book

Reading and Writing 4 All

Research: Cunningham (2001) and Hall and Williams (2001)

Day 1 – Write the Chart

- Title your chart and generate a sentence stem
- Brainstorm possible responses
- Each learner fills in the blank with their work

Video Example – Day 1

- https://youtu.be/1hu1EV60bqk?t=171

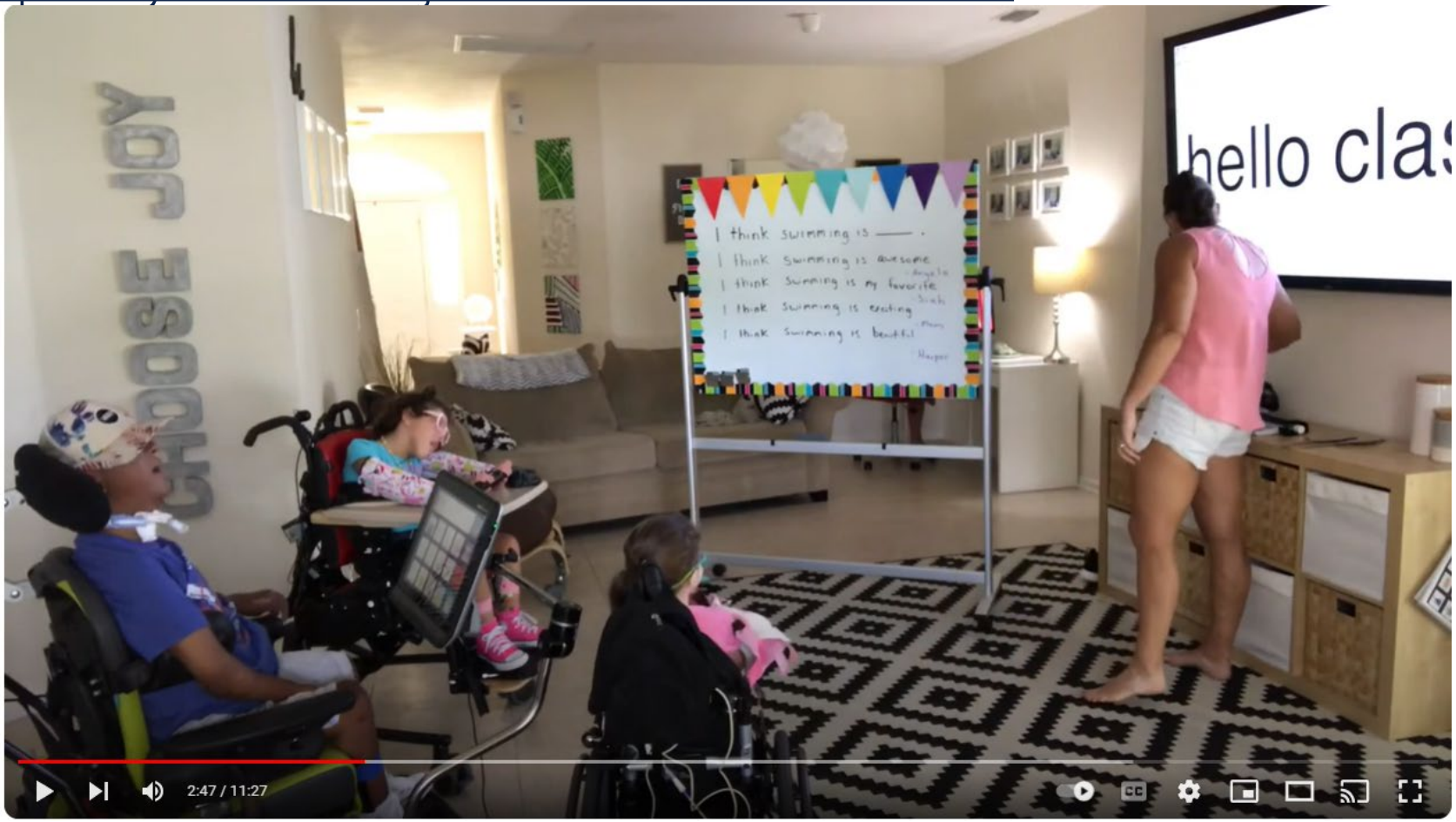
Day 2 – Work with the Chart

- Re-read the chart (rap, sing, chant, stomp, clap, dance, etc) – emphasize words and syllables. Use pointing tools
- Practice reading with inner voice
- Focus on a concept of print
  - Letter concepts
  - Word concepts
  - Conventions of reading
  - Conventions of writing

Refer to Mary-Louise Bertram at Durham Road School handout

Video Example Day 2

- https://youtu.be/jAu-nYMwwrE?t=167



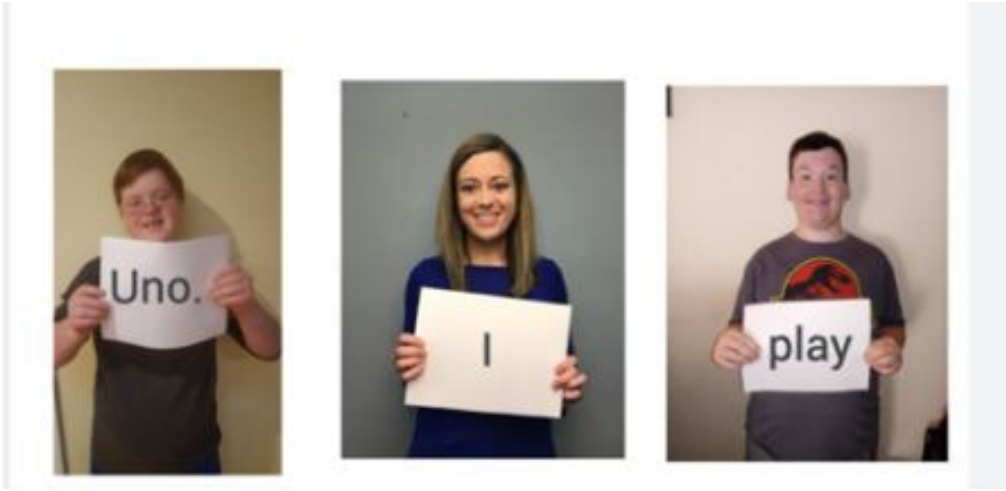
Day 3 – Cut up Sentences

- Provide students with their sentence on a strip of paper
- Have students cut apart the words (mistakes are welcomed and part of learning!) – students might need alternate scissors
- Mix up the words and have learners place them in the correct order.

Video Example – Day 3

- https://youtu.be/iNDVNG6D1gw?t=104

Day 4 – Be the Sentence



- Adults write each word on separate pieces of paper.
- Students display a word.
- Students practice putting themselves in order, with each student being responsible for one word in the sentence.
- Each student has a word and can practice saying the word in the sentence and listening to the end to determine if it makes sense.

Day 5 – Write the Book

- Re-read the sentences in the chart
- Learners work to illustrate and publish their book
- Illustrations can be drawings, photographs, pictures from magazines or the internet
- Be sure to have your students write their name on their page
- Publish the book

Example – Day 5

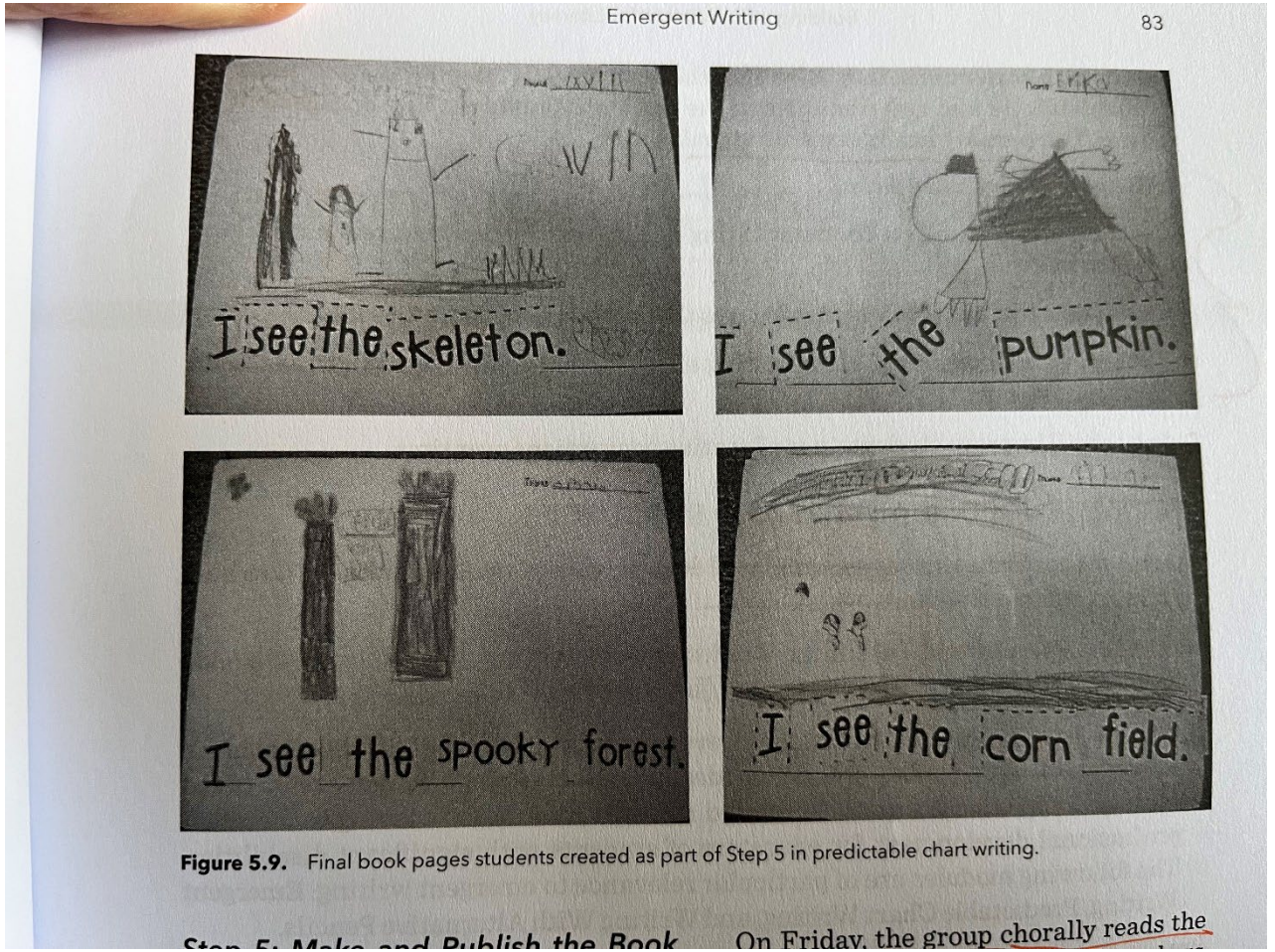
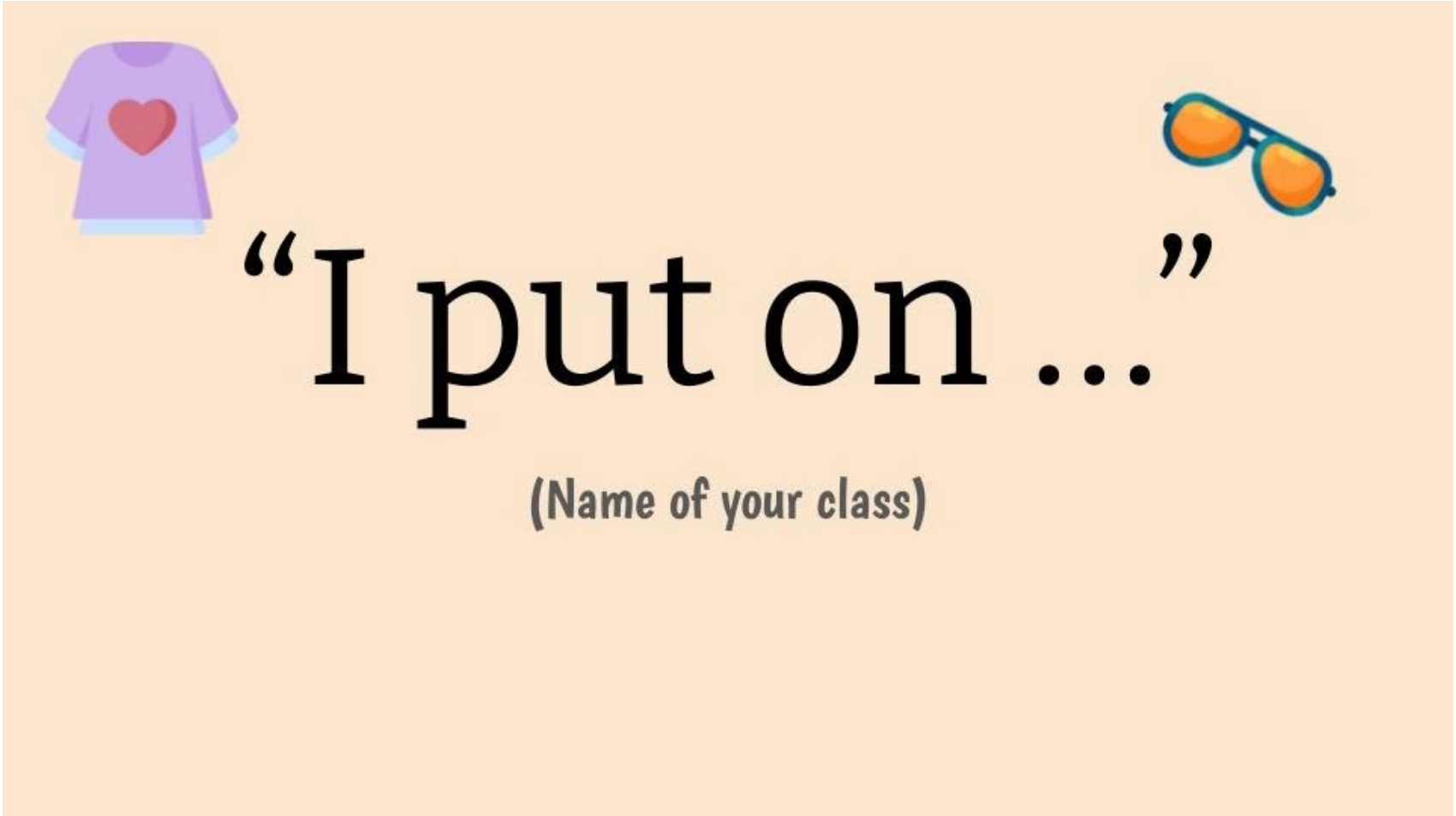


Figure 5.9. Final book pages students created as part of Step 5 in predictable chart writing.

Step 5: Make and Publish the Book On Friday, the group chorally reads the

“I put on…”

Reading and Writing 4 All



Using the Google Slides

1. Print out, cut out and laminate the Picture Icons from the slides. Use them as choice options for students.
2. Use a Universal Core Board to model Core Vocabulary
3. Use the sentence stem “I put on…” and let the student choose a picture (or verbally tell you) what clothes they put on.
4. 4. Write their sentence using words (no pictures). Read each sentence out loud.

“I like…” (foods)

Reading and Writing 4 All

“I like…” (animals)

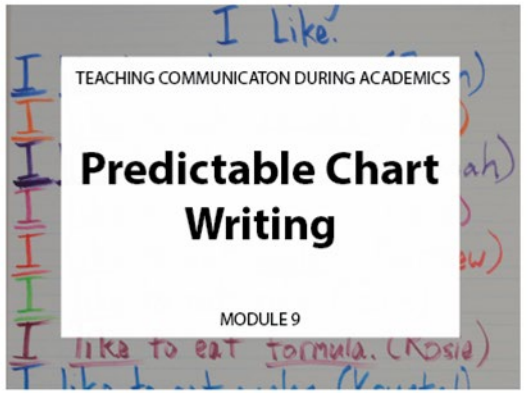
Reading and Writing 4 All

Teacher Reminders

- Use AAC & Paper Core boards as appropriate for each student
- Practice repeating/speaking the sentence stem “I like …” when writing
- Acknowledge each student's contribution (write their name or add their picture)
- Use Core & existing symbols on AAC devices
- Have individual symbols on choice boards (student pictures, etc)
- Add tactual symbols for Core, feelings, verbs when needed (can also act out)
- Use auditory partner-assisted scanning (students don’t need to use their vision to access activities)
- All students MUST have a way to communicate in ALL lessons

To learn more….

- Check out these slides from Reading & Writing 4 All
- Reading & Writing for Students with Moderate to Severe Disabilities: https://bit.ly/ReadWriteMSD
- Low Incidence Reading and Writing 2: http://bit.ly/NKCESReadWriteLI2
- Project Core's Predictable Chart Writing module
- Jane Farrall: Predictable Chart Writing with Adults
- Center for Literacy and Disability Studies: Predictable Chart Writing
- Predictable Chart Writing Weebly



Module 9: Predictable Chart Writing

Overview and case examples of strategies for embedding communication instruction into predictable chart writing lessons.

Learn More About Module 9

Predictable Chart Writing Self Reflection and Observation

Predictable Chart Writing Self-Reflection and Observation

Teacher: _____ **Other Adults:** _____ **# of Students:** _____

Brief Description of Activity: _____ **Date:** _____ **Time:** _____ **Observer:** _____

Types of Core Vocabulary Systems Used: ☐ Printed Core Board ☐ 3D Symbols ☐ Communication App or device ☐ Other: _____

Directions: Observe or reflect on practice with **all** students for whom AAC is appropriate.

Evidence	Consistently	Occasionally	Never	Comments & Examples
ALL students have access to their own personal communication system with core vocabulary.				
Adults recognize and respond to student's efforts to communicate.				
Adults tell students very clearly what they did to communicate.				
Adults show students how to use core vocabulary using each student's personal communication system (or a system that is very similar).				
Adults encourage students to communicate beyond completing a sentence for the chart.				
Adults invite students to use their core vocabulary system, without requiring use.				
Adults provide wait time for students to initiate and respond.				
Adults do not provide students with physical support (e.g., hand-over-hand) to communicate.				
Chart title is related to something students are learning or have experienced.				
The sentence stem is age and ability appropriate.				
The sentence stem includes one or more core words.				
Choices to complete the sentence stem have been prepared.				
An adult introduces the chart and demonstrates completing the first sentence.				
Each student completes a sentence given adequate wait time and a set of choices.				

Project Core | www.project-core.com | © 2019 Center for Literacy and Disability Studies, Department of Allied Health Sciences, UNC-Chapel Hill

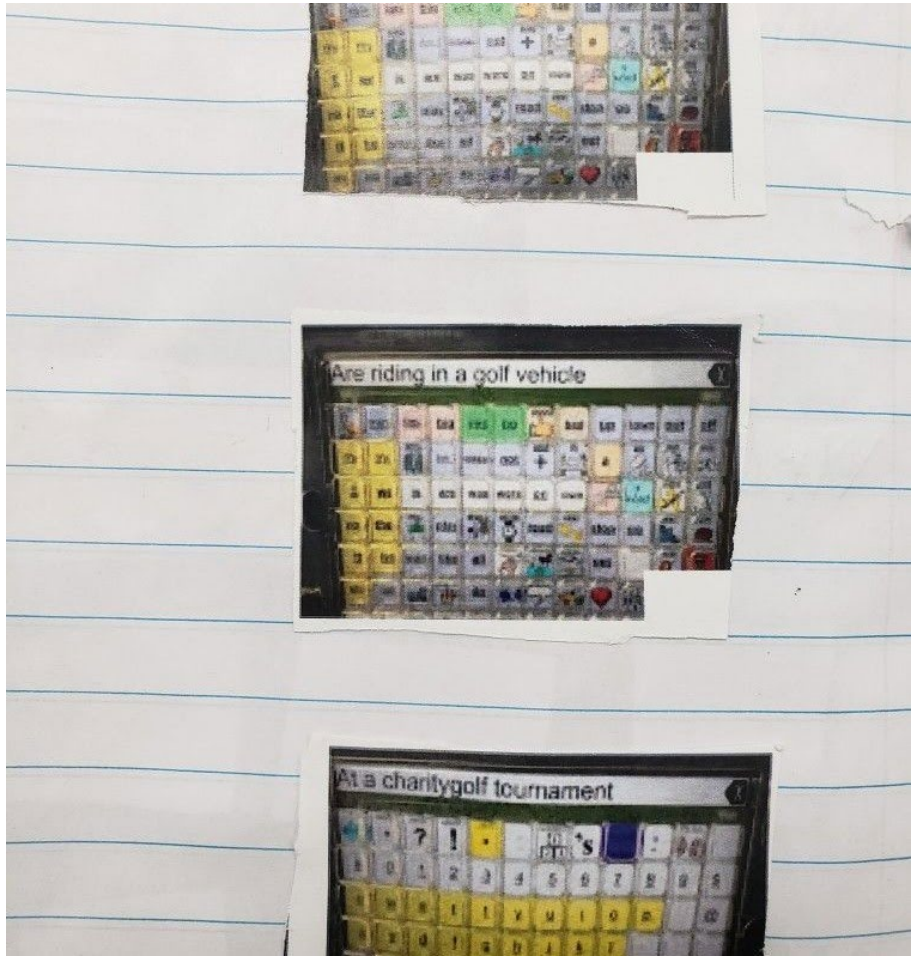
Each predictable chart writing lesson should also include one or more of the following:

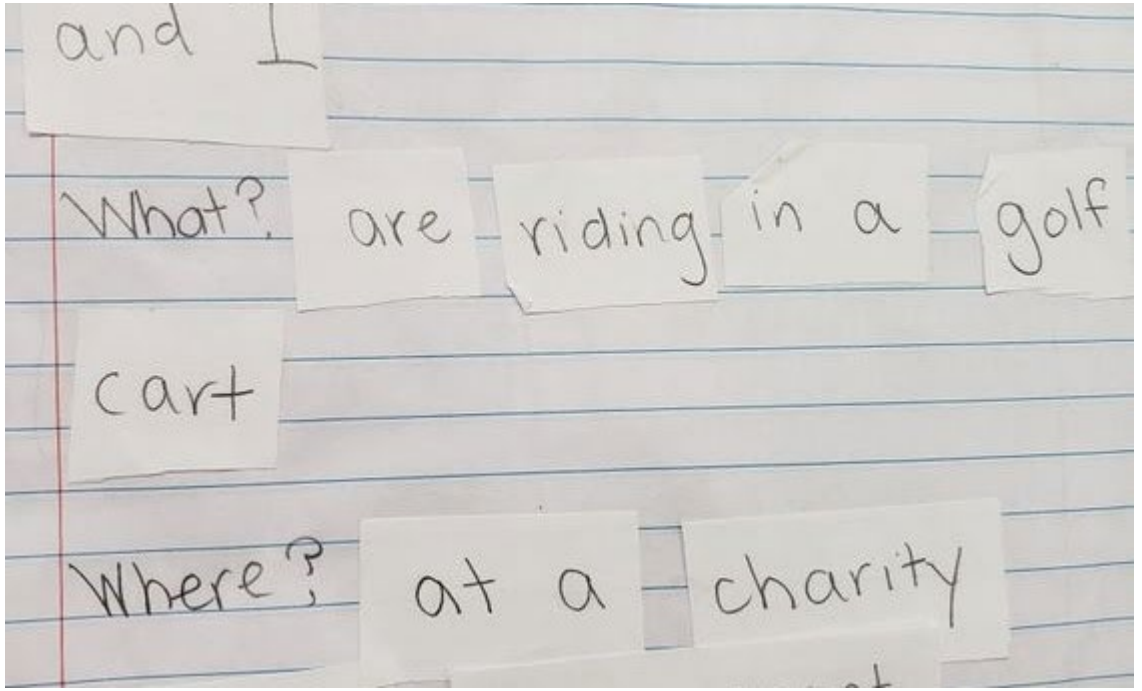
Evidence	Consistently	Occasionally	Never	Comments & Examples
An adult reads the chart showing students the core words on their communication systems (or a system that is very similar).				
An adult clearly states one or more purposes for rereading or working with the chart.				
Each student participates actively in cutting the sentence into individual words.				
Students (individually or as a group) build and compare the sentence with the chart.				
Each student selects an image, object or tactual to illustrate their sentence.				
A book is compiled and shared with the students.				

Summary and Additional Comments (continue on back as needed):

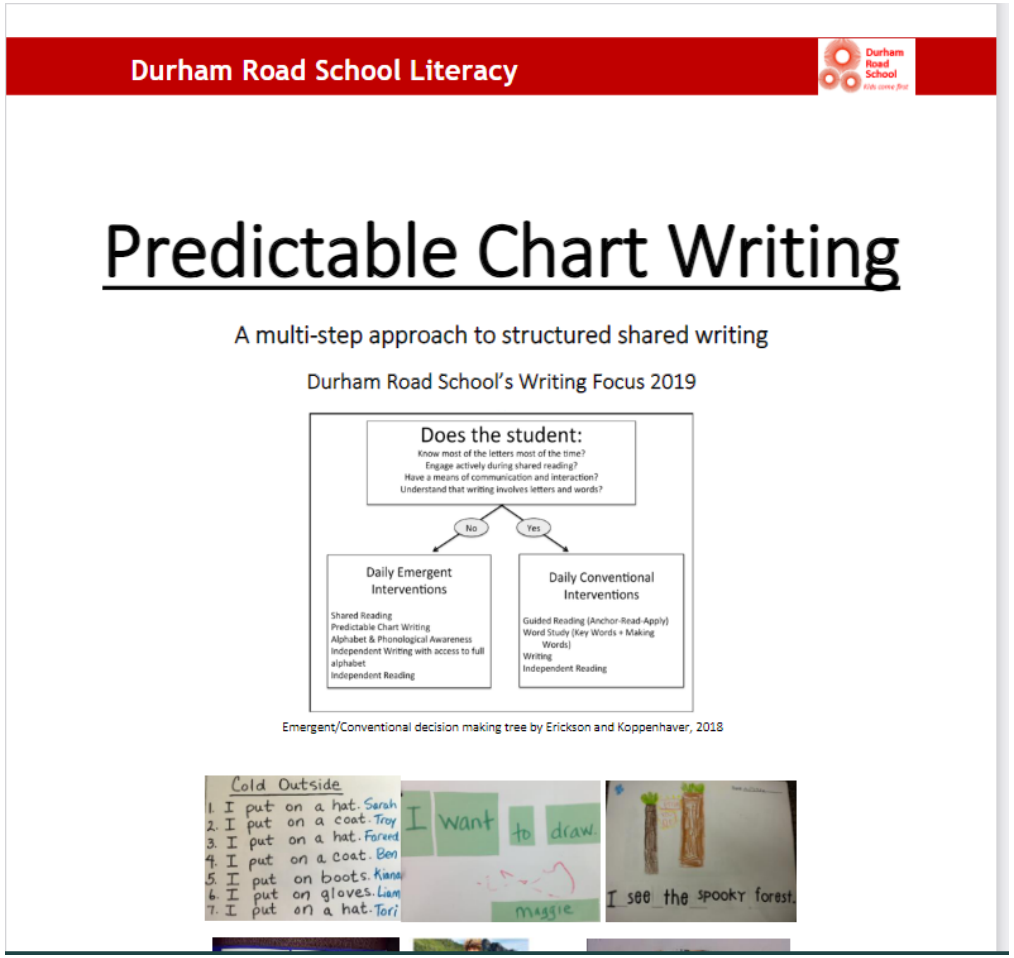
Project Core | www.project-core.com | © 2019 Center for Literacy and Disability Studies, Department of Allied Health Sciences, UNC-Chapel Hill

Integration of AAC & Writing





Handout from Mary Louise Bertram



Durham Road School Literacy

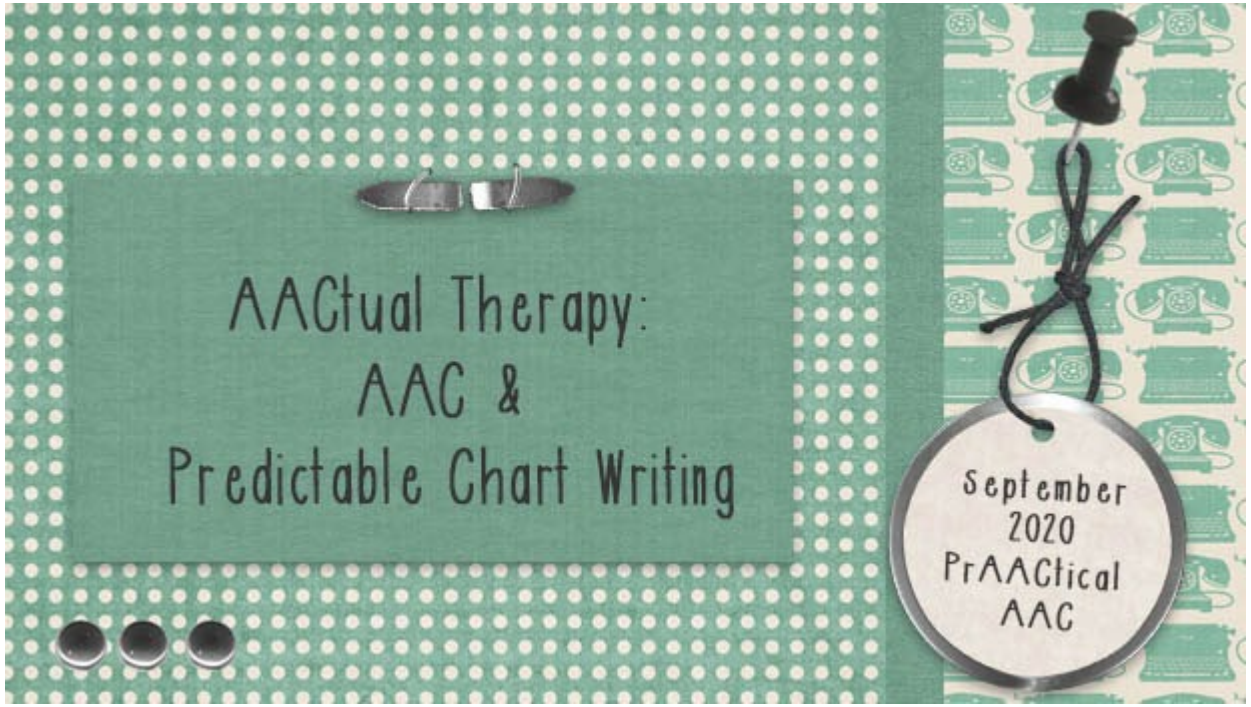
Predictable Chart Writing

A multi-step approach to structured shared writing

Durham Road School's Writing Focus 2019

Emergent/Conventional decision making tree by Erickson and Koppenhaver, 2018

AAC and Predictable Chart Writing



Independent Writing

KANSAS
STATE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
www.ksde.org | #KansansCan

Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.

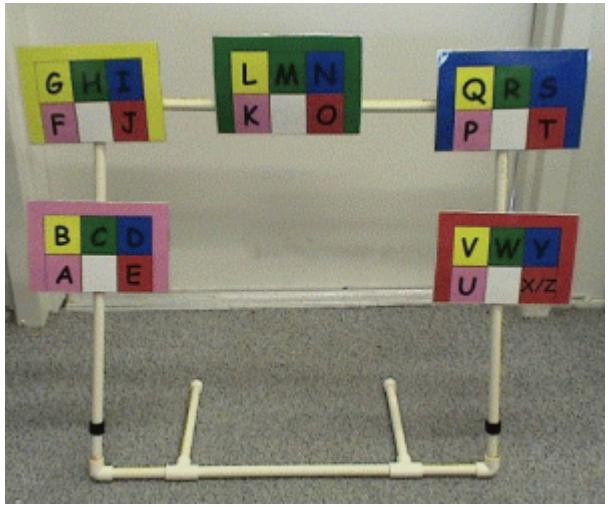
No Prerequisites

- Students will need a writing tool
- Students will need a writing surface

Emergent Writing

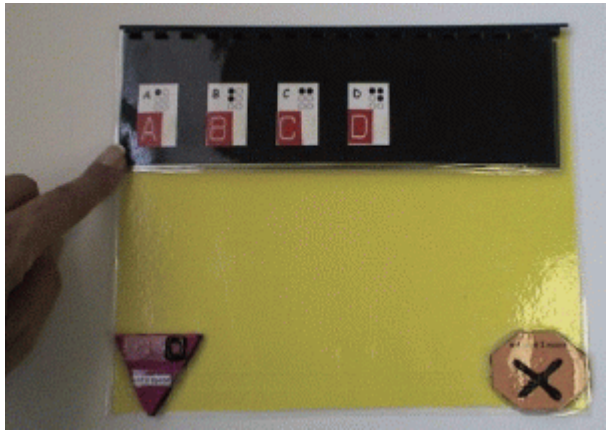
- Explorations
- Experiments
- Inventions
- All of the writing behaviors and understanding of learners before they develop into conventional writing

Alternate Pencil Templates from UNC Chapel Hill



Alphabet Eye Gaze Frames

Print Flip Charts



Braille Alphabet Flip Chart

Writing Setup

Before

1. Set the purpose – topic should be MOTIVATING
2. Select the tool (pencil or alternate pencil)

During

1. Let the student's write (listen, provide informative feedback, encourage them to write more, do not correct)
2. What will student write with and write on?
3. Will the student need a communication partner to transcribe selections

After

1. Mini-lesson with feedback

    Ask student what they wrote about (attribute meaning, counting all the letters, counting all of one letter, finding something in the room that begins with a certain letter, borrowing a letter to create a word)

The Developmental Writing Scale

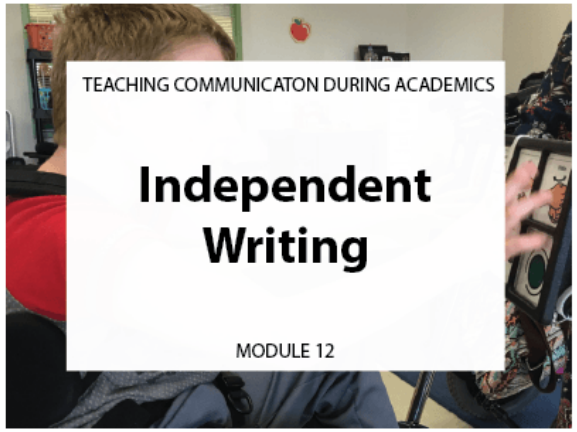
Levels	Scoring Criteria	Description	Accommodations
1	Drawing	Lines and curves that appear to represent objects	Selection of a picture by a child who cannot hold a traditional pencil or marker
2	Scribbling	Continuous vertical, circular, or wavy lines arranged linearly across the page, which may include letter-like forms, but with the majority of shapes not recognizable as letters.	If a child uses a keyboard, this level would not be used
3	Letter strings (no groups)	Handwritten or typed strings of letters but not grouped into words. Examples: *ttttt* *kshpppns*	Alphabet display (e.g., paper copy) and standard or electronic keyboard access (e.g., on screen keyboard or AAC system)
4	Letter strings grouped in words	Strings of letters grouped into "words" (i.e., with spaces between at least two groups of letters) but with no intelligible words. Example: *iLCR6a iLKVKC CPRSB WRKe BRKe*	Alphabet display (e.g., paper copy) and standard or electronic keyboard access (e.g., on screen keyboard or AAC system)
5	One intelligible word	Strings of letters grouped into "words," with only one possible real word (i.e., two or more letters in length) set apart, written repeatedly (e.g., dog, dog, dog), or embedded in a string of letters. Example: *IMPlCOTheC (I am playing outside on the swing.)*	Word bank or word prediction software
6	Two to three intelligible words	Two or three different intelligible words embedded in strings, separated by spaces, or in a list format. Single letter words such as "I" and "a" must be separated by spaces to count as an intelligible word. Example: *IYTKTOSMNTHETR (I like to swim under the water.)*	Word bank or word prediction software
7	Three or more different intelligible words in a list	Three or more related words. Example: *Lions Detroit football*	Word bank or word prediction software

(*continues*)

Writing Scale Continued

Levels	Scoring Criteria	Description	Accommodations
8	Partial sentence of more than three words	More than three different intelligible words, with at least two of them in a partially formed sentence (i.e., grammatically related parts of a phrase, clause, or sentence). Example: *MYDADDYWASLIEGAGARILA (My daddy was like a gorilla.)*	Word bank or word prediction software
9	One to two complete sentences	Sentences have a subject phrase and a verb phrase. End punctuation is not necessary. Example: *I am hpe Easter is here. I cw the Easter bnny. (I am happy Easter is here. I saw the Easter bunny.)*	Word bank or word prediction software
10	Three or more unrelated sentences (neither coherent nor cohesive)	Sentences have no coherent topic (i.e., sentences are not related) *I play a game. I went to my fnid house. I went to get a egg to eat. I went to chansh on Sun day. I kiss my momer sun day. I can walk my dog. I sat in my house. I went to the saing in ring.*	Word bank or word prediction software
11	Three or more related sentences (coherent but limited cohesive)	Organized writing with three or more sentences on a coherent topic but with limited cohesion between sentences (i.e., sentences can be reordered without changing meaning). Example: *Frogs are eggs. Frog are cool. I no how a frog grows egg then grow mory. Frog eat lot of things that we don't eat like bugs. I want a frog to play with. I thak frogs are mumloss because thae swim.*	Word bank or word prediction software
12	Three or more related sentences that cannot be reordered (coherent and cohesive)	Organized writing with a coherent topic (i.e., on a consistent theme) and use of cohesive devices (e.g., pronoun or synonym replacement, logical connectors, subordinating conjunctions, conclusions that refer to prior content) across three or more sentences so that sentences cannot be reordered without changing meaning (see Supplemental Digital Content [available at http://links.lww.com/TLD/A10] Appendix A [available at http://links.lww.com/TLD/A10] for examples)	Word bank or word prediction software
13	Two coherent paragraphs of at least three cohesive sentences each	Organized writing with a coherent main topic and two cohesive subsections (subtopics or story parts), with at least two sentences elaborating the meaning of each (see Supplemental Digital Content Appendix A [available at http://links.lww.com/TLD/A10] for examples)	Word bank or word prediction software
14	Three or more coherent paragraphs of at least three cohesive sentences each	Organized writing with a coherent main topic and at least three cohesive subsections (subtopics or story parts), with at least two sentences elaborating the meaning of each (see Supplemental Digital Content Appendix A [available at http://links.lww.com/TLD/A10] for examples)	Word bank or word prediction software

Project Core Modules

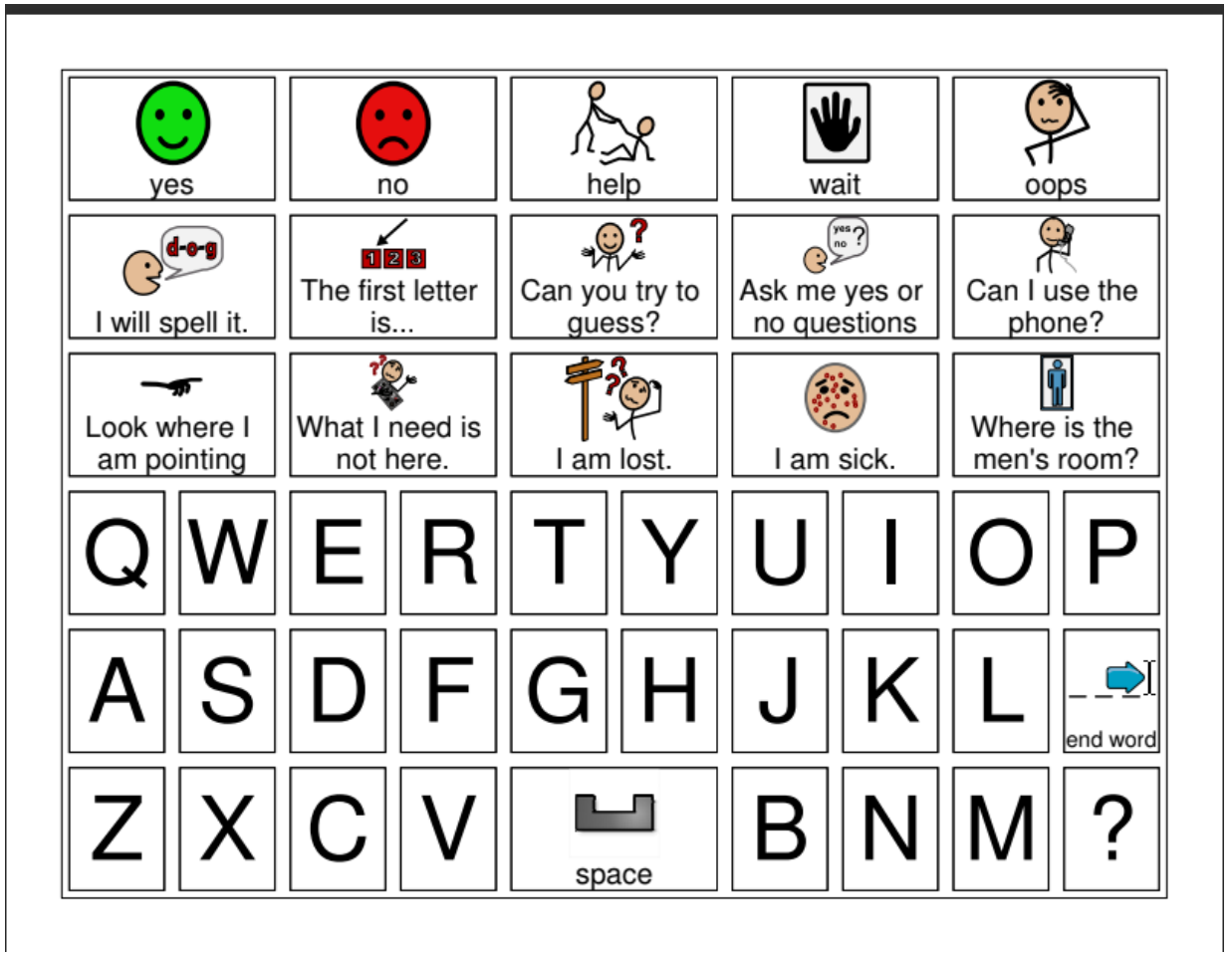


Module 12: Independent Writing

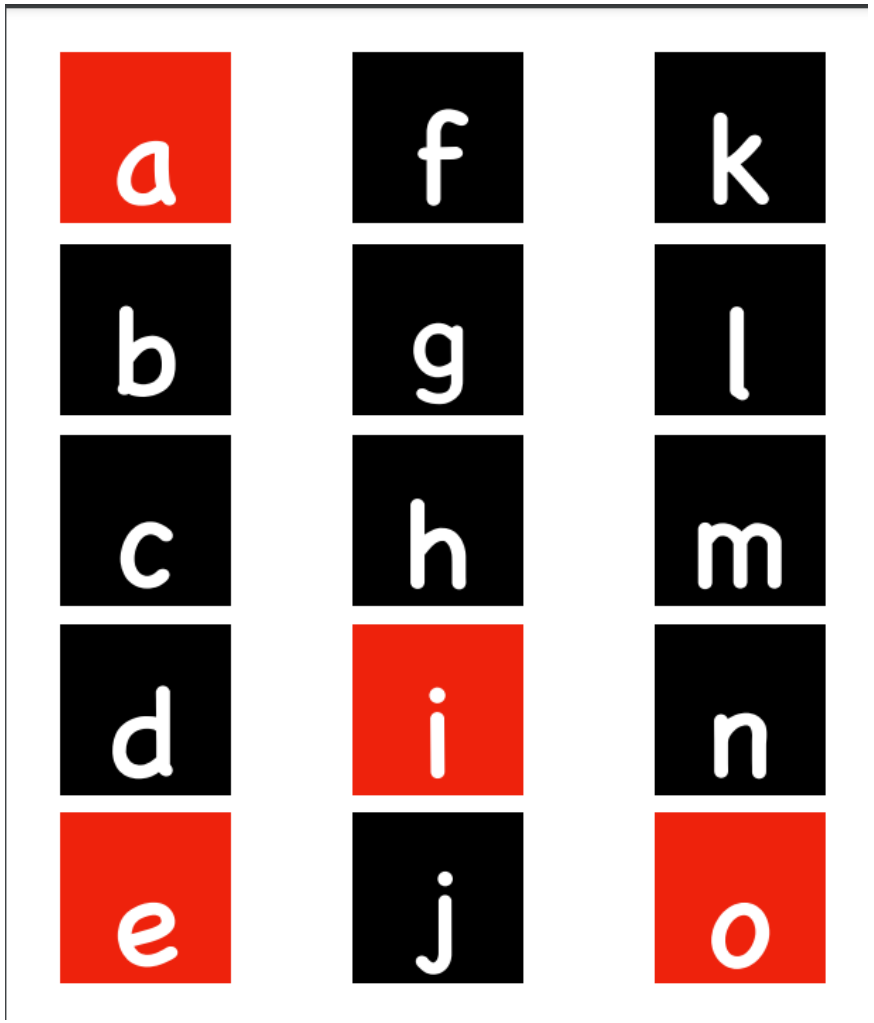
Overview and case examples of strategies for embedding communication instruction into independent writing lessons.

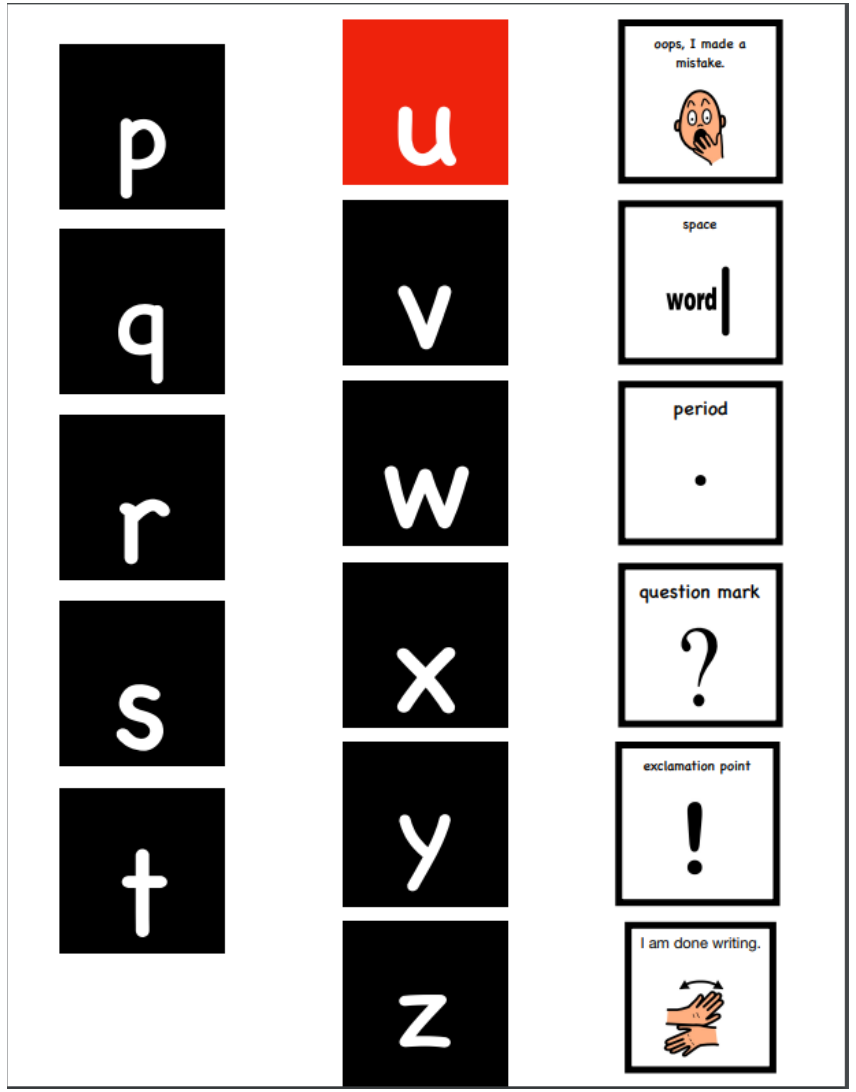
Learn More About Module 12

Spelling Board with Picture Support



Vertical Alternate Pencil





Alternate Pencils Resources

- Co-Writer: Options for Letters Only, will read aloud) https://cowriter.com/
- Build in Accessibility TTS for Writing
- SuperKeys: https://www.cricksoft.com/us/superkeys
- TalkSuite App: https://talk-suite.com/
- Clicker Sentences: https://www.spectronics.com.au/article/clicker-sentences
- Keedogo by Assistive Ware: https://apps.apple.com/us/app/keedogo-plus/id918496636
- Keeble by Assistive Ware: https://www.assistiveware.com/products/keeble
- Alternative Pencil For Auditory Plus Visual Scanning by Linda J Burkhart : https://lindaburkhart.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/alternative-pencil-auditory-plus-visual-scan-Burkhart-lower-case-D.pdf

Project Core

- A Stepping-Up Technology Implementation Grant Directed by the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies

- ABOUT
- QUICK START GUIDE
- TEACHING SUPPORTS AND IMPLEMENTATION
- PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
- UNIVERSAL CORE
- COMMUNICATION APPS AND SGDS
- SCHOOL GUIDANCE
- RESEARCH
- SUCCESS STORIES
- FAQS

Tips for Supporting Student Writers

Do

- Give encouragement (e.g., Go ahead and write! OR Keep writing! OR You are doing a good job!)
- Remind students to think of ideas & words in their head & try to spell them

Don't Suggest

- Writing topic ideas (e.g., You could rite about what you did on the weekend
- Text types (e.g., Write a story.)
- Words or ideas they can use
- Word Spelling

@Sturm, McCarty, Staskowski – used with permission

Is it writing?

Spelling

KANSAS
STATE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
www.ksde.org | #KansansCan

Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.

Research on 2nd graders

- Students who had a spelling focus on instruction saw improvements in word reading and spelling
- Students who had a reading focus on instruction saw improvements in word reading

- 2023 Sturm, McCarthy, Staskowski – Building a toolbox for Literacy Instruction

Hear It, Say IT, Spell It

Gentry & Ouellette, 2019)

Teacher says the word for “hear it”

Student says the word for “say it” (verbally or on AAC device)

Teacher models the spelling of the word – model, sound it out, write & spell

Say the word “cat”, then model "sounding it out“ -
Say /k/ &write “c”
Say /a/ & write “a”
Say /t/ & write “t”
Blend the word and say “cat”

© 2023 Sturm, McCarthy, Staskowski

Shared with permission

Contact Information

Cary Rogers
Education Program Consultant
Special Education and Title Services Team
(785) 296-0916
crogers@ksde.org

KANSAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION