Phase Four - Sentences

Consistent Practice

We believe that given the right time and support all students can learn to their full potential.

What should be consistent about phase four of the PWIM?

**Phase 4– Sentences**

- Anchor charts with sentence work
- Teacher using mentor texts as models to improve sentences “Mentor texts serve to show, not just tell, students how to write well. They, along with the teacher, provide wonderful examples that help students grow into successful writers through supportive partnerships.” (Dorfman and Cappelli, 2007)
- Teacher modelling sentence writing, classifying sentences, titling sentence categories, etc.
- Students with a set of sentence strips, practicing fluency, classifying sentences, titling sentence categories, and practicing a variety of sentence-related skills [Sentence Templates](#)
- Each student should have his/her own sentence on an anchor chart. The sentences need to be numbered, and followed by the student author’s name in parenthesis in smaller font
- The sentences on the sentence cards should be typed or printed by the teacher.

How will we know when we are effectively and deeply implementing phase four of PWIM?

- Sentences should become more complex from the read alouds and modelling
- There should be a variety of sentence structures and vocabulary
- Improved fluency in reading sentences
- Improved paragraph writing
- More attention to word choice
- Students can talk about what makes a good sentence: fluency, voice, idea
- Students can talk about the reading/writing connection
How is the consistent practice of PWIM supported in the literature or in research?

- Uses, consistently, a variety of complete, detailed sentences with varied openings and correct punctuation and capitalization. Uses, consistently, quotation marks with dialogue. Access Saskatchewan ELA Curriculum 2010
- Chooses and uses words for a particular effect and to add interest and details; Access Saskatchewan ELA Curriculum 2010
- Within the context of community writing, the students not only learn about letters, sounds, and how words work but also about decisions writers make, such as what to include, how to best structure a sentence to make a point, or how to organize thoughts on a topic. Johnson and Keier (2010)
- Writing together is an excellent time to teach children within their zone of proximal development, especially when sharing the pen…community writing can be done in all subject areas, as long as it comes from an authentic shared experience and is surrounded by a great deal of conversation. Johnson and Keier (2010)
- From the time children become comfortable writing and sharing what they have written, conventional spelling, mechanics, and usage are supported with wall charts and gradually taught by having students learn to apply them a little at a time in their writing. Cunningham and Moore (2004)
- “In developing young writers, my sense is that they are not being stretched much, if at all, in our schools today.” Gallagher (2011)
- Modelling is central to explicit instruction. Teachers who provide explicit instruction use the Think Aloud frequently to model the use of reading and writing strategies, understanding that students need multiple demonstrations of strategy use over extended intervals. They also understand that students may experience “cognitive overload” and be overwhelmed if instructed to learn a new process skill or strategy at the same time as new learning materials. Therefore they often present new strategies in the context of familiar materials, introducing new content only after students have acquired some proficiency in the use of the target strategy. Elliott & Woloshyn (2013)
What do I do or who can I talk to for support with phase one of PWIM?

- Talk to the teachers in your building who are experienced with PWIM
- Contact any member of the Literacy for Life support team
- Access the Literacy for Life portal

What evidence will I have that this is making a difference in student learning outcomes?

- Sentences will become more complex from the read alouds and modelling
- There should be a variety of sentence structures and vocabulary
- Improved fluency in reading sentences
- Improved paragraph writing
- More attention to word choice
- Students can talk about what makes a good sentence: fluency, voice, idea

Resource List


![Image of students in a classroom setting]