Step Up to Writing
Step Up To Writing
Presenters, Marlene Rolfe and Colleen Canale

Sign In

Introductions
- What is your goal or purpose for this workshop?

Power Point

Presentation

Break

It’s All In The Bag!!!!!

Game

Power Point continued

Students at work & testimonials

Accordion

Video

Course Comments and Evaluation

Thank you for joining us today!
What is “Step Up to Writing?”

- Development process began in 1985 by a middle school teacher who wanted to improve her students’ writing.

- The methods are simple and effective.

- This was originally called the Read-Write Connection until 1999.
Easy to Teach Program
Components

- Clear, straightforward instructions on teaching methods:
- Step-by-step guidelines for lessons, activities, and strategies;
- Examples, instructional models, and charts;
- Reproducible student materials;
- Ideas for curriculum integration and topics for writing prompts;
- Sequencing of skills for writing strategies
Teacher’s Role

• Classroom teachers giving writing instruction act as facilitators or they provide direct instruction.

• In Step Up to Writing the teacher acts as the “sage on the stage” giving explicit instruction and specific modeling techniques.
Using Colors to Teach Organization

Topic Sentence:
- Green means “go;” it asks the writer to decide:
  “What am I going to prove?”
  “What am I going to explain?”
  “What information will I share?”

Reasons/Details/Facts:
- Yellow means “slow down.”
  - Introduce key concepts to support the topic sentence.

Explain:
- Red means “stop and explain.”
- Present evidence.
- Provide explanation and examples.

Conclusion:
- Green means “go back to your topic.”
- Restate the topic and the position.
- Do not introduce new information.
- Use synonyms and leave your reader with something to remember.
Two Categories of Writing

• **Telling a story (a narrative)**
  – This type of writing requires a beginning, a middle, and an end. The beginning of a story pulls the reader into the story; it does not always give the reader advance warning of what is to come.

• **Giving information (explaining/expository)**
  – This type of writing shares information and has an introduction, body sentences/paragraphs, and a conclusion.
"My first Dog"

"When I was 2 years old, I saw my dog Sabbie for the very first time. First, I was in my room with my Best Friend and I saw what I thought was my pillow walking. I pick it up and said, "Mom, there is an animal in my hands!" Next, I pulled her white, thik hair. Like I did to my pillow. My dog squealed like a pig. Then my friend leaped on her because she loved to jump on pillows. Sabbie stopped gazing at me and tried to get away. Finally, my friend Alice grabbed Sabbie turned out later to be a really cute Dog."
Dear Mr. Guff,

Please do not eat me for Thanksgiving. I think you should eat hamburgers. People love to eat them at picnics. Maybe you could become a vegetarian. Carrots and lettuce are very healthy. You can also go to the store. The store has a lot of turkeys you could buy. My last idea is you can pick me next year. I will be a lot fatter. In conclusion, I have given you a lot of ideas, so please leave me alone!

Sincerely,

Tom Turkey
• Describe what is happening in this picture. What is the father robin doing? What are the babies doing? Remember to tell how things look, feel, sound, taste, and smell.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>See</th>
<th>Touch</th>
<th>Taste</th>
<th>Smell</th>
<th>Hear</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>birds</td>
<td>Reddish-brown, blue, tiny, miniature, three, one, narrow, tall</td>
<td>Delicate, smooth, silky, fluffy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chirp, peep, CAW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nest</td>
<td>Brown, uneven</td>
<td>Rough, ragged, scraggly, bumpy</td>
<td></td>
<td>piney</td>
<td>Crunch, crumble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>worm</td>
<td>One, pinkish, brown, purple, string-like, lengthy</td>
<td>Slimy, slippery, wet, ticklish</td>
<td>Gooey, delicious, slimy</td>
<td>Earthy, musty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clouds</td>
<td>Fluffy, white, puffy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feathers</td>
<td>Baby, gray</td>
<td>Silky, puffy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>flapping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leaves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Robin Family

One day with clouds, Father Robin flew to his nest in the tree to feed his babies. The babies began to chirp and flap their wings when they saw the worm in their father’s mouth. They opened their mouths and Father Robin fed the worm to them. The babies thought that the worm tasted good. The robins ate until they felt full. Then they settled down in their nest and took a nap. All of the excitement had made them tired. Father Robin was glad that he had found a worm to make his babies happy.
The Robin Family

One _______day with __________, ___________ clouds, Father Robin flew to his ________nest in the _________tree to feed his ________ babies. The ________ babies began to chirp and flap their _______ wings when they saw the _________ _______ worm in their father’s mouth. They opened their _______ mouths and Father Robin fed the _______ worm to them. The ________ babies thought that the ______ worm tasted (good)__________. The _____ robins ate until they felt (full)_____________. They settled down in their _________ nest and took a _________ nap. All of the excitement had made them (tired) __________. Father Bird was glad that he had found a _____ worm to make his _______ babies (happy) ______________.
The Robin Family

One sunny day with bright, white clouds, Father Robin flew to his ragged nest in the giant tree to feed his beautiful babies. The reddish brown babies began to chirp and flap their gray wings when they saw the gooey, slimy worm in their father’s shiny mouth. They opened their miniature mouths and Father Robin fed the pinkish-brown worm to them. The three babies thought that the silky worm tasted delicious. The tiny robins ate until they felt stuffed. They settled down in their scraggly nest and took a comfortable, cozy nap. All of the excitement had made them sleepy. Father Bird was glad that he had found a ticklish worm to make his blue babies delighted.
After reading the story *The Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid of Anything*, I discovered many characteristics about the little old lady. The little old lady was very brave. The lady repeats many times that she is not afraid of anything. She is caring. At the end of the story she gave an idea to the pumpkin to become a scarecrow. The little old lady is also thoughtful. The lady made the pumpkin happy. Finally, the little old lady was creative. She was creative because she made a plan for the pumpkin. In fact, the little old lady was a magnificent character.
She said, "I'm not afraid of anything."
Little Old Lady thoughtfu brave caring creative Felt upset and wanted to guide the pumpkin She said I’m not afraid of anything made a plan gave idea to pumpkin Little Old Lady
Carrots, lettuce, are healthy

Can I change your mind?

People love them at picnics

Buy turkey

store

vegetarian

hamburgers

Pick me next year

fatter

Can I change your mind?
Step Up to Writing (with a Science Twist)

- **Topic Sentence:** Can be in the form of a claim – a statement of one’s understanding about a phenomenon or about the results of an investigation.

- **Evidence / Reason:** Provide appropriate and sufficient facts, data, or observations to support your claim.

- **Explain:** Provide reasoning that links the evidence to the claim. Use scientific vocabulary and principles to connect to what one is doing or learning.

- **Evidence/Reason:**
- **Explain:**
- **Conclusion:**
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>What <strong>problem</strong> are you doing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>What is the <strong>question</strong>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>What are the <strong>facts</strong>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>What <strong>clues</strong> or clue words are given?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Make a drawing, an <strong>illustration</strong>, or chart, or a graph to show that you understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Make a <strong>prediction</strong> or estimate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Do the <strong>work</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Give the <strong>final answer</strong> with labels in a complete sentence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WILL: “IT IS SO EASY TO ORGANIZE MY IDEAS BEFORE I WRITE.”

Karl: “Wow! I can’t believe I wrote so much. It seemed really easy.”

Casey: “Can I bring this home? My mom will really like this. I want to read it to my sisters.”
• “I love the structure that Step Up can give to kids. Even my great writers (4th, 5th) can utilize the structure. It is not an all-encompassing program, but after 16 years in the classroom, I can say that it is the first program I’ve seen that gives kids a place to start. It works best when the whole school is using it so that there is a common thread through all the grades.”

• “I like the structure of Step Up. I teach ELL students and have found that the program helps them to better organize their thoughts. Of course, any good teacher is going to take the best of what works from each program they come into contact with to create a balanced comprehensive program. My suggestion is to take what works for you and then continue to look for something else to fill in the gaps. There is NEVER going to be one program that will cover EVERYTHING that you want and need.”

• “…it works wonders….students love the color-coding….it begins to give students a structure they can follow…the colored posters and color-coding really helps ingrain the system into the child’s mind…”

• “I have used this program for many years and have found it’s the only organizational tool that has worked for my Language Disordered kids…”
• “I just got our state test results back. After using Step Up for one year we raised our scores significantly. It’s not a perfect program, but it is a great tool to add to the tool box.”

• “…Step Up teaches kids to write like little clones of each other….there are probably teachers out there who like it…I can’t say anything nice about this program…”

• “While many students are gifted with words, there are others that struggle and need direction and a formula. These students need help with organization. Step Up can offer that organizational help.”
Why Do We Need to Teach Expository Writing?

1. Most of the writing that students will be asked to do in school and in the workplace will be expository writing.

2. Expository writing teaches writers to think clearly and logically.

3. Expository writing helps students learn content.
Why Do We Need to Teach Expository Writing?

• 4. Expository writing prepares students to write speeches and give oral presentations.

• 5. Learning to write clear paragraphs, reports, and essays gives students confidence.

• 6. Learning to write clear paragraphs, reports, and essays helps students perform better on writing assessments.
Elements of Expository Writing

• Organization is the key.

• Topic sentences and thesis statements are the heart.

• Transitions are the glue for the key ideas.

• Examples, evidence, and explanations are the meat.

• Conclusions tie it all together.
Create an Outline

6 Sentence Paragraph

Topic Sentence
* Reason/detail/fact
  - Explain
* Reason/detail/fact
  - Explain

Conclusion
Organizing with Informal Outlines

(Powering Out Method – J.E. Sparks)

Used for the planning stage in the writing process (linear brainstorming).

Informal outlines do not have tight rules.

The idea is to jot down ideas quickly and then rearrange/delete items.

Writers are free to focus on content.

Identify topic, Label main ideas as ones or stars, Label details as twos and threes or dashes and dots.
It’s the Color, Not the Form

Topic =

1 ____
2 ____
3 ____

1 ____
2 ____
3 ____

1 ____
2 ____
3 ____
The Power of an Informal Outline

- Use informal outlines to brainstorm at the end of class, beginning of class, to review for a test, as a test.
- Teach informal outlines by Powering Out orally, relay races, sorting games.

- Topic = Foods
  1 __________
  1 __________

- Topic = Summer
  * __________
  * __________

- Topic = _______
  *Firefighters
  *Police Officers
Color Coding Enables Students

• Color coding enables your students to visualize writing organization by using the colors of the traffic signal. Students follow these steps:
  – Step 1: Construct informal outline
  – Step 2: Convert outline to sentences
  – Step 3: Compile the paragraph
Go!
Write a topic sentence.

Slow Down!
Give a reason, detail, or fact. Use a transition.

Stop!
Explain. Give an example.

Go Back!
Remind the reader of your topic.
Organizing With Accordion
8 Sentence Paragraphs
(Fold paper in half/then half again-"hot dog" style)
(front)

1. Topic Sentence

2. R/D/F

3. Explain

4. R/D/F

(back)

5. Explain

6. R/D/F

7. Explain

8. Conclusion
Green Light
Write
Green means “go.”

Green asks the writer to decide:

- “What am I going to prove?”
- “What am I going to explain?”
- “What information will I share?”
Begin at the Beginning!
Thirteen Methods for Writing a Topic Sentence

• 1. Occasion/Position Statements
• 2. Power (Number) Statements
• 3. However Statements
• 4. And, But, and Or Statements
• 5. A Few Good Prepositions
• 6. To, Plus a Verb
Topic Sentences

- 7. The List Statement
- 8. Get Their Attention
- 9. A Rhetorical Question
- 10. Side-by-Side Statements
- 11. Semicolon Topic Sentences
- 12. Two Nouns and Two Commas/ Using an Appositive
- 13. Using a Quotation
Yellow means “slow down.”

Introduce key concepts to support the topic sentence.

Use a transition.
Explain/Give an Example

Red means stop and use the E’s to support your topic and bring your paragraph to life.

Include:

• Examples
• Explanation
• Evidence
• Events
• Experiences
• Excitement
• Elaboration
Conclusion

Green means “go back to your topic.”

Restate the topic and position.

Do NOT introduce new information.

Use synonyms and leave your reader with something to remember.
Prewriting
(Venn Diagram)
Rough Draft
Use
and rough skin:

1. Topic
2. Reason/Detail/Fact
3. Explain
4. Reason/Detail/Fact
5. Explain
6. Reason/Detail/Fact
7. Explain
8. Conclusion
Alligator

- Snout rounded
- Teeth don't show when mouth shut

Crocodile

- Snout pointed
- Some teeth show when mouth shut

Both

- Long snouts
- Short legs
- Tough, rough skin
- Lots of teeth
- Live near water
- Catch fish, birds
- Good swimmers

Reasons: Alligator and Crocodile
Tools Needed for Writing Clear, Concise, Organized Paragraphs

- Direct instruction
- Step-by-step guidelines
- Examples
- Opportunities to practice
- Specific feedback
Step Up to Writing

- Although Step Up to Writing was originally designed for middle school students, the systematic approach to teach writing skills can be adapted to teach students from the earliest grades through high school.

- It is particularly useful in special education classrooms due to the wealth of visual aids and hands on activities.
Step Up to Writing Is a Unique, Multisensory Approach to Writing

To make the process easier, students use:

• Color coding

• Folded paper

• Lists of words

• Informal outlines
Generic Expository Paragraphs

• Need a title
• Have a topic sentence
• Use transitions
• Explain and give examples
• Have a conclusion
Website Listings

Step Up to Writing – THE MOVIE