

Supporting Writing Strategy Development in the General Education Classroom

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What is a Strategy?

...a tool, plan, or method used for accomplishing a task.

Terms that are related to strategies:

- Cognitive Strategy
- Cues
- Independent, Strategic Learner
- Learning Strategy
- Metacognition and Self-regulation
- Mnemonic
- Strategy Instruction
- Learning Schema

Students who become strategic:

- Trust their minds.
- Know there's more than one right way to do things.
- Acknowledge their mistakes and try to rectify them.
- Have improved memory.
- Learn more.
- Have improved self-esteem.
- Feel a sense of power.
- Become more responsible.
- Develop and use a personal study process.
- Know how to "try."
- Are more "engaged."

What Writing Strategies are Most Important to Teach?

- planning
- revising
- questioning
- use of cues
- verbalization
- visualization
- checking
- monitoring

Self Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD)

- Based on the work of Graham and Harris (2005)
- SRSD is a method for providing explicit, focused writing instruction.
- SRSD assumes that some children require more specific teaching in order to be able to understand and use effective writing strategies.
- SRSD is supported by numerous research studies with children who experience difficulty writing.

Stages of SRSD Instruction

- There are six recursive stages:
 - Background Knowledge
 - Discuss It
 - Model It
 - Memorize It
 - Support It
 - Independent Performance

Background Knowledge

- Develop background knowledge and teach any pre-skills needed for learning and using the writing strategy.
- Examples:
 - Vocabulary specific to strategy (e.g., topic sentence, topic, main idea)
 - Skills embedded in the strategy (e.g., writing a topic sentence, determining the main idea)

Self-Statements

- Self-statements are designed to regulate strategy use, writing task, or interfering student behavior. They include statements that focus on:
 - Problem definition – “What is it I have to do here?”
 - Focusing and attention – “I need to concentrate.”
 - Strategy-step statements – “I need to write down my strategy reminder.”
 - Self-evaluation and error correction – “Have I used all my parts?”
 - Coping and self-control – “I can handle this; slow down and take my time.”
 - Self reinforcement – “I like this ending.”

Discuss It

- Discussing the strategy involves several specific components:
 - Explain the new strategy and each step.
 - Define the strategy purpose, benefits and how and when to use it.
 - Examine and discuss current writing performance and strategies used to accomplish specific writing tasks.
 - Encourage students to make a commitment to learn the strategy and act as a collaborative partner in order to accomplish their goal.
 - Introduce progress monitoring.
 - Discuss positive self-statements and address negative or interfering student statements/behaviors.

Model It

- Model how to use the strategy.
- Include appropriate self-talk and self-instruction.
- Show children how to use self-instruction that includes problem definition, planning, strategy use, self-evaluation, error corrections, coping, and self-reinforcement statements.
- Collaborate with class/student to modify the strategy as necessary to make it more effective and efficient.
- Introduce goal setting.

Memorize It

- “You can’t use it if you can’t remember it”
- Encourage the students to memorize and practice the steps of the new strategy and accompanying mnemonic.

Support It

- ❑ Support students in using the writing strategy, self-statements, and any other self-regulation processes already introduced.
- ❑ Assistance comes from the teacher, peers, or both until they use the strategy procedures are used independently.
- ❑ Assistance ranges from direct assistance, to modeling, to corrective feedback and praise.
- ❑ Students are encouraged to support each other by working together to apply the strategies.
- ❑ Assistance is faded as soon as possible and students are encouraged to use personal self-statements privately.

Independent Performance

- ❑ Students work to apply the strategy independently.



Project SOLO™ Overview

Project SOLO™ was designed to investigate the additive benefits of SOLO™ software and ready-made assignments for SOLO™ software to self-regulated strategy instruction (SRSI) for middle-grades students with and without identified disabilities who struggle with writing.

Design

- ❑ Random assignment of 9 teachers to one of three treatment conditions:
 - Self-Regulated Strategy Instruction Only
 - Self-Regulated Strategy Instruction plus SOLO™
 - Self-Regulated Strategy Instruction plus SOLO™ with Ready-Made assignments produced by the research team to the teacher's specifications.
- ❑ Six weeks of intervention (18, 45 min. lessons)
- ❑ Ongoing classroom observations and collection of observational data including fidelity checklists.

Research Measures

- ❑ Pretest/Posttest Measures:
 - Test of Written Language – 3 (TOWL-3, Hammill & Larsen, 1996)
 - Writing Attitudes Survey (Kear, Coffman, McKenna, & Ambrosio, 2000)
 - Focus Group Interviews
- ❑ Observation of instruction (Fidelity)

Participants

- ❑ Nine teachers, 3 each in grades 3, 4, and 5.
 - 7 teachers hold a masters degree
 - 4 teachers hold National Board Certification.
 - Average of 12 years of experience (range 3-30 years).
- ❑ 80 students in grades 3 (n=29), 4 (n=28), and 5 (n=23).
 - 12 additional children took either the pre or posttest but not both.
 - 1 child did not speak English well enough to understand the directions.
 - 11 have Identified Disabilities, 14 Identified as Gifted

The Intervention

- Teachers in each grade level selected a strategy to teach using SRSD instruction.
 - 3rd Grade: Summary Writing
 - 4th Grade: Narrative
 - 5th Grade: Expository
- All teachers were provided with an example of the 18 lessons for the writing strategy they were implementing at their grade level.
 - The 18 lessons did not provide information regarding the implementation of SOLO™.

SRSD

The six stages of the writing strategy instruction were built into the lessons:

- Build Background
- Discuss It
- Model It
- Memorize It
- Support It
- Independent Performance

Summary Writing Strategy

1. Read the text.
2. Identify and write down the main idea.
3. Identify and write down the important things about the main idea.
4. Reread the text to make sure all of the important ideas are in the list.
5. Write a topic sentence.
6. Number the important ideas using 1 for the most important.
7. Turn the topic sentence and list of important ideas into a paragraph.
8. Reread the summary paragraph to make sure it makes sense.
9. Ask yourself, "Have I left anything out?"

Narrative Writing Strategy: SSCARE me

SSCARE

Situation
Setting
Characters
Action
Reaction
Ending

Expository Strategy

TH3 TNT T3Z

Opening paragraph:

Topic
Hook
3 Details +

Body Paragraphs:

Topic
NEED to enumerate
Transition

Closing Paragraph:

Topic
3 Reasons
Zinger

3rd Grade Summary Writing
Strategy: Sample Lesson

Model It

13. Purpose: Identifying the Main Idea and Important Ideas

a. Minilesson

- i. Read a short story to the students.
- ii. Think aloud while you show them how to write the main idea.
- iii. Reread the story, the main idea and other important ideas you've listed. Think aloud while you model the **self-statement**, "Have I written the main idea and all the important ideas?"

b. Student Writing Idea:

- i. Ask students to read a short story or portion of a story and write the main idea and other important ideas. Encourage them to check what they've done and ask themselves, "Have I written all of the important ideas?"

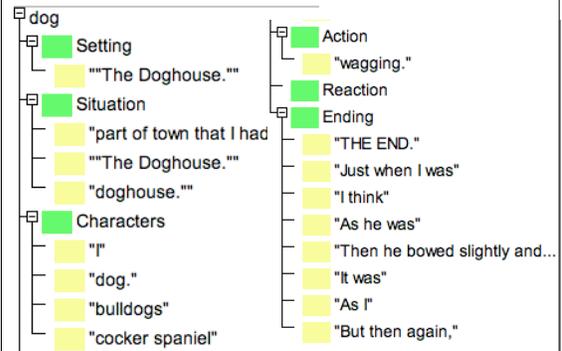
SOLO™ Supported Reading Guide to Support Summary Writing: Christmas in Greece



SOLO™ Supported Reading Guide to Support SSCARE Strategy: The Night I Followed the Dog



Student 1: Completed Supported Reading Guide



After completing the Supported Reading Guide, the teacher directs students to launch Write:OutLoud and retell the story using the information in the Supported Reading Guide.

Student 1's Rewritten Version of The Night I Followed The Dog

As I was going to feed my dog, I saw a Limousine pull up in the Driveway and let my dog out of the limosine. I asked my dog "what were you doing in a limousine?" "I was driving home from the store" oppse. WOW!

dog gets in
car takes off
I get on bike
go though parts of town never seen before
stop in front club
went in club but stop by bulldog
dog said he with me
sat down at table
i said got to go

Just when I thought of something fun to do , I had to leave.

Just when I got on a Mountain dragon it flew away and I was never seen agin.

Student 2: Completed Supported Reading Guide

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> my dogs Setting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "The Doghouse." "club." Situation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "club." "The Doghouse." Characters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "I" "dog." "cocker spaniel" "afghan" "two mean looking bulldogs" "glamorous greyhound" "next-door neighbors" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "grabbed" "I crept" "slightly" "appeared" "wagging." "whisked" Reaction Ending <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Just when I was" "As he was" "It was" "As I" "But then again,"
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**Student 2's Rewritten Version of
The Night I Followed the Dog**

As I was Brushing my teeth I saw my dog getting out of the Limousine Wearing a tuxedo. Is This my dog? Am I dreaming? Shocked I went down stairs and opened dog get in car takes off I get on bike. go through parts of town I never seen before. Just when I thought of something fun to do it was time to go. Just when I figured out a new program I think that twin day is a great idea.

Student 3: Completed Supported Reading Guide

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> my dogs Setting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "The Doghouse." "club." Situation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "club." "The Doghouse." Characters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "I" "dog." "cocker spaniel" "afghan" "two mean looking bulldogs" "glamorous greyhound" "next-door neighbors" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Slowly, I snuck around the..." "I opened the kitchen door and..." "he runs off into the darkness with..." "shake hands," "I crept closer." "and peeked into the doghouse." "and fumbling with the bow tie." Reaction Ending <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Just when I was" "I think" "As he was" "Then he" "disappeared into" "I thought to myself," "But then again,"
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**Student 3's Rewritten Version of
The Night I Followed the Dog**

As I was going out to feed my dog I heard a car door slam and the car took off. I figured it was the next door neighbors. But to my surprise when I went outside I did not see my dog any where. I wondered did the car I heard earlier take my dog. I went to go see if my dog was in his the doghouse.

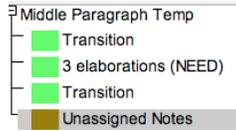
Student 3 Continued

Just when I was thought of something fun to do, I had to leave. Just when were about to see the greatest new show my mom told my friend and I it was time for supper and there was no excuses whats so ever. I think that twin day is a great idea. I think that my friend was going to ask me something but her mom grabbed her arm and said we have to hurry. I think that my 7th birthday was the best birthday ever because I got my puppy named Maggie and I will never for get it. As I was about to go slide down the scariest water slide ever my mom said it is time to go home. As I was about to go to outside It started to rain I was still going to go outside but my mom said I could not go outside in the rain. But then again I wondered if it was a dream after all? Could it have been real? Could it been a dream? As we were about to get to the last level the power went out. As we were about to go in the haunted house they had to close it.

The fifth grade teachers provided students with well-written and poorly written paragraphs to read and analyze using using the Supported Reading Guide in Read:OutLoud.

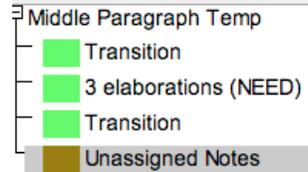
5th Grade Expository Writing Activities -
TH3 TNT T3Z with Good Examples
 Read:OutLoud with Supported Reading Guide

To begin with, my grandmother always put herself last and her family first. By this I mean that she always made sure that the family was fed, bathed and tucked into bed before she took the time to do something she liked to do for pleasure. One night, when I was staying with my grandmother, she was not feeling well, but she helped me with my homework before she laid down to rest. Another time, my grandmother stayed up most of the night with me because I thought I heard a prowler outside. It takes a great deal of sacrifices to put yourself last all of the time.

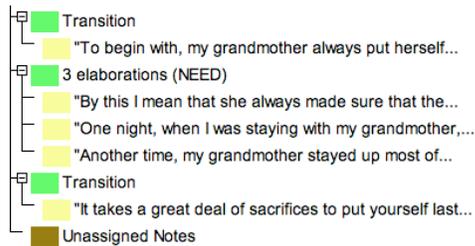


5th Grade Expository Writing Activities
TH3 TNT T3Z with Poor Examples
 Read:OutLoud with Supported Reading Guide

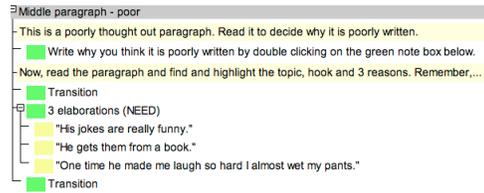
My brother is funny because he tells jokes. His jokes are really funny. He gets them from a book. One time he made me laugh so hard I almost wet my pants.



5th Grader #1-Completed Supported Reading
 Guide from [Well Written Paragraph](#)

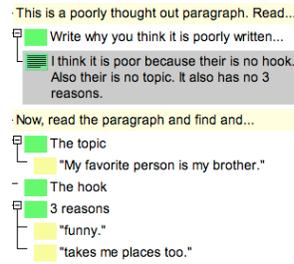


5th Grader #1-Completed Supported Reading
 Guide from [Poorly Written Paragraph](#)



Students then read a poorly written paragraph, find the TNT components, evaluate why the paragraph is poorly written.

5th Grader #2: Completed Supported Reading
 Guide and Evaluation of
[Poorly Written Paragraph](#)



5th Grader #3: Completed Supported Reading Guide and Evaluation of Poorly Written Paragraph

- This is a poorly thought out paragraph. Read...
- Write why you think it is poorly written...
 - It is a poor story because it does not have a hook or the three reasons.
- Now, read the paragraph and find and...
 - The topic
 - "brother."
 - The hook
 - 3 reasons
 - "I like him because he is really funny."
 - "He takes me places too."

Preliminary Results

Comparison of pretest-posttest scores within groups:

- No significant differences for the SRSI-only group on the spontaneous writing subtests of the TOWL ($t = -1.195$, $p > .243$) and the contrived subtests ($t = -.567$, $p > .575$).
- No significant differences for the SRSI plus SOLO group on the spontaneous writing subtests of the TOWL ($t = -1.412$, $p > .181$) and the contrived subtests ($t = -1.010$, $p > .329$).
- Significant differences for the SRSI plus SOLO with support group. Differences on the spontaneous writing subtests of the TOWL ($t = -2.945$, $p > .006$), but not for the contrived subtests ($t = -.282$, $p > .779$).

Preliminary Results

Ability Group Membership Based on TOWL Pretest Scores

Grade	Mean/Standard Deviation	Ability Group (score)	N
3	40.71 (SD = 17.07)	Low (23 or less)	5
		Average (24-56)	18
		High (57 or more)	5
		Low (38 or less)	6
4	53.92 (SD = 15.62)	Average (39 – 68)	24
		High (69 or more)	6
		Low (53 or less)	3
5	68.02 (SD = 14.36)	Average (54 – 81)	16
		High (82 or more)	2
		Low (53 or less)	3

Preliminary Results

Group	N	Mean Scores			
		SRSI only	SOLO	SOLO+	
low	28	pre	31.00	20.00	17.625
		post	30.00	30.00	30.750
		GAIN	-1.00	+10.00	+13.125
average	36	pre	47.1677	33.60	43.2667
		post	48.1111	41.20	40.9667
		GAIN	+9.9434	+7.60	-2.30
high	21	pre	63.6667	70.500	60.400
		post	72.50	55.000	61.600
		GAIN	+8.8333	-15.50	+1.20

Preliminary Results

Participants with Disabilities Only

	SRI only	SOLO™	SOLO™ +	All SOLO™
Garfield	(n=5)	(n=2)	(n=2)	(n=4)
pre	79.2	88.5	62.5	75.5
post	80.5 (gain = +7)	90.0 (gain = +1.5)	79.7 (gain = +17.2)	83.8 (gain = +8.3)
TOWL	(n=4)	(n=2)	(n=3)	(n=5)
pre	48.22	47.88	42.88	44.13
post	53.2 (gain = +4.98)	58.5 (gain = +10.62)	48.33 (gain = +5.45)	52.40 (gain = +8.27)

The Lowest 9 Students Overall

	pretest	posttest	gain	% increase
No Solo	22	29	7	0.25
Solo 3	18	28	11	0.38

No Solo n=3

Solo n=6

Next Steps

Look for a new resources from DJI
that will support you in using
SOLO™ to teach SRSD.