THE SIMPLE VIEW OF WRITING

WEBINAR
with Lyn Stone
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PLEASE ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF

Linguist in private practice

I work with children who struggle with reading and writing

We have high expectations of all our students but…

Sometimes fluent writing is very far off.

This is due to its multiple components.
THE SIMPLE VIEW OF READING

This view does not mean that reading is simple!

Two critical activities in learning to read:

WORD-LEVEL READING

X

LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION

Reading is a PRODUCT of these separate factors
WRITING IS AN **APEX** ACTIVITY.

It requires THE COORDINATION OF multiple skills.
THERE IS A SIMPLE VIEW OF WRITING

Two critical processes:

**Transcription:** mechanics + conventions

**Ideation:** planning, drafting, editing, word choice, structure, genre

Mediated by attention and working memory

Berninger et. al. 2002
THESE CAN BE DIRECTLY INFLUENCED

Mechanics:
- posture
- paper position
- implement
- grip
- motor control

Conventions:
- handwriting
- punctuation
- spelling

Text generation:
- planning
- drafting
- editing
- word choice
- text structure
- genre

TRANSCRIPTION

IDEATION
THESE CAN BE MAXIMIZED

Writing is mediated by the following:

- attention
- working memory

And they can be maximised via a peaceful setting and self-regulation:

“...students can develop self-directed learning behaviors and greater independence when they are explicitly taught how to regulate their thoughts, feelings, and actions related to writing.”

(Glaser & Brunstein, 2007; Montague & Leavell, 1994)
Children do not simply learn to read by reading.

Nor do they learn to write by writing (except the lucky few).

John Hollingsworth (EDI author) talks about the difference between ‘talent discovery/development’

Many components = many opportunities for explicit instruction

Why leave writing development to chance?
“Younger writers and those who struggle with writing will require

- greater explicitness,

- more practice, and

- enhanced scaffolding (e.g., repetitive modeling, graphic aids, checklists, incremental goals, expectations)

than older writers and those who do not struggle with writing.”

Troia, G (2014)
THREE WAYS TO SUPPORT WRITING DEVELOPMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teach</th>
<th>Teach the code — Research tells us that systematic synthetic phonics in the first three years of schooling yields the highest likelihood of success.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adapt</td>
<td>Adapt the instruction and expectation, not the content. All children need to access the curriculum at their own grade level.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Look</td>
<td>Look into ways to self-regulate the writing process, including goal setting, self-monitoring, self-instruction, and self-reinforcement.</td>
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LET’S UNPACK...

**Mechanics:**
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TRANSCRIPTION

IDEATION
Learning to perceive letters and read words is facilitated by producing them by hand.

Handwriting is more effective in establishing automatic recall and recognition than simple visual, auditory or keyboarding input.

(Li & James, 2016; Longcamp et al., 2005)
“The ability to reproduce a particular movement without conscious thought, acquired as a result of frequent repetition of that movement.”

Oxford Dictionary of English

This can go right or it can go wrong...
TRIPOD GRIP
Make like a woodpecker
UNCOMFORTABLE GRIP

Don’t let the grip slip!
YOU CAN CHOOSE YOUR READING POSTURE
WRITING REQUIRES GOOD POSTURE

“1 2 3 4 are your feet on the floor?
5 6 7 8 is your back nice and straight?
9 10 11 12 look at how your pencil’s held!”
• Non-dominant hand holds paper.
• Wrist below the writing line (especially important for left handers).
• Parallel lines with arm and paper edge.
“If handwriting – a skill best taught through explicit instruction – is only emphasized when the students have failed to ‘catch’ the skill, students are likely to fall behind early and develop poor habits that require remediation.” (Dinehart, 2014)

Clear, consistent meta-language

Clear scope and sequence from K-6
A WORD ABOUT IMPLEMENTS & TEXT GENERATION

Mechanics:  
- posture  
- paper position  
- implement  
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Conventions:  
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Lifelong Literacy

TRANSCRIPTION

IDEATION
COLD WRITES & PEN LICENCES: A CLINICAL PERSPECTIVE

- How my population differs from a general classroom population:
  - 1:1
  - non-school context
  - no mistakes
  - conversation

- Humiliation and suffering is a very common reported experience among my students. They will not show you in many cases. Cold writes and pen licences are two culprits.
PLANNING AND DRAFTING

Any self-directed writing should be low-stakes.
Any high-stakes writing should be scaffolded.
Change the emphasis to planning, drafting and editing.
Favour quality over quantity.
We all have our strengths and weaknesses.

Forming letters on a page is a severe weakness for some children.

In extreme cases, letter formation and organizing/expressing written information is caused by neurological impairment.

This impairment is known as Written Expression Disorder or dysgraphia

When transcription and ideation are hard.
SOME RESOURCES FROM THE IDEATION SIDE

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**Conventions:**
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TRANSSCRIPTION

IDEATION
Too much of a gap between explicit teaching and expectation.

Writing needs to be taught through ‘intentional exercises’.

For practice to improve skills, there has to be a ‘specific and focused goal’.
Content knowledge is crucial and writing should be embedded in all subjects.

Key word lists

Vocabulary

Going beyond “What I did at the weekend”

Complete sentences
SUMMARY

1. Fluent writing requires *automatic* transcription and *strategic* text generation.

2. Deliberate, scaffolded, structured practice is harmful for none and *crucial* for some.

3. Focus on the sentences before expecting paragraphs.

4. Quality beats quantity every time.
THE NOT-SO SIMPLE VIEW OF WRITING

Figure 2. The not-so simple view of writing

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FREE KEYBOARDING PROGRAM
https://sense-lang.org/typing/tutor/keyboarding.php


K-12 WRITING SCOPE AND SEQUENCE:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/17c_o68PBeW2CbZS6rjBMLkfCcP91GA1f/view?fbclid=IwAR35NcSKqUYeAG1JK1RW7MUkhkf-1poaLximZrM-tJo3V9gvMAfi2P-kMlg