Reading and Writing
Across
CTE Career Pathways

Participant Packet
Early Child Care

Division of Language Arts/Reading
Division of Career and Technical Education
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Reading and Writing across the Curriculum

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IN THIS ISSUE

- One Implication of CCSS
- Research-Based Recommendations for Fostering RAWAC

The Standards insist that instruction in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language be a shared responsibility within the school. The K–5 standards include expectations for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language applicable to a range of subjects, including but not limited to ELA. The grades 6–12 standards are divided into two sections, one for ELA and the other for history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. This division reflects the unique, time-honored place of ELA teachers in developing students’ literacy skills while at the same time recognizing that teachers in other areas must have a role in this development as well.

Introduction, Common Core State Standards

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS), an initiative of the National Governor’s Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers, have refocused attention on reading and writing across the curriculum. Launched in June of 2010, the CCSS have already been adopted by 40 states. These standards, which focus on mathematics and the English language arts, will replace existing standards in states that have agreed to adopt the CCSS. Accordingly, this is a moment when many teachers and instructional leaders across the country are redesigning curriculum to align with the CCSS. It is also a moment when teachers, instructional leaders, and policymakers can reconceptualize reading and writing across the disciplines.

Reception of the CCSS has been mixed, with praise for higher expectations and more uniformity of curriculum alongside concerns about an even greater focus on high-stakes tests and a narrowing of the curriculum. Regardless of what one thinks of them, the CCSS take a clear stand on behalf of reading and writing across the curriculum. The insistence on making reading and writing instruction “a shared responsibility” within schools signals that teachers in multiple disciplines will be expected to help foster literacy development, and the CCSS benchmarks specify the expectations. This mandate could provide the foundation for creating a robust program of reading and writing across the curriculum (RAWAC) in K–12 education. And in schools where ELA teachers have worked with colleagues to establish these programs, the CCSS may provide further support for their early efforts to build a school-wide culture in support of literacy.

Continued on page 16
The Status Quo

Building a RAWAC program will require significant transformation in most schools because it has not been a priority. Attention to RAWAC has been limited, and it has declined in recent years. A 2002 study showed that eighth graders reported weekly writing assignments in 46% of social studies, 32% of science, and 13% of mathematics classes. By 2007, these numbers had slipped to 44% and 30% for social studies and science respectively, with mathematics remaining constant. For twelfth graders the numbers were similar, with writing assignments reported for 40% in social studies, 20% in science, and 8% in math in 2002, and in 2007 these numbers were 42%, 21% and 8% respectively.²

Furthermore, research shows that most secondary teachers outside ELA struggle to see their subject as inherently linked to conversations about what it means to be a reader or writer who makes sense of science or math. Accordingly, these teachers express little interest in incorporating instruction in reading and writing into their courses. One reason teachers of subjects like science, math, or social studies don’t see the importance of teaching reading and writing is that they have not had opportunities to consider what it would mean.³ Clearly, if RAWAC is going to be incorporated into classes beyond ELA, teachers’ views of RAWAC need to change, and schools will need to undertake significant programs of professional development.

The Benefits of RAWAC

The research is clear: discipline-based instruction in reading and writing enhances student achievement in all subjects. Studies show that reading and writing across the curriculum are essential to learning. Without strategies for reading course material and opportunities to write thoughtfully about it, students have difficulty mastering concepts.⁴ These literacy practices are firmly linked with both thinking and learning. Students who can read with clear comprehension and write effectively about a given subject matter will learn the material much more thoroughly than those who do not. Yet, as research shows, reading and writing cannot be learned once and for all; these skills represent complex arrays of capacities that vary from one discipline to another. Reading and writing in science is not the same as reading and writing in social studies or a technical subject like drafting.⁵ This means that student achievement can be enhanced by teachers who focus on helping their students develop strategies for reading and writing within their respective content areas.

Brockton High School in Massachusetts offers a compelling example of the powerfully positive effects of RAWAC. The largest high school in the state, in 1999 its test scores were very near the bottom in Massachusetts, and three out of four students dropped out. After the 1999 test scores were reported, a group of teachers persuaded the administration to let them develop a program that integrated “reading and writing lessons into every class in all subjects, even gym.”⁶ By 2001 student retention and test scores had improved dramatically, and in 2009 and 2010 Brockton outscored 90% of Massachusetts schools. Researchers have studied the Brockton turn-around, and it is clear that RAWAC played a key role.⁷

Research-Based Recommendations for Fostering RAWAC

Reframing RAWAC

Research on the benefits of RAWAC is not new, but implementation of programs that incorporate reading and writing instruction into all subjects has been slow and/or unsuccessful. Preliminary studies show that reframing the teacher’s role in RAWAC can be effective in leading teachers to focus more attention on reading and writing. Specifically, a few strategies for approaching RAWAC can make it more appealing to teachers who resist incorporating reading and writing into their instruction.

Use low-stakes writing assignments.

Much teacher resistance to introducing writing in multiple content areas is based on the assumption that it means assigning and grading complicated essays. While such writing has many benefits, learning can also be enhanced with shorter assignments that ask students to explain key concepts, summarize arguments on a given topic, or outline a procedure. Research shows that writing regularly in this way fosters learning because it strengthens connections with course reading.⁸

Provide multiple forms of feedback.

Another source of teacher resistance to incorporating writing into instruction is concern about the need to grade stacks of student papers. Certainly some teacher response is necessary, but student learning can be enhanced by peer responses to writing, whole class discussion of student
writing samples, students’ reflection on their own writing, and brief one-on-one conferences. Such strategies, combined with traditional teacher feedback, can help students develop metacognitive capacities that will enhance their learning.9

**Employ variety in texts and their presentation.**

Textbooks are often assumed to be the primary reading material in all subjects, but research shows that effective teachers use many different kinds of texts—essays, primary sources, fiction, scientific reports, inventories and so on—to help students learn in all subjects. By using these different genres, student learn multiple ways to approach reading. In addition to moving away from total reliance on textbooks, teachers can help students improve as readers by giving assignments of varying length or reading difficult texts aloud and pausing to explain their own meaning-making process.10

**Employ a variety of levels of reading difficulty.**

Because not all students are able to read at grade level, content-area teachers need to provide accessible materials for those who can’t, and this means making available texts with varying degrees of difficulty. All students need to be readers and writers in a variety of subjects, but teachers need to scaffold their learning.11

**The Role of Professional Development**

Research also suggests ways to help teachers who feel unprepared to take up RAWAC in their classes. Even when K–12 teachers accept the idea that RAWAC will foster deeper learning in a given subject matter, they often take the position that they lack the professional expertise necessary for helping students to develop their literacy capacities. Findings from research on professional development can help address this issue.

**Sustained and intensive professional development fosters student achievement.**

Research shows that not all professional development is equally effective. To change instructional practice in ways that yield real gains in student achievement, professional development needs to: extend across 50 hours; connect to a school initiative; foster collaboration among teachers; and focus on the teaching and learning of specific academic content.12 Few teachers in subjects outside ELA have been trained to provide effective instruction in reading and writing across the curriculum, so any serious effort to establish this kind of teaching will require significant investment in the professional development of teachers.

**The benefits of collaboration in professional development extend across multiple classrooms.**

If the goal is to help teachers in several disciplines become effective in incorporating reading and writing instruction into their teaching, the most effective way to accomplish this will be through collaborative models of professional development. In particular, teacher learning communities or communities of practice—interdisciplinary groups that share study and reflection on their own practices—can be effective in transforming teaching.13

**Professional development in reading and writing across disciplines can be especially attractive to teachers.**

Learning to incorporate reading and writing into multiple disciplines encourages teacher inquiry, and most teachers find this kind of learning very appealing. Literacy programs that extend across several subjects foster a “rhetoric of inquiry” that connects with K–12 teachers’ predispositions toward learning. This approach can support the development of learning to combine content knowledge with strategies for conveying it—a capacity often called pedagogical content knowledge.14

**Endnotes**


"Dave, stop. Stop, will you? Stop, Dave. Will you stop, Dave?" So the supercomputer HAL pleads with the implacable astronaut Dave Bowman in a famous and weirdly poignant scene toward the end of Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A Space Odyssey. Bowman, having nearly been sent to a deep-space death by the malfunctioning machine, is calmly, coldly disconnecting the memory circuits that control its artificial brain. "Dave, my mind is going," HAL says, forlornly. "I can feel it. I can feel it."

I can feel it, too. Over the past few years I've had an uncomfortable sense that someone, or something, has been tinkering with my brain, remapping the neural circuitry, reprogramming the memory. My mind isn’t going—so far as I can tell—but it’s changing. I'm not thinking the way I used to think. I can feel it most strongly when I'm reading. Immersing myself in a book or a lengthy article used to be easy. My mind would get caught up in the narrative or the turns of the argument, and I'd spend hours strolling through long stretches of prose. That’s rarely the case anymore. Now my concentration often starts to drift after two or three pages. I get fidgety, lose the thread, begin looking for something else to do. I feel as if I'm always dragging my wayward brain back to the text. The deep reading that used to come naturally has become a struggle.

I think I know what’s going on. For more than a decade now, I’ve been spending a lot of time online, searching and surfing and sometimes adding to the great databases of the Internet. The Web has been a godsend to me as a writer. Research that once required days in the stacks or periodical rooms of libraries can now be done in minutes. A few Google searches, some quick clicks on hyperlinks, and I’ve got the telltale fact or pithy quote I was after. Even when I’m not working, I’m as likely as not to be foraging in the Web’s info-thickets reading and writing e-mails, scanning headlines and blog posts, watching videos and listening to podcasts, or just tripping from link to link to link. (Unlike footnotes, to which they’re sometimes likened, hyperlinks don’t merely point to related works; they propel you toward them.)

For me, as for others, the Net is becoming a universal medium, the conduit for most of the information that flows through my eyes and ears and into my mind. The advantages of having immediate access to such an incredibly rich store of information are many, and they’ve been widely described and duly applauded. “The perfect recall of silicon memory,” Wired’s Clive Thompson has written, “can be an enormous boon to thinking.” But that boon comes at a price. As the media theorist Marshall McLuhan pointed out in the 1960s, media are not just passive channels of information. They supply the stuff of thought, but they also shape the process of thought. And what the Net seems to be doing is chipping away my capacity for concentration and contemplation. My mind now expects to take in information the way the Net distributes it: in a swiftly moving stream of particles. Once I was a scuba diver in the sea of words. Now I zip along the surface like a guy on a Jet Ski.

I’m not the only one. When I mention my troubles with reading to friends and acquaintances—literary types, most of them—many say they’re having similar experiences. The more they use the Web, the more they have to fight to stay focused on long pieces of writing. Some of the bloggers I follow have also begun mentioning the phenomenon. Scott Karp, who write a blog about online media, recently confessed that he has stopped reading books altogether. “I was a lit major in college, and used to be [a] voracious book reader,” he wrote. “What happened?” He speculates on the answer: “What if I do all my reading on the web not so much because the way I read has changed, i.e. I’m just seeking convenience, but because the way I THINK has changed?”

Bruce Friedman, who blogs regularly about the use of computers in medicine, also has described how the Internet has altered his mental habits. “I now have almost totally lost the ability to read and absorb a longish article on the web or in print,” he wrote earlier this year. A pathologist who has long been on the faculty of the University of Michigan Medical School, Friedman elaborated on his comment in a telephone conversation with me. His thinking, he said, has taken on a “staccato” quality, reflecting the way he quickly scans short passages of text from many sources online. “I can’t read War and Peace anymore,” he admitted. “I’ve lost the ability to do that. Even a blog post of more than three or four paragraphs is too much to absorb. I skim it.”
Anecdotes alone don’t prove much. And we still await the long-term neurological and psychological experiments that will provide a definitive picture of how Internet use affects cognition. But a recently published study of online research habits, conducted by scholars from University College London, suggests that we may well be in the midst of a sea change in the way we read and think. As part of the five-year research program, the scholars examined computer logs documenting the behavior of visitors to two popular research sites, one operated by the British Library and one by a U.K. educational consortium, that provide access to journal articles, e-books, and other sources of written information. They found that people using the sites exhibited “a form of skimming activity,” hopping from one source to another and rarely returning to any source they’d already visited. They typically read no more than one or two pages of an article or book before they would “bounce” out to another site. Sometimes they’d save a long article, but there’s no evidence that they ever went back and actually read it. The authors of the study report:

It is clear that users are not reading online in the traditional sense; indeed there are signs that new forms of “reading” are emerging as users “power browse” horizontally through titles, contents pages and abstracts going for quick wins. It almost seems that they go online to avoid reading in the traditional sense.

The human brain is almost infinitely malleable. People used to think that our mental meshwork, the dense connections formed among the 100 billion or so neurons inside our skulls, was largely fixed by the time we reached adulthood. But brain researchers have discovered that that’s not the case. James Olds, a professor of neuroscience who directs the Krasnow Institute for Advanced Study at George Mason University, says that even the adult mind “is very plastic.” Nerve cells routinely break old connections and form new ones. “The brain,” according to Olds, “has the ability to reprogram itself on the fly, altering the way it functions.”

…As we use what the sociologist Daniel Bell has called our “intellectual technologies”—the tools that extend our mental rather than our physical capacities—we inevitably begin to take on the qualities of those technologies. The mechanical clock, which came into common use in the 14th century, provides a compelling example. In *Technics and Civilization*, the historian and cultural critic Lewis Mumford described how the clock “disassociated time from human events and helped create the belief in an independent world of mathematically measurable sequences.” The “abstract framework of divided time” became “the point of reference for both action and thought.”

…The Internet promises to have particularly far-reaching effects on cognition. In a paper published in 1936, the British mathematician Alan Turing proved that a digital computer, which at the time existed only as a theoretical machine, could be programmed to perform the function of any other information-processing device. And that’s what we’re seeing today. The Internet, an immeasurably powerful computing system, is subsuming most of our other intellectual technologies. It’s becoming our map and our clock, our printing press and our typewriter, our calculator and our telephone, and our radio and TV.

When the Net absorbs a medium, that medium is re-created in the Net’s image. It injects the medium’s content with hyperlinks, blinking ads, and other digital gewgaws, and it surrounds the content with the content of all the other media it has absorbed. A new e-mail message, for instance, may announce its arrival as we’re glancing over the latest headlines at a newspaper’s site. The result is to scatter our attention and diffuse our concentration.

The Net’s influence doesn’t end at the edges of a computer screen, either. As people’s minds become attuned to the crazy quilt of Internet media, traditional media have to adapt to the audience’s new expectations. Television programs add text crawls and pop-up ads, and magazines and newspapers shorten their articles, introduce capsule summaries, and crowd their pages with easy-to-browse info-snippets. When, in March of this year, *The New York Times* decided to devote the second and third pages of every edition to article abstracts, its design director, Tom Bodkin, explained that the “shortcuts” would give harried readers a quick “taste” of the day’s news, sparing them the “less efficient” method of actually turning the pages and reading the articles. Old media have little choice but to play by the new-media rules.

Never has a communications system played so many roles in our lives—or exerted such broad influence over our thoughts—as the Internet does today. Yet, for all that’s been written about the Net, there’s been little consideration of how, exactly, it’s reprogramming us. The Net’s intellectual ethic remains obscure.

…I’m haunted by that scene in *2001*. What makes it so poignant, and so weird, is the computer’s emotional response to the disassembly of its mind: its despair as one circuit after another goes dark, its childlike pleading with the astronaut—“I can feel it. I can feel it. I’m afraid”—and its final reversion to what can only be called a state of innocence. HAL’s outpouring of feeling contrasts with the emotionlessness that characterizes the human figures in the film, who go about their business with an almost robotic efficiency. Their thoughts and actions feel scripted, as if they’re following the steps of an algorithm. In the world of *2001*, people have become so machinelike that the most human character turns out to be a machine. That’s the essence of Kubrick’s dark prophecy: as we come to rely on computers to mediate our understanding of the world, it is our own intelligence that flattens into artificial intelligence.
### Reciprocal Teaching

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1. Write a one-sentence summary using the frame:
The passage about begins with ______, discusses or develops the idea that ________ and ends with ______.
Creative Play Makes for Kids in Control

by Alix Spiegel

The Best Kind of Play for Kids

Organizing play for kids has never seemed like more work. But researchers Adele Diamond and Deborah Leong have good news: The best kind of play costs nothing and really only has one main requirement — imagination.

February 28, 2008 · It's playtime at the Geraldyn O. Foster Early Childhood Center in Bridgeton, N.J., and in one corner of a busy classroom, 4-year-olds Zee Logan and Emmy Hernandez want to play bookstore.

In a normal preschool, playing bookstore would be a pretty casual affair. They would just pick up some books, set the shiny toy cash register on the table by the blackboard, and get down to business.

But this isn't a normal school. It's based on the Tools of the Mind program. In other words, it's a school where almost every moment of the day is devoted in some way to teaching the kids — mostly low-income children who live in the poor surrounding community — how to regulate their behavior and emotions.

So before Emmy and Zee even think about picking up a toy, they sit down with their teacher at a small classroom table and fill out some paperwork. That's right. Paperwork. On a small blank form, they spell out their intentions. "I want to play bookstore," each girl writes with assistance from her teacher.

Then she draws a picture of herself playing bookstore. Then, together with her teacher, she reads back her intention so that everyone is clear about what is going to happen. Finally, each girl grabs an armful of props and makes her way to the corner, where (as in most preschool classrooms) strong disagreements about the appropriate way to play bookstore ensue.

Transformation in Play

Now, the reason that the Tools of the Mind curriculum asks kids like Zee and Emmy to fill out paperwork before they pick up the Play-Doh lies in the fact that today's play is very different from the play of past eras.

For most of human history, children played by roaming near or far in packs large and small. Younger children were supervised by older children and engaged in freewheeling imaginative play. They were pirates and princesses, aristocrats and heroes.

But, while all that play might have looked a lot like time spent doing nothing much at all, it actually helped build a critical cognitive skill called executive function. Executive function has a number of elements, such as working memory and cognitive flexibility. But perhaps the most important is self-regulation — the ability for kids to control their emotions and behavior, resist impulses, and exert self-control and discipline. Executive function — and its self-regulation element — is important. Poor executive function is associated with high dropout rates, drug use and crime. In fact, good executive function is a better predictor of success in school than a child's IQ.

Losing Skills

Unfortunately, play has changed dramatically during the past half-century, and according to many psychological researchers, the play that kids engage in today does not help them build executive function skills. Kids spend more time in front of televisions and video games. When they aren't in front of a screen, they often spend their time in leagues and lessons — activities parents invest in because they believe that they will help their children to excel and achieve.

And while it's true that leagues and lessons are helpful to children in many ways, researcher Deborah Leong says they have one unfortunate drawback. Leong is professor emerita of psychology and director of the Tools of the Mind Project at Metropolitan State College of Denver. She says when kids are in leagues and lessons, they are usually being regulated by adults. That means they are not able to practice regulating themselves.

"As a result," Leong says, "kids aren't developing the self-regulation skills that they used to."

That is why, in a Tools of the Mind program like the one at Geraldyn O. Foster Early Childhood Center, almost every minute of the day
is spent building executive functions.

The Freeze Connection

Children walk in the door and are asked the question of the week: a practice intended to work on deliberate memory. This work is followed by a highly modified version of a musical game that might otherwise be familiar to parents of preschool children: Freeze.

In a normal game of Freeze, music plays and children dance and jiggle until the music abruptly cuts off and the children freeze in place. But in the Tools version, as the music plays, the teacher holds a picture of a stick figure in a certain pose above her head. The children are supposed to observe the position of the figure without doing it, and when the music ceases, they assume that position and that position only.

Celeste Merriweather, an early childhood supervisor at the school, explains that the important part of the Freeze game is the practice of controlling impulses by observing the stick figure without immediately doing as the stick figure does. This helps then when they're older, she says. Later in life, if they get angry, instead of punching or yelling, they're able to stop themselves.

The Freeze dance, while fun, also builds self-regulation, she says. Merriweather ticks off a long list of other activities that teach such skills. After Freeze, there is Buddy Reading — another impulse-control practice. As she explains it, not even recess is innocent fun: "It's not just 'run out in the yard.' No. We want them to make a plan: What do you want to do, and how do you want to do it?"

Thinking Ahead

According to executive function researcher Adele Diamond, all of these little exercises genuinely do improve the ability of children to control themselves. Diamond, professor of developmental cognitive neuroscience at the University of British Columbia, recalls the very first time she ever set foot in a Tools of the Mind classroom.

"I was totally blown away. The kids were sitting together working quietly. It was like a second-grade classroom instead of a preschool classroom. I couldn't believe it," Diamond says.

Diamond has no financial or professional connection to the Tools of the Mind program. She's just a researcher who decided to test the program. She followed 147 preschooilers. Half the kids were given Tools training; half followed the regular school curriculum. After two years, the children all took a series of tests that measure executive function. The Tools kids did better.

"Children who were in the [school] district curriculum performed roughly at chance. And the kids in the Tools program were about 85 percent correct," Diamond says. "So those are big differences."

Diamond says there are potential benefits to this training that go beyond improved executive-function scores. She and several other researchers argue that children's reduced self-regulation skills may be showing up in the numbers of kids diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

"I think a lot of kids get diagnosed with ADHD now, not all but many just because they never learned how to exercise self-control, self-regulation, the executive functions early," she says.
Cloze Activity

- Teacher prepares reading with blanks inserted for key concepts or vocabulary
- Student reads passage and tries to fill in blanks.
- Student then reads complete passage (no blanks)
- Student goes back to “cloze” version and fills in blanks.

Culinary - Capsicums of the Americas

*Capsicums* are simply chiles. We are all used to seeing and using them, whether to make a salsa, a guacamole, or a curry. Chiles are versatile and have the ability to transform ordinary food into spectacular dishes.

Used by different ______ in many ways and in all types of _____, chiles are sold in cans, _____, bags, and bulk, and are even used for _____ in a *ristra* (an arrangement of drying pods) or a flower pot. There are fresh, _____, and smoke chiles, and the same chile _____ dramatically in its different stages. Imagine the most _____ of the chiles—a jalapeno. When fresh, it is _____ But as it slowly turns red, its _____ changes and becomes sweeter. Then, if it is _____, it becomes the famous _____, with delicious, complex _____ and tones.

Fashion and Interior Design - Photoshopped or Not? A Tool to Tell

The photographs of celebrities and models in fashion advertisements and magazines are routinely buffed with a helping of digital polish. The retouching can be slight — colors brightened, a stray ______ put in place, a pimple healed. Or it can be drastic — shedding 10 or 20 _____, adding a few inches in height and _____ all wrinkles and blemishes, done using Adobe’s _____ software, the photo retoucher’s magic wand.

“Fix one thing, then _____ and pretty soon you end up with _____,” said Hany Farid, a professor of computer science and a digital forensics expert at Dartmouth.

And that is a _____, feminist legislators in France, Britain and Norway say, and they want digitally altered _____ to be labeled. In June, the American Medical Association adopted a _____ on body image and advertising that urged _____ and others to “discourage the altering of _____ in a manner that could promote_____ expectations of appropriate body _____.”

Early Child Care - The Best Kind of Play for Kids

Organizing play for kids has never seemed like more work. But researchers Adele Diamond and Deborah Leong have good news: The best kind of play costs nothing and really only has one main requirement — imagination.

In a normal preschool, _____ bookstore would be a pretty casual affair. They would just _____ up some books, set the shiny toy _____ register on the table by the blackboard, and get down to business.

But this isn’t a normal _____ . It’s based on the Tools of the Mind program. In other words, it’s a _____ where almost every moment of the _____ is devoted in some way to _____ the kids — mostly low-income children who live in the poor surrounding _____ — how to regulate their _____ and emotions.
1. Read the essay aloud.
2. Elaborate on one sentence only.
3. The task is to use the sentence only as the start of your writing. Write several additional sentences beginning with that sentence.
4. The only requirement is that you must “stay in the moment” of the sentence. You cannot write what happens after the moment or you will change the course of events in the paragraph.
5. You will have 10 minutes of writing time.

**Child Care**

Educators agree that the exercise of self-control and increased cognitive skills benefit preschoolers. (1) Emmy is in preschool. (2) She likes to play. (3) Her teachers use imaginative play activities. (4) Sometimes Emmy has trouble controlling her behavior. (5) Her teachers are working to build Emmy’s cognitive skills. (6) They play games.
Text Structure Writing Frames

Directions: The box below contains a writing frame for description text structure. The words in the writing frame are organized to guide the writer toward constructing a description paragraph.

- Draft a description paragraph by writing relevant information in the blanks. The words in italics require the writer to choose one of two words or phrases.
- Refer to a list of description signal words and phrases if other word options are needed to better fit the particular paragraph you are drafting.
- Record the final version of the paragraph in the blank space.

Description Paragraph

Have you ever _________________? ______ has/have very interesting characteristics. It/they has/have ______________. For instance, it/they has/have ________________ which enhances _________________. It/they also __________ _________________. For these reasons, _________________.

Sequence Paragraph

The events/process of __________ is _________________. The first _________________. Then, _________________. Next, _________________. Finally, _________________.

Directions: The box below contains a writing frame for sequence text structure. The words in the writing frame are organized to guide the writer toward constructing a sequence paragraph.

- Draft a sequence paragraph by writing relevant information in the blanks. The words in italics require the writer to choose one of two words or phrases.
- Refer to a list of sequence signal words and phrases if other word options are needed to better fit the particular paragraph you are drafting.
- Record the final version of the paragraph in the blank space.
Directions: The box below contains a writing frame for compare/contrast text structure. The words in the writing frame are organized to guide the writer toward constructing a compare/contrast paragraph.

- Draft a compare/contrast paragraph by writing relevant information in the blanks. The words in italics require the writer to choose one of two words or phrases.
- Refer to a list of sequence compare and contrast signal words and phrases if other word options are needed to better fit the particular paragraph you are drafting.
- Record the final version of the paragraph in the blank space.

Compare and Contrast Paragraph

| There are several differences between _____________ and _____________ . They _____________ _________________ . In contrast to _____________ , _____________ has _________________ . Unlike _____________ , ______________ does not ______________ . On the other hand, _________________ . |

Directions: The box below contains a writing frame for cause/effect text structure. The words in the writing frame are organized to guide the writer toward constructing a cause/effect paragraph.

- Draft a cause/effect paragraph by writing relevant information in the blanks. The words in italics require the writer to choose one of two words or phrases.
- Refer to a list of cause/effect signal words and phrases if other word options are needed to better fit the particular paragraph you are drafting.
- Record the final version of the paragraph in the blank space.

Cause and Effect Paragraph

| ______________ is influenced by _______________ . Since ______________ happened, then ______________ . Therefore, ______________ . This provides explanation for ________________ and ______________ . The impact is ______________ . |
**Directions:** The box below contains a writing frame for problem/solution text structure. The words in the writing frame are organized to guide the writer toward constructing a problem/solution paragraph.

- Draft a problem/solution paragraph by writing relevant information in the blanks. The words in italics require the writer to choose one of two words or phrases.
- Refer to a list of problem/solution signal words and phrases if other word options are needed to better fit the particular paragraph you are drafting.
- Record the final version of the paragraph in the blank space.

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**Problem/Solution Paragraph**

__________present(s) a dilemma that is__________. The problem is ________________

_________________. This has/have occurred because _______________________________________

______________________. A resolution is/was possible. To solve it/this, it will be/has been necessary to ____________

_________________________________________________. The solution(s) include(s) ______

_________________________________________________.

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Preschool Curriculum

Teachers are always trying to find the connection between meaningful activities with preschoolers and exercises to improve cognitive skills. Think about art, alphabetics, music and storytelling activities to build a strong preschool curriculum.

Directions:
Write a 500 word response explaining how you would use imaginative play to create a strong preschool curriculum.

Discuss specific activities and explain how you would apply current cognitive research in early childhood education.
After you have completed your planning sheet, decide which main points (in the circles) have good supporting details (in the boxes) which you can develop in the body of your paper. Feel free to add or subtract circles and boxes as you work with your ideas.
An informative essay provides information about a clearly defined topic. Each point is fully supported and elaborated. Use this template to plan your essay.

**Introduction** (state subject)

**Thesis statement**

**Supporting point 1**
**Evidence**
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**Supporting point 2**
**Evidence**
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**Supporting point 3**
**Evidence**
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**Conclusion**
A persuasive essay requires a clear statement of opinion, evidence supporting that opinion, and responses to possible objections. This template will help you organize your notes.

**Introduction** (identify issue)

**Statement of opinion** (thesis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Supporting evidence</th>
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<th>Objections</th>
<th>Possible responses</th>
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**Conclusion**
Opinion statements focus on a clearly stated belief that has strong supporting evidence. Use this template to organize your ideas.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>State Opinion</th>
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<td>Reason 1</td>
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<td>Support</td>
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| Reason 2      |
| Support       |
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| Reason 3      |
| Support       |
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| Conclusion    |
Losing the Race for Intelligence
Source: Leonard Pitts, Miami Herald, February 6, 2011

ITEM: Only 28 percent of high school science teachers consistently follow National Research Council guidelines encouraging them to present students with evidence of evolution. Thirteen percent "explicitly advocate creationism or intelligent design."

These are among the findings of Penn State political scientists Michael Berkman and Eric Plutzer after examining data from a representative survey of 926 high school biology teachers. Writing in the Jan. 28 issue of Science magazine, they report that most science teachers -- 60 percent -- cheat controversy by such stratagems as telling students it does not matter if they "believe" in evolution, so long as they understand enough to pass a test. Or they teach evolution on a par with creationism and encourage students to make up their own minds.

Giant Squid
Architeuthis dux

Once upon a time, there lived a stupid giant. The giant had not always been stupid. Or, perhaps it is more accurate to say the giant had once revered intelligence, reason and the byproducts thereof. Indeed, the giant was renowned for an ingenuity and standard of living that made it the envy of the world. But much of the world did more than envy the giant. Much of the world admired and respected it. Its basic decency, along with its strength and intelligence, set it apart.

There came a time, however, when, though the giant retained its strength and arguably even its decency, it lost its intelligence. No one can say exactly how and when the loss occurred. There was no great blast of thunder and lightning to herald it, no sudden instant when the giant's intelligence plummeted dramatically from the instant before. No, stupidity crept over the giant with the stealth of twilight, a product less of one abrupt moment than of a thousand moments of complacency, of resting on laurels, of allowing curiosity to be teased and bullied out of bright children, of dumbing down textbooks so kids could get better grades with less work, of using ""elite" like a curse word. And, of behaving as if knowing things, and being able to extrapolate from and otherwise make critical use of, the things one knows, was a betrayal of some fundamental human authenticity -- some need to keep it real.

Stupidity stole over the giant until it could no longer tell science from faith, or conventional wisdom from actual wisdom and in any event, valued ideological purity above them all. Stupidity snaked over the giant until science teachers shrank from teaching science, history books contained history that wasn't history, late-night comics got easy laughs from people on the street who could not say when the War of 1812 was fought, political leaders told outright lies with blithe smiles and no fear of being caught and you would not have been surprised to hear that someone had fixed mathematics, so that 2+2 could now equal 17, thus preserving the all-important self esteem of second-grade kids.

Some regarded the giant's stupidity as a danger. They reasoned that when one is so big that one's merest movement or slightest utterance affects the entire world, it's a good idea if those movements and utterances are animated by something more than autonomic function. Others saw the giant's stupidity as an opportunity. They learned eagerly until they surpassed the giant's intellect. They grew until they rivaled the giant's size and strength. They did not attempt to match the giant's decency. They considered decency a hindrance.

And the giant? It sat on its haunches in the mud as the world changed about it and new giants rose and shook their fists. The giant did not notice. It was watching The Jersey Shore on MTV. And it lived obliviously ever after.

What happens when mom unplugs teens for 6 months? (excerpt)
Source: Beth J. Harpaz, Associated Press – Tue Jan 18, 2011

Susan Maushart lived out every parent's fantasy: She unplugged her teenagers. For six months, she took away the Internet, TV, iPods, cell phones and video games. The eerie glow of screens stopped lighting up the family room. Electronic devices no longer chirped through the night like "evil crickets." And she stopped carrying her iPhone into the bathroom.
The result of what she grandly calls "The Experiment" was more OMG than LOL — and nothing less than an immersion in RL (real life). As Maushart explains in a book released in the U.S. this week called "The Winter of Our Disconnect" (Penguin, $16.95), she and her kids rediscovered small pleasures — like board games, books, lazy Sundays, old photos, family meals and listening to music together instead of everyone plugging into their own iPods.

Her son Bill, a videogame and TV addict, filled his newfound spare time playing saxophone. "He swapped Grand Theft Auto for the Charlie Parker songbook," Maushart wrote. Bill says The Experiment was merely a "trigger" and he would have found his way back to music eventually. Either way, he got so serious playing sax that when the gadget ban ended, he sold his game console and is now studying music in college.

Maushart's eldest, Anni, was less wired and more bookish than the others, so her transition in and out of The Experiment was the least dramatic. Her friends thought the ban was "cool." If she needed computers for schoolwork, she went to the library. Even now, she swears off Facebook from time to time, just for the heck of it.

Maushart's youngest daughter, Sussy, had the hardest time going off the grid. Maushart had decided to allow use of the Internet, TV and other electronics outside the home, and Sussy immediately took that option, taking her laptop and moving in with her dad — Maushart's ex-husband — for six weeks. Even after she returned to Maushart's home, she spent hours on a landline phone as a substitute for texts and Facebook. But the electronic deprivation had an impact anyway: Sussy's grades improved substantially. Maushart wrote that her kids "awoke slowly from the state of cognitus interruptus that had characterized many of their waking hours to become more focused logical thinkers."

Maushart decided to unplug the family because the kids — ages 14, 15 and 18 when she started The Experiment — didn't just "use media," as she put it. They "inhabited" media. "They don't remember a time before e-mail, or instant messaging, or Google," she wrote. Like so many teens, they couldn't do their homework without simultaneously listening to music, updating Facebook and trading instant messages. If they were amused, instead of laughing, they actually said "LOL" aloud. Her girls had become mere "accessories of their own social-networking profile, as if real life were simply a dress rehearsal (or more accurately, a photo op) for the next status update."

**World Wide Friends**

*Posted Mar 13, 2010*

The first social-network website, known as SixDegrees, launched 13 years ago. Its members could find and send messages to pals—and then communicate with each other's friends and family—online. The site went off-line in 2000, but the trend of social networking has surged. More and more people are joining sites that let them set up profiles and share photos and updates about anything from their lunch to their daydreams.

U.S.-based giants Facebook and Windows Live are popular just about everywhere. But why is Google's Orkut site number one in both Brazil and India, countries miles apart literally and culturally? Researcher Michael Thelwall credits that site's simplicity, which gives it an advantage in places with slow Internet access. In many countries nuances of language and culture make homegrown networks such as China's Baidu Space and Russia's VKontakte stronger than imports. Japan's top site, Mixi, lists blood types as part of its member profiles, catering to the local belief that knowing that tidbit can predict compatibility. And in South Korea, Cyworld users create avatars, or alter egos, that express emotions and repair friendships on behalf of their real-life counterparts. —Shelley Sperry

Possible Writing Notebook topics:
- Do you agree with Pitts? Why? Why not?
- What can be done to solve the problem that Pitts describes?
- Do you think being plugged in makes us dumber?
Possible Writing Notebook topics:

- In what ways does the diagram "World Wide Friends" reinforce the view of Pitts and Harpaz?