

Why Wait? Writing From Day One to Build All Language Domains for Multilingual Learners



REIMAGINING WRITING: FROM DAY ONE, FOR EVERY
LEARNER

ALLYSON TECHMEIER

ENGLISH LEARNER TEACHER, ALTOONA SCHOOL DISTRICT
M.A. TESOL CANDIDATE – UW-RIVER FALLS
ATECHMEIER@ALTOONA.K12.WI.US

About Me – My Journey to TESOL

- Lifelong passion for helping children find their voice through language
- Background in **Child, Youth, and Family Studies** and **Early Childhood Education**
- Experience teaching learners from **preschool to high school**
- Former Head Start teacher in St. Paul serving multilingual 4K students
- Now: **Grades 6–12 EL Teacher**, Altoona School District
- **M.A. TESOL Candidate**, UW–River Falls - researching writing as a driver of language growth
- I've spent my life working with students from all over the world — at home, abroad, and in my classroom.

Passionate about helping students find their voice through language and writing.

Why Writing, and Why Now?

- Writing often overlooked in TESOL PD and research
- Many multilingual learners reach secondary school without basic writing confidence
- Yet writing supports all four domains: reading, listening, speaking, and language structure
- This work grew from research, reflection, and real classrooms — not theory



Today's Focus

Why Writing Matters from Day
One

Daily Writing Routines that Build
Language

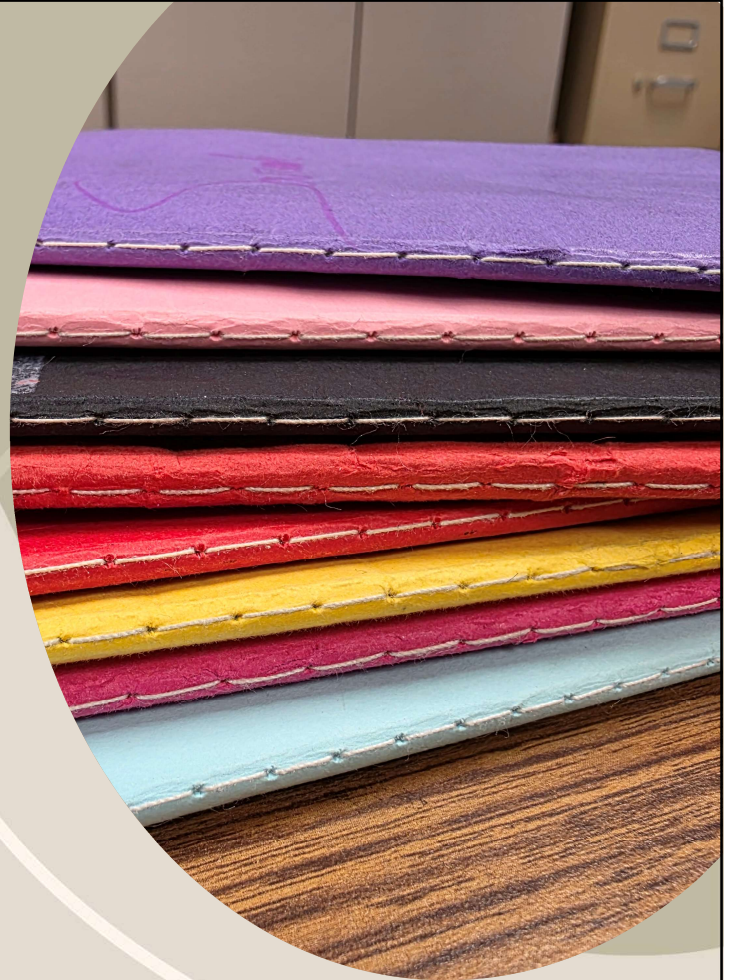
Reading → Writing Scaffolds

Feedback & Growth through
Peer Review

Helping Students See Themselves
as Writers

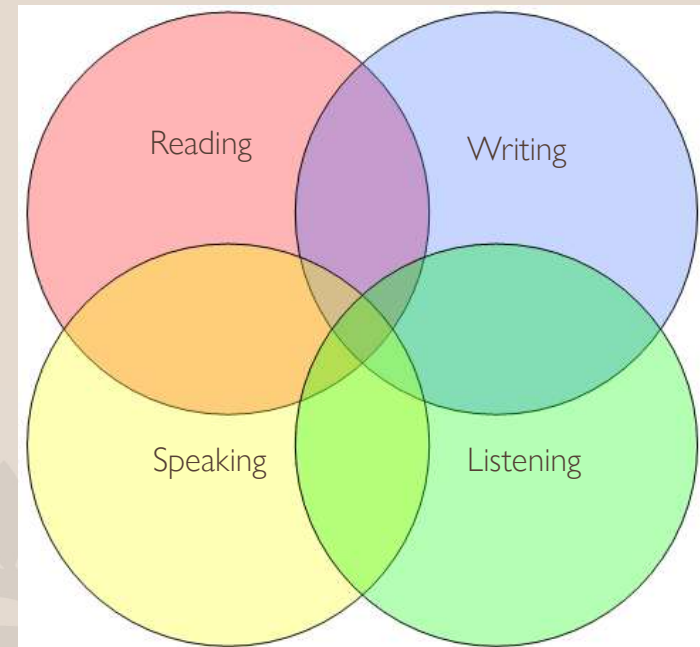
So... Why Writing From Day One?

Writing isn't the end of language learning —
it's the bridge that connects every domain.



Writing Builds Every Language Domain

- **Reading:** reinforces structure and comprehension
- **Listening & Speaking:** writing clarifies pronunciation and phrasing
- **Vocabulary & Grammar:** repeated use = retention
- **Confidence & Identity:** students see their own growth



What “Day One Writing” Looks Like

ve, good	Some	Lacks creativity
----------	------	------------------

Memo No. _____
Date 09/04/24

What is your name?
My name is [REDACTED]

How old are you?
I am 14 years old

Where are you from?
I am from Guatemala

where are you from?

Opinion Paragraph

I think that collaborating is the best because if they collaborate they can solve.

I think that the child is making bad because his dad is saying that he don't use his phone in the night, the child should listen to his dad.

Collaborating is the best because if the child listen to his dad can solve.



So how do we
make writing
possible from Day
One?

Building Language Through Daily Routine (10–15 Minutes)

Component

Description

Targets pronunciation and writing accuracy through repetition and rhythm. On Day 1, I model

Focus / Purpose

Example

Tongue Twister of the Week

slowly in two-word chunks; each day we add more until Friday's group and individual recitation (with candy for brave volunteers!).

Phonics, /-s/ and /-ed/ endings, confidence, fluency.

"Silly Sam sings six short songs on Sunday." → reinforces plural s and /s/ sound.

Idiom of the Week

Introduces figurative language and builds cultural awareness. Students act it out, draw it, or use it in a sentence related to our unit.

Meaning beyond literal language; comprehension; real-world use.

"Lead By Example" → "To show others how to behave or act by doing it yourself." We talk about ways that we can "lead by example"

Verb of the Week

Reinforces grammar and academic language across the week. Pulled from vocab or content focus. Day 1 = forms chart; Day 2 = sample sentences; Day 3–4 = fill-in practice; Day 5 = student-created sentences.

Grammar; tense, subject-verb agreement, academic verbs.

describe → I describe / you describe / she describes / we described / describing.

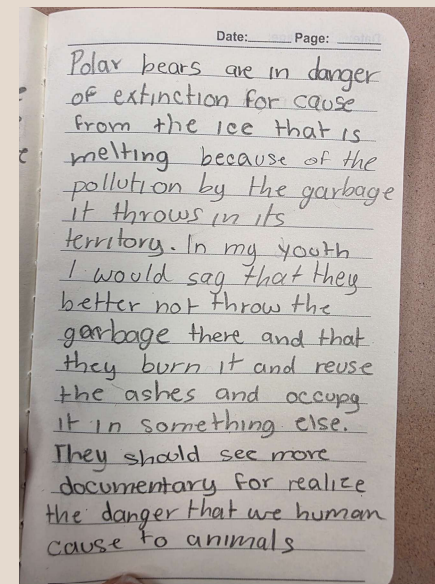
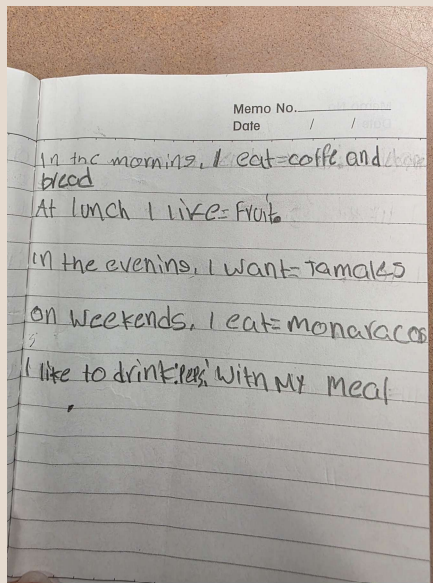
Daily Writing Prompt

Ten-minute focused writing that connects vocabulary, grammar, and reading topics. Students write independently, then share or discuss with partners.

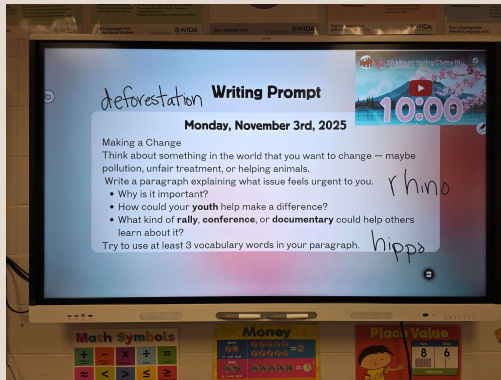
Fluency, sentence structure, transfer across domains.

"What makes a great leader?" Use *adapt* and *challenge* in your response."

Sample student journals



Daily Writing Prompt



Level

Foundations 1

Foundations 2

Prep English

Structure & Supports

- Sentence stems and fill-in-the-blank starters.
- Option to use picture dictionaries or tablets.
- 10 minutes of continuous writing.
- Write **3–5 full sentences daily**.
- Encouraged to use paper dictionaries for new words.
- Growing independence with sentence complexity.
- Write full **paragraphs or reflections**.
- Integrate weekly vocab and academic verbs.
- Add descriptive details and transitions.

Purpose & Growth

Build comfort, sentence formation, and vocabulary awareness.

Develop grammar control, fluency, and stamina.

Strengthen voice, cohesion, and academic writing skills.

Vocabulary Instruction for Beginning Writers

EF1 Unit 6: Health and Well-Being

Word	Translation	Image	Sentence
hot			Ella is hot .
cold			Taylor is cold .
sad			Dom feels sad because he lost his book.
confused			Henri feels confused because he doesn't understand.
proud			Maria feels proud because she won the competition.
stressed			Kai feels stressed because she has a lot of homework.
happy			He feels happy because he is going home.

Building Academic Language

EF2 Unit 2: Leaders of Tomorrow

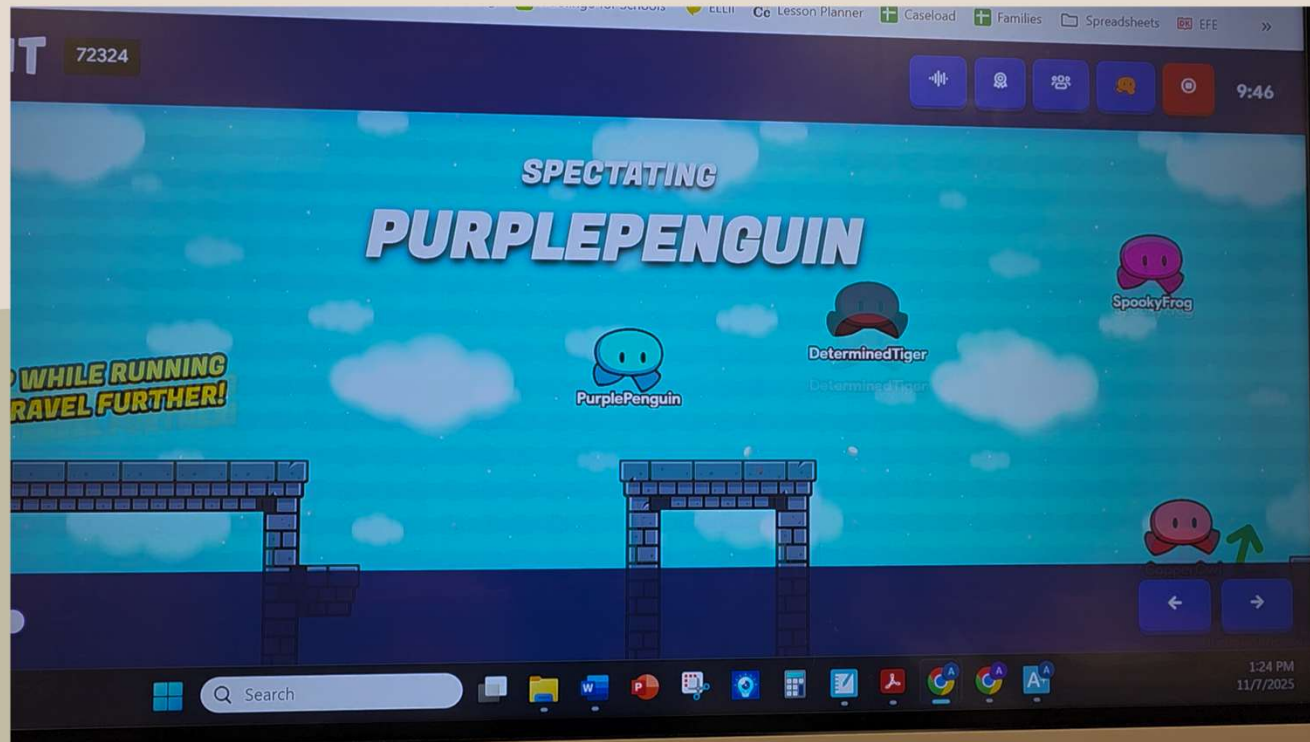
Shackleton vocab

Word	Part of Speech	Definition	Sentence	Translation	Other Forms	Synonyms
abandon	verb	to give up or withdraw from	The captain refused to abandon his crew, even when the storm grew worse.		noun: abandonment ; adjective: abandoned	desert, relinquish, forsake, leave behind, give up
adapt	verb	to change; to function in a new way	Good leaders know how to adapt when plans change unexpectedly.		noun: adaptation ; adjective: adaptive	adjust, modify, alter, accommodate, conform
capacity	noun	the ability to do something	She has the capacity to inspire others through her words and actions.		adjective: capable	ability, potential, competence, aptitude, capability
contrast	verb	to compare differences	We can contrast two leaders by looking at how they handle failure.		noun: contrast ; adjective: contrasting	differentiate, distinguish, compare, juxtapose, oppose
emerge	verb	to become known or important	After years of hard work, a new leader began to emerge from the group.		noun: emergence ; adjective: emergent	appear, arise, develop, surface, materialize
involved	adjective	included in something	Every student became involved in the project to improve the school.		verb: involve ; noun: involvement	engaged, connected, included, active, participating
embody	verb	to express or symbolize	He embodies the values of honesty and service that define a true leader.		noun: embodiment	represent, exemplify, personify, symbolize, manifest
flag	verb	to slow down or become weak	Their energy began to flag after hours of hard work in the hot sun.		noun: flagging ; adjective: flagging	weaken, fade, decline, deteriorate, diminish
instill	verb	to give an emotion or quality by example or teaching	A good teacher can instill confidence and curiosity in their students.		noun: instillation	implant, impart, infuse, engrain, introduce

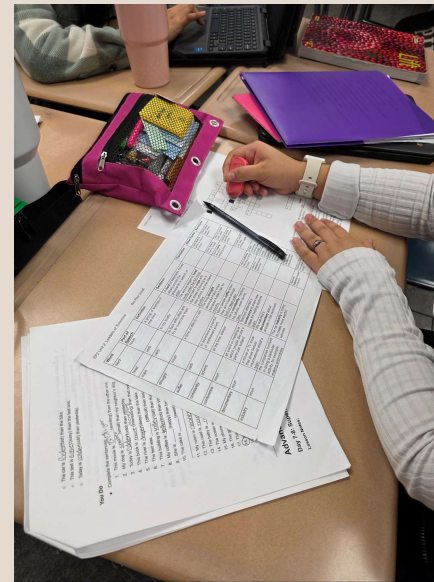
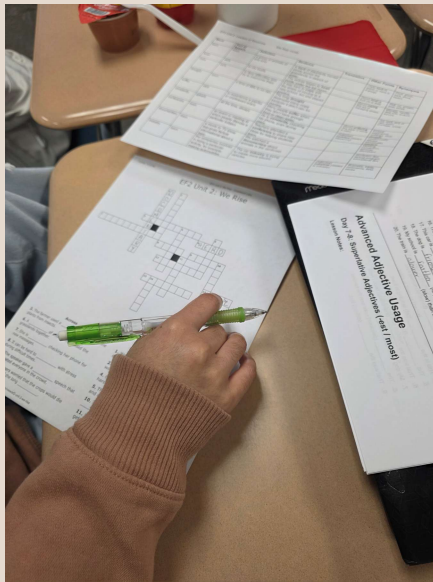
Vocabulary in Action: Interactive Practice



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Vocabulary in Action: Crossword Practice



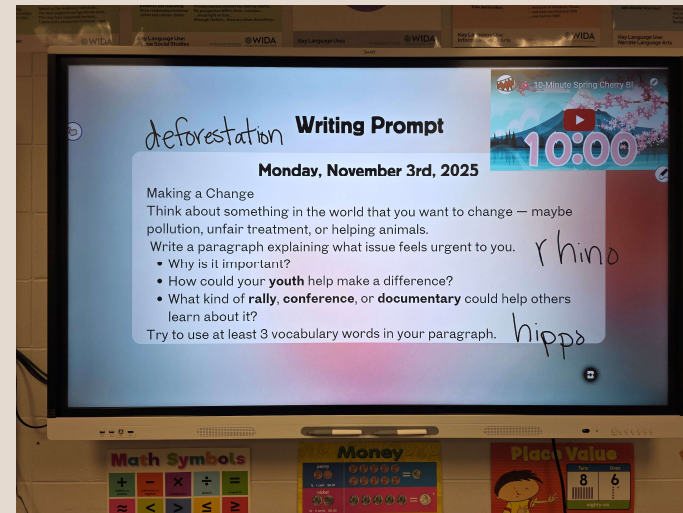
Using Vocabulary in Context: Reading + Writing

Vocabulary doesn't live in isolation — we use it immediately in both reading and writing.

Here's an example from our “*Making a Change*” mini-unit.

Students are preparing to read “*We Rise*” by Xiuhtezcatl Martinez, a young climate activist and artist.

Their daily writing prompt introduced key vocabulary — *rally*, *conference*, *urgent*, *youth*, *inspire*, *documentary* — and asked them to use those words to explore what kind of change they want to see in the world.



How It All Comes Together

Memo No. _____
Date 10 / 28 / 25

I learned that you need to be positive on situation even though you are facing a hard time and almost gave up hope. I can apply this in my own life by spreading positivity around and always thinking of positive things on a certain bad situation. Thinking positive can help my life have a healthy lifestyle and my mental well-being.

English

10/28/25
Date: _____ Page _____

- I learned how I can do
a good leader the first
is the responsibility and
emphatly for make a
leader you have that
every power and control.

- The first is how I can make my jobs for make a good leader and also ask how make a good leader how is the experience of a leader.

35 This capacity is vital in our own time, when leaders must often change course midstream—abandoning earlier stand-
ards and redefining their purposes and plans.

20 His ship, the *Endurance*, never reached Antarctica. None of the 28 crew members set foot on the continent.

☆, is important because

★. Is important
for you because
as you live your
life, things will
not always go to
plan. you need to
know how to adapt
and change as things
happen.

Leadership
Lessons...

But from the beginning, the expedition encountered unfamiliar challenges. In late 1914, the ship arrived at a whaling settlement on South Georgia Island, the last southern port of call before the Antarctic Circle. Local seamen urged Shackleton to postpone his venture because of unusually thick pack ice² that could trap the

Impatient to get moving, Shackleton commanded the ship to continue south, navigating through the icy waters. In January 1915, the **vessel** came within sight of the Antarctic mainland. But harsh winds and cold temperatures descended quickly, and the pack ice trapped the ship, just as the South Georgia sealer had. What was the **Endurance** to do? Shackleton realized that his men would have to wait out the coming winter: the ship's cramped quarters until summer's thaw.

and dissidence² among his men more than he did the heat and cold. He required that each man maintain his own quarters as closely as possible. Sailors cleaned decks; scientists collected specimens from the ice; others were assigned to hunt.

He also kept a strict routine for meals and insisted men socialize after dinner, as a tonic⁶ for declining

Through the matrix, order, and interaction, Sh managed the fear that threatened to take hold when things didn't go as planned. He knew that in this environment, with no traditional supports, his greatest enemies were his

Months later, the ice still held the ship. By June—middle of winter in the Southern Hemisphere—they were weakening under the pressure created by the

¹**pack ice** a large area of floating ice pieces that are pushed together
²**immobilized** prevented from moving
³**thaw** melting or softening of the ice
⁴**killdeer** *Charadrius dominicanus*

[†]**tonic** something that improves a person's feelings or energy

Leadership Lessons from the Shackleton Expedition

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Peer Review: Learning to See Like a Writer

EVEN MRS. T'S MODEL HAS SOMETHING TO IMPROVE.

Peer Review

EF1 Peer Review

My name: _____

Author's name: _____

What is one thing that the author did well?

One thing that _____ did well is _____

What is one thing that the author can do better?

One that that _____ can do better on is _____

EF2 Peer Review

Peer Review

What is the skit's introduction that begins the scene?

What is the reason for the disagreement? Is it clearly explained?

Does each character speak at least ten times?

☐ Yes
☐ No

What is each character's opinion? Is it clear?

What is the solution? Is it explained clearly?

What does the audience learn?

Does the skit include phrases to express agreement and disagreement?

☐ Yes
☐ No

What vocabulary words from the unit were used?

Prep English

Peer Review Guide: Narrative Writing

Title of Paper: _____

Name of Writer: _____

Your Name: _____

Step 1: Read the Story Once for Enjoyment

Just read it like a reader, not a judge.

Think: What sticks with me? What images or moments do I remember most?

Notes:

Step 2: Check the Story Arc (Structure)

✓ Does the story have a clear beginning, middle, and end?

✓ Can you find the exposition, conflict, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution?

Notes:

Step 3: Look at Narrative Techniques

✓ Description: Are there sensory details (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch)?

✓ Dialogue: Is dialogue used to reveal character or move the story forward?

✓ Interior Dialogue/Reflection: Do we see the narrator's thoughts or feelings?

✓ Pacing: Does the story slow down at important parts and speed up at less important parts?

Notes:

Step 4: Check Context, Characters & POV

✓ Is the setting clear? (Can you picture where it's happening?)

✓ Are the characters introduced and consistent?

✓ Is the point of view (first person or third person) the same throughout?

Notes:

Step 5: Language & Conventions

✓ Is the language clear and understandable?

✓ Are there any places where grammar, spelling, or punctuation makes it confusing?

✓ Are paragraphs and dialogue formatted correctly?

Notes:

Step 6: End with Praise & One Suggestion

Write one thing you really liked:

Write one thing that would make the story even better:

Revision as a Path to Progress

Student Rough Draft

It was a time when I first came to Korea, we were plan to go see the firework in Busan it was huge and a lot of people in there, we want to buy food because we want eat and see the firework, and they said it start at 9:00 PM but when we wait there it was so late it start at 11:00 and while i wait we just using our phone, and i told them to save the battery so we could go back later. When the fireworks started it was so amazing and so pretty, after that they played it again for like 3 times. When it was done it was like 12:00 am. We start so we leave for the train.

Because my sister's plan is to go to Busan for one day and then back to Myeongdong. And we try to book a taxi but no one wants to drive, so that is why we have to keep walking and bum, my noise drops blood. I was panicking and we didn't have any napkins with us so we went to the convenience store. I want to buy a napkin and find a bathroom. But I couldn't, so we kept walking until we could find a taxi to go back. Everything was so bad. Then I saw the taxi. We asked if he could drive us to the rail and that guy said no, our hope goes. And our phone dies, so we try to find the convenience store to buy a charger. BUT my phone still has 10% left but i dont have a taxi app on my phone so i have to download it, but i still can't use it. So we had to keep waiting to find a bus or taxi, then finally we found a taxi. We came to the train but were struggling to buy the ticket. We put the money in and it is not accepted so it gives our money back. I tried another one and it still is not working so we ask someone who ever passed by us. They told me to go down there to get the ticket. Finally, the site is random so we wait. And get on the subway and we all check if they have a spot for us, unlucky that there is no spot left, so we decided to sit on the floor....

A long time waiting in the subway. And my sister booked a hotel. We called a taxi on the app. That guy looks very old so he doesn't speak any English. When it come to the point it we drive to the mountain because that hotel is in mountain he couldn't go, he try to drive up the mountain but still couldnt our car got stuck and is smell really burn so that guy yelling at us in korea language then we decided we just gonna go down and call another taxi so that guy could go. But when we were waiting for the taxi. He drove back and we decided to help him get out of the way. So we called another taxi that was near us. Finally we could get to the hotel safely. No one got hurt, just everything really bad and waiting for so long.

Student Peer Review

Peer Review Guide: Narrative Writing

Title of Paper: Taxi in Busan

Name of Writer: [Redacted]

Your Name: [Redacted]

Step 1: Read the Story Once for Enjoyment

Just read it like a reader, not a judge.

Think: What sticks with me? What images or moments do I remember most?

Notes:

I remember most the moment when like have 30% in the phone and after he haved 10% and she need downloaded a taxi app.

Step 2: Check the Story Arc (Structure)

✓ Does the story have a clear beginning, middle, and end? Yes

✓ Can you find the exposition, conflict, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution? Yes

Notes:

The history have the beginning, middle and end because is in order and don't mixaround

Revision as a Path to Progress

Teacher Feedback & Conference

When I first went to Korea, we planned to see the fireworks in Busan with my sibling. My older sister's name is Annie, and Henry is my brother. We are also going with my sister's fiance. His name is Jack. It was really huge, with so many people from different countries and lots of students were there. I looked and said "Oh my God it's gonna take forever to get there."

My brother and I kept joking around. He pushed me into other people, so I yelled at him, "STOP!"

My sister, who is like the "director" of our family tour, said to her fiance and my brother, "You two go find a spot. I'll go with her to buy food." On the way we saw a restaurant selling Jajangmyeon, the famous Korean black noodle with pork belly and greens beans.

I was so excited. "Finally my dream came true," I said, because it was my first time trying real Korean food. But after only three minutes, they told us the restaurant was closing because the seats were already reserved. So we had to find another place to eat.

Later, my sister called her fiance back, and we had to be hurry because the fireworks were supposed to start at 9:00 PM. When we arrived, it was already 9:20, but nothing had started yet. We waited and waited. At 11:00, while waiting, we just used our phones. My sister's fiance wanted to livestream, but I told him not to show my face on it.

I also looked at my phone and said "OMG my phone's at 30% now, so I kept telling everyone, "Save your battery, we'll need it for later."

Finally, BOOM! The fireworks started and it was worth the wait. They played music, the lights were so bright and pretty, and we sat close to the front, so it was really loud. They had three rounds of fireworks, and by the end my phone ran out of storage because I took too many pictures and videos. It ended around midnight.

After that we got ready to leave. My sister's plan was to stay in Busan just for one day and then go back to Myeodong. But when we tried to book a taxi, no one wanted to drive. So we had to keep walking. At one point, I got a nosebleed. I panicked because we didn't have napkins, so I told my sister to go to the convenience store to look for some. My sister came back and said "it's no big deal, stop being so dramatic." I lowkey mad, and said if that happens to you in the middle of nowhere what you gonna acting like?

Student Final Draft

The Taxi in Busan

When I first went to Korea, we planned to see the fireworks in Busan with my sibling. My older sister's name is Annie, and Henry is my brother. And we are also going with my sister's fiance. His name is Jack. It was really huge, with so many people from different countries and lots of students there. I looked and said "Oh my God it's gonna take forever to get there."

My brother Henry and I kept joking around. He pushed me into other people, so I yelled at him, "STOP!"

My sister Annie, who is like the "director" of our family tour, said to her fiance and my brother, "You two go find a spot. I'll go with her to buy food." On the way we saw a restaurant selling Jajangmyeon, the famous Korean black noodle with pork belly and green beans.

I was so excited. "Finally my dream came true," I said, because it was my first time trying real Korean food. But after only three minutes, they told us the restaurant was closing because the seats were already reserved. So I never got to try it, we had to find another place to eat.

Later, Annie called her fiance Jack back. We walked into a crowd, a lot of people were sitting on the beach to wait for the fireworks. And we had to hurry because the fireworks were supposed to start at 9:00 PM. When we arrived, it was already 9:20, but nothing had started yet. We waited and waited. At 11:00, while waiting, we just used our phones. My sister's fiance Jack wanted to livestream, but I told him not to show my face on it.

I also looked at my phone and said "Oh My God my phone's at 30% now," so I kept telling everyone, save your battery, we'll need it for later.

Revision as a Path to Progress

Rubric – progress towards standard

Related WIDA Standard(s): **ELD Standard 2: Language for Language Arts**
ELD-LA.9-12.Inform.Expressive (ELD-LA-9-12.I.E.c)

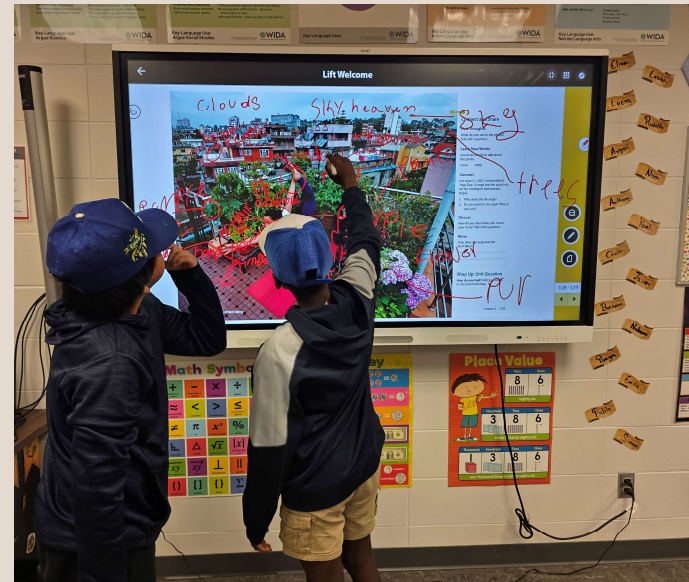
Construct informational texts in language arts that:

- a) Introduce and define topic and/or entity for audience
- b) Establish an objective or neutral stance.
- c) Add precision, details, and clarity about complex attributes, qualities, characteristics, activities, and conceptual relationships
- d) Develop coherence and cohesion throughout text

	15	10	5	0
Did student make progress towards mastering the ELD standard?	Yes, student is ready to move to next level	Yes, student is progressing towards end of level goal	Some progress is evident	No progress was seen

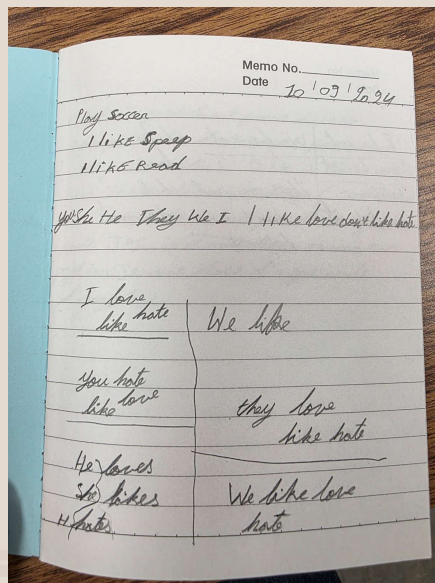
Criteria	End of Level 1	End of Level 2	End of Level 3	End of Level 4	End of Level 5	Level 6
	Understand how coherent texts (spoken, written, multimodal) are created...					
DISCOURSE Organization of language	to meet a purpose (to inform, narrate, entertain) in a series of topic-related connected sentences	to meet a purpose through generic (not genre-specific) organization (introduction, body, conclusion)	to meet a purpose through specific organization (orientation and explanation sequence)	to meet a purpose through organizational patterns characteristic of the genre (claim, evidence, reasoning) that link ideas, events, and reasons across text	to meet a purpose reflective of genre and discipline, linking ideas, events, and reasons in a variety of ways (causes and effects, factors and outcomes, events and consequences)	According to authors' strategic use of generic structure (combining different genres to meet their social purpose) for particular effects and for a variety of audiences

Building Identity, Ownership, and Pride in Writing

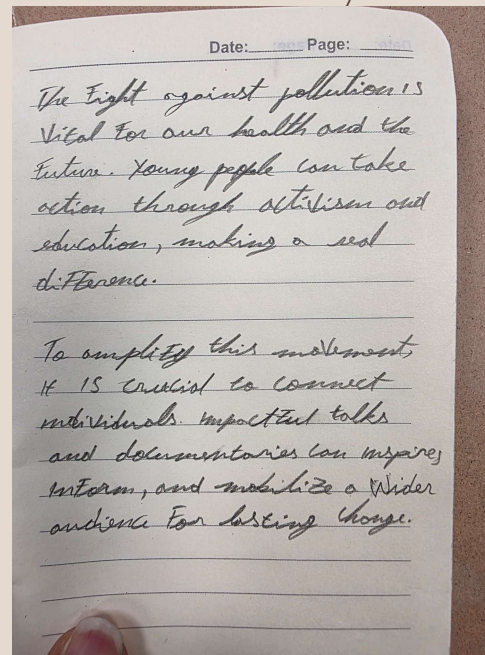


Why Day One Matters

Student day 1

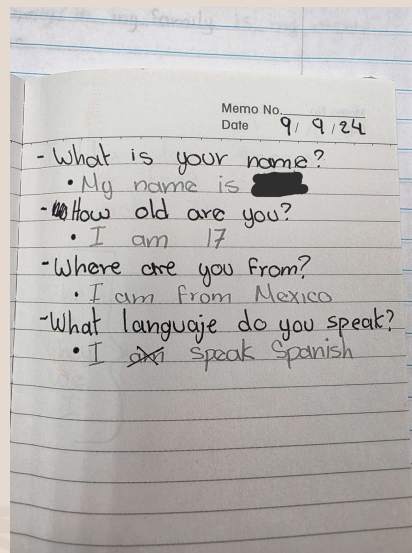


Student today

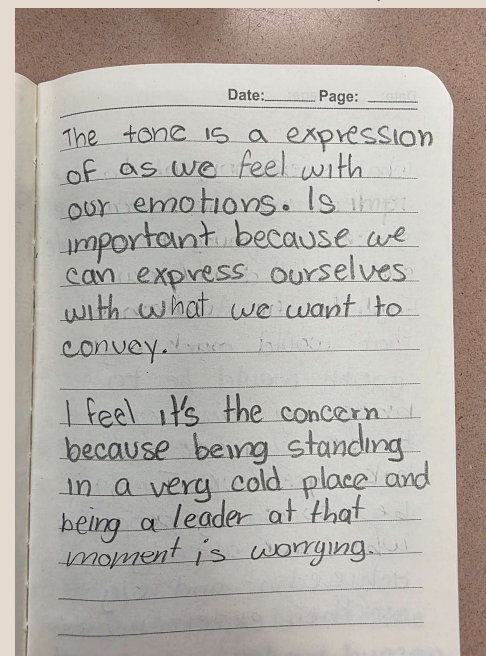


Why Day One Matters

Student day 1



Student today



The hidden door

Flor is a senior student. She likes volleyball, singing, and dancing. On a normal day at school, she noticed a door that she had never seen before. That door was in the room where the mats and sports equipment were stored. When Flor saw the door, she didn't care because she thought she hadn't seen it because she was distracted and because she tended to leave things very quickly, so she went to her normal classes without giving importance to the door. After school, she was doing homework with Eva, a friend, in face time, since Eva and Flor like to do homework together. The intrigue surrounding the door led her to ask her friend, "have you seen the small room that is inside the room that we keep our stuff?" since Flor and Eva have the same gym class, and it's Flor who leaves the gym stuff behind.

"Which door?" Eva asked. Eva remains puzzled since the only door she can see is the one that leads into the room.

"The inner door, where we keep the sports equipment?" Flor said. She thought Eva knew something about the door, but she realized it wasn't like that.

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Every Student Is a Writer

11. Science Connection

- a. Why do you think Shackleton worked to prevent his team from feeling pessimistic?

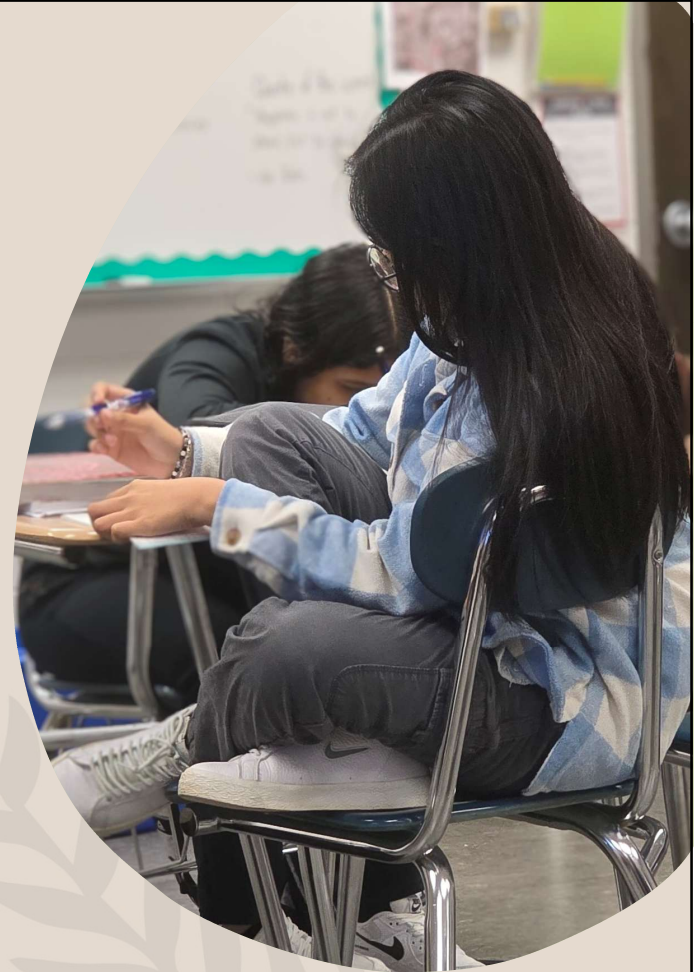
If they are pessimistic, they will not want to do things and will lose hope for survival.

- b. How do you think pessimism would negatively affect their work?

- Losing focus on work
- Create a toxic environment
- Give up harder tasks

- c. Would there be any benefits to feeling a small amount of pessimism?

Yes, if you know how to handle it, in small amounts it can help you avoid risks.



The background of the slide features a light beige base. On the left, there is a large, muted olive-green organic shape. In the top-left corner, a branch with several leaves is depicted in a dark brown, minimalist line-art style. On the right side, there is a large, dark reddish-brown organic shape. A thin, white, wavy line curves across the lower portion of the slide, separating the reddish-brown shape from the bottom. The word "Questions?" is centered in a dark brown, serif font.

Questions?

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Writing as Thinking Across Content Areas

Word	Translation	Image	Definition	Example	Other Forms
balanced			Both sides are the same.		<i>same on both sides equal makes the same is the same as</i>
addition (add)			Put numbers together to find the total.		<i>plus more than increase together in all total sum combined</i>
subtraction (subtract)			Take away from a number.		<i>take away less than minus difference how many left fewer</i>
division (divide)			Split into equal parts or groups.		<i>split each shared cut into parts per out of goes into</i>

Math wall with vocab and sentence stems

Friendship Skit Project — Writing, Speaking, and Collaboration

- Unit theme: Friendship — building, maintaining, and repairing relationships
- Students worked in pairs to write and perform short skits showing a friendship conflict and resolution
- Writing process included:
 - Planning outline: disagreement, lesson, and theme
 - Full script with stage directions and unit vocabulary
 - Filming and editing the performance for presentation
 - Connected reading, writing, and speaking in one creative task

Outline

What is the disagreement about?
 Leyo and Pyona argue about what's better to do after graduating from high school.
 Leyo wants to get a job after they graduated from high school.
 Pyona wants to go to college after graduating from high school.

Character 1's name:
 Leyo - to want work first before of the college

Character 2's name:
 Pyona - planner, wants to have more planned future rather than hurrying to get a job

Character 1's opinion:

It's important to get ready first before college. Speaking of the money, I prefer working for one year to save money for college and I have time to think or have a break from school for the time being.

Character 2's opinion:

It's important to go to college after graduating high school to get a better career/job. It's to have a good future and a planned life plan. So, she thinks that all high school graduates should go to college.

What is the solution?

They reached a mutual agreement and understanding of each other's opinion. Leyo understands now why Pyona wants to go to college after school, and Pyona understands why Leyo wants to get a job after school. They respect each other's opinion.

What does the audience learn?

A well built friendship can solve disagreements by understanding and respecting each other's point of view.

They will learn that people see life from a different point of view and that everyone doesn't have to have the same point of view.

(Scene: In the classroom of Mrs Technology, where is Leyo and Pyona talking about what to do after high school due to Mrs Technology statement about it earlier in their class)

* Bell Rings *

Mrs. Technology: Okay class, that will be all for today. But over the weekend, think about what you want to do after graduating high school. Have a good weekend everybody, see you on Monday!

* Leyo and Pyona decide to stay in the classroom for study hall and talk about what Mrs Technology asks them to think about *

Pyona : (while sitting down) Ey Leyo, about what Mrs Technology said earlier, what are you thinking about doing after high school?

Leyo : (just sat down) I still don't know, but I think that it would be to have a job first then going to college.

Pyona : (confused look) Ehh? But wouldn't it be more beneficial if you go to college then have work?

Leyo : (she says it quietly) I think not, because you must have money to go to college.

Pyona : (more confused look) But, I don't mean to be rude, but shouldn't your parents provide that? Because, personally I think it's better to go to college first.

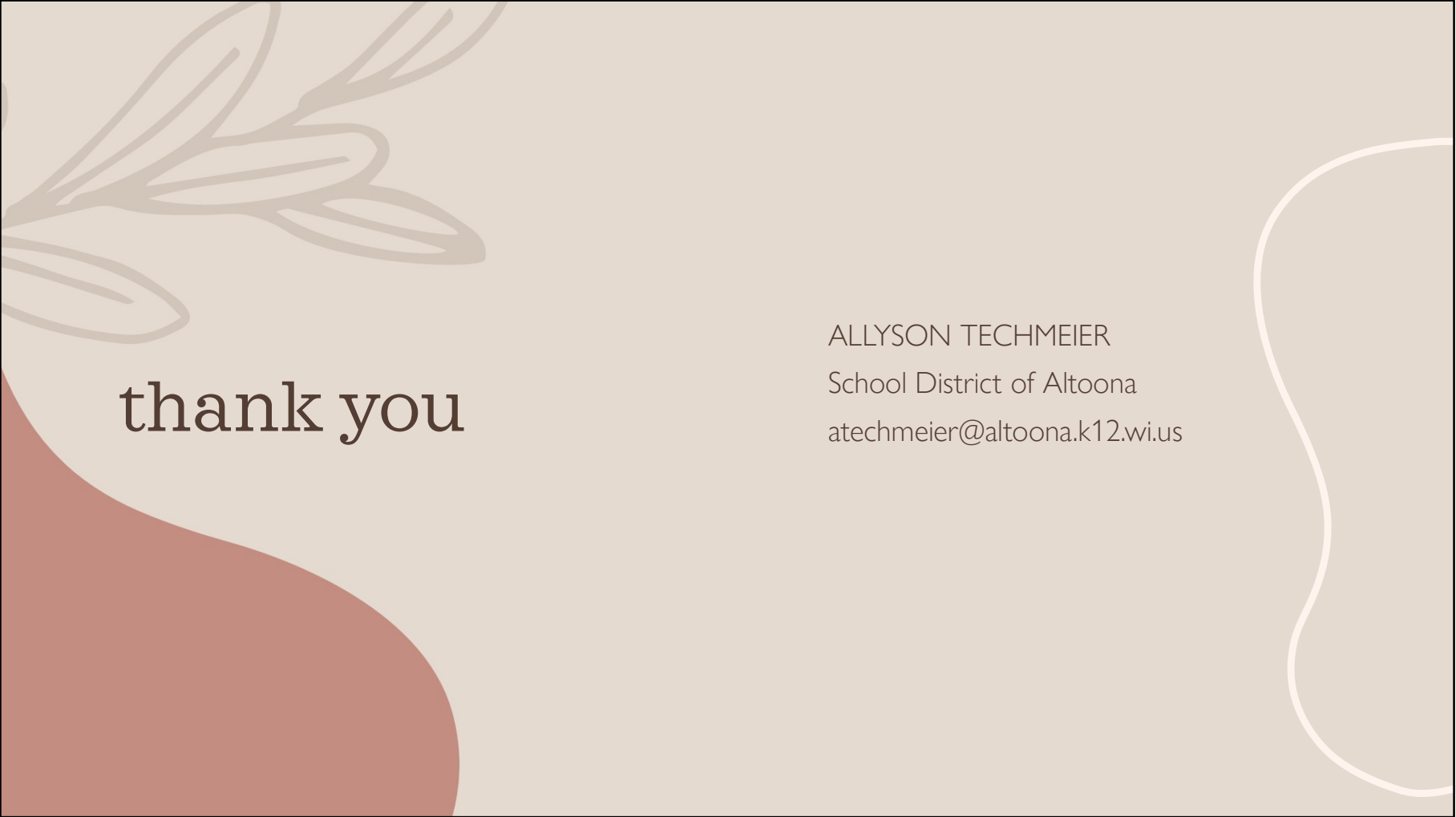
Leyo : Well, in my opinion I say that it is better to provide myself with the money that I need for my college.

Pyona : Oh. Okay, I didn't think it that way. I just always thought that your parents have to provide all that you need.

Leyo : It's okay that you think that way, honestly, most people think that way. But it is important to have a career to help lessen the cost for college, and to have experience beforehand. That is what I always think.

Pyona : Wow, you think so maturely and really think carefully about things. I've always thought that I was a planner, and thoroughly analyzing things, but you gave me a different perspective on things.

Leyo : Yeah, people have different points of view on things. Also, honestly some people don't even consider the different POV of others, and they think theirs is always right.



thank you

ALLYSON TECHMEIER
School District of Altoona
atechmeier@altoona.k12.wi.us