Expanding Journal Writing Entries

For Beginning Writers

First Grade Level

Lesson Planning Approach

Some learners perceive their "world" as a whole, where all things are interconnected and dependent upon each other. These "integrated" students face major challenges in coping with our dominant educational, social, and economic systems, which tend to present information in ways that do not match their experience. Among large populations of at risk students are many from Native American and similar cultures who do not regard their world as a sum of parts but as a blend of all that they experience.

This lesson plan does include some traditional, linear approaches to delivering information (checklist, rules, analysis, problem solving and organization). In addition to the traditional, linear delivery of information, this lesson plan also includes some of the following strategies, designed to appeal to at-risk students as they learn academic/life skills:

- ❖ Integration of technology
- ❖ Story telling/anecdotal information
- ❖ Non-competitive group and team work
- ❖ Performance-based assessment and rubrics
- ❖ Visual presentations and practice through technology and other means
- ❖ Project-based assignments that integrate family and community
- ❖ Activities appealing to multiple intelligences (Gardner)

Lesson Overview

Students begin writing in their own journals as early as kindergarten. Writing begins with a picture and a few written letters that may or may not correspond to any words in the story the student orally relays. Later in normal development of writing skills, students are often satisfied with a simple sentence containing little more than a subject and verb. This lesson is designed to encourage beginning writers to expand their writings and use more descriptive words.

Lesson Objectives

Project Objectives: When students complete this session, they will be able to

- ❖ Use a word processing program.
- ❖ Add additional descriptive words to an existing sentence using a word processing program.
- ❖ Add a capital letter at the beginning or a sentence using a word processing program.
- ❖ Add terminal punctuation at the end of a sentence using a word processing program.
- ❖ Draw a picture with details that help expand the story line of their writing.

Integration of Other Functional/Academic Skills: Students will be able to ….

Reading: Apply decoding skills to read student's own writing. Sequence events.

Technology: Move mouse to click on next portion of Power Point presentation.

Use keyboard to insert new words into an existing sentence.
Use shift key to make capital letters and question marks.
Find letter keys on the keyboard
Print writings.

Colorado State Standards

Colorado Model Content Standards for Language Arts

Standard 1: Students will read and understand a variety of material.

Standard 2: Students will write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Standard 3: Students write and speak using conventional grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

Standard 4: Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

Websites

None

Pre-requisites:

Students must have knowledge of letter and sound correspondence in order to write independently at some level even a very beginning level.

Required Equipment/Technology

- ❖ Computer with ability to run a PowerPoint presentation.
- ❖ Paper for drawing.
- ❖ LCD projector if available

Handouts

Copies of pertinent PowerPoint presentation.

Top End

The Lesson

Preparation

Activity	Instructor Notes
Have students read through their old journals. Compare entries from the beginning and the end.	A good time to have this lesson is when new journals are being passed out to the students. Tell students there will be a presentation to make their journals even more interesting than they are already.

Presentation

Show Power Point Presentation "My Journal"	Make sure all students can easily see the Power Point presentation. Use a LCD projector if available or show to students in small groups if a classroom computer is used.

Go through each of the steps presented in the Power Point presentation to expand the sentence. (See Appendix)	Put up a simple sentence such as "The bear ran."
Review yesterday's activities by reviewing Power Point presentation and the expanded sentence.	Have Power Point Presentation ready from yesterday

On a computer screen in a writing program put up a simple sentence such as "The dog jumped." Have small groups work at the computer to add words to the sentence in the manner shown in the Power Point presentation	Have students divided into groups for expanding the sentences. Divide into groups of twos or threes by ability factors or other means that best serves the needs of your classroom

Have each small group print their final sentence and illustrate. Groups should practice reading the sentence as a group.	
Exhibit and read the original sentence. Have each group read their sentence to the class and show their illustrations.

Have class look for ways the sentences are alike and different. | Present original sentence on LCD if available, chart paper if not.
Record each group's final sentence. Work on conventions as a group.

Bind the sentences into a class book. |

Practice

Activity	Instructor Notes
Have students think about what they want to write in their journals. Have students tell another student in one sentence what they will be writing about. Remind students about expanding sentences.	Have last journals ready for comparisons.

Students should independently write in their journals. Have students read to another student before conferencing with teacher.	Use rubric to evaluate progress in writing in journals.

Performance

Students read their journal entries to the class.	

Lesson Assessment Strategy (Formative as the lesson progresses)

Preparation, Presentation and Overall Implementation (Instructor)

1. Is the Power Point presentation "My Journal" available for classroom presentation?
2. Are the students familiar with writing in journals?
3. Are the instructions and expectations clear?
4. Is there enough variety to appeal to most learning preferences?
5. Do the groups reflect the strengths and weaknesses of my students?

6. Do the students understand what part technology plays in the lesson?

Performance and Practice (Student)
1. Do all students have the skills to follow the instructions?
2. Do all students contribute to the project in some measure?
3. Are students comfortable sharing their individual work?

Activities Checklist

Anticipatory set: Have students read their journals.	
Show Power Point Presentation " My Journal"	
Class helps expand a simple sentence	
Students work in small groups to expand a sentence and illistrate.	
Students share writings.	
Sentences are bond in a class book.	
Students are given a new journal in which to write.	
Rubrics is completed comparing last entry in old journal and first entry in new journal	

Appendix

Rubric for Expanded Sentences

	0	1	2	3
Capitals used in writing.	Capitals are not evident at beginnings of sentences.	The first letter of the first sentence is capitalized.	Capitals appear at the beginning of some sentences.	Each sentence begins with a capital letter.
Spaces between words.	Letters appear to be randomly written. Spaces, if present, do not correspond to words.	Spaces are present between several words, but not all.	Spaces are present most of the time with a few exceptions.	Spaces are always present between words.
Illustrations	Illustrations do not correspond with the writing.	Illustrations have few details, only one object.	Illustrations have more than one object and some details.	Illustrations help to convey meaning to the writing with several objects in the pictures and many details.
Descriptive Words	Only nouns and verbs are present.	Color and number words are the only descriptive words used.	Additional adjectives are used.	Adverbs and adjectives are present.