STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING EXPOSITORY WRITING SKILLS FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING AND BEHAVIORAL DIFFICULTIES

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AGENDA

- Writing Research: Studies over Past 8 Yrs
  - Middle school students with emotional and learning difficulties
  - Sample Descriptions
  - Instructional Materials, Methods, and Procedures
- Individual Study Variations, and Findings
- Synthesis Across Studies
- How Do I Implement These Strategies
- What Have We Learned?
- Future Directions for Research & Practice
BACKGROUND

Recently Completed USDOE, IES Grant with PSU
- Presenting Data from GMU studies
- Students with EBD/LD have significant issues:
  - Behavior, including social emotional needs
  - Academics, especially in written expression
- Research Questions:
  - Can SRSD model POW + TREE persuasive writing strategy be adapted for middle-school students with serious EBD and LD served in separate settings?
  - Once students master the SRSD POW + TREE strategy effectively, can students be taught during a fluency phase to implement the same strategy quickly?
  - Can this model be adapted to work in inclusive schools with students EBD/LD and can counter-argument components be successfully added to the essay instruction?
  - Does the order of fluency instruction matter?
    - Can we include self-determination components to improve self-efficacy?
    - Can we include peer editing and revision components?
WHAT DO THESE STUDENTS LOOK LIKE?

- Below grade level in academics
  - Significant expressive writing issues
- Difficulties maintaining attention and focus,
- Difficulties interacting with others, using and interpreting social cues.
- Very low frustration tolerance levels, anger management difficulties and
- Impulsivity, verbal aggression, anxiety
I hate writing.

Writing and me have nothing in common.

I am not writing.
**InSTRUCTIONAL ELEMENT VARIATIONS**

**All Studies**
- Persuasive Essays w/ SRSD elements
  - Self-regulation
  - 6 stages of instruction
- Materials
  - POW+TREE chart and strategy
  - Graphic Organizers
  - Transition Word Lists
  - Self Statements
  - Self - evaluation recording

**Some Studies**
- Multiple Paragraph Essays
- Single Paragraph Essays
  - Timed
  - Untimed
- Counterarguments
- Self determination
- Peer revision and editing
- Content Area

* All studies used same POW-TREE strategy with SRSD instructional elements
MEASURES*

All Studies

- 2 Essay Prompts – Select 1
  - (3-5 essays @ baseline, post phase 1, post phase 2; 1-2 essays @ maintenance, generalization)
- Essay Scoring
  - Quality
  - Essay Elements
  - Length
  - Transition Words
  - Sentences
  - Paragraphs
- Essay parts probes
- Interviews
  - Students and teachers
- Fidelity of Implementation

Some Studies

- Woodcock Johnson Writing Fluency subtest
- Time on Task
- Self Efficacy
- Self Determination
- Planning Time
- Writing Time

* All studies used same scoring criteria for essays, same time on task recoding procedures
Jose’s Essay Pretest

Kids my age should be able to have cell phones because we can use it for emergencies or to call friends.
I would have a $30 gift card as a gift. My first reason is that I could use it to buy gifts for people I care about. Another reason is to use it to buy some movies or some video games.

My next reason is to save the money for something special. My first reason is that I could use it to buy gifts for people I care about. If I go to the store and I see something nice that someone would like, then I would get it in secret.

Like the time I saw a beautiful ring that my mom would like I gave it to her as a present for Christmas. Also try to get it as cash and send it to my grandfather he'll need it more than me.

Another reason is to use it to buy video games. If there is a real cool game that is the store I’d go buy it and play it when I have time. Or maybe a new movie just came out I would ask my parents if they can they take me to the store, and buy it to watch it with them. Save up for a game that I want so when I save enough I can get.
Jose’s Post Test (cont.)

My final reason is to save that money for something special. Like buying stuff for my cousins back home. Also buying stuff for camp, the summer, the pool, a party or for winter and snow. Maybe just saving it for something cool that might come out like a movie or a game. Or to buy a gift for a very special girl that I care about a lot.

This is why I would get a gift card as a gift. It’s important to be careful for the things you buy or get. If you are not careful you may get mad or very upset so be careful.
Bruno’s PreTest Essay

- Kids should NOT go to school during the summer because I think they should have a bigger brake.
I will choose a digital camera

Which would you rather have to take a picture with a digital camera, film (35mm) camera or a disposable camera? First, a digital camera is better because you can see the picture you took.

Second, you can have more options like for example the numbers of pictures you take. Third, you can take the memory card anywhere you go.

First, a digital camera is better because you can see the picture you took. Also, you change the cameras settings like for example Black and white settings.
Bruno’s Post Test Essay

- Second you can have more options like for example the numbers of pictures you take. The more memory the more pictures you can take.
- Third you can take the memory card anywhere you go. Another the digital camera are much better then any other camera in the world.
- This is why I should get a digital camera.
CARMEN’S PRETEST

“Should students your age be allowed to have a TV in their room?”

13-year-olds shouldn’t be allowed to have a TV in their room. The TV might make students feel a need to rush on their homework if they see it. Students may also be tempted to do their homework while watching TV, or watch TV without doing their homework at all.
CARMEN’S POST TRAINING ESSAY

Should kids under age 15 have a Facebook page?

I think kids under age 15 should have a Facebook page. To begin, you can socialize more. Most middle and high schools limit social time to a mere thirty minutes at lunch. The more social time you have, the more friends you can have. The more friends you have, the better your life will be.

Next, friends can’t talk to others and ignore your face. Facebook allows teens to talk to lots of friends at once. The only time teens see each other’s faces is when they are looking at friends profiles. Some kids don’t put their own face on their profile picture.

Hence, nobody can overhear personal conversations. Teens can limit profile viewing to only them and their friends/ family. This way nobody can spill the beans about an embarrassing conversation. Nobody can gossip or be gossiped in others / their faces.
CARMEN CONT.

In contrast, a lot of teens are addicted to Facebook. This may be one cause of obesity. Facebook also affects school performance. Yet, Facebook is a great way to communicate and socialize without being interrupted or overheard. Teens can socialize with friends without disrupting class. Teens can also chat with family without disrupting their sibling’s homework or their parent’s phone conversations.

In short all of these are the reasons, teens under fifteen, should have a Facebook page.
Children from the ages 10 and up should have cell phones. When children need to call their parents or 911, they need to have a cell phone. Like if I broke my leg, and couldn't move what would I do sit there? I would need help and what would I do if no one else was around. I would need too call for support or help. All these reasons and more are why we need a cell phone.
I would rather receive a 30$ gift card than a sweater as a present because, you have more options, it’s less humiliating, cooler, more ordinary, and gift cards are more popular.

First, with a gift card you have more options. You can get what you want. You can get more than just a sweater. Plus, you can spend it on what you want rather than have someone pick you out a tacky sweater.

Second, getting a gift card is a lot less humiliating. Because, when you get a sweater from your grandmother, you are going to get laughed at rather you like it or not by all your friends. You are defiantly going to look and feel weird. Plus, everyone in school is going to criticize you.
Third, gift cards are a lot cooler than stupid sweaters. You can use the gift cards with your friends if you want. Then you can use the gift card just about anywhere. Plus, with a sweater you don’t have to feel pressured to tell everyone that your grandmother got you the stupid sweater and that she made you wear it to school.

Fourth, a gift card is a normal gift. A sweater is not. Plus, gift cards don’t itch you to death like stupid sweaters do. Then gift cards don’t suffocate you. I swear that whoever designed the sweater made it as a touchier device.
Fifth, gift cards are very popular. Everyone has had a gift card at least once in their lives. So, you don’t have to feel out of date with the times. Plus, if you have no use for it you can give it to someone else without feeling embarrassed about it.

In conclusion, give a gift card as a gift not a sweater. There great to have and they won’t embarrass you. Therefore, gift cards are much better gifts than sweaters.
Now I know how to organize everything. I used to write everything in a bundle. (Sally)

I am very glad that you guys came here to help me to write more, to learn how to write POW+TREE. (Sam)

I was really bad at writing. . . . It taught me a lot. (William)

I used to hate writing, but now I think it’s not so bad. Now I pick my ideas before I write and the rest of it is easy. (Mark)

I like writing a little bit more. I can do it. (Matthew)

It taught me how to do stuff correctly so I can teach someone else when I am a teacher. It helped me concentrate and stay on task. (George)

I like that it is faster and easier to write because I get more ideas and can organize it better. The graphic organizer really helped. (Jay)

When writing longer essays, it made it easier to break it up into parts. It helped to organize it so I can write longer essays. (Bob)
Student Interview Responses to: Why are counter reasons important?

- To make readers see my writing and think of something else.
- I think they are good because it’s good to get someone else’s point of view.
- If they are steadfast on their opinion & don’t want hadn’t thought of before, then they may change their mind.
- So it makes your essay stronger. Define CR- another person thinks the opposite of what you think & you try to explain so your reason sounds more efficient than theirs.
- Because counter reasons let other person know that you know what they are thinking. It is not only a one sided point of view. You know what their thoughts are too. It gets you from keeping them from saying that your essay is biased because you acknowledge the other person’s point of view.
Tell me how you have used Counter arguments in your writing?

- I think of what other people that do like it would say, and then kinda have to be 2 people at once.
- It allows you to know that let the other person know that you acknowledge what they think but you can come back and say and give more facts why your reasons are better.
- Counter arguments state the other persons opinion so that you can change their opinion on it with a refute.
### Critical Instructional Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-Regulation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>Set goals</strong> for learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>- <strong>Talk to themselves in positive ways about learning</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- <strong>Use self-instruction</strong> to guide themselves through a learning problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>Monitor</strong> their comprehension or progress</td>
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<tr>
<td>- <strong>Reward</strong> themselves for success</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SRSD Instructional Stages*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Develop background knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>Discuss it</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>Model it</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>Memorize it</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- <strong>Support it</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>Independent practice</strong></td>
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*See Graham, S., & Harris, K. R. (2003).*
## Self Regulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set Goals</td>
<td>Sign Learning Contract</td>
<td>Increase personal investment in learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Self-Talk</td>
<td>Generate self statements to use during all phases of writing</td>
<td>Self encouragement statements to stay on task and keep thinking, planning, writing, and checking essays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Instruction</td>
<td>Talk through the thinking process when brainstorming, completing the graphic organizer, proofing, etc.</td>
<td>Learn how teachers use self talk and use self talk independently to promote thinking and strategy usage throughout the entire writing process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Monitoring</td>
<td>Checking progress and performance throughout all writing phases</td>
<td>Learn how to monitor individual progress and performance during all writing stages, complete checklist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Rewards</td>
<td>Providing self-rewards for completing an essay using the strategy</td>
<td>Learn how to provide self praise for work completed using the strategy</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### SRSD: 6 Major Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage 1</td>
<td>Develop and activate background knowledge</td>
<td>Increase background knowledge Discussion about writing Example: What is persuasive writing? POW+TREE strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2</td>
<td>Discuss the strategy including benefits and expectations</td>
<td>How and when to use the strategy Self-regulation procedures are emphasized (i.e. goal setting, monitoring)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 3</td>
<td>Model the strategy</td>
<td>Teachers model the strategy- Inner thought process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 4</td>
<td>Memorize the strategy</td>
<td>Practice steps of the process and memorize the strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 5</td>
<td>Provide guided practice</td>
<td>Longest of the stages. Students practice writing with help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 6</td>
<td>Independent practice</td>
<td>Students require little or no support. Write independently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROCEDURES: SIMILAR FOR ALL GMU STUDIES</td>
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<td>---</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>IRB permissions from University, school district, building principal, teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Written student assent, parent consent, teachers consent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Teachers, trainers, and observers were trained</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Baseline (essays, knowledge probes, sometimes WJ Fluency subtest, self-efficacy, errors, time planning and writing probes) or Pretest for group designs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Phase 1: SRSD Instruction - with essay knowledge probes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Post Phase 1 Measures – essays</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Phase 2 SRSD + Study Variations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Post Phase 2 - essay, essay parts probes, interviews, WJ, others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Generalization – Math content, social studies content</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Both SRSD MP &amp; P and SRSD + Content Maintenance measures assessed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Stage 1: Develop and Activate Background Knowledge**

- What is your background knowledge of POW + TREE? (show picture of mnemonic strategy)
- Do you know what the mnemonic stands for? **POW+TREE**
- Have you used it in a class before?
- Tell us how you have used the strategy or the SRSD model of instruction.

**Lesson Ideas**

- Option of using a learning contract
- What does it mean to persuade someone?
- Can you give me some examples?
- What is persuasive writing?
- How would you persuade someone in writing?
Writing to Persuade Learning Contract

Student _______________________________________
Date: __________________________________________
Teacher _______________________________________
Target Completion Date: __________________________
Goal: __________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________

How to meet this goal: ____________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________

Signatures: Student ______________________________
Teacher ________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________ has successfully completed instruction on _______________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________

and agrees to use it in ________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________

Date: _________________________ Student: ___________
Teacher: ______________________
Writing to Persuade Learning Contract

Student: Albert  Date: 10/24/07
Teacher: [Name]  

Target Completion Date: Sep 7, 2007
Goal: Nice, dict, writing, to write an persuasive essay that contains

How to meet this goal: Get A+, Listen to teacher and direction on a single topic, 2/3 reasons, conclusion

Signatures: Student: Albert  Teacher: 

____________________________________________________________________________________

Albert has successfully completed instruction on 
and agrees to use it in science, class, etc.

Date: 10/24/07  Student: 
Teacher: [Name]
POW
Pick my idea
Organize my notes
Write and say more

TREE
Topic sentence
Reasons (3 or more) and
Counter reasons (1 or more)
Explain reasons
Ending and Examine
STAGE 2: DISCUSS IT
LESSON IDEAS

- Introduce the strategy
- Go over an example of an essay and identify essay parts
- Introduce Graphic Organizer (GO) and complete the GO with the parts identified in sample essay
- Introduce Transition Words and pick out transition words in the sample essay by circling and write them on the GO
INTRODUCE THE GO

“Good writers plan before writing their essays. Graphic organizers help us organize our ideas and thinking as we plan. See spaces for all parts of TREE.

Show this by filling in the parts from the essay example

Practice recalling mnemonic with students
“Do you know what transition words are? Transition words make essays more organized and identify reasons that are given. There are many types of transition words. Some transition words show a reason, a counter reason or conclude essays.”
Stage 3: Model It Lesson Ideas

- Have a writing prompt ready to complete
- Go through the POW + TREE strategy from start to finish
  - P- pick your idea
  - O- organize your notes
    - Fill out the GO using all the support materials (e.g., transition word chart)
  - W- write and say more
    - Use the GO to write the essay out
- Introduce the Record Sheet
- Introduce and develop Self-Statements

- Pick My IDEA.
- Writing Prompt: Provide sample prompts for student selection:
  - Persuade the reader that students should or should not be required to perform community service.
  - Is it better to receive a gift card or a sweater?
  - Is it better to communicate with someone using email or snail mail?
  - Should students have to wear school uniforms or not?
- Which do I believe is better? Start thinking about reasons to support
SECOND: ORGANIZE MY NOTES

Step 2: Organize my notes, continued

Teacher: (modeling the thought process)

“First, what do I believe – What should I write for the topic sentence: A gift card is better. “Good idea!” (WRITE ON THE GO)

“Now I better figure out at least 3 reasons and give an explanation for each reason. Think of good ideas.” (Think and say ideas, and briefly write notes for at least 3 reasons-not in full sentences - use self-statements at least twice.) I have one good reason, two more on the way!! (WRITE ON THE GO)-

“Hmmm, if I think about other points of view, my writing would be better. In this case: I might need the sweater to keep warm during the winter. I am doing a good job (WRITE ON THE GO)
# POW + TREE

**TOPIC** Sentence
What do I believe?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>EXPLANATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email is better than snail mail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TW</th>
<th>REASONS - 3 or more</th>
<th>EXPLANATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why do I believe this?</td>
<td>Say more about each reason.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will my readers believe this?</td>
<td>What details will persuade my reader?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First</th>
<th>Safer</th>
<th>Post office can’t lose your letter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Another</td>
<td>More private</td>
<td>Goes directly to the individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>Faster</td>
<td>Does not go through the mailing process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lastly</td>
<td>Eco-friendly</td>
<td>Save paper, money, envelopes, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Counter Reason- 1 or more. Who might disagree and why?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yet</th>
<th>Not everyone has a computer</th>
<th>Can’t afford computer and internet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Refute it! Tell why your side is better?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>But</th>
<th>They could go to a friend’s house or the library to use a computer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**ENDING**
What do I want my reader to remember?

In summary For these reasons email is better than snail mail

**EXAMINE**
Check my paper again. Do I have all my parts? Yes No
Does each of my paragraphs have at least 3 sentences? Yes No
STAGE 3: MODELING

Step 3: Write and Say More:

“Now I can do W in POW - write and say more. I will use the notes in the GO to help me write my essay. I can write my opinion essay and think of more good ideas or transition words as I write.”

(Now - talk yourself through writing the essay; the students can help). Use a clean piece of paper and print.
STUDENT RECORD SHEET:  EXAMINE HOW YOU DID TODAY

Name: _________________

POW+TREE Record Sheet + Effort
Use this sheet to track how you did. Look at the example on the first line.
1) Rate how well you did today - ☺☻☺☻☺

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal: ___________________________</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Rate your performance today: 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Completed Graphic Organizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wrote Topic</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Wrote Reasons</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Wrote Explanations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wrote Counter Reason &amp; Explanation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Wrote Refute to CR</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Wrote Ending</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Number of Transition Words: 5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Examined Essay</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Used Self Statements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# of parts: _______________________________
POW+TREE Record Sheet

Use this sheet to track how you did. Look at the example on the first line.

1) Rate how well you did today -
   - 😊  🥺  😞  😞
   - 3  2  1

2) Mark each step you did today.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>10/8</th>
<th>10/16</th>
<th>10/23</th>
<th>10/27</th>
<th>11/1</th>
<th>11/5</th>
<th>11/6</th>
<th>11/9</th>
<th>11/26</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Rate your performance today.</td>
<td>😊</td>
<td>😊</td>
<td>🥺</td>
<td>😞</td>
<td>😞</td>
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<td>😞</td>
<td>😞</td>
<td>😞</td>
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<td>Organizer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Transition Words</td>
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<tr>
<td>Examine Essay</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self Statements</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Self Statements**

*My Self Statements*

**While I Think of Good Ideas:**

- I need to let my mind be clear.
- Take my time. I will think of good ideas.
- I can think of new ideas.
- What do I want to tell the reader I believe?

**While working**

- I need to come up with at least 3 reasons.
- I need to think of good words.
- I can use the graphic organizer to write down ideas of parts as I think of them.
- Think about the next step.

**To check my work**

- Does my essay have all the parts?
- Does my essay make sense?
- Can I think of anything else to include?
PARAGRAPH CHECKLIST

Name: _______________  Date: __________

Persuasive Essay

Paragraph 1
- Sentence 1 Topic sentence
- Sentence 2 Transition Word (TW), Reason 1
- Sentence 3 TW, Reason 2
- Sentence 4 TW, Reason 3

Paragraph 2
- Sentence 1 TW, restate Reason 1
- Sentence 2 Explanation for Reason 1
- Sentence 3 Expand on explanation

Paragraph 3
- Sentence 1 TW, restate Reason 2
- Sentence 2 Explanation for Reason 2
- Sentence 3 Expand on explanation

Paragraph 4
- Sentence 1 TW, restate Reason 3
- Sentence 2 Explanation for Reason 3
- Sentence 3 Expand on explanation
  (repeat paragraph 4 for each addition reason)

Paragraph 5
- Sentence 1 TW, Counter Reason (CR)
- Sentence 2 Explanation for CR
- Sentence 3 TW, Refute it
  (repeat paragraph 5 if you have an additional counter reason)

Paragraph 6 (ending)
- Sentence 1 TW, restate your position
- Sentence 2 Briefly restate your reasons
- Sentence 3 Wrap it up!
Stage 4: Memorize It Lesson Idea

- It’s critical to make sure by this point students have memorized the mnemonic strategy POW + TREE
- Students can’t utilize the strategy if they can’t remember it
- Practice recalling the strategy is key
- What does POW + TREE stand for?
- Continue practice writing essays using all strategy components
STAGE 5: SUPPORT IT
LESSON IDEAS

- Students compose essay. Assist and provide feedback and support as needed
- Practice, practice, practice, practice
- Now, it’s your turn!
  - Independently, possibly with partners
  - Compose essay using POW + TREE

STAGE 6 INDEPENDENT

- Slowly remove GO and other support materials
  - Encourage students to generate GO and POW TREE strategy
- Writing
  - Self regulation, Strategy, and checklist reminders
- Graph Performance
- Successful when several essays completed independently. Essays included all components.
CHECK FOR INDEPENDENCE

- Challenge to students to see if they can draw the GO on a blank sheet of paper
  - A good suggestion for the students is to write POW+TREE in the corner as a reminder
  - Check parts against original GO; How did they do?
  - If struggling to have spots for all the parts in TREE connect GO to the TREE parts

- See how many transition words the students can remember in 1 minute then share. Have students connect the transition word to the TREE reasons.

- Ask “Are there other transition words we can use?”
EXTENSION LESSONS

- Fluency
- Counterarguments
- Revision
- Self-determination
Fluency

Quickly write well-organized short responses to complete class work and tests.

Fluency Instruction:
• Identical materials as traditional SRSD instruction
• Write one-paragraph response with all the parts persuasive essay in 10 minutes
• Compare multi-paragraph essays and fluency paragraphs using a Venn diagram
• Use individual timers for students to pace themselves
STEPS FOR TEACHING WRITING FLUENCY

1. Review the parts of a persuasive essay
2. Model how to plan an essay quickly
3. Model how to write a one-paragraph essay in 10 minutes
4. Practice “quick writes,” using timers to self-pace
5. Graph essay parts and set a goal to include more essay parts within the 10 minute limit
6. Practice
Sample Fluency (1 Paragraph) Lesson

• Lesson 1: Students will:
  – recognize instances where a one-paragraph written response is required;
  – identify components of a good response (i.e., topic, reasons, explanations, and ending);
  – complete a 10-minute written response as a group; and
  – complete self-monitoring chart and set goal for next essay.

• Some studies taught after teaching multi paragraph essays (Mastropieri et al., 2010; 2012).
  • Students quickly transferred to single paragraph responses and included all elements

• Some studies taught fluency first or only single paragraph essays (Allen-Bronaugh, 2013; Hauth et al., 2012)
COUNTERARGUMENTS

- Enhance persuasiveness of essays and practice taking the perspective of another by including counterarguments.

Counterargument Instruction

1. Modifying the graphic organizer
2. Teach a lesson on counterarguments
3. Model how to write counterargument paragraphs
4. Include counterarguments components when graphing essay parts
COUNTERARGUMENTS*

- To imagine and articulate an objection to the writer’s argument,
- To reaffirm the writer’s original argument (reference).
- Writers must take the position of an individual who disagrees with the writer and
- One characteristic of this population is a lessened ability to appreciate the opinions of others (Kauffman & Landrum, 2009).

- Included after 3 paragraphs of reasons and explanations supporting your opinion, but before the closing paragraph.

- Parts:
  - (1) TW,
  - (2) counter reason,
  - (3) one-sentence explanation,
  - (4) refute TW, and
  - (5) refute the counter reason

* See Mastropieri et al., 2014; Hauth et al., 2013
3 parts to a counterargument:

**Counter Reason**

**Explanation**

**Refute**
COUNTERARGUMENTS LESSON

Brainstorm reasons and counter reasons for different topics. Ask the following questions when discussing counterarguments:

1. What do I believe?
2. Who might disagree with me?
3. How can I prove my point of view?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TW</th>
<th>Counter Reason</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Refute</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Writing a Counterargument Paragraph

- This paragraph is included after three paragraphs of reasons and explanations supporting your opinion, before the closing paragraph.
- Paragraph parts: (1) TW, (2) counter reason, (3) one-sentence explanation, (4) refute TW, and (5) refute the counter reason

On the other hand, some people might think that receiving a sweater is better than a gift card. My grandmother selected the sweater for me because she believed I would love it. However, I could select something I could use more than a sweater with a gift card.
Revising essays is also a critical part of the writing process.

Working with peers has been successful and could potential facilitate improved social skills for students with challenging behaviors.

Peer-Revision (Mills, 2012)

Peer-Conferencing Checklist

- Find a place in the classroom to conference where you will not distract other students.
- Turn on the audio recorder to record your conference.
- Use quiet voices. Be respectful of other students who are working.
- Take turns reading your essays to each other.
- Re-read your partner’s essay to yourself and fill out the POW TREE Revision sheet.
- Conference with your partner about your suggestions.
- Revise your own essay on the computer. Save your work. Print out a copy.
- Meet with the teacher to talk about your revisions.
- When both partners are done revising on the computer, meet again to edit your partner’s essay for capitalization, punctuation, and spelling errors. Remember to record your conference.
- Make your final corrections on the computer. Save your work. Print out a final copy and turn it in to your teacher.

Expectations:
- Try hard
- Do your best
- Be positive
- Be kind and encouraging to partners
- When in doubt, raise your hand for assistance
### Steps of Peer-Revision Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 1</td>
<td>Develop and activate background knowledge</td>
<td>Discuss what good writing looks like, sounds like, and feels like; and the importance of revision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 2</td>
<td>Discuss the revision strategy</td>
<td>Taught to complete the Revision Strategy Guide through modeling, guided practice, and independent practice. Made connections to POW+TREE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 3</td>
<td>Teach the steps of peer-conferencing</td>
<td>Introduced to the steps of peer-conferencing and behavioral expectations. Next, students watched a video of a model peer conference, noting which steps were completed and what types of feedback partners provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 4</td>
<td>Guided practice</td>
<td>Partners practiced peer-revision, with feedback from the teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 5</td>
<td>Independent practice</td>
<td>Partners practiced peer-revision independently.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### POW+TREE Revision

1. **COMPLIMENT**
   What did the author do well?

2. **Does it have all the PARTS?**
   Mark-up the essay. Then, put a √ next to the parts you see.

3. **Is it CLEAR?**
   + = yes; ◯ = no

4. **Is it PERSUASIVE?**
   + = yes; ◯ = no

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>¶1</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Topic – What does the author believe?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>¶2</td>
<td>TW</td>
<td>Reasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¶3</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Explanation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¶4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¶5</td>
<td>CR</td>
<td>Counter Reason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Explanation – Refute the CR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¶6</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Ending – Restate the topic and reasons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. **COMPLIMENT**
   What did the author do well?

6. **Editing**
   - **CAPITALIZATION** Does every sentence start with a capital letter?
   - **PUNCTUATION** Does every sentence end with an endmark (., ?, !)?
   - **SPELLING** Did you check your spelling?

(Mills, 2012)
SELF-DETERMINATION (Cuenca-Sanchez et al, 2012)

The Seven POWERFUL Self-Determined Behaviors

Make a good decision that will help me attain a goal.
I am going to work hard on this assignment.

Set a goal and make a plan:
What would my goal be?
What is my plan of action?

Self-awareness:
What are my strengths?
Do I need help?

Apply problem-solving strategies:
What strategy is going to help me write a good essay?

Self-advocacy:
How can I communicate what I need in a persuasive manner?

Monitor and evaluate my progress:
Am I following a plan?
How am I doing my work?

Self-efficacy:
I have confidence in my abilities to attain my goal.
## ADAPTED INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES FOR SRSD AND SELF-DETERMINATION (Cuenca-Sanchez et al, 2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Stage 1: Develop and activate background knowledge | 1. Goals and contracts  
2. What is self-determination? (The Powerful 7-Self-determined Behaviors)  
3. How does persuasive writing relate to self-advocacy?  
4. Introduce persuasive writing genre |
| Stage 2: Discuss the strategy including benefits and expectations | 1. Introduction of POW+TREE as a problem solving strategy  
2. Application of POW+TREE to write essays to self-advocate  
3. Transition words  
4. Discussion about counterarguments  
5. Importance of self-determined behaviors – self-monitoring and self-evaluation |
**Essay Scoring**

- Multiple independent scorers read and scored each essay individually. Scorers met to assess inter-rater reliability, and discussed disagreements until they were resolved.

- Each essay was scored using a holistic rubric with a scale from 0-10. Zero being no essay parts and ten for a complete essay.

- A complete essay had to include the following components:
  - Topic sentence.
  - More than three reasons with explanations.
  - Ending sentence.
  - Written in a logical sequence and with more than one counter argument.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study (5 MB, 3 group)</th>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Sample (112)</th>
<th>SRSD(Pow-Tree)</th>
<th>Intensity</th>
<th>Hours (M=16.4, SD =8.01)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mastropieri (2010)</td>
<td>Design study</td>
<td>10 8th graders, separate setting</td>
<td>Multi Paragraphs</td>
<td>4 days wk/ 55 sessions</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mastropieri (2009)</td>
<td>Multiple baseline</td>
<td>12, 8th graders, separate setting</td>
<td>MP 1st + Fluency 2nd</td>
<td>4 days wk/ 50 sessions</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mastropieri (2012)</td>
<td>Multiple baseline</td>
<td>12, 8th graders, inclusive school</td>
<td>MP + Counterarguments 1st + Fluency 2nd</td>
<td>5 days wk/ 18.4 sessions</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cerar &amp; Mastropieri (2012)</td>
<td>Multiple baseline</td>
<td>7, 7th-8th graders, inclusive school</td>
<td>PC Fluency 1st + MP 2nd</td>
<td>5 days wk/ 33.4 sessions</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hauth, et al. (2012)</td>
<td>Multiple baseline</td>
<td>8, 7-8th graders, inclusive school</td>
<td>PC 1st + Content Focus 2nd (measured planning)</td>
<td>5 days wk/ 9.7 sessions</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mills &amp; Mastropieri (2012)</td>
<td>Multiple baseline</td>
<td>10, 7-8th graders, inclusive school</td>
<td>MPC 1st + Peer Revision 2nd</td>
<td>5 days wk/ 17.5 sessions</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mastropieri et al.,(2015)</td>
<td>Group Exp</td>
<td>32, 8th graders, separate setting</td>
<td>MP – wait list control group</td>
<td>5 days wk/ 10 sessions</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuenca-Sanchez , Mastropieri</td>
<td>Group Exp</td>
<td>21, 7th graders, separate setting</td>
<td>MPC + self determination</td>
<td>4 days wk/ 33 sessions</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ESSAY LENGTH: EIGHT STUDIES


Baseline  Post Phase 1  Post Phase 2  Maintenance  Generalization
ESSAY QUALITY: EIGHT STUDIES

- Mastropieri (2009)
- Cerar (2012)
- Mills (2012)
- Mastropieri (2012)
- Hauth (2012)
- Mastropieri (2010)
- Manuscript (submitted)
- Cuenca-Sanchez (in press)

Baseline, Post Phase 1, Post Phase 2, Maintenance, Generalization
Overall 8 Studies Essay Quality (N = 112)

Quality

Baseline  Post Intervention  Maintenance  Generalization

P < .028 all baseline with post measure comparisons, Wilcoxin Signed Ranks Tests
GENERAL ED CURRICULUM VS GMU STUDIES

General Ed Curriculum
- 7–10 days of instruction during unit covering reading and literary analysis and persuasive essays
  - Several days devoted to grammar, syntax, language usage
    - 3-5 half days, including writing only 2 persuasive essays
  - Two complete persuasive essays written (typically during unit)
- Whole class instruction

GMU Studies
- Average 12 weeks – just persuasive essays
  - 4-5 days a wk; 30-45 min sessions
- Required writing multiple essays for testing alone
  - Baseline 3-5
  - Post Phase 1: 3-5
  - Post Phase 2: 3-5
  - Post Maintenance & Generalization: 2-4
- Range high of 20 – 12 essays during testing alone in MB studies
- Writing practice throughout the instruction
- Small group instruction (2-3 best)
OVERALL FINDINGS

- Improved essay quality, number of words, transition words, sentences, and paragraphs from baseline to post intervention, post fluency, maintenance and generalization.

- Significant differences from pre to post intervention on W-J Fluency.

- Student strategy reports indicated they used the strategy, saw the benefits of the strategy, and reported some generalized strategy use.

- Performance declined some on maintenance and generalization probes, but still substantially higher than baseline.

- Time spent planning and writing increased significantly from baseline to post testing phases.
INTENSIVE, RECURSIVE INSTRUCTION

- Intensive, Recursive, Relentless Instruction
  - 50 – 55 days of instruction – separate setting school
  - 7–23 days inclusive school
  - Small groups of 2-3 optimal
- Consistent discussions and reflections
  - GMU staff held daily discussions on progress
- Ongoing monitoring student progress
  - Each student’s daily performance
  - Instructional Modifications as needed
- Significant Intensity and Duration
- Students still require even more instruction in grammar, syntax, punctuation, etc.
SUMMARY

Students can learn to write better persuasive essays.
Requires intensive, recursive, repetitive instruction.
We used small groups (2-10), the smaller the group the better.
Student require even more instructional support on language usage, grammar, punctuation.
Students require much more intensive instructional time on task than allocated in general education.
Cerar, N (2012). *Students with emotional and behavior disorder learn how to write fluently persuasive essays and to write elaborated persuasive essays.* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). George Mason University, Fairfax, VA.

Cuenca-Sanchez, Y., Mastropieri, M.A., Scruggs, T.E., & Kidd, J. (2012). Middle school students with emotional disorders: Determined to meet their needs through writing *Exceptionality, 20,* 71-93.


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THANKS