

Northfield Public Schools
Language Arts Teaching Tutorials
Grades 7-12

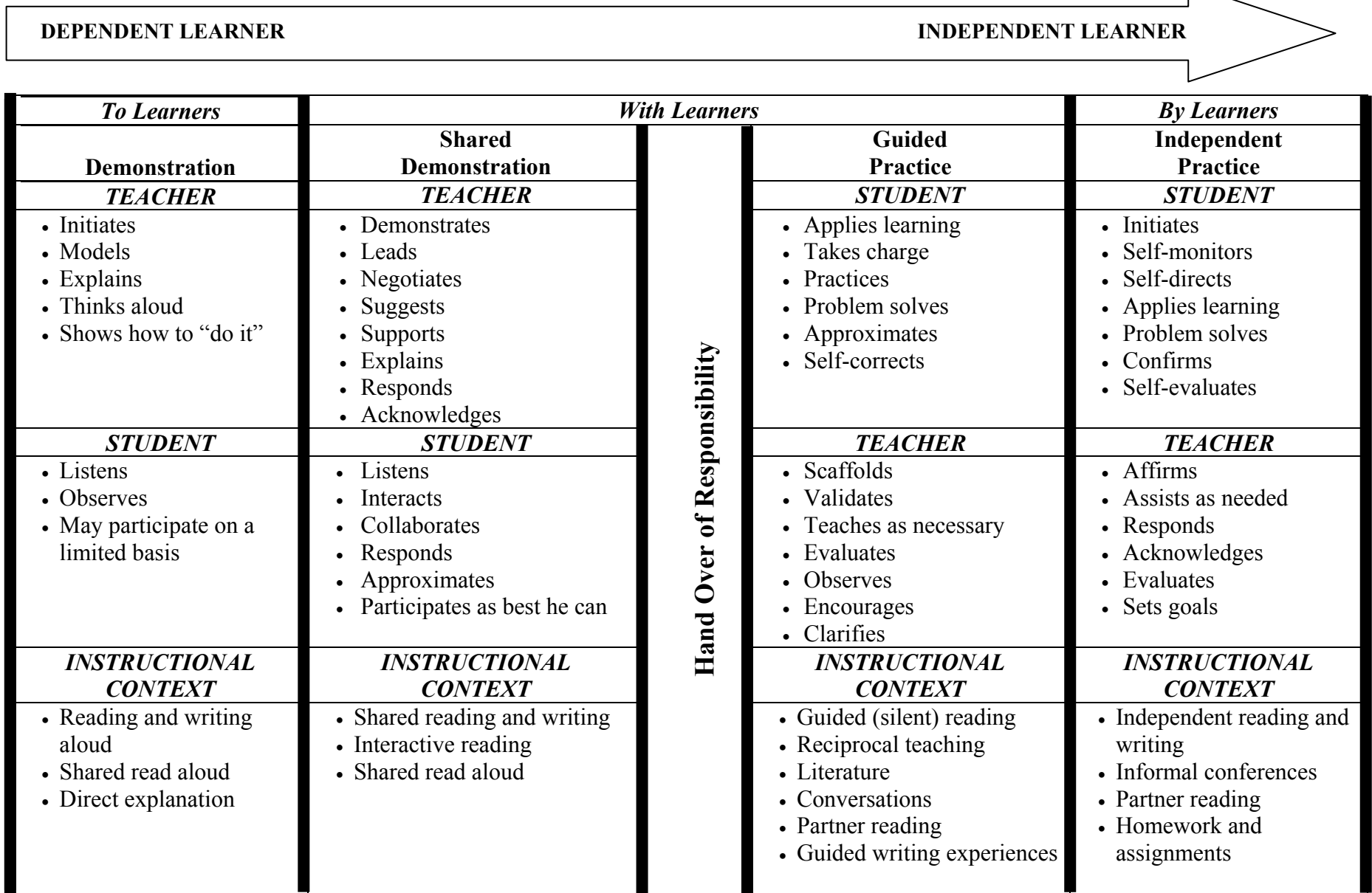
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Language Arts Teaching Tutorials Grades 7-12
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OPTIMAL LEARNING MODEL ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Below is a teaching and learning model that can serve as a reminder of how to plan lessons and units that will move students from dependent learners to independent learners.



Adapted from “Reading Essentials” by Regie Routman (Heinemann: Portsmouth, NH); @ 2003

COMPONENTS OF READER'S WORKSHOP GRADES 6-12

Framework for Reading Instruction

(These reading instructional strategies help teachers to organize their lesson plans.)

1. **Mini-Lesson:**

Mini-lessons allow the teacher to deliver instruction on comprehension strategies and reading skills in a whole group setting. Concepts are taught within the context of authentic literature and are drawn from district standards as well as the needs of the students. The teacher models reading and the students engage in shared reading.

Setting: Whole Group

Resources: Literature of all genres/levels, district standards, student data.

Student Reading Level: Texts used should be at grade level – what a student at that grade level should be able to read.

2. **Independent Reading:**

Independent reading time provides students with the opportunity to read a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts at their own individual reading levels during an uninterrupted block of time. During this time, students utilize the skills and strategies they have acquired during min-lessons. The teacher conducts individual reading conferences with students to provide individualized instruction and gather data. The teacher listens to each student read, asks questions about comprehension, identifies and records strengths, and identifies and records weaknesses that need to be addressed. Independent reading time drives instruction and fosters the development of students as readers.

Setting: Individual

Resources: Literature of all genres/levels, student data.

Student Reading Level: Texts should be at a student's "just right" level – what a student can read without support.

3. **Guided Reading:**

Guided reading is a teaching approach that enables students to work with the teacher in a small group setting. The teacher chooses a text appropriate for the needs of the students in the group and guides them through it, working on comprehension strategies and reading skills. Areas of emphasis are derived from district standards and the students' current reading needs. Guided reading groups are flexible and instruction is differentiated to meet the needs of individual students.

Setting: Small Group

Resources: Leveled books, district standards, student data.

Student Reading Level: Texts should be at the students' instructional level – slightly more difficult than the "just right" text.

4. **Literature Circles:**

Literature circles are small, student-led discussion groups whose members have chosen to read the same text within the same time frame. Students determine the group's reading schedule, make notes about their thinking as they read, and hold periodic group discussions as they make their way through the book. Upon completion of the book, students may share highlights with the class and then move into a new cycle of literature circles. The teacher monitors these groups, but does not facilitate them.

Setting: Small Group

Resources: Literature of all genres/levels.

5. **Sharing Time:**

Students share and reflect upon what they learned during the reader's workshop, collaboratively problem solve areas of concern and celebrate successes in a whole group setting.

Setting: Whole Group

Overview of Comprehension Strategies

MAKING CONNECTIONS	Good readers make connections to their prior knowledge before, during and after reading to enhance their understanding of what they're reading. (Text-to-self, text-to-text, text-to-world)
	<i>Possible questions to ask your students: Is there a part of this text that reminds you of something in your own life, something you have read in another text, or something that has happened in the world?</i>
QUESTIONING	Good readers generate questions before, during and after reading to clarify meaning, make predictions and focus their attention on what is important.
	<i>Possible questions to ask your students: Can you show me a part of the text where you have a question? What were you wondering about as you read this part?</i>
VISUALIZING	Good readers create a wide range of visual, auditory and other sensory images as they read, and they become emotionally involved with what they read.
	<i>Possible questions to ask your student: Were there places in the text where you made a picture in your mind? What images or pictures did you see? What specific word helped you create that picture in your mind?</i>
INFERRING	Good readers use their prior knowledge and information from what they read to make predictions, seek answers to questions, draw conclusions and create interpretations that deepen their understanding of the text.
	<i>Possible questions to ask your students: What do you predict will happen in this piece? Can you show me a place in the text where you found yourself making an inference? What do you think were the big ideas in the story?</i>
DETERMINING IMPORTANCE IN TEXT	Good readers identify key ideas or themes as they read, and they can distinguish between important and unimportant information.
	<i>Possible questions to ask your students: What is this story or piece mostly about? Can you tell me about some of the important ideas that struck you? Did you notice any important themes? What do you think is most important to remember about this story or topic?</i>
SYNTHESIZING INFORMATION	Good readers track their thinking as it evolves during reading, in order to get the overall meaning of what they have read.
	<i>Possible questions to ask your students: Can you tell me what the piece is about in just a few sentences? Can you show me a place in the piece where your thinking changed? Do you have some new ideas or information?</i>
USING "FIX-UP" STRATEGIES	Good readers are aware of when they understand and when they don't. If they have trouble understanding specific words, phrases or longer passages, they use a wide range of problem-solving strategies including skipping ahead, rereading, asking questions, using a dictionary and reading the passage aloud.

*Adapted from Strategies That Work by Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis
& 7 Keys to Comprehension by Susan Zimmerman and Chryse Hutchins*

THE 6 TRAITS OF WRITING

IDEAS

Stimulating Ideas: Effective writing presents interesting and valuable information about a specific subject. It has a clear message or purpose. The ideas are thoroughly developed and hold the reader's attention.

ORGANIZATION

Logical Organization: In terms of basic structure, good writing has a clearly developed beginning, middle, and ending. Within the text, each main point is developed with examples, explanations, definitions, specific details, and so on.

WORD CHOICE

Original Word Choice: Simply put, good writing contains good words. Nouns and verbs are specific; modifiers are colorful; and the overall level of language helps communicate a particular message or tone.

FLUENCY

Smooth-Reading Sentences: Effective writing flows smoothly and clearly from one sentence to the next. But it isn't, by any means, predictable. Sentences will vary in length, and they won't all begin in the same way. Sentence smoothness, or fluency, gives writing rhythm, which helps make it enjoyable to read.

VOICE

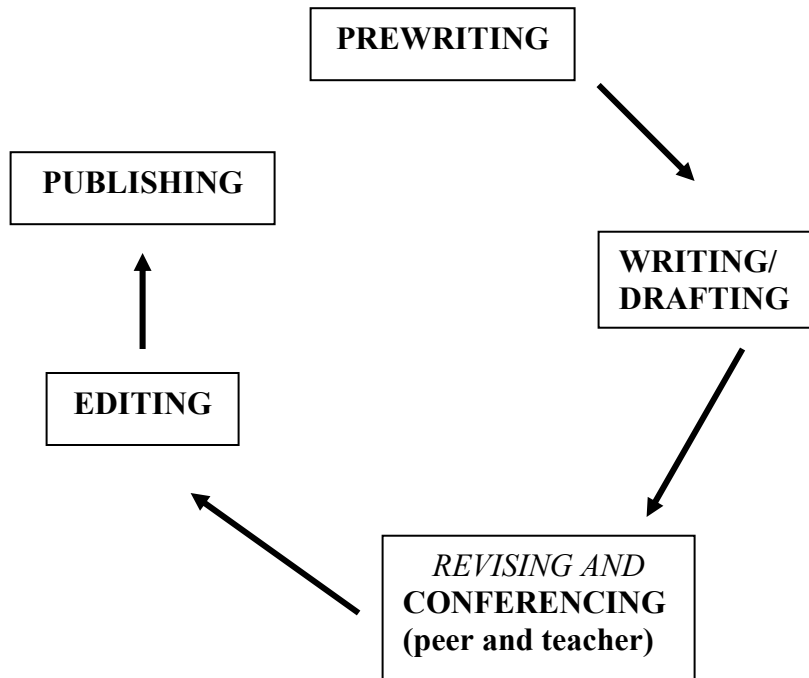
Engaging Voice: In the best writing, you can hear the writer's voice – his or her special way of expressing ideas and emotions. Voice gives writing personality; it shows that the writer sincerely cares about his or her subject and audience.

CONVENTIONS

Correct, Accurate Copy: Good writing follows the basic standards of punctuation, mechanics, usage, and spelling. It is edited with care to ensure that the work is accurate and easy to follow.

For more information, see [Writer's Inc.](#), [Write Source 2000](#), or [Writer's Express](#).
Adapted from Write Source 2000.

THE WRITING PROCESS



Prewriting: At the start of a project, writers explore possible subjects before selecting one to develop. Then they collect details about their subjects and plan how to use these details in their writing.

Writing/Drafting: Writers then complete a first draft using their plan as a general guide. This draft is a writer's first look at an emerging writing idea. (A writer may find it necessary to write more than one early draft if his or her thoughts about the subject are still forming.)

Revising and Conferencing: After reviewing the first draft, writers change any parts that are not clear or complete. They may ask a writing peer to review the draft as well.

Editing: Writers then check their revised writing for style and accuracy before preparing a neat final copy of their work. The final copy is then proofread for errors before publication.

Publishing: This is the final step in the writing process. Publishing is to a writer what an exhibit is to an artist – an opportunity to share his or her work with others.

For more information see Writer's Inc., Write Source 2000, or Writer's Express.

Adapted from Write Source 2000.

COMPONENTS OF WRITER'S WORKSHOP GRADES 6-12

Framework for Writing Instruction

(These writing instructional strategies help teachers to organize their lesson plans.)

1. **Mini-Lesson:**

The teacher delivers instruction on the writing process and the six traits of writing in a whole group setting. Concepts are taught within the context of authentic literature and are drawn from district standards as well as the needs of the students. The teacher models writing and the students engage in shared writing.

Setting: Whole Group

Resources: Literature of all genres/levels, district standards, student data.

2. **Independent Writing:**

Students independently engage in the writing process to write about self-selected topics within a particular genre during an uninterrupted block of time. During this time, students utilize the skills and strategies they have acquired during mini-lesson instruction. The teacher conducts individual writing conferences with students to provide individualized instruction and gather data. The teacher confers with individual students and instructs each student at his/her individual level. The teacher reads each student's writing, asks questions, identifies and records strengths, and identifies and records weaknesses that need to be addressed. Independent writing time drives instruction and fosters the development of students as writers.

Setting: Individual

Resources: Student work, student data.

3. **Guided Writing:**

Guided writing is a teaching approach that enables students to work with the teacher in a small group setting to work on writing skills and the components of the writing process. Areas of emphasis are derived from district standards and the students' current writing needs. Guided writing groups are flexible and instruction is differentiated to meet the needs of individual students.

Setting: Small Group

Resources: Literature of all genres/levels, district standards, student data, student work.

4. **Sharing Time:**

Students share and reflect upon what they learned during the writer's workshop, collaboratively problem solve areas of concern and celebrate successes in a whole group setting.

Setting: Whole Group.