SCAFFOLDING ACADEMIC WRITING FOR BEGINNING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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OBJECTIVES

★ **We will demonstrate a need for the development of academic writing skills for Beginner English Language Learners (ELLs).**

★ **We will describe an instructional method that leads Beginner ELLs to academic writing.**

AGENDA

★ **Rationale – Why teach academic writing to beginner ELLs?**

★ **Our Method**

★ **An Example: Sequence**

★ **An Example: Compare & Contrast**

★ **Wrap-up & Q&A**

WHY TEACH ACADEMIC WRITING TO BEGINNERS?

Academic language is the key to success in today's classrooms, and students need explicit instruction at the word-level, sentence-level, and discourse-level, especially ELLs.

(Gottlieb and Ernst-Slavit, 2013)

WHY TEACH ACADEMIC WRITING TO BEGINNERS?

"the set of all words and phrases that

(1) describe content area knowledge and procedures,

(2) express complex thinking processes and abstract concepts, and

(3) create cohesion and clarity in written and oral discourse" (Zweirs, 2005, p. 60)

WHY TEACH ACADEMIC WRITING TO BEGINNERS?

COMMON CORE SHIFTS

- Academic language & vocabulary
- Text complexity
- Multiple genres of text
- Writing using textual evidence

(Ernst-Slavit, 2013)
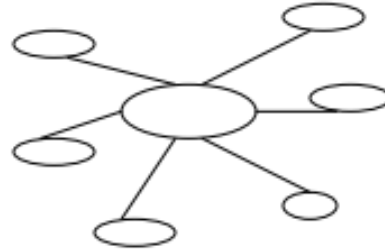
ACADEMIC LANGUAGE & COMMON CORE

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.1c Use of **words, phrases,** and **clauses** to creation **cohesion** and **clarify relationships** among claim(s), counterclaims(s), **reasons,** and **evidence**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.2 Write **informative/ explanatory texts**, including the narration of **historical events**, **scientific procedures/experiments**, or **technical processes**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, **organization**, and **analysis** of relevant content
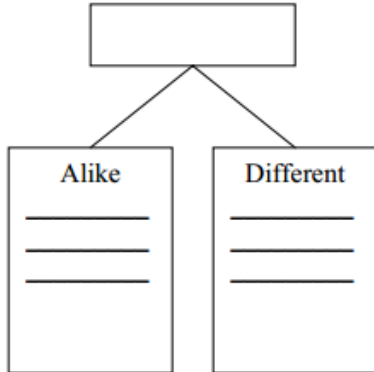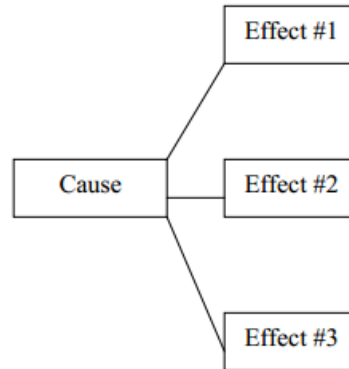
ACADEMIC LANGUAGE & COMMON CORE

Description

Sequence

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

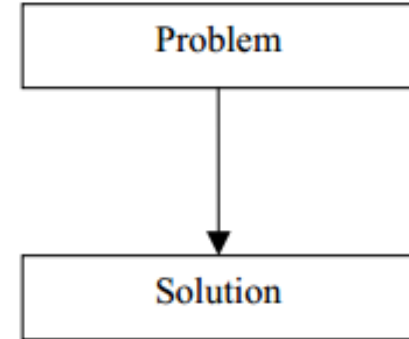## Compare & Contrast

Alike	Different
____	____
____	____
____	____

Cause & Effect

Cause → Effect #1, Effect #2, Effect #3

Problem & Solution

Problem → Solution

(Akhondi, Malayeri, & Samad, 2011)

WHY TEACH ACADEMIC WRITING TO BEGINNERS?

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- Text complexity
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- Writing using textual evidence

(Ernst-Slavit 2013)

- Massachusetts adopts WIDA standards in June 2012
- New focus on learning language through content

ACADEMIC LANGUAGE & WIDA
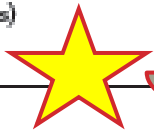
The Features of Academic Language in WIDA's Standards

	Performance Criteria	Features
Discourse Level	**Linguistic Complexity** *(Quantity and variety of oral and written text)*	Amount of speech/written text Structure of speech/written text Density of speech/written text Organization and cohesion of ideas Variety of sentence types
Sentence Level	**Language Forms and Conventions** *(Types, array, and use of language structures)*	Types and variety of grammatical structures Conventions, mechanics, and fluency Match of language forms to purpose/perspective
Word/Phrase Level	**Vocabulary Usage** *(Specificity of word or phrase choice)*	General, specific, and technical language Multiple meanings of words and phrases Formulaic and idiomatic expressions Nuances and shades of meaning Collocations

WHY TEACH ACADEMIC WRITING TO BEGINNERS?

According to most scales of English Language Development, ELLs begin to develop proficiency with Academic Language when they reach and intermediate level (Hong Xu, 2013).

WIDA Can-Do Descriptors (Grades 6-8, Writing)

| Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Beginning	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging
• Draw content-related pictures • Produce high frequency words • Label pictures and graphs • Create vocabulary/concept cards • Generate lists from pre-taught words/phrases and word banks (e.g., create menu from list of food groups)	• Complete pattern sentences • Extend "sentence starters" with original ideas • Connect simple sentences • Complete graphic organizers/forms with personal information • Respond to yes/no, choice, and some WH- questions	• Produce short paragraphs with main ideas and some details (e.g., column notes) • Create compound sentences (e.g., with conjunctions) • Explain steps in problem-solving • Compare/contrast information, events, characters • Give opinions, preferences, and reactions along with reasons	• Create multiple-paragraph essays • Justify ideas • Produce content-related reports • Use details/examples to support ideas • Use transition words to create cohesive passages • Compose intro/body/conclusion • Paraphrase or summarize text • Take notes (e.g., for research)	• Create expository text to explain graphs/charts • Produce research reports using multiple sources/citations • Begin using analogies • Critique literary essays or articles

AGENDA

★ **Rationale – Why teach academic writing to beginner ELLs?**

★ **Our Method**

★ **An Example: Sequence**

★ **An Example: Compare & Contrast**

★ **Wrap-up & Q&A**

OUR METHOD

Proper, systematic scaffolds, when embedded in familiar thematic vocabulary units, enable beginners to write academically in different text structures.
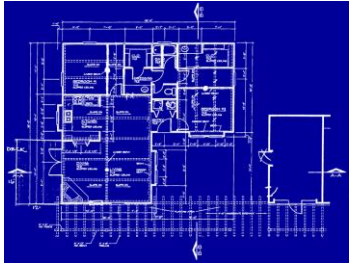
1. CONCEPTUAL **2. WORD** **3. SENTENCE** **4. DISCOURSE**

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★ **Rationale – Why teach academic writing to beginner ELLs?**

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AN EXAMPLE: SEQUENCE

Applications

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.2 Write **informative/explanatory texts**, including the narration of **historical events**, **scientific procedures/experiments**, or **technical processes**

Sequence

1._____
2._____
3._____
4._____

CLASS CONTEXT

- **Garfield Middle School (Revere, MA)**
- **Grades 6-8**
- **Diverse Newcomer / Beginner**
- **Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese, French, Vietnamese, Haitian Creole, Amharic, Albanian**

SEQUENCE: CONCEPTUAL LEVEL

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Use familiar pictures to build / connect to the concept of the text structure.

Other examples:

- Recipe

- Daily school schedule

- Daily routines

SEQUENCE: WORD LEVEL

1. First
   At the beginning
   To begin

2. Next

3. After

4. Then

5. Next

6. Finally
   At the end
   Last

Connect the pictures to the signal words of the given text structure.

- **First, To begin, At the beginning**

- **Next, Then, After**

- **Last, Finally, In the end**

SEQUENCE: SENTENCE LEVEL

Daily Routine | Something you do EVERY day

1.

First, The man wake up at 7:50 he is Happy.

2.

Next, The man takes a shower at 7:58 because is hot.

3.

After, he is shaving beard at 8:06.

4.

Finally, The man is getting dressed and he is pulling his tie. He need it at work in the car.

Embed the concept and signal words into the thematic unit students are studying. Students use their knowledge of the content and signal words to describe pictures.

SEQUENCE: DISCOURSE LEVEL

Daily Routine | Something you do EVERY day

1 2 3 4

Students connect their previously written sentences to form an organized and structured paragraph.

Now, what are the steps this man takes to get ready for his day?

First
~~First~~/The man wakes up at 7:00 He is Happy,
Next, The man Takes a shower at 7:52 because
is Hot. After, He's shaving Beard at 8:06,
Finally, The man is getting dressed and He
is putting his tie He need ir at work in
the car.

Sentence Level

Daily Routine | Something you do EVERY day

1.
_____
_____
_____

2.
_____
_____
_____

3.
_____
_____
_____

4.
_____
_____
_____

Discourse Level

Daily Routine | Something you do EVERY day

1   2   3   4

Now, what are the steps this man takes to get ready for his day?

to begin, he is waring a blue shirt.
Next, he put the clothes on the washing
machine. Then, when he take the shirt out
of the washing machine the shirt is wrinkle.
At the end, the woman is ironing the Blue shirt
to give to her husband.

APPLYING THE STRUCTURE

Students read an accessible text and apply the text structure as a way to demonstrate comprehension

CNN.com / WORLD

MAINPAGE
EUROPE
WORLD
WEATHER
BUSINESS

Japan corners the market on square fruit

June 15, 2001 Posted: 11:01 a.m. EDT (1501 GMT)

2

How do people in Japan grow watermelons in the shape of a square?

Write a paragraph explaining the steps in the process of growing a square watermelon. Use sequencing words.

I'm going to describe the steps in the process of growing a square watermelons. First, they plant the seed in soil. Next, when the watermelons grow they put the watermelon in the box watermelon. Then, when is square they send it to the store. After that, the people buy them. Finally, the people put it in the refrigerator and they eat it. In conclusion, these are the steps in the process of growing a square watermelon. ✓

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★ **Rationale – Why teach academic writing to beginner ELLs?**

★ **Our Method**

★ **An Example: Sequence**

★ **An Example: Compare & Contrast**

★ **Wrap-up & Q&A**

AN EXAMPLE: COMPARE & CONTRAST

Applications

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2 **Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2a **Introduce a topic; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2c **Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.**
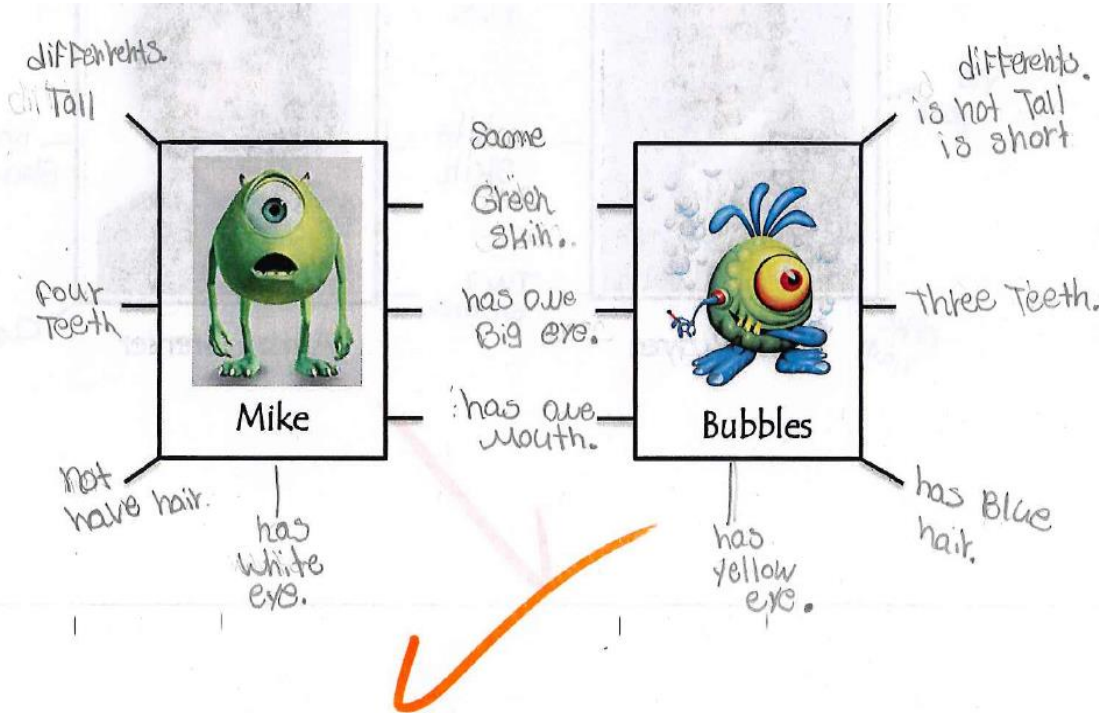
Alike   Different
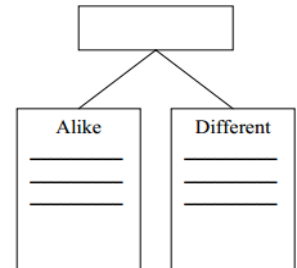
CLASS CONTEXT

- **UP Academy Leonard (Lawrence, MA)**

- **Grades 6-7**

- **Newcomer / Beginner class, 15 students from the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, and Puerto Rico, all Spanish speaking**

COMPARE/CONTRAST: CONCEPTUAL LEVEL

Introduce:

- **idea of same and different and connect to terms compare/ contrast**

- **concept through thematic vocabulary (body parts)**

- **organizational structure**

COMPARE/CONTRAST: WORD LEVEL

Introduce signal words. Use sentence frames to scaffold sentence-level writing.

Compare	Contrast
Both are_____.	_____. However, _____.
Both have _____.	_____. In contrast, _____.
____. In the same way, ____.	_____. On the other hand,___.
_____. Similarly _____.	_____, but _____.
_____. Likewise, _____.	

COMPARE/CONTRAST: SENTENCE LEVEL

Compare	Contrast
Both are_____.	_____. However, _____.
Both have _____.	_____. In contrast, _____.
_____. In the same way, ____.	_____. On the other hand,___.
_____. Similarly _____.	_____, but _____.
_____. Likewise, _____.	

Sentences that Compare	Sentences that Contrast
Topic Sentence: There are many similarities between Gruffy and Slimy.	Topic Sentence: There are also many differences between Gruffy and Slimy.
Gruffy and Slimy Both are Monsters.	Gruffy has two legs. In contrast, Slimy does NOT have legs.
Gruffy is ugly. Similarly, Slimy is ugly too.	Gruffy has red skin. On the other hand, Slimy does Not have skin, he has Purple Slime
Gruffy has two arms. Likewise, Slimy has two arms.	Gruffy has horns. but Slimy does NOT have horns.

COMPARE/CONTRAST: DISCOURSE LEVEL

Model and co-construct writing at the discourse level.

There are many similarties between Gruffy and Slimy. Gruffy and Slimy Both are Monsters. Gruffy is ugly. Similarly, Slimy is ugly too. GruFy has two arms. Likewise, Slimy has two arms.

There are also many differences between Gruffy and Slimy. Gruffy has two legs. In contrast, Slimy does not have legs. Gruffy has red skin. On the other hand, Slimy does not have skin, he has purple grime. Gruffy has horns, but Slimy does NoT has horns.

have

COMPARE/CONTRAST: DISCOURSE LEVEL

Some students will still need paragraph templates.

    There are many similarities between _____ and _____. Both are _____. _____ is _____. Similarly, _____ is _____. _____ has _____. Likewise, _____ has _____.

    There are also many differences between _____ and _____. _____ has _____. In contrast, _____ does not have _____. _____ is _____. On the other hand, _____ is not _____. _____ has _____, but _____ does not have _____.

COMPARE/CONTRAST: PUTTING IT TOGETHER

1)

2)

Sentences that Compare	Sentences that Contrast
Topic Sentence: There are many similarities between Taylor and Ariana.	Topic Sentence: There are also many differences between Taylor and Ariana.
Both Ariana Grande and Taylor Swift have straight hair.	Taylor Swift has blonde hair. However Ariana Grande is a red-head.
Taylor Swift is skinny. Likewise, Ariana Grande is thin.	Ariana Grande has long hair, but Taylor Swift has little short hair.
Taylor Swift has white skin. Similarly, Ariana Grande has white skin.	Taylor Swift has blonde eyebrow. On the other hand, Ariana Grande has brown eyebrow.

COMPARE/CONTRAST: PUTTING IT TOGETHER

3)

There are many similarities between Taylor Swift and Ariana Grande. Both Ariana Grande and Taylor swift have straight hair. Taylor Swift is skinny. Likewise, Ariana Grande is thin. Taylor swift has white skin. Similarly, Ariana Grande has white skin.

There are also many differences between Taylor Swift and Ariana Grande. Taylor swift has blonde hair. However, Ariana Grande is a red-head. Ariana Grande has long hair, but Taylor Swift has little short hair. Taylor Swift has blonde eyebrow. On the other hand, Ariana Grande has brown eyebrow.

APPLY THE STRUCTURE

Directions: Look at the graphs of rainfall in **Kuwait** and **Cambodia**.

Compare and **contrast** the **average rainfall** in both countries.

Average Rainfall in Kuwait (mm)

RAIN mm — values: JAN. 126.5, FEB. 95.9, MAR. 70.2, APR. 67, MAY 19, JUN. 0.5, JUL. 0, AUG. 0, SEP. 0, OCT. 56.6, NOV. 114.4, DEC. 73.5

MONTH

Rainfall in Cambodia

average rainfall in mm per month

Make a Brain Frame:

Compare	Contrast
Both are_____.	_____. However, _____.
Both have_____.	_____. In contrast, _____.
_____. In the same way, _____.	_____. On the other hand, _____.
_____. Similarly _____.	_____, but _____.
_____. Likewise, _____.	

❷ **Write your paragraphs:**

OUR METHOD

Proper, systematic scaffolds, when embedded in familiar thematic vocabulary units, enable beginners to write academically in different text structures.
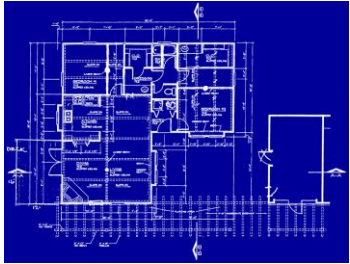
1. CONCEPTUAL

2. WORD

3. SENTENCE

4. DISCOURSE

IT CAN BE DONE!

Through this approach, beginners are able to reach an intermediate level of writing proficiency faster and can apply these structures to more rigorous grade level concepts.

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QUESTIONS?

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