

The following instructional plan is part of a GaDOE collection of Unit Frameworks, Performance Tasks, examples of Student Work, and Teacher Commentary. Many more GaDOE approved instructional plans are available by using the Search Standards feature located on [GeorgiaStandards.Org](http://GeorgiaStandards.Org).

**Grade:** Kindergarten

**Title:** Modeled Writing

**Task Annotation:**

Modeled Writing is a lesson format that will be used many times throughout the school year. During a modeled writing session, the teacher models for the students how to write a story. Throughout the school year, the instructional focus of the modeled writing sessions will differ. This is why this lesson format is so valuable, as it provides the teacher with an effective format for delivering differing content. Initially, the modeled writing sessions in kindergarten will focus on the alphabetic principle. These sessions will help to teach kindergartners that their oral language has a written counterpart. Through modeling or demonstrating one's writing, teachers show students the patterns and structures associated with written language.

Another goal of the early modeled writing session is to teach kindergartners that their stories matter. While the teacher will model the actual writing, students will be chosen to share things that are happening in their lives. Typical topics that are important to kindergartners include losing teeth, family, pets, getting haircuts, playing with friends, etc. By focusing on the stories of the students, teachers are able to accomplish two goals. They show kindergartners that they all have topics about which to write and they help build a sense of community in the classroom.

**The Task:**

The following is a transcript of how a lesson may be presented. It IS NOT a script! Its purpose is to provide an example of how this lesson format *may* be delivered. Italicized notes are also included throughout the lesson. These notes are inserted to provide commentary on the lesson.

Please also make note that the instructional focus of this lesson format will change throughout the school year, depending on the standard/elements that are being taught. So pay attention to the general format of the lesson, and tailor it to meet the instructional needs of your students throughout the school year. Use the data collected in the Language Use and Conventions Class Profile to plan specific lessons based on the needs of the students.

SAMPLE LESSON

**"Boys and girls, today I am going to show you how to write a story. As you know, we are working on the kindergarten writing standard, and today we are going to really focus on one of the elements of this standard. (The teacher points to the element on a chart.) It says, 'uses drawings, letters, and phonetically spelled words to create meaning.' This means that you will learn how to create meaning, or tell a story, by using letters, words and pictures. I'm going to show you how to do that today."**

*As the lesson transpires, you will notice that the teacher teaches MANY things during this modeled writing session. However, her main purpose is to equip students with some strategies for writing words. She "peppers" her teaching with other conventions. This enables her to meet the needs of most of the students in her classroom. Some students may already possess several strategies for spelling unknown words; however, they may lack some of the other conventions that she includes in her modeled writing.*

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**"This morning, as you were arriving at school, I overheard one of our friends talking about something that happened to him yesterday afternoon. I asked him if he would share it with you, and he said 'yes'."**

*Notice how the teacher attended to the discussions that took place that morning. She carefully chose a student to share with the class something that happened to him. This practice helps build community and interest. Most students care about their classmates and want to know about them.*

**"Jiah, will you come to the front of the class and share what you were talking about this morning? Alright Jiah, tell the boys and girls about your experience."**

*Jiah says,*

**"Yesterday I lost a tooth."** (During this time, Jiah briefly shares with the class about how he lost a tooth yesterday afternoon. The teacher asks a few questions to elicit more information.)

*It is important to keep this portion of the lesson very brief. Although it is an important time to help build the necessary vocabulary to write a story, the heart of the lesson lies in the actual modeling of the writing process. It is easy to spend too much time on this sharing session, thereby losing the attention of the students during the modeling session.*

**"Thank you Jiah; you may have a seat. Boys and girls, did you hear all of those interesting things that Jiah told us about losing his tooth? I think that we should write a story about it. Remember, the element of the writing standard that we are working on today is, 'uses drawings, letters, and phonetically spelled words to create meaning.' I'm going to show you how to use letters, words and pictures to create meaning, or tell a story. First, I'm going to quickly sketch a picture to go with the story. We know that pictures sometimes help us tell stories. Jiah told us about losing his tooth, so what should I draw? (Students respond) You're right. I will draw a picture of Jiah missing a tooth. (The teacher quickly sketches Jiah smiling with a missing tooth.)"**

*It is easy for kindergartners to spend too much time drawing their picture and not enough time writing their story. It is important to model for the students how to do quick sketches. At this stage in kindergarten, it is appropriate for students to begin their writing by drawing a picture. Usually, students are able to successfully sketch some type of representational drawing. Therefore, allowing them to draw a picture before writing a story gives them an opportunity to start with something successful, then move to something that may be a bit more challenging (writing a story).*

*Pay close attention to your students. There will be a time in the school year when you will want to change the order in which they go about writing a story. You will want to take the focus off of the sketch and put more of a focus on writing the story. This shift usually takes place when they are able to successfully produce print that is decipherable by an adult who is knowledgeable of phonetic spelling. From a management standpoint, this shift may need to take place when students, who are capable of writing a story, spend the entire writing time drawing a picture.*

**"Now I am going to try to create meaning, or tell a story, with letters and words. Jiah told us all of those wonderful things about losing a tooth. He said that his mom pulled it...it hurt and bled...he put it under his pillow...the Tooth Fairy left him a quarter. What do you think I should write?"**

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*The teacher is embedding the language of the standard throughout the lesson, explaining it in terms the students can understand; (Teacher says) "Now I am going to try to create meaning, or tell a story, with letters and words."*

*Notice how the teacher summarizes all that Jiah told the class. Then, she asks the students to help her come up with a story. At the beginning of the year, it is important to show kindergartners how to develop a short story to write. Sometimes, the task of writing can seem quite daunting when faced with the reality of having to write all of the details relating to a story. While detailed stories are the ultimate goal of kindergartners' writing, teaching them how to tackle a story in short, manageable chunks should be taught in the beginning.*

**"Okay, I'll write, 'Jiah lost a tooth.' I already have my picture to help create meaning, now all I need to do is use letters and words to create meaning. I'm going to say the story out loud, and I would like for you to try to say it with me. 'Jiah lost a tooth'. Good job remembering all of the words in the story. Let's try it again. This time, I would like for you to clap each time we say a word. 'Jiah lost a tooth.' Great clapping. You really used your ears to hear the pauses between the words in our story. Okay, this time as we say the story, I would like for you to hold up a finger each time we say a word. We're going to try to count how many words are in our story. 'Jiah lost a tooth.' How many fingers did you hold up? You're right! There are four words in our story, 'Jiah lost a tooth.'"**

*The teacher is trying to embed the language of the story into the students' minds. She wants them to remember the story. She has so many things to teach during this lesson, and she wants to make sure they know the story that is going to be written. Yes, it will be memorized. However, this will help students at this stage in kindergarten. Rather than trying to decode words, which is difficult for most kindergartners at this time of the school year, they will be focusing only on the process by which the words are written on paper.*

*The teacher also reinforces the concept of letter/word/sentence. She knows that students must hear the difference in words in order to write words with appropriate spacing, so she has them clap each time a word is spoken. The teacher also says "word" many times, exposing the students to the language she will expect them to know, understand and use in the future.*

**"I know that good writers often draw a line for each word that they will write in their stories. So, I am going to try to do that. You told me that our story, 'Jiah lost a tooth', has four words in it. That tells me that I need to draw four lines. I'm going to get my marker ready. I know that I need to start at the left side of the paper because that is how we read and write. Watch me, 'Jiah lost a tooth.'"** (The teacher draws a line for each word as she says the story.)

*In this part of the lesson, the teacher introduces an important writing tool called scaffolding. Scaffolding is when a writer draws a line for each word that he/she will write. Scaffolding has many purposes. It helps young writers differentiate between letters and words, and it forces them to hear the difference in words. Scaffolding also helps with spacing. In addition, students who use scaffolding attend to the length of words, determining what size line to draw based on how long the word sounds.*

*The teacher also took a moment to point out the left-to-right progression of writing.*

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*In the end of this lesson segment, the teacher says the words in the story as she draws the lines. It is important to do this because it emphasizes the fact that some words are longer than others, and some lines need to be longer than others. By saying the story as the lines are being written, each line's words are spoken. This makes the writer think about the length of the word and the necessary length of the line.*

**"Now it's time to begin writing our story. I'm going to be sure to use letters and words in my story. What is the first word that I'm going to write in our story, 'Jiah lost a tooth.'?"** (Students respond) **You're right, the first word that I'm going to write is 'Jiah'. Where can I look to figure out how to spell Jiah's name?** (Students respond...class name chart...the word wall...his name plate at his seat...) **Yes, I can look at all of those places. I think that I will look at our class name chart. Carlos, can you find Jiah's name on the name chart, and point to it for us?** (Carlos points to Jiah's name) **Alright, I'm going to write the word 'Jiah' on my first line since it is the first word in our story. It starts with a capital J. It is a name, and all names start with a capital letter. Then it has a lower case i, then a, and h is the last letter in his name."** Thank you Carlos for helping us find **Jiah's name."** (The teacher writes the name as she says this.)

*The teacher makes several good teaching points during this segment. She begins by focusing on the concept of "first" and "last". She asks students to identify the first word that she is going to write. She also talks about the first and last letters in Jiah's name.*

*The teacher points out how all names begin with a capital letter, raising the students' awareness that letters have two forms, capital and lower case, and teaching them that names must begin with a capital letter.*

*The teacher also talks with the students about places to look to find out how to spell unknown words.*

**"Let's read our story together. We only have one word so far. (The teacher points to the word while the students read.) 'Jiah.' Good reading boys and girls. Let's see, our story should say, 'Jiah lost a tooth.' What is the next word that we need to write in our story?** (Students respond) **You're right, the next word that we will write is the word 'lost'. I'm going to try another strategy when I spell this word. When we spelled Jiah's name we looked around the room to figure out how to spell it. Now, I'm going to try to listen to ALL the sounds I hear in the word 'lost'. I am going to say the word slowly, listening for every single sound. 'llll-oooo-ssss-tttt' Why don't you try saying the word slowly with me. 'llll-oooo-ssss-tttt' I hear an 'l' at the beginning of the word 'lost', so I'll write it on the next line. Let's try saying the word slowly again to try to hear the next sound in the word, 'llll-oooo-ssss-tttt'. I hear an 'o' next, so I'll write it beside the letter 'l'. I have an 'l' and an 'o' in the word 'lost', but I think that this word has more letters in it. Let's try Slow Talkin Mama again, 'llll-oooo-ssss-tttt'. What do you hear next? That's right, it is the /s/ sound. The letter 's' makes the /s/ sound. I'm going to write the letter 's' beside the 'o'. Let's try saying the word slowly again to see if there are any other letters in the word 'lost'. 'llll-oooo-ssss-tttt' Hey, I hear a 't' at the end of the word 'lost'. Let me write it."**

*The teacher introduces students to another strategy for spelling unknown words. This strategy teaches students to say words slowly, emphasizing each sound as they say a word. This technique proves to be quite effective because students do not fall into the trap of producing sounds in isolation. It forces students to attack a word from a global standpoint, saying the entire word over and over again. This reduces the risk of students getting "lost in a word", sounding out a word by making each sound*

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*individually, and forgetting their places in a word.*

*The teacher encourages interaction from her students during this segment. She wants all of them to attempt saying the word slowly, trying to hear all of the sounds in a word.*

*The teacher also uses the terms "letter" and "word" frequently, thereby modeling for the students the difference between the two.*

**"Let's read our story together to see what we have so far, 'Jiah lost' (teacher points to each word as it is read aloud by the students). What word goes next in our story? (Students respond) Right, the next word in our story is 'a'. You are not going to believe this, but this is one of the easiest words in the world! How do you think we could spell the word 'a'? (Students respond) Yes, it's just the letter 'a'! This word is so easy! The word 'a' and the letter 'a' are the same! I'm going to call on someone to come write the word 'a' in our story. I'll call Mandy because she has the letter 'a' in her name. I bet she's an 'a' expert! (Mandy comes to the front and writes the word 'a' in the next blank.)"**

*Again, the teacher uses the terms "letter" and "word" frequently. She also teaches the students how to write an easy word, "a".*

*The teacher places some attention on Mandy's name. Throughout the school year, students will be taught to use each other's names to help them spell and decode unknown words. This is one way that the teacher models for the students how to do this.*

*By calling Mandy to the front of the class, she "shares the pen" with her. It is appropriate to take some opportunities to call students to help write words. This builds confidence and portrays the students as writers. Be careful though, as this practice is more time consuming than when the teacher does the writing.*

**"Let's read our story together and see what word is missing. It looks like just one word at the end of our story is missing. (Teacher points to each word as it is read aloud by the students) 'Jiah lost a'. What is the last word in the story? You're right, it's the word 'tooth'. Let's try saying the word slowly again to help us spell the word 'tooth'. Remember, we can say the word slowly and try to hear all of the sounds in the word. Here we go 'ttt-oooooooo-th' What do you hear at the beginning of the word 'tooth'? Yes, there is a /t/ sound at the beginning of the word 'tooth'. The letter 't' makes the /t/ sound. I'm going to write a 't' on the last line. Let's try saying the word slowly again. 'ttt-oooooooo-th' I hear an /oo/ sound. I know that when two o's are right beside each other they make this sound /oo/. We call those double o's. Watch how I write them. Let's try saying the word slowly again 'ttt-oooooooo-th'. Watch my mouth when I say that last sound /th/. Did you see how I put my tongue between my teeth? It takes two letters to make that sound. They are 'th'. I'm going to write them beside the double o's in the word 'tooth'."**

*Once again, the teacher models how to do say the word slowly. She is modeling for the students the thought process that is going on inside her head.*

*Some may say that the /oo/ and /th/ sounds are too complex for kindergartners at this point in the school year. However, there may be some in the class who would benefit from this. That is why modeled writing is so valuable--its purpose is to meet the needs of most learners in the classroom. It is important to model*

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*correct spelling during this time.*

**"It looks like we have written all of the words in our story. Let's read it together just to be sure (teacher points to each word as it is read aloud by the students). 'Jiah lost a tooth' Boys and girls, it looks like we have all of the words in the story, but there is something missing at the end of the sentence. Does anyone know what is missing? It is a period. Periods are punctuation marks that tell us we are at the end of a sentence. Our sentence needs a period. Watch me make a period (teacher places a period at the end of the sentence). What does that period look like? (Students respond) You're right, it just looks like a little dot. Periods are little dots that tell us we are at the end of a sentence. Let's read our story together one more time now that we have our period at the end of the sentence."**

*The teacher takes a moment to teach the students about ending punctuation, and introduce the concept of "sentence" before ending the writing session for the day.*

**"Boys and girls, today you helped me create meaning by writing a story. You looked around the room to help me spell Jiah's name. You also said the words slowly to stretch out words. This helped you to hear all of the sounds in the words 'lost' and 'tooth'. Today, when you write your own story, I want to see if you can try to use those strategies to spell words that you don't know."**

### Differentiation of Instruction

#### Readiness

The overall construction of this lesson is significantly supportive and inclusive of students at all developmental levels. By accepting students at every stage of writing development, all students will be empowered to become risk-takers and encouraged to move along the continuum of writing. With continued instruction under this model, students will flourish.

This lesson accommodates students of all levels of development very well. There are a couple pointers that are worth mentioning, however.

1. **Accept** beginning and ending sounds as phonemic spellings (dog --> dg).
2. **Focus on one or two targeted skills** until mastery for students who may be overwhelmed by so aspects of this and subsequent lessons. Then add on one or two more as each student's ability allows.
3. **Another helpful way of reinforcing individual letter sounds** in slowly sounding out words is to have the student move a card or poker chip. Provide the appropriate number of cards to sound out a particular word (cat - 3 cards) and line them up in front of the student in a horizontal line. As the student and/or the teacher slowly sounds out each word, he/she would move a card up for each sound. When the student has sounded the word out a few times, allow them to write the letters on the cards of the sounds he/she moved. Have the student move the correct letter as they sound out the word again.
4. **Sentence Frames** are sentence starters where the teacher has a sentence strip or on paper with the beginning of a sentence written by the teacher. A sentence might be, "I feel happy because \_\_\_\_\_." Help the student read the sentence by pointing to each word as it is spoken. Have the student add the

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ending orally or with a picture. Have the student read the sentence again (several times, if needed) until they can do it independently. This is particularly important to support student with significant language challenges, such as non-English speakers and special education needs in the areas of expressing feelings, wants/needs, and likes or dislikes.

5. **Backward Design** is a strategy where intense scaffolding is provided at first and then as the student accomplishes the ending steps in a procedure, then the teacher backs off one step at a time so that the student is doing more and more of the task.

Example: "I feel sad because I wanted to \_\_\_\_\_."

"I feel sad because I \_\_\_\_\_."

"I feel sad \_\_\_\_\_."

"I feel \_\_\_\_\_."

6. **Handwriting Without Tears** (see web resources) is a strategy that is very effective for students dealing with fine motor issues.

Handwriting Without Tears

[www.hwtears.com/](http://www.hwtears.com/)

Other resources of interest:

Learning Disabilities

[www.ldonline.org](http://www.ldonline.org)

Children with Attention Deficits

[www.chadd.org](http://www.chadd.org)

Council for Exception Children

[www.cec.sped.org](http://www.cec.sped.org)

Kid Sources for teaching exceptional children

[www.kidsource.com](http://www.kidsource.com)

### Learning Profile

**Auditory Learners** are those students who gain most of their information through sound. They are usually easy to discern because they talk to themselves as they work. When they independently read, they will read out loud. They want the directions repeated or will repeat them back to the teacher to clarify. Auditory learners may benefit from the listening center, from reading partners, and stories being read aloud by the teacher or other adult. They also need directions or instructions to be repeated and backed up a visual example or model.

**Visual Learners** are those students who want to see everything. They benefit from demonstrations, models, graphic organizers, pictures, and other representation. They will want to show the teacher what they mean rather than say it.

**Kinesthetic Learners** are those students who learn through the use of their bodies, through touch,

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manipulation of objects, and physically using their bodies. For example, these learners might benefit from manipulating objects to discern letter sounds or for each word in a sentence, building words and sentences using letter and/or word cards, and writing in various tactile mediums (sand, rice, beans, finger paint, or shaving cream sprayed on a desk top).

**Learners** with developmental delays can learn but at their own pace. They will benefit from the many strategies that are successful with other students. They tend to be fairly literal, concrete, and are usually slower at gaining reading and writing skills at proficient levels. Listening centers, peer readers, writing partners, and concrete examples and models are some ways to support these students. These students can become easily frustrated and often have a difficult time expressing their emotions, needs, or dislikes. Modeling how to express these requirements can be done through the Sentence Frames.

**Learners** with sensory issues are exceptionally sensitive to touch, light, sound, smells, and movement. They can often “hear” fluorescent light bulbs buzz, see the constant flickering of the computer screen, and will cover their ears with loud noises and clapping. Some students do not want to be touched or to touch objects. Others will not like perfumes, colognes, or hairspray odors. But there is hope by being creative and patient. A large umbrella suspended from the ceiling can block harsh light. Have the student face away from computer screens and reassure them when or if they react. Touch sensitive students may need to write with a marker as it requires less pressure to hold and press down to write. A slantboard may also assist students as it requires them to apply a certain amount of pressure. Their writing is often illegible and may require some hand over hand assistance. The best resource for these types of issues is an occupational therapist. Most systems have one or contract for services through a local facility for advice. Touch sensitive students can also benefit from writing with their fingers in sand, uncooked rice, or uncooked beans such as peas or pinto beans.

**Learners** with symptoms of inattentiveness have difficulty sustaining focus on a task, being very easily distracted, wants help before applying themselves to a task, and/or “daydreaming.” Many also exhibit excessive motor activity: out of seat, blurts out, wants to be first, first volunteers for anything, acts impulsively, and/or talks continually. Some students, girls more so than boys, will be very quiet and are often overlooked as they are off thinking of other things, causing no disruption, nor demanding teacher attention. By providing a “safe space” in the classroom where a student can move to better focus, cool off, or just to move is helpful. Also, many of the strategies that are successful with visual and kinesthetic learners are useful with these students as well.

**Learners** with limited English experience are obviously going to be anywhere along the spectrum of proficiency of English mastery. Be mindful that each culture has its own way of showing respect toward adults and in responding to redirection or criticism. Many cultures **do not** look adults in the eye as it is a sign of **disrespect**. Some cultures need to “save face” when being corrected or redirected. Utilize your system’s resources to find out about the students you are responsible for, and do your own research for facts and information. For students who have recently been immersed in English (less than one year), they will need significant supports within the classroom: picture dictionaries, labeling all objects in the room, and picture/icons to accompany as many charts and graphic organizers as possible. They will need visual representation for grade level vocabulary and key words in content areas.

**Note:** There are several sites online available for translating to facilitate home-school communication such as Alta Vista. You simply type in what you need to say and then choose the language you need it to be translated to.

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### Student Interest

Some students will have preferential activities, things they really enjoy doing or those with which they will persistently work on for a period of time. To help these students become more accepting of trying new things or to move from one activity to the next, balance required tasks with preferred tasks. Ask the student to perform an activity or to participate in an activity for a specific amount of time. Then allow them access to a preferred activity for a specific and brief time period. For significantly delayed students, accepting a low level of quality at first may be needed, but firmly move the expectations of quality up to an appropriate level for the student's abilities.

Students with sensory issues often like to rock, spin, and swing. Having small rockers, therapy balls (like many adults use to exercise with), sit and spins, and/or perhaps a suspended swing will help alleviate the stress these students often feel when coming into a school environment and having to cope with a lot of demands.