

Professional Learning Communities Facilitator's Guide

for the What Works Clearinghouse Practice Guide: Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School

VIDEO

4:44 minutes

Full Details and Transcript

Introduction to Recommendation 3

July 2015

Video Details

Facilitator's Guide Session:	Recommendation 3, Session 3A Handout 3A.1: Video Viewing Guide – Introduction to Recommendation 3
-------------------------------------	--

Description:	In this video, Joan Morris, a retired teacher specialist and a panel member for the English learner practice guide, presents a brief overview of Recommendation 3, including a description of the four <i>How-to</i> steps for carrying out the recommendation.
---------------------	---

Full Transcript

Joan Morris: Recommendation 3. Currently, Common Core State Standards are guiding K–12 instruction in 43 of our states. These standards suggest that students engage in analytical writing activities that support their opinions, arguments, and claims with evidence from text. Recommendation 3—provide regular structured opportunities to develop written language skills—dovetails completely with these standards. Recommendation 3 states that teachers should make writing a priority by providing regular, structured opportunities so that students can develop their skills in writing. This recommendation is based on the panel's expertise as the research evidence for this recommendation is minimal. Panel members identified four *How-to* steps to carry out this recommendation.

How-to Step 1 advises that you provide writing assignments that are anchored in content and focused on developing academic language as well as writing skills. This suggests that you assign writing tasks that are based on subject matter that you have already studied and discussed with your students. The writing assignment should provide students with an

Video Transcript: Introduction to Recommendation 3

opportunity to use their newly acquired academic vocabulary words and to improve their writing skills. Vocabulary words, as well as transition words such as *therefore*, *however*, and *next*, should be reviewed before students begin writing. The panel recommends that you develop and consistently use instructional routines that help move students from graphic organizers to the writing process.

How-to Step 2—for all writing assignments, provide language-based supports to facilitate students' entry into and continued development of writing—suggests that you use language-based supports to help students as they write. For example, this *How-to* step shows how a teacher can take a graphic organizer, such as the Venn diagram, to help students comprehend content being studied and then develop a writing framework. This helps students to convert the content in the graphic organizer into an organized response to a writing assignment. A writing framework may include a sentence starter, as you'll see in Exhibit 3.2. Exhibit 3.3 provides several useful sentence starters for your English learners and other students who need this level of support.

How-to Step 3—use small groups or pairs to provide opportunities for students to work and talk together on varied aspects of writing—suggests that you have your students talk in small groups or pairs during all phases of the writing process, from brainstorming to revising to final draft. Giving your students opportunities to talk to their peers benefits their language development and, thus, their ability to write.

How-to Step 4 advises that you assess students' writing periodically to identify instructional needs and to provide positive, constructive feedback in response. Weekly assessments are a good way to measure your own progress in attaining your instructional objectives. The panel recommends that rubrics be used for these benchmark assessments. Examples of writing rubrics can be seen in Exhibit 3.4. Exhibit 3.5 shows how Ms. Carson incorporated the *How-to* steps described above in her fourth-grade classroom.

There are three roadblocks listed at the end of this recommendation. One is teaching writing to English learners can be an overwhelming task for teachers due to the number of errors students make. Another problem is the limited amount of writing students are able to produce for a writing assignment. Designing and implementing effective peer collaboration can also be challenging. The panel discusses these three roadblocks at the end of this recommendation and makes suggestions for how they might be addressed as you implement this recommendation.

Thank you.

– *End of Transcript* –

Disclaimer: This video, produced by the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Southwest is part of a series developed for the *Professional Learning Communities Facilitator's Guide for the What Works Clearinghouse Practice Guide: Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School*.

This video was prepared for the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) under Contract ED-IES-12-C-0012 by Regional Educational Laboratory Southwest, administered by SEDL. The content of the video does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IES or the U.S. Department of Education, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

This video is available on the Regional Educational Laboratory website at <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>.