

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

7:16 minutes

[Full Details and Transcript](#)

Using Graphic Organizers in Writing (Fourth-Grade Class)

July 2015

Video Details

**Facilitator's
Guide Session:** Recommendation 3, Session 3A
Handout 3A.2: Video Viewing Guide – Using Graphic Organizers in Writing

Description: In this video, a teacher in a fourth-grade class demonstrates how to use a graphic organizer as the foundation of a writing assignment. The class shown has 26 students. The majority have attended this school since kindergarten. Nine of the students are native speakers, while the rest come from homes where Spanish is the primary language. Six of the students were either reclassified as fluent English proficient or found to be proficient in English when initially tested on entering kindergarten. Of the remaining 11 English learners, 1 student is at the early advanced level of English proficiency, 9 are at the intermediate level, and 1 is at the early intermediate level. This teaching segment was filmed during the third month of school.

Full Transcript

Teacher: We're going to continue on with our lesson from yesterday about elements of poetry and compare and contrast, but today we're going to take the information that we got from our compare-and-contrast graphic organizer and we're going to turn it into a paragraph.

So before we begin, I'd like us to just go over our academic words that we talked about. Our job today is to put those academic words into our writing when we explain. Okay?

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So let's take a look. Please pull out your organizer where we did a compare and contrast of fables and poems. All right. What I gave you today was just an organizer to kind of help us keep our thoughts organized for our writing. So who can tell me what they see as the first item on our template? Cardell.

Cardell: Topic sentence.

Teacher: Good. So we're going to do our topic sentence first. Who can identify for me the two items that we are talking about? Andrea.

Andrea: Fables and poems.

Teacher: Good. You're going to write "fables and poems" in that first box. We've identified what we're going to be talking about today. Can you put *R* in the center box? Now we're going to finish up our thought in that third box. "Fables and poems are . . ." I want you to look back here. What was our whole purpose here in using this graphic organizer? Gabriel.

Gabriel: Their similarities.

Teacher: And . . . ?

Gabriel: Differences.

Teacher: Differences. Fables and poems are the same and different. If you go just below your three boxes, I left you a little bit of space. Could you put those three pieces together? Now we're ready to support this with details. I have all kinds of examples here to help me. Put your finger on the next box. I'm now going to start my paragraph. One example of how poems and fables are similar, similar – you said that word, Gabriel. So I'm going to look over here to my chart, and I'm going to say, "Hmm, what things are similar about fables and poems,"—the stuff in the middle, the stuff that is connected by two lines, one to fables and one to poems. I'm going to use this first one. Narrative . . .

Students: Writing.

Teacher: . . . writing. One example of how fables and poems are similar is that they are . . . In that first box, go ahead and finish it out that they're both examples of narrative writing. Okay. Put your finger on the next one. I've given you a transition word: *in addition*. Ooh, this means I'm going to give another example of how they are . . .

Students: Alike.

Teacher: . . . alike or similar. I'm going to give you the opportunity right now to turn and talk to your shoulder partner, and together you're going to decide which of these other examples you'd like to do. Then you're going to put them in a sentence here.

Student 1: Sure.

Teacher: Okay. So you know they're in the middle, so now you just need to pick one. Can you suggest one? Steven, which one do you think that would be good?

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Steven: That they both can teach a lesson.

Teacher: They both can teach a lesson. Okay. Would anybody like to offer what they talked about with their partner to fill in this one? Let's talk to Samuel and Steven. What did your partnership discuss?

Samuel: In addition, fables and poems teach lessons.

Teacher: In addition, fables and poems – can I add the word *can*?

Students: Yes.

Teacher: Okay. I have my two examples of how fables and poems are alike. Let's go down to the next part. Okay. Put your finger on the sentence starter. We're going to read that part together. That big word is *contrast*. This is going to be a word that says, "Oops! I'm not talking about similarities anymore. Now I'm going to talk about how these two things are . . ."

Students: Different. In contrast, one . . .

Teacher: One. Okay. Here I go. I'm flipping back to my organizer. I'm going to model again. So now I'm talking about how these two things are different. I'm going to not think about the middle of my organizer. Where am I going to be looking?

Student 2: On the edges.

Teacher: On the edges. Thinking about how the two items are different. Okay. In contrast, one way that fables and poems are different is that poems can rhyme, but fables do not. Can you pick up your pencil and write that too? The next box, I gave you another transition word. Can we read it together?

Students: *Finally*.

Teacher: Ooh, this means my writing is coming to an . . . ?

Students: End.

Teacher: . . . end. So this is my last reason. So I'm on *finally*, and I want to talk about one more way . . .

You're going to have time to talk with your partner, and I want you to work really hard for this final reason to include one of those underlined academic words that we've been working really hard on. Are you ready? Make eye contact with your partner. Turn and talk.

Where do you find stanzas, in poems or fables? Presley and Kimberly, what did you come up with? Let me repeat what you said. I'm going to paraphrase.

What I heard you say was, "Finally, poems" – am I right – "have stanzas, and fables . . ." – what did you say next?

Student 3: Have paragraphs.

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Teacher: . . . have paragraphs." What was their academic word, boys and girls?

Students: *Stanzas.*

Teacher: *Stanzas.* To do our very last sentence, and a paragraph, who can remind me what you call this last sentence? Gabriel?

Gabriel: A conclusion.

Teacher: A conclusion sentence. I'm going to start you off with some transition words that will help us remember that. What is our phrase that we're going to use in the beginning for transition?

Students: *In conclusion.*

Teacher: *In conclusion.* Okay. Remember now, in conclusion, I'm going to restate my main ideas. So, "In conclusion, fables and poems are different, but I like them both." That is my feeling about it. So I'm going to write that.

I'm going to give you time to talk with a partner again. Here's your job. You and your partner are going to restate your topic. What is it that you were trying to show your reader? How fables and poems are the same and different, and then you're going to add sort of a final thought. Well let's look at our topic sentence. What is it that you were trying to make your reader understand?

Student: [unintelligible]

Teacher: Now I'm looking for a brave volunteer.

Student 4: Fables and poems are the same and different. One example of how . . .

Teacher: Go ahead, pat yourself on the back. One more time. Good.

– *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*.

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