

DOINGWHATWORKS



PRESENTATION

5:04 min

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Teaching Foundational Skills to Help Students Become Effective Writers

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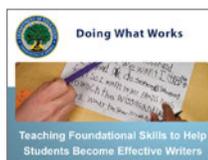
Topic TEACHING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS TO BE EFFECTIVE WRITERS

Practice FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

Highlights

- » Students need to learn foundational writing skills so they can focus on developing ideas.
- » Young writers need to learn how to hold a pencil and form letters correctly.
- » Students must learn to spell commonly used words and use rules to generate and check plausible spellings for unfamiliar words.
- » It is important to teach students how to construct effective, well-formed sentences.
- » Learning how to type and use a word processor has become an essential foundational skill.

Full Transcript



Slide 1: Welcome

Welcome to the overview on Teaching Foundational Skills to Help Students Become Effective Writers.



Slide 2: Foundational skills

Students need to learn foundational writing skills so that they can focus more on developing and communicating ideas in their writing. Handwriting, spelling, sentence construction, typing, and word processing should become effortless as students move to middle and upper elementary school. Younger students need explicit instruction and frequent practice to acquire and polish these skills.



Slide 3: Pencil grip

Young writers in kindergarten and first grade need to learn how to hold a pencil and form letters correctly. Teachers should demonstrate how to hold a pencil comfortably between the thumb and forefinger while resting on the middle finger. Although children may change their grip over time, a comfortable pencil grip will prevent students from getting tired, which can discourage writing.



Slide 4: Letter formation

Teachers need to show young children how to form print and cursive letters correctly from memory. Handwriting practice diagrams can be helpful in showing students how to form letters.

Practicing specific letters in isolation is not sufficient to achieve handwriting proficiency; students need to apply their handwriting skills to authentic writing activities.

Handwriting practice is most effective when done in multiple short sessions.



Slide 5: Spelling

Students need to be proficient in the foundational skill of spelling. Teachers need to both help students learn the spelling of commonly used words, and teach them how to generate and check plausible

complex sentence frames such as “I like to ‘swim.’” or “When I ‘play,’ I like to ‘go outside.’”

The teacher can model completing the sentence frame and then ask students to write their own sentences using the frame. It is important to provide time for students to practice applying these principles on their own.



Slide 10: Typing

Learning how to type without looking at the keyboard has become an essential foundational skill in today’s world. Students can begin typing in first grade, and by third grade they should be able to type as fast as they can write.



Slide 11: Word processors

Students should become proficient in using a word processor as part of the writing process. They need to learn how to open, close, and save files and how to use editing functions. Teachers should emphasize that it is still important to proofread and edit their writing even when working with a computer’s spell checker. Students need to understand that, while they are useful, spell checkers will not flag a misspelling if the misspelling is a real word (for example, if a student writes *sad* instead of *said*) and may mistake a proper noun for a misspelling.



Slide 12: Conclusion

Mastering the foundational skills of handwriting, spelling, sentence construction, typing, and word processing is essential for elementary school students so that they can clearly communicate their ideas in writing.

Writing is a process that begins with learning these foundational skills and leads to students being able to devote more attention to developing and conveying their thoughts.

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