

Reading Aligned Writing Guide Introduction

This lesson sequence is designed to support teachers in intentionally integrating writing instruction alongside their core reading program. Using *Empowering Writers* as a supplemental resource ensures that teachers have the tools and instructional support needed to provide explicit writing instruction, particularly in areas that comprehensive reading programs may not fully address. It also helps equip students with essential writing skills that strengthen reading comprehension and enable them to produce more organized, well-developed, and elaborated responses.

Strong foundation skills take time to develop. Writing growth does not occur in a single lesson; it requires consistent exposure, practice, reflection, and refinement. For this reason, repetitiveness and recursiveness are required. Students benefit from revisiting skills across units and texts, deepening their understanding each time they encounter and apply them.

While writing must be taught explicitly, incorporating writing with reading, especially through purposeful reading responses, maximizes instructional time and creates tighter connections for students across all content areas. When students write about what they read, they strengthen comprehension, clarify thinking, and solidify their understanding of both content and craft. Integrating the two disciplines ensures that instruction is cohesive rather than fragmented, allowing students to see reading and writing as interconnected processes.

While many more lessons in the guide are included for both scaffolding and enrichment purposes, this sequence identifies specific skills to be aware of when reading and responding. By calling attention to these focus areas, teachers can more intentionally model how authors use craft, structure, language, and conventions—and how students can transfer those same techniques into their own writing.

These lessons are not meant to replace existing curriculum, but rather to enhance it by supporting teachers in building confident, capable readers who think and write with clarity, intention, and skill.

How to Use This Lesson Sequence

This lesson sequence is intentionally organized to provide clarity, coherence, and measurable growth when used alongside a core reading program. Each component is designed to help teachers deliver explicit writing instruction while maximizing instructional time and strengthening the connection between reading and writing.

Assessments (highlighted in orange) are embedded throughout the sequence to monitor student progress. The first assessment serves as a baseline, capturing students' skill levels at the beginning of the school year. Subsequent assessments follow the explicit instruction of targeted skill areas and are designed to demonstrate measurable growth. These checkpoints provide teachers with actionable data to inform instruction, adjust pacing, and ensure that students are mastering specific response skills before moving forward.

Headings are bolded or italicized to clearly reference corresponding sections in the writing guide. Each heading signals the genre or instructional focus and is immediately followed by the aligned lessons from that section. This structure allows teachers to easily locate resources, maintain alignment with the writing framework, and deliver instruction in a logical, scaffolded progression.

Color coding further clarifies the instructional purpose of each lesson. **Green lessons** represent awareness instruction, building students' understanding of key concepts and foundational skills. **Blue lessons** are generative, guiding students in producing and developing their own writing using the skills taught. **Magenta lessons** are response lessons, in which students apply their writing skills to reading-based tasks, strengthening their ability to analyze, explain, and support their thinking in connection to texts.

Additionally, while this sequence provides a carefully curated pathway through the resource, it does not include every lesson from every section of the writing guide. The full range of lessons and practice opportunities remains available to teachers for targeted scaffolding, strategic reteaching, extension, or enrichment. Because all supplemental lessons are housed in the same resource, teachers can provide additional support or challenge without spending valuable time searching for outside materials. This ensures coherence, efficiency, and instructional depth throughout the year.

Finally, clearly defined **Reading Response Outcomes** articulate the impact of explicit writing instruction on students as readers. These outcomes make visible the transfer of skills—showing how sentence structure, organization, elaboration, and evidence-based thinking enhance comprehension and deepen analysis. They also identify how each section of lessons explicitly supports the **9 Steps to Constructed Response**, ensuring students develop a clear, repeatable process for analyzing prompts and building well-supported answers. By identifying these outcomes, the sequence reinforces that writing instruction is not separate from reading instruction; rather, it strengthens students' ability to think critically about any text and communicate their understanding with clarity and precision.

Note: All assessments and lessons included in this guide are highlighted in the Hub Navigation Menu.

When to Use the *Editing, Revising, and More* Lessons

Just as explicit instruction is essential for genre-specific writing skills, the **Editing, Revising, and More** lessons must also be directly taught. These lessons provide students with structured opportunities to refine their writing, focusing on clarity, sentence structure, organization, and precision in language. To maximize impact, it is recommended that these lessons be implemented at least three times per week, in addition to the genre skill lessons. This approach allows students to immediately apply the strategies they are learning, reinforcing skills while strengthening their ability to produce polished, thoughtful, and well-supported responses. While these lessons are important, they are not included in the main lesson sequence and can be taught in the order they appear, allowing teachers flexibility to fit them into their instructional schedule. Regular integration ensures that students do not simply complete a draft—they actively engage in the writing process, learning to revise and edit with intention and purpose.