The Use of Graphic Organizers for Written Expression

Jennifer Means, SLP.D., CCC-SLP
West Chester University
Purpose of this Session

• Review various graphic organizers
• Understand the need for alternative writing process
• Learn a new system for writing which is easily generalized
• Take away ideas for therapy and references of therapy materials
• Direct application to the curriculum
Scope of Practice

- Professional Roles and Activities
  - Language (comprehension and expression)
  - Literacy
    - Reading
    - Writing
    - spelling
Written Language and The Role of the SLP

• ASHA’s position statement delineates our role with respect to reading and writing which is consistent with the roles and responsibilities of the SLP.

• Surveyed SLPs indicated lack of confidence with addressing the writing process (ASHA, 2002)
Position Statement

• Appropriate roles and responsibilities for SLPs include, but are not limited to
  – (a) preventing written language problems by fostering language acquisition and emergent literacy;
  – (b) identifying children at risk for reading and writing problems;
  – (c) assessing reading and writing;
  – (d) providing intervention and documenting outcomes for reading and writing; and
  – (e) assuming other roles, such as providing assistance to general education teachers, parents, and students; advocating for effective literacy practices; and advancing the knowledge base.
Required Knowledge and Skills

- **The nature of literacy**, including spoken-written language relationships, and reading and writing as acts of communication and tools of learning.
- **Normal development** of reading and writing in the context of the general education curriculum.
- **Disorders of language and literacy** and their relationships to each other and to other communication disorders.
- **Clinical tools and methods** for targeting reciprocal spoken and written language growth.
- **Collaboration, leadership, and research principles** for working with others, serving as advocates, and advancing knowledge about evidence-based practices.
Additional knowledge

- Curriculum
- Standards
  - What’s the difference?
  - Are they assessed differently?
- We need to understand both
Writing Standard 4.0

Topic
A. WRITING

Indicator
1. Compose texts using the prewriting and drafting strategies of effective writers and speakers

Objectives
– Generate ideas and topics and make a plan before writing
– Write a first draft with a main idea and supporting details
– Organize related ideas into a simple paragraph
Writing Standard 4.0

Indicator
2. Compose oral, written, and visual presentations that express personal ideas, inform, and persuade

Objectives
• Write to express personal ideas using a variety of forms, such as journals, narratives, letters, and reports
• Contribute to a shared writing experience or topic of interest
• Use sensory details to expand ideas
• Compose to inform using major points and examples to support a main idea
• Write persuasive text to support a stated opinion
• Write a variety of responses to text, such as response logs, journals, and constructed responses
Writing Standard 4.0

Indicator
3. Compose texts using the revising and editing strategies of effective writers and speakers

Objectives
• Improve writing by
  – Maintaining a topic
  – Adding ideas
  – Deleting unrelated ideas
• Proofread and edit writing for
  – Complete sentences
  – Capitalization at the beginning of sentences
  – Capitalization of proper nouns
  – Punctuation at the end of sentences
  – Commas with dates, salutations, and closing, and items in a series
  – Apostrophes in contractions
  – Quotation marks in simple dialogue
• Prepare writing for publication
Writing Development

- Pictures
- Lines and scribbles
- Letter repetition
- Letter usage without sound symbol association
- Invented spelling using primarily consonants
- Writing tends to be shorter phrases and sentences than their conversational speech in the early elementary years
- Later years require extensive multi-tasks
Required Skills for Writing

- Sequencing
- Organization
- Visualization
- Ability to story tell
- Syntax, semantics, morphology
- Pragmatics
- Problem solving
- Reasoning
- Metalinguistic skills
- Multi-tasking
- Attending
The Writing Process

• Planning (prewriting), organizing, drafting reflecting, revising and editing (Flowers and Hayes, 1987)

• The need to remain focused for an extended period to time to reflect on work and make revision/editing decisions
Putting it all together

- Okay, now I know development, standards, curriculum and law. How do I put it all together for therapy???
Curriculum Problems

- Not enough writing
- The misconception regarding the multitude of skills in writing
- Emphasis on mechanics
- Cursive writing requirements
Types of Graphic Organizers

- Webbing
- Organizational maps
- Flow charts
- Kidspirations
Network Tree
Fishbone Map
RIVER FLOW CHART

In what order did the events happen?  Topic:

1  2  3  4  5
Similes, Metaphors, and Sensory Details

Descriptive Words

Topic
Barrier a Student Faces During Writing Tasks

• When asked, “what makes writing difficult?”
  – Spelling
  – Punctuation
  – Capitalization
  – Organization
  – Hand fatigue
Attitudes Toward Writing

- Students with LD are less motivated to write and write less frequently (Graham, Schwartz, MacArthur, 1993)
- When asked, “What do good writers do?”
  - LD students focused on appearance such as neatness and spelling
  - Normally achieving peers focused on planning and revising
- When asked to make changes to text the students with LD made surface changes
- When asked, “Why do children have trouble writing?”
  - Surface level errors were the focus; neatness and spelling
Changes in Attitudes Toward Writing

• Computer technology or word processing has changed attitudes toward writing by improving surface features (Collins, 1990)

• However…..
  – Student to computer ratio is 5.5:1 in the state of Pennsylvania (NEA Today, 2001)
Are there other ways to reduce apprehension?

- If a student focuses on the mechanics of writing while composing, then **eliminate** the mechanics while composing.
- Systematic use of editing.
- Alternative methods for editing so the task is less stressful.
Learning Strategies

• Students with LD are systematic learners
• Students with LD have a strong visual memory for word configuration. Students recall the visual representation of words as they write (automaticity). The visual representation students recall is based on the print from which they read.
(Richards, 1999)
Study

- Evaluated the editing skills of 6 students with learning disabilities all in the 5th grade.
- All students met specific criteria
- Students composed and edited a total of 9 stories over a 6 week period.
  - 3 stories were edited under 3 different formats
    - Print
    - Cursive
    - Typed
Results

- Results were graphed according to the average percentage of errors identified for capitals, periods and spelling in each of the three formats.
- Comparisons may be made for each format.
Overall Findings

- Typed version yielded more identified errors in all areas
- Print yielded the second most identified errors.
- Cursive format for composition produced shorter stories, increased hand fatigue and reduced motivation to write
While editing the typed version two students stated:

“I made more mistakes this time, especially with spelling”

While composing using cursive one student stated:

“I can write cursive but I can’t read it”

During the final story to write, one student began proofing the first few sentences before completing the rest of the story stating:

“I want to fix the error so I won’t have to do it tomorrow.”
Student Q and A

Did you learn anything from this experience?

“We have a powerful imagination”

“We learned how to spell words easier and how to scan our work better.”

“I learned that my imagination can go far and you can be a good writer if you try harder.”

“Using a picture to base your story on is much easier”

Which form was easier for composing?

“Printing is much better because cursive takes much longer and is harder to read”
Are there any differences between cursive and print?

“I can’t read my cursive”

“Printing is easier because in cursive all the letters look the same and I can’t find my mistakes”

“Cursive is too hard to read because it’s all loopy.”

“I read cursive much slower.”
Tell me about the proofing.

“Print was easier but typed was the easiest to find the mistakes especially the spelling. I could see the words well and they were spaced apart better.”

“It was really cool since there were not lines on the paper.”

“I liked the typed best because you can see the mistakes. On the handwritten ones the letters are stuffed together.”

“I can see the typed words better.”
Did proofreading later help in anyway?

“You could write faster, you know, not thinking and not all nervous about spelling the words.”

“It’s faster to write it down if you know what you want to write and not how to fix it.”

“You might forget the words in your mind if you have to proofread at the same time. Then you would have to think them up all over again.”

“You don’t have to spend so many minutes on a word and waste time.”
Student Q and A

Which format was easiest to proof?

“The typed was the easiest. I didn’t know I made all those mistakes when I wrote it! Like ‘who’ came out ‘ho’ and I didn’t remember writing it like that.”
Current Therapy Program

• Students participate in systematic self-regulating writing program
• Fears of writing are eliminated at the start of the program
• Editing is conducted after the story is typed
• Therapy sessions may focus on writing content.
Initial Sessions - Counseling

- “Counseling sessions”
  - No pencils, no writing
  - Discuss fears and apprehensions
  - Feeling about writing
  - Eliminating the fears
  - Desensitization
Elimination of.....

- Spelling
- Capitalization
- Punctuation
- Choosing a topic
- Organization
- Handwriting
Continuous Sessions – Reading

- Reading aloud
  - Mysteries
  - Non-fiction
  - Research information
  - Curriculum – science, social studies, health, etc.
Early Writing

- Sequencing
- Sentence writing
- Punctuation and capitalization are not focus, just built into the process
- Simple sequence cards
- Visualization strategy
Block Outline

- Based on the same concept of sequence cards
- The topic is provided for the student
- Mechanics are not a focus
- Organization is provided
### Block Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Idea</th>
<th>Main Idea</th>
<th>Main Idea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Super word</td>
<td>✓ Super word</td>
<td>✓ Super word</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Idea</th>
<th>Main Idea</th>
<th>Main Idea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Super word</td>
<td>✓ Super word</td>
<td>✓ Super word</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Idea</th>
<th>Main Idea</th>
<th>Main Idea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Super word</td>
<td>✓ Super word</td>
<td>✓ Super word</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Composite Pictures

- Students must visualize what has occurred before and after the scene
- This requires sequencing, visualization and organization
- Webbing does not provide a student with built in organization
MAN TURNS INTO GIRAFFE

Doctors are baffled. "We've never seen anything like this," says his physician.
Single Subject

• Male
  – PSSA math and reading scores (2002)
    • Basic – math
    • Below basic – reading
    • Proficient – writing
      – Scores 15 and 14 with state average 12.8 and 12.2 respectively
  – Teacher reported data regarding book reports and writing tasks in the classroom
    • Significant improvements specific to organization and improved content.
    • Letter grade improvement from B to A in writing
Establishing Independence

- Use of block outlining in all situations
- Role playing independent use
- Classroom instruction
- Replacement of traditional writing process
- Across curriculum
- Used for expository and narrative writing
- My experiences with students
Other Materials

- President reports
- Famous people
- Story Blasters
- Making the News
- Writopoly
- Harris Burdick
THE MYSTERY OF
HARRIS BURDICK

CHRIS VAN ALLSBURG

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
BOSTON
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Idea</th>
<th>Main Idea</th>
<th>Main Idea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Super word</td>
<td>➢ Super word</td>
<td>➢ Super word</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Idea</th>
<th>Main Idea</th>
<th>Main Idea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Super word</td>
<td>➢ Super word</td>
<td>➢ Super word</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Idea</th>
<th>Main Idea</th>
<th>Main Idea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
<td>• Detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Super word</td>
<td>➢ Super word</td>
<td>➢ Super word</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References

• ASHA (2002). Knowledge and skills needed by SLPs with respect to reading and writing in children and adults. ASHA 2002 Desk Reference, 3.
• Graphic Organizers
  http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/students/learning/lr2grap.htm
References