

Teaching Prompt-Driven Writing

Many schools provide students with strategies to give them confidence in testing situations. These tools can help students organize their thoughts and perform well on written assessments. In deciding whether a particular method is right for your students, we encourage teachers to consider the following:

DOES THIS STRATEGY ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO READ ALL PARTS OF THE PROMPT?

- Practice identifying the different parts by numbering them or using different colors.
- When responding, use the numbers or colors to show direct connection to the prompt.

DOES THIS STRATEGY ASSIST STUDENTS IN ORGANIZING THEIR RESPONSES?

- There is a beginning, middle and end.
- There are introductory and concluding sentences or paragraphs.
- There are transition words between ideas (also, first, finally).

DOES THIS STRATEGY HELP STUDENTS KEEP THEIR RESPONSES FOCUSED?

- All of the response is connected to what is being asked.
- The response includes relevant information from the passage(s).

DOES THIS STRATEGY HELP STUDENTS SELECT EVIDENCE FROM THE PASSAGE?

- The response should include relevant quotes and/or paraphrases from the passage.
- The evidence is identified by source (Passage 1, Passage 2, Author's name, Title).
- Evidence from each passage is used in the response.

DOES THIS STRATEGY ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO ELABORATE?

- The response should include students' own words of explanation, description and argument.
- Students' words are directly related to the evidence and the task.

DOES THIS STRATEGY REINFORCE MECHANICS, STRUCTURE AND GRAMMAR?

- Grade-appropriate rules for capitalization and punctuation are followed.
- Vocabulary from the passage that is specific to the content being discussed is included.
- Sentence structure is varied (simple constructions, complex sentences, statements and questions).
- Spelling reflects grade-level understanding.