

Building Foundational Paragraph Skills Course Companion

The Course Companion is designed to allow participants to capture notes, reflections and action steps as they work through a course. Additionally, the Course Companion contains a list of all extra resources listed in the course. Each section of the Course Companion is linked to a corresponding section of the course.

Consider this Scenario:

Ms. Day has been working with her 5th grade science students on basic experiments. At the conclusion of each experiment, she wants her students to create a one paragraph “lab report” that describes their hypothesis, experiment and findings. She explained the purpose of the reports and provided an example of a quality lab report. However, she notices that many of her students get stuck on the first sentence of their paragraphs and cannot seem to move on. Furthermore, when they do complete an entire paragraph, the sentences are often unrelated or seemingly out of order.

Can you relate to the above scenario? In what ways are your challenges in literacy instruction similar or different?

What are the key skills associated with paragraph writing?

Consider the list of component activities associated with writing listed above.

- Can you think of any other activities involved in writing?

- What items on this list do you feel comfortable addressing? What do you need to work on to improve your ability to support students’ writing

Building Foundational Paragraph Skills with William Van Cleave (Video)

Notes:

Question: Consider Mr. Van Cleave's five steps for writing a topic sentence. Which of these steps are used in your classroom and/or building? What are some steps you can take to incorporate any steps that are not currently used or to integrate this five-step process into your instruction?

Course Reflection:

Identify one or two key takeaways from what you learned in this course

How can you begin to implement your learning in your work in your classroom, building or district?

What barriers do you anticipate to incorporating this learning into your practice? How might you and your colleagues overcome those barriers?

The following resources are listed in the course:

- [From the Ground Up!](#) by William Van Cleave, provides in depth guidance on foundational paragraph skills.