

Reading and Writing Connections

Dear Fellow Educator,

When planning curriculum and setting individual goals for children, it's important we make natural connections between reading and writing. That way, our teaching can be more focused, children have a greater chance to see the interrelatedness of skills and strategies, and there can be more opportunities for students to practice similar work across their day. In all cases, careful assessment of student strengths and needs is important to determine whether it makes sense to focus on reading and writing goals that relate to each other, or to target different areas in reading and writing.

There are times when student strengths and needs will align between reading and writing. For example, a student who needs help with spelling as they write may also need help decoding as they read. Encoding and decoding are reciprocal processes. When you are working to plan a unit on nonfiction reading, it may also make sense to teach nonfiction writing at the same time. The skills you plan to teach in each can align to each other. For example, you may teach students to write topic sentences and supporting details while reading to determine the main idea and key details in reading and summarizing what the author is teaching about. You may teach children to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary by using context clues and text features as they read, and during writing time teach them how to use content specific words *and* provide information to help their intended reader understand those words.

There are other times, however, when students are able to do something as writers that they are not yet able to do as readers. For example, a student may be able to add “show not tell” details to a story they are writing, but have difficulty inferring ideas about the character from details an author provides in something they read. In such cases, knowing the connections can help you to leverage a strength in one area to support a need in another (“You’re already _____ when you read, so now you can try _____ as you write!”).

I have created this document to help you see where natural connections can be made between reading and writing, using the goal categories you will find in the ***The Reading Strategies Book*** and ***The Writing Strategies Book***. Here are two quick notes about the connections you’ll see in the following table:

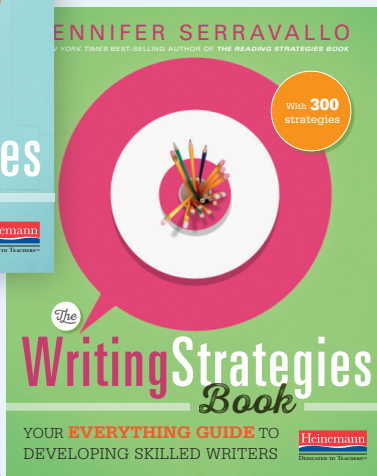
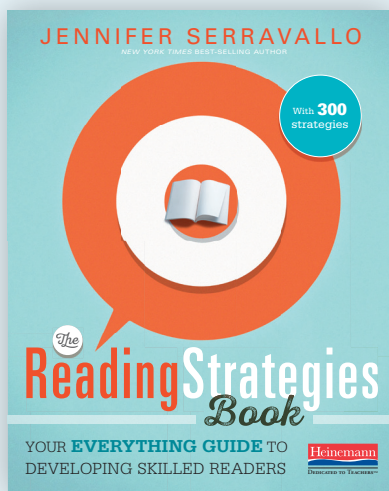
- There are 13 reading goals and 10 writing goals, so there isn’t always a one-to-one correspondence. At times, one goal in reading or writing may connect to multiple goals in the other.
- Some of the goals that appear earlier on the hierarchy in reading are later on the writing side (i.e., see the placements of print work in reading, spelling in writing).

I hope this is helpful to you.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Serravallo

For more information about this Heinemann resource, visit <https://www.heinemann.com>.



READING

Emergent Reading—Before students read conventionally, they can learn to storytell from pictures and learn from photos and illustrations in nonfiction texts.

Engagement—Engaged readers are focused, have stamina to read for long stretches, and choose books that are interesting and important.

Reading With Accuracy—Reading with Accuracy includes a child’s ability to use what they understand about the alphabetic principle to decode unfamiliar words, read words that have been orthographically mapped with automaticity, and monitor their reading to notice when they make a mistake and have strategies to fix it.

Fluency—Fluent readers read smoothly and with expression and intonation.

Plot and Setting—To comprehend a story, readers need to know how the story is put together, how the events connect, what problems are central to the story, and where the events are taking place.

WRITING

Composing with Pictures—Before children use letters to write words, they can learn how to record ideas, using details to storytell, teach, or persuade.

Engagement—Engaged writers take initiative in their own projects, write for sustained periods of time, and find enjoyment in some part of the process (or at least in having written).

Spelling—Spelling is (in part) an ability to encode. Knowing certain rules of how language works and having automaticity with the spellings of some words help students write with accurate, conventional spelling.

Engagement—Engaged writers write with fluency, letting their words flow onto the page without interruption.

Punctuation and Grammar—Writers make choices about punctuation (what to use where) and how to construct sentences to communicate how a text should be read.

Structure and Organization—Before, during, and after composing a text, a story writer needs to consider how the piece will be organized and how much detail to include in each part so that the story flows and is easy to understand.

Elaboration—Before, during, and after composing a text, a story writer considers what details to include and what to leave out to show actions, events, and setting.

NOTE

There is a new/updated chapter available for *The Reading Strategies Book* focused on this goal.

To access, see here <https://blog.heinemann.com/serravallo-reading-with-accuracy>



READING

Text Features—Readers of nonfiction texts need to read the entire page, text *and* features, in order to comprehend the information the author is teaching.

Character—Understanding characters—their feelings, traits, actions, and relationships—is an important part of understanding the story overall.

Vocabulary and Figurative Language—Readers need to understand the words and phrases the author uses.

Themes and Ideas—Readers interpret a story to understand central lessons and messages, symbolism, and social issues.

WRITING

Structure and Organization—Writers of informational texts must consider how to present the information they want to share. They can think about what should be included in the main text and what should be included in features.

Elaboration—One way writers of informational texts add more information is to add visual features (pictures, illustrations, maps, graphs) that show and explain their facts. They also must consider how their information is best represented.

Elaboration—Developing details in stories, including their characters' traits, feelings, and actions, helps writers bring the characters in their stories to life and helps the characters to be understood by the reader.

Word Choice—Carefully considering words they choose to describe actions, and being as precise as possible with those words, allows writers to help their readers understand characters.

Word Choice—Writers need to carefully consider their intended meaning and choose the words they use carefully.

Focus—A story writer should decide on a central focus for their story. For some students the focus will be a point in time (a “small moment”) but for others it can be on a central idea, theme, message, or issue.

READING

Main Idea—When reading informational texts, it's important to identify the big picture of what a text is mostly about, and what slant/angle/idea the author has about the topic.

Key Details—Readers of informational texts need to understand and identify what details support and connect to the main idea(s) of a text.

Main Idea—When reading informational texts, it's important to identify the big picture of what a text is mostly about, and what slant/angle/idea the author has about the topic.

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Conversation—Readers benefit from spending time with peers in partnerships and small groups to deepen their understanding about their text, clarify misunderstandings, and engage in social experiences around books. In reading, they need to be taught ways to communicate effectively and how to listen when a peer is speaking.


WRITING

Focus—When writing informational or persuasive pieces, writers must clarify what their work is mostly about so that before, during, and after writing they are able to include information that aligns to their intended meaning and doesn't distract readers with extraneous information.

Elaboration—Writers of informational and persuasive texts need to back up their topics and ideas with details such as facts and statistics.

Organization and Structure—When writing nonfiction and persuasive texts, sections and chapters are often organized by subtopic or sub-main idea and details that go with those subtopics are used within those parts.

Writing Partners and Clubs—Writers benefit from spending time with peers in partnerships and small groups to generate ideas, test out ideas, get suggestions for revision, edit their work, and more. In writing, they need to be taught ways to communicate effectively and how to listen when a peer is speaking or sharing their writing.



Writing About Reading—To write about reading—to hold onto ideas and develop those ideas in longer entries—connects to many writing goals. In order to write about reading, a reader needs to **generate** an idea, have some way to structure the writing, and be sure that the writing is **focused** on one idea. To write longer, the writer needs to **elaborate** on their thinking with details and support from the text.