

# Writing in the Primary Grades

## By Shirley George

### Narrative Story writing in the Blended Sound-Sight Program of Learning

Begin with oral storytelling using 4 pictures and Sequence Chart

1. Make Sequence chart visible, discuss parts of a story.
2. Examine story in reader or series of pictures, picture by picture or event by event. Guide students in telling story by asking questions from Sequence Chart.
3. As students speak, teacher puts appropriate words on chalkboard to show sequence. Teacher discusses and demonstrates “clinchers”, good vocabulary, feelings & values.
4. Several students retell story individually, following both chart and story sequence words on board. Clinchers are emphasized.
5. For variation, have class dramatize story if appropriate.

#### Story Sequence Chart

Who is in story?

Where does he live?

Where does he go?

What does he say, do?

Story sequence - What happened next?

Problem or Surprise?

Solve problem

Clincher

\*Note: Students retell at least 20 or 25 reader stories orally before proceeding to writing the story. Teacher gradually prints fewer words on board. Eventually students internalize chart and do not need sequence words.

### Writing Narrative Stories Using Ingham Sequence Chart

1. Follow oral storytelling procedure.
2. Ask students to write the story, which they have just told. Teacher may wish to demonstrate writing the first story, do a class composition or at least put a first sentence on board.
3. Teacher could guide small group while others work independently.
4. Daily, teacher marks, evaluates and gives feedback to students. Stories are not rewritten unless they are being displayed but errors are brought to the attention of students. “A mistake is an opportunity to learn”. Students refer back to corrections and learn from them.
5. As students become efficient at story writing, they write stories without discussion or direction. Since they have now internalized the chart, they don't need chart or sequence words.

<u>Writing Stories with Dress-up</u>	<u>Library Book Story writing</u>
1. Synonyms for “said”	1. Children begin to transfer sophisticated language from reading good literature.
a) Brainstorm for synonyms	2. Children limit details in long stories.
b) Make a “said synonym” chart	3. They summarize sections by making generalizations.
c) Encourage students who use synonyms.	4. At the end of their story, they write a clincher.
2. “ly” words such as “suddenly” or “quickly” are encouraged.	For further enhancement, see Webster list of dress-up & starters.
3. A variety of story beginnings are introduced. e.g. One day, One cool morning, Once upon a time etc.	<u>Creative Writing</u> Structure is how we write. Creativity is what we write. Children begin to use creative ideas.

Sample first draft story from Blended Sound-Sight Program of Learning - written in March by a top grade one student who was summarizing a library book story with no reference to the book.

Casper The Friendly Ghost by Anne Al-Deiry. Errors are indicated in [    ].

Casper was a friendly ghost. All winter long the winds blew. The trees had no leaves. One day Casper went for a walk. He heard some voices so he hid behind a tree to find out who was talking. Casper saw a squirrel. The squirrel cried I wish spring would come. I do too, chattered a little Mouse. There's no sign of spring anywhere [whailed] the chipmunk. That's what I say groaned the beaver. Then Casper appeared. Away ran all the animals. I didn't [meen] to scare them said Casper. Casper walked on. He came to some signs on trees that said, Welcome Miss Spring, Hurry Up, Spring, We are waiting for you. Casper met a rabbit. Poor little Rabbit was crying. I've put up all these signs but spring doesn't come. Maybe I can help you. I will go to Mother Nature's kitchen and get some [bottels] of spring air. [s]o Casper went to Mother Nature's. Please may I have some [bottels] of spring air said Casper to Mother Nature. Yes, said Mother Nature here you are. Thank you said Casper. Just as he was going out the door, he saw Jack Frost dancing around and tossing snowflakes in the air. [s]top that cried Casper. We've had enough of this cold snow. Oh I'm having so much fun said Jack Frost. Well I'll throw these [bottels] of spring air at you. No! no! please stop, I'll go away, stop, please stop. Away went the cold winter. At last spring had come and all the animals were happy.

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\*Sample narrative story written by a grade three student, using a formal outline composed from the Senior Sequence Chart Model [Blended Structure and Style by JB Webster].

\*The dress-ups had been introduced. 1. who/which 2. "ly" 3. because 4. strong verb 5. quality adjective

6. clausal = when/while/where/as/since/if/although Dress-ups in Emily's story are indicated by underlining.

\*Sentence starters had been introduced except the vss. Emily's starters are numbered.

1. subject 2. prep 3. "ly" 4. "ing" 5. clausal 6. vss = very short sentence

\*Follow-up lessons could be "synonyms for lion and mouse", no repeats etc.

## The Lion and the Mouse

By

Our Class

Senior Sequence Chart Model [based on Ingham chart]	Class-generated outline
WHO/WHEN/WHERE Who was in the story? When did it happen? Where did it happen? [character & setting]	I lion lair 1. prairie, grass 2. arrogant 3. mouse, skip 4. smelled
II WHAT & PROBLEM What did they do, say, think, want, need? [Plot, Conflict]	II mouse, nose 1. lion seized 2. prayed not 3. someday favor 4. amused, let go
III CLIMAX/SOLVE PROBLEM What was the problem and how was it solved? [Climax]	III lion net 1. struggled, roared, help 2. mouse heard, scampered 3. gnawed, freed 4. thank you, told repay moral = small help bigger

## Small and Weak Helps Big and Boastful

By

Emily

One sunny day an arrogant lion who was also lazy, was sleeping in the tall savannah grass. Being King of the beasts, he was so arrogant that sometimes he wouldn't look where he was going. There was a tiny white mouse who also lived here. Although she was timid and talented, she was also very brave. Cautiously, she smelled different things because she liked to learn. [2, 4, 1, 3]

Unfortunately the mouse tripped over the lion's claws while she was sniffing with her nose in the air and her eyes closed. She accidentally fell onto his paw and woke him. As soon as he woke, he seized her. Crying, she screamed, "Please do not eat me. If you let me go, I will repay you." The sleepy lion was amused. When the lion let the mouse go, the mouse gratefully thanked the lion. [3, 1, 5, 4, 6, 5,]

A few days later the lion got trapped in a net. Struggling, the lion roared for help. While the lion was roaring, the mouse heard him and immediately scampered to rescue him. Quickly, the mouse gnawed on the ropes and set him free. The lion thanked the mouse who said, "I told you I would repay you. The moral of the story is: even if you are small and weak like the mouse, you can still help someone who is strong and boastful like the lion. [2, 4, 5, 3, 1, 1,]

# Writing in the Primary Grades

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Sample Nip – Tip for outlining

Teaching Students How to Outline and Write Summaries from Outline  
based on Webster's Blended Structure and Style in Composition

### Unit I - Notemaking

1. Paragraph on overhead or chalkboard
2. Class reads & discusses.
3. Teacher prints on board as class chooses key words from each sentence [max. of 3 per sentence]. Roman numerals for first sentence (topic), Arabic for details.
4. Remove par. from view.
5. Class retells par. orally, looking at outline.
6. Students copy outline.

Materials - can be any content but Nip and Tip stories are good for easy reading. There are 60 short Nip stories. Tip stories are in Webster's book.

Sample Nip story	Possible Class Outline	Tip
Nip Nip is a baby bear. Nip lives with Ann. Ann plays train. Nip plays train with Ann.	Nip by Our Class  I. Baby bear 1. Lives 2. Ann plays 3. Nip with	Tip Tip is a baby. He is a monkey Tip lives with Jack. Tip plays all day. He sits in a tree. He throws a ball.

### The Contest (A Tip Story)

Fluffy looked arrogant this morning. Her tail was riding high. "Nice Fluffy", called Jack as he poured her milk. Tip bounded. With one swipe he upset the milk. "That should show nice Fluffy who is boss". Fluffy arched and hissed. She struck out and caught Tip on the nose.

The following is a 3 par. Tip story, [Aday As A Youth] from Webster's text.

### Aday As A Youth

Aday grew up. He became strong and powerful. With his arms and tail he could swing through the trees. Aday became heavier so that when he dropped on you from his tree, he gave you quite a jolt. He never stopped moving. The more he ate, the faster and more agile he became. When full grown he could reach your waist, standing on his hind legs.

He got his name because he knocked everything over. He tipped over pails and bottles. He loved a mess. Within an hour he could make a room look like a teenage bedroom. He once broke a glass and was spanked for it. As he grew up, his name "Tip" was changed to "Aday".

Aday ate everything except meat. He loved eggs and cheese, milk and nuts. He liked his food best when he had stolen it. He ate bananas. He even liked dill pickles. He was a strict vegetarian. As a youth, Aday was a rascal.

### Teaching Sequence

1. Teach class to make outline from one paragraph.
2. Repeat 3 or 4 times until top students are ready to do a few outlines independent of the teacher. They work alone or in a group. Teacher works with class.
3. Bring whole class together. Teach class to write up summary from outline,

Aday as a Youth (abbreviated)  
by  
Our Class

- I grew up  
1. strong  
2. swing in trees  
II knocked everything over  
3. ate, faster, agile  
4. tall as waist

4. Repeat a few summary lessons and then filter some students to independence. 5. Teach class how to outline multi-paragraph selections. [Use I II III] 6. Teach class to make an abbreviated outline.	<div> <div>1. tipped pails</div> <div>2. mess</div> </div> <div> <div>3. teenage bedroom</div> <div>4. name changed</div> </div> <div>III ate everything</div> <div> <div>1. eggs, milk, nuts</div> <div>2. stolen food</div> </div> <div> <div>3. strict vegetarian</div> <div>4. rascal</div> </div>
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Writing in the Primary Grades

Shirley George

Grade Three Science Report on Frogs

Frogs  
by

Lyndsay (grade 3)

I appearance

- 1. thin, moist, breathe
- 2. bulgy, opposite
- 3. eyelid, bottom, clear
- 4. strong legs, twenty times

Clincher: appearance

You would be very lucky to see the appearance of a frog because they are hard to find. When a frog is alive [,] it has this moist skin, which he/she breathes through. [Wry] a frog will keep his bulging eyes open looking for [enimies] like the [Hearon]. A frog's eyes are on opposite sides so that he can see an [enimy] Swimming [,] while cautiously looking [,] a frog has two eyelids, one on the bottom and one on the top. The bottom eyelid is used to see under the water without getting water in his eye. All of a sudden a frog could jump twenty times [it's] length or dive deep into the water since it has long strong hind legs. Sometimes a frog as small as a cm can be very interesting. Frogs have a weird appearance.

Frogs  
by

Lauren (grade 3)

II diet, eat

- 1. no need drink
- 2. never chew, gulp
- 3. sticky tongue, insects
- 4. eyeballs sockets swallow

Clincher: diet, eat

Although frogs have a disgusting diet, they eat in an interesting way. Swimming, diving and jumping, frogs do not need to drink because they get moisture from their skin. They never chew but they greedily gulp down their [pray] which can be big or small. As quick as a wink, the frog sticks out its sticky slimy tongue to catch ugly insects like [flies]. Hungrily, he catches a larger [pray] and pulls his eyeballs into his socket to help shove the meal down his tiny throat. Without a [dought], the eating habits of frogs are weird.

Frogs  
by

Emily (grade 3)

III hibernate

- 1. cold blooded
- 2. too die
- 3. fall burrow mud
- 4. summer rain
- 5. slows no eat

Clincher: hibernate

Frogs hibernate at different times of the [season] according to the [climit]. Since frogs are cold-blooded [creachers]. their blood is the same temperature as the air. [Natureally], if frogs get too hot or cold they will die. Trying to get away from the cold, frogs carefully burrow into wet, soggy mud when fall comes and they sleep there all winter. In a warm [climit] the summer sun is too hot so the frogs burrow down and wait for the rain to come. When the frogs hibernate, their hearts slow down which can be scary for us and they do not eat or move a [musul] until they wake up. The way frogs hibernate is interesting.

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### Checklists for Writing Assignments

The following checklist is what Shirley George uses with adults for marking a paragraph after teaching units I and II of the Webster syllabus plus all 6 dress-ups and 6 sentence openers [starters].

### Structure and Style in Writing – Checklist for Practicum

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Check (√) your work as you complete these items. Number of marks for each item is indicated in brackets. Total points = 20

<input type="checkbox"/> 1. date [1]	<input type="checkbox"/> 5. paragraph double spaced [1]
<input type="checkbox"/> 2. title centered [1]	<input type="checkbox"/> 6. indentation [1]
<input type="checkbox"/> 3. by name [1]	<input type="checkbox"/> 7. dress-ups underlined – one of each [1]
<input type="checkbox"/> 4. outline included (single spaced) [1]	<input type="checkbox"/> 8. openers numbered in LH margin [1]

Remember: Do not underline whole clauses for dress-up. For example, a “which” clause would have just the “which” underlined.

#	Dress-up	√	√ for teacher	#	Openers [sentence starters]	√	√ for teacher
1.	who/which			1.	subject		
2.	“ly”			2.	prepositional [on, after etc.]		
3.	because			3.	“ly”		
4.	strong verb			4.	“ing”		
5.	quality adjective			5.	clausal : <a href="http://www.asia">www.asia</a> When, while, where, as, since, if, although		
6.	when, while, where, as, since, if, although			6.	vss [very short sentence]		

Total out of 20 = \_\_\_\_\_



**Reminders: For a student checklist in primary grades**

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- List only dress-ups and openers, which have been taught, thus taking it necessary for frequent changes in checklist format. Grade one may not learn all dress-ups and openers.
- In grade one, a checklist in a very simple form would be used only later in the year.
- Grades 2 and 3 could use a checklist as soon as elements of style are introduced.

**For other units in the Webster Syllabus**

- The checklist will reflect the structure being introduced as well as the style. For example, after teaching Unit III [narrative story writing], the checklist would include:
- three paragraphs included
- a final clincher reflecting the title
- any decorations already taught such as conversation and similes

# Writing in the Primary Grades

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### Elements of Style to Enhance Student Writing

#### Dress-up

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. who/which   | <u>Example</u><br>Ted, <u>who</u> is athletic, ran to the field <u>which</u> is far away. |
| 2. "ly"  | Ted ran <u>quickly</u> .  |
| 3. because   | Ted stopped <u>because</u> he was tired.  |
| 4. strong verb   | Ted <u>sprinted</u> across the field.   |
| 5. quality adjective (describing word)                   | Ted wore his <u>colourful</u> uniform.  |
| 6. clausal (when, while, where, as, since, if, although) | Bill watched <u>while</u> Ted ran.  |

#### Sentence Starters

#### Example

- |  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. Subject                                       | Ted ran across the field.    |
| 2. Prepositional                                 | In haste, Ted ran.           |
| 3. "ly" adverb                                   | Quickly, Ted ran.            |
| 4. "ing"   | Breathing heavily, Ted ran.  |
| 5. Clausal -when, while, as, since, if, although | While Ted ran, Bill watched. |
| 6. vss -very short sentence                      | Ted ran.                     |

#### Decorations [for advanced students or for Grade 3 and up]

- |                                     |                             |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. question                         | 4. dramatic opening-closing |
| 2. conversation                     | 5. simile-metaphor          |
| 3. 3 sss (short staccato sentences) | 6. alliteration             |

#### Triple Extensions (advanced)

- |                               |                        |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. word repetition            | 4. repeating "ly"s     |
| 2. phrase & clause repetition | 5. repeating adj-nouns |
| 3. repeating "ing"s           | 6. repeating verbs     |

J B Webster created the above lists to assist students in increasing vocabulary and variety in their compositions. In his book, Blended Structure & Style in Composition, Dr. Webster explains these elements of style. In Anna Ingham's book, The Blended Sound-Sight Program of Learning, the formal list of dress-up and sentence starters is discussed in a chapter based on Webster's system of teaching writing.

Reader Story Dr I  
Where, oh Where

Sequence  
words

Teddy naps  
tucked gently  
Anna, Zack, room  
Anna whispered  
Teddy gone  
Fred  
naps sleeping, not playing

Feb. 28

Where, Oh, Where?

by  
Brian

One day after lunch  
it was time for Teddy's  
nap. Mother tucked  
Teddy in bed. Anna and  
Zack walked by. Anna  
whispered shsh Teddy is  
sleeping. They tip-toed  
in Teddy's new room.

Oh no Teddy is gone.  
They lookt for him.  
Fred found him. Zack  
came. Naps are for  
sleeping not for playing.  
Get in bed Teddy.

Feb. 28

Where, Oh, Where?

by  
Meagan

One day after lunch Teddy had  
to go for a nap. Mother carried  
him up the stairs. She tucked  
Teddy into bed. Teddy fell asleep.

Suddenly Teddy woke up because

Anna was taking too loud.

Teddy sneaked to the closet. When

Anna find around Teddy was

gone! Anna and Zack split up

Fred hopped along then Fred

saw Teddy's feet. Anna and

Zack came running in. Zack

said Teddy naps are for

sleeping not for playing. Naughty

Teddy!

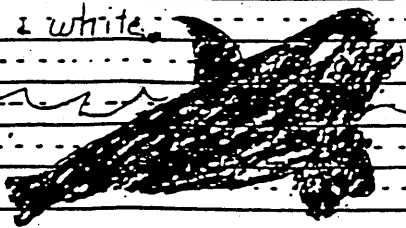
P3  
Killer Whales

by

Irene Gr 2

Quickly, killer whales swim  
25 mph. They belong to the loving,  
laughing and jumping family of  
dolphins. The killer whales have  
teeth which are shaped like an  
ice cream cone. I think the  
killer whales are hunters

because their first name is  
killer. Hungry, they eat fat  
walrus, seals, dolphins, porpoises  
and great big whales in the  
whole sea kingdom. Killer whales  
are the best because they are  
black & white.



Protected Lobster

by

Stichomic Gr 2

Happily lobsters which  
have no back bone  
have a hard shell.  
The female lays eggs  
every 2 years. Moving  
swimming and pinching

the interesting lobsters  
have thick claws to crush  
things. Lobsters have 5  
pairs of legs that  
are jointed. Their heads  
have a hard shell all  
over. Lobsters are  
protected by their  
hard head.