**Excellence in Writing Resource Guide**

**I. Types of Writing Responses**

⏺ Imitation – Imitate the text using author’s words and ideas while incorporating your own

⏺ Narration – tell back the author’s words, details and sequence as close to the original text as possible

⏺ Summarization – tell back only the main ideas or points of the text

**II. Spalding Connections**

* When approaching a source text use Mental Actions 1-3 (Monitoring Comprehension, Predicting and Making Connections) to ensure understanding of the text
* Mental Actions 4 & 5 – Writing Key Word Outlines (KWOs) serve as the reformatting and mentally summarizing components of the Spalding Mental Actions
* Discuss text structure: narrative, informative (expository), informative/narrative
* Identify the main idea/topic (discuss if stated or implied) find or write topic sentences

**III. Stylistic Technique: Basic Dress-Ups**

*Minimum Rule:* ***one*** *of* ***each*** *dress-up in* ***each*** *paragraph until easy or mastered. (easy +1 rule)*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **–ly Adverb**  **Basic technique:** find the verb and then tell *how* it’s being done.  ⏺ -ly adverbs usually tell ‘how’  ⏺ adverbs can describe verbs, adjective or another adverb  ⏺ they tell when, where, why, how, under what condition  **Ex:** The fox *casually* complimented the crow. | **Who/Which Clause**  **Basic technique:** find the subject of a sentence and then add a clause that begins with who/which and tells more about the subject  ⏺ clauses have verbs; phrases do not  ⏺ clauses beginning with who/which are adjectival clauses  and need verbs  **Ex.** The crow, who was flattered by the fox, sang proudly. |
| **Strong Verb**  **Basic technique:** find the verb and give a more descriptive version  ⏺ strong verbs give a strong image or feeling  ⏺ ask: “Does this verb give a clear picture of the action?”  ⏺ make sure the verb is not a banned word  **Ex:** The chicken ~~went~~ across the road.  *strutted* | **Quality Adjective**  **Basic technique:** find the subject of the sentence and add a one-word description that gives more detail  ⏺ adjectives describe nouns or pronouns  ⏺ ask: “what kind, how many, which one?”  ⏺ true adjectives are just before the noun, predicate  adjectives come after the verb  ⏺ make sure the adjective is not a banned word  **Ex:** The *mighty* king served his people well. |
| **Adverbial Clause** *(www.asia)*  *when, while, where, as, since, if, although*  **Basic technique:** find a basic subject opener sentence. Change the period to a comma and add a ***www.asia*** that gives more information.  ⏺ clauses must include a verb  ⏺ these words are prepositions if they are in a phrase,  phrases do not have verbs  ⏺ additional adverbial clause indicators such as, *whereas, unless, once,* or *after,* can be taught as differentiation  **Ex:** The tortoise continued to race *while* the hare napped. | **Because Clause** *(www.asia.b)*  **combine with***: when, while, where, as, since, if, although*  **Basic technique:** find a basic subject opener sentence. Add a clause that begins with ***because*** that gives more information.  ⏺ clauses must include a verb  ⏺ these words are prepositions if they are in a phrase,  phrases do not have verbs  ⏺ additional adverbial clause indicators such as, *whereas, unless, once,* or *after,* can be taught as differentiation  **Ex:** The tortoise won the race b*ecause the hare napped*. |

**IV. Topic/Clincher Rule and Titles**

⏺ Unit 2: The Title Clincher: The title repeats or reflects words from the final sentence.

⏺ Unit 3: The Story Clincher: The last sentence in the story, the story clincher, should make the story

feel finished. Repeat or reflect 2-3 words from the story clincher to create the title.

⏺ Unit 4: Topic-Clincher: The clincher repeats or reflects 2-3 words from the topic sentence.

**V. Stylistic Technique: Advanced Dress-Ups**

Typically introduces after students master the basic dress-ups and the sentence openers.

*Minimum Rule:* ***one*** *of* ***each*** *dress-up in the paper until easy or mastered. (easy +1 rule)*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1.** **Dual “-ly” Adverbs**  **Basic technique:** find the verb and then use two words to tell *how* it’s being done.  ⏺ -ly adverbs usually tell ‘how’  ⏺ the two adverbs must describe the same verb  ⏺ the two adverbs must have different meanings  Indicate  **Ex:** The boy *fearfully* and *desperately* screamed for the villagers help. | **2.** **Invisible Who/Which Clause**  **Basic technique:** find the subject of a sentence and then add a clause that begins with who/which and tells more about the subject, take out the who/which ensuring that the sentence still makes sense.  ⏺ clauses have verbs; phrases do not  ⏺ clauses beginning with who/which are adjectival clauses  and need verbs  ⏺ The invisible who/which is also known as an appositive  **Ex:** Mr. Shay, ~~who is~~ my soccer coach, lived in Australia. |
| **3.** **Dual Strong Verbs**  **Basic technique:** find the verb and add a conjunction and another verb that gives additional information  ⏺ strong verbs give a strong image or feeling  ⏺ the two verbs must be about the same subject  ⏺ the two verbs should have different meanings  ⏺ ask: “Does this verb give a clear picture of the action?”  ⏺ ask: What is another action that describes what the  subject is doing?  ⏺ make sure the verb is not a banned word  **Ex:** The chicken *squawked* and *strutted* across the road. | **4. Dual Quality Adjectives**  **Basic technique:** find the subject of the sentence and add two one-word descriptions that give more detail  ⏺ adjectives describe nouns or pronouns  ⏺ dual adjectives should have different meanings describing  the same noun  ⏺ ask: “what kind, how many, which one?”  ⏺ true adjectives are just before the noun, predicate  adjectives come after the verb  ⏺ make sure the adjective is not a banned word  **Ex:** The *mighty and honorable* king served his people well. |
| **5.** **Adverbial “Teeter-Totter”**  **Basic technique:** find a strong verb, add two adverbs before the verb and an adverbial clause (www.asia.b) following the verb.  ⏺ strong verbs give a strong image or feeling  ⏺ the two adverbs must describe the same verb  ⏺ the two verbs should have different meanings  ⏺ clauses must have a verb  **Ex:** The fox *secretly* and *cruelly* laughed **as** the foolish crow sang. | **6.** **Adjectival “Teeter-Totter”**  **Basic technique:** find a noun and add two adjectives before the noun and an adjectival clause (who/which) after the noun.  ⏺ adjectives give more description about a noun  ⏺ the two adjectives must describe the same noun  ⏺ the two adjectives should have different meanings  ⏺ clauses must have a verb  **Ex:** The hare scoffed at the *humble*, *lethargic* tortoise **who** had challenged him. |

**VI. Sentence Openers**

Typically introduced after students master the basic dress-ups.

*Minimum Rule:* ***one*** *of* ***each*** *in the paper until easy or mastered. Use a variety.* ***\*No more than***

***two of the same kind in a row.***

*Indicator: write the sentence opener number in the left margin on the line it appears.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ➀ **Subject**  **Basic technique:** begin with a very basic subject/verb sentence.  ⏺ One of the first few words must be the subject  ⏺ none of the other words before the subject fit any other  sentence opener rule  ⏺ always labeled with a ➀  **Ex:** The **fox** secretly and cruelly laughed as the foolish crow sang. | ➁ **Prepositional**  **Basic technique:** find a subject opener sentence and add a prepositional phrase in front of it  ⏺ the sentence begins with a prepositional phrase  ⏺ This is a phrase, not a clause - phrases do not include  verbs; clauses do.  ⏺ the prepositional phrase opener is usually followed by a  comma  ⏺ always labeled with a ➁  **Ex:** **Under his breath,** the fox secretly and cruelly laughed as the foolish crow sang. |
| ➂ **“-ly” Adverb**  **Basic technique:** find a subject opener sentence and add an –ly adverb that tells more about how the subject did the action.  ⏺ the sentence begins with an –ly adverb  ⏺ ask “How did the subject do the verb?”  ⏺ can begin with a dual adverb as an advanced technique  ⏺ always labeled with a ➂  **Ex:** **Secretly and cruelly**, the fox laughed as the foolish crow sang. | ➃ **“-ing” & “-ed”**  **Basic technique:** find a subject opener sentence and add an –ing or –ed word or phrase that beings with an –ing or –ed.  ⏺ for the –ing give an action that tells more about what the subject is doing. (Rule: the thing after the comma has to be the thing doing the ing-ing.)  **Ex:** The boy ran home after the game. “What additional action was the boy doing? Sweating  *Sweating*, the boy ran home after the game.  ⏺ for the –ed opener ask what state of being the subject is in to add the –ed.  **Ex:** The girl jumped out of her chair. “What state of being was she in to jump out of her chair?” startled  **Startled,** the girl jumped out of her chair.  **Screaming**, the girl jumped out of her chair.  ⏺ both the –ing and the –ed are always labeled with a ➃ |
| ➄ **Adverbial Clause *(www.asia.b)***  **Basic technique:** find a subject opener sentence and add an adverbial clause before it  ⏺ the sentence begins with a *www.asia.b* clause  ⏺ This is a clause, not a phrase – clauses have verbs; phrases do not  ⏺ the *www.asia.b* clause opener is usually followed by a  comma  ⏺ always labeled with a ➄  **Ex:** **While the hare napped**, the tortoise finished the race. | ➅ **VSS**  **Basic technique:** Write a sentence with only a subject and a verb  ⏺ the sentence can only contain 2-5 words  ⏺ It is typically used to break up the pattern of several long sentences in a row  ⏺ always labeled with a ➅  **Ex:** The fox laughed. The crow cried. |

**VII. Decorations**

Typically introduced after students master the basic dress-ups, sentence openers & advanced

dress-ups. Written below in the order best introduced. Can be introduced in different orders.

*Minimum Rule:* ***one*** *different decoration in* ***each*** *paragraph.* Take these slow - easy +1 rule

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ❑ **Alliteration**  3 words beginning with the same sound. Alliterations may be separated by conjunctions, articles, short pronouns or prepositions  **Basic Technique**: easiest to learn first with adjs or verbs | **Examples:**  *… big, beautiful butterflies …*  *… kind, caring and considerate …*  *…clumsily he clawed and clamored up the cliff…*  *… pleading, plotting and pretending …*  *The wild, wet, wandering dog found his way home.* |
| ❑ **Simile/Metaphor**  **simile**: compares one thing to another using *like* or *as*  **metaphor**: saying something is something else which clearly cannot be physically true | **Examples:**  simile: *She is as light as a feather.*  metaphor: *She has a heart of stone.* |
| ❑ **Personification**  Gives human attributes to things or ideas. Symbolizes an object as human or alive. | **Examples:**  *The wildcat sea swallowed the men.*  *The wind reeled with a wild fury in response to the tree’s stubbornness.* |
| ❑ **3 SSS**  Three short staccato sentences used in descending patterns  5-4-3 or 4-3-2, etc. -OR-  Even patterns 4-4-4, 3-3-3, etc. | **Examples:**  *Killer bees invaded America. Viciously they attacked. Humans suffered.*  *Bees invaded. They marauded. Humans perished.* |
| ❑ **Dramatic Opening/Closing**  A short dramatic VSS before the topic sentence, combined with another dramatic VSS after the clincher. | **Example:**  *Hungry flames engulfed the valley.* [Topic sentence. Body/Facts. Clincher.] *The farm lay in ashes.* |
| ❑ **Quotation/Conversation**  “Real life” example or quote from a text that supports an idea or conveys a strong image or feeling | **Example:**  Exploration is innate in the human spirit. “We are tormented with an everlasting itch for things remote. To sail forbidden seas, and land on barbarous coasts.” (Herman Melville) |
| ❑ **Question/Command**  Create a strong image, feeling or connection for the reader that entices them to continue reading. | **Example:**  Think back to your favorite childhood memory …  Why is it that cats always land on their feet? |

Adapted from Excellence in Writing resources