Accessible Writing Strategies

Introduction
This guide looks at some of the easy-to-use, targeted writing strategies that are built into Writing Coach instruction. In Writing Coach, each strategy is presented in an easy-to-use, highly visual format.

Three strategies are focused on in this guide: Outline for Success, Revision RADaR, and The ABCDs of On-Demand Writing. The examples are taken from Grade 7 materials, but the information can apply to any grade level.

Outline for Success
Writing Coach provides lessons and activities for each step of the writing process. During the Prewriting stage, students select a topic and begin planning for the chapter’s Feature Assignment. Then, they move on to the Drafting process.

The Outline for Success provides students with a strategy for organizing their thoughts as they write a focused, coherent first draft. This outline is customized for each writing task.

For example, the first section of the outline for a personal narrative emphasizes the importance of presenting a clearly defined focus and providing details about the writer. This differs from the outline for a compare-and-contrast essay, which begins with a focus on presenting an attention-grabbing opening and a clearly stated thesis.

For more detailed information about each bulleted suggestion in the Outline for Success, students can refer to the boxes on the right side of the page.

Within the Outline for Success, students also have an opportunity to make connections to the Mentor Text. In the Teacher’s Edition, there are references to specific lines from the Mentor Text that illustrate each section of the outline.
After students complete their first draft, they move on to the revision stage. Revision RADaR provides students with a strategy for making changes to improve their first draft. This strategy helps students master the critical phase of revising. It is important to note that students may not need to use every step within the RADaR strategy. Look to Chapter 3 of The Writing Game Plan for a detailed overview of this strategy.

Revision RADaR consists of four stages:

1. Replace
2. Add
3. Delete
4. Reorder

As students focus on the first step, Replace, they strengthen their work by replacing words that are not specific, words that are overused, and sentences that are unclear. During the next step, students look to add new information, descriptive adjectives and adverbs, and rhetorical or literary devices. Students then review their work for unrelated, unnecessary, or repeated information that they can delete from their writing.
Finally, students look for opportunities to reorder information in their writing to make sentences flow more logically. Students can refer to the Before and After models in Chapter 3 to see examples of how to apply each step.

The Revising section in each writing chapter starts with a Student Model that demonstrates how to use Revision RADaR effectively. Students begin by reading a first draft of the Student Model. Next to the draft are questions that the writer posed as she reviewed her work. Remind students that these questions are based on genre-specific characteristics provided in the Outline for Success.
Next, students analyze how the writer applied Revision RADaR to write an improved second draft.

For example, the nonfiction narrative Outline for Success reminds students to clearly state the importance of, or reasons for, the actions they describe in their essay. In the second draft, students can see that the writer added a sentence to provide further clarification. After reviewing the Student Model, students apply Revision RADaR to their own work.

The Look at the Big Picture chart in each chapter provides students with a guide as they evaluate how well their essay addresses purpose, audience, and genre.

The Section column in the Look at the Big Picture chart identifies the main parts of the genre. Be sure to remind students that these are the same sections listed in the Outline for Success. The Evaluate column in the chart identifies the characteristics found in each section and explains how to assess them. The Revise column presents specific strategies for revising each characteristic.

Finally, the Focus on Craft feature of the RADaR strategy gives students a chance to practice evaluating the student model for a targeted characteristic, such as Simple, Compound, and Complex Sentences. Students revise their own work for this characteristic in the Fine-Tune Your Draft section.
The ABCDs of On-Demand Writing

Each writing chapter ends with Writing for Assessment. This section gives students a chance to practice responding to the types of prompts they will see on standardized tests such as state assessments, the ACT, or the SAT.

After reading the prompt aloud, students review information in the Format and Academic Vocabulary boxes. These boxes call students’ attention to genre-specific characteristics that they should keep in mind as they plan their essays. Then students apply The ABCDs of On-Demand Writing as they write.

This simple, easy-to-use approach provides strategies for students to

- Attack the prompt
- Brainstorm possible answers
- Choose the order of their response
- Detect errors before turning in the draft

To support students in applying this strategy efficiently, each step includes a recommended time limit. Students begin by spending one minute attacking the prompt. First, they circle or highlight important verbs in the prompt and draw a line from each verb to what it refers to. Then they rewrite the prompt in their own words. Next, they brainstorm possible answers. This step should take about four minutes. During this step, students are encouraged to create graphic organizers to generate ideas.
Then, students spend one minute choosing the order of their response. They think about the best way to organize their ideas and number the ideas in the order that they will appear in their essay. After students write their draft, they will spend one minute rereading their work to detect errors before turning it in. Students practice applying The ABCDs of On-Demand Writing to multiple prompts working individually, with a partner, or as part of a small group.

**Review**

This guide looked at three of the accessible writing strategies that Writing Coach uses to support students in becoming better writers. The Outline for Success provides students a structure for creating a first draft. The Revision RADaR guides students in effectively revising and improving their work. The ABCDs of On-Demand Writing provides a strategy for approaching writing for assessment.

For more information, review the other Writing Coach materials on myPearsonTraining.com.