

Optimal Learning Model

Recipe for Teaching Students how to become independent thinkers and writers for each paragraph type:

Demonstration	I do, You watch	1 story
Shared Demonstration	I do, You help	2 - 3 stories
Guided Practice	You do, I help	1 - 2 stories
Independent Practice	You do, I watch	1 - 2 stories

I do one story per week, and I tend to spend several weeks using the “I do, You help” model. The way I have students progress toward independence is:

Week 1	Teacher Models (model the metacognitive strategy of thinking out loud – the questions we can ask ourselves to help our thinking for each step.) Teacher is as consistent as possible with the language so that it is reinforced through repetition, and eventually internalized by student.	Demonstration
Week 2	Teacher asks students questions (the metacognitive language) that guide them toward certain conclusions, and asks students to come up with sentences. Teacher writes student-generated sentences for whole class using the overhead projector, and students copy (for both Story Map and Paragraph)	Shared Demonstration
Week 3 (or more)	Same as Week 2 for Story Map. For paragraph, teacher helps class come up with Introductory and Concluding Sentences. Students write paragraphs on their own – using Story Map created by class.	Shared Demonstration
Week 4	Beginning and Ending boxes are done together as whole class (with the teacher’s language helping to guide the students). Students then work on events individually (checking with teacher after each event). When Story Map is complete, teacher helps class come up with Introductory and Concluding Sentences. Students write paragraphs on their own.	Shared Demonstration ↓ Guided Practice
Week 5	Students come up with their own Beginning and Ending boxes (check with teacher before going on to Events). Students work on their own Events (checking with teacher after each event). Intro and Concluding Sentences done as whole class.	Guided Practice
Week 6	Students come up with their own Introductory and Concluding sentences.	Independent Practice (used as assessment)