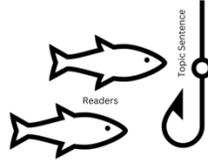


Topic Sentence Instructional Routine: Fishing Hooks



Common Core State Standard:

- CCSS.ELA.W.5.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- CCSS.ELA.W.5.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Overview

This instructional routine is a 10-15 minute lesson that uses the analogy of a fishing hook to teach students the purpose and structure of a topic sentence. In this lesson, students will learn a) the purpose of a topic sentence b) the elements of a topic sentence c) how to write a topic sentence.

Symbol Key



Explicit Instruction



Opportunities to Respond



Feedback

Sample Lesson “Reeling in the Reader”

Common Core State Standard: CCSS.ELA.W.5.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Materials

- Student copies of example paragraph with an exemplary topic sentence
- Example paragraph displayed for whole class
- Highlighter and writing materials (pencil, paper, computer, etc.)

Packing the Tackle Box

Rods, reels, and baits: (mentor sentences and paragraphs)

Example paragraph with topic sentence:

Recess is an important part of the school day because it helps kids in many ways. It gives students a break from learning so they can move around, play, and have fun. Playing outside helps kids stay healthy and strong. It also teaches them how to work together, solve problems, and make friends. After recess, kids can focus better in class and behave well because they feel refreshed. Schools that have recess help students do better in school and feel happier.

Teacher Preparation

- Select example paragraph and topic sentence
 - **Example Topic sentence:** “Recess is an important part of the day because it helps kids in many ways.”

-  Does the example topic sentence and paragraph:

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| ✓ |  Clearly demonstrate the purpose and use of a topic sentence? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hook the reader in an engaging way? • Introduce the topic of the paragraph and/or text? |
| ✓ |  Come from authentic, grade-appropriate text? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written at the appropriate grade and reading level? • Relevant to student’s lives and incorporates their background knowledge |
| ✓ |  Connect meaningfully to current learning? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align with previous and current writing instruction about different genres/styles of writing? |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| ✓ |  Contain language that students can realistically incorporate into their own writing? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentence structures that can be adapted and utilized in individual students' writing |
|---|--|--|

Step 1: Packing the Tackle Box (2-3 minutes)

Connect to Previous Learning (if applicable):

- Review previous learning that applies to current lesson
- Reference recent discussions about current lesson
- Connect to ongoing analysis in larger unit of study

Investigation Preview

-  Set the scene/Connect to students' lives:
 - "Have you ever been fishing? To catch a fish, anglers need to use tools called bait, which attract the fish to their hook. Once the fish is hooked, the angler uses their rod and line to reel the fish in."
-  Share today's focus:
 - "We are going to learn how to write topic sentences. Topic sentences are an important part of any piece of writing, because they introduce the reader to what you are writing about."
-  Explain real-world importance:
 - "Good topic sentences are like fishing hooks, because they get the reader interested in the rest of the passage. Topic sentences use things like a quote, question, or interesting statement to directly address the reader."

Activate Prior Knowledge

-  Activating Questions:
 - "What catches your attention when you see it?"
 - "Have you ever opened a book without knowing what it is about?"

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Step 2: Lead Angler Demonstration (7-8 minutes)

"Casting Your Line" Presentation

-  Present example paragraph for whole class, pass out individual copies of the paragraph to each student:
 - Recess is an important part of the school day because it helps kids in many ways. It gives students a break from learning so they can move around, play, and have fun. Playing outside helps kids stay healthy and strong. It also teaches them how to work together, solve problems, and make friends. After recess, kids can focus better in class and behave well because they feel refreshed. Schools that have recess help students do better in school and feel happier.

Lead Angler Think-Aloud

-  Model pattern analysis process:
 - “When I read that first sentence, my brain tells me that the rest of the paragraph is probably going to be about recess.”
 - “The writer used an interesting statement to hook me into reading more.”



Engagement Check

- Ask questions to check for comprehension & engage students:
 - “What was the paragraph about?”
 - “Where else have you seen topic sentences?”

Guided Learning

-  “Topic sentences typically are the first thing written in a paragraph. In our example paragraph about recess, I see that the first sentence says, “Recess is an important part of the day because it helps ways. Highlight that on your copy.”
- “Another way to write a topic sentence is to directly ask the reader a question.”
- “What are some other facts about recess that we know, either from the paragraph or your own life? Turn and talk with your table partners.”

Step 3: Partner/Group Fishing Trip (10-12 minutes)

Teacher-Guided Practice



Fishing Partners

- Pair students (or create small groups) for collaboration

- Review partnership expectations
-  Now let's try this again together. What are some other facts about recess that we know, either from the paragraph or your own life? Turn and talk with your table partners."
-  Partners/groups work together to discuss their prior background knowledge about recess.
-  "Now, each group will tell the class one thing they talked about, and I will write a list on the board."
- *Go through each group and keep a record of the groups' comments where every student can see it.*
- "We have a great list of information. How can we use this to "hook" our readers with a great introduction topic sentence? Let's practice writing an informative statement. What is an important fact about recess that we could use for this?"
- *Have students raise their hands and call on a couple volunteers. Refine, edit (as needed) and record their responses on the board for the whole class to see.*

Teacher Support

- Circulate among partners/small groups to:
 - Monitor discussions
 -  Offer feedback
 -  Provide scaffolded prompts
 - Support struggling teams

Step 4: Solo Fishing (5-7 minutes)

Independent Practice

 "Now you will practice on your own. On your own piece of paper, practice writing a topic sentence about the importance of recess. It is ok if it is like the examples we just used, because we are all writing about the same topic."



Solo Fishing

- Students independently write their own topic sentence(s) about recess in their writing notebook or on their computer.
- If students finish their topic sentence early, encourage them to compose a corresponding paragraph to their topic sentence.

Pack your Tackle Box

- Find topic sentences in examples of connected text, like in books, news articles, etc.

While students are working, make sure you are circulating or meeting with them to:

-  Ensure understanding (provide additional examples as needed)
-  Answer questions
-  Provide feedback
-  Scaffold sentence writing

Step 5: Reeling in the Fish

-  ” What did you learn today about topic sentences? What are some ways we can write them to hook our readers and introduce them to the topic?”
- “How can you use different features of topic sentences that we talked about today in future writing tasks?”

 Add the features of topic sentences to a class reference wall or individual writing notebook

Notes

The open nature of topic sentences can be difficult for students to grasp. Help students learn the key features of topic sentences by encouraging them to be creative in their “hooks” while staying on topic to the point of their paragraph. Choose topics that students are inherently interested in and have sufficient background knowledge. **Do not choose topics that are unfamiliar to students to teach topic sentences.**

Adaptations

Support

Plan for Support

- Schedule follow-up with students who are struggling
- Plan ongoing review opportunities

Supportive Structures

- Provide sentence frames for discussion and practice
- Use visual supports
- Allow think time before discussion
- Accept various forms of participation (verbal, written, gestural)