SWIM 5-Step Sequence Plan: Informative & Explanatory Writing

The purpose of the SWIM Sequence Plans is to guide instruction of the SWIM Sequence. Plans are differentiated depending on the writing level and grade band of the student. SWIM sequence plans are comprised of four sections, 1) SWIM Learning Map Assignment, 2) Evidence-based practices, 3) Universal Design for Learning (UDL) aligned instructional materials & strategies, and 4) SWIM Sequence Steps.

Section I: SWIM Learning Map Assignment

SWIM Learning Map Neighborhood	Grade Band	Writing Level
Research to Build and Present Knowledge	4–6	Conventional

SWIM Learning Map Neighborhood	Grade Band	Writing Level
Informative and Explanatory Writing	4–6	Conventional

Section II: Evidence-Based Practices

Title	Description
Formative Assessment	Formative assessment is a planned, ongoing process used by all students and teachers during learning and teaching to elicit and use evidence of student learning to improve student understanding of intended disciplinary learning outcomes and support students to become self-directed learners (CCSSO 2021).

Title	Description
Vocabulary	Tier 1 Vocabulary: Basic vocabulary (e.g., book, girl, run). Tier 2 Vocabulary: High-frequency, multiple-meaning vocabulary Tier 3 Vocabulary: Low-frequency, context-specific vocabulary
Text Comprehension Strategies	Shared reading is the interaction between an adult and a student or group of students while they read a book together. During shared reading, the goal is for the student or students to eventually direct the interaction by labeling pictures, asking questions, making comments, and directing the way that the adult navigates through the pages in the book. Shared dialogic reading involves an adult and child having a dialogue around the text they are reading. During dialogic reading, the adult asks questions to help the child explore the text and story components, increase their vocabulary, and talk about the text. Anchor-Read-Apply is an instructional approach that supports students in learning how to activate background knowledge based on prior experience or build new background knowledge that they can connect to information contained in or related to the text. Guided Reading is an instructional approach where the teacher provides prompts and feedback as students practice newly learned skills.
Graphic Organizers	A visual learning tool to help students organize their ideas, clarify or simplify complex concepts, help with problem solving or decision making, or be used to plan research or brainstorm ideas.
Self-Regulation Strategies	Self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) is an instructional approach designed to help students learn, use, and adopt the strategies used by skilled writers. It is an approach that adds the element of self-regulation to strategy instruction for writing. It encourages students to monitor, evaluate, and revise their writing, which in turn reinforces self-regulation skills and independent learning (TEAL Center).

SWIM Formative Assessment Process

Formative assessment is a process that is both planned and ongoing for each lesson. Planning requires the development of specific questions and tasks within each of the SWIM sequence steps that best meet the range of learning needs of students. Formative assessment that is ongoing is enacted while learning is occurring, not after the learning takes place (CCSSO 2023). The following strategies are provided to support the teaching and learning process between students and teachers during SWIM.

Before Each Lesson

☐ All students have a personal communication system with core and robust vocabulary.
☐ All students have access to a personalized writing tool (alternative pencil or communication device) that includes all 26 letters of the alphabet.
☐ SWIM learning goals and student success criteria are modeled and reviewed by students.
☐ Students review and communicate learning goals and success criteria.

During Each Lesson

☐ Use wait time, so that students have the time to make comments or answer questions. Collect student comments or answers as evidence of student learning.
☐ Engage students by using UDL strategies and creating opportunities for extended conversations.
☐ Provide descriptive feedback to students that reflect the student learning goals and student success criteria.

After Each Lesson

☐ Support students self-assess on how and what they learned.
☐ Check for student understanding of learning goals by reviewing success criteria.
☐ Provide descriptive feedback and extend the thinking of your students.

Section III: UDL (Universal Design for Learning) Aligned Instructional Materials & Strategies

The following example instructional materials and strategies can support educators implement UDL, a framework to improve and optimize teaching and learning within the 5 steps of the SWIM Sequence Routine.

Engagement Strategies for Recruiting Interest/Sustaining Effort & Persistence/Self-Regulation	SWIM Sequence Steps
Topic choices ☐ Familiar shared reading text ☐ Experience ☐ Experience Book ☐ Personal Experience ☐ Events ☐ Family Members ☐ Friends ☐ Other:	Step 1 & 2
☐ Student Choice	Steps 1–5

Representation **Strategies for Perception/Receptive Language/Comprehension**	SWIM Sequence Steps
<u>Varied organization strategies for information to guide information processing and multimedia usage</u> ☐ Visual, tactual, or multimedia information. ☐ Other:	Steps 1–5
<u>Text comprehension strategies to learn, communicate, and collect information about the topic</u> ☐ Shared Reading ☐ Shared Interactive Reading ☐ Guided Reading ☐ Anchor-Read-Apply ☐ Independent Reading	Step 2
<u>Vocabulary</u> ☐ Tier 1 ☐ Tier 2 ☐ Tier 3	Steps 1–5

Action and Expression Strategies for Physical Action/Expressive Communication with Fluency	SWIM Sequence Steps
Graphic Organizers ☐ KWHL ☐ Lists ☐ Notes ☐ Other:	Steps 1–3
Writing Tools ☐ Pen or Pencil ☐ Computer Keyboard ☐ Onscreen Keyboard ☐ Sentence Frame ☐ Paragraph Frame ☐ Other	Steps 4 & 5

Section IV: SWIM Sequence Steps

Step 1: Choose a Topic and Purpose of Writing

☐ Choose a topic

Brainstorm ideas, think about categories of topics, and narrow down the topic.

Questioning Strategies	Tasks & Activities
• What are things you know about? • Who are the important people in your life? • What things are important to you? • Where do you like to go? • What do you like to do? • What should we write about?	• Use think-aloud to brainstorm ideas and choose a topic. • Help students think about different categories of things to write about (e.g., favorite places to visit, friends, etc.). • Make a list of topics and read them together. • Narrow down the topic.

☐ Activate background knowledge about the topic

Learn the connections between prior experience and the topic.

Questioning Strategies	Tasks & Activities
• What do you remember? • What can you tell me? • What do you know about this? • When did you see this? • When did you do it? • Did you like it? • Did you not like it? • What does it look, sound, taste, or feel like? • What new words can we use? • How is it the same? • How is it different?	• Use think-aloud to support students recall what they know about the topic by using details to describe their experiences, people, places, things, or events. • Scribe student reflections within a graphic organizer or other outline strategy (e.g., K: What I "know" about the topic of KWHL chart).

☐ **Determine the purpose and audience for writing**

Questioning Strategies	Tasks & Activities
• Do you want to tell someone about the topic, describe it or explain something about the topic? • Who would want to read our writing? • What do they know about the topic? • What is their opinion about the topic? • What will they learn from our writing?	• Use think-aloud to help students determine the purpose for writing (e.g., give information or explain how to do something sequence, problem solution, cause and effect, compare and contrast). • Generate a list of potential audiences. • Choose the audience that best fits the writing topic.

Step 2: Learn about the Topic

☐ **Explore Topic Resources**

Explore sources of information on the topic through experiences, texts, video, photographs, illustrations or pictures.

Questioning Strategies	Tasks & Activities
• What do you want to learn about the topic? • What do we have that can help us learn about the topic? • Where can we find information about the topic? • Who can we talk to so we can learn about the topic? • What can we do to learn about the topic?	• Scribe student responses to questions in a graphic organizer or other outline strategy (e.g., W: What I want to learn about the topic within a KWHL chart). • Use think-aloud to help students know how to gather information about the topic (family members, experiences, text, video, or other digital information. • Scribe student responses into a graphic organizer or other outline strategies (e.g., H: How will I learn about the topic within a KWHL chart).

☐ **Gather Information about the Topic**

Use topic resources to meet the purpose of writing.

Questioning Strategies	Tasks & Activities
• How can we list our informational sources? • Were the informational sources we used truthful and accurate? How do we know? • What can we say about the topic? • What are some things we have learned about the topic? • Have we answered our questions about the topic? • How can we use our notes to write what we've learned in our own words? • What do we use when we write about someone else's words? • How can we use our notes to write down what we've learned about the topic? • How can we group our notes into different categories? • How can we write what we've learned in our own words? • What do we need to include in our bibliography?	• Model how to select appropriate informational sources. • Ensure students are using the appropriate level of text comprehension strategy to read and gather facts and details about the topic. • Use think-aloud to support students write about their topic. • Scribe facts and details into a graphic organizer or other outline strategies (e.g., L: What I've "learned" about the topic within a KWHL chart to create notes).

☐ **Elaborate on the purpose of the text**

Develop ideas by providing supporting details.

Questioning Strategies	Tasks & Activities
• What more can we learn and tell others about the topic?	• Encourage students to learn more about the topic. • If needed, have students revisit the information sources. • Scribe additional facts and details within the graphic organizer or outline strategy.

Step 3: Plan for Writing

☐ **Select strategies for translating communication into writing**

Choose student ideas and words that most accurately convey what was learned about the topic.

Questioning Strategies	Tasks & Activities

• What would the audience want to know about the topic?
 	
• What ideas do we want to present about the topic?
 	
• What information about the topic do we want to cover?
 	
• How do we want to express our ideas?
 	
• What should we include in our writing?
 	
• What should we leave out of our writing?
 	
• What is the main idea of our topic?
 	
• What can we say about our topic?
 	
• How can we describe these things?
 	
• What illustrations, multimedia, and graphics do we want to include in our writing?
 	
• What should we include in our writing?
 	
• What words can we use to tell what we've learned?
 	
• Are there special words about the topic?
 	
• Do we know the meaning of the words we are writing?
 	
• What does this phrase tell us about the topic?
 	
• Are there certain words we need to include?
 	
• How can we describe our topic using examples?
	• Review the graphic organizer or outline strategy used in Steps 1 & 2.
	
	• Provide students with resources to draw or provide illustrations or pictures they can include in their writing to express their ideas and plan for writing.
	
	• Use think alouds and modeling to
	
	   o select words, phrases, pictures, or illustrations that best communicate their ideas about the topic.
	
	   o decide what content will be included, what vocabulary words will be used in writing, the conventions of writing, and the order of the content to meet the purpose of writing.

☐ Set goals to meet the purpose of writing

Identify the text structure and purpose for writing.

Questioning Strategies	Tasks & Activities
• What is our topic? • What is our purpose of writing? • What does writing look like in our book? • How do our information sources organize and arrange their words, sentences, and paragraphs? • How do we start our writing? • How can we introduce the topic? • How should we write our ideas? • What details, facts, definitions, quotations, and examples should we use to write about our topic? • How many paragraphs or sections should we include in our writing? • What is the main idea of our topic? • What details, facts, definitions, quotations, and examples should we use to write about our topic? • How can we put these into groups? • How can we link our ideas within categories? • What words or phrases can we use to connect the groups together? • Why do we use quotation marks? • How can we end our writing?	• Review texts used to gather information about the topic as example mentor texts. • Discuss with the student what elements of writing in the text were good and label what made it so (e.g., word choice, illustrations, text structure, etc.). • Support students in setting goals for writing based on the purpose of writing, text structure and student learning goals.

☐ Set-up tools for writing

Use a variety of writing tools, references, or technologies to create an outline of the text for the purpose of writing.

Questioning Strategies	Tasks & Activities

• What tools can we use to meet our writing goals?
 	
• What is the best way for us to organize our ideas?
 	
• What order should we put down our ideas?
 	
• What will our writing look like?
 	
• How can we write our sentences/paragraphs?
 	
• What can we use to organize our writing?
 	
• What format should we use to help our reader understand our writing?
	• Use think alouds to
	  ○ select a graphic organizer or other writing tool aligned to the purpose of writing
	  ○ Organize the goal-related information appropriately within it (e.g., paragraph frame or graphic organizer).
	  ○ Model what content will be included, what vocabulary words and conventions of writing will be used.
	  ○ Use of classroom or personal resources to write the text.

☐Set goals for the amount and quality of information in the text

Review a writing checklist for text production.

Questioning Strategies	Tasks & Activities
• How do we write our sentences/paragraphs so that we are following the rules of writing? • How will we include topic specific words? • How will we group our facts and details into paragraphs • Where will we use our linking phrases or words? • Where will we use quotation marks? • How can we make sure our writing can be read by others? • How will we use a formal writing style? • How can we write using words and ideas that are relevant and precise? • What transitions will we use to clarify how our ideas and understanding about the topic related to one another? • How will we include graphics to help the reader understand the topic? • Does our ending come from the information or explanation we presented the body of our writing?	• Introduce a writing checklist at the appropriate level of writing conventions that are aligned to student learning goals. • Use think-alouds and writing examples to model how to use the checklist during Step 4.

Step 4: Write with a Purpose

☐ **Translate thoughts and ideas into written communication.**

Turn ideas into writing. Use a variety of writing tools, stay on topic, write using an appropriate level of writing mechanics and grammar, and self-correct to improve the text.

Questioning Strategies	Tasks & Activities
- How should we begin our writing? - How can we make sure we are staying on topic? - Do we always write about the topic or something else? - Are we following our goals for writing? - Do our sentences make sense? - Do our sentences fit into our paragraph? - Do our paragraphs fit into our sections? - Do we know when we are not following the rules of writing? - Can we find words, sentences, paragraphs, or sections that need to be fixed? - Did we fix them? - How will we end our writing?	- Review writing goals, tools or technologies used to plan for writing in Step 3. - Use think-aloud during shared interactive writing to create a common text together. - Model and support students tell about their topic through an informative and explanatory text structure. - Read the writing product together.

Step 5: Review and Evaluate for Purpose

☐ **Read the writing product together and evaluate how the purpose was met.**

Review what was written and decide if there is more to communicate about the topic.

Questioning Strategies	Tasks & Activities
• Did we write what we wanted to say? • Will our readers understand what we want to say? • Can our writing be read by others? • Can we say it better? • Do we need to say more? • Did we follow the rules of writing? • Do we need to correct our writing? • How can we share our writing with others?	• Discuss student learning goals and success criteria with students. • Read the writing together and use the review strategy. • Attribute meaning to the written product. • Provide descriptive feedback on clarity and cohesiveness and conventions of writing. • Help students decide if the reader can understand their writing. • Determine if the text matches the purpose and goals of the writing. • If additional information is needed, return to Steps 2–4 to further develop the written product.