

63RD CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Believing In Achieving

SHERATON FOUR SEASONS | KOURY CONVENTION CENTER | GREENSBORO, NC



Themed Writing With Alternative Pencils





- Bonnie Cristina, EC Teacher Lowrance Middle School, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools
- Lynda Horney, Occupational Therapist, Lake Mary, Florida



Themed Writing with Alternative Pencils is a program geared towards:

- Students who are unable to direct a writing tool (pencil, keyboard) independently.
- Students who are unable to generate text independently (word, sentence, paragraphs, etc.)
- Students who can copy or trace, but are unable to read what they have written.
- Students who mainly use symbol based instruction for academic lessons and have limited phonemic awareness skills.
- Students who have moderate to severe cognitive/language delays and a wide range of physical disabilities.

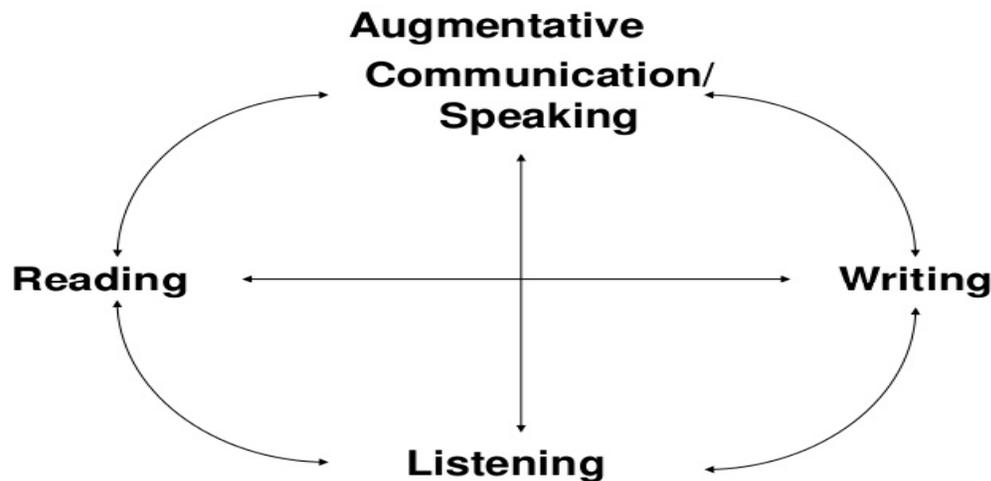


In the beginning:

- We wanted to create a symbol based writing program based on what we already knew about Emergent Literacy

(Teale & Sulzby, 1986, 1991)

- Children learn about literacy when they are actively engaged.
- Children learn about literacy through real life experiences & interactions.
- Emergent literacy behaviors are fleeting and variable depending on text, task, and environment.
- Reading, writing, speaking, listening all develop concurrently.



Oral and Written Language Development

(Koppenhaver, Coleman, Kalman & Yoder, 1991. Adapted from Teale & Sulzby, 1989)



One Pencil was not enough...

- Pixwriter
- Classroom suite
- ActiveInspire/Interactive White Board
- Word and PowerPoint
- Alternative Keyboards and Peripherals
 - Intellikeys
 - OnScreen Keyboard
 - Big Keys
 - Switch Adapted mouse
 - Swifty



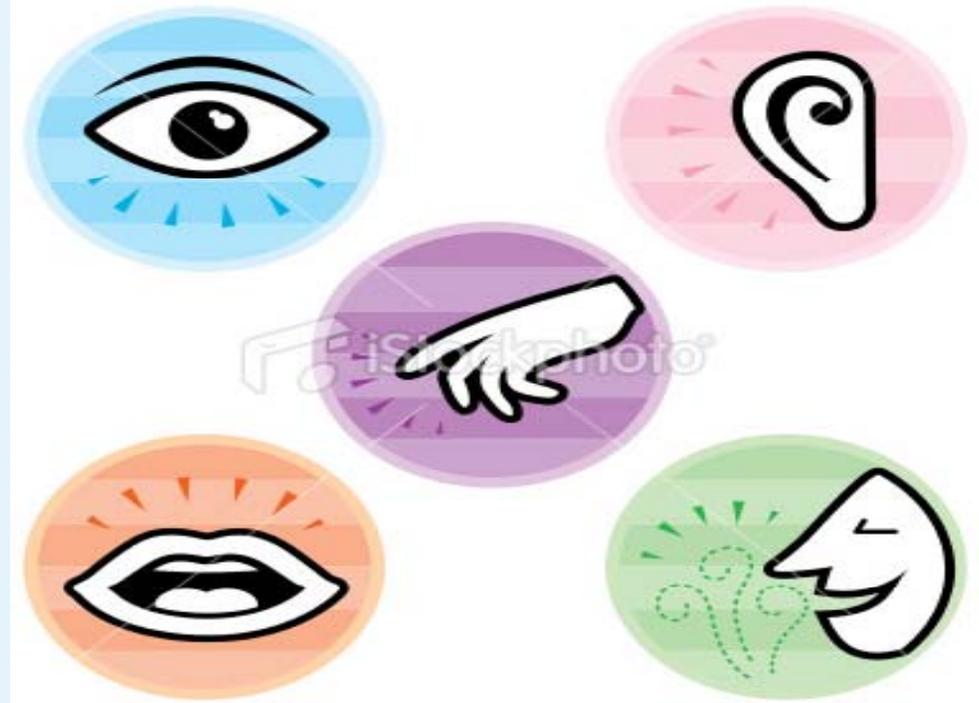
To introduce our new unit, a social story was developed to teach *Why We Write*

- To Show What We Know
- To Tell What We Think
- To Help Us Remember



To Show What We Know

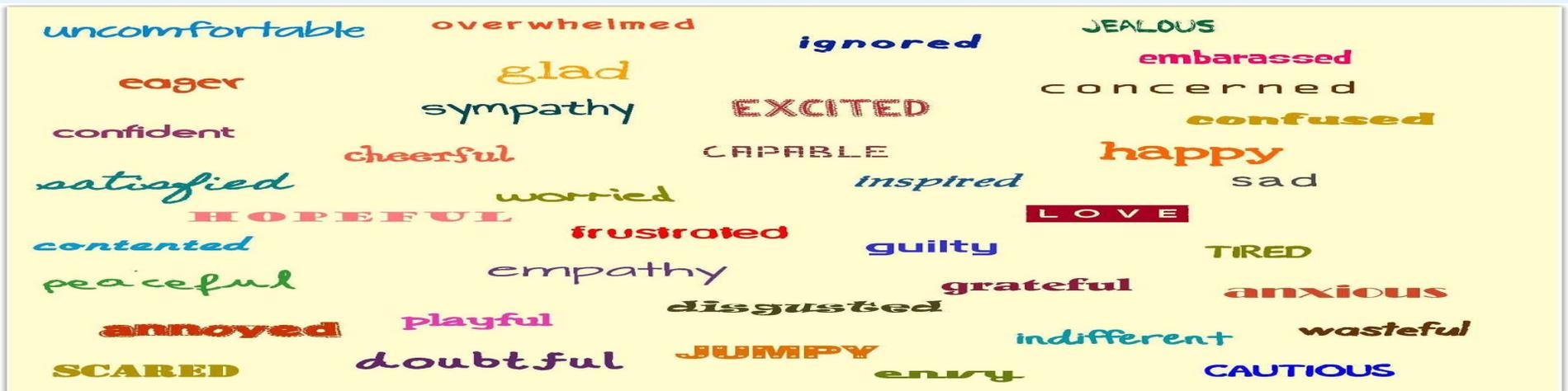
- We know things because we can
 - » See it
 - » Feel it
 - » Smell it
 - » Hear it
 - » Taste it





To Show What We Think

- We write to tell others
 - »What we like and enjoy doing
 - »What we don't like
 - »How we feel





To Help Us Remember

- This one is one of the most important concepts as we all need a little help now and then.

What is my class schedule?

What do I need to get at the grocery store?

When are all of my friends and relatives birthdays?

How do I make this recipe?

What do I pack for school?





In the End,

- Our students are engaged and excited during every Writing Wednesday lesson.
- Students are demonstrating increased independence when generating simple sentences, with meaningful text
- A variety of professionals are able to successfully collaborate to work on student's goals and objectives (OT, Speech, EC teacher)
- Most importantly, the lessons are just plain FUN!



**We would like to thank the
UNC Center for Literacy and
Disability Studies
Many of our ideas are based
upon their work.**