

1. Build Writing Skills

Teach Writing Trait: Ideas

- A. **Restate Ideas** Remind students that good writers are able to express their ideas in a clear and original way. They make sure that their writing contains a clear message and then stay on topic by using details to support their main ideas. *Today we are going to focus on making our writing clear and to the point.*
- B. **Focus on the Visual** *Where did you find the main idea in the second piece? (first sentence) Why do you think the author took out the sentence about building a sandcastle? (off-topic detail) How else did the writer improve the second piece to better express his ideas? (added detail, focused topic)*

2. Write and Analyze

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- A. **Write Texts** Students should focus on creating or revising a piece that expresses a message in a clear, original way, using important details to add support to their main idea.

Below Level	On Level	Above Level
Review students' prewriting together. Ask them to explain what their message will be and how they plan to support it with details. Tell them to start each paragraph with a clear topic sentence. Tell students to ask themselves if each new idea supports the topic. Give additional support as needed.	Suggest that students read each paragraph silently to make sure they are focused on the main message, using the topic sentence as a reference. Remind them that details should be both supportive of the main idea and interesting.	Have students read their topic sentences to a partner and exchange suggestions to help improve focus. Ask students to add good transitions for smooth flow of ideas. Encourage them to look for ways to express their ideas in unique ways.

- B. **Support Writing** When students are finished, ask:
 - *Tell me about your main idea. How did you make that idea clear in your writing?*
 - *Point out key sentences that support or explain your main idea. Are some details more important than others? Explain.*

3. Support Writing Independence

- A. **Write on My Own** In a conference, ask:
 - *What could you add or change to make your main idea even clearer?*
 - *Which supporting details make your writing different from anyone else's writing?*
- B. **Monitor Learning** Use the rubric below to assess students' writing for ideas.
- C. **Next Step** Continue providing small group support for ideas for students who score 1 or 2.

Writing Trait: Ideas

1. Little Evidence	Student's writing contains no clear message. Writing may not be organized in a logical order, and there is no clear focus on the topic sentence. Details are missing, irrelevant, or unimportant.
2. Some Evidence	Student's writing contains a vague message. Writing is generally focused and organized, and some details are relevant and support the main idea.
3. Clear Evidence	Student's writing contains a strong message, is well organized, and uses relevant details to focus on the main idea. The student shows strong signs of trying to express ideas in a clear and original way.