

# **Writing Interventions**

## Increasing Writing Fluency Performance

**Technique:** Students are often able to *tell* a story but have difficulty *writing* the story on paper. Moreover, writing for some students may be slow and awkward. With practice, however, students can learn to write their ideas on paper more rapidly. This strategy provides students with frequent practice opportunities and writing goals to work toward.

**Most Likely to Benefit:** Students who are writing below the average words per minute.

**Materials:** Story starters, writing journals, writing charts or graphs, and a timer.

**Baseline:** Assess the students using a story starter. Tell the students that they will write a story. Give the students a story starter and one minute to think about what they want to write. Set a timer for three minutes and tell the students to begin writing. Review each student's story and count the number of words that you are able to read. Hence, even misspelled words count if you can read them.

- Treatment Procedure:**
1. Set a designated time for students to write each day. For example, immediately in the morning, after recess, or after lunch.
  2. Tell the students that their journals should be on their desks but remained closed until you tell them to begin writing.
  3. Tell students that they will be writing for 10 minutes each day. (This time may be shorter for younger children. However, the time should be consistent from day to day.)
  4. Tell the students a story starter that they can use to begin thinking about a story to write about for 10 minutes.

5. Give the students one or two minutes to think about what they are going to write about.
6. Set a timer for 10 minutes and tell the students to begin writing.
7. After the 10 minutes has passed, tell the students to close their journals.
8. Tell the students to count all of the words that they have written.
9. Instruct students to write the number of words that they have written on a chart or plot the number on a graph.
10. Students enjoy trying to beat their best scores or reaching certain goals. Moreover, students can be rewarded for their progress. For example, students can earn activity time for reaching 500 words, the class earns activity time for a total of 5,000 words, or the class earns activity time if everyone meets the teacher-set goal.

**Progress  
Monitoring:**

While students are writing, check one-third of the students' charts or graphs. You should expect that students will increase the amount of words that are written over time. However, students will peak at some maximum number, depending upon how much each individual is capable of writing any amount of letters in that time. Other goals can also be attained as students improve, such as number of transitions, sentences, proper capitalization, or punctuation.

**Source:**

Moxley, R.A., Lutz, P.A., Ahlhorn, P., Boley, N., & Armstrong, L. (1995). Self-recorded word counts of free-writing in grades 1-4. *Education and Treatment of Children, 18*, 138-157.

# WRITING PERFORMANCE CHART

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Writing Time	Goal	Number of Words Written Correctly	Points Earned

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Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

### Writing Intervention



This intervention is designed to build written expression skills and increase accuracy. It requires approximately 10 minutes each day.

**Materials Needed:** Written Expression story starter worksheet, timer, and pencil.

Teacher Coach Card (Complete these steps every day):

1. Get materials.
2. Go to assigned writing area.
3. Pass out paper face down, instructing student not to turn it over until you tell him/her to do so.
4. Say, **“This is a writing assignment. Turn your paper over and you will see a story starter at the top of the page. You will be writing a story using this starter. You will have 1 minute to think about what you would like to write. Do not begin writing until I say, ‘begin.’ Are there any questions?”**
5. Set timer for 1 minute. Tell student, **“This is your think time.”** Begin timer.
6. After think time is over, explain to the student that he/she needs to work as quickly as possible, but also be very careful not to make spelling and capitalization errors.
7. Set the timer for 3 minutes. Tell the student **“Begin.”**
8. When the timer rings, say **“Stop. Put your pencil down.”**
9. **Teacher coach:** The student and teacher read paragraph together. The teacher edits the paragraph and instructs the student to make corrections on the line above the error(s). The teacher counts the number of words written and the number of errors made. Put these numbers on the appropriate line at the top of the page.
10. If student beats his previous highest score by 1 point, he/she can pick from his previously determined reward list.

## Sample Chart for Monitoring Student Progress

CHART FOR \_\_\_\_\_ IN \_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Name Subject (Math, Reading, or Writing)

### MONDAY

My best score is: \_\_\_\_\_  
My score on the timed test is: \_\_\_\_\_  
Did I beat my score? \_\_\_\_\_

### TUESDAY

My best score is: \_\_\_\_\_  
My score on the timed test is: \_\_\_\_\_  
Did I beat my score? \_\_\_\_\_

### WEDNESDAY

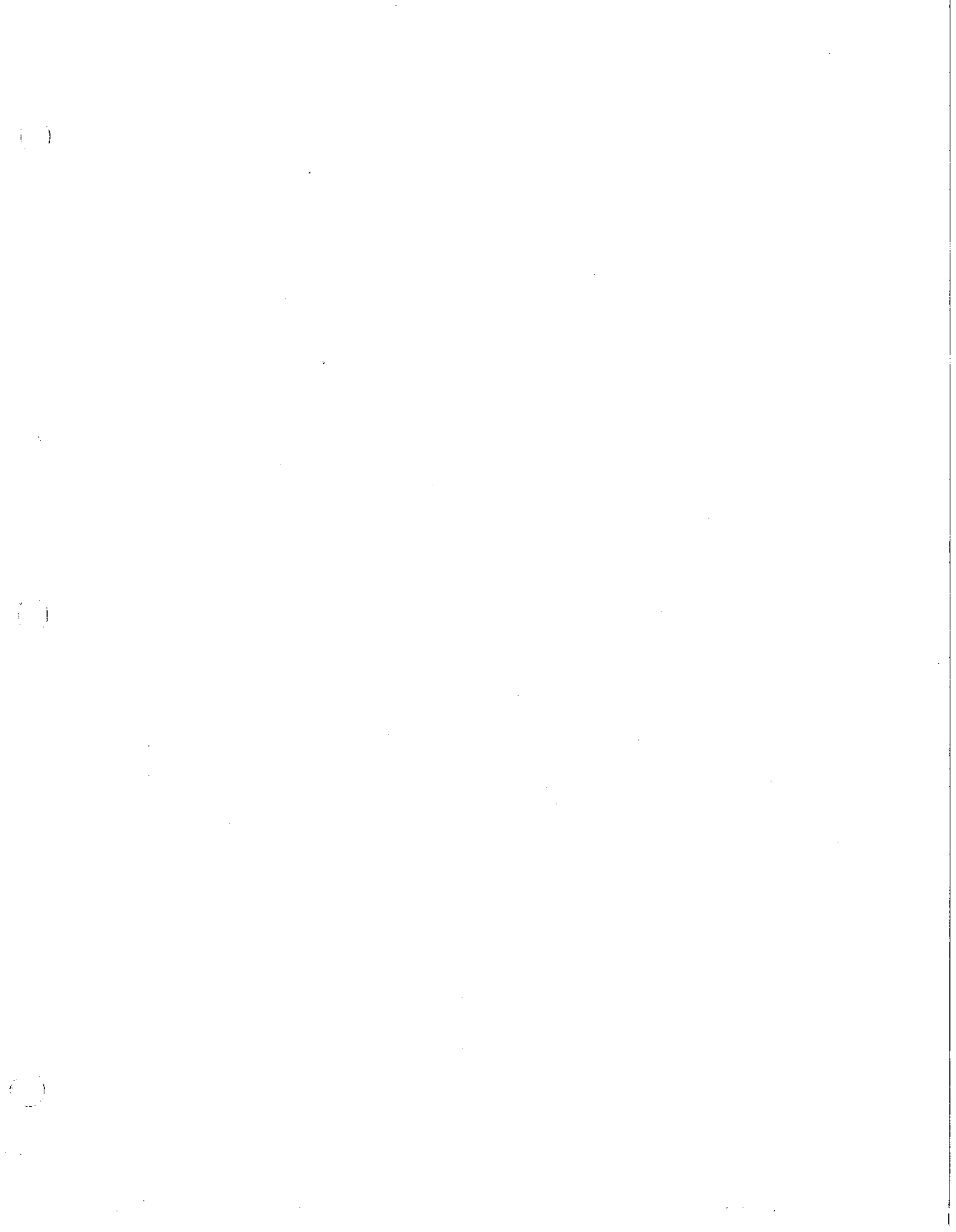
My best score is: \_\_\_\_\_  
My score on the timed test is: \_\_\_\_\_  
Did I beat my score? \_\_\_\_\_

### THURSDAY

My best score is: \_\_\_\_\_  
My score on the timed test is: \_\_\_\_\_  
Did I beat my score? \_\_\_\_\_

### FRIDAY

My best score is: \_\_\_\_\_  
My score on the timed test is: \_\_\_\_\_  
Did I beat my score? \_\_\_\_\_





## Helping the Class Improve Spelling Scores

**Technique:** Many students have difficulty studying spelling words on their own or getting extra practice at home. However, students can help each other practice their words in class for a few minutes a day. The entire class can then be rewarded for their efforts if they meet a teacher-set spelling performance goal at the end of the week.

**Most Likely to Benefit:** Students who are able to learn spelling words with some practice but need additional motivation to maintain adequate levels of spelling performance are most likely to benefit from this procedure. For example, a student may be averaging below 70% on the spelling tests but will be able to get above 70% when told she will earn a reward for accurate spelling performance. Although one student may need this additional motivation to adequately perform, this strategy promotes better spelling performance for the entire class.

**Materials:** Spelling words and a Good Job jar. Write preferred activities on slips of paper, fold the papers, and then put the papers in the Good Job jar.

**Baseline:** Both the class average and individual student progress can be monitored in this intervention. Calculate the class average for the last three end-of-the-week spelling tests. If there is a specific individual that needs to be monitored, that student's last three spelling tests scores will be his baseline performance.

**Treatment Procedure:**

1. Before introducing spelling words at the beginning of the week, inform the students that the class will be working together to earn Good Job time for spelling test scores at the end of the week. The class will earn some reward if the class is able to get 90% or better on the spelling test.

2. Brainstorm with the class on various activities or prizes that they would be willing to earn.
3. Have several students write the ideas on small pieces of paper. The students can fold the papers and put them into a Good Job jar.
4. Organize study groups or partners. Designate 5 to 10 minutes each school day for the students to work with each other to learn the spelling words.
5. During practice time, set a timer for 3 to 5 minutes.
6. One student will read the words to her partner while the partner writes the words. When the timer rings, the students switch roles. If there are students who have difficulty reading the words, use groups of three. These students can also practice the test two times before reading the words out loud to their partners.
7. The students can grade the words after the practice session.
8. Teach spelling lessons as usual throughout the week.
9. On Thursday, remind students about the Good Job reward. Pick an activity from the Good Job jar.
10. On Friday, give and grade the spelling tests.
11. Determine if the students have earned the Good Job reward. If the class did not meet the goal, encourage the students to try harder next week.

**Progress  
Monitoring:**

Each student's progress on the weekly spelling test will be evaluated. Due to the additional practice provided during class time, student's individual scores should increase. If certain students' scores are not increasing or are not within acceptable levels, these students may need additional practice. Interventions such as the Write/Say

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method can easily be implemented while the teacher continues to use this procedure for the rest of the class.

### Sources:

Delquadri, J.C., Greenwood, C.R., Stretton, K., & Hall, R.V. (1983). The peer tutoring spelling game: A classroom procedure for increasing opportunity to respond and spelling performance. *Education and Treatment of Children, 6*, 225-239.

Shapiro, E.S. & Goldberg, R. (1986). A comparison of group contingencies for increasing spelling performance among sixth-grade students. *School Psychology Review, 15*, 546-557.

# IMPROVEMENT IN SPELLING CHART

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Spelling Test	Student or Class Average	Activity Earned

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Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

### Classwide Writing Intervention for 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Students



This intervention is designed to provide daily writing practice to build fluency and improve writing quality.

**Materials Needed:** story starter/outline papers, pencils, timer, and monitoring chart for each student. Divide students into working pairs. Match high students with lower students. The first day of the intervention, teach students how to make an outline.

Steps to be conducted daily:

\_\_\_\_\_ Pass out story starter/outline papers.

\_\_\_\_\_ Write the story starter on the board.

\_\_\_\_\_ Tell students **“Copy the story starter on both sides of the paper.”**

\_\_\_\_\_ Instruct students to get into their writing pairs.

\_\_\_\_\_ Set timer for 10 minutes. Tell students, **“Begin making your outlines.”**

\_\_\_\_\_ Students can get help from their writing partners if they get stuck.

\_\_\_\_\_ Set timer for 3 minutes. Tell students, **“You will have 3 minutes to write a story. Be sure to do your best work. Does anyone have a question?”**

\_\_\_\_\_ Start the timer and tell students, **“Turn over your papers and begin writing.”**

\_\_\_\_\_ When the timer rings, tell students, **“Put your pencils down and hold your papers up in the air so I can see that you have stopped working.”**

\_\_\_\_\_ Tell students, **“Trade papers with your writing partner.”**

\_\_\_\_\_ Tell students, **“Count the number of words that your partner wrote and write this number at the top of the page.”**

\_\_\_\_\_ Tell students, **“Give papers back to their owners.”**

\_\_\_\_\_ Tell students, **“Write your score on your monitoring chart. Did you beat your score? Circle yes or no.”**

**Story Starter:** \_\_\_\_\_

**OUTLINE**

**Beginning:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Middle:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**End:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Story Starter: \_\_\_\_\_

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Did I beat my score? \_\_\_\_\_

### WEDNESDAY

My best score is: \_\_\_\_\_  
My score on the timed test is: \_\_\_\_\_  
Did I beat my score? \_\_\_\_\_

### THURSDAY

My best score is: \_\_\_\_\_  
My score on the timed test is: \_\_\_\_\_  
Did I beat my score? \_\_\_\_\_

### FRIDAY

My best score is: \_\_\_\_\_  
My score on the timed test is: \_\_\_\_\_  
Did I beat my score? \_\_\_\_\_