



Research-Based Writing Instruction  
(Grades K–12)

# Step Up to Writing<sup>®</sup>

## Step Up to Writing and the Science of Reading



VOYAGER SOPRIS  
LEARNING<sup>®</sup>

Reading and writing instruction are both informed by the science of learning and reinforce each other throughout literacy development. Just as teaching students how to read requires explicit and systematic instruction, the same is true of writing instruction. **In fact, writing is one of the most effective ways to improve reading proficiency.**

*“The body of research is substantial in both number of studies and quality of studies. There’s no question that reading and writing share a lot of real estate, they depend on a lot of the same knowledge and skills,”* said Timothy Shanahan, emeritus professor of education at the University of Illinois at Chicago.<sup>1</sup>

From learning phonemic awareness to language structure, writing can support the learner’s knowledge about how texts and narratives work, how texts can be pulled apart, and then reconstructed. **Writing helps enhance foundational reading skills as students learn how to read and write together.** K-5 students, especially, need explicit writing instruction, texts to model, access to rich content, and time to practice.<sup>2</sup>

## The Science of Reading Informs Writing and Reading Development

Many studies have underscored the importance of the reading-writing connection, finding writing instruction boosts students’ reading abilities and vice versa.

**Researchers have found five ways writing about text can facilitate reading comprehension:**

- 1 IT IS EXPLICIT.** The writer chooses which part of the text is most important.
- 2 IT IS INTEGRATIVE.** The writer must organize ideas so there is an explicit relationship between ideas.

- 3 IT SPURS REFLECTION.** Writing makes it easy to review, connect, critique, and construct new understanding of the text.
- 4 It creates PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT** with the text. The writer chooses what will be written and how it is presented.
- 5 IT IS TRANSFORMATIVE.** Transforming or manipulating the language of the text so writers put ideas into their own words, making them think about them.<sup>3</sup>





## Begin Writing Instruction Early

As soon as students begin learning phonemic awareness, they can write the letters to connect the sound to print. Experts say **students should be supported in writing almost as soon as they begin to read**. When students are learning to decode, they can also encode—“decode letters and words while they say the sounds out loud.”<sup>4</sup>

Moving beyond the word level, **students need to be explicitly guided and presented with writing models to learn how to form sentences and then paragraphs systematically**. Teaching writing strategies and skills alongside each other, reinforces both writing and reading. As their writing skills progress, the act of writing to consider and evaluate content reading helps students with reading comprehension.



**READ OUR  
WHITE PAPER:**

How Handwriting  
Supports the Science  
of Reading, to learn  
how handwriting  
is firmly linked to  
reading and spelling  
achievement.

**READ NOW →**

## Science of Research-Based Writing Instruction

*Step Up to Writing*<sup>®</sup> is a comprehensive resource of multisensory reading strategies that develop students' ability to create thoughtful well-written compositions. These strategies can be integrated into any curriculum or implemented as a standalone writing solution.

The program provides instruction to teach each phase of writing—ensuring students understand what good writing looks like; can evaluate their own writing and the writing of others; and are confident in planning, drafting, editing, revising, producing, and publishing an original composition.





# Step Up to Writing helps students understand every step of the writing process.

## THE SCIENCE OF READING SAYS

High-quality research proves the science of reading is effective in teaching all students to read and write.

Teaching students to read and write requires explicit, systematic, cumulative, and diagnostic practices.

Writing can enhance foundational reading skills and students' knowledge of how words and sentences work.

New neural pathways are created with explicit instruction and student practice.

Research shows that reading and writing draw on shared knowledge, even though they traditionally have been taught separately.

Constructing and deconstructing words is a foundational skill.

Educators must learn about the vast body of research in the science of reading to understand and inform their practice of teaching students how to read and write.

A deep understanding of skills needed to develop reading and writing and how the brain works to process written and oral language is required.

Science of reading instruction is proven to enable elementary students make the critical shift from learning to read to reading to learn.

## STEP UP TO WRITING DOES

Supports the individuality of every learner and grows literacy across content areas.

Beginning writers explicitly learn and practice each phase of the writing process becoming more adept with each phase.

Foundational skills include writing to improve reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition and use.

Classroom-proven reading and listening exercises teach students to respond to what they read in content areas through writing.

From learning phonemic awareness to language structure, writing can support students' knowledge about how texts and narratives work and be pulled apart and reconstructed.

Spelling and handwriting are linked to the ability to connect speech to print through encoding as students develop writing skills.

*Step Up to Writing* includes embedded professional development that helps support writing instruction that is multisensory, explicit, and systematic that also helps reinforce students' reading development.

Students are explicitly taught writing skills and the need to see connections between reading and writing.

Created for all students, the strategies in *Step Up to Writing* are designed to support writing instruction for all students in all content areas.

# Step Up to Writing®

## Putting the Science of Reading into Practice with *Step Up to Writing*

The science of reading recognizes the importance of including both writing and reading in literacy development. They reinforce each other. Writing instruction needs to be explicit and systematic and focused on the specific text types emphasized in state standards: **informative/explanatory, opinion/argument, and narrative writing.**

Grade-specific Unit Maps provide sequenced instructional strategies to help students improve their writing skills through differentiated instruction that ensures the needs of all students are met. As students get more accomplished in their writing, studies have shown it is helpful to teach them specifically how to plan, revise, and edit their own work. *Step Up to Writing* can be used to support any curriculum. **Based on the science of reading and evidence-based applications,** *Step Up to Writing* provides students with clear direction about what they need to reach proficient and advanced levels of skill in their writing.



**LISTEN TO THE EDVIEW360 PODCAST, THE WRITING ROPE:**

**A Framework for Evidence-Based Writing Instruction**

**LISTEN NOW →**

# Step Up to Writing®

Research-Based Writing  
Instruction (Grades K–12)

*Step Up to Writing* is a robust writing instruction solution offered by *Voyager Sopris Learning*® that can help transform your students' skills and inspire them as writers. **Here are five features of this explicit writing program:**

- ✓ It is designed for **K–12 learners of all levels** and types and is compatible with any core curriculum.
- ✓ With a balance of explicit, systematic instruction and time spent producing works in each of the text types, it **helps students understand the differences between writing styles, and hones their skills in each.**
- ✓ Students master strategies through its **multimodal instruction**, which is engaging and motivating.
- ✓ It provides **hundreds of strategies** to explicitly teach the types of writing students need to master to be proficient.
- ✓ It is an **evidence-based, unparalleled, hands-on writing program** with flexible implementation options.

Learn more at  
[voyagersopris.com/SUTW](https://voyagersopris.com/SUTW)



- 1 <https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/how-does-writing-fit-into-the-science-of-reading/2023/01>
- 2 <https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/the-science-of-reading-and-writing>
- 3 [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279741659\\_Writing\\_to\\_Read\\_A\\_Meta-Analysis\\_of\\_the\\_Impact\\_of\\_Writing\\_and\\_Writing\\_Instruction\\_on\\_Reading/link/5bf58fd3a6fdcc3a8de8aab8/download](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279741659_Writing_to_Read_A_Meta-Analysis_of_the_Impact_of_Writing_and_Writing_Instruction_on_Reading/link/5bf58fd3a6fdcc3a8de8aab8/download)
- 4 <https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/how-does-writing-fit-into-the-science-of-reading/2023/01>