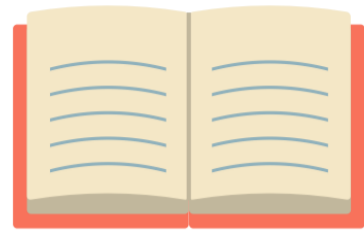


# Teaching ELLs to Deconstruct Writing

Article # 11  
Visible Literacy Series



The goal is to share a process of helping ELLs deconstruct writing to discover how different genres use language.

## Research

Learning a language is most effective when a more knowledgeable person offers guidance to the learner in a shared context (Martin and Rose, 2012).



The elements of successful language learning consists of social interactions, shared context, and scaffolding (Riddett, 2015; Hyland, 2014; Gibbons, 2009).

## The Process

### 1 Select a Mentor Text

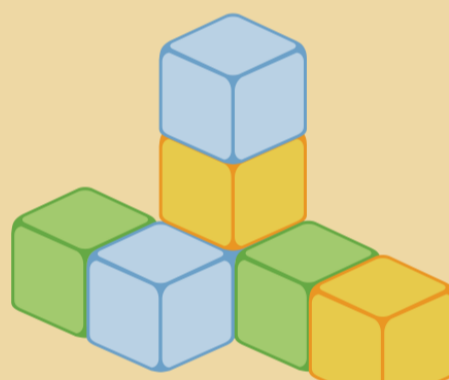
The mentor text should be in the genre that the writing prompt requests.



### 2 Deconstruct the Mentor Text

Guide students to deconstruct the writing genre by identifying the job of each paragraph.

Have ELs describe how the author communicates the meaning.



### 3 Co-Construct Text

Allow students to collaboratively construct a text that incorporates the language features identified during the deconstruction.



### 4 Student Construction

ELs compose their own text using the insights developed during the deconstruction and joint construction.



## Meta-Cognitive Reflection

4 Students reflect on the steps of composing the text. This reflection helps them internalize both the skill sets and the process learned.



## Takeaways

- Writing is an invisible task.
- Deconstructing mentor texts with ELs teaches the way language is used in different genres.
- Teaching students to think metacognitively about the writing process helps them transfer the skills to other contexts.



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Gibbons, P. (2009). English learners academic literacy and thinking: Learning in the challenge zone. Portsmouth: Heinemann.

Hyland, K. (2014). Genre and second language writing. Michigan: University of Michigan Press.

Martin, J.R., & Rose, D. (2012). Learning to write, reading to learn: Genre, knowledge and pedagogy in the sydney school. Bristol: Equinox.

Riddett, C. (2015, April 2). The Teaching Learning Cycle. Retrieved September 7, 2016.