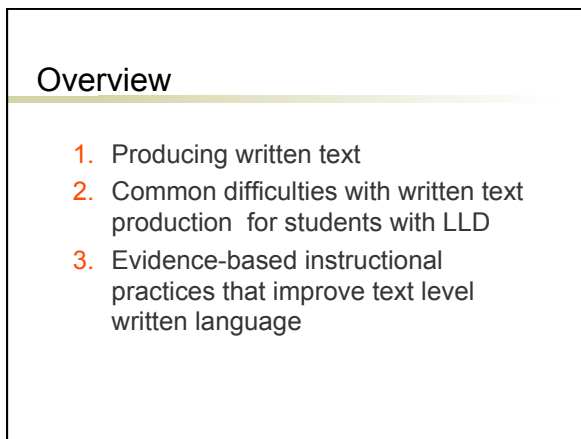


The slide features a light green horizontal bar with the title 'The Write Stuff' in a large, bold, black font. The title is enclosed in large, thin, yellow square brackets. To the left of the title, a thin yellow circle is partially visible. Below the title bar, the subtitle 'Improving the quality of students' written language' is centered in a smaller black font. In the bottom left corner, the text 'SPELD 2009' is written in a small, black font.

The Write Stuff

Improving the quality of students' written language

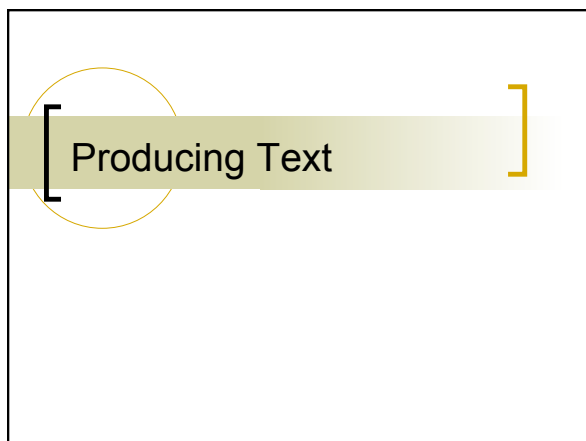
SPELD 2009



The slide has a light green horizontal bar at the top with the word 'Overview' in a bold, black font. Below this bar, a list of three items is presented, each with a red number and a black text description.

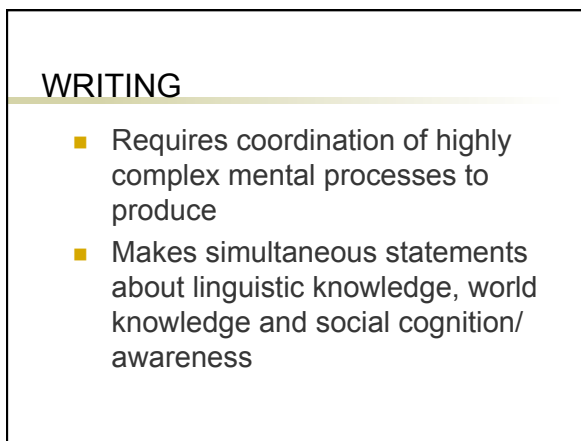
Overview

1. Producing written text
2. Common difficulties with written text production for students with LLD
3. Evidence-based instructional practices that improve text level written language



The slide features a light green horizontal bar with the title 'Producing Text' in a large, bold, black font. The title is enclosed in large, thin, yellow square brackets. To the left of the title, a thin yellow circle is partially visible.

Producing Text



The slide has a light green horizontal bar at the top with the word 'WRITING' in a bold, black font. Below this bar, two bullet points are listed, each with a yellow square bullet and a black text description.

WRITING

- Requires coordination of highly complex mental processes to produce
- Makes simultaneous statements about linguistic knowledge, world knowledge and social cognition/awareness

WRITING

- Not automatic and natural
 - Does not become effortless with practice
- However;
- Its complexity is one of its virtues; encourages/requires higher order thinking skills
 - Interpreting, evaluating, synthesising, analysing

Main issues with producing text

- *What shall I write?*
Content generation
- *How do I write it?*
Transcription and organization

Content Generation

1. Accessing what you know
2. Selecting what is relevant
3. Organising what you have selected

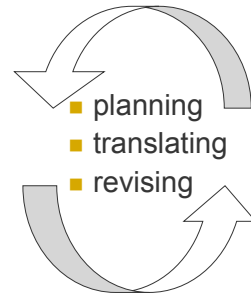
Producing Text

- ★ the ability to use **text structure** to access, organise and revise content is an important strategy for effective production and understanding of written communication

The writing process and text production

★ knowledge of the writing process is strongly correlated with text production

The Writing Process



The writing process and text production

The more students know about the different stages of the writing process and the more proficient they are in executing these stages, the better the quality of their text tends to be.

[Writing and students with LLD]

1. Knowledge of text (genre) structure

- judge texts by
 - length
 - mechanical issues
 - accuracy of information
- affects content generation because retrieval of topic information is not goal directed
- affects comprehension and production

2. Knowledge of the writing process

- one shot process
 - knowledge telling
 - believe good writing is related to form and mechanics. Rarely make substantive changes
- Resemble younger 'novice' writers*

2. Knowledge of the writing process

- fewer strategies for working through process
- poor at using taught strategies

3. Written product

- poorly organised
- less cohesive (list-like)
- irrelevant, inappropriate material for genre, topic
- use simpler syntactic constructions
- don't expand on ideas
- tend to write less

[Instructional Practices
that Improve Text Level
Written Language Skills]

[What to teach]

1. The purpose, structure
and language features of
texts

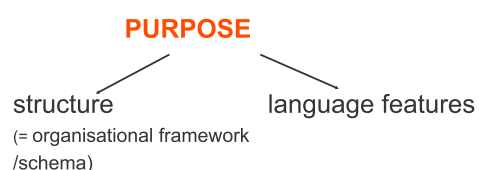
Genre

= typical ways people have come to organise or structure discourse to achieve particular purposes

= ways that people make **meaning** with one another in **stages** to achieve their **goals**

Genre

Systemic functional linguistic approach



1. The purpose, structure and language features of texts

Activities

- Looking for patterns;
 - Same genre, different topics (how and *why* are the texts similar)
 - Same topic, different genres (how and *why* are the texts different)
 - Identifying text types

1. Purpose, structure and language features

- Identifying language features
- Analysing good and flawed texts

1. Purpose, structure and language features

- Provide 'Plans of Action' for working through stages of the text;

e.g. for persuasive texts

TREE	DARE
T opic Sentence	D evelop topic sent
R easons (>3)	A dd supporting ideas
E xplain reasons	R eject arguments
E nding	E nd with a conclusion

2. Explicitly teach stages of writing process

- Provide 'Plans of Actions' for working through the whole writing process
e.g. POWER
- Provide 'Plans of Action' for working through each stage
e.g. PLANS

POWER

P lan
O rganise
W rite draft
E dit
R ewrite

Plan & Organise

1. PLANS
P ick goals (purpose of paper)
L ist ways to meet goals
A nd
make N otes
S equence notes

Plan & Organise

2. POW
P ick my ideas
O rganise my notes
W rite and say more

Write Draft

- WRITE
- W ork from your plan to develop a thesis statement
 - R emember your goals
 - I nclude transition words for each paragraph
 - T ry to use different kinds of sentences
 - E xciting, interesting million-dollar words.

Edit

1. COPS
C ontent
O rganisation
P unctuation & spelling
S entences

Edit

2. CDO
C ompare
D iagnose
O perate
3. SCAN
S does it make **S**ense?
C is it **C**onected to goal?
A can I **A**dd more?
Note errors (use COPS)

How to teach 'Plans of Action' (strategies)

1. Develop background knowledge (vocab and concepts for strategy)
2. Discuss it
3. Model it
4. Memorise it
5. Support it
6. Use it (independent performance)

* *Self-Regulated Strategy Development, Harris et al., 2009*

Teaching 'Plans of Action' (strategies)

- Adapt to individual needs and task demands
- Need to teach methodically
- Need to help transfer to new situations
- Metalinguistic and metacognitive skills involved
- Aim is for internalisation

Pros

- A tool for all writing situations
- Students think about the process, become self-directed learners

Cons

- Takes a long time for students with LLD to learn and use independently

3. Teach reading and writing together

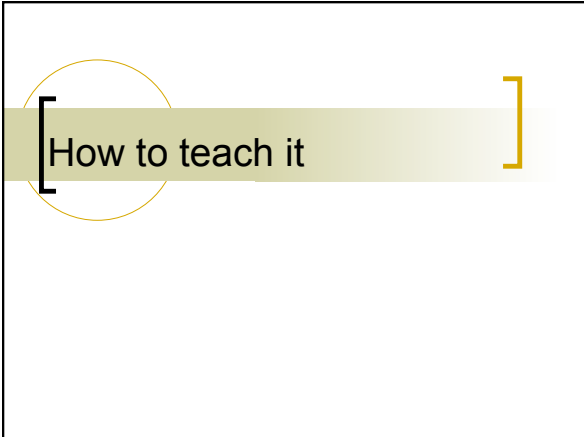
- Mechanics
- Higher level skills
e.g. teaching around text structure and language features can be used to assist reading comprehension as well as text production (e.g. text identification activities)

3. Teach reading and writing together

- Vocabulary
 - use of descriptive words, (descriptions, narratives, recounts)
 - adverbs (procedures)
 - specific, technical vocabulary (information reports)
- Grammar
 - post modifying clauses (e.g. wombats are mammals that ... (information reports, persuasive texts))

4. Explicitly teach self - monitoring skills

- Set clear and specific goals for what students are to achieve in their writing
 - e.g.
 - when editing (add three things)
 - write more words (graph results)
 - include more text elements
 - monitoring time management by graphing progress through stages of POWER
- Discuss achievements and set new goals



How to teach it

1. Teach writing often

- How much time/week spent teaching text level writing vs basic writing skills?

Students' writing gains are associated with how frequently evidence-based practices are applied (and how faithfully they are implemented)

(Kihara, Graham & Hawken, 2009)

2. Be explicit (provide supportive practice)

- Think aloud (externalise the internal)
- Model
- Joint construction
- Independent construction
- Strategy instruction

3. Be specific

- Feedback
- Goal setting
- Common vocabulary

4. Emphasize whole text production

- Develop an integrated series of lessons that traverse the entire writing process
- Writing is experienced as a whole cognitive exercise in all its complexity
 - Write in meaningful contexts but also need to learn to write to show knowledge
but also

5. Provide specific skills practice

- E.g.
- Vocabulary
 - Grammar
 - Mechanics

E.g. Writing Lessons

1. Reviewing (Quick Quiz)
 - Purpose
 - Structure
 - Language features
 - POWER

Writing Lessons

2. Teaching (subskill practice)
e.g.
 - Editing
 - Peer collaboration
 - Language features (grammar, vocabulary for the topic and genre)
3. Applying (whole text practice)
 - Working through whichever stage of the process student or class is up to in POWER

6. Manipulate demands

- Manipulate the demands on some skill areas to allow students to concentrate on one particular skill at a time

a. Mechanical demands

- Scribing, drawing
- Joint constructions
- Cloze sheets
- Sequencing cut up texts

b. Topic knowledge demands

- Familiar topic, own choice
- Provide information

c. Reading demands

- Reading level demands
 - Fact sheets (easier >>>> harder)
 - Documentaries - joint brain storming

d. Organisational demands

- Paragraph scaffolds
- Text scaffolds
- Writing process proformas
 - E.g. POWER, editing checklists

7. Meta is better

- Development of a shared language for talking about language is a specific objective of the K-6 English syllabus

7. Meta is better

K-6 Stage 1. Outcomes and Indicators

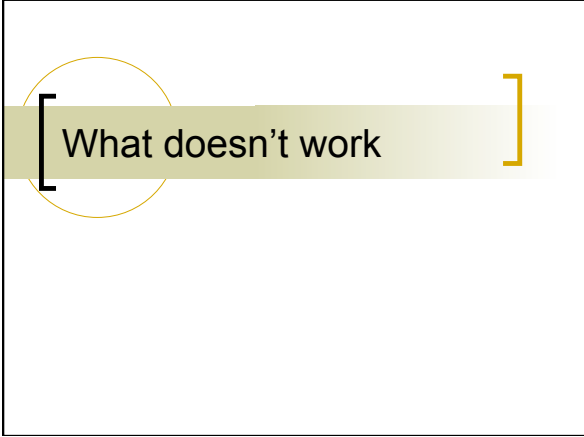
- Discusses some of the different purposes for which people write
- Recognises organisational structure of some text types
- Examines stages of a text and discusses their functions
- Talks about how own procedures have been structured and how action words have been used

8. Review, review, review

Teach

1. Frequently
2. Explicitly
3. Specifically
4. Parts and whole
5. Manipulatively
6. Metalinguistically
7. Repetitively





What doesn't work

What doesn't work

- Focus on studying parts of speech and sentence fragments
- Simple sentence combining (needs to be in context)
- Attempting to emulate good writing without explicit modeling and teaching
- Telling students to 'try' again

Martello, 2001; Baker et al., 2003