



## The Big Block Literacy Framework: Writing and Working with Words

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## Writing Goals

page 56

- Students see writing as a way of telling about things
- Students develop fluency in writing
- Students learn to use grammar and mechanics in the context of their own writing
- Students learn about specific forms of writing during focused instruction
- Struggling writers are still supported in order to maintain their motivation and self-confidence.

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## Writing Block

- 180 minutes a week  
(150 – 200 minutes)
- Keep in mind, it needs longer chunks of time
  - Time given is indicative of type of writing

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## Writing Block

Daily components include:

- Mini-lesson: 5-15 minutes of instruction
- Writing time: 20 – 40 minutes
- Sharing time: 5- 10 minutes

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## Writing Mini-lessons

- Whole group instruction
- Almost always includes you writing in front of students
- Make the writing process visible
- Gathering space – community
- Get ideas from:
  - » Curriculum
  - » Student writing
  - » Professional resources

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## Writing Handbook

page 61

- Create a section in your Big Blocks Notebook
- Students take notes at the end of the mini-lesson
- Teacher decides on what is written
- Student accountability and resource

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## Writing Handbook – Big Blocks Notebook

- Decide when to write and when to utilize the time in a different way!

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## Types of Mini-lessons

- Procedural – models expectations, procedures of the block
- Conventions – teaches the mechanics of writing
- Craft – models the craft of writing

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## Examples of Procedural Mini-lessons

- Process for distributing/collecting writing folders each day
- Expectation for the level of student voices during writing, conferencing, and sharing
- Where students can find materials for writing time

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## Writing Ideas

- Model a list of your own topics
- Share specific events or ideas
- Ideas should matter to *you*

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## Writing Ideas

- Jeff
- Merrill  
Kaye the talking trash can at Disney World  
Being chased by the wild geese  
Watching her dance her duet at competition  
The dancer
- Alex Becoming an artist – its ups and downs  
The perfectionist  
Collecting the poison ivy
- Lafe watching the elephants at the zoo on Mother's Day  
Eating bananas in Boston  
My little sugar bear
- Mother how I miss her  
Her laughing brown eyes  
Her ability to say what she meant

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## Writing Time

- Students write independently on topics of their choosing
- Organization is the key
  - Materials, storage
  - Location in roomStudents are never “finished”.  
We DO NOT publish everything

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## Teacher – Student Conferences

page 72

### Coaching – Revision - Editing

- Meet with students on a regular basis
  - Schedules or checklist, as often as possible
- Conference is short to allow as many as possible
- Encourage kids to tell you what needs work
- Find a system for recording

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## Sharing

page 81

“We write to be read.” Nancie Atwell

- Author’s chair
- Partner share
- Focused share
- Outside the classroom
- Published

– [www.arenconsulting.com](http://www.arenconsulting.com)

- Published works

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## Focused Writing

page 62

- Choose appropriate genres for your grade level/ curriculum/ state standards
- This is not writing to a story starter or prompt
- One genre per quarter
- Spend quality time modeling the genre (3-5 weeks)
- Make sure you have quality examples of that genre in your classroom

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## Using a Matrix

| Questions<br>Resources                                | When did MLK die? When<br>was he born? | What did he do to become<br>famous? | What is one interesting fact<br>about MLK? |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| Scholastic News<br>January 2001                       |  |                                     |  |
| The Story of Martin<br>Luther King, Jr.<br>(D. Adler) |  |                                     |  |
| Martin's Big Words                                    |  |                                     |  |
| I Have a Dream<br>video                               |  |                                     |  |

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## Writing From the Matrix

- The important thing about an elephant's size is that he is big. An African male can be 10 feet tall and weigh from 12,000 – 13,000 pounds. They are the largest animals on land and their skin is very thick. But the important thing about an elephant's size is that he is big.

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## Writing From the Matrix

- **B** is for big,  
the size of an elephant.  
It is the largest animal  
on land.

An African male elephant is usually around 10 feet tall and can weigh up to 12,000 pounds.

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## Focused Genre: Persuasive

page 94 - 95

- Suggested mini-lessons
- Read through the suggestions
- Use *your* curriculum to guide instructional decisions
- Extend and supplement lessons based on student need

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## Writing Mini-lesson for the Upper Grades

- Resource for mini-lessons
- Additional detailed genres for Focused Writing
  - Memoir
  - Biography
  - How To
  - Traditional Tale (Porquoi)
  - Research
  - Writing to a prompt

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## Record Keeping

- Quick Check or Status of the Class (pg 70 – 71, 97)
- Student Journal of finished pieces (pg 98)
- Anecdotal records of conferences (pg 100 – 101)

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## Working with Words

- Goal 1: to learn key words which contain the prefixes, suffixes and spelling changes necessary for decoding and spelling polysyllabic words
- Goal 2: to learn to spell common words which students may be spelling in the logical—but incorrect way
- Goal 3: To learn to develop a visual checking sense while spelling
- Goal 4: To learn to cross check meaning with word pattern knowledge

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## Working with Words

page 155

- 60 minutes a week
- Three twenty minute lessons
- Introduction of Nifty Thrifty Fifty words takes place in the first week of the month
- Introduction of the 8-10 Word Wall Words takes place in the third week of the month
- Use spare minutes here and there to practice the month's words

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## Month at a Glance

|        | Lesson 1   | Lesson 2                  | Lesson 3         |
|--------|--|---------------------------|------------------|
| Week 1 | Introduce the month's Nifty Thrifty Fifty words            | Nifty Thrifty fifty Cards | Word Sort        |
| Week 2 | Mini-WORDO with NTF words                                  | Guess the Covered Word    | Scavenger Hunt   |
| Week 3 | Introduce the month's Word Wall words (chosen from drafts) | Making Words              | Word Detectives  |
| Week 4 | Review all words on the wall (Riddles or Be A Mind Reader) | Guess the Covered Word    | Root Word Lesson |

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## Nifty Thrifty Fifty

page 195

- Month by Month Phonics for Upper Grades (Cunningham and Hall, 1998) is the best resource for the monthly introduction of these words
- New month by month books are being written
- To introduce, talk about the words, explain morphemes, have students chant the spelling and print one time

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## Nifty Thrifty Fifty

page 163

- Review activities:
  - Riddles
  - Be a Mind Reader
  - Mini-WORDO
- Extending Nifty Thrifty Fifty
  - Scavenger Hunts
  - Nifty Thrifty Fifty Cards
  - Word Sorts

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## August/September Examples

- Words to be added:  
composer discovery encouragement hopeless  
impossible musician richest unfriendly
- Riddles:
  1. Write the word that is the opposite of friendly
  2. Write the word with cover as a root word
  3. Write what you are if you have the most money

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## August/September Examples

- Words to be added:

composer    discovery    encouragement    hopeless  
impossible    musician    richest    unfriendly

- Be a Mind Reader

1. It is one of the Nifty Thrifty Fifty Words
2. It has three syllables
3. It has a suffix
4. It has three vowels
5. It means someone who writes music

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## Mini-WORDO

- Students take a Mini-WORDO card and fill in the nine Nifty Thrifty Fifty Words you have chosen
- Students determine the arrangement for their own words
- Using a marker of some kind, students cover a word that has any common part of the word called out by the teacher
- The words called out will not be NTF words, but words that are made up of the different morphemes and root words studied with the NTF.

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## Mini-WORDO

- Teacher says:  
– enrichment
- Students mark:  
– encouragement, richest
- Teacher says:  
– dispose
- Students mark:  
– discovery, composer

|               |            |            |
|---------------|------------|------------|
| hopeless      | musician   | impossible |
| discovery     | WORDO      | richest    |
| encouragement | unfriendly | composer   |

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## Nifty Thrifty Fifty Cards

### Twenty Minute Lesson

1. Write the individual chunks of index cards
2. Give students two new words to make by combining parts
3. Ask students to make one word of their own
4. Give students one neologism to make.
5. Ask students to make one word of their own

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## Nifty Thrifty Fifty Cards

un

friend

ly

hope

less

dis

cover

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## Nifty Thrifty Fifty Cards

swim

m

ing

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## Nifty Thrifty Fifty Cards

|    |       |
|----|-------|
| un | cover |
|----|-------|

|      |      |    |
|------|------|----|
| hope | less | ly |
|------|------|----|

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## Nifty Thrifty Fifty Cards

- Neologisms –  
– A newly coined phrase or word

- Colorize

Technology has its own set of neologisms

- Texted, blog, wireless

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## Neologisms

- Words to be added:

composer    discovery    encouragement    hopeless  
impossible    musician    richest    unfriendly

- Neologism to make:

– This word means to make someone your friend

|    |        |      |
|----|--------|------|
| en | friend | ment |
|----|--------|------|

– What neologism could you make?

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## Word Sorts

### Twenty Minute Lesson

- Show/provide chart with columns and labels
- Explain sample words – one should be a NTF word
- Show words to students one at a time
- Have students write each one in the chart and tell why it belongs in a certain column
- Transfer- talk about why it could help when reading/writing

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## Word Sort

| Un – prefix<br>Opposite of; not | spelling/pronunciation<br>only         | Part of word |
|---------------------------------|--|--------------|
| unfriendly                      | uncle                                  | unicorn      |
| unbutton                        | unit<br>until                          | unique       |
| unbelievable                    | unbutton<br>unbelievable<br>understand | unit         |
| uncertain                       | until<br>unless<br>unique              | universe     |
| unfamiliar                      |  | united       |
| unhealthy                       |  |              |
|                                 |  |              |

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## August/September Example

- Scavenger Hunt-
  - After you introduce the word composer, you may choose to have students look for other words that end with –er
  - Students look for examples as they read during SSR, Guided Reading, Social Studies, Science, or at home
  - They record the **word** on the chart in the classroom

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## August/September Example

Words that end with -er

winner MKA

grader MKA

other MKA

writer MKA

player MKA

locker MKA

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## Scavenger Hunt Process Twenty Minute Lesson

- Use two different colored markers to identify the root and affix of each word
- Write any spelling changes above the word
- Cross out any words the students agree is NOT an example of the prefix, suffix or spelling change
- Assign a student or two to look up any words they are not sure about

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## August/September Example

Words that end with -er

<sup>Double the n</sup>  
winner MKA

<sup>Drop the e</sup>  
grader MKA

~~other~~ MKA

<sup>Drop the e</sup>  
writer MKA

player MKA

locker MKA

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## Making Words

page 166

- Hands-on manipulative activity
- Lessons highlight patterns and how changing one letter changes the whole word
- Lessons will often sort to focus on morpheme connections
- Lessons should use a secret word connected to the content areas or to one of the morphemes introduced in a NTF word

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## Making Words – sample lesson

e e o h l l p s s y

|       |                   |                    |            |          |
|-------|-------------------|--------------------|------------|----------|
| hop   | sleepy            |                    |            |          |
| hope  | helpless          | Sort: sleep        | hope       | help     |
| hole  | hopeless          | sleepy             | hopeless   | helpless |
| pole  | hopelessly        |                    | hopelessly |          |
| pose  |                   |                    |            |          |
| hose  |                   |                    |            |          |
| shoe  |                   | Sort: hop          | hole       | hose     |
| shop  |                   |                    |            | seep     |
| help  |                   | shop               | pole       | pose     |
| seep  | Reading Transfer: |                    |            | sleep    |
| sleep | parole enclose    | Spelling Transfer: |            |          |
|       |                   | raindrop           | oversleep  |          |

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## Word Detectives

page 175

- Word Detectives encourages students to answer the questions:
  - “Do I know any other words that look and sound like this word?”
  - “Are any of these look-alike/sound-alike words related to each other?”

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## Word Detectives

- The answer to the first question should help students with pronouncing and spelling the word.
- The answer to the second question should help students discover what, if any, meaning relationships exist between this new word and others in their meaning vocabulary

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## Word Detectives

### Desegregation

Students think of:

|             |             |                |
|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| dessert     | irrigation  | multiplication |
| segregation | deserve     | migration      |
| aggravation | preparation | design         |
| segregate   | defrost     | destroy        |
| decompose   | notation    | destination    |
| decline     |             |                |

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## Word Detectives

### Desegregation

|                    |                    |                       |
|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| <u>dessert</u>     | <u>irrigation</u>  | <u>multiplication</u> |
| <u>segregation</u> |                    | <u>deserve</u>        |
|                    | <u>migration</u>   |                       |
| <u>aggravation</u> |                    | <u>preparation</u>    |
|                    | <u>design</u>      |                       |
| <u>segregate</u>   |                    | <u>defrost</u>        |
|                    | <u>destroy</u>     |                       |
| <u>decompose</u>   |                    | <u>notation</u>       |
|                    | <u>destination</u> |                       |
| <u>decline</u>     |                    |                       |

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## Words for the Word Wall

page 157

- Use your students' first draft writing to decide what words make the most sense for your Word Wall
- 300 words provided on pages 192 – 195 to compare to your student writing
- Choose 90 – 100 for your Wall
- Combined with the NTF, you will have 140 – 150 words TOTAL

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## Word Wall

page 159

- Introduce each word giving explanation for its placement on the word wall

Example: said

\*This is not a hard word, but many people misspell it because it does not look like it sounds. Long ago, it was pronounced to rhyme with raid and braid. But the pronunciation has changed. You'll just have to remember what it looks like.

- Students chant the words in a rhythmic manner
- Students print the word one time with careful attention to its spelling
- Students repeat the process with each of the four or five words
- Students check the words
- When time, review words already on the wall

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## Word Wall Review Activities

page 160

- Review Activities
  - Riddles
  - Be a Mind Reader

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## Guess the Covered Word

page 181

- Encourages students to use a combination of structure cues, semantic cues, and visual cues
- Direct connection to reading
- May be used to preview a text, review vocabulary or concepts, or focus on one part of speech

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## Guess the Covered Word

- Cover the same part of speech in each sentence
- Use as a way to introduce vocabulary at the beginning of units of study
- Use as a way to review vocabulary at the end of units of study

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## What Looks Right

page 179

- Focuses on patterns that spell the same sound
  - ail and ale      or      ite and ight
- Helps students use two important monitoring strategies –
  - Does it look like a word I've seen?
  - Can I find it in the dictionary to check?

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## What Looks Right

- Teacher's list

- Student's Paper

|                        |                 |               |              |
|------------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|
| J <u>a</u> ne          | rain            | J <u>a</u> ne | rain         |
| mane                   | main            | mane          | main         |
| ob <u>o</u> ne         | obtain          |               | obtain       |
| re <u>r</u> ane        | remain          |               | remain       |
| prof <u>a</u> ne       | pro <u>o</u> in | profane       |              |
| scatter <u>e</u> brane | scatterbrain    |               | scatterbrain |

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## What Looks Right

- To share the What Looks Right Lesson with 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade:
  - Fourth grade does first lesson each month, and fifth grade does second (beginning in Nov.)
- Page 189 in Working with Words Supplement
  - Supply of extra polysyllabic words for extending the What Looks Right Lessons in the Month by Month book

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## Working with Words

- Goal 1: to learn key words which contain the prefixes, suffixes and spelling changes necessary for decoding and spelling polysyllabic words
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