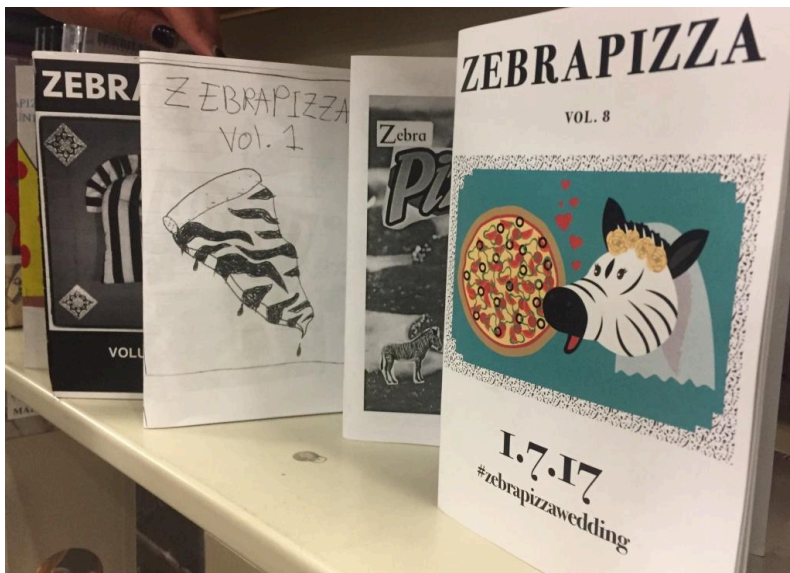


A Zine Scene Writing Club: Engaging Early Elementary Children in Fun, Fluent Writing with Support from Middle Grade Mentors

Dyslexic Positive Library Programming in Support of Developing Readers & Writers, Dyslexic Positive Libraries Initiative

Overview & Rationale:

Children ages 7-9 are acquiring literacy skills rapidly. They are learning to read and spell phonetic words that follow specific syllable types, have simple suffix and words that are not spelled how we expect them to be. Mastering these skills is critical to unlocking the code of meaningful reading and accurate, fluent writing.



Pizzajono. 2017. [Zines from the Long Beach Public Library](#). CC BY-SA 4.0

This is easy to use, customizable ready-to-go programming for **A Zine Scene Writing Club**. It is designed specifically to support library workers who seek to engage children ages 7- 9 in actively learning, applying and routinely practicing early elementary literacy skills with guidance and lots of positivity. Refer to the Language & Literacy Terms to support your instructional work with children and youth within this document.

Goal: Engage early elementary children in free-flow writing independently or collaboratively on topics of their choice to support developing writing fluency skills, including sentence structure, mechanics, grammar, spelling, editing, theme, voice and author's message.

Simultaneously, library workers may choose to engage middle grades youth as small group mentors. With explicit support guidelines and ongoing guidance, middle grade youth can serve as joyful, industrious mentors who benefit from positive social engagement and purposeful generosity.

Group Format:

Developing readers and writers need routine opportunities to practice their growing literacy skills with the help of encouraging and positive correction and editing support in a safe, fun environment with the choice of an independent or collaborative experience with peers. It is recommended 2–3 younger students per middle grade mentor, supervision by one youth library worker per 15 youths.

Meeting Frequency:

Once per week

Duration:

6 to 8 Weeks (45-60 minutes per session)

Space requirements:

Tables with chairs in a portion of the library where children and youth can talk, move around, work sitting on chairs, standing or on the floor.

Materials:

Writing folders, zine templates, markers, stickers, glue / glue sticks, scissors, lined and unlined paper, pencils, pens, colored pencils, colored pens, computer, computer printer. Dictionaries, thesaurus access and online or print access to etymological dictionaries / reference books. Zine starter templates.

Final outcome:

- Children / youth feel empowered to share their creativity through written communication. They experience the opportunity to review and practice reading, spelling and writing skills in a welcoming, accepting, socially/emotionally safe environment with the help of knowledgeable library workers and inspiring middle grades volunteers.

- Children / youth authored zines published and cataloged in their local library to share and inspire other patrons.
- Library workers share enthusiastic support for children's literacy learning, actively engaging in sharing English language skills for accurate reading, spelling, structured writing and writing practice.



Weekly routine:

Begin every Zine Scene Writing Club meet with a greeting that includes each child's / youth's name and check-in.

Eg. Hi, Zoey!

How are you doing - show with a thumb up, thumb in the middle or thumb down. Repeat with each writer, youth volunteers, and library workers.

Hello. CC0 1.0 Universal Deed

- Identify focus for time spent together writing independently or collaboratively to the group of children and youth.
- Identify the materials, and teach how to use specific components, tools as needed.

Engage the whole group in completing one MadLibs word-fill in activity for a fun, engaging way to learn grammar skills at the beginning of every **Zine Scene Writing Club** meeting.

Week-by-Week Programming

Week 1: Launch Day – What's a Zine?

Objective: Understand zines & build excitement.

Activities: Establish routines, introduce Zines

- Whole group MadLib.
- Greeting and Icebreakers led by library workers.
- Identify ways to take turns using materials. Mentors show and tell with sample zines.
- Manage setting up and breaking down the writing space, set out, manage and clean up supplies

- Decorate cover of blank zine booklets

Library Worker / Mentor Roles: Help children grades brainstorm topics and guide zine cover creation

- Support writers to create sentences that have initial uppercase letters, a mark of punctuation.
- A proper noun is the name of a person, place or thing.

Note: Refer to the Language & Literacy Terms to support your instructional work with children and youth within this document.

Week 2: Writing from the Heart

Objective: Express personal interests

Activities:

- Review what a sentence needs to be a sentence - First letter in first word upper case, an end mark of punctuation. Proper nouns.
- **Teach** accurate spelling for closed syllable words with short vowels that have *no tricks* accurately and fluently, model key words: pet, frog, thrush, split, bend, slant
- *Topic stations* (Pets, Dream Day, Favorite Snack, Wild Ideas) Begin writing short entries or drawing with captions

Library Worker / Mentor Role: Engage children and youth in foundational and practical writing experiences with encouragement and kindness .

- Prompt, model writing on paper or computer screen left to right and top to bottom, identify margins and title line and explain use, assist with spelling words with and explicitly focus on ensuring children are spelling closed syllable words with one or more consonants before or following a short vowel sound accurately (eg. plan, must, crept, throb).
 - “What’s the word you want to spell?”
 - “How many parts do you hear”
 - “Let’s sound it out, part by part”
 - “What does the word mean?”
- Make digital or poster size paper chart to record every creative topic idea generated by all of the children and youth. Keep this poster to take out and reference at every meeting to support writer idea generation at every meeting, add new ideas as they come up.

Note: Refer to the Language & Literacy Terms to support your instructional work with children and youth within this document.

Week 3: Storytelling Magic

Objective: Create a personal narrative.

Activities:

- Review sentence structure, punctuation and proper nouns, CVC, CCV and VCC spelling patterns
- **Teach** nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. Make a paper or digital chart with columns entitled Nouns, Adjectives, Verbs, Adverbs. Define each and write examples in the appropriately labelled columns. Ask children and youth to add their ideas. Keep this chart to continue adding words as ideas are generated over upcoming meetings.
- Use story graphic organizers (Beginning, Middle, End) Draw and write a comic or 3-panel story (insert link to visual or provide a visual in following)

Library Worker / Mentor Role: Engage children to understand and use time and consequence sequencing in their zines

- Guide writers to understand present and past tense, and explain how -ed and -ing endings change when an action happens.

Note: Refer to the Language & Literacy Terms to support your instructional work with children and youth within this document.

Week 4: Opinion Power

Objective: Write an opinion Zine on a topic of choice.

Activities:

- Review sentence structure, punctuation and proper nouns, CVC, CCV and VCC spelling patterns, and review nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. Make a paper or digital chart with columns entitled Nouns, Adjectives, Verbs, Adverbs.
- **Teach** action and consequence, and if / then writing statements to support children / you expressing their opinions on a topic with examples and evidence of their thinking. Help them explain their thinking with logic and rationale.
- **Teach** What are Contractions? Contractions originate from two separate words that are joined when letters are omitted and an apostrophe is added in their place. Contractions are

commonly used in oral language, and commonly used narrative dialogue and potentially opinion writing.

- Make digital or poster size paper chart to complete children's / youth's responses to "I Think, I Feel, I Believe"
- Add drawings or reasons to support opinion in each Zine

Library Worker / Mentor Role: Ask clarifying questions, help with structure

- Make a list of as many common and tricky-to-spell words that everyone can think of and notice the variety of irregular spellings.
- Make digital or poster size paper chart to record every common tricky-to-spell words and a second digital or poster size paper chart to record commonly used contractions generated by all of the children and youth. Keep these posters to take out and reference at every meeting to support writer access to accurate spelling for non-phonetic words.

Note: Refer to the Language & Literacy Terms to support your instructional work with children and youth within this document.

Week 5: Mini How-To or Informational Page

Objective: Teach readers something!

Activities:

- Review previously taught skills by posting the charts created over each session, and referring to each. Solicit responses, offer new key words and applications of each skill. This is a time children and youth may choose to share if they like.
- **Teach** transition words, including: because, next, when, then, now, before to support children and youth writing an instructional guide about a process or experience they are familiar with.
- **Teach** using symbols to engage children and youth to guide readers of the instructional zines through a diagram, and step them through a process. Symbols include, arrows, bullet points, talking bubbles, thinking bubbles, the hyphen, the ellipses
- Write step-by-step instructions or write 3 facts on a related topic to teach the reader something
- Decorate with labeled diagrams

Library Worker / Mentor Role: Help organize ideas and check for clarity of children and youth's topics and writing on their subjects of interest.

- Review: Ask clarifying questions, help with structure
- Make a digital or poster size paper chart list of transition words to be used in writing.
- Make digital or poster size paper chart to record symbols that can be used to get readers' attention and guide them through a diagram or process. Keep these posters to take out and reference at every meeting to support writer access to accurate spelling for non-phonetic words.
- Support revisions, encourage details in writing and diagrams, help with connecting letter sounds to accurate spelling patterns with encouragement and kindness.

Week 6: Throw A *Zine Scene* Writing Club Author's Publishing Party!

Objective: Revising, Assembly & Publishing

Activities:

Review previously taught skills by posting the charts created over each session, and referring to each. Solicit responses, offer new key words and example applications of each skill. This is a time children and youth may choose to share if they like.

Teach peer review with a checklist. See a peer review checklist option within this document.

- Finalize each zine using feedback from the peer editing process.
- Finalize drawings, speech bubbles, captions

Library Worker / Mentor Role:

- Support peer to peer editing process and each child / youth in the final revision process.
- Guide page layout and finishing touches each child / youth chooses to make to their Zine(s)
- Assemble final zine: staple/glue pages in order, create a title page and "About the Author" page
- Encourage confidence, welcome children / youth to share aloud one of their published zines and assist with public reading (consider welcoming caregivers, family members)
- Display each zine for a gallery walk. Consider cataloging each zine for regular library check out by peers and other patrons!
- Offer certificates or badges to each author for ***Zine Scene* Writing Club** completion!

- A child and youth friendly reflection sheet or survey to complete their experience with the programming so library workers can learn and make improvements for the next **Zine Scene Writing Club** series of meetings.

Credit

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English Language & Literacy Terms: Supporting Library Workers to Become Skilled Literacy Allies

Language and literacy terms are used to identify and map sounds with letter patterns. This supports developing orthographic and phonological skills for reading and spelling.

Learning and understanding how the following foundational language and literacy terms are applied will support library workers to develop inclusive and engaging programming, work side-by-side with developing readers and writers ages 0-adult.

Letter

A **letter** in the English language has a letter-name and a letter-sound.

Vowel

A **vowel** is a speech sound where the flow of air is not obstructed by the opening or closing of the throat, nose, tongue, teeth or roof of the mouth.

Consonant

A **consonant** is a speech sound where the air flow is partially or completely obstructed by a movement within the throat or nose or having to do with the lips or tongue.

Unvoiced / Voiced Consonant Pair

A unvoiced / voiced **consonant pair** is a pair of letter sound-symbols that differ in sound production just enough to produce a contrasting sound from one another with the same mouthfeel.

- they are: p/b, c/k/g, f/v, t/d, s/z

Short Vowel Sound

A **short vowel sound** is the sound of a vowel when it is followed by a consonant (other than r, h, w, y). A short vowel sound does not say the name of the vowel.

Long Vowel Sound

A **long vowel sound** typically is the same sound as the name of the letter.

Consonant Digraph

A **consonant digraph** is two consonant letters side by side that make one sound

- eg. ch chin, wh whip, th then or path, sh shop or swish, -ck chick

Consonant Blend

A **consonant blend** is two or more consonant letters in a letter pattern where each individual sound is heard.

The consonant vowel codes look like this: CCV, VCC or CCV

- initial blends: r-blends
 - eg. drip, trust l-blends eg. black, class s-blends eg. smell, prism, slip
- final blends: xt, ct, nt, ft, pt, nd, ld, lm, rd, sm, st, nk, ng
 - eg. text, act, want, loft, wept, swept, prism, weld, sand, told, bird, gust, wing, thank, film

Syllable

A **Syllable** is a word or part of a word with one vowel sound.

Syllable Type

A **Syllable Type** indicates a predictable code helping readers and writers know what sound to expect the vowel will make.

Closed Syllable

Closed syllable is a **VC** syllable containing a single vowel letter, ending in one or more consonants. The vowel has a short sound

- example: bag, net, chip, smug, toss
- **V-consonant-e** is a **VCe** syllable that contains a vowel followed by a consonant and a silent e. The vowel has a long sound
 - ★ example: plane, eve, fire, confuse
- **Open syllable** is a **V** syllable that ends with one vowel which has a long vowel sound
 - ★ example: my, we, so, tulip, ivy, emit
- **R-controlled vowel** is a **RC** syllable where the letter r changes the sound of the vowel
 - ★ example: car, fir, hurt, for, her
- **Vowel team** is a **VV** syllable that has a long vowel (eg. ee, ea, ai, ay, oa, oe) sound or makes an entirely new sound (oi, oy, ue, ew, oo, ou, au, aw).

- **V-consonant-le** is a **V-cle** syllable that ends with a -cle after the vowel

★ example: table, bubble, rabble-rouser

A **compound word** is a word made up of two or more whole words. Each word is spelled as though it is independent.

- example: dishpan, tailgate, penpal, tablecloth

Syllable Division or Syllabication

Syllable Division or **Syllabication** is how to divide multisyllabic words into syllables to read and write.

- VCCV - closed syllable
★ example: tennis, impact, confuse, rapture
- VCCCV - closed syllable
★ example: plankton, lobster, contract
- V/CV - open syllable combinations
★ example: tiger, nylon, humor, futile, Nolan
- CV/C - closed syllable combinations
★ example: lemon, camel
- -Cle - consonant -le syllables
★ example: kibble, boggle, muddle

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Peer Review Checklist for Young Authors

Check your peer's writing step by step

Use your ears, eyes, brain, and kind words!

Step 1: Read and Look

 What to Do:

- Read the story or article from start to finish.
- Look at all the pictures, diagrams, and captions.

 Ask Yourself:

- Do I understand what this is about?
- Do the pictures and captions match the words?

 Offer a **Visual Tip** to add / include in the illustration.

Step 2: Start with a Compliment

 What to Do:

- Tell your partner one thing you **liked** about their writing or drawing.

 Examples:

- "I liked your picture of the volcano erupting!"
- "Your beginning really made me want to keep reading!"

 Offer a **Visual Tip** to add / include in the illustration.

Step 3: Check the Main Idea

 What to Do:

- Find the **main idea** of the writing.

💬 Ask Yourself:

- What is this mostly about?
- Is it a story (fiction) or facts (nonfiction)?

📷 Offer a **Visual Tip** to add / include in the illustration.

🔴 Step 4: Check for Structure

📖 What to Do:

- Check the order: **Beginning - Middle - End** for stories.
- Check **Headings, Facts, and a Closing** for nonfiction.

💬 Ask Yourself:

- Is it easy to follow?
- Did they forget anything?

📷 Offer a **Visual Tip** to add / include in the illustration.


🟪 Step 5: Look for Spelling and Punctuation

🔤 What to Do:


- Look for capital letters, periods, and question marks. If some are missing, point that out kindly.
- Look for tricky words they might have mis-spelled and point them out kindly.

💬 Ask Yourself:


- Are there capital letters at the start of sentences and names?
- Are there punctuation marks at the end?

 Offer a **Visual Tip** to add / include in the illustration.

Step 6: Give One Helpful Suggestion

 What to Do:

- Tell your partner **one thing** they can **add** or **improve**.

 Examples:

- “Maybe you could add more to the ending.”
- “You could label your diagram.”

 Offer a **Visual Tip** to add / include in the illustration.

Step 8: Say “Great Job!”

 What to Do:

- End with a smile and kind words!
- Tell them 3 things about their writing that you liked, again!

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