

The 8 Day Planner

New to Writer’s Workshop? Need help getting started? This 8-Day Planner uses a prewriting strategy to take the students through the entire writing process in 8 days. The goal of this 8-Day Planner is to acquaint students with what Writer’s Workshop will involve. However, it is important to enforce that true Writer’s Workshop is an ongoing process with many steps taking more than one day to complete. The 8-Day Planner is just an example of what each step of the Writing Process looks like.

Note: *Focus more on the content* than the number of days this planner takes. For larger class sizes or more intensive students, you may need more than 8 days. For smaller class sizes or advanced students, you may need less than 8 days.

Teacher Prep before beginning Writer’s Workshop:

Get 7 sheets of large poster paper. On each poster paper put one of the six steps in the writing process (prewriting, drafting, sharing, revising, editing, publishing) and on the 7th poster put “Writing Rules.” Laminate these posters so they can be used year after year; then choose a wall to hang them on. As you go through each stage over the next 8 days, the class will fill in the chart using a dry erase marker.

Student Prep before beginning Writer’s Workshop:

Decide what notebooks/folders you want students to use. For example, you may want students to have a Writer’s Notebook (used for drafts) and a Writing Folder (used to keep drafts that are going through the writing process). In addition, you may want a filing system for students to put published pieces of work. This would serve as a student portfolio that would be added to throughout the year. Portfolios are great resources to show growth as well as allowing the students to write self-reflections to their finished work.

Keep in mind that you should MODEL what you expect your students to do before asking them to do it.

	Activity/Lesson
Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell the students they will be doing Writer’s Workshop this year. If they have done Writer’s Workshop in the past, some things may be the same, but some may also be different.• Point out the writing posters you hung up on the wall. Tell the students these are the 6 steps of the writing process and you’ll be visiting each one over the next several days.• Next, go to the “Writing Rules” poster and decide what these rules will be for the year. Feel free to utilize a cooperative learning strategy here.• Finally, students will make a Topic T-Chart with their “likes” and “dislikes.” This chart can go on a single bright colored sheet of paper, in the back of their Writer’s Notebook, or wherever you see fit. Explain to students the difference between a “topic” and a “main idea.” A topic is what the piece is mostly about, while the main idea is the one most important thing you want your audience to know about.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give students the remaining class time to work on their Topic T-Chart. Of course, you're modeling this before you ask the students to do it.
<p style="text-align: center;">Day 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students get out their Topic T-Chart from yesterday. Explain that this is a resource they can come back to all year to get ideas to write about. Give them a few minutes to choose one they'd like to write about first. When they decide, have them circle that topic. • Next, go to the "Prewriting" poster. Break down the word into "pre" and "writing" and discuss what it means. The conclusion should be "everything you do before writing" - then put that on the chart. Discuss how the Topic T-Chart is one type of prewriting, and add that to the chart as well. Next, have the students get out their Writer's Notebook. Discuss and model where the spiral edge, holes, and margin should be. Never assume students know. • Introduce the Draw-Label-Caption prewriting strategy. In this strategy, students draw a picture representing their topic, label different parts of the picture, and write a short caption underneath. A D-L-C focuses on ideas like a camera: it shows us some important things that you will concentrate on in your story. At this point, talk about what belongs in the picture: it has to be something they really did, something they can really remember, and they have to be in the picture because this is a story about them. Then, do a quick pencil sketch — rough shapes and lines only, no shading or coloring, stick people are just fine. And that's all you'll probably have time for.
<p style="text-align: center;">Day 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students get back out their D-L-C and discuss what you did yesterday in Writer's Workshop. Review of the previous day is a good way to start Writer's Workshop each day. This will help you and the students. • Next comes the "labeling" part of D-L-C. This is quick and easy. Students will use "sound spelling" to label. Teach them this poem (even useful to have on a poster hanging up in the room) "Say it slowly. Hold the sound. Find the letter. Write it down." This is an excellent strategy that students can utilize instead of always raising their hand asking, "How do you spell..." • Point out on your paper (because you are always modeling) how to label. Draw a line with an arrow to an object. By the line write what that object is called. Students need to label every single thing in their picture. This is the connection from words to sentences and can be used in any grade level. Give students time to label their picture. • Then discuss what a caption is - using comics or pictures in the newspaper. Tell them this will be one sentence that tells what they are doing in the picture. • Write one sentence about your picture, but purposely leave out details and some grammar mistakes to use in the steps ahead. Give the students time to complete their caption for their picture. • Add Draw-Label-Caption to the prewriting poster. Explain that normally D-L-C will only be used during prewriting, but for the next few days you are going to use it as an example to go through the entire writing process. • Finally, get the "drafting" poster and discuss how writing their caption was an example of how you draft. Depending on your grade level will depend on what drafting really means. For primary grades, the caption (one sentence) may be a good example of a draft. However, in upper elementary grades this would not be the case. Your students may end up using 5 D-L-C for main events in their story.

	<p>THEN create paragraphs about each D-L-C as their “draft.” Write what drafting means on the poster.</p>
Day 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Today get out the “Sharing” and “Revising” poster. Show students your D-L-C and ask them if anyone has a question about your sentence. Of course, they do! Take two questions. This is an example of sharing, so add a definition to your poster. Tell them having peers ask questions will help add detail and clarification to your sentences. Show them how to use a “caret” to add detail to your sentence based on the questions you answered. Reread your sentence with revisions and discuss how much better it sounds. This is an example of revising, so add a definition to your poster. • Next, teach sharing procedures. Predetermine a place in the room where students can go to share. Cover things like where to sit/stand, how to hold their notebook, what kind of voice to use, etc. Also teach good audience skills - eyes and attention on speaker, ears open, mouths off, etc. Add all of these things you come up with to the “Sharing” poster. • Finally, students will get to come up one at a time with their D-L-C. The student will read their sentence and ask for two questions only. Based on the two questions his/her peers ask, the student will go back to their seat and “revise” by adding in detail from the questions. Continue to go through as many students as time allows. You’ll finish the rest tomorrow.
Day 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review what you learned yesterday. Finish having students come up one at a time to “share” their sentence, then return to their seat to “revise” based on the questions asked.
Day 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get out the “Editing” poster. For the first time, keep it simple. • Discuss with students that editing means, “fixing it” and add this to the poster. Focusing on complete sentences is the main focus for beginning editing (capital letter, no words left out, makes sense, punctuation, etc.) Add these non-negotiables to the “Editing” poster. • Each student will edit his/her own paper while you go over each non-negotiable editing your paper. Once you’ve went over each one, take time to let students peer edit. However, discuss ahead of time the expectations for peer editing.
Day 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get out the “Publishing” poster today. Show the students some books, magazines, and/or newspapers. Tell the students everything they did over the last 6 days had to be done before publishing their work. On the poster, write how publishing is the “final copy.” You may also want to share that “publish” is derived from the word “public.” They are getting their writing ready for the public to view. • Next, go over any criteria you need to share before publishing - things like: where to get paper, skip lines or don’t skip lines, neat work, copy things exactly the way they are in the draft, etc. If students find a change they need to go back to the revising process. • Finally, students will get a piece of paper to publish their D-L-C. Remember you are only using D-L-C as an example to go through the writing process. Students will not need to do this when they use D-L-C solely as a prewriting strategy. Students will need to publish their D-L-C, complete with labels, a colored illustration of the same sketch, and their complete sentence.
Day 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the six steps of the writing process, using the posters. To see how much really sunk in you will have the students choose a new topic and do another D-L-C

	like you just did the past 7 days, but this time on their own. CONGRATULATIONS - you have just helped your students go through the writing process.
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As you continue Writer's Workshop, students will refer back to the processes you set up the last 8 days. A simple workshop format is a mini lesson (5-10 minutes), independent writing time (30-45 minutes) - you are conferencing during this time as well as peers conferencing, and students simply share an excerpt of their writing (5-10 minutes).