

STEP UP TO WRITING PARENT GUIDE

Step Up to Writing is an organizational program that teaches explicit writing strategies within the writing process (pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, final copy, proofreading, sharing) to help students organize their thinking and their writing. It is used primarily for informational, expository writing.

The Fox Point - Bayside School District has been using Step Up to Writing for the past 5 years in grades 1 through 8. Through this program, our students have learned to organize and write in a logical order, expand and support their statements, and write cohesive multi-paragraph pieces, even at an early age.

Students learn some key strategies in the Step Up to Writing Program:

- How to write effective topic sentences using Power Statements and Occasion/Position Statements.
- How to write strong “Accordion” paragraphs
- How to write strong topic and concluding sentences
- How to make transitions between ideas
- How to write comparison sentences

Power (number) Statements: contain a number in the topic sentence to help to focus the writer and reader on the information to follow. Helpful number words include:

Using Power Words in a Topic Sentence

Rules For Using Power Or Number Words In A Topic Sentence

1. A power or number statement can be long or short.
2. A power or number sentence contains a number word.
3. The number or power word tells the reader that the writer will present a certain amount of information.

Example Topic Sentences that Use Power or Number Words

1. In the winter, I enjoy doing a variety of winter activities.
2. The new orchestra students learned two ways to improve their playing.

Two	A few	Numerous
Plenty of	Three	Some
A number of	Four	Many
A myriad	A couple	Several
Various		

Occasion/Position Statements: a complex two-part sentence with the **Occasion** (subject/reason for writing) and **Position** (what you plan to prove or explain). For example, I have lived in several states; however, there is only one I would call home.

Occasion/Position Statements usually begin with one of these words or phrases:

After	As soon as	Even though	Though	Where
Although	Because	If	Unless	Wherever
As	Before	In order that	Until	Whether
As if	Even	In order to	When	While
As long as	Even if	Since	Whenever	So that

Accordion Paragraphs: use color to define the paragraph components and structure

- Blue = Title/ Interesting Information
- Green = Topic Sentence/ Concluding Sentence
- Yellow = Reason, Detail, or Fact
- Red = Explanation, Example, Elaboration

Using these components, students “build” paragraphs in a variety of configurations. The most basic is:

Blue: Title

Green: Topic Sentence

Yellow:

Red:

Red:

Yellow:

Red:

Red:

Green: Concluding Sentence

Young students utilize colored paper strips as they begin the process.

Transition words: are used in the accordion method to let the writer/reader know that a new reason, detail, or fact (Yellow) is being introduced.

Transition Words

1st Supporting Word	2nd Supporting Word	3rd Supporting Word
First,	Second,	Third,
First,	Another,	Next,
First,	Along with	Likewise,
First,	In addition,	Equally important,
First,	Also,	Finally,
First,	After,	Last,
The first	The second	The third
To begin,	Next,	Last,
To start,	After that,	The last step
First of all,	Also,	Next,
First of all,	Second of all,	Third of all,
First of all,	The next	Another
First of all,	In addition,	Finally,
First of all,	Besides,	In addition,
It started when	As a result,	Therefore,
One way	Another way	A third way
One way	Another way	A final method
At first,	After	Finally,
At the beginning,	Following this,	Finally,
In the beginning,	Afterward,	Eventually,
To begin,	Then,	To conclude,
In the first place,	After that	At last,
For example,	Also,	All in all,
One example	Another example	The last example
The most important	Another important	The final important

COMPARISON TOPIC SENTENCES

The Topic Sentence must have a Comparison word (blue) and a Power or Number word (green) in it

Comparison Words (blue)

similarities similarity compare the same
in common resemble like alike

Power or Number Words (green)

Plenty of	Three	Some
A number of	Four	Many
Two	A few	Numerous
Various	A couple	Several
A myriad		

Examples of Power or Number Word Topic Sentences

Use a comparison word (blue) and a power or number word (green)

1. Pioneer and modern schools have **three** main **similarities**.
2. Pioneer and modern schools can be **compared** in **three** ways.
3. Pioneer and modern schools are **alike** in **three** ways.
4. Pioneer and modern schools have **three** **like** characteristics.
5. Pioneer and modern schools have **three** characteristics **in common**.
6. Pioneer and modern schools **resemble** each other in **three** ways.

The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Comparison Sentences must begin with a transition.

Each explanation sentence should NOT begin a transition word.

COMPARISON CONCLUDING SENTENCES

The Concluding Sentence must begin with an Occasion / Position Word and have a Comparison word (blue) in it

EXAMPLES OF OCCASION / POSITION CONCLUDING SENTENCES

Use an occasion/position word and a comparison word (blue).

1. As I learned about pioneer schools, I could tell how **similar** they are to modern schools.
2. **When** you compare pioneer schools with modern schools, you can see
3. **Even though** both pioneer and modern schools educate children differently, they have some things in common.
4. **As long as** students are educated, we will always see that school systems **resemble** each other in some ways.
5. **After** studying pioneer and modern schools, I see how many **similarities** they have between them.
6. **While** both pioneer and modern schools have things that differ, they certainly have a variety of things in common.

Occasion / Position Words to Use in Concluding Sentences

After	As soon as	Even though	Though	Where
Although	Because	If	Unless	Wherever
As	Before	In order that	Until	Whether
As if	Even	Since	When	While
As long as	Even if	So that	Whenever	

Methods to Use in Concluding Sentences

- Summarize** Summarize information
In fact, soccer is a great sport for boys and girls.
- Encourage** Encourage your reader to take action
When someone does something wrong, we should speak up.
- Convince** Try once more to convince the reader of your position.
Honestly, bicyclists should wear helmets.
- Challenge** Challenge your reader to think.
Everything you hear about a product may not be true; stop and think about the product before you waste your money.