

Next Generation Writing at the Secondary Level for Students With Learning Disabilities

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James was an eighth grade middle school student who did not enjoy writing. Similar to many students across the country, James's writing activities were increasing across subject areas in response to the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Although his special education teacher, Ms. Felix, found him to be very creative and interested in technology, she was unsure about the new standards. James was diagnosed with a language-based learning disability (LD) and had individualized education program goals for writing. Ms. Felix was concerned about how she would be able to support his writing for the new CCSS. She also recognized that writing expectations would increase for James as he transitioned to high school, where he would be expected to communicate his knowledge in written form more often and at a deeper level in response to the new standards. Ms. Felix was encouraged by James's enthusiasm for technology, so she decided to seek evidence-based practices of writing instruction merged with technology to support James's ability to meet the CCSS for writing in science and ease his transition to high school.

Common Core State Standards and Writing

With the implementation of the new CCSS, all students, including those with LD, will have increased expectations in English Language Arts (ELA) and content area literacy. Most classroom teachers are aware that the ELA standards span from kindergarten through Grade 12. However, both general and special education teachers need to be aware that these standards apply not only to English but also to content area subjects, such as social studies and science. This application across content areas could help provide synergy for the learning of students with disabilities impacted in ELA, but may require special education teachers to provide additional support for students with reading, writing, and language-based disabilities in other content areas. The writers of the CCSS clearly articulate reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language expectations for students to be ready to succeed in college, workforce training programs, and careers (Common Core State Standards Initiative [CCSSI], 2010b). How these standards will impact classrooms and teacher practice is yet to be determined. For additional

information about the CCSS, see <http://www.corestandards.org/>.

At the secondary level, this shift in the teaching of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language in response to the CCSS is intended to create a shared responsibility across content areas and hence teachers. Special education teachers who work across an array of teachers at the secondary level should be aware that although designers of the standards recommend splitting instructional time equally between fiction and nonfiction, they acknowledge that the ELA classroom must focus on literature as well as literary nonfiction. As a result, secondary teachers in other classes will be responsible for increasing the amount of informational reading. Classroom teachers will want to find out more information about the shifts in the CCSS by visiting <http://www.achievethecore.org/>.

This focus on informational text will also encourage teachers at all levels to increase their use of primary source documents, which in turn could result in more challenging reading in the classroom. One area of struggle special education teachers should be aware of is that the CCSS emphasize that students need to be able to "analyze, eval-

uate, and differentiate primary and secondary sources” and “gain knowledge from challenging text” (CCSSI, 2010b, p. 60). Students who struggle with text in general should know the difference between primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are documents that were created at the same time as the events which they describe (for example, an American Civil War soldier writes a letter home to his wife), while secondary sources are documents written at a later point in time (for example, a historian describes the American Civil War in a summary for a textbook). Teachers might use very basic examples to help students understand the differences. For example, the Declaration of Independence is a primary source text, whereas a textbook with a chapter about the Declaration of Independence is a secondary source. These types of concrete discussions need to occur at the elementary level so that students are prepared across the content areas for the challenges of both identifying and using primary sources across content areas at the secondary level. In addition, with the increased attention on informational texts, students’ ability to read, analyze, and write about primary source documents also will increase. Because students with LD characteristically experience challenges reading complex text, they will need different types as well as different levels of support in ELA as the shifts in the CCSS occur across grades and content areas.

Teachers who work with students with disabilities should know that the CCSS are aligned with the framework of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (National Assessment Governing Board, 2011), specifically in the area of writing. The National Assessment of Educational Progress standards emphasize that students should be able to write to persuade, explain, or convey real or imagined experiences. The standards were designed with the intent that “the overwhelming focus of writing throughout high school should be on arguments and informative/explanatory texts,” a shift from the current practice of writ-



ing narrative text in schools (CCSSI, 2010b, p. 5). By the 12th grade, students should be able to “introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, rea-

sons, and evidence” to meet ELA standards (CCSSI, 2010b, p. 45). How this level of writing instruction occurs across and within each content area is something for special education teachers to consider as they collaborate with their general education peers.

Keep in mind that those states using the CCSS will require content

area teachers, ELA teachers, and special education teachers to be responsible for incorporating increased writing instruction into their lessons so that students, including those with LD in writing, get increased exposure to writing tasks. As a classroom teacher working with students with disabilities, keep these three main shifts in mind related to ELA and literacy instruction. Students with LD in writing need to be able to (1) build knowledge through content-rich nonfiction; (2) read, write, and speak grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational; and (3) have regular practice with complex text and its aca-

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demically language (Student Achievement Partners, 2012). Students will also be expected to write using evidence grounded in complex primary and secondary source text, rather than from prior experience, which could have implications for students with reading disabilities as well. For science and technical subjects, by 12th grade students will be expected to “cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts, attending to important distinctions the author makes and to any gaps or inconsistencies in the account” (CCSSI, 2010b, p. 62). Hence, as the standards spiral to more complex tasks, support accommodations and potential modifications are areas that secondary special education teachers should consider across content areas, not just ELA courses.

Although the CCSS provide clear expectations of what students should be able to do, they do not mandate how teachers should approach instruction, with the intent of enabling local school districts and teachers to use their expertise to select tools and knowledge that will support students’ achievement. Although the new expectations for learning could create challenges for students with disabilities,

including those with LD, students such as James and his teacher Ms. Felix can be supported in the writing process by blending high-quality instruction with current tools and technologies. A clear understanding of the needs of students with LD in writing is essential when aligning instructional supports to the new expectations of CCSS.

The Writing Process and Students With LD

As known by both special and general education teachers in language arts, writing is a complex task and one of the major areas impacted by language impairments (National Joint Committee

on Learning Disabilities, 1990). Students with LD struggle with the demands placed on them when writing. Difficulties can range from lower order mechanical problems such as handwriting and typing to higher order cognitive and metacognitive problems such as using writing strategies (Englert & Thomas, 1987; Graham & Harris, 2009; Newcomer & Barenbaum, 1991; Wong, Butler, Ficzer, & Kuperis, 1996). For students such as James to successfully compose written text, Ms. Felix should look for successful strategies to coordinate the four aspects of the writing process: writing skills, knowledge of writing, strategic behavior, and motivation for writing (Graham & Harris, 2009).

Writing Skills

Ms. Felix knows that transcription skills, such as handwriting and typing, have an essential role in developing writing abilities (Graham & Harris, 2009). Research has shown that handwriting and spelling skills account for about 40% of the overall essay quality (Graham, Berninger, Abbott, Abbott, & Whitaker, 1997). Yet, writing students such as James might try to eliminate the necessity to transcribe by using

speech-to-text generators. MacArthur and Graham (1987) found that students with LD produce qualitatively better text using such tools. Speech-to-text can also help because it takes away one level of complexity in that students no longer have to switch attention between content generation and mechanical concerns, which may cause writers to lose ideas in working memory (Graham & Harris, 2009). Also, students have been found to typically place undue emphasis on the form of their writing (e.g., penmanship, spelling) over their structure and writing processes (Graham, MacArthur, & Schwartz, 1995). Wong and colleagues (1996) found that students with LD believe that good essays are those without spelling errors. In addition, Graham et al. (1995) found that 70% of revisions made by students with LD were surface level in nature, with only 16% impacting overall meaning.

Supporting Skills for Writing

Ms. Felix reminds herself that when James writes about content, handwriting can cause challenges. Therefore, she chooses to use a speech-to-text generator to ensure some of the cognitive demands of transcription are easier and allow James to focus on the act of generating content for his essays, rather than handwriting. Ms. Felix also is encouraging James to try to use one of many mobile apps she has identified that might help with his writing using mobile devices such as an iPhone, iPad, or Android. Programs that support writing skills include (a) Dragon Dictation, a voice recognition mobile app that allows the student to circumvent the keyboard by speaking and immediately generating the text (Nuance Communications, 2013); (b) ListNote Speech/Text Notepad, a note-taking and organizational app that also includes a speech-to-text feature (Khymaera, 2013); and (c) Evernote, an organizational app for note-taking, photos, to-do lists, and voice recording, with a searchable feature for notes (Evernote, 2013). Ms. Felix works with James to pick an option that works best for him related to his writing.

Table 1. Examples of Cognitive Strategies for Writing

Informational and Argumentative Essays ^a	Argumentative Essays ^b	Overall Writing Processes ^c
P - Pick my ideas O - Organize my notes W - Write and say more	S - Suspend judgment T - Take a side O - Organize ideas P - Plan more as you write	P - Planning O - Organizing W - Writing E - Editing R - Revising
T - Topic sentence R - Reasons (3 or more) E - Explain reasons E - Ending	D - Develop topic sentence A - Add supporting ideas R - Reject argument for other side E - End with a conclusion	

^aHarris, Graham, & Mason, 2002. ^bDe La Paz, 1999. ^cEnglert, Raphael, Anderson, Anthony, & Stevens, 1991.

Knowledge of Writing

Ms. Felix knows that in order to compose effective essays, students are required to have knowledge of content and of text structures related to genres of writing (Englert & Thomas, 1987; Scribner, 1997). She realizes that students must not only know about the topic but also know how to organize their writing for the purpose of the writing task. Text can be organized into expository (informational), persuasive (argumentative), and compare/contrast formats, and these formats are alike across the content areas. Helping students understand when to use each type of writing and strategy is a role that special educators should think about as they work across the general education content areas related to the CCSS.

Supporting Knowledge of Writing

The CCSS emphasize students' ability to use evidence from text. For students with language- or reading-based LD, complex text may present a barrier. For students with issues in this area, Ms. Felix might choose to use various screen reader applications. The National Center on Accessible Instructional Materials provides resources for a variety of software applications to read text (see http://aim.cast.org/learn/e-resources/software-based/screenreaders_tts) and the National Archives provides a rich source of primary source documents supported by secondary source digital text which teachers can use to create a varied learning environment (<http://www>

.archives.gov/education/lessons/) to better understand complex text. Students may read a primary source document, such as Alexander Graham Bell's Patent for the Telephone, or listen to text that has been transformed to audio, and then see reproductions of the original documents during class discussion. Using screen readers can help students have the depth of experience with text which can have a great impact on their written work.

Strategic Behavior

Once students have a way to produce writing and the knowledge of content to put pen to paper, many students such as James struggle with the strategic behavior needed to produce a coherent and quality piece of writing. When planning, skilled writers generally create and revisit goals for writing. In contrast, writers with LD tend to jump directly into the writing phase, spending less than 1 minute planning (MacArthur & Graham, 1987); they generally write shorter essays with fewer words (Englert & Thomas, 1987; Graham et al., 1995). They revise infrequently, leading to writing that is poor in both quantity and quality (Schumaker & Deshler, 2009). Ms. Felix knows that her students with LD tend to focus on mechanics rather than overall quality and often overemphasize penmanship, spelling, and grammar when approaching revising (Graham et al., 1995).

One way to address the overwhelming yet critical need for discipline and structure in the writing process is to

use *cognitive strategy instruction*, also referred to as explicit strategy instruction. This strategy supports the complex, cognitive processes of writing and has been effective with a variety of ages and disability types, including students with LD. Many mnemonic devices to help students remember strategies for planning and writing have been developed, such as POW + TREE (Harris, Graham, & Mason, 2002), STOP + DARE (De La Paz, 1999), and POWER (Englert, Raphael, Anderson, Anthony, & Stevens, 1991). Table 1 provides examples of cognitive strategy instruction techniques Ms. Felix is considering trying in her classroom.

Supporting Strategic Behavior

Ms. Felix knows that students with LD not only need to learn and memorize strategies for writing but also need to master self-regulation of the strategies in order to write effectively (Graham & Harris, 1989). Self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) provides a framework for writers to learn and regulate a newly acquired writing strategy. The process of using SRSD is comprised of six phases that incorporate research-based practices in a variety of areas (Harris, Graham, & Mason, 2003). The SRSD framework consists of the following components which can be used with any writing strategy, such as those listed in Table 1:

- Develop background and knowledge for strategy.

Table 2. Summary of Writing Process for Students With LD

Writing Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handwriting and typing can cause challenges for students with LD. • Speech-to-text generators ease demands of handwriting or typing.
Knowledge for Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students need to know the content as well as text structures. • Structures for text include expository (informational), persuasive, and compare/contrast.
Strategic Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with LD generally spend less than 1 min planning. • Revision of spelling and handwriting is overemphasized, instead of revising content and improving overall quality.
Motivation for Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with LD are generally more negative than their peers about writing. • Students with LD may be overconfident about their writing skills, which can be frustrating when scores do not match expectations.

Note. LD = learning disability.

- Discuss the purpose and benefits of the strategy.
- Model the strategy.
- Memorize the strategy (steps using mnemonics).
- Support the strategy with teacher or scaffolding in which assistance is provided and then gradually reduced as students memorize strategy and use it on their own.
- Provide independent practice.

Students learn how to regulate their use of the strategy by focusing on setting goals for their writing and learning how to keep self-talk positive. Strategies in Table 1 can be selected and taught based on the type of writing task needed. These strategies address the types of writing students are expected to produce with the new CCSS across content areas. In the classroom, argumentation essays can be written using the STOP + DARE strategy, expository essays can be written using the POW + TREE strategy, and narrative essays can be written using the POWER strategy. Using this array of strategies Ms. Felix can meet the needs of James across different types

of writing and across an array of content areas.

Motivation for Writing

One of the biggest issues related to writing is the one that stands in the way of even the most effective writers, that is, the basic skill of being self-motivated to write. Motivation for writing is a significant component of the process, and students with LD are generally more negative about writing than peers without disabilities (Graham & Harris, 2009). However, many students with LD perceive that they write as well as their peers without LD. Although this overconfidence may seem beneficial for self-esteem of students with LD, it may actually result in frustration when writing scores are lower than expected. This mismatch between performance and expectation can lead to more negative feelings about writing (Graham & Harris, 2009; Harris et al., 2003). Special education teachers such as Ms. Felix need to keep this overconfidence and lack of motivation at the forefront in the writing process at all grade levels.

Supporting Motivation for Writing
 Helping students improve their motivation to write can be accomplished in a number of ways. Providing choice is one method of increasing engagement in tasks (Kern, Bambara, & Fogt, 2002). Positive reinforcement of desired behaviors is a well-established method for increasing the frequency of an academic behavior and applies to writing when students self-reinforce to achieve writing goals (Atkeson & Forehand, 1979; Harris et al., 2003). Dieker and Hines (2014) suggest the following self-determination activities for writing in the secondary inclusive classroom: (a) students identify their own successful strategies for writing, (b) students share strategies with a partner, (c) students develop a list of the most successful strategies, and (d) students create a mnemonic device to aid in the memorization of writing tips. See Table 2 for four aspects of the writing process.

Application of CCSS to Students With LD

The CCSS identify three areas of support for students with disabilities, including students with LD: (a) instructional supports for learning based on the principles of Universal Design for Learning, (b) instructional accommodations, and (c) assistive technology devices and services (CCSSI, 2010a). Special education teachers such as Ms. Felix can coordinate the varying levels of support needed to help students with LD be prepared to write for college and career by aligning writing tasks to the CCSS and providing both direct and indirect support.

Common Core: Next Generation Writing Tasks

So where do general and special education teachers go to learn how to help their students make the shift to the new CCSS? Teachers have access to many high-quality instructional resources that are aligned to the writing activities specified in the CCSS. A close look at one set of resources, created by the Literacy Design Collaborative (LDC), gives insight into what

type of writing will be expected of students with LD. A national organization comprised of teachers, administrators, and educational stakeholders, the LDC, developed a collection of resources including modules and tasks closely aligned to secondary literacy in the

technology courses. Because the tasks are specifically aligned to the CCSS for writing in ELA and across content areas, secondary special education teachers can use this information to prepare students with LD for the new writing expectations and accountability

visual, and auditory formats to support learning.

Instructional supports, accommodations, and assistive technology can overlap to provide resources for students with LD as they write. Kennedy and Deshler (2010) recommended “existing evidence-based practices for literacy instruction may be of benefit to teachers and students if repackaged and delivered using technology” (p. 290), but most important, “the practitioner must be knowledgeable, skilled, and ready with a menu of evidence-based practices to support learning” (p. 296).

Special education teachers such as Ms. Felix can coordinate the varying levels of support needed to help students with LD be prepared to write for college and career by aligning writing tasks to the CCSS and providing both direct and indirect support for students with LD in the area of writing.

CCSS (LDC, 2013; <http://www.literacydesigncollaborative.org/>). The LDC template tasks, which are fill-in-the-blank “shells,” can be customized to local curriculum needs and used across content areas. The tasks are aligned to the writing specified by the CCSS (i.e., argumentation, informational or explanatory text, and narrative). Approximately 87% of teachers who used LDC modules reported that their expectations for student writing had increased as a result. Teachers reported that the modules could be differentiated by providing texts and writing assignments that varied in complexity. An example of an LDC template task for argumentation is:

After researching _____ (informational texts) on _____ (content), write a/an _____ (essay or substitute) that argues your position on _____ (content). Support your position with evidence from your research. Be sure to acknowledge competing views. Give examples from past or current events or issues to illustrate and clarify your position” (LDC, 2011, p. 3).

Although the LDC template tasks are only one set of many resources for CCSS writing, they are representative of the next generation of writing tasks at the secondary level. Special education teachers can expect to see assignments similar to the previous task in English, science, social studies, and

requirements which are the same level as their peers without disabilities.

We suggest that special educators get ahead of the curve by bringing these template tasks to the classroom and collaborating with general education, content-area teachers to create writing tasks that are both aligned to the CCSS and accessible to students with LD. Because the template tasks can be customized by content and writing assignment, they (a) provide special education teachers with the unique opportunity to collaborate with content-area teachers, (b) help them customize reading and writing tasks, and (c) allow them to share responsibility for literacy. Content-area teachers noted the flexibility of the template tasks and reported that they could be customized to accommodate varying levels of ability. This flexibility in reading and writing assignments opens the door for special educators because they support students with LD. Special educators might collaborate with general educators by completing the template tasks together so that writing supports can be identified that match the content to be examined. For example, if the general education teacher plans to have students write a persuasive essay about science content, then the special educator can choose the STOP + DARE strategy, which supports persuasive writing. Also, special educators could enhance the content area resources for the lesson by identifying alternate resources in digital,

Common Core Writing Task and Instruction Scenario

James’s science class is preparing to write a persuasive essay and Ms. Felix has coordinated her support for students with disabilities. Ms. Felix and the general education teacher used the LDC template tasks to create a challenging writing task. The task requires James and his peers to read two primary source documents and make an argument for whether or not aliens exist, to support their position with evidence from the text, to acknowledge competing views, and to give examples from the text to illustrate and clarify their position. Ms. Felix knows that the content of the lesson will interest James, so his motivation to write will be high. She wants to set James up for success by teaching him a strategy he can use to write the persuasive essay. She wants to capitalize on James’s interest in technology, so she’ll choose a technology platform that will enable James to plan and write collaboratively with his peers and teachers before he writes his own essay.



After learning about the four components of the writing process, Ms. Felix developed a plan for James’s writing to the CCSS. Ms. Felix chose to support James by using a mix of instructional supports, accommodations, and assistive technologies. Students with LD may have a difficult time identifying and using appropriate text structure when writing genre-specific

Table 3. Teaching James to Write a Persuasive Essay Using SRSD Model

Develop background and knowledge for strategy	Ms. Felix discussed the structure of persuasive text: stating a main idea, supplying at least three pieces of supporting evidence, rejecting an argument from the other side, then concluding by revisiting the main idea.
Discuss the purpose and benefits of the strategy	Ms. Felix discussed the benefits of being able to persuade (in writing or speaking) and how a strategy could help, and then introduced each step of STOP + DARE.
Model the strategy	Ms. Felix used the “think aloud” technique: With a laptop and projector she wrote a sample persuasive essay using the STOP + DARE strategy, allowing students to see it in action. She was careful to speak her thoughts out loud to make her thinking visible as she wrote.
Memorize the strategy	Ms. Felix used a flash card app from http://www.flashcardapps.info/ to create a digital flash card stack so that James could memorize all of the parts of the persuasive essay and each part of the STOP + DARE strategy.
Support the strategy with teacher or scaffolding	Together, Ms. Felix and James brainstormed and organized their ideas on an iPad using iCardSort. iCardSort works similarly to flash cards which have information on the front and back and can be sorted on a large digital desk surface and exported for use when writing.
Provide independent practice	After completing a card sort using iCardSort app, Ms. Felix and James sent the card sort to James’s e-mail, and the information was automatically organized into a linear format including main ideas (front of card) and notes (back of cards). The e-mail laid the digital foundation for his writing task.

Note. SRSD = self-regulated strategy development.

essays, such as argumentative or informational essays. Ms. Felix carefully evaluated the writing task to find the text structure required for the assignment. Ms. Felix found that James’s assignments required the reader to be persuaded about a topic, which meant he would have to use the persuasive/argumentative text structure. She decided to teach James STOP + DARE strategy, because it can be used when planning and writing persuasive essays. Learning a new strategy is challenging for students with LD, so Ms. Felix planned to do each step of the SRSD model with James. See Table 3 to learn how Ms. Felix taught James to write a persuasive essay, step-by-step.

After James had learned the basics of the writing strategy, Ms. Felix began to focus on the primary and secondary source texts for the science class. She found a wealth of resources to download from the National Archives web site in digital format. Students were familiar with the lesson concepts after taking part in exploratory science activities and discussion of the writing task, which supported the develop-

ment of background knowledge for writing. After sustained silent reading and a think-pair-share activity with the text, Ms. Felix supported the science teacher by projecting the digital text on the screen in the front of the classroom and highlighting key points as identified by the students. Then, she projected a sample student essay on the screen and also shared it in paper format with the students. Ms. Felix also integrated SRSD into her lessons with the entire class, which allowed James to hear about the strategy again. Ms. Felix led a group discussion about the structure of the persuasive essay, explicitly indicating important features (see Table 3: Develop background and knowledge for strategy). After the students identified the text structure needed for the writing task, Ms. Felix led students in a discussion about choosing the appropriate writing strategy (see Table 3: Discuss the purpose and benefits of the strategy).

The students then broke into small groups to begin identifying evidence in the text that could be used to plan and write a persuasive essay. Citing specific evidence in the text is a critical skill

for the CCSS, so Ms. Felix worked with a small group of students, including James, who had difficulty with the language demands of the task. Ms. Felix modeled finding evidence in the text to the small group, and answered questions and used the projector and word processing software with digital text to highlight evidence and text features to support the students’ writing. The printout was shared with students with LD to scaffold their learning and support their background knowledge as they wrote. Before the students began independent writing, Ms. Felix used the “think aloud” technique to plan and write a sample essay in real-time using the STOP + DARE strategy to model the writing process (see Table 3: Model the strategy). Ms. Felix used a laptop and projector to write a sample persuasive essay using the STOP + DARE strategy (see Table 1). As she wrote, she spoke about her thoughts and actions so that students could learn how she used the strategy (i.e., the “think aloud” technique). After working as a small group to plan the individual essays, James and his peers worked independently to create

Table 4. Resources to Support Common Core Writing Tasks

Common Core Writing	The main Common Core web site is http://www.corestandards.org/ A web site which highlights the shifts in the Common Core is http://www.achievethecore.org/
Supporting Writing Skills	Speech-to-Text Generators Desktop Software <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dragon NaturallySpeaking: http://www.nuance.com/dragon/index.htm Speech-to-Text Generators Mobile Applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search for Dragon Dictation & Voice Assistant via iTunes.com • Search for ListNote Speech/Text Notepad and Evernote for Android Devices
Supporting Knowledge for Writing	Text-to-Speech Readers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Center on Accessible Instructional Materials lists over 10 text-to-speech reader software applications http://aim.cast.org/learn/e-resources/software-based/screenreaders_tts Informational Text in Digital Format Using Multiple Means of Representation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Archives http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/
Supporting Strategic Writing	Strategies for Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • POW + TREE (Harris et al., 2002) • STOP + DARE (De La Paz, 1999) • POWER (Englert et al., 1991) Self-Regulated Strategy Development Framework: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/casl/srsd.html • Memorize It step in SRSD: https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/memorize-anything/id430219093?mt=8 • Scaffold It step in SRSD: http://www.flashcardapps.info/
Supporting Motivation for Writing	Choice: Multiple Means With Universal Design for Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple means of representation, action, expression, and engagement are supported by resources designed using Universal Design for Learning principles • CAST Learning Tools: http://www.cast.org/learningtools/index.html • Self-determination activities: Dieker and Hines (2014)

Note. SRSD = self-regulated strategy development.

a first draft (see Table 3: Provide independent practice). In the next class, he switched essays with a peer and used a persuasive essay rubric to provide feedback to his peer and receive feedback of his own (see Table 3: Support the strategy with teacher or scaffolding). One of the research-based methods for increasing motivation toward writing is self-reinforcement if students meet personal goals they set for writing. Ms. Felix incorporated a procedure for students to set goals to include all parts of the persuasive essay in their writing and then mark their performance on a chart after each writing session (see Table 3: Support the strategy

with teacher or scaffolding). James's science teacher also reviewed the essays and identified common misconceptions in the content and shared them with the class as a group, enabling students to make revisions to their essay content before turning in a final draft.

Resources for Common Core Writing Tasks

Special educators can ensure that Common Core writing tasks are supported by sticking with research-based practices and capitalizing on technologies and tools that allow for a supported writing process. Resources

such as the What Works Clearinghouse (<http://www.whatworks.ed.gov>) or Center on Instruction (<http://www.centeroninstruction.org>) include searchable topic-specific resources. Educational journals, such as *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, also provide a wealth of information about research-based instructional strategies. See Table 4 for practical information and tools that teachers can use to support the writing process of students with LD.

Final Thoughts

The CCSS provide a vision of a literate person in the twenty-first century and

set clear expectations for literacy to be a shared responsibility across the school campus. Although Ms. Felix was concerned about the changes coming with the new standards, she knew that the increased expectations would create the opportunity for students with LD to achieve new heights. Because the Common Core standards require increased literacy for students, a new level of collaboration and expertise for teachers is required. The professional challenges special education teachers and content area teachers face will be worth the extra effort, as the bar will be raised for students with LD. As a result, these students will be better prepared to write successfully in college, career, and life.

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