

Module 3  
Participant Guide

Supporting All Students in  
Writing and Research

## Activity 8a

Connecticut Core Standards for  
English Language Arts and  
Literacy



Grades K–5

*Systems of Professional Learning*

**Connecticut Core Standards Systems of Professional Learning**

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The Systems of Professional Learning project includes a series of professional learning experiences for Connecticut Core Standards District Coaches in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Humanities, Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM), and Student/Educator Support Staff (SESS).

Participants will have continued support for the implementation of the new standards through virtual networking opportunities and online resources to support the training of educators throughout the state of Connecticut.

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## Activity 8a: Examining a Framework

### DESCRIPTION

Participants will examine a framework for scaffolding writing to sources and assess advantages and disadvantages of using frameworks to scaffold writing tasks.

### DIRECTIONS

1. Review the framework described in “Writing to Sources: Guided Instruction,” on the following pages. Note the sequence of instruction and the purpose of each step.

**Take 8 minutes for this activity.**

2. With a partner, choose one of the two sample lessons that follow the Writing to Sources guide – either “Lou Gehrig, The Luckiest Man,” beginning on page 43 or “The Night of San Juan”, beginning on page 51.
3. Read the sample lesson and annotate to indicate the steps described in “Writing to Sources: Guided Instruction.”
4. Turn and talk to your partner:

**What are the benefits of using a framework like this to scaffold a writing task? Are there disadvantages?**

### RESOURCES

- Achieve the Core. Student Achievement Partners. *Writing to Sources: Guided Instruction*. Retrieved from [http://www.solution-tree.com/media/pdf/WriteLikeReportersK\\_5FREYCF335.pdf](http://www.solution-tree.com/media/pdf/WriteLikeReportersK_5FREYCF335.pdf)
- “Writing Task for Lesson on ‘Lou Gehrig’” and “Writing Task for Lesson on ‘San Juan.’” Retrieved from <http://achievethecore.org/page/209/knowning-thinking-and-writing-detail-pg>

## Writing to Sources: Guided Instruction

### *Written by SAP & CGCS to Accompany BAP Writing Lessons*

Writing about a text after doing a careful read is an important opportunity for students to synthesize their knowledge about that text. When they write clearly and thoughtfully about a text, even if the piece of writing is relatively short, they construct meaning of that text in a way that sticks.

Sometimes, of course, we use writing to *assess* students' understanding of the text. More often, we use writing to *help students build deeper meaning* of the text. In addition, we use writing about a text to help students learn to write clearly, logically, and thoughtfully. In this way, the writing not only helps students synthesize meaning of the text – it helps them think clearly and thoughtfully about other texts.

These exemplars are designed to use text-dependent questions to help students, through careful reading, to a deep understanding of the text. They are also designed to help students write about that understanding clearly and thoughtfully. Each exemplar includes:

- A set of student worksheets, designed to lead the student step by step through the process.
- A set of teacher reference sheets, which offer a sample of student responses to note taking and writing activities.

These text specific sheets are meant to be used with the more general description of the process in this document.

All of the writing tasks created for this project are highly guided and scaffolded - it is assumed that the concept of writing to sources will be new and challenging for most students and teachers. However, the materials provided are meant to introduce a process that students (and teachers!) will eventually make their own. As you and your students become more comfortable with text based writing, be sure to modify your process to encourage independence. With careful instruction, much practice and gradual release of responsibility, all of your students will enrich and improve, not only their writing, but the way they think about and interact with what they read.

The following estimated 2 – 3 day sequence provides a template for guiding students through this process. Use it in combination with the specific *Read, Think and Write!* student sheets that accompany each text.

## Writing to Sources: Guided Instruction

### DAY ONE (approximately 45 minutes)

- **Writing begins with the third read**

The first read of the sequence establishes a first familiarity with the text. In the second read the teacher guides students slowly and carefully through the text, prodding their thinking with text-dependent questions. On the third read, students read with a specific purpose, to gather information that will allow them to answer a Focusing Question for writing.

- **Pose the Focusing Question for writing**

Before the third read, the teacher poses the Focusing Question for writing. Each selection has a single, carefully crafted, Focusing Question that will be answered by gathering and synthesizing evidence from the text. The teacher makes this question visible for all the students to see, and makes sure they all understand the question. The Focusing Question is always written at the top of the graphic organizer/notes sheet, reminding the students of the focus of their inquiry into this text.

- **Review the notes sheet / organizer**

For students, taking notes captures the knowledge that they will be generating on this third read and using as they write their response to the focusing question. The graphic organizers provided for each Focusing Question guide students in gathering, organizing and synthesizing evidence from the text. Every story has a graphic organizer / note sheet to cue students about what knowledge they will be looking for, and to help them make sense of that knowledge both as they go, and after the notes have been taken. For younger students or less experienced students, the teacher should create a large class note chart that can be used to model the process of taking notes. This can be done simply by enlarging the student chart and reproducing it on chart paper, a whiteboard or with a document camera.

- **Capture the knowledge, gather the notes**

This is the longest step. As the teacher takes students through the third read, she stops frequently to take notes *related to the Focusing Question*. The purpose of this step is to gather evidence from the text that students will use in writing. Depending on the grade level and the text, these notes may be generated by the class and recorded by the teacher (and often copied later by the students) or taken by the students as they go along, with as much conversation and guidance as they need to gather good, useful evidence from the text for writing. *NOTE: you may want to have students paraphrase notes or quote directly from the text. In fourth grade, paraphrased reference to text is at standard; by fifth grade, the CC standards remind us that students need to also know how to accurately quote from a text.*

- ***Review the notes, develop a Focus Statement for writing***

**It's essential that all students have a Focusing Statement (or "Claim") for their writing that addresses the Focusing Question.** The Focus Statement, or "Claim," is a concise sentence (or sometimes two) that expresses the central idea of the writing piece and will be supported by the evidence they have gathered in the notes. The teacher helps guide this process. Depending on the writing task, the Focus Statement may be developed *before* gathering evidence (as a sort of hypothesis that students seek to prove using evidence from the text) or *after* gathering evidence (as a source of inquiry into the Focusing Statement). In both cases, the resulting Focus Statement needs to be clear, and needs to point the student clearly to the writing that will follow.

One or more sample Focus Statements are provided for each story. It's quite possible, even probable, that everyone will have the same Focus Statement. That's fine. Remember, this is not an assessment – this is instruction! If you have taken group / public notes, make sure that at this point every student copies the Focus Statement individually.

#### **DAY TWO** (*approximately 45 minutes*)

- ***Model the thinking / writing***

It's important for students to know what this kind of thinking looks like in writing. How will they use the evidence (with reasoning) to develop / support their Focus Statement? Begin by rereading the Focus Statement (or claim) students have written down.

Then, depending on the Focus Question, the text, the age of the students, and the familiarity of the students with this type of task, the teacher and the students create some part of the writing together. This might be a couple of sentences, or it might be a paragraph. The point is that, if students are going to be successful with this type of thinking / writing, they need to see what it looks like, and they need to know how to proceed. Make sure that every student copies this "model." It will become part of their finished writing piece.

- ***Have students orally "talk the writing" for the rest of the piece***

Using their notes, students "talk the writing" before they write it. This might be in partners; it might be in somewhat larger groups; it could be a circle setting of some sort. The point is, students need to be able to orally verbalize their thinking before they write it. Writing is hard: it's important to make sure, that when every student sits down with a pencil or at the keyboard, he is able to say to himself, "Hey, I get this. I know what I'm doing!"

- **Write the body of the piece**

Either with a pencil or a keyboard, using their notes and the model, students write the body of the piece (up to the conclusion). For each Focusing Question, a sample piece designed to illustrate the type of writing and thinking expected has been provided. This sample is not meant to be shared with students; it is included primarily to clarify the goals of the lesson for the teacher.

- **Write a concluding statement or section**

The teacher helps students conclude. Depending on the Focusing Statement, the age of the students, the text itself, and the students' familiarity with the process, the conclusion could vary from a simple re-statement to an extension or reflection of some sort. For a more thoughtful conclusion, the teacher will often need to pose a relevant question or two and make sure students have ample opportunity for processing that idea together. Many lessons include suggestions for a reflective question to extend student thinking.

*These two sections, along with the introduction, go together to provide a “clear and effective organizational structure that has a variety of transitional strategies, logical progression of ideas from beginning to ending, and an effective introduction and conclusion.” This is taken from the SBAC rubric being used for the Writing Formative.*

- **Optional Activity** (*recommended, but may sometimes be omitted due to time constraints*):

**Share, proofread and revise the piece**

In partners or in some larger setting, students read their work aloud, checking meaning and correcting conventions. The teacher may use a variety of approaches for this; no matter what approach she uses, she is available to check for meaning and proofreading.

**Think and Write!**

Day 1

Name

Date

Title of story “**Lou Gehrig: The Luckiest Man**”

*Lou Gehrig was a baseball player for the Yankees. This story tells us what a great player he was, and what huge challenges he faced with his illness. Yet not long before he died, Lou Gehrig described himself as “the luckiest man on the face of the earth.” What do Lou Gehrig’s actions show us about his attitude towards life?*

1. What will you be writing about? **Underline** the Focusing Question in the assignment above.
2. What information will you need to be able to answer the Focusing Question and to explain your answer? Turn to a partner. **Look** carefully at the graphic organizer as you **discuss** the answers to the questions below. **Color in** the circle next to each question after you have talked about it.
  - What information will you put in the first two columns?
  - Where will you get this information?
  
  - What information will go in the third column?
  - Where will this information come from?
  
  - Why are you gathering all this information? What are you trying to figure out?

*Lou Gehrig faced huge challenges with his illness, yet he described himself as “the luckiest man on the face of the earth.” What do Lou Gehrig’s actions show us show us about his attitude towards life?*



<p><b><i>Evidence</i></b>  <b>What Lou Gehrig did</b></p>	<p><i>Page</i></p>	<p><b><i>Elaboration / explanation</i></b>  <b>What this shows about his attitude</b></p>	<p><i>Used                      in your                      piece?</i></p>
<p>Example...</p> <p>kept working for the team even when he could no longer play</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Quote</p> <p>“Before each game...make sure he didn't fall.”</p>	<p>112</p>	<p>positive, could have quit</p> <p>did what he could do</p>	
<p>Example</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Quote</p>			
<p>Example</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Quote</p>			
<p>Example</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Quote</p>			

3. When the class is ready, your teacher will reread the story aloud. Your job is to **listen carefully** for information that will help you to complete the graphic organizer. During the read aloud, every time you hear some evidence from the text that you think belongs on the chart, **raise your hand**. The class will stop to discuss what you have noticed and decide whether to add that evidence to the chart.

You may have noticed that there is not much room to write in each box! Don't worry, your teacher will show you how to "**take notes**" in that small space using just key words and phrases.

4. Once you have taken notes, **look** back at your assignment, **copy** the Focusing Question onto your Writing Draft Sheet. **Think** about the evidence you found. How could you answer the Focusing Question in a single sentence? Turn and **tell** your partner how you might answer.
5. The answer to a Focusing Question is called a Focus Statement. With your teacher, **develop** a class Focus Statement. Then, **copy** that focus statement on the Writing Draft Sheet right underneath the Focusing Question.

**Think and Write!**

Day 2

Name

Date

Title of story “**Lou Gehrig: The Luckiest Man**”

1. **Look** at your Writing Draft Sheet from yesterday. With a partner, take turns. Have one person **read** the Focusing Question and the other person **read** the Focus Statement. Then **switch**, so that you each have read both.
2. **Look** at your graphic organizer. **Listen** carefully as your teacher gives an example of how to write the first evidence paragraph of your response. Where are these sentences coming from? On your graphic organizer, **check the box** next to the evidence your teacher used to write this part.
3. Now comes the fun part! Talk your piece! Use your graphic organizer. **Point** to each row of the chart and **tell** your partner what you will write. Then listen as your partner explains what he/she will write.

*On your own...*

4. **Look** at your Writing Draft Sheet. **Re-read** what you have written so far. Then, **write** about each piece of evidence. **Check off** each piece of evidence on the graphic organizer as you write.
5. A Concluding Statement restates the focus of the piece. **Look** at your Focus Statement. How could you **restate** it? Use the same idea, but different words. **Write** your Concluding Statement at the end of your piece.
6. Now, **think** about this question: “*Knowing what we know about Lou Gehrig, why might the Yankees have retired his number after he died?*” Your teacher will lead a **discussion** to help you improve and expand your conclusion. When you are ready, **add a few sentences** to your conclusion that show your thinking about this.
7. With a pencil in your hand, **read** your piece aloud to a partner. **Revise and edit** as you read.

Name

Date

Title of story: **“Lou Gehrig: The Luckiest Man”**

*Writing Draft*

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**Teacher Pages**

*Sample Graphic Organizer (Students may add additional evidence.)*

**FOCUSING QUESTION:** *What do Lou Gehrig’s actions show us about his attitude towards life?*

<p><b>Evidence</b>  <b>What Lou Gehrig did</b></p>	<p>Page</p>	<p><b>Elaboration / explanation</b>  <b>What this shows about his attitude</b></p>	<p><i>Used                      in your                      piece?</i></p>
<p>Example...</p> <p>kept working for the team even when he could no longer play</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Quote</p> <p>“Before each game...make sure he didn't fall.”</p>	<p>112</p>	<p>positive, could have quit</p> <p>did what he could do</p>	
<p>Example</p> <p>Very sick, had to leave baseball</p> <p>made amazing speech</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Quote</p> <p>"...luckiest man on earth..."</p>	<p>113</p>	<p>Positive, focused on the good things in his life, not bad</p>	
<p>Example</p> <p>Worked with prisoners</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Quote</p> <p>"...job would enable him to do something for the city..."</p>	<p>115</p>	<p>Positive, thinking about what he could do for others, not himself</p>	

**POSSIBLE FOCUS STATEMENT:** *Lou Gehrig was a baseball player who faced huge challenges with his illness, yet he described himself as “the luckiest man on the face of the earth.” This shows what a positive attitude he had towards life.*

Additional notes to the teacher about this piece:

- For this particular story, it will probably make sense to use **two** sentences to answer the Focusing Question, one to set the context and one to directly answer the question:  
**What do Lou Gehrig’s actions show us about his attitude towards life?**
- An extension / reflection question for the conclusion of this piece might be, “Knowing what we know about Lou Gehrig, why might the Yankees have retired his number after he died?”

## Writing Sample

*NOTE: This is for the teacher’s use only, not for students. The purpose is to show the teacher what the final piece might look like when students have completed their work.*

Lou Gehrig was a baseball player who faced huge challenges with his illness, yet he described himself as “the luckiest man on the face of the earth.” This shows what a positive attitude he had towards life.

One example of what a positive Gehrig attitude had was when he kept working with his team, the Yankees, even when he could no longer play. The author writes, “Before each game, Lou brought the Yankee lineup card to the umpire at home plate. A teammate or coach walked with him to make sure he didn’t fall” (p. 112). This shows how positive Gehrig was. He could have just quit, but instead he concentrated on what he could still do, and how he could help his team.

Another example of Gehrig’s positive attitude was when he finally had to leave baseball. The Yankees held a special day in his honor, on July 4, 1939. By now he was very sick, but he still told the cheering crowd, “You have been reading about a bad break I got. Yet today I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of the earth” (p.113). Instead of complaining about how awful it was to be so sick at such a young age, Lou Gehrig talked about his “many blessings”. Again, it takes a very positive attitude to do this. He paid attention to the good things in his life, instead of the very bad illness that was destroying him.

Finally, Lou Gehrig’s positive attitude showed when he went to work with former New York City prisoners after leaving baseball. He could have made more money doing something else, but the author writes that “he believed this job would enable him to do something for the city that had given him so much” (p. 115). Once again, Lou Gehrig was being positive. He was thinking about the good he could do for others, and not about himself. Lou Gehrig’s positive attitude was shining through.

In conclusion, Lou Gehrig held onto a positive attitude throughout his short life, despite the huge challenges of his illness. No wonder the Yankees retired his number after he died, so nobody would ever use it again. There are not many people who come along in life like Lou Gehrig. He was an incredible role model for everyone.

**Think and Write!**

Day 1

Name

Date

Title of story **“The Night of San Juan”**

***In “The Night of San Juan,” the three sisters want to take their friend, Jose Manuel, to the beach. This is not easy because his grandmother does not let him go out much. What challenges do the sisters face in getting Jose Manuel to the beach, and how do they resolve them?***

1. What will you be writing about? **Underline** the Focusing Question in the assignment above.
2. What information will you need to be able to answer the Focusing Question and to explain your answer? Turn to a partner. **Look** carefully at the graphic organizer as you **discuss** the answers to the questions below. **Color in** the circle next to each question after you have talked about it.
  - What information will you put in the first two columns?
  - Where will you get this information?
  - What information will go in the third column?
  - Where will this information come from?
  - Why are you gathering all this information? What are you trying to figure out?

***What challenges do the sisters face in getting Jose Manuel to the beach, and how do they resolve them?***



<p><b><i>Evidence</i></b>  <b>The challenges the sisters faced</b></p>	<p><i>Page</i></p>	<p><b><i>Elaboration / explanation</i></b>  <b>How they resolved the challenges</b></p>	<p><i>Used                      in your                      piece?</i></p>
<p>Example</p> <p>needed to find way to get message to Jose Manuel</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Quote</p> <p>“I had an idea. Maybe there was a way we could ask him to join us.”</p>	<p>81, 82</p>	<p>Example</p> <p>Used a vegetable basket to get him a message about inviting him to the beach</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Quote</p> <p>“What if we send Jose Manuel a note in his grandma’s basket inviting him to go to the beach with us tonight?” I offered</p>	
<p>Example</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Quote</p>		<p>Example</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Quote</p>	
<p>Example</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Quote</p>		<p>Example</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Quote</p>	

3. When the class is ready, your teacher will reread the story aloud. Your job is to **listen carefully** for information that will help you to complete the graphic organizer. During the read aloud, every time you hear some evidence from the text that you think belongs on the chart, about the challenges the sisters faced or how they resolved them, **raise your hand**. The class will stop to discuss what you have noticed and decide whether to add that evidence to the chart.

You may have noticed that there is not much room to write in each box! Don't worry, your teacher will show you how to **"take notes"** in that small space using just key words and phrases.

Sometimes, you will use the author's exact words, which is called "quoting the text." Other times, you will use your own words, which is called "paraphrasing."

4. Once you have taken notes, **look** back at your assignment, **copy** the Focusing Question onto your Writing Draft Sheet. **Think** about the evidence you found. How could you answer the Focusing Question in a single sentence? Turn and **tell** your partner how you might answer.
5. The answer to a Focusing Question is called a Focus Statement. With your teacher, **develop** a class Focus Statement. Then, **copy** that focus statement on the Writing Draft Sheet right underneath the Focusing Question.

**Think and Write!**

Day 2

Name

Date

Title of story **“The Night of San Juan”**

1. **Look** at your Writing Draft Sheet from yesterday. With a partner, take turns. Have one person **read** the Focusing Question and the other person **read** the Focus Statement. Then **switch**, so that you each have read both.
2. **Look** at your graphic organizer. **Listen** carefully as your teacher gives an example of how to write the first evidence paragraph of your response. Where are these sentences coming from? On your graphic organizer, **check the box** next to the evidence your teacher used to write this part.
3. Now comes the fun part! Talk your piece! Use your graphic organizer. **Point** to each row of the chart and **tell** your partner what you will write. Then listen as your partner explains what he/she will write.

*On your own...*

4. **Look** at your Writing Draft Sheet. **Re-read** what you have written so far. Then, **write** about each piece of evidence. **Check off** each piece of evidence on the graphic organizer as you write.
5. A Concluding Statement restates the focus of the piece. **Look** at your Focus Statement. How could you **restate** it? Use the same idea, but different words. **Write** your Concluding Statement at the end of your piece.
6. Now, think about this question: *“Knowing what we know about how the story ends, do you think the Night of San Juan really is a time when dreams come true?”* Your teacher will lead you in a **discussion** to help you think about this question, which will help you improve and expand your conclusion. When you are ready, **add a few sentences** to your conclusion to show your thinking about this question.
7. With a pencil in your hand, **read** your piece aloud to a partner. **Revise and edit** as you read.



**Teacher Pages**

*Sample Graphic Organizer (Students may add additional evidence.)*

**FOCUSING QUESTION:** *What challenges do the sisters face in getting Jose Manuel to the beach, and how do they resolve them?*

<p><b>Evidence</b>  <b>What challenges the sisters faced</b></p>	<p><i>Page</i></p>	<p><b>Elaboration / explanation</b>  <b>How they resolved the challenges</b></p>	<p><i>Used                      in your                      piece?</i></p>
<p>Example</p> <p>needed to find way to get message to Jose Manuel</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Quote</p> <p>“I had an idea. Maybe there was a way we could ask him to join us.”</p>	<p>82</p>	<p>Example</p> <p>Used a vegetable basket to get him a message about inviting him to the beach</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Quote:</p> <p>“What if we send Jose Manuel a note in his grandma’s basket inviting him to go to the beach with us tonight?” I offered.</p>	
<p>Example</p> <p>Aitza, one sister, doesn’t think they can succeed in the plan</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Quote</p> <p>“It will never work,” Aitza said. “His grandmother will not like it. We could get into trouble.”</p>	<p>82</p>	<p>Example</p> <p>Other sisters talk her into trying the plan</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Quote</p> <p>“we convinced her to try our plan”</p>	

<p><b><i>Evidence</i></b>  <b>What challenges the sisters faced</b></p>	<p><i>Page</i></p>	<p><b><i>Elaboration / explanation</i></b>  <b>How they resolved the challenges</b></p>	<p><i>Used                      in your                      piece?</i></p>
<p>Example</p> <p>afraid to ask grandmother if Jose Manuel could come out to beach</p> <p>The grandma looks mean</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Quote</p> <p>“wearing a frown as grim as her black widow dress”</p>	<p>83, 84</p>	<p>Example</p> <p>Found the courage to ask grandma if Jose Manuel could come to beach</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Quote</p> <p>“Amalia took a deep breath, then took a step forward”</p> <p>“Amalia followed her in without a thought”</p>	

**POSSIBLE FOCUS STATEMENT:** *The three sisters face several challenges in trying to get Jose Manuel to the beach, and they resolve all of them.*

Additional notes to the teacher about this piece:

- An extension / reflection question for the conclusion of this piece might be, “Knowing what we know about how the story ends, do you think the Night of San Juan really is a time when dreams come true?”