

STOP AND APPLY: GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES FOR STRUGGLING READERS AND WRITERS

By Susan Koehler

You have students struggling to gain fluency with literacy skills. You have provided direct instruction, intervention, and differentiation. What will help these fledgling readers to grow? It's time to allow students to strengthen their skills through application.

The activities that follow are literature-based applications that integrate reading and writing. They can be used at literacy centers or as independent work following any reading selection – a narrative story from your reading series, a book from your classroom library, as part of a novel study, or with a personal-choice trade book.

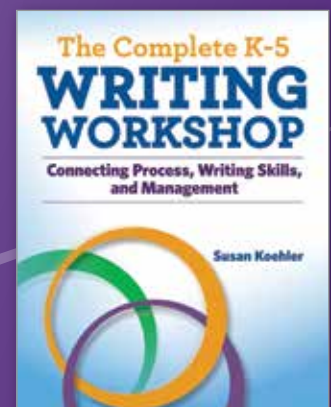
Activities to Apply and Integrate Literacy Skills

Writing: Descriptive Language	Reading: Character Analysis
Select a character from the story. Review the story and make a list of any descriptive language the author has used to help the reader picture this character. Use some of the author's language to write your own description of the character. Include both character traits and physical features. If the author has not supplied many details to describe this character, add your own descriptive language to describe the character.	
Writing: Descriptive Language	Reading: Setting
Look through the story for descriptions of the setting(s) in which this story takes place. List words used by the author to describe the setting and create a free-verse descriptive poem about the setting. Illustrate your poem.	
Writing: Friendly Letter	Reading: Character Analysis
Select a character from the story and write a friendly letter to that character. Include information from the story and ask the character questions about his/her feelings about the events in the story.	
Writing: Strong Verbs	Reading: Vocabulary / Visualization
Fold a paper to make eight boxes. Skim the story for strong verbs. Write a strong verb from the story in each box and draw a picture to represent the action.	
Writing: Organization	Reading: Story Analysis
Use a storyboard to retell the story's main events. Fold a paper to make four sections. Write a sentence in each section to tell about main events from the beginning, middle, and end of the story. Illustrate each section and be sure to include significant details in your drawing.	
Writing: Beginning Techniques	Reading: Survey / Preview
Preview the stories in your reading book. Look at the beginning of each story and see if you can identify a beginning technique that the author used to grab the reader's attention. Select four stories and copy the beginning sentences. Beneath each beginning sentence, write the story title, author's name, and the type of beginning technique modeled.	
Writing: Time and Place Transitions	Reading: Sequence of Events
Skim the story and jot down the time and place transitions you find in the order they are used in the story. Consider how each time or place transition was used to advance the plot and help the reader create a timeline of events.	

For more ideas on integrating reading and writing instruction, application activities for non-fiction text, and activities that build literacy through writing, see Susan Koehler's *The Complete K-5 Writing Workshop*, Capstone Professional, 2010.

Susan Koehler is a veteran educator and national writing consultant. She is also the author of:

Crafting Expository Papers, 2007, Capstone Professional
Purposeful Writing Assessment, 2008, Capstone Professional
Models for Teaching Writing-Craft Target Skills (co-author), 2010, Capstone Professional
CraftPlus Daily Writing Lessons, a K-8 writing curriculum (project editor), 2008, Capstone Professional



The Complete K-5 Writing Workshop ■ 978-1-936700-43-1

2010, Capstone Professional \$24.95

CapstoneClassroom.com ■ phone: 888.262.6135