

# Unit 02: News Writing Basics

Content Area: **Template**  
Course(s):  
Time Period: **Full Year**  
Length: **FY**  
Status: **Published**

## **Standards Alignment**

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### **New Jersey Student Learning Standards**

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#### **Integration of Career Readiness, Life Literacies and Key Skills**

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CRP.K-12.CRP1	Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.
CRP.K-12.CRP2	Apply appropriate academic and technical skills.
CRP.K-12.CRP3	Attend to personal health and financial well-being.
CRP.K-12.CRP4	Communicate clearly and effectively and with reason.
CRP.K-12.CRP5	Consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of decisions.
CRP.K-12.CRP6	Demonstrate creativity and innovation.
CRP.K-12.CRP7	Employ valid and reliable research strategies.
CRP.K-12.CRP8	Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
CRP.K-12.CRP9	Model integrity, ethical leadership and effective management.
CRP.K-12.CRP10	Plan education and career paths aligned to personal goals.
CRP.K-12.CRP11	Use technology to enhance productivity.
CRP.K-12.CRP12	Work productively in teams while using cultural global competence.

#### **Technology / Integration of Computer Science and Design Thinking**

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#### **Interdisciplinary Connections: NJSLs for ELA, Social Studies, Science and/or Math Section**

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**Capacities of the Literate Individual**  
**Students Who are College and Career Ready in Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening, & Language**

They demonstrate independence.

They build strong content knowledge.

They respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline.

They comprehend as well as critique.

They value evidence.

They use technology and digital media strategically and capably.

They come to understand other perspectives and cultures.

#### Key Ideas and Details

LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences and relevant connections from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R2 Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R3 Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

#### Craft and Structure

LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R4 Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R5 Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R6 Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

#### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R7 Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R8 Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R9 Analyze and reflect on how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

#### Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

LA.K-12.NJSLSA.R10 Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently with scaffolding as needed.

LA.RI.11-12 Reading Informational Text

LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W Writing

LA.RI.11-12.1 Accurately cite strong and thorough textual evidence, (e.g., via discussion, written

response, etc.), to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferentially, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

- LA.RI.11-12.2 Determine two or more central ideas of a text, and analyze their development and how they interact to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.
- LA.RI.11-12.3 Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.
- LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W1 Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- LA.RI.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).
- LA.RI.11-12.5 Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.
- Production and Distribution of Writing
- LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- LA.RI.11-12.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text.
- LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W5 Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
- LA.RI.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.
- Research to Build and Present Knowledge
- LA.RI.11-12.8 Describe and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. and global texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning (e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court majority opinions and dissents) and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy (e.g., The Federalist, presidential addresses).
- LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W7 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects, utilizing an inquiry-based research process, based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- LA.RI.11-12.9 Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) documents of historical and literary significance for their themes, purposes and rhetorical features, including primary source documents relevant to U.S. and/or global history.
- LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
- LA.RI.11-12.10a By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at grade level text-complexity or above with scaffolding as needed.
- LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

LA.RI.11-12.10b	By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at grade level text-complexity or above.
	Range of Writing
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.W10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.
LA.W.11-12.1	Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
LA.W.11-12.1.A	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, reasons, and evidence.
LA.W.11-12.1.B	Develop claim(s) and counterclaims avoiding common logical fallacies and using sound reasoning and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.
LA.W.11-12.1.C	Use transitions (e.g., words, phrases, clauses) to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
LA.W.11-12.1.D	Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
LA.W.11-12.1.E	Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the argument presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).
LA.W.11-12.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
LA.W.11-12.2.A	Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
LA.W.11-12.2.B	Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.
LA.W.11-12.2.C	Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
LA.W.11-12.2.D	Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.
LA.W.11-12.2.E	Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
LA.W.11-12.2.F	Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the argument presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.L	Language
	Conventions of Standard English
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.L1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.L2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
	Knowledge of Language

LA.K-12.NJSLSA.L3	Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
	Vocabulary Acquisition and Use
LA.W.11-12.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.L4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.L5	Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.
LA.W.11-12.5	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, trying a new approach, or consulting a style manual (such as MLA or APA Style), focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
LA.K-12.NJSLSA.L6	Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.
LA.W.11-12.6	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, share, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.
LA.W.11-12.7	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
LA.W.11-12.8	Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation. (MLA or APA Style Manuals).
LA.W.11-12.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
LA.W.11-12.9.A	Apply grades 11–12 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics”).
LA.W.11-12.9.B	Apply grades 11–12 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning [e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court Case majority opinions and dissents] and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy [e.g., The Federalist, presidential addresses]”).
LA.W.11-12.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes.
LA.L.11-12.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
LA.L.6.1.C	Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.
LA.L.11-12.1.A	Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested.
LA.L.7.1.C	Place phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers.

LA.L.9-10.1.A	Use parallel structure.
LA.L.8.1.D	Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.
LA.L.11-12.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
LA.L.6.1.D	Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).
LA.L.3	Language
LA.L.11-12.2.A	Observe hyphenation conventions.
LA.L.6.1.E	Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.
LA.L.11-12.2.B	Spell correctly.
LA.L.6.2.A	Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.
LA.L.11-12.3	Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
LA.L.11-12.3.A	Vary syntax for effect, apply an understanding of syntax to the study of complex texts.
LA.L.7.3.A	Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.
LA.L.11-12.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
LA.L.5.1.D	Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense.
LA.L.11-12.4.A	Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
LA.L.11-12.4.B	Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., conceive, conception, conceivable).
LA.L.6.3.B	Maintain consistency in style and tone.
LA.L.3.1.F	Ensure subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement.
LA.L.11-12.4.C	Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage.
LA.L.4.1.F	Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.
LA.L.4.1.G	Correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., to, too, two; there, their).
LA.L.11-12.4.D	Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
LA.L.11-12.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
LA.L.11-12.5.A	Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.
LA.L.11-12.5.B	Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.
LA.L.11-12.6	Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
LA.L.4.3.B	Choose punctuation for effect.

## **Integration of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Climate Change; Informational and Media Literacy**

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see Crosswalks

### **21st Century Life and Careers**

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#### **Stage I: Desired Results**

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#### **Transfer/Overview/Rationale**

<b>Transfer / Overview / Rationale</b>
Unit Rationale The purpose of this unit...

#### **Meaning**

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#### **Essential Questions**

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Essential Questions

1. Why must journalists avoid bias?
2. How and why is the basic news story format different than regular practice?
3. How are reporting and researching utilized in composing articles?
4. How does an understanding of specific formats impact a writer's ability to communicate effectively?
5. How can headlines and leads affect reader interest?

## **Enduring Understanding/Indicators of Understanding**

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### Enduring Understanding/Indicators of Understanding

1. Journalists must research and report all sides of an issue and refrain from inserting personal opinion.
2. Journalistic writing uses a different format than formal English classroom and Creative writing.
3. Skilled writers identify information that is important enough to capture in writing and make that information accessible, understandable, and thought-provoking to a target audience
4. The different journalistic styles of reporting and writing are required to best represent different types of stories.
5. Headlines and leads serve to grab the readers' attention and summarize the main idea of the article.

## **Acquisition (Student Learning Objectives)**

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### **Knowledge**

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#### Knowledge

Students will know...

- Definitions: 5Ws and H, By-line, Flag, Graf, Hammer, Headline, Kicker, Lead, Bias
- Inverted Pyramid
- Soft Leads versus Hard Leads
- The contrast, mystery/teaser, descriptive, anecdote, and quote leads
- Headlines
- Research skills
- Editing Marks/Responsibilities
- Article Format
- Google Classroom/Docs

### **Skills**

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#### Skills

Student will be skilled at ...

- Analyzing news stories for structure, style, and content
- Evaluating news stories in order to decide what should be written and published
- Prioritizing the most important information
- Citing evidence to support opinion
- Gathering information from various sources
- Applying interviewing techniques
- Writing a variety of different leads
- Use technology to produce and share news stories
- Copyediting peer and published articles using the proper copyediting symbols and the AP style guide
- Analyzing design elements of different forms of journalism print and online

- Selecting credible print and non-print sources.
- Using social networking sites to track various news sources and rate their coverage of particular events
- Reviewing various news sources for their scope of coverage and quality of reporting

## **Stage 3: Learning Plan**

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### **Resource and Mentor Texts**

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#### Resources and Mentor Texts

- Computers
- Google Classroom
- Introduction to Journalism PowerPoint
- Various news websites/apps (i.e. CNN, 6ABC, FOX, BBC, etc.)
- *Workbook: Journalism: A Handbook for Journalists* by Mark Levin
- *Springboard to Journalism* Edited by Helen F. Smith
- *Teacher's Manual: Springboard to Journalism* Edited by Helen F. Smith

### **Formative Assessment Strategies**

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#### Formative Assessment Strategies

- Cycle Participation (attendance, preparation, discussion)
- Online assessments
- Teacher/student discussion
- 2.2 Hard News or Soft News
- 2.5 Angles
- Writing Effective Leads
- 3.8 Writing and Rewriting Headlines
- 3.7 Story Formats
- 4.3 Analysis: In-depth Reporting

[BROCHURE PROJECT Types of Leads.doc](#)  
[Journalism Writing Leads.doc](#)  
[Lead Exercises.doc](#)  
[Paragraphing Activity.doc](#)  
[Parrot Process.doc](#)  
[The Journalistic Headline.doc](#)  
[The Journalistic Lead.doc](#)

## **Learning Activities/Unit of Study**

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### Learning Activities/Unit of Study

- Write practice news stories using teacher-provided information, including samples interviews and research
- Practice writing a variety of leads
- Interview classmates using different types of questioning
- Review the forms of headlines
- Write appropriate headlines for specific articles
- Review vocabulary on Introduction to Journalism PowerPoint
- Review appropriate format for article submission
- Navigating Google Classroom

[Checklist for Student Editors.doc](#)

[Creative Expressions Keys to Success.doc](#)

[Editors Marks.doc](#)

[Headlines.doc](#)

[Publication Process.doc](#)

## **Modifications and/or Accommodations**

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### **Suggested Modifications (ELL, Sp. Ed, Gifted, At-risk of Failure)**

#### **English Language Learners**

**Native language support:** The teacher provides auditory or written content to students in their native language.

**Adjusted Speech:** The teacher changes speech patterns to increase student comprehension. This could include facing the students, paraphrasing, clearly indicating the most important ideas, and speaking more slowly.

**Visuals:** The teacher uses graphics, pictures, visuals, and manipulatives. This helps ELL students better understand and comprehend the subjects at hand.

**Front-Loading Vocabulary:** The teacher front loads vocabulary. This means providing students with a list of important vocabulary words they will need to know for a book, lesson, etc. prior to the lesson being taught. Including pictures to go with the vocabulary words is also very beneficial for the students.

#### **Special Education Students**

**Chunking:** The teacher presents information in a way that makes it easy for students to understand and remember. Chunking is based on the presumption that our working memory is easily overloaded by excessive detail. The best way to deliver information is to organize it into meaningful units. Because students with special needs get overloaded easily, chunking is an effective strategy to use with them.

**Checking for Understanding:** It is important to constantly check for understanding, especially for students who have accommodations. Teachers want to make sure students understand the concepts being covered in a way that makes sense to them.

**Extra time:** The teacher provides students with special needs extra time to complete work or answer questions. It is important to give students enough time to process their thoughts.

**Oral Reading:** The teacher will read work orally to students. Class work such as tests and literature circles may need to be read aloud to the student.

**Timers:** The teacher will use timers as an instructional tool. The use of timers is beneficial for students who have trouble completing tasks. Timers can be helpful so the student is aware of how much time they have to complete an assignment.

## **Students with 504 Plans**

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## **Gifted & Talented Strategies**

**Extensions/Enrichments:** Teachers will provide gifted and talented students with extension/enrichment projects. Students will be challenged to further their understanding, to apply acquired knowledge, and/or to produce something in reference to acquired knowledge.

**Modify/Change Activities:** Teachers will monitor and modify activities to accommodate those students who need to be challenged further. Additional reading, problem-solving, writing, or project work is necessary for those students who are ready to move on at a rate more accelerated than their peers. In this way, G & T students are provided the same opportunity for support as special needs

students.

## Students at Risk of School Failure

**Directions or Instructions:** Make sure directions and/or instructions are given in limited numbers. Give directions/instructions verbally and in simple written format. Ask students to repeat the instructions or directions to ensure understanding occurs. Check back with the student to ensure he/she hasn't forgotten.

**Peer Support:** Peers can help build confidence in other students by assisting in peer learning. Many teachers use the 'ask 3 before me' approach. This is fine, however, a student at risk may have to have a specific student or two to ask. Set this up for the student so he/she knows who to ask for clarification before going to you.

**Alternate or Modified Assignments:** Always ask yourself, "How can I modify this assignment to ensure the students at risk are able to complete it?" Sometimes you'll simplify the task, reduce the length of the assignment or allow for a different mode of delivery. For instance, many students may hand something in, the at-risk student may jot notes and give you the information verbally. Or, it just may be that you will need to assign an alternate assignment.

**Increase One to One Time:** When other students are working, always touch base with your students at risk and find out if they're on track or needing some additional support. A few minutes here and there will go a long way to intervene as the need presents itself.

**Contracts:** It helps to have a working contract between you and your students at risk. This helps prioritize the tasks that need to be done and ensure completion happens. Each day write down what needs to be completed, as the tasks are done, provide a checkmark or happy face. The goal of using contracts is to eventually have the student come to you for completion sign-offs.

**Hands On:** As much as possible, think in concrete terms and provide hands-on tasks. This means a child doing math may require a calculator or counters. The child may need to tape record comprehension activities instead of writing them. A child may have to listen to a story being read instead of reading it him/herself.

**Tests/Assessments:** Tests can be done orally if need be. Break tests down in smaller increments by having a portion of the test in the morning, another portion after lunch and the final part the next day.

**Seating:** Seat students near a helping peer or with quick access to the teacher. Those with hearing or sight issues need to be close to the instruction which often means near the front.