

Sevensteps

Theory Refresher

Seven Steps to Transform Writing

Workshop Two



Step 1: Plan for Success

Step 2: Sizzling Starts

Step 3: Tightening Tension

Step 4: Dynamic Dialogue

Step 5: Show, Don't Tell

Step 6: Ban the Boring

Step 7: Exciting Endings / Endings with Impact



Authorial side of writing



Writing involves two different groups of skills: authorial and secretarial.

Seven Steps focuses on the **authorial** side of writing.

The Five Secrets

Chunk

large tasks

Repetition

builds muscle
memory

Think

first, write second

Verbal

is vital

Consistency

creates change

Chunk
large tasks



Repetition

builds muscle
memory



Think

first, write second



Verbal

is vital



Consistency
creates change

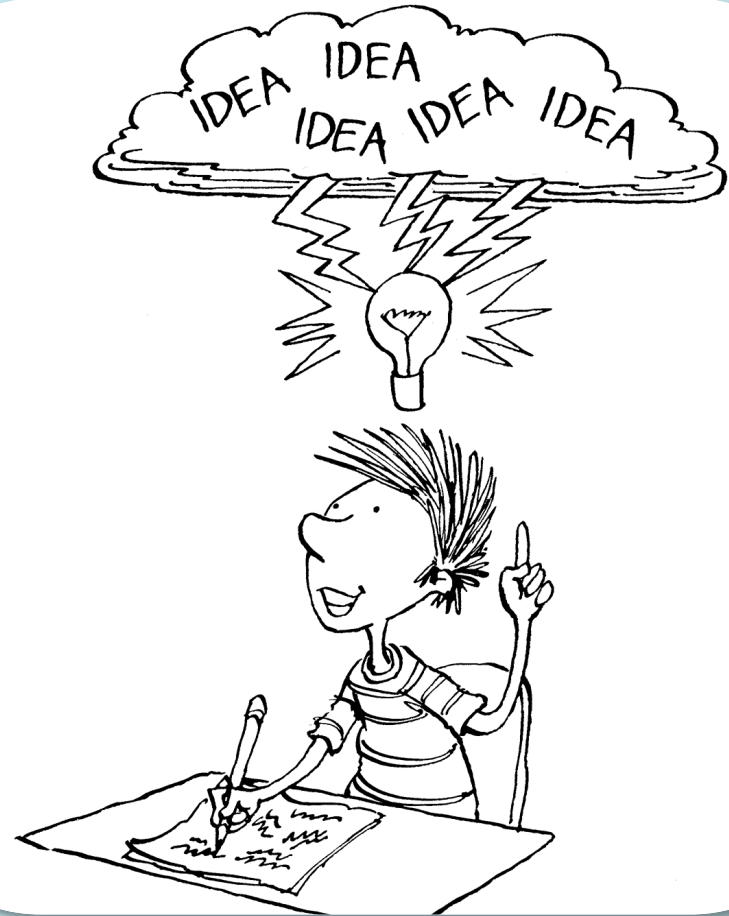




Step 1: Plan for Success

Theory

- Brainstorm multiple ideas to find the right one.
- Plot your ideas on the writing graph to plan the structure of your text.



Narrative

- Brainstorm 10 ideas to get one great story idea.

Informative

- Brainstorm questions as a starting point for your research.

Persuasive

- Brainstorm arguments for AND against before picking a side.

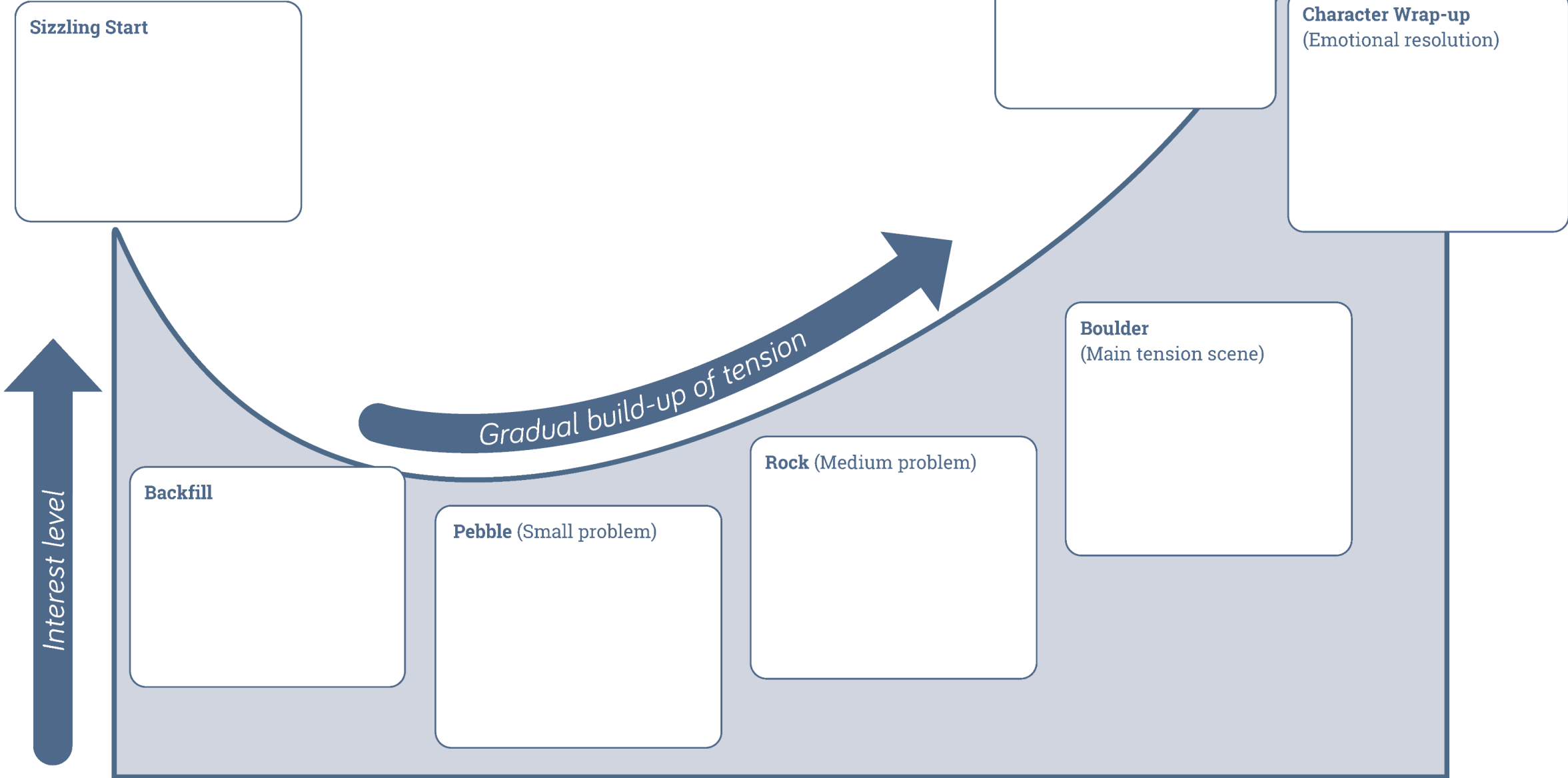
**These techniques work across
all types of texts.**

Planning for all text types:

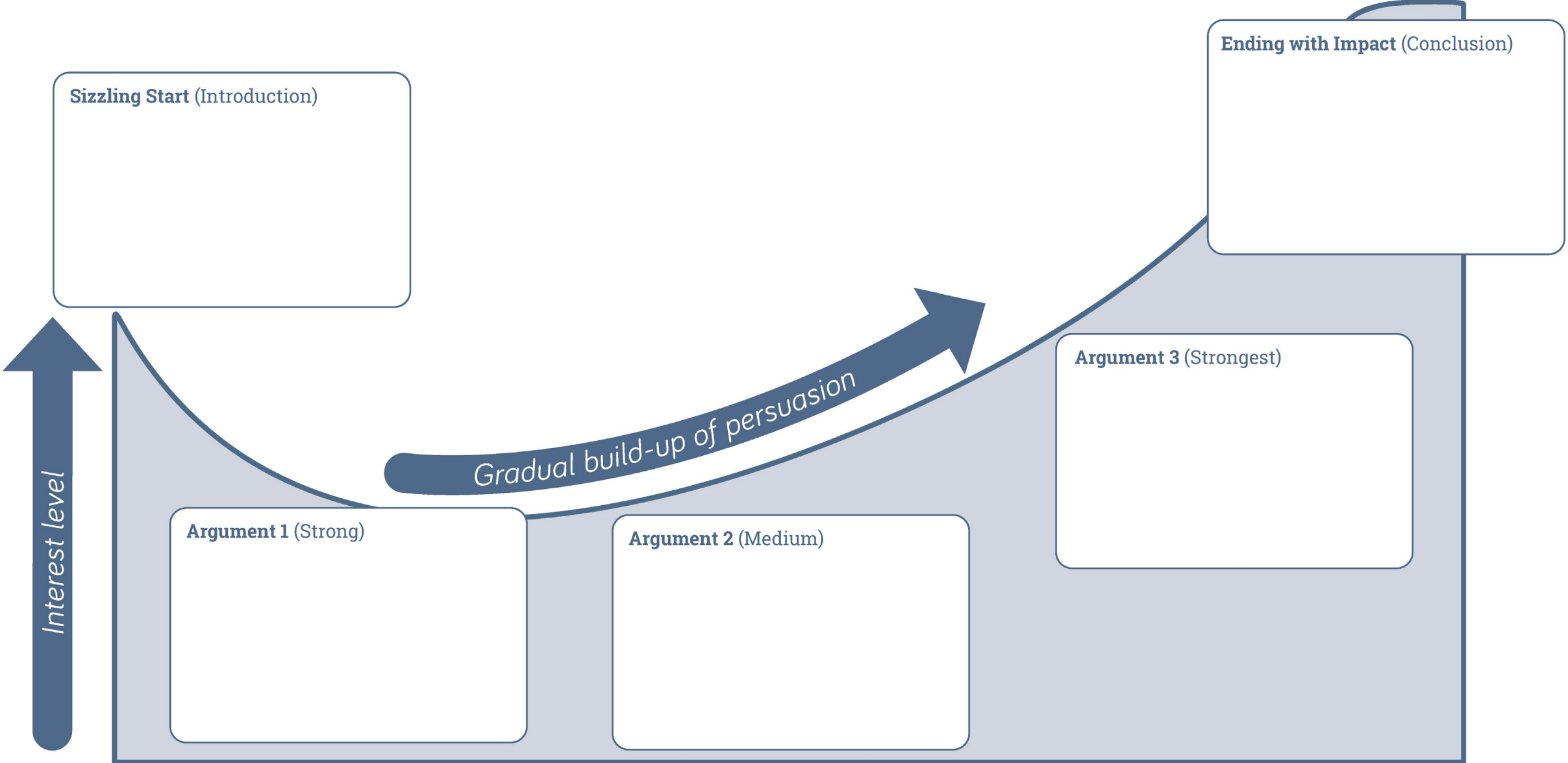
- Brainstorm ideas and plot them on the writing graphs
- Hook the reader with a Sizzling Start
- Build up the tension to a climax
- Finish with an Exciting Ending or Ending with Impact.



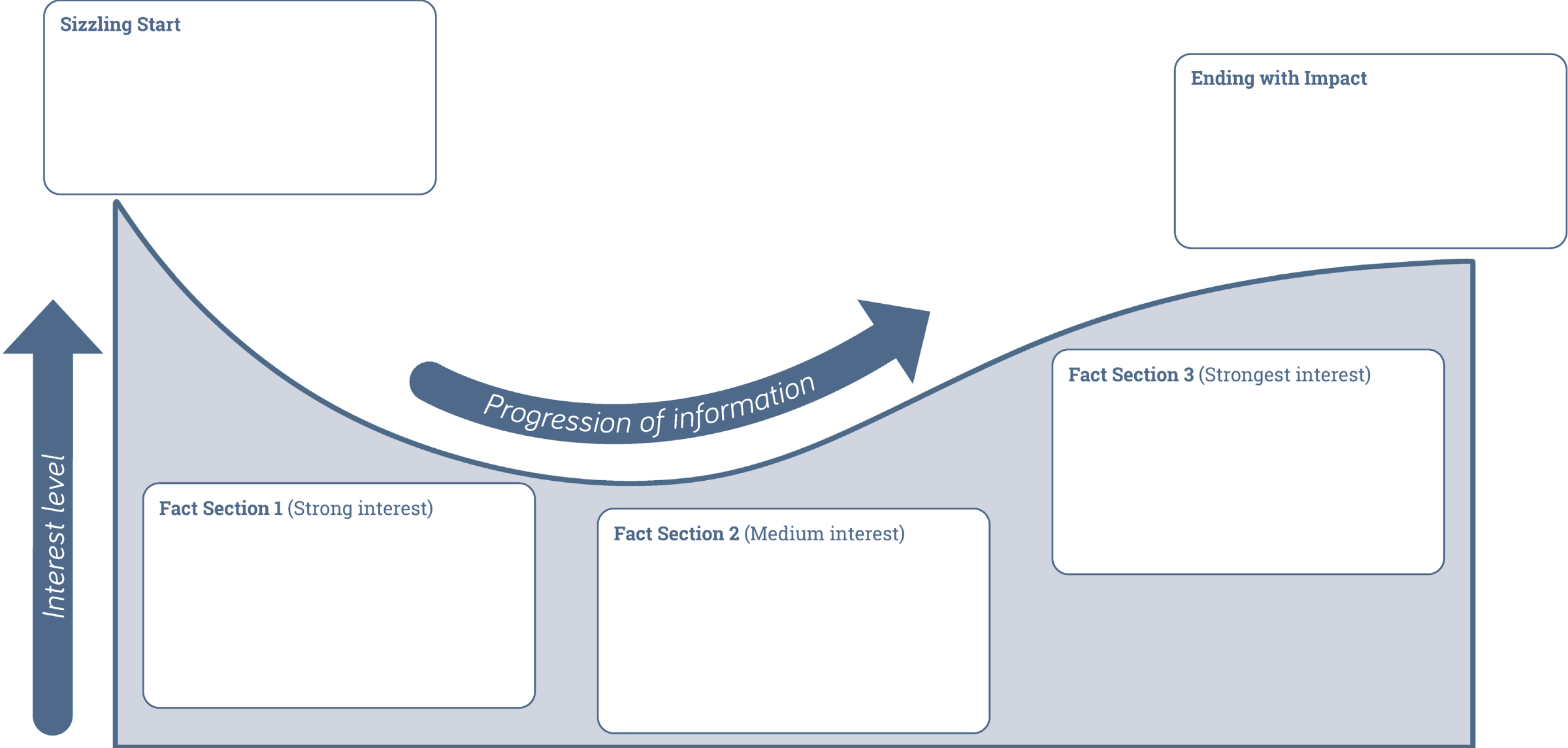
Narrative Story Graph



Persuasive Writing Graph



Informative Writing Graph



Over 70 picture writing prompts

Sevensteps

N



Step 1: Plan for Success

Who lives in the magical little house?

Brainstorm a list of characters and the special powers of the magic house.

Narrative

Sevensteps

P



Step 1: Plan for Success

Your younger sibling is scared to go to a birthday party.

Brainstorm five things you could say to reassure them.

Persuasive

Sevensteps

I



Step 1: Plan for Success

What does it take to become a professional athlete?

Brainstorm five ideas for a text about the topic.

Informative





Step 2: Sizzling Starts

Theory

Hook your reader immediately:

1. Start with action
2. Start at a moment of change
3. Start with a sound
4. Use humour
5. Start with dialogue (or a fight!)
6. Ask a question
7. Paint a word picture



Narrative

- Start at a **moment of change** or in the middle of the action.

Informative

- Hook the reader with an enticing fact or action that introduces your topic.

Persuasive

- Engage the reader immediately and start to persuade them.

Sizzling Starts in movies

- Raya and the Last Dragon
- Toy Story
- Finding Nemo
- Coco
- Up
- Luca





Step 3: Tightening Tension

Theory

- The reader must care about the characters.
- Escalate the tension: pebble, rock, boulder.
- Make the tension scene long and strong.



Narrative

- Put your character in a precarious situation and throw problems at them: pebble, rock, boulder!

Informative

- Write as if you're a witness to what's happening.

Persuasive

- Build to a crescendo that will persuade the reader.

Text and video lists

Step 3: Tightening Tension

Title	Source	Example	Target Audience
'Plot Device – Sci-Fi Action Comedy Short Film by Seth Worley'	https://youtu.be/itMHVpXo2IU (duration 9:09)	Comic masterpiece for older students. This video uses loads of standard cinematic tension devices one after the other.	Secondary
'Paddington Teaser Trailer'	https://youtu.be/X-d-V9jXYDE (duration 2:28)	Tension builds to a crescendo. Music starts slow and picks up pace as things go from bad to worse for Paddington.	Primary





Step 4: Dynamic Dialogue

Theory

- Dialogue makes writing more dynamic.
- BUT only if it serves a purpose.
- Must be short and powerful.



Narrative

- Use dialogue to bring characters and scenes to life

Informative

- Use quotations to convey information or move the action along

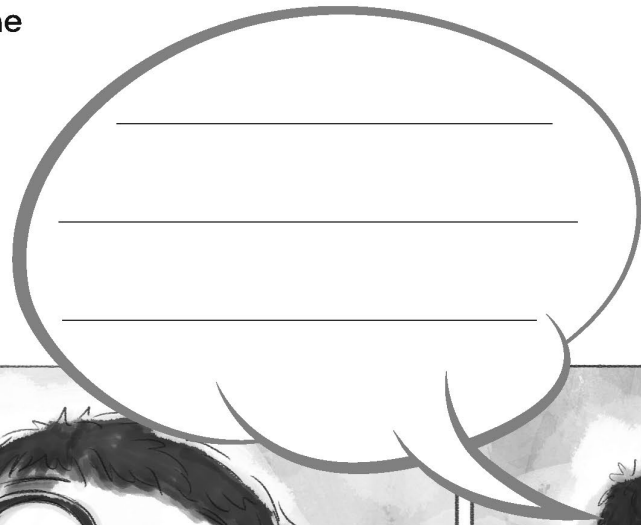
Persuasive

- Use quotations to support your argument and add authority



CREATE DIALOGUE

Create dialogue for the comic strip below.





**Step 5:
Show,
Don't Tell**

Theory

- **Show** rather than **tell** the reader to build empathy and understanding.
- Leave room for inference to engage the reader.



Narrative

- Use 'show' scenes and other signs throughout the text to let the reader infer meaning.

Informative

- Use a single example that shows the importance or impact of the topic.

Persuasive

- Facts alone don't persuade. Give evidence to convince the reader.

'Show' techniques in action



Look for advertisements that 'show', e.g.:

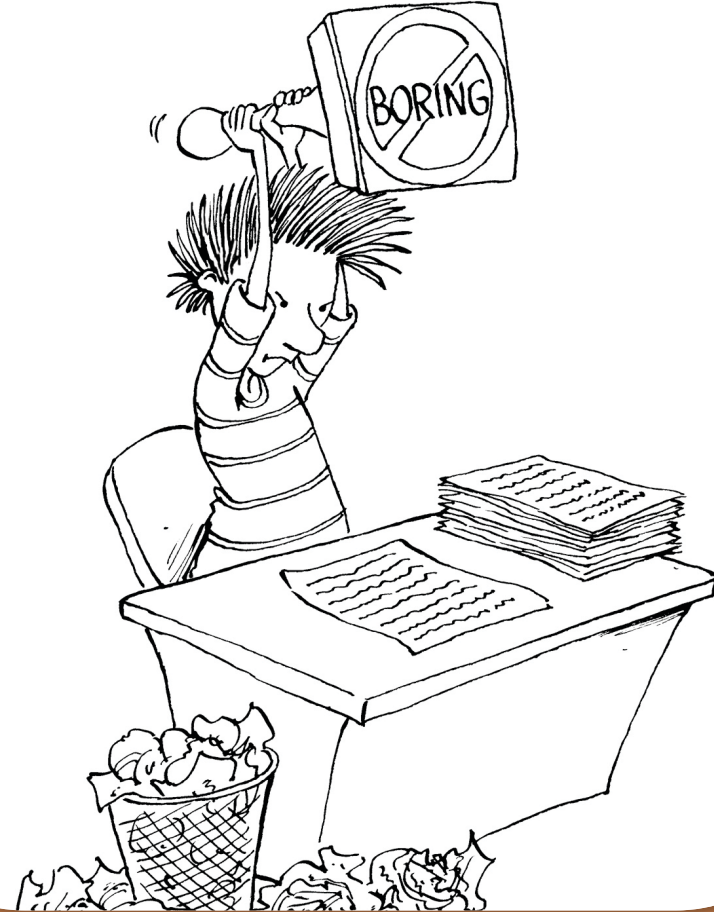
- Salvation Army
- World Vision
- Greenpeace



Step 6: Ban the Boring

Theory

- When students have learnt the Seven Steps, they'll be able to Ban the Boring as they write!
- Ban the Boring can also be used **after** writing as a creative editing tool.



Narrative

Ban:

- Travel
- Food
- Getting up and going to bed

Informative

Ban:

- Boring beginnings
- Repetitive sentences
- Boring endings

Persuasive

Ban:

- Putting all your ideas in the introduction
- 'Firstly, secondly, thirdly ...'

Deleted movie scenes



**DELETED
SCENE**

HD



Step 7: Exciting Endings / Endings with Impact

Theory

- A great ending can leave the reader satisfied, inspired or persuaded.
- Know how you want to end before you start writing.



Narrative

- There are two parts to a narrative ending:
 - action climax
 - emotional resolution.

Informative

- Don't just summarise your facts; leave the reader with something to think about.

Persuasive

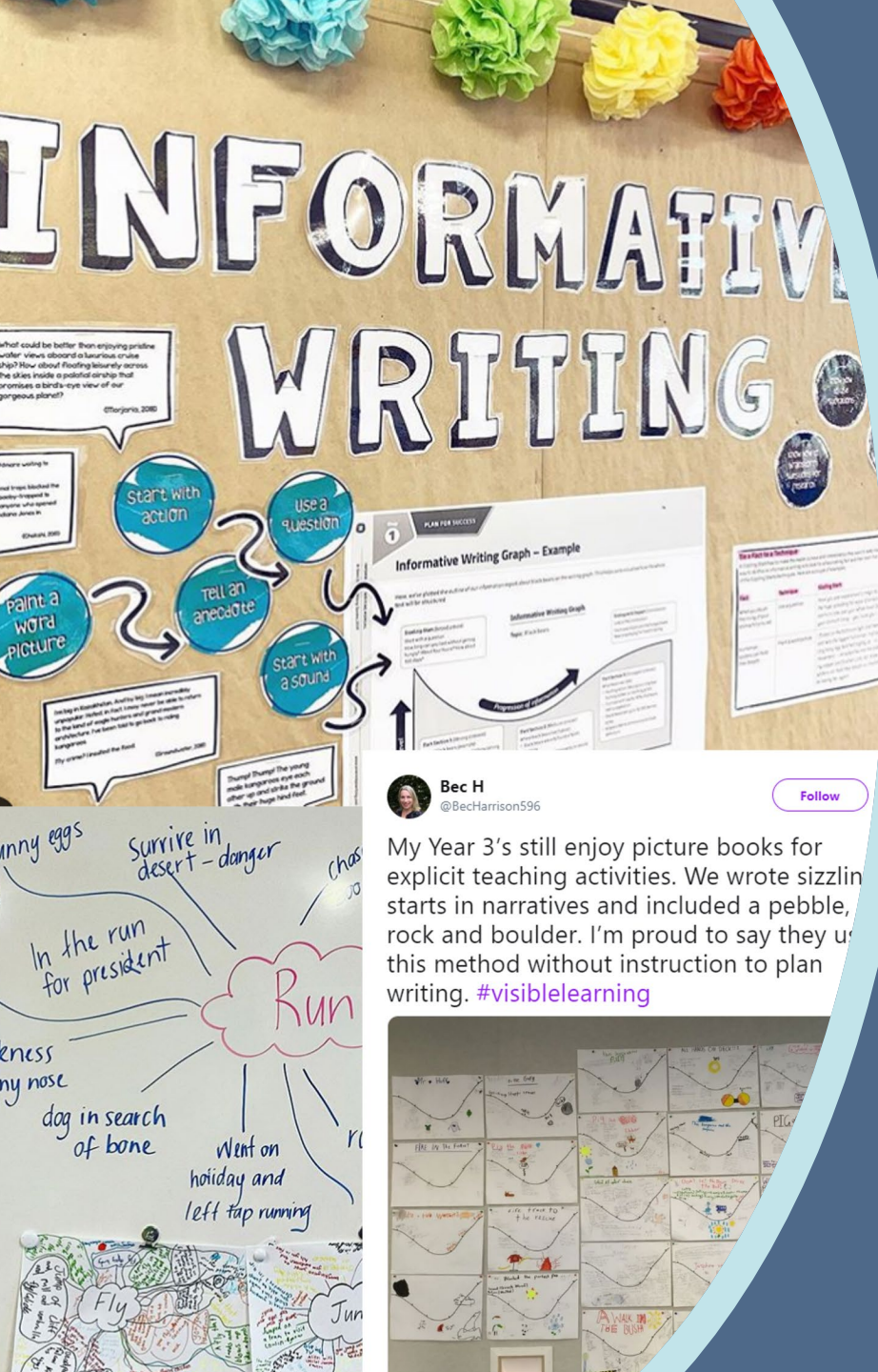
- Don't just summarise your arguments; convince the reader by engaging their emotions.

Text and video lists

Step 7: Endings with Impact

Title	Source	Example	Target Audience
Volkswagen: 'The Force'	https://youtu.be/6HugFW8rLZ8 (duration 1:03)	A funny and clever ending shows off the car's remote features.	Primary and secondary
St George Foundation commercial	https://youtu.be/_m3cgcjWoj4 (duration 0:59)	The ad ends with a question and a call to action.	Primary and secondary
British Red Cross commercial	https://youtu.be/2roAHJ6SDLs (duration 1:03)	Ends with a call to action: 'A donation from you today could help buy essential food or provide clean drinking water ... with your help, we can help.'	Upper primary





Stay connected and inspired ...

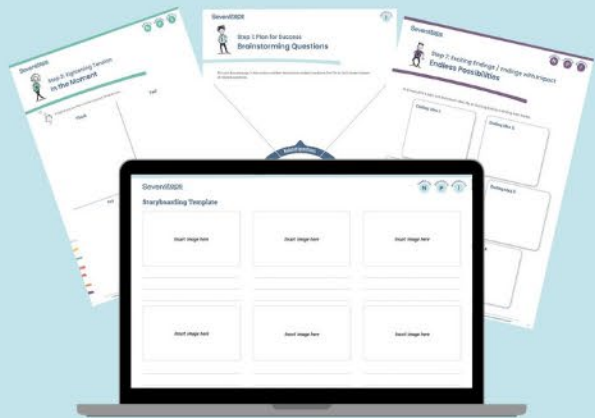
- Follow us @sevenstepswriting
- Search #sevenstepswriting for ideas and inspiration
- Tag us in your posts!



Bec H
@BecHarrison596

My Year 3's still enjoy picture books for explicit teaching activities. We wrote sizzlin starts in narratives and included a pebble, rock and boulder. I'm proud to say they used this method without instruction to plan writing. #visiblelearning





Sevensteps

Classroom Practice Video: Box of Goodies




Action Activity – Wonder Wall

Creating a 'Wonder Wall' when you begin a new topic is a great way to generate questions collectively and keep them visible.

As a class, watch a video clip, read a book or take part in an incursion related to your topic of study.

Pose the question: What does this video/book/incursion make you wonder about? Then get students to write any questions that they have about the




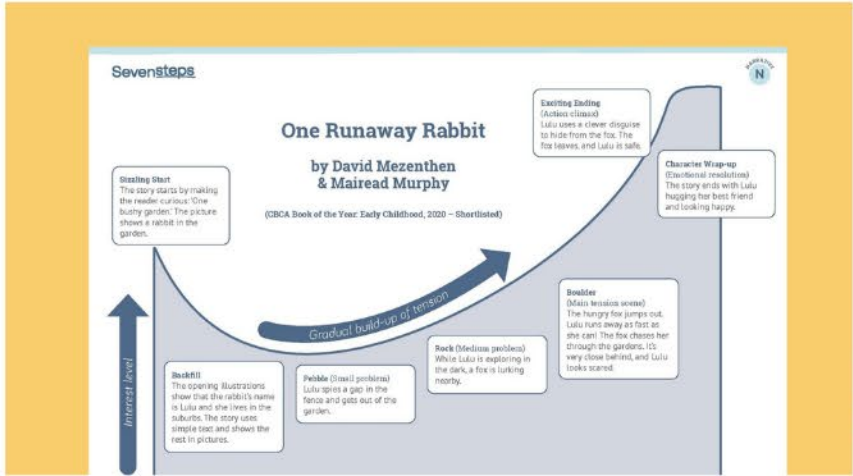
Action Activity – Listen Up

Identify elements of a story in different narrative texts to show students that stories often have a similar structure.

Listen to authors reading their picture books and discuss the following elements of the story: Sizing Start, Pebble, Rock, Boulder, Exciting Ending.

Here are a few suggested links to get you started:

- Authors Read Their Picture Books (collection) <https://youtube.com/watch?v=5k191st-5kank&list=PLm7xw0Wc2K-05s30e8v8iud>
- There's a Hippopotamus on Our Roof Eating Cocoa by Hazel Edwards (duration 8:27)

Online Learning

Narrative Writing Course

Welcome to our Narrative Writing Course, a Step-by-Step guide to transforming students into passionate storytellers. Discover how to get the creative juices flowing in your narrative writing lessons and create unique and engaging stories that entertain an audience.


9 modules 9 videos 149 resources

0% course progress

Select a Course Module

Module 1

Module 2



Writing courses on Teacher Hub



- Learn or refresh your knowledge of the Seven Steps
- Find out how to **teach, apply** and **assess** each Step
- Create your own customised teaching plan

SPECIAL OFFER: Save 40% on the Tool Kit!



Purchase a Teacher Hub School Subscription with a Tool Kit and save!

The Five Secrets

Chunk

large tasks

Repetition

builds muscle
memory

Think

first, write second

Verbal

is vital

Consistency

creates change

Step 1: Plan for Success

Step 2: Sizzling Starts

Step 3: Tightening Tension

Step 4: Dynamic Dialogue

Step 5: Show, Don't Tell

Step 6: Ban the Boring

Step 7: Exciting Endings / Endings with Impact



© Highlighting Writing Pty Ltd, 2021
(trading as 'Seven Steps to Writing Success')

Based on Seven Steps to Writing Success, created by Jen
McVeity.

