# Case Study on Self-Regulated Strategy Development:
## STOP & LIST Strategy for Two Fourth Grade Students with Writing Difficulties

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## Introduction

- Writing is a complex process which includes cognitive linguistic skills such as transcription, text generation, self-regulation, and memory. Students with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) or Communication Impairments (CI) can exhibit difficulty with any combination of these skills requiring intervention that includes explicit instruction and scaffolding at multiple levels of language to improve writing skills.
- According to Ritchey et al. (2016), development of the writing process in children centers around the Simple View of Writing (Berninger & Amtmann, 2003) and includes instructional scaffolds and a levels of language framework.
- One evidence-based approach to writing instruction is Self Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) whereby a student is taught a writing strategy through six recursive phases: (1) Develop background knowledge, (2) Discuss it, (3) Model it, (4) Memorize it, (5) Support it, and (6) Independent performance (Graham & Harris, 2005).

## Purpose

- The purpose of this case study was to provide an intensive intervention targeting planning and organization in 2 students with writing difficulties using an SRSD.
- The self-regulated strategy was STOP and LIST, which stands for **S**top **T**hink **O**f **P**urpose and **L**ist **I**deas **S**equence **T**hem (Graham & Harris, 2005).
- STOP and LIST is a planning strategy, which encourages students to generate and organize ideas as part of the writing process.

**References:**
- Berninger, V.W., & Amtmann, D. (2003). Preventing written expression disabilities through early and continuing assessment and intervention for handwriting and/or spelling problems: research into practice. In H.L. Swanson, K. Harris, and S. Graham (Eds.) Handbook of Learning Difficulties (pp. 345-363), New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Graham, S. & Harris, K.R. (2005). Writing better: Effective strategies for teaching students with learning difficulties. Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing.
- Ritchey, K. D., McMaster, K. L., Al Otaiba, S., Puranik, C. S., Kim, Y.-S., Parker, D. C., & Ortiz, M. (2016). Indicators of fluency writing in beginning writers. In K. Cummings, & Y. Petscher (Eds.), The fluency construct (pp. 21-66). Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

## Case History

To protect the identity of students, the pseudonyms A.B. and C.D. are used throughout.

| | Age | Gender | Grade | IEP Qualifying Mandate | Classroom Mandate |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Student A.B.** | 11 years | Male | 4th Grade | Communication Impairment | Inclusion Classroom |
| **Student C.D.** | 10 years | Female | 4th Grade | Communication Impairment | Inclusion Classroom |

## Intervention

This Intervention was provided 2x per week for 30 minutes to the pair of students, resulting in 6 sessions across 3 weeks. The intervention took place in a speech therapy classroom.



## Results

| A.B.; C.D. | Complexity | | Productivity | | Accuracy | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Pre-Test** | **Post-Test** | **Pre-Test** | **Post-Test** | **Pre-Test** | **Post-Test** |
| **Word Level** | 90%; 90% | 100%; 100% | n/a | n/a | 92.4%; 97.5% | 98.8%; 99.8% |
| **Sentence Level** | 3.3; 3.2 | 2.6; 3.25 | n/a | n/a | 98.4%, 99% | 98.8%, 99.8% |
| **Discourse Level** | 100%; 89% | 100%; 95% | 38; 78 | 78; 70 | 3; 3.75 | 3.5; 4.0 |

- **Complexity** was determined at the word level by the *Type-Token Ratio of the first 10 words*; at the sentence level by *Clauses per Sentence*, and at the discourse level by *Percent of Completed Cohesive Ties.*

- **Productivity** was determined at the discourse level only in the *Total Number of Words (TNW).*

- **Accuracy** was determined at the word level by *Proportion of Spelling Errors to Total Number of Words*, at the sentence level by *Grammatical Errors per Sentence,* and at the discourse level by *Quality Ratings (1 to 4).*

- A measure of **global and local coherence** was applied to writing samples as an indicator of discourse level coherence to the topic (global) and between sentences (local).

| Coherence (A.B.; C.D.) | Pre-Test | Post-Test |
|---|---|---|
| Global | 3.7; 1.8 | 3.0; 2.0 |
| Local | 4.0; 1.6 | 2.5; 2.5 |

## Summary

- This case study demonstrated the effectiveness of the STOP and LIST strategy on the planning and organization of the writing process for two 4th grade students in a short period of time.
- Improvements were observed in:
  - **Complexity-** Both students wrote more unique words, fewer clauses per sentence (removed excessive or run-on sentences), and increased total cohesive ties used from pre- to post-test.
  - **Productivity-** Both students increased the length of sample in total number of words on post-test.
  - **Accuracy-** Both students had fewer spelling and grammatical errors from pre- to post-test.
  - **Coherence -** Both students transcribed more coherent samples, resulting in more focused, on-topic writing between sentences and to the topic.

## Conclusions

- Overall, the SRSD used, STOP and LIST, proved to be successful in helping two students with writing difficulties better plan and organize their writing. Once they mastered the skill using the SRSD strategy, their writing became more complex, accurate, lengthy, and coherent.
- It was important to target these goals in speech language therapy because writing is a modality of language, and the students will need these skills to achieve academic success in writing.

Limitations and Future Directions:

- To improve this intervention, it is recommended to provide explicit instruction and modeling on how to outline ideas when planning, using a bullet-point or other strategy, and then later turn these ideas into complete and elaborated sentences. This was a missed step in the current study as the students lacked this skill. This skill should be taught as a separate data-based intervention before teaching the STOP & LIST strategy.
- At the end of the intervention, the clinician must support classroom carryover of the skill in order to promote generalization.