Mat 2a: Narrative Writing: Beginning, Middle, End

Mat 2a builds on the sentence writing skills from Mat 1. With Mat 2a, combine three sentences to form a story with a beginning, a middle, and an end. The directions and mat are identified by the tree symbol.

Students: Plan your idea by drawing or writing the beginning, middle, and end of your story. Then write one sentence for each part.

Use QR code to access a video of how to use the mat!
The dog jumps.

Do your sentences?
- begin with a capital letter?
- include a who or what the sentence is about?
- include what your who/what is doing?
- end with punctuation (., ?!)

SOME WORDS TO USE:

CHECK YOUR GRIP:

CHECK YOUR WORK:

PARTS OF A SENTENCE:
The dog jumps.
Parents/Caregivers/Teachers: The tri-pod pencil grip is the recommended way to hold a writing utensil (pencil, pen, marker, etc.). One tip for practicing the grip is to first lay the pencil/writing utensil on a flat surface with the tip pointing towards the writing hand. Have your child/student hold/pinch the utensil with their thumb and index finger (1st finger next to the thumb) close to the tip of the utensil. Then, while still holding the tip, have them flip the end of the utensil over, with the other hand; so, it is resting on the hand between the thumb and index finger. Now, slide the 2nd finger over the support the other side of the pencil. The index finger and your thumb do most of the work, while your second finger helps to keep the pencil in place. Check to make sure your child/student is not holding on too tightly. You will see a visual of the grip to use as a model on the mat.

Students: Take a look at the picture of someone holding a pencil. Try to use this grip when holding your pencil or anything you use to write. You will see that your 1st finger and your thumb do most of the work, while your 2nd finger helps to keep the pencil in place. Be careful not to squeeze too tightly. Check your grip whenever you are writing.

Parents/Caregivers/Teachers: The mat includes a model of the alphabet in lowercase and uppercase printed letters. The letters are printed with dashed lines so they can be used for tracing practice. For example, your child/student could trace each letter and then say the name of the letter, or they can trace the letters in their name. The alphabet can also be used while writing to help remember how to form each letter.

Students: At the top of your mat, you have the alphabet written in uppercase (capital) and lowercase print. The letters are dashed so you can practice tracing the letters. Also, use the letters to help you spell words while you write.

Parents/Caregivers/Teachers: Another part of the mat is a place to write words your child/student may want to use in their story. You can write words that you believe would be difficult for them to write independently. You could also ask them if there are any words that they would like to include in their writing. For example, if their story is about a trip to the park with their dog, Tahlula, you would write the dog’s name in a box. You may also want to write the words walk and park. Of course, you want to encourage them to sound out the words and spell them the best that they can using what they know about letters and sounds, so don’t write all the words they will need. Limit this to words that they would not be able to sound out on their own.

Students: Now that you have your idea and a plan for what you will write, think about some words that you might need help to write your story. Don’t forget that your spelling does not need to be perfect; use what you know about letters and sounds to spell the words on your own too.
Parents/Caregivers/Teachers: You will see a space to plan your story on the left side of the mat. Planning is an important part of the writing process because it helps your child/student think about what they want to write and how they will put their ideas onto the paper. Help your child/student organize what they would like to write by thinking about what happened at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of their story. They can draw a picture or jot down some notes in each box. Be sure to have them tell you about their ideas before or after they draw a picture or write their notes in the boxes.

Students: On the left side of your mat, you have a space to plan what you want to write. Take a few minutes to think about your story idea. Then, draw a picture or write some notes in the boxes for the beginning, middle, and end of your story. Don’t forget to share your idea with someone or say it aloud to yourself.

Parents/Caregivers/Teachers: You will see an example sentence in the bottom right-hand corner of the mat. Take a few minutes to read the example sentence and talk about the important parts of a complete sentence. Starting at the beginning of the sentence and moving left to right, point out the part of the sentence. First, the sentence begins with a capital letter. Next the sentence must include a subject or the who or what the sentence is about. Then the sentence must include a predicate. A predicate is a verb or the action happening in the sentence. It tells what the subject of the sentence is doing/has done/will do. Finally, the sentence ends with some kind of punctuation. This could be a period, question mark, or exclamation mark, depending on the sentence. Ask them to think about these parts while they are writing.

Students: Before you start writing, take a look at the sentence in the bottom corner of the mat. You will see that the sentence begins with a capital letter [The]. Your sentence must include a subject, this is the who or what your sentence is about [dog]. You will also need a predicate (verb) that tells what the who or what is doing/has done/will do [jumps]. Finally, you will need to end your sentence with some kind of punctuation. It will change depending on your sentence. If you are telling something, use a period [. ]. If you are asking something, use a question mark [ ? ], and if you are excited or want to emphasize something, use an exclamation mark [ ! ].

Parents/Caregivers/Teachers: Your child/student will complete the writing portion of the mat. Using the drawing or notes and the words recorded on the mat, have your child/student write at least one sentence for each part of the story—the beginning, middle, and end. If the mat is printed, have your child/student use a pencil. If the mat is in a plastic sheet protector, have your child/student use a dry- or wet-erase marker with a thin point.

Students: Now it’s time to write! Use the lines on the mat to write about your idea. Look at your drawings or notes and the words on the mat. Then, include sentences for the beginning, middle, and end of your story. You should have at least three sentences. Use a pencil if the mat is printed. Use a thin point dry- or wet-erase marker if the mat is in a sheet protector. Have fun!

Parents/Caregivers/Teachers: After your child/student is finished writing their story, have them read it aloud. Ask them to check if each sentence makes sense and communicates what they want it to say. Your child/student may need to add, take away, or change the words at this time. Then, help your child/student use the sentence writing checklist to make sure that they have included all the important parts of a sentence. If they are missing any of the parts, prompt your child/student to go back and revise their sentence to include what is missing. Remember to have them use the model sentence to help them check.

Students: After you finish writing your story, read it aloud and check if it makes sense. You can always add or take away parts until your sentences say what you wanted them to say, and the story makes sense. The last step is to use the checklist to make sure you have included all the important parts of a sentence. If not, go back and add them. You can use the model sentence to help you check.