Mat 1: Sentence Writing Mat

This writing mat has a single-sentence focus. The directions and mat are identified by the tree symbol, meaning it is for young writers at a beginner level.

Students: Draw a picture to help you plan your story idea and then write a sentence to share your idea.

Use QR code to access a video of how to use the mat!
LET’S WRITE:

Draw a picture of your idea.

Some words to use:

- beginning
- capital letter
- who or what
- is doing or did
- ending punctuation (., ? !)

Parts of a sentence:

The dog jumps.

Check your work:

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

Check your grip:

TRACING LETTERS:

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

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Mat 1: Sentence Writing Mat Guide

Print out the page to write on it with a pencil. You also can place the printed page in a plastic sheet protector to use with a dry- or wet-erase marker with a thin point.

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 pinch the utensil with their thumb and index finger (first finger next to the thumb) close to the tip of the utensil. Then, while still holding the tip, have your child/student use their other hand to flip the end of the utensil over so that it is resting between the thumb and index finger of the hand holding the utensil. Now, slide the second finger of that hand over to support the other side of the pencil. 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 first finger and your thumb do most of the work, while your second 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. They also might trace the letters in their name or use the alphabet 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 that you can practice tracing the letters. Also, use the letters to help you write the letters in the words of your sentence.

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

Parents/Caregivers/Teachers: On the left side of the mat, you will see a space for your child/student to plan their sentence. 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. Encourage your child to think of something they would like to write about. For example, they may want to write about a family pet, a trip to the park, a special event, or a favorite toy. Be sure to have your child/student tell you about their idea before or after they draw a picture of their idea.

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 idea. Then, draw a picture of this in the box. Don’t forget to share your idea with someone or say it aloud to yourself.

**PARTS OF A SENTENCE:**

The dog jumps.

**CHECK YOUR WORK:**

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 parts 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. The sentence also 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. Depending on the sentence, this could be a period, question mark, or exclamation mark. Ask your child/student 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 also will need a predicate (verb) that tells what the subject 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 [ ! ].

Students: After you finish writing your sentence, read it aloud and check to see if it makes sense. You can always add or take away parts of your sentence until it says what you wanted it to say and 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.