



# Writing Mat 4a: Expository Writing- Sequence (First, Next, Then, Last)

Mat 4a builds on skills from Mats 1, 2, and 3. With Mat 4a, use a specific structure to write sentences about a sequence of events happening in a specific order. The directions and mat are identified by the star symbol, meaning it is for young writers with intermediate abilities.

**Students: Plan your idea by writing sentences about an idea or topic that has different steps or that happens in a specific order. Use the words First, Next, Then, and Last to guide your writing. Write a sentence for each step.**

  
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Use QR code to  
access a video of  
how to use the mat!



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**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  
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

**SOME WORDS TO USE:**


**TIME TO PLAN:**

First

Next

Then

Last



**LET'S WRITE:**

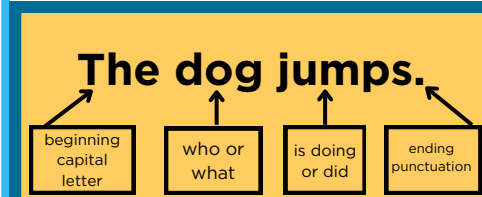
Handwriting practice lines consisting of blue top and bottom lines and a red middle line, with 12 rows available for writing.

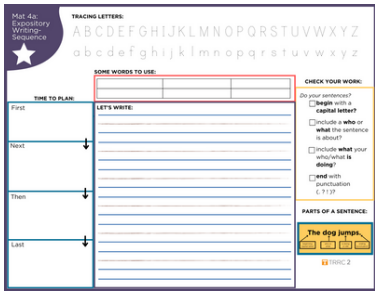
**CHECK YOUR WORK:**

*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 (. ? !)?

**PARTS OF A SENTENCE:**





# Mat 4a Guide: Expository Writing-Sequence (Intermediate) 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.**

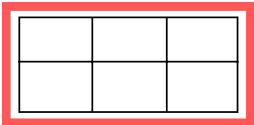
## TRACING LETTERS:



**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 also can 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 that you can practice tracing the letters. Also, use the letters to help you spell words while you write.

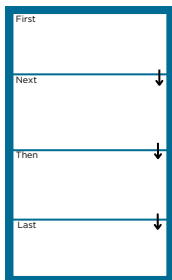
## SOME WORDS TO USE:



**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 also could 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 also may want to write the words *walk* and *park*. Of course, you want to encourage them 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 might help you write your story. You can write these in the Words to Use box, or your parent/caregiver/teacher can write the words for you. Don't forget that your spelling does not need to be perfect. Use what you know about letters and sounds to spell the words.

## TIME TO PLAN:



**Parents/Caregivers/Teachers:** On the left side of the mat, you will see a space for your child/student to plan the sequence for their topic. 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 giving an example of a sequence, such as a recipe, that happens in steps. Think about what comes First, Next, Then, and Last. Your child/student can jot some notes in each box. Be sure to have your child/student tell you about their ideas before or after they 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 the sequence of your topic. Then, write some notes in the boxes about what happens First, Next, Then, and Last. Don't forget to share your idea with someone or say it aloud to yourself.

## PARTS OF A SENTENCE:



**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 [ ! ].

## LET'S WRITE:

**Parents/Caregivers/Teachers:** Your child/student will complete the writing portion of the mat. Using the notes and the words recorded on the mat, have your child/student write at least one sentence for each step of the sequence: First, Next, Then, and Last. Encourage your child/student to write at least four sentences—one for each of the labeled planning boxes. 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 notes and the words on the mat. Then, write at least one sentence for each step of your sequence: First, Next, Then, and Last. You should have at least four 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!

## 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 (. ? !)?

**Parents/Caregivers/Teachers:** After your child/student is finished writing the sequence of their topic, 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 the sequence of your topic, 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.