



Writing Mat 1: Sentence Writing

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 the QR
code to access
a video on how
to use the mat!

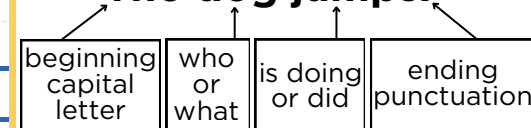
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

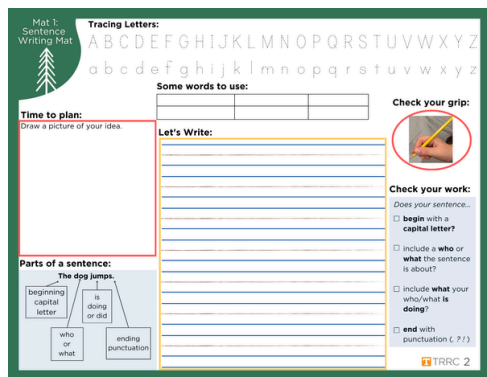
Draw a picture of your idea.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue lines and a vertical red margin line on the left. The paper is oriented vertically and appears to be a standard notebook page. There are no markings or text on the page.

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

The dog jumps.





Writing Mat 1 Guide: Sentence Writing

Print out the page and 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.

CHECK YOUR GRIP:



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 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 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 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.

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 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.

SOME WORDS TO USE:

Parents/Caregivers/Teachers: Another part of the mat is a place to write words your 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 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 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 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:

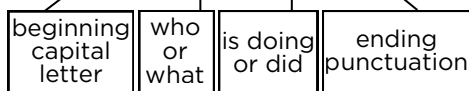
Draw a picture of your idea.

Parents/Caregivers/Teachers: On the left side of the mat, you will see a space for your student to plan their sentence. Planning is an important part of the writing process because it helps your student think about what they want to write and how they will put their ideas onto the paper. Encourage your student 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 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:

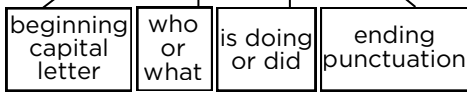
The dog jumps.



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.

PARTS OF A SENTENCE:

The dog jumps.



Continued

Depending on the sentence, this could be a period, question mark, or exclamation mark. Ask your 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 student will complete the writing portion of the mat. Using the drawing and words recorded on the mat, have your student write at least one sentence on the lines provided. If the mat is printed, have your student use a pencil. If the mat is in a plastic sheet protector, have your student use a dry- or wet-erase marker with a thin point.

Students: Now it's time to write! Look at your drawing and the words on the mat. Then, write a sentence about your idea on the lines of the mat. Use a pencil on a printed mat. Use a thin point dry- or wet-erase marker on a plastic 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 student is finished writing their sentence, have them read it aloud and check to see if the sentence makes sense and says what they want it to say. They may need to add, take away, or change the words at this time. Then, help your student use the sentence writing checklist to check that they have included all the important parts of a sentence. If they are missing any of the parts, prompt your student to go back and revise their sentence to include what is missing. Remember to have your student use the model sentence to help them check.

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.