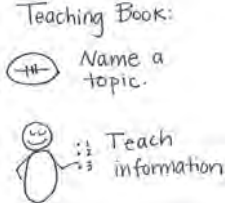
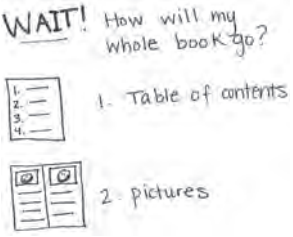
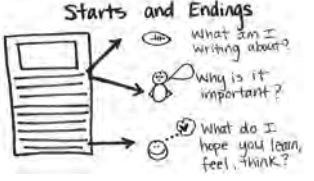







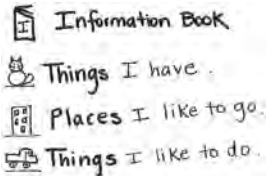
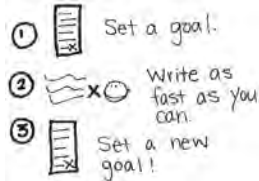
Information Writing

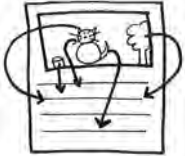

If . . .	After acknowledging what the child is doing well, you might say . . .	Leave the writer with . . .
<p>Structure and Cohesion</p> <p>The writer is new to this particular genre. This writer may actually write in another genre. Instead of writing an information book about her topic (“All About Dogs”), she may end up writing a narrative about her topic (“One day I took my dog for a walk.”)</p>	<p>You’ve got a nice start to a story here. You are telling one thing that happened—you took your dog for a walk.</p> <p>But actually, right now we are writing all-about pieces. The pieces we are writing now aren’t stories; they are all-about nonfiction books that teach people true stuff about a topic. One thing that you want to do as a writer is to teach your reader the information about the topic, rather than tell them a story about one time when something happened to you. To do this, one thing you might do is to name the topic and the information that you can teach your reader. Say the list across your fingers, and then you can draw and write it across pages.</p>	<p>Teaching Book:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name a topic • Teach information <p>(You may leave the writer a couple of nonfiction books from the leveled library to help her remember what an information book is.)</p> 
<p>The writer has included facts as he thinks about them. This writer tends to write without planning. He starts writing any information that comes to mind and in any order. The result is a text with information that is not grouped together on a page or in a chapter.</p>	<p>You know what I think is happening? You have so much to say that when you pick up your pen, you just start writing right away, without thinking, “Wait. How will my book go?” I’m glad you have a lot to teach, but now that you are getting to be almost seven years old, I think you are old enough to do what professional writers do—the people who write the books in our library. When they sit down to write a book, instead of just starting by writing one thing that comes to mind, they say, “Wait a minute. How will my whole book go?” and then they plan out what they will write about on one page, and on another page.</p> <p>Are you willing to try that planning while I am here to help? Yes?! Great. And after this, whenever you go to write a book, remember to do like the pros and to say, “Wait! How will my whole book go?”</p> <p>Then you can plan by making a Table of Contents, or by sketching what goes on each page.</p>	<p>Wait! How will my whole book go?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Table of Contents 2. Pictures 

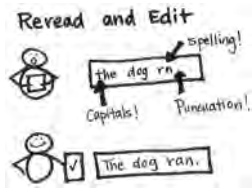
If . . .	After acknowledging what the child is doing well, you might say . . .	Leave the writer with . . .
<p>The writer does not have a clear beginning and/or ending to his text.</p> <p>This writer tends to start (and possibly end as well) his books with an information page that seems as if it is just randomly chosen.</p>	<p>I want to ask you to do something. Pretend the phone is ringing, and lift up the receiver, okay? "Ring, ring."</p> <p>The child says: "Hello?"</p> <p>"And then he stopped seeing his patients. He just wrote them letters and said he was too old to be their Goodbye."</p> <p>I stopped. How would that be as a phone conversation? Pretty weird, right? I agree. It would be weird because there wasn't any start to it, or any finish. There was no introduction, no overview, and there was no closing.</p> <p>I am telling you this because your writing seems to go like that a lot. Your book just starts in teaching something about your topic. There isn't any place where you talk to the reader and you tell the reader what the whole book will be about and why you have written it, that sort of thing.</p> <p>Do you want to study the way other people start books and see if you want to begin starting your books in a more usual way? If you decide to change the way you start books so it is more usual, who knows, you might end up thinking about the way you end books as well.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">* * *</p> <p>One thing that writers do to end their information book is they think about the topic and why it is important to know and learn about. Sometimes writers tell their readers what they hope for in the future.</p>	<p>Starts and Endings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What am I writing about? • Why is it important? • What do I hope you learn, think, feel? 
Elaboration		
<p>The writer provides information in vague or broad ways.</p> <p>This writer's books are list-like, with broad terms and few supporting details. "Dogs play. Dogs eat. Dogs sleep."</p>	<p>When you are teaching information, it is important to teach your reader lots of information—on every page, you teach the reader some information.</p> <p>One way that writers think up details to teach is by thinking, "What would readers want to know about my topic? What questions would they ask?" Then writers answer those questions.</p>	<p>Page 1: Information Page 2: Information Page 3: Information</p> <p>Ask and Answer Questions: Why? When? How?</p> 

If . . .	After acknowledging what the child is doing well, you might say . . .	Leave the writer with . . .
<p>The writer uses one way to elaborate in her writing.</p> <p>This writer has one strategy that she overuses to elaborate. For example, she makes comparisons for <i>every</i> fact that she writes.</p>	<p>You have gotten really good at comparing, haven't you? You compared here, here, here, here. I am glad you have learned to do that, and you are right that practicing so much has made it so you will always, after this, remember that one way to elaborate on a fact when you are writing an all-about book is to make readers really think about that fact by comparing it to something else.</p> <p>But here is the thing. You are actually doing that one thing—comparing—too much. In fact, you are doing it <i>way</i> too much.</p> <p>As you become sort of like a professional writer, you are going to want to go from writing like a kid to writing like a pro. You know how little kids, when they learn to use exclamation points, start using them all the time . . . Yeah, they sometimes use whole lines of exclamation points. Well, you are sort of doing the same thing with comparing. You are overusing it.</p> <p>But you are right to want to elaborate, to say more, about a fact before moving on. It's just that the best way to elaborate is to have a little list of different ways you can do that, and then to draw on that whole list of ways. Would you and your partner be willing to work together and start a short list of different ways to elaborate? Then we'll share this list with the rest of the class and get their ideas, too.</p>	<p>A mini-chart from the classroom to help her remember and think about how she can say more in her writing.</p> <p>You may decide to leave the writer with a Post-it that says, "How else can I describe or teach about my information?" You will want to tell the writer to use the chart in the classroom.</p>
<p>The writer writes with lots of good information but it is in helter-skelter order.</p> <p>This writer may have written about two, three, or even four different topics in one book. Or, he may not know how to organize his information.</p>	<p>You know what, your writing hops back and forth from one topic to another to the first again . . . like it is about bears, then dogs, then bears again, then dogs, then rabbits, then bears . . . it is sort of <i>crazy!</i> Usually what a writer does is she puts all the pages that are about one thing together, with a title, and all the pages about something different together, with a title.</p> <p>Maybe you want to use jaws (the staple remover) to take your book apart and see if it can get divided into three books. And another time, when you are writing a book and you think of a whole different topic to write about—get another book. Don't smooch it all together in one.</p>	<p>(One topic) (one topic) (one topic)</p>

If . . .	After acknowledging what the child is doing well, you might say . . .	Leave the writer with . . .
<p>The writer invents or makes up information about the topic in order to elaborate.</p> <p>This writer may invent facts. Usually this information is made-up. It is not rooted in personal experience or any sort of research from books or photographs or other artifacts.</p>	<p>When writers write fiction stories, they make up stuff that isn't true. But you are writing <i>non-fiction</i> now, or true books. After you write a book, you can reread it and think, "Is this all true?" And if some of it isn't true, then you take it out.</p>	<p>Reread:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • True information? <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Not</i> true? 
Language		
<p>The writer does not use a variety of end punctuation in her text.</p> <p>When you read this writer's texts, you see that she mostly uses periods as end punctuation. She may sometimes use a question mark and rarely an exclamation point. She has not reread her writing or considered what end punctuation is needed for each sentence she writes.</p>	<p>As you are writing, will you think more about how you are using end punctuation to talk to your readers? Reread your writing and think which end punctuation you need. You are tending to use only periods, and actually you could be using exclamation points and question marks as well.</p>	<p>Reread and Edit for Punctuation:</p> <p>. Period</p> <p>! Exclamation Point</p> <p>? Question Mark</p>
<p>The writer does not use all that he knows about letter sounds/vowel patterns to write words.</p> <p>When you read the writer's work, you see that he has one or two letter sounds in his labels. You know from your letter name/sound ID assessment that he knows the other letters and sounds that he is not putting onto the page.</p> <p>When you read the writer's work, you see that he has a few words misspelled with vowel work that he is working on in word study. From your spelling assessment, for example, you know the writer knows or is working on short vowel patterns. In his work, though, he does not write with short vowel patterns.</p>	<p>When you write, you want to use all that you know about writing words. Using <i>all</i> that you know will help you as well as your reader to read back what you have written and taught in your book.</p> <p>One way that you can help make your writing even more readable is to work on getting more sounds in your words. After you put a letter down for your word, keep saying the word slowly. Listen for the next sound. Slide your finger under the letter you wrote as you listen to the next sound. Keep your alphabet chart here to think about what other letters you hear.</p>	<p>You may decide to have the student use his word sorts to help him study his spelling. Remind the writer to take out his sorts to remind him about the features of phonics that he is studying and working on. These could be in an envelope that he keeps in his writing folder if you make him a set.</p>

If . . .	After acknowledging what the child is doing well, you might say . . .	Leave the writer with . . .
<p>The writer does not use domain-specific vocabulary.</p> <p>This writer has not included specialized words that fit with his topic. For example, if he is writing about dogs, he might say, "This is a dog. You need to walk your dog. Dogs need food. Dogs have babies." The writer does not specify what kind of a dog (a Spaniel or a Maltese), the type of food that dogs eat, or what you call baby dogs—puppies.</p>	<p>When you are teaching information in your books, remember that the reader <i>also</i> wants to be an expert. Usually experts know really important words that have to do with their topics. As a nonfiction writer you want to use these words and also teach them to your readers, so that they too can be experts.</p> <p>As you are writing, one way that you can do this is to reread and think about the information and ask yourself, "Did I use all the special words that fit with this information? Is there a better word or a more specific word that fits with this topic that I can use?"</p>	<p>A Post-it with a few keywords to reread and think about.</p> <p>You may write on the Post-it, "Look for places to use special words. Think about what important words fit with this topic."</p> 
The Process of Generating Ideas		
<p>The writer chooses ideas that he likes rather than what he actually knows information about.</p> <p>This writer tends to pick topics that he does not know a lot of information about. Sometimes he picks topics according to things that he likes or once saw on a television program. The writer does not pick topics with which he has had personal experience.</p>	<p>Sometimes it seems like you are trying to write information books about topics that you don't know too much about. That doesn't work. Writers write books about things that they know and care <i>a lot</i> about so that they can teach others. They usually choose topics that they have <i>a lot</i> to say about and that they think is important for others to know.</p> <p>There are many ways to come up with a topic to write about. You can think about your own life. What are things you have, places you go, or things you do that you think other people should care about as well? Let's make a little list.</p> <p>Then you can start thinking about the chapters or parts of your book to see if you have a lot to say about the topic.</p>	<p>To come up with an idea for an information book, think:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Things I have • Places I go • Things I like to do 
The Process of Drafting		
<p>The writer has some sections that have more writing and information than others.</p> <p>This writer seems to begin with a head of steam and then to peter out so that by the middle of a book, pages often hold only a single sentence.</p>	<p>You seem to always start your books by writing these lovely, full pages that teach so much, but then after a bit, your pages get to be like this, and this.</p> <p>One thing that can help is to set a goal for how much you will write on a page. Make an X at the bottom of the page. See if you can write to that X. When you get there, set a new goal! This will help you get more and more ideas down on the page!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step 1: Set a goal. Make a star or an X on the page. • Step 2: Write to the goal as fast as you can. • Step 3: Set a new goal. 

If . . .	After acknowledging what the child is doing well, you might say . . .	Leave the writer with . . .
<p>The writer spends more time elaborating on his drawing than using the picture to help add and write more information.</p> <p>This writer often does not spend the workshop time in an efficient way to get as much information and words as possible down on the page. He spends most of the workshop time drawing details onto the page, rather than using his drawing to get more words on the page.</p>	<p>Writers draw and write with details to teach the reader. Sometimes you may spend more time on your drawing because you see a lot of details that you can add. Remember, while writers are drafting, they are trying to get as much information into their words as possible. Drawings can help the writer see more to say.</p> <p>I want to teach you that when you are drafting and revising your information books, use what you draw to help add more information to your words.</p> <p>If the details don't really help you add more information, wait until the end of the writing process when you will publish to color and illustrate.</p>	<p>Use your picture to write all that you see.</p> 
The Process of Revision		
<p>The writer is unsure how to revise her writing and does not use the tools available in the classroom.</p> <p>When this writer gets to the last page in her book, she may stop and get another booklet to begin a new text. The writer does not go back and try to add to her piece. She may or may not be aware of the charts, checklists, and mentor texts that she could use to help her decide how to revise her text.</p>	<p>Information writers revise as well. They use the same types of tools as other writers to help them revise their piece.</p> <p>Sometimes, studying a mentor text can help you find and think about what you may want to add or change in your own writing. One thing that I want to teach you is that you can study books and think, "What did this author do that was powerful in his writing? Can I do the same thing with my topic?"</p>	<p>Provide a mentor text to help remind her to study books to find ideas for her writing. On a Post-it, write, "What did this author do that I can do?"</p> 
<p>The writer tends to revise by elaborating, rather than narrowing and finding the focus of the text or chapter.</p> <p>When this writer revises, he may always revise to add information to his piece. Rarely will he think to take out something that doesn't go or to improve the way he has said something.</p>	<p>You are really good at adding things as you revise. Sometimes you add details, and sometimes you add things that will help make it so your writing makes sense. That's great. Congratulations.</p> <p>Now—can I teach you the next step? The next step as a reviser is to reread your writing, knowing that sometimes what the writing needs is for you to add, and sometimes the writing needs you to subtract! Like, if the book is called <i>My Hamster</i> and you get to a part that goes on and on about your turtle . . . what would you need to do? You are right! Subtract. And what if you say, "My hamster has a tiny tail" at the start of your book and then at the very end you say, "My hamster has a tiny tail." What if you repeated yourself by mistake? You are right! You'd subtract.</p> <p>Writers even do one more thing when they revise, they sometimes try to write the same thing with better words, or more excitement—revising not to add or subtract but to improve. If you ever do that, would you call me over?</p>	<p>Writers Revise by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • + adding (details, answers to readers questions) • – subtracting (parts that don't belong, repetition . . .) • * improving (making the words better, making writing interesting)

If . . .	After acknowledging what the child is doing well, you might say . . .	Leave the writer with . . .
The Process of Editing		
<p>The writer edits quickly and feels done, missing many errors.</p> <p>This writer tends to miss many errors because he does not reread his writing.</p>	<p>When you reread and edit your writing, it should take a little bit of time. You shouldn't feel like it was super fast. Editors are detectives, looking for mistakes that are hiding!</p> <p>One way to edit really carefully, like a detective, is to reread your writing <i>many</i> times, out loud, and slowly. Place your pen right under the words as you are reading. You might even reread a page a couple of times, just to be sure that no mistakes are hiding. Use the checklist in our room to help remind you of what kinds of things to be looking for as you are rereading.</p>	<p>Reread and Edit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling • Punctuation • Capitals 
<p>The writer has used an abundance of end punctuation marks throughout the text that do not make sense.</p> <p>This writer has end punctuation, such as periods, in strange and unusual places throughout the piece. For example, the writer might have end punctuation written down the page at the end of each line, regardless of whether that is the end of the sentence.</p>	<p>Writers reread and think carefully about where to place end punctuation. They think, "Does that sound right? Can I understand what I am teaching?" Sometimes reading it to a partner can help uncover the errors.</p> <p>After you find a mistake, you can change it.</p> <p>When you change it, though, check it the same way, "Does it sound right? Do I understand what I am teaching?"</p>	<p>Check End Punctuation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does that sound right? • Can I understand what I am teaching?