



Cooperative Strip Paragraph/ Párrafo cooperativo

CCSS: W1-5, SL2, SL6, L1, L2, L3

Summary

The Cooperative Strip Paragraph was developed by Nancy Whisler and the University of California at Irvine Writing Project. The purpose is to teach children the writing process (drafting, revising, editing, publishing) through shared production of the text. It is an excellent opportunity for students to work cooperatively to generate a piece of academic text, and it can be used to teach any type of writing (e.g., response to literature, informational text, narrative, etc.).

Implementation

The Cooperative Strip Paragraph can be done at any point in the thematic unit, once the class has some shared information or experience such as a read aloud, experiment, or field trip. The teacher determines what type of writing the class will practice and then generates an appropriate topic sentence. For example, if the class has learned about the octopus through a Draw & Label, the teacher may choose to create informational text. The topic sentence might be: *We have learned many scientific facts about the octopus.* Perhaps the class has finished three days of an Interactive Dialogic Read Aloud. The teacher might write the following topic sentence: *Our class read a wonderful book called Rainbow Fish to the Rescue.* This prompt will allow for either a narrative retell of the text or a response to literature, depending upon the teacher's objective and the standards being taught.

Students will work together, either in small groups or as a whole class, to create supporting/detail sentences to complete the paragraph. To scaffold students into this writing and to ensure students are addressing the prompt, there must be a common document or artifact the class is referencing to determine the information. Examples include: Draw & Label, Categorical Matrix, Narrative Input, Story Maps, graphic organizers, class brainstorms, etc. How the student sentences are written depends upon the independent writing abilities of your students. Usually, by mid-Kindergarten, students are capable of hearing and recording sounds in words.

Mid-Kinder – 3rd Grade Procedure

To begin, the teacher reveals the topic sentence written on a sentence strip in a large pocket chart and reads it several times with the class. The teacher can highlight key words and phrases in the topic sentence to focus the students on the prompt. S/he will also reference the chart/artifact students will be referencing to generate their supporting sentences. Alternatively, in 2nd/3rd grade, as students are learning to write to a prompt, the teacher may create a prompt with expectations for what should be included (see photo on page 75).

In teams, students collaboratively determine what sentence or section they would like to write, and orally compose it. When a team is in agreement, they orally share the sentence or section with the teacher, and the teacher provides the team sentence strips

and a colored marker (to match their team color). The team works together to record their sentence, and once finished, places it in the pocket chart. In Kinder & 1st grade, as teams are sharing their sentences with the teacher, s/he can control for repeat information or inaccuracies. However, the teacher should NOT use this as a time to correct for grammar. Likewise, spelling is not a consideration at this time. Students should be encouraged to reference the supporting chart/artifact. We want to encourage children to engage in the practice of recording their ideas first, and then attending to spelling & grammar later.

Once all the teams have placed their sentences in the pocket chart, the class is then ready to revise and edit the paragraph. The teacher should utilize an editing checklist as a guide to lead the class through the process. Through discussion and highlight, it is important to first identify the aspects of the paragraph that are good. In this way, we can be sure to keep these elements of the writing. Next the teacher leads the class through revising the content. This can include reordering sentences, combining sentences, adding in missing information, developing use of high-level vocabulary and word choice, etc. Again, the teacher should encourage the children to pull information from the resources in the room such as chants, the Sentence Patterning Chart, and other graphic organizers. Now, the class works together to edit the paragraph correcting spelling, grammar and punctuation. At this time, it is appropriate to add a title as well as conclusion if appropriate.

When working through the Revising & Editing process, the teacher should always use a black marker. Because the groups wrote in their team colors, the teacher can be sure not to delete any group's entire sentence. This entire process can be spread through 2-3 sittings. Once complete, the teacher should type the paragraph for the students to practice reading for automaticity and fluency, and it should be sent home for students to read and share with their families as a form of Bridging School to Family Projects.

Following the Teaching and Learning Cycle, the next step is for teams to write their own paragraph together cooperatively. In this case, the teacher should provide a cloze topic sentence where the team can select the topic, however they are still practicing the same type of writing. Teams should write, revise, and edit their paragraph using the same editing checklist that was used with the whole class. The teacher can work with teams to guide them through the Revising & Editing process. Finally, students are ready to independently write, revise, and edit their own paragraph which can be used as a piece of summative assessment.

Scaffolds for Preschool, Transitional Kindergarten, and Beginning of Kindergarten

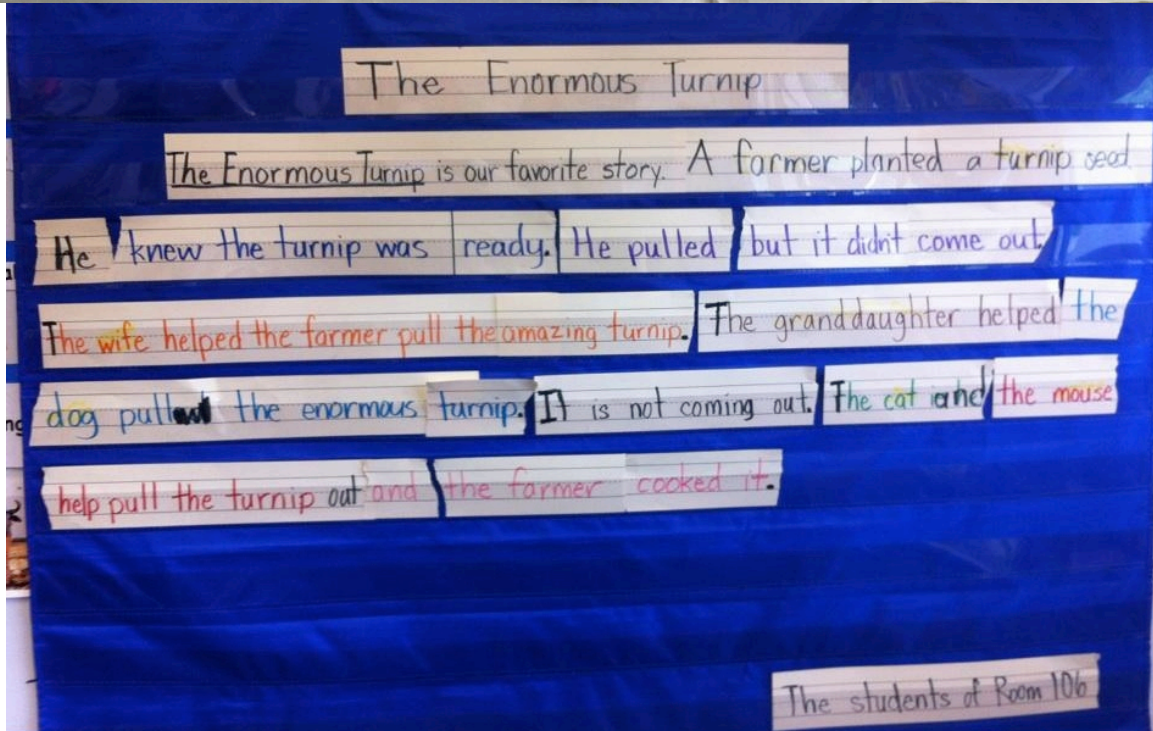
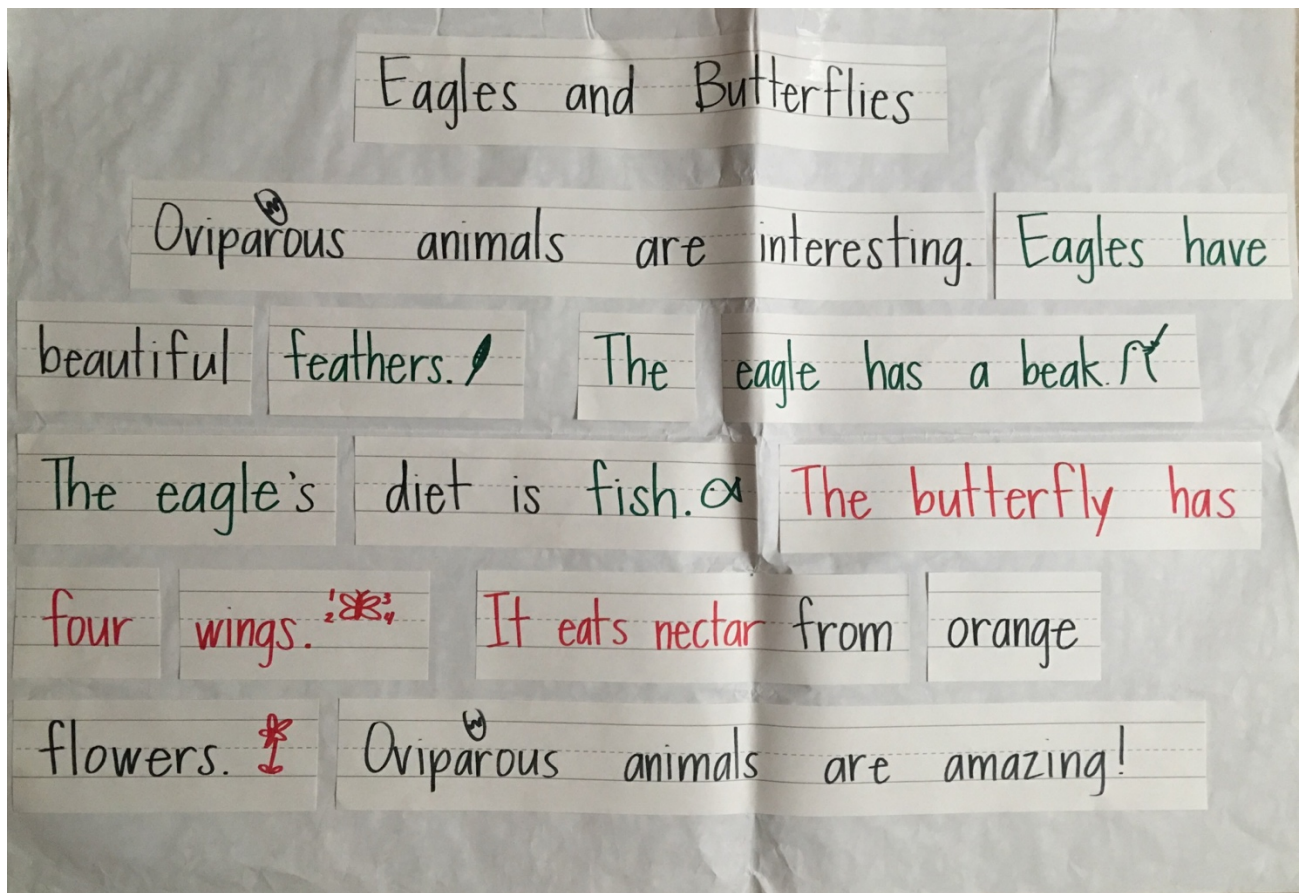
Scaffolding young writers into the Cooperative Strip Paragraph can take on many forms. It is critical for teachers to gear their instruction to the needs of the group, and also to be aware of the zone of proximal development. Through the use of modeled, shared, and guided writing, the Cooperative Strip Paragraph can be used very successfully with the youngest grades. It is imperative that we engage students in the writing process from the beginning, so they are able to see their words turn into text. Following are a variety of scaffolds:

- To generate supporting sentences, students can work in teams or pairs. The

students can share their sentence orally and the teacher can act as a scribe or choose to share the pen with select students. If the students are ready to practice a particular skill such as capitalization or ending punctuation, the teacher can intentionally omit those when recording the sentence. Then, through the Revising & Editing process, the class can work together to add them.

- At the youngest level, the teacher could choose to select small homogeneous groups of children who are ready. S/he can guide them through the process described above.
- The generation of sentences can occur over a period of days with picture cards and/or sketches used as a pre-reading cue.

Photos of Cooperative Strip Paragraph



Kindergarten Narrative Example

Community Workers

We have learned many interesting facts about

community workers. Nurses work in hospitals. Custodians

clean in the classroom. The fire fighter uses a hose

to put out fires. The sanitation worker takes trash to the

landfill.

by Room 106

November 15, 2011

Community Workers

We have learned many interesting facts about community workers. Nurses work in hospitals. Custodians clean in the classroom. The fire fighter uses a hose to put out fires. The sanitation worker takes trash to the landfill.

By Room 106
November 15, 2011

Cooperative Strip Paragraph

Informational Writing

The Paleozoic Era was very different than life on Earth today. Write a paragraph describing the Paleozoic Era. Be sure to include:

- an introduction - Draftsmen
- information about plants - Paleontologists
- information about animals - Geologists
- significant findings - Specialists
- interesting facts - Excavators
- a concluding statement/section - Photographers

Your writing should include academic language, facts, definitions, and details as appropriate.

The Paleozoic Era

The Paleozoic Era was a time when life on Earth was very different compared to today. The Paleozoic Era was 570-245 million years ago. Prior to the Paleozoic Era, life existed only in the water, however, life moved from water to land during this time. Plants consisted of mainly algae, ferns, and moss. There weren't any trees or flowers! Eventually, these primitive "forests" turned into coal beds and primitive sea life turned into oil. During this era, there were the 1st insects such as dragonflies and cockroaches. The lung fish was one of the first fish and Eryops was the first amphibian. The land changed shape from Gondwanaland to Pangea. Even though there was so much life on Earth during the Paleozoic Era, sadly it ended with ^{over} 80% of the plants and animals dying. It was the largest mass extinction! Although the Paleozoic Era was a long time ago, some plants and animals still ^{exist} today. It was a time that was very different, but some things haven't changed.

by Room 26 June 20, 2013

2nd Grade Informational Example