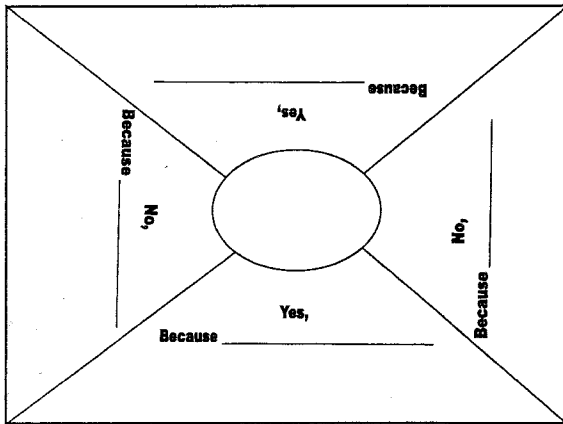


Reading and Language Arts Writing Strategies

Ellen Kimbrough
Jayne Knighton

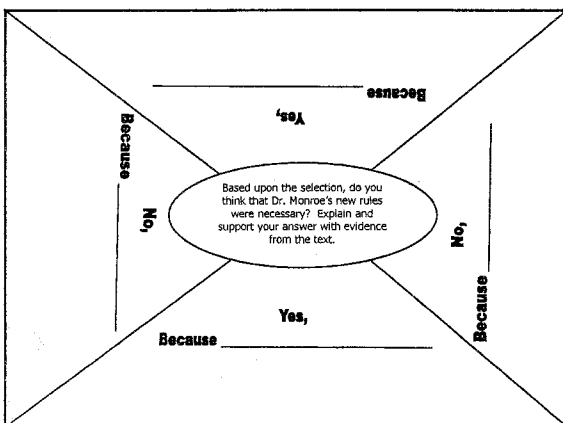
High School Best Supporting Ideas (a.k.a. Placematting)

Allows students the opportunity to evaluate strong ideas - the connection between text and ideas



Best Supporting Ideas

- Each table gets a "placemat" big enough for 4 people to write on and easily rotate.
- An open-ended question will be written in the center (a question that requires a "yes" or "no" answer with explanation).
- Each person is at one of the four sides of the placemat. They must answer the question as they are prompted (either a "yes" or "no" depending on the side of the placemat they are seated) and fill out the "because" line to support their answer.



Best Supporting Ideas (Using Placematting) cont.

- Table participants rotate the placemat $\frac{1}{4}$ of the way around.
- The next person must record text evidence in support of the argument before him/her.
- Table participants rotate the placemat $\frac{1}{4}$ turn again.
- The next person must record *more* text evidence in response to the idea.

Elementary
Nudges for Writing

- Get your pens and paper ready and get ready to make lists:

If you lost all of your memories, which three would you keep forever?

What three memories would you love to permanently erase?

Name three times you felt emotionally connected to someone else.

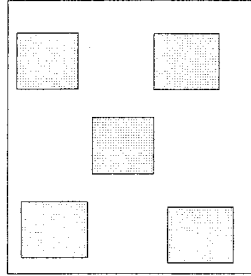
Right this instant, who are your three favorite people on earth?

Baby Essays

- Go back to your list of the three memories you would keep forever.
- Choose your favorite one.

Baby Essay

- Draw five medium-sized boxes on your paper.



Box #1
Where were you?

Box #2
Describe the moment the memory began.

Box #3
Describe the next moment of your memory.

Box #4
Describe the final moment of your memory.

Box #5
What were you left thinking after this event?

TAKS Prompts – Do you have a story ready?

- Write a composition about trying to do something you thought was difficult.
- Write a composition about an adventure you have had.
- Write an essay about the impact another person can have on your life.
- Write an essay explaining the importance of accepting people as they are.

Middle School

The Green, Yellow, Red Strategy

Step 3:

- Students will read aloud their “middles” from the yellow cards to their group.
- The group will elect their favorite middle – the one they believe will result in the most engaging story.
- Give each student a red index card.
- Students will individually write an ending to the middle that they elected (everyone writes from the same middle but creates their own ending).

The Green, Yellow, Red Strategy

Step 4:

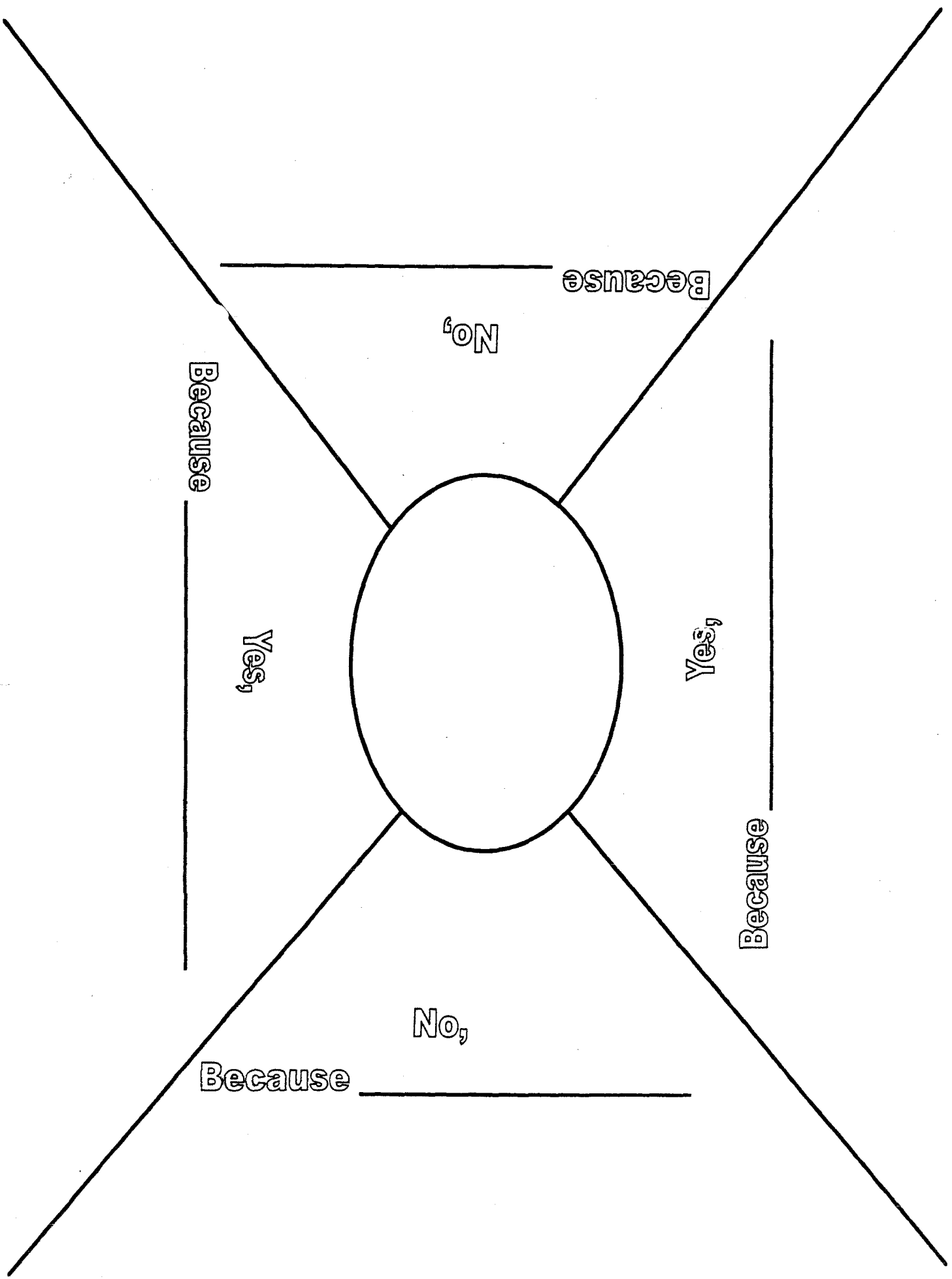
- Students will read aloud their “endings” from the red cards to their group.
- The group will elect their favorite ending – the one they believe will result in the most engaging story.
- Give each GROUP two blue index cards.
- Groups will collaborate to write purposeful transitions on their blue index cards to bridge the beginning to the middle and the middle to the end.

Remember . . . Transitions can be a word, a phrase, a sentence, several sentences, or even a paragraph

The Green, Yellow, Red Strategy

Step 5:

- Display the cards by combining the parts in one of the following ways:
 - Punch holes and use yarn
 - Glue on sentence strips
 - Staple, glue or tape together
 - Clothespin together



Because

No,

Because

Yes,

Yes,

Because

No,

Because

TAKS Writing Activity

Green, Yellow, Red Cards (4x6 size) and Blue (3x5 size)

1. Assign students into groups of four. Make sure that these groups have similar writing abilities (TAKS writing of 1 and 2's or 2's and 3's. Do not put 1's and 4's together).
2. Recall a story they have read or talk about memories.
3. Brainstorm for ideas (use of scenery, sounds, places, etc.). These make good hooks in writing.
4. Give a statement and have them fill in the blank. Ex. He came with _____.
Or _____ was my most favorite place on the face of the earth.
5. Give each student one 4x6 green card, two 4x6 yellow cards, and one 4x6 red card.
6. Have each individual to write an introduction to his memory or idea on his green card.
7. Next, have each student write the middle part of his story (the evidence or happenings that are most memorable) on the two yellow cards.
8. Finally, have each student write a conclusion on the red card.
9. Each group now reads all of the introductions to the group and the group decides which is the most interesting or the best. This becomes everyone's introduction.
10. Next, they decide which is the best evidence, middle or body for the paper, and finally, they decide which is the best conclusion. They cannot select the same person's cards for parts 1 and 2 or 2 and 3 but they could have the same person's for 1 and 3. It is now the entire group's essay or composition.
11. Each group must now decide what the transitional needs are to connect each of the three parts. They are to take two 3x5 blue cards and make the connections (transitions) between the parts of the composition. The group then decides what is the best connections.
12. Now each of the groups read aloud their group's complete essay to the entire class. The entire class now decides the best of the class essays.
13. Finally, each person writes why this is the best essay (in essence showing understanding of the writing requirements according to the TAKS rubric).

Note: If a student complains that his didn't get picked, explain that this is a learning activity and not everyone can be picked.