

Grade 5 Think Aloud: Penguins

OK what do I need to do here? How should I get started? I feel a bit overwhelmed and lost but I'll take a deep breath and remember my steps. They work. I can do this. I'll think again about the prompt. I also need to first think about what kind of writing I'm doing here. I know that once we know the text type, then we know what kind of writing to do. This looks like informative/explanatory because they want information, not so much my opinion. So I'll use POW + TIDE to get going since TIDE helps with informative/explanatory writing. POW says: Pick my idea(s) and pull apart the prompt, Organize my Notes and then Write. My goal now in writing is to pull apart the prompt really carefully and think about each part slowly. When I do this, I know I can write a good piece. Let me write POW across the top of my paper, then TIDE down the side. I'll write T for my topic introduction, ID for important evidence and detailed examination then E for end. LL is for links and language. I'll leave the most space between the IDs because they require the most planning space. Good, I am getting organized. That helps me do my work.

OK the prompt is: "Compare how the articles by Lauren Tarshis and Dyan deNapoli and the video describe penguin effects and the rescue efforts after oil spills. Support your piece with information from all three sources." I read it, but Hmm, I think I'll read it again more slowly and carefully. Let me pull it apart, then find the prompt type. Well the prompt tells me exactly what type of prompt it is – it wants me to compare the sources. OK I can do that. Let me look at them again and see what was the same in all three. Now I'll think about a first sentence. What is the big idea? Well all three talk about the damage, the rescue efforts, and the island before and after. OK I can use those three main ideas and compare how each describe them. So that can be my general introduction. What should my topic statement say? I'll preview these ideas. My topic statement will need to offer a 'response' to the prompt, rather than just only 'restate' the prompt in parrot-like fashion. So I'll preview the main points I'll make while I write my topic statement. I should get started on thinking about the body paragraphs now – what would go in those? Wow, it looks like so much work. I need to take a deep breath. I can do this. What is my important evidence? I'll have to be sure I find the most key points when the information is now not all making the same point. OK, next the detailed examination is important also. I think I need to take a deep breath and carefully think about what analysis or explaining I can do about these pieces of evidence I've found. Let me read the quotes I'll use a few times and see what common themes come up in my mind. Next in TIDE is E – ending. I'll conclude by wrapping up and think about 'so what?', so I can bring together the points I have made and extend them. I'll also mention that reading this made me want to go and help the poor penguins.

OK my outline is ready. What is that banging? Oh, that noise outside sounds like the kids playing soccer in PE. I would love to be playing soccer now! I am a great goalie. OK focus. This is hard, but I will take my time and think. I have my outline and now I'll start writing. is going well. This is becoming so much clearer now! Let me go back and look it over. Let me see if there is more detail I can add. I have all my ideas now. Let me go back and work in better links. OK now I'll reread it and revise as I go. I feel good about this. Did I meet my goal and think really carefully about the prompt before I wrote, then recheck a few times to make sure I'm sticking closely to answering exactly what it had been asking? POW and TIDE really helped me. Planning saved so much time because my thinking was clear and organized before I wrote so I did not need to do major revising – just did some polishing. I am done with my rough draft! I knew I could do this. I just had to stick with it. I can't wait for my friends to read this!

Regular Ongoing, Daily Think Alouds:

OK last time I wrote, I forgot to use short phrases or just triggers when I plan. Instead I wrote long phrases and sentences. Argh, it took forever. And then when I peer scored, I saw that a boy in my class only used just one word to hold his thoughts on paper. Can you believe it? Just one word for each part of TIDE! And he got a perfect score. He did so much less work when he planned and was done so quick. I felt really jealous! Then I realized I could do less writing when I plan too! So today I'm all set to use short phrases. Let's see if I can use one word too!