Patterns of POWER

Inviting Young Writers into the Conventions of Language

Grades 1-5

JEFF ANDERSON with Whitney La Rocca

Professional development training for teachers provided by Stenhouse Publishers

Stenhouse Publishers
www.stenhouse.com
## CONTENTS

**Summary** .................................................. 3  

**Introduction** ............................................. 4  

**Part One** .................................................. 5  
  **Chapter 1** ................................................. 6  
  **Chapter 2** ................................................. 7  
  **Chapter 3** ................................................. 8  

**Part Two** .................................................. 9  
  **Chapters 4–8** ............................................ 10  
  **Chapter 9–12** .......................................... 12  
  **Chapter 13–16** ......................................... 14  
  **Chapter 17–20** ......................................... 16  

**Conclusion** ............................................... 18
Instead of chanting grammar rules or completing countless convention worksheets, Jeff Anderson and literacy coach Whitney La Rocca invite young writers to explore conventions as special effects devices that activate meaning. Their students study authentic texts and come to recognize these "patterns of power"—the essential grammar conventions that readers and writers require to make meaning.

The first part of the book introduces a way of thinking about grammar instruction and sets up everything you need to immerse yourself in the process of inviting elementary students to experiment and play with language. The second part of the book offers more than seventy practical, ready-to-use lessons.

Patterns of Power invites you to take just five minutes from your reading workshop and five minutes from your writing workshop to focus on conventions. Those ten minutes will have a miraculous effect on your students' understanding of how language works for readers and writers.

This guide is set up for a study group. It could be used with a group of teachers or individually as a reflective structure for those reading the book alone.

Part One of the guide is designed to support participants as they learn and play with the structure and process that Jeff and Whitney share for sustainable instruction in the area of grammar and conventions. Participants can scan the QR code to view video of this invitational practice in action.

Part Two of the guide provides an opportunity for participants to choose invitations appropriate for their students to try out in the classroom. Participants can lean on the supportive network of one another as the group inches forward and plays with various lessons over the course of the year.

The suggestions offered in the guide are designed to foster collaboration, spark new thinking, and support the transfer of new ideas into the classroom.
Introduction
Where Do Reading and Writing Meet?

Discussion/Sharing (10 Minutes)
• How confident are you about your own grammar usage and editing?
• How and when do you teach grammar and conventions?
• What do you do when a developing writer makes a mistake? How do you deal with it in a positive way to move the writer forward?

Reading Excerpt (15 Minutes)
• Read the Introduction on pages 6–8, and reflect on Figure 0.3.
• How is this approach to teaching grammar and conventions similar to yours? How is it different?
• Is it reasonable for you to find ten minutes a day to teach grammar and conventions?

Quotes Worth Discussing (10 Minutes)
Beyond ideas of absolute right and absolute wrong lives a classroom where writers thrive (1).
Conventions activate meaning, showing us how to read the text: words, punctuation, and syntax unfold before us, triggering meaning, sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph (2).
Our classrooms can be about progress rather than perfection, moving towards both correctness and meaning (5).

Putting Ideas Into Practice (5 Minutes)
What is one idea or concept that you will continue to think about after today and might integrate into your writer’s and reading workshop?
Part One of the book introduces a way of thinking about grammar instruction and sets up everything you need to immerse yourself in the process of inviting elementary students to experiment and play with language. Part One sets the structure for sustainable instruction in the area of grammar and conventions.
Chapter 1: Into Planning:
What Do You Need to Do Before Teaching the Invitations?

Discussion/Sharing (10 Minutes)
- How do you teach grammar and conventions?
- How is the teaching of grammar and conventions incorporated within your writing and/or reading workshop?
- What challenges do you face in the teaching of conventions and grammar?

Reading Excerpt (15 Minutes)
- How is the planning process in this chapter similar to yours? How is it different?

Toolbox Strategy (15 Minutes)
- Identify a standard skill that you want to teach and sketch out a plan using the template on page 24. The planning process for the lesson on capitalization is sketched out on pages 56–58. This can serve as a guide as you think through your own planning process.
- What did you notice? What do you wonder about the planning process?

Quotes Worth Discussing (10 Minutes)
To teach the patterns of power in a way that sticks, planning is essential: we think deeply about what students actually need to know and be able to do before designing our lesson (17).

Author’s purpose informs why writers do what they do, and writer’s craft is how they do it (20).

In the end, the whole purpose of grammar and conventions instruction is to elevate writing (20).

Putting Ideas Into Practice (5 Minutes)
What is one idea or concept from the planning process that you will continue to think about after today and might try out in your classroom?
Chapter 2: Into the Classroom: How Do You Teach Conventions with the Invitational Process?

Discussion/Sharing (10 Minutes)

• How do you include students as part of the instructional process?
• How might you use short mentor texts and sentences to enhance grammar and convention instruction?
• What part of teaching grammar and conventions works well for your students? What areas would you like to tweak?

Reading Excerpt (15 Minutes)

• Read the outline of the Invitational Process on pages 25–26. This is where the process shifts from the planning to the doing.
• How might this process work for you?

Toolbox Strategy (15 Minutes)

Using your planning template from last session, think through how this instruction would look in your classroom using the invitational process. As you think through this process, you may want to view Jeff and Whitney’s example of using Mercy Watson to the Rescue (59–60) for his instruction around capitalization.

Quotes Worth Discussing (10 Minutes)

Student curiosity drives the invitational process (26).

As students answer the two questions (What do _________ do when we read them aloud? What do _________ do when we read them with our eyes?), reading the model aloud and silently, they build a theory about the function of the convention (30).

Conversation deepens understandings of structure and the choices that go into them. Conversations bring ideas to a conscious level of awareness (32).

Putting Ideas Into Practice (5 Minutes)

Try using your plan and teach the lesson in the classroom using the invitational process.
Chapter 3: Into Application: How Do You Ensure that Writers Apply What They Know?

Discussion/Sharing (10 Minutes)

• How do you support students as they apply new learning of grammar and conventions?
• How might you use the strategy of conferring with students to support them in their transfer and application of new learning of conventions?
• What do you find most challenging in the teaching of grammar and conventions?

Reading Excerpt (15 Minutes)

• Skim through pages 44–52, *Invitations to Apply*.
• Which strategies might you try in the classroom to support the transfer and application of instruction?

Toolbox Strategy (15 Minutes)

• Now that you have tried out the invitational process, choose a strategy to support students in the application process within the classroom. You might want to try the strategy yourself first to see how it looks and feels.
• As a group, talk about what worked and what didn’t work.

Quotes Worth Discussing (10 Minutes)

*Acquiring a convention isn’t an event, it’s a process that takes place over time, slowly and cumulatively* (43).

*Children need a chance to apply language conventions, and authentic use is the best way* (44).

*Our teaching of the patterns of power is not complete until students use those patterns in their own writing to make meaning for their audiences* (52).

Putting Ideas Into Practice (5 Minutes)

Before the next meeting, work through the planning process, invitational process, and application of a selected grammar convention that you wish to focus on in the classroom.
Part Two of the text is a series of lesson invitations. In these lessons you can easily access color-coded, organized plans for a span of conventions. Lessons include a focus phrase, teacher “power notes,” and materials for classroom use. The lessons in each chapter are organized in order from the most primary ideas to the most complex. The lessons provide an opportunity for participants in the group to choose invitations appropriate for their students and try them out in the classroom over the course of the year.
Chapters 4–8: The Power of Sentences: Why Do Writers and Readers Use Sentences?

Discussion (15 Minutes)
Reflect and share on the implementation of the Patterns of Power Process. What’s working? What areas are challenges?

Reading Excerpt (15 Minutes)
• Read The Power of Sentences on pages 67–68.
• How is this similar to your understanding of how sentences work? How is it different?
• What did you notice? What did you wonder?

Toolbox Strategy (15 Minutes)
Choose a lesson from one of the following chapters. Read and talk through the lesson with a partner within the group. The intent is that you will try out the invitation in your classroom before the next meeting. When you try the lesson, note areas of success and challenges.
◦ Chapter 4—What Do Capital Letters Do?
◦ Chapter 5—What Do Nouns Do?
◦ Chapter 6—What Do Verbs Do?
◦ Chapter 7—What Do Sentences Do?
◦ Chapter 8—What Do End Marks Do?

Quotes Worth Discussing (10 Minutes)
Sentences are a primary way for writers to string together words (67).
There’s a difference between the goal of students noticing what they observe and teachers waiting for students to label the parts of speech (68).
When a standard asks us to teach declarative, interrogative, and exclamatory sentences, we argue for using the terms writers and children do: sentences, questions, and exclamations (68).
Putting Ideas Into Practice (5 Minutes)

What is one idea or concept that you will continue to think about after today and might integrate into your classroom?
Chapters 9–12: The Power of Pairs: Why Do Writers Use Pairs?

Discussion (15 Minutes)
• Reflect and share on the implementation of the Patterns of Power Process. What’s working? What areas are challenges?
• Share out on the lesson you that you tried out last month.

Reading Excerpt (15 Minutes)
• Read The Power of Pairs on page 179.
• How is this similar to your understanding of the power of pairs in writing? How is it different?
• What did you notice? What did you wonder?

Toolbox Strategy (15 Minutes)
Choose a lesson from one of the following chapters. Read and talk through the lesson with a partner within the group. The intent is that you will try out the invitation in your classroom before the next meeting. When you try the lesson, note areas of success and challenges.
◦ Chapter 9—What Do Apostrophes Do?
◦ Chapter 10—What Do Pronouns Do?
◦ Chapter 11—Do Verbs and Nouns agree?
◦ Chapter 12—Which Punctuation Comes in Pairs?

Quotes Worth Discussing (10 Minutes)
Careful pairing crafts a perfect match for reader ease (179).
Certain punctuation comes only in pairs: quotation marks, parentheses, and brackets (179).
Writers need pairs, and young writers need to know how to craft them with balance and effectiveness (179).
Putting Ideas Into Practice (5 Minutes)

What is one idea or concept that you will continue to think about after today and might integrate into your classroom?
Chapters 13–16: The Power of Detail: 
How Do Writers Add Detail to Their Sentences?

Discussion (15 Minutes)
• Reflect and share on the implementation of the Patterns of Power Process. What’s working? What areas are challenges?
• Share out on the lesson you that you tried last month.

Reading Excerpt (15 Minutes)
• Read The Power of Details on pages 243–244.
• How is this similar to your understanding of how conventional structures support deeper detail in writing? How is it different?

Toolbox Strategy (15 Minutes)
Choose a lesson from one of the following chapters. Read and talk through the lesson with a partner within the group. The intent is that you will try out the invitation in your classroom before the next meeting. When you try the lesson, note areas of success and challenges.
◦ Chapter 13—What Do Adjectives Do?
◦ Chapter 10—What Do Comparatives and Superlatives Do?
◦ Chapter 11—What Do Adverbs Do?
◦ Chapter 12—What Do Prepositions Do?

Quotes Worth Discussing (10 Minutes)
Life is so rich, if you can write down the real details of the way things were and are, you hardly need anything else (243).
A multitude of conventional structures beyond nouns and verbs have the power to describe in deeper detail (243).
Readers crave detail to answer their questions, to fill in the missing pieces (427).
Putting Ideas Into Practice (5 Minutes)
What is one idea or concept that you will continue to think about after today and might integrate into your classroom?
Chapters 17–20: The Power of Combining: Why Do Writers Combine and Connect Words and Sentences?

Discussion (15 Minutes)

- Reflect and share on the implementation of the Patterns of Power Process. What’s working? What areas are challenges?
- Share out on the lesson you that you tried last month.

Reading Excerpt (15 Minutes)

- How is this similar to your understanding of how patterns of combining support clarity, meaning, and balance in writing? How is it different?
- Read *If These Walls Could Speak: Follow a Fourth-Grade Classroom’s Journey Toward Complex Sentences* (326). What do you notice? What do you wonder?

Toolbox Strategy (15 Minutes)

Choose a lesson from one of the following chapters. Read and talk through the lesson with a partner within the group. The intent is that you will try out the invitation in your classroom before the next meeting. When you try the lesson, note areas of success and challenges.

- Chapter 17—What Do Conjunctions Do?
- Chapter 18—Why Do Writers Use Compound Sentences?
- Chapter 19—Why Do Writer’s Use the Serial Comma?
- Chapter 20—Why Do Writer’s Use Complex Sentences?

Quotes Worth Discussing (10 Minutes)

*Like life, things in writing can be combined to make it more meaningful, enjoyable, and effective* (325).

*Sometimes thoughts, words, and sentences are better expressed together* (325).
Putting Ideas Into Practice (5 Minutes)

What is one idea or concept that you will continue to think about after today and might integrate into your classroom?
Conclusion
Look Up!

Discussion (15 Minutes)

• Reflect and share on the implementation of the Patterns of Power Process. What’s working? What areas are challenges?
• Share out on the lesson you that you tried last month.

Reading Excerpt (15 Minutes)

• Read Conclusion Look Up! on pages 427–429.
• If available to you, share the book that Jeff and Whitney highlight in the conclusion, The Knowing Book by Rebecca Kai Dotlich.
• Overall, how has your thinking evolved about grammar and conventions over the course of this book study?

Quotes Worth Discussing (10 Minutes)

In this book, we focus on inviting young writers into the world of conventions in hopes that they will uncover the patterns of power that will be their key to open expression and understanding (427).

The truth about conventions is that they are where reading and writing meet. Put simply, the conventions are where meaning is activated (427).

Writing thrives in exploration of thought and experimentation of effect (428).

Wrapping It Up and Moving Forward (5 Minutes)

How has your instruction of grammar and convention changed as a result of reading Jeff and Whitney’s book, Patterns of Power?