

The Sticky Note Prewriting Strategy

Why?

Research shows that students with disabilities can:

- Rely on “stream of consciousness” story telling that lacks focus
- Spend minimal time planning
- Struggle to sustain thought on the main idea
- Produce text with minimal elaboration
- Get “stuck” on 1-2 ideas

How?

The Sticky Note Prewriting Strategy is a way to help students plan and organize their ideas in advance of writing. It is also a strategy that can wean students away from scribing. Using this strategy, students are encouraged to write, draw, or dictate ideas - one idea per sticky note. Once sufficient ideas have been generated

(topic introductions, details, closing statements, etc.), the sticky notes are arranged in order on a piece of paper. Students then use the sticky note outline to write their paragraph(s)



During the process teachers can scaffold toward developing independence through

- Discussing the importance of prewriting.
- Describing the use of sticky notes to generate and organize ideas.
- Modelling the use of the sticky note strategy using her own ideas on a topic.
- Develop student skill through using a familiar, non-academic topic.
- Over time, reduce the amount of support, by writing only key words on the sticky notes rather than phrases or partial sentences.
- Over time, have the student write his ideas on the sticky notes, but continue to help the student organize his notes.
- Monitor the student’s use of this strategy and gradually reduce organizational support once the student can demonstrate improved prewriting skills.

Other benefits

- This also provides the student with the opportunity for kinesthetic participation in the writing process
- It is forgiving as the sticky notes are infinitely moveable
- It can involve words or pictures