POW

Background and Implementation
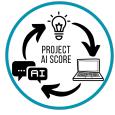
Understanding the POW Strategy

This strategy…

Supports: Planning and Drafting

Applies To: Informative writing

Grade Levels: All grades
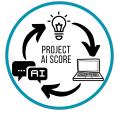
Understanding the POW Strategy

The POW Strategy is a mnemonic for planning and drafting a writing piece.

- **P**ick my idea: brainstorm and plan what to write about
- **O**rganize my notes: choose and group several possible ideas
- **W**rite and say more: elaborate on the topic
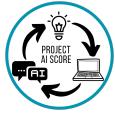
Purpose and effectiveness

What it Helps Students Do:

- **Self-regulate** and use a consistent writing process across subjects and genres
- **Retain a short, memorable mnemonic** to serve as a foundation for other strategies
- **Transition from brainstorming to organized notes** before writing
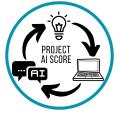
Purpose and effectiveness

Why POW is Effective:

- **Breaks down the complex task of writing into manageable parts** through a simple, memorable acronym
- **Improves student motivation and organization** by providing a clear structure
- **Can be paired with other strategies** to improve student writing skills

Step-by-Step

P: Pick my idea

Step	Action	Guiding Question
P	**Brainstorm and plan out what to write about.**	**"What is the main idea I want to share?"**
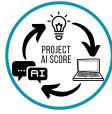
O: Organize my notes

Step	Action	Guided Question
P	Brainstorm and plan what to write about.	"What is the main idea I want to share?"
O	**Organize your notes by story part or section. Choose several possible ideas for each part.**	**"How can I group my ideas together to support my main point?"**
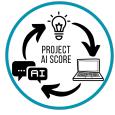
W: Write and Say More

Step	Action	Guiding Question
P	Brainstorm and plan what to write about.	"What is the main idea I want to share?"
O	Organize your notes by story part or section. Choose several possible ideas for each part.	"How can I group my ideas to support my main point?"
W	**Write about and describe the topic, adding details, examples, and explanations.**	**"How can I add more details or examples to make my writing interesting?"**

WRITE
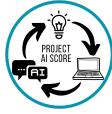
Implementation Tips

Activate students' background knowledge

- Ask students questions related to their topic
- Read aloud other stories and articles
- Use mentor texts to inform their writing
- Provide examples of exemplars

Implementation Tips

Explicitly teach each step of POW

- Break down "Pick my idea," "Organize my notes," and "Write and say more" with clear modeling and several examples
- Use a graphic organizer to help students structure their thoughts, like an idea web for brainstorming and a planning chart for organizing

WRITE

Implementation Tips

Guided Practice

- Brainstorm with think-pair-share
- Continue using graphic organizers
- Share exemplars (print outs, projections, etc.)

Implementation Tips

Independent Practice

- Circulate around the classroom to provide encouragement and support while students write
- End the writing session with reflection questions

WRITE

# Implementation Tips

Scaffold for different learners

- Personalize **graphic organizers** with color-coding and icons to help students with the "Organize" step
- For the "Write" step, provide **sentence starters and word banks** to help students with expressive language and vocabulary
- **"Chunk" the process** by introducing and practicing one POW step at a time with micro-checklists
- Use **multi-sensory instruction**, combining visuals, verbal explanations, and hands-on activities to support students with learning disabilities
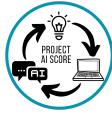
Implementation Tips

Ideas for group or independent practice

- **Group Practice:** Choose a topic as a class and use a digital graphic organizer on a smartboard to fill in the steps together
- **Independent Practice:** Students can use a printable or digital POW Graphic Organizer to plan a paragraph on a teacher-selected topic or one of their choosing

Interested in learning more? Check out WritingClassroom.org