



# PLANS

Background and Implementation

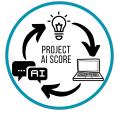


# Understanding the PLANS Strategy

The PLANS strategy is designed to support students in organizing their thinking **before** and **during** the writing process, specifically for informational and expository writing. It uses a mnemonic to guide students through a structured planning and drafting routine.

**A mnemonic for organizing ideas and content for informational writing.**

- Preview topic, audience, and goals
- List main ideas and details using the Frame Think Sheet
- Assign numbers to order main ideas and details
- Note ideas in complete sentences
- Search for errors and correct them



# Understanding the PLANS Strategy

This strategy...

- **Supports:** Planning and Drafting
- **Applies To:** Informational and Expository Writing
- **Grade Levels:** Upper Elementary through High School



# Purpose and effectiveness

## What it Helps Students Do:

**Critically evaluate** their own writing by considering the **topic, audience, and purpose** before writing.

**Extract and organize content** using the FRAME graphic organizer to logically structure main ideas and supporting details.

**Refine writing** by systematically checking for clarity, grammar, and overall coherence in the Search step.



# Purpose and effectiveness

## Why it's Effective:

- Provides an explicit, tactile process for developing internal **planning and revision habits**.
- Encourages **metacognition** by prompting students to think about their own decision-making (e.g., how ideas connect, what order makes the most sense).
- Demonstrates positive outcomes across diverse learners, including students with learning differences, by building a **repeatable, visual process** that reduces cognitive overload.



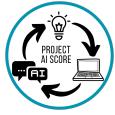
# PLANS

## Step-by-Step



## Step 1: Preview topic, audience, and goals

Step	Action	Guiding Question
<b>P</b>	Gather information about the topic; think about the audience and the goals for the writing.	"What do I know about this topic? Who is my audience and what do I want them to learn or feel?"



## Step 2: List main ideas and details using the Frame Think Sheet

Step	Action	Guiding Question
<b>P</b>	Gather information about the topic; think about the audience and the goals for the writing.	"What do I know about this topic? Who is my audience and what do I want them to learn or feel?"
<b>L</b>	Write the title, subject, main ideas, essential details, and the ending "big idea" on the Frame graphic organizer.	"What are my key points and supporting details? How can I organize them visually?"



## Step 3: Assign numbers to order main ideas and details

Step	Action	Guiding Question
P	Gather information about the topic; think about the audience and the goals for the writing.	"What do I know about this topic? Who is my audience and what do I want them to learn or feel?"
L	Write the title, subject, main ideas, essential details, and the ending "big idea" on the Frame graphic organizer.	"What are my key points and supporting details? How can I organize them visually?"
A	Decide which main ideas will be written first, second, etc., and then determine the order of details for each main idea.	"What order makes the most sense for my reader?"

# Step 4: Note ideas in complete sentences



Step	Action	Guiding Question
P	Gather information about the topic; think about the audience and the goals for the writing.	"What do I know about this topic? Who is my audience and what do I want them to learn or feel?"
L	Write the title, subject, main ideas, essential details, and the ending "big idea" on the Frame graphic organizer.	"What are my key points and supporting details? How can I organize them visually?"
A	Decide which main ideas will be written first, second, etc., and then determine the order of details for each main idea.	"What order makes the most sense for my reader?"
N	Follow the numbered plan to draft the essay, starting with an introduction, putting each main idea and its details into a new paragraph, and writing at least two sentences per detail.	"How can I turn my plan into full paragraphs?"

# Step 5: Search for errors and correct them



Step	Action	Guiding Question
P	Gather information about the topic; think about the audience and the goals for the writing.	"What do I know about this topic? Who is my audience and what do I want them to learn or feel?"
L	Write the title, subject, main ideas, essential details, and the ending "big idea" on the Frame graphic organizer.	"What are my key points and supporting details? How can I organize them visually?"
A	Decide which main ideas will be written first, second, etc., and then determine the order of details for each main idea.	"What order makes the most sense for my reader?"
N	Follow the numbered plan to draft the essay, starting with an introduction, putting each main idea and its details into a new paragraph, and writing at least two sentences per detail.	"How can I turn my plan into full paragraphs?"
S	Read aloud to fix sentences that don't make sense or are incomplete/run-on; read silently to fix spelling, punctuation, tense, and subject-verb agreement errors.	"Does my writing make sense? Is it free of errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation?"





# Implementation Tips

## Tip 1: Explicitly model each step

- Use **think-alouds** to show students the mental processes for each phase.
- Practice the strategy with the **PLANS Frame graphic organizer** and discuss the purpose of each step.
- Use the provided lesson plan and slide deck/presentation

## Tip 2: Scaffold for learners who need support with sentence structure

- Offer **sentence starters** (e.g., for introductions or transitions) or **paragraph frames** that model the structure of a body paragraph.
- *Example:* A frame for a body paragraph can include slots for the Topic Sentence, Supporting Detail 1, Supporting Detail 2, and a Closing Sentence.
- Gradually remove scaffolds as students gain independence.

## Tip 3: Use teacher conferencing during the process

- Conduct **brief, targeted conferences** (3–5 minutes) during independent work to provide individualized feedback.
- Use specific prompts tailored to the student's current step (e.g., for the 'Preview' step: "What do you want your audience to know after reading?").
- Keep a log to track which steps need repeated reteaching for specific students.



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