



# PLANS

## Best Practices and Adaptations



# Understanding the PLANS Strategy

A **step-by-step process** for **organizing thinking** before writing.

## Core Components/Phases:

- **P - Preview** topic, audience, and goals.
- **L - List** main ideas and details using the Frame Think Sheet.
- **A - Assign** numbers to order main ideas and details.
- **N - Note** ideas in complete sentences (drafting).
- **S - Search** for errors and correct them (revising/editing).



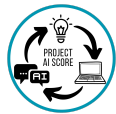
# Understanding the PLANS Strategy

This strategy...

**Supports: Planning and Drafting.**

**Applies To: Informational and Expository Writing.**

**Grade Levels: Upper Elementary through High School**



# Suggestions for Implementation

Teach each step (P, L, A, N, S) explicitly.

- Use **modeled writing** with **think-alouds** to demonstrate how to execute each phase.
- Discuss the **purpose of each step** explicitly.

Check for understanding after each step.

- Have students explain or show what they just completed (e.g., "Show me your numbered ideas after Assign").

Incorporate visuals and scaffolds.

- Use the **PLANS anchor chart**, the **FRAME graphic organizer**, and step-by-step student handouts.



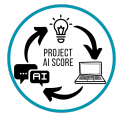
# Suggestions for Implementation

**Allow multiple practice opportunities.**

- Be patient; students need **repeated cycles** through PLANS before it becomes automatic.

**Use collaborative groups for initial steps.**

- Pair or group students for the **Preview, List, and Assign** steps to encourage brainstorming and content discussion.



# Common Pitfalls to Avoid

**Don't skip the Preview, List, or Assign stages.**

- Jumping directly to drafting undermines the structured thinking the PLANS strategy is built on.

**Don't expect mastery after one lesson.**

- Students require **repeated guided practice** before they can independently apply PLANS.

**Don't assume all students will organize their ideas the same way.**

- Allow **flexibility** in how students arrange ideas in the **Assign** step.

**Don't treat PLANS as a one-size-fits-all tool.**

- **Adapt the strategy** for different writing tasks, topics, and learner needs.

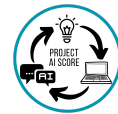
**Don't let students skip the Note step independently.**

- The **Note** (drafting) step should be completed **individually** to develop autonomy and preserve the student's writing voice.



# Troubleshooting

Issue/Challenge	What to Do
Student struggles to generate main ideas	Use graphic prompts or brainstorm as a class. Allow students multiple forms of media to look up facts.
Writing lacks detail	Prompt elaboration with questions.
Overwhelmed by planning	Chunk the task over multiple days/lessons, focusing on 1–2 PLANS steps per session.
Ignores revision step ("Search")	Make <b>Search</b> a peer activity (structured peer review).



# Adapting PLANS for ALL learners

## Provide sentence starters or paragraph frames.

- Especially helpful for multilingual learners, students with disabilities, or reluctant writers who struggle with structure.
- *Example:* Offer starters for introductions ("One way X is...") or paragraph frames with clear slots for topic sentence, details, and closing sentence.

## Use teacher conferencing.

- Conduct brief, targeted check-ins (3–5 minutes) during any step a student is struggling with to provide **individualized feedback**.

## Allow students to use speech-to-text tools.

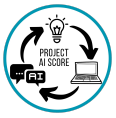
- Removes handwriting/keyboarding barriers, allowing students to focus on idea generation during the **Note** step.
- Teach students to still **review and revise** the dictated text during the **Search** step.





# Adapting PLANS for ALL Learners

- **Provide a digital version of the FRAME Graphic Organizer.**
- **Pre-fill graphic organizer templates.**
  - Include partially completed main ideas or sentence starters specific to the assignment for support.
- **Create specific icons or visuals for each PLANS step.**
  - Provide **step-by-step checklists** with icons to help visualize progress through the strategy.



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