From the International Dyslexia Association website\*:

1. Explain each concept explicitly and clearly.

Growing Writers takes this to heart. The teacher’s manuals give specific instructions on how to introduce a concept or assignment and sometimes suggest certain language (“Teacher Talk”) to prevent unnecessary confusion.

1. Provide guided practice.

Each lesson has an “I do it” (whole group instruction), “We do it” (do an example together) and a longer “You do it” (independent practice).

1. Have instructional routines.

Each lesson begins with whole group instruction, then has guided practice. After that, students

work independently in their workbooks. When the skills page is completed, they move on to the

creative page. There is no “I’m done”; everyone writes for the entire independent time. Students

are taught to work silently for the first part of independent writing. The lesson period ends with

a short sharing time, either with a partner or the teacher showing several students’ work.

1. Provide immediate feedback.

During independent work time the teacher checks each child’s skill page and has them correct mistakes. The goal is for all mistakes to be corrected that day.

1. Follow a planned scope and sequence that progresses from easier to more difficult.

The full scope and sequence of Growing Writers is available on the Evidence page of the website. The sequence of skills is carefully planned and was tested over a period of 20 years.

1. Be hands-on, engaging, and multi-modal.

Writing is almost always hands-on! Engagement in writing comes from appropriate assignments that are not too hard and not too easy, and the opportunity to share writing with others regularly. Immediate feedback keeps students engaged since they know exactly what to do. Group times are active with call-and-response involvement and hand motions.

1. Work towards fluency.

Fluency goals will change over time. First, handwriting fluency in order to get more words on the page without frustration. Then the focus becomes sentence fluency and understanding punctuation. After that, longer sentences become the focus.

1. Monitor and assess progress.

A big strength of Growing Writers is clear goals and objectives for each lesson, workbook, and

grade level. Teachers will never wonder what they are teaching or the why behind it. Each

workbook (12-15 lessons) has the goals listed on the back so that students and teachers know

exactly what they are working towards. There is an assessment at the end of each workbook.

\*Structured Literacy: Effective Instruction for Students With Dyslexia and Related Reading

Disabilites (2020).

My note: Structured literacy is also known for more effective teaching in typical classrooms,

which keeps fewer students from being labeled “dyslexic” or having “disgraphia”.