

Grade 3 Think Aloud: Ants

Initial Introductory Think Aloud:

So, what am I being asked to do here? Let me read the prompt slowly and carefully again. I just read the texts using my close reading steps and strategies and now I'm getting ready to write. I need to write about the different jobs ants have. There is so much information. What should I do first? I need to first think about what kind of writing I'm doing here. My teachers says that once we know the text type, then we know what kind of writing to do. This looks like informative/explanatory because they want information, not so much my opinion. Hmmmmm, I need to use the mnemonics, POW and TIDE to make it easier to write this article since TIDE helps with this informative/explanatory writing. Those will help. I also have to remember my goals. My goal is to analyze the prompt carefully and make sure I understand what I'm being asked to do since last time I had difficulty with that part.

First, POW! Let me write POW across the top of my paper, then TIDE down the side. I'll write T for my topic introduction, ID for important evidence and detailed examination then E for end. Let's see. My topic introduction will talk about ants and the jobs they have. Then I'll list job types under each ID. My E will relate back to my topic of ants' jobs.

For P, I really need to pick my ideas and pull apart the prompt carefully. Let's see the prompt asks that I talk about the different jobs they have. They are busy creatures! They have a lot of jobs. And it looks like there are names for the ants and each ant has different jobs. Ok I'll make a list in the margin of my text. Then I can pull from that as I organize my organizer. Slow and steady wins the race. Let me check over my organizer and make sure I have all the parts.

OK I think I'm ready to start actually writing now. I am really getting going at this! POW really helped me get started, and TIDE is helping me to organize my ideas. I am so glad that I know how to organize my ideas now because this makes writing so much easier. First, my topic statement. I can't forget that my topic statement will need to really answer or 'respond' to the prompt, rather than just 'restate' the prompt in parrot-like fashion. I also want to add voice to my opening. I'll use a surprising fact to get my reader's attention. That's it! I got it! I knew I could do it! I am really getting good at writing! I'll take out some direct quotes as evidence and use careful vocabulary from the articles. Let me find all the rich vocabulary that I boxed as I was reading the text. Let me see if I can work all that in as I write. I'm excited. My goal was to use more evidence and strong language and I do think I'm doing both. Let me think about how to word my next sentence. I'll start it with a link and think about how to be super clear, but also make it interesting for my reader.

I have a huge pile of ants on the porch behind my home. My dad called an exterminator to get rid of them. Wait, I'm going off track. Another goal of mine is to be sure that I stay on track. I have to make sure my thinking is about the paper I'm writing now. I'll think about the ants by my house later. Great. I'm back on track. I knew I could do this.

Am I meeting my goals and thinking carefully about the evidence and making this fun to read? I think I am! POW and TIDE help so much. I knew I could do this if I just stuck with it and used good strategies.

Regular Ongoing, Daily Think Alouds:

OK last time I wrote, I forgot to use short phrases or just triggers when I plan. Instead I wrote long phrases and sentences. Argh, it took forever. And then when I peer scored, I saw that a boy in my class only used just one word to hold his thoughts on paper. Can you believe it? Just one word for each part of TIDE! And he got a perfect score. He did so much less work when he planned and was done so quick. I felt really jealous! Then I realized I could do less writing when I plan too! So today I'm all set to use short phrases. Let's see if I can use one word too!