Head Start
Literacy Skills / Writing

Materials
1. Newspaper headlines

Virginia SOLs
1.11, 1.12, 2.11, 2.12, 3.9, 3.10

Procedure
1. Students select a headline of interest from the day’s newspaper.

2. Students choose only one word from the headline.

3. Direct students to write a sentence that starts with that word. For example, using the headline, “Culture is National Treasure,” from which the student chooses the word “treasure,” the student might write, “Treasure is something you cherish.”

4. Then direct students to use the last word of the first sentence to write a second sentence. Using our example of, “Treasure is something you cherish,” the student’s second sentence would start with “cherish.” Therefore, s/he might write, “Cherish means you really love something.”

5. Up to this point, you are leading students step by step through this writing exercise. After two sentences are composed and students have an understanding, explain to students that they will now write a whole page using this pattern. The writing may not make sense in its flow of sentences. Only the individual sentences must make sense. The purpose of this exercise is to get students writing and having fun!

Extended example using the word treasure:

“Treasure is something you cherish. Cherish means you really love something. Something you might cherish is your skateboard. Skateboard is a word for a fun toy that can sometimes be dangerous. Dangerous situations scare me. Me has two letters. Letters are fun to write, because in them I can say things in my own words. Words sometimes escape me, but not today! Today I’m writing. Writing is a blast!”

Source: (2003). The Virginia Press Association’s Newspaper in Education Committee