

## Developing Informational Text Writing Skills of Gifted Students by Leveraging Writing Strategies\*

### Yazma Stratejileri ile Özel Yetenekli Öğrencilerin Bilgilendirici Metin Yazma Becerilerinin Geliştirilmesi

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**ABSTRACT:** Designed as action research, this qualitative study aims to develop the informational text writing skills of gifted students through the strategies of “all about” books and “biography writing frames”. The study group of the research consists of 21 gifted 4th-grade students studying in the field of general mental ability in a Science and Art Center in the spring semester of the 2020-2021 academic year. An eight-week action plan was prepared to support the development of these students’ ability to write informational texts. The first 4 weeks were planned with the strategy of “all about” books, and the last 4 weeks with the strategy of biography writing frames. The data were collected with student and teacher diaries, observer reports, and student products were scored through Informational Text Writing Rubric. Content analysis was used for the analysis of the collected data. The analysis of the data revealed that while the informational text writing skills of the students were at a moderate level at the beginning, they reached a high level at the end of the process. Based on the findings, some suggestions were presented to teachers and researchers to improve students’ ability to write informational texts.

**Keywords:** Writing skills, all about books, frames for writing biographies, gifted students.

**ÖZ:** Bu araştırmada “işimiz gücümüz kitaplar ve “biyografi yazma çerçeveleri” stratejileriyle özel yetenekli öğrencilerin bilgilendirici metin yazma becerilerinin geliştirilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Araştırma eylem araştırması deseni ile yürütülmüştür. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu, 2020-2021 eğitim öğretim yılının bahar döneminde bir Bilim ve Sanat Merkezinde genel zihinsel yetenek alanında eğitim gören 21 özel yetenekli 4. sınıf öğrencisi oluşturmaktadır. Bu öğrencilerin bilgilendirici metin yazma becerilerinin gelişimini desteklemek için sekiz haftalık bir eylem planı hazırlanmıştır. İlk 4 hafta işimiz gücümüz kitaplar, son 4 hafta biyografi yazma çerçeveleri stratejileri ile planlanmıştır. Araştırmanın verileri öğrenci-öğretmen günlükleri ve gözlemci raporları ile toplanmış, öğrencilerin yazdığı metinler “Bilgilendirici Metin Yazma Dereceli Puanlama Anahtarı” ile puanlanmıştır. Toplanan verilerin analizinde içerik analizi kullanılmıştır. Araştırmada öğrencilerin bilgilendirici metin yazma becerilerinin başlangıçta orta düzeydeyken sürecin sonunda yüksek düzeye ulaştığı belirlenmiştir. Araştırma sonuçlarına dayanarak öğrencilerin bilgilendirici metin yazma becerisini geliştirmeye dönük öğretmenlere ve araştırmacılara bazı öneriler sunulmuştur.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Yazma becerileri, işimiz gücümüz kitaplar, biyografi yazma çerçeveleri, özel yetenekli öğrenciler, bilgilendirici metin yazma.

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Writing has never lost its importance throughout history. Although writing tools and techniques have changed, writing has been at the forefront of humanity's most basic forms of communication. Written expression is one of the most effective tools for an individual to express himself/herself correctly and in accordance with his/her purpose and to communicate. In addition, writing is a critical skill for academic and career success (National Commission on Writing, 2003). Writing skill is a strong predictor of individuals' success in both classroom and business life (Powell, 2009). However, many studies show that students do not have adequate writing skills (Kaptan, 2016; Müldür & Çevik, 2019; Okatan & Özer, 2020; Temel & Katrancı, 2019; Tok & Erdoğan, 2017). Many studies have also concluded that writing studies are not given sufficient attention and time (Bilgin, 2018; Karakoç Öztürk, 2012; Ungan, 2007; Yaylı & Solak, 2014). Not allocating enough time to write is not a problem only in Türkiye. Brindle et al. (2016) found that in the 3rd and 4th grades, teachers spend an average of 15 minutes a day on writing activities, and students write about 25 minutes a day. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)'s 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress, nearly a quarter (21%) of high school seniors in the United States do not meet the standards of core competency in academic writing, while only 3% of students are qualified to be considered advanced writers (NCES, 2011).

Writing is a complex endeavor that requires both cognitive skills and linguistic knowledge (Connelly et al., 2012). In addition, different writing genres, such as narrative writing, creative writing, informative writing, poetry writing, and persuasive writing, have their own characteristics, and different techniques are required to write these different genres. Among these, informative texts are the most neglected ones. Therefore, problems in writing skills may manifest themselves more frequently in writing informative texts because it is also known that most of the writing studies in schools progress on narrative texts. While there are many studies on narrative writing and creative writing at primary school level in the literature, the research on informational text writing (Duran & Özdiş, 2020; Temel & Katrancı, 2019) is still quite limited. Duke (2011) also stated that in the early years of education, children have little experience reading and writing informational texts.

The focus on informative texts has rapidly increased in developed countries since the 2000s. In particular, Duke's (2000) work was a turning point. Duke found that only 3.6 minutes per day were spent teaching informative text in the first grades he observed, which fell to 1.9 minutes per day in lower socio-economic classes. Yopp and Yopp (2006) found that reading aloud is overwhelmingly narrative in kindergarten to 3<sup>rd</sup>-grade classrooms. According to Goodwin and Miller (2012), the reading time for genres other than stories is less than 4 minutes in students' daily readings. These striking results increased the interest in informative texts, and recommendations were made that 4th-grade students in the USA should spend half of their reading time on informative texts (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers [NGACBP & CCSSO], 2010). The Common Core State Standards Initiative [CCSSI], 2010) for the language arts, adopted by 45 states in the United States, emphasizes the use of informative texts to help students become researchers while reading. Thus, the importance attached to informative text writing has gradually increased.

According to Aktaş and Gündüz (2005, p.140), an informative text is “a text created to inform the reader, to change or strengthen his/her thoughts and opinions.” In Türkiye, it appears that insufficient attention is given to different types of informative texts. There could be several reasons contributing to this situation. According to Akyol (2020), the texts children have the most difficulty with are persuasive and informative because informative texts are complex and challenging by nature. The inclusion of technical words, complex sentence structures, and visual representation of information are examples of some difficulties (Duke & Billman, 2009). The notion that children naturally have a preference for stories over informative texts, find them more enjoyable, and may not be ready for informative texts, could also be one of the reasons for the neglect of informative texts. However, some research results do not support this argument. For example, Smolkin and Donovan (2003) found that young learners, especially boys, are interested in informative books. According to Marinak and Gambrell (2009), informative texts serve as reading motivation for children. The idea that young children are not ready for informative texts has been refuted in many studies (Duke & Tower, 2004; Filipenko, 2004; Smolkin & Donovan, 2003; Yopp & Yopp, 2006).

Problems with writing are not only observed in classrooms with normally developing students. Studies also show that gifted students do not have adequate writing skills or have some problems in writing (Collins & Cross, 1993; Collins & Parkhurst, 1996; Yates et al., 1995). According to Feldman (1993), a high intelligence level is not sufficient for perfect writing. According to Ataman (2011), gifted students behave more reluctantly in writing studies than their peers, which negatively affects their writing attitudes. Şengül (2015) also determined that writing is an area that needs to be developed in gifted students. On the other hand, gifted students have a greater need to write informative texts. Gifted students studying at Science and Art Centers in our country have to write informative project texts in order to participate in research projects such as TÜBİTAK (Turkish National Academy of Science). Due to the researcher’s experiences with gifted students and the demands to develop informative text writing skills, which were frequently expressed in interviews with teachers working in these institutions, the research focus was shifted to the development of gifted students’ informative text writing skills.

Reviewing the related literature revealed that the research on the writing skills of gifted students in Turkey has been relatively scant. When the available research was examined, it became clear that narrative writing (Bi, 2020; Tetik, 2020; Yaylacık, 2014), creative writing (Özcan et al., 2020; Saluk & Pilav, 2018; Şahin, 2020) and writing anxiety-attitude (Özsoy, 2015) had been the primary focus of research. No research on the development of gifted students’ ability to write informational texts in Turkey could be identified.

Reviewing international studies revealed that different strategies and techniques are used for teaching informative text writing. For example, Mathia (2015) used ebooks for teaching informative text writing. Duke (2016) used project-based instruction for teaching informative text writing, and Hebert et al. (2021) used structure instruction. In addition, Antonacci and O’Callaghan’s (2012) book “Promoting Literacy Development” includes a section on strategies for teaching informative text writing. It was envisaged that the “all about” books and biography writing frames strategies in this section could

be a solution to the problems experienced by students in writing informative texts. No scientific research using these two strategies was found when the literature was reviewed. However, when the professional material-sharing websites (Teachers Pay Teachers, 2023; The Kinder Corner, 2023) and blogs (All About Books, 2023; Pinterest, 2023) frequently used by teachers were examined, it was seen that teachers frequently used the “all about” books strategy. Therefore, the research focused on these two strategies. These strategies differ from the others in that they are suitable for primary school level, can be easily adapted to grade levels, and offer concrete templates for students to compose their texts.

In the present research, strategies on “all about” books and frames for writing biographies were used to support the development of gifted students’ informational writing skills. These strategies are developed to improve students’ writing skills. “All about” books strategy offers students the opportunity to write and publish books about the content area they are learning (Antonacci & O’Callaghan, 2012). Antonacci and O’Callaghan (2012) state that with the use of this strategy, students read and discuss the contents of the curriculum, focus on all aspects of a subject they have learned, and write and publish their own books related to the subject. In this way, students are encouraged to read to present ideas on the topic, gain broad knowledge, and choose appropriate information for their book. This strategy consists of five steps. These steps can be listed as choosing a topic for writing, collecting and organizing ideas, writing the book, reading it with the teacher, and sharing it. These steps should not be perceived as steps set in stone. This strategy can be enriched with different steps depending on the students’ grade level and writing skills.

Another strategy used in the study is biography frames. This strategy supports students in collecting and organizing information so that they can write biographies (Antonacci & O’Callaghan, 2012). When students begin to write a biography about a person, they need to gather facts about that person’s life and organize them in a coherent way. Competent writers use a process of critical inquiry based on posing questions and then seeking answers to those questions (Antonacci & O’Callaghan, 2012). This strategy consists of five steps as well. These steps can be listed as reading a short biography, showing how to use biography frames, presenting students with biographies to choose from, observing students’ use of frames while reading, and showing how to use the information to write.

The use of strategies is essential in teaching informative text writing. Novice writers need strategies to decide what to include and exclude from their text, create a text that meets the needs of the target audience, and review and edit a text effectively (Butterfield et al., 1996). For students whose writing skills are not sufficiently developed, strategies that include writing templates can facilitate the process of writing informative texts, which is challenging in nature. For this reason, the learning outcome “applies writing strategies” is included in the Turkish curriculum (MEB, 2019) at all grade levels.

Based on these reasons, our study focused on the development of gifted students’ ability to write informational texts, with the problem stated as “Do the strategies of “all about” books and frames for writing biographies support the development of the informational text writing skills of gifted students?” Based on this problem, answers to the following questions were sought in the study.

1. What is the level of gifted primary school students' ability to write informational texts?
2. Does the "all about" books strategy support the development of students' ability to write informational texts?
3. Do the frames for writing biographies strategy support the development of students' ability to write informational texts?

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

This study was designed as action research. Action research is a systematic research approach that enables people to find effective solutions to the problems they encounter in their daily lives (Stringer, 2014). The purpose of action research studies is to improve student achievement and outcomes while improving teacher education (Spaulding & Falco, 2012). The reason why action research is preferred in the current study is that action research is for problem-solving, as this study focuses on solving the problems of gifted students in writing informative texts. Another reason is that action researchers help teachers improve their teaching skills and develop a greater understanding of their students. In addition, the effect of action research on filling the gap between theory and practice and its success in including the teacher (practitioner) in the process is one of the reasons for choosing it. This study may serve as a guide for teachers who aim to improve their students' ability to write informative texts.

### **Participants**

The research was carried out with 21 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students studying at the Science and Art Center located in the city center of Afyonkarahisar in the spring term of the 2020-2021 academic year. The learning outcome of "Writing informative texts" is only included in the 4<sup>th</sup>-grade level in primary school in the Turkish Language Curriculum. 56 fourth-grade students are studying at this center. Some of these students continue their distance education optionally due to the Covid 19 epidemic. For this reason, the research was conducted with all of the students (13 boys and nine girls) attending face-to-face education at the center. All of the students volunteered to participate in the research. Four of the students did not receive pre-school education. The students receive education in public schools. Since they are gifted, they attend the Science and Art Center on different days outside of regular school hours. For this reason, the research was carried out with four different groups.

### ***Practitioner Teacher***

The practitioner teacher has 15 years of experience teaching in the classroom. She has a doctorate in primary school teaching and has published multiple articles in the field. She attaches importance to academic studies and participates in TUBITAK project competitions with secondary school students in the institution. It is important for her that students are at a sufficient level, especially in project writing. In this sense, she observes that her students have some problems in writing informational texts and thinks that these skills should be improved



### ***Role of the Researcher***

The researcher is in the role of the observer in this research. The practitioner became a BİLSEM teacher. The researcher undertook the task of planning the action process, preparing the activities, and evaluating the data. He was also in the practice environment with all the groups during the action process and noted his observations in an impartial way. The researcher was in constant communication with the practitioner teacher about the implementation and functioning of the action plan and guided the teacher to ensure effective research progress.

### **Data Collection Tools**

Observer reports, student and practitioner diaries, student products (informational texts), and the “Informational Text Writing Rubric” developed by Duran and Özdil (2020) were used as the data collection tools. The rubric consists of three dimensions “expression and content,” “form,” “process,” and consists of ten criteria “finding a title,” “text sections,” “main idea explanation,” “supporting idea,” “vocabulary,” “semantic integrity,” “transfer information,” “letter legibility,” “spelling and punctuation” and “timing.” It has four levels “high,” “good,” “medium” and “low.” During the research process, the researcher in the environments the activities were taking place as an observer. The researcher documented the difficulties encountered in practice, the feelings and thoughts conveyed by the students, and the dialogues between the practitioner teacher and the students. The practitioner teacher also kept diaries during the process. The teacher took notes in his diary about whether the activities were completed properly, the points that the students had difficulty with, and what he wanted to change and add to the activity. The students also wrote in their diaries their feelings and thoughts about the implementation process, what the process contributed to them, what they liked, and the areas in which they encountered difficulties.

### **Intervention Process**

An eight-week action plan was prepared to improve gifted students’ informational text writing skills. The action plan is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

#### ***Action Plan***

Strategy	Week	Activity
	1	Noticing informative text features: Students are asked to write text in order to see their current status in writing informative texts. Then, the informative and narrative books are examined, and the physical differences between them (cover, visuals, tables, figures, different chapter titles, table of contents, bibliography, etc.) are identified and grouped. By reading both types of books on the same subject, differences in content (writing purposes, language used, realistic information, tables and figures, subtitles, precise information, etc.) are determined. The differences between both types are discussed in detail through examples.
“All about” books	2	Reviewing “All about Books” examples and preparation for writing: Students are introduced to “All about books” examples, which are good examples of informative text. For this, many examples of All about books are brought to the class and students are asked to review these books. The

chapters in the book are examined and their functions are emphasized. Students choose a topic for the book they will write. They collect information about the topic they have determined. They are presented with a data graph that they can use to organize the information they collect. The importance of using different resources and the ways to reach these resources are emphasized. The “Informative Text Writing Rubric,” where students can see the elements that need attention in an informative text, is examined together with the students.

3 Writing exercises: Before completing the texts, students present the information they have collected, the subtitles they have determined, and the resources they have reached to their friends. Students evaluate each other on topics and content and make suggestions. With this discussion, the skeleton of the book that the students will write is determined. Students continue to write their texts. Cover, author information page, contents, sections, visuals, graphics or tables, if any, and bibliography are prepared.

4 Evaluating and sharing the book: Final corrections are made for their books. Each student presents their book to their friends and teachers and completes their books in line with their criticism and suggestions. Completed books are printed out.

5 Noticing the biography features, using the biography framework: Students write a biography about a person they identify using their prior knowledge. The teacher reads a short biography to attract the attention of the students and chats with the students about this biography. The teacher conducts a class discussion by asking questions such as whether the book interests them, what kind of information it provides about the person, and what aspects of their life affect them the most. S/he brings some examples from the biography books of famous people to the class and asks students to examine these examples. S/he talks to the students about the differences between these biographies and the books they have read before and focuses on what characteristics a good biography should have. S/he asks students to identify a person to write their biography and why they chose that name. S/he asks them to find resources about this person before coming to the next lesson.

Frames for  
writing  
biographies

6 Preparation for biography writing: Students are presented with a biography frameworks strategy to guide them by creating a framework for biography writing. The strategy is examined together and how to use it is discussed. A short biography is read and a sample frame is filled in with the students. Students fill in their frames while doing research to find information about the name they have chosen. In this process, detailed information about the person whose biography will be written is collected.

7 Biography writing: Students continue to write their biography book by completing their framework. Students work on the writing process together by taking the ideas of their friends and teachers. While writing the biography, they are reminded to consider biography features. Students who have completed their biographies are asked to check and make corrections according to the criteria in the Informative Text Writing Rubric.

8 Evaluating and sharing biographies: Students complete and present their bios to their groupmates and teacher. The aim here is to inform other students about the people whose biographies are written, as well as to receive feedback and suggestions about the biography. During this presentation, students talk about why they chose this person, what they knew about this person before writing a biography and what they learned after writing, why this person most influenced them, and what they

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thought as a biographer. Students evaluate each other's biographies and make suggestions. According to the feedback received, students finalize their biographies.

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While preparing the action plan, the practitioner teacher was interviewed, and the action plan and activities were prepared in line with the teacher's views and suggestions. The prepared action plan was shared with the validity committee (four professors whose research area is reading and writing) before taking action, the plan was finalized in line with the opinions received, and the action plan was tested through piloting. However, the data from these students were not included in the study. The conclusions reached with the piloting are presented below.

- The specified time (3 lesson hours) for each activity is sufficient.
- Reading informational and biography books takes a long time, and students can be distracted.
- The students wanted to write their biographies in the form of a book, just like the "all about" books.
- The students were observed to generally turn to internet resources to access information.
- Since the students have been continuing their education with distance education for a long time, continuing the activities online will pose no problem when the decision is made to use distance education again.

Based on these conclusions, a summary of the books read during the implementation was made, and the actual implementation was carried out through the summary texts. Biography text writing studies were also updated in the form of writing a biography book in line with the students' requests. In addition, the importance of collecting information from different sources was studied.

### **Data Analysis**

The data obtained from the observer reports, teacher and student diaries were subjected to content analysis, and some sub-themes and themes were obtained through coding. All the informational texts written by the students during the intervention were also analyzed using the Informational Text Writing Rubric. Items 1, 2, 4, and 5 in the scoring key each get 10 points, and items 3, 6, and 7 each get 15 points. The following formula was used to calculate the total score: items 8, 9, and 10 were 5 points each:  $(1, 2, 4, 5^{\text{th}} \text{ items total} \times 5/2) + (3, 6, 7^{\text{th}} \text{ items total} \times 15/4) + (\text{Sum of items } (8, 9, 10) \times 5/4)$ . The Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the developed rubric was calculated as .83 (Duran & Özdil, 2020). 4 points from the scale correspond to a high level, 3 points to a good level, 2 points to a medium level, and 1 point to a low level.

### **Validity and Reliability**

The validity and reliability of qualitative research differ from quantitative research due to the differences in its paradigm and basic assumptions. While long-term interaction, variation, expert review, and participant confirmation methods can be used for credibility (internal validity) in qualitative studies, detailed description method is used for transferability (external validity). The consistency examination method is used



for the consistency (internal reliability) of the research and the confirmation examination method is used for the confirmability (external reliability).

Longitudinal interaction or observation is significant for understanding, which is the focus of qualitative research. Therefore, the researcher interacted with four different groups for eight weeks and followed the process closely. When considered together, the duration of the face-to-face and distance education observations is almost 80 lesson hours. The observations were recorded impartially by the researcher during this longitudinal interaction.

Different data sources were used to ensure diversity in the research, and the data were collected at different times and reviewed by a different researcher to confirm and correct the findings. Observation, student and teacher diaries, student products, and rubrics were used to diversify the data sources. In addition, since the intervention was carried out with four different groups and the environment of each group was different, environmental diversity was also ensured. Furthermore, researcher diversification was ensured with the participation of an expert researcher in evaluating the research findings.

From the emergence of the research idea, the thesis supervisor and the experts in the thesis monitoring committee helped improve the research with their suggestions at all stages of the research process. In addition, critical evaluation and feedback were received from a teacher who has the expertise to make appropriate judgments about the findings and interpretations based on the findings, who knows the method applied, whose area of expertise is parallel to the study, and who has many years of work experience in Science and Art Centers (with gifted students).

The observation data kept by the researcher was also read to the practitioner teacher, and confirmation from the participant was obtained. Care was taken to transfer the data as it is, and direct quotations were included. The student dialogues with their teachers or among themselves were given a lot of coverage without commenting, and the process was described as much as possible with direct quotations, including those from student diaries.

The results and comments obtained in the research were compared with the raw data to operate a confirmation mechanism. By reviewing the raw data, an external expert examined and evaluated the judgments, comments, and suggestions obtained by the research. In addition, the informational texts written by the students during the action were scored by an expert using the same rubric. The rubric consists of ten items. Considering that 21 students participating in the study wrote four informational texts, the total number of texts examined is 84. As such, the number of items scored for all texts is 840 in total. The reliability = consensus / (consensus + disagreement) formula is used while calculating the agreement between the raters, and it was found to be 92% ( $=779/779+61$ ). In general, if the result calculated with the reliability formula is above 70%, it is considered reliable.

### **Ethical Dimension**

Adhering to ethical principles is extremely important for the reliability of a research study. Therefore, care was taken to comply with the ethical rules in all steps of the research. At the beginning of the research, the necessary permission and approval were obtained from Hacettepe University Ethics Commission and Afyonkarahisar

Provincial Directorate of National Education (Number E-49809702-605.01-22565992). Participation in the study was completely voluntary. The purpose and process of the research were explained, and the voluntary participation of the students was confirmed before the intervention. For this, the students filled out and signed the Child Voluntary Participation Form. In addition, permission was obtained from the parents of the students that they gave their consent for their children to participate in the research. The parents also filled out and signed the Parent Voluntary Participation Form. During the research reporting, the students' real names were not used, and their personal information was not included. The names used in the research are pseudonyms, and particular care was taken to make sure the pseudonyms did not bear any resemblance to the real names of the participants.

## Results

The results are presented in sub-headings according to the research questions.

### Results on Students' Informational Text Writing Skills

Before the intervention, the students' status in writing informational texts was determined. The thoughts of the practitioner teacher about the students' ability to write informational texts are as follows:

... The working logic of Science and Art Centers is quite different from normal schools... We are expected to organize activities with students and participate in some national and international competitions. That is why we need the ability to write informational texts so much. For example, I observe a problem in the students I work with for TÜBİTAK projects. It is necessary to write a report for these projects. Although students are very successful in preparing projects, they have difficulty in reporting it. In other words, students have difficulties in writing informational texts even though they are gifted. They can think of these texts as stories. For this reason, they try to include their feelings and thoughts in their writings. To overcome these challenges, studies on writing informational texts will be very helpful for us (Preliminary interview before the intervention).

To assess the level of informational text writing skills among the gifted students, they were instructed to select a topic they were highly familiar with and write an informational text on that topic prior to the intervention. While doing this, they were reminded to consider the features of informational texts. They were told that they could benefit from the themes and subjects in the Turkish Language Curriculum (MEB, 2019) while choosing the subject. The results revealed by examining the student texts according to the rubric are presented in Table 2.

As can be seen in Table 2, the average of the students is 54.76 out of 100. In other words, the gifted students are at a moderate level in writing informational texts.

A closer look at the criteria in the rubric revealed that the students generally used a general title addressing the subject and did not consider the element of originality. It is observed that most of the examined texts consist of only one paragraph, with no introduction, development, or conclusion. In addition, it was observed that the students started to write their texts without making a mental outline before they started to write. They randomly listed the sentences that came to their minds and kept their texts short in a way that could be considered a summary. In most of the students' texts, the main idea and the subject were not fully explained. Since the main idea was not included in most of the texts, the supporting idea was not included either. Except for

three texts, the vocabulary was insufficient, and overall semantic integrity could not be achieved. In addition, texts lacked sufficient information, or some pieces of information were erroneous. However, attention was paid to spelling and punctuation, except for a few of the texts. Overall, legibility and timing were observed to be good. To sum up, at the beginning of the process, the students were not at a sufficient level, especially in organizing the text parts, giving a clear place to the supporting idea in the text, providing semantic integrity, and presenting rich vocabulary and information. In addition, there were some problems, such as the random ordering of the information in the texts, keeping it short so that it can be considered as a summary, disconnections among the sections of the text, and the inability to achieve semantic integrity.

Table 2  
*Students Pre-intervention Scores*

Text Title	Narration and Content						Form		Process		Score
	Finding a title	Text sections	Explaining the main idea	Supporting idea	Vocabulary	Semantic Integrity	Transferring Information	Legibility	Spelling and Punctuation	Timing	
3D Flight Game	3	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	3	41.25
Hide-and-Seek	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	53.75
Brain Test	3	1	1	1	1	1	2	3	3	3	41.25
JMW Dino War	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	57.5
Football Game	3	2	1	1	1	2	2	3	3	3	47.5
Saturn	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	3	1	4	57.5
Solar System	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	4	2	3	60
Solar System	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	67.5
Space-1	3	2	2	1	3	2	3	4	3	3	61.25
Space-2	3	3	2	2	4	3	3	3	4	3	72.5
Planets	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	53.75
Telephone	3	2	2	1	2	2	2	3	1	3	51.25
Car Motors	3	2	2	2	4	3	3	4	3	3	70
Design Patent	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	3	35
History of Communication	3	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	60
History of Communication	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	53.75
Wildlife	4	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	1	3	63.75
Fish	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	4	3	57.5
I love Math	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	3	3	4	40
Food	3	2	2	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	51.25
Charlie Chaplin	3	2	2	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	53.75
	2.95	1.80	2	1.66	2.04	2.04	2.09	2.90	2.47	3.04	54.76

At the beginning of the intervention, some questions were asked to understand the experience and knowledge of the students on writing informational texts, and all the

students stated that they did not receive any training on writing informational texts and did not know any strategy for it. Only one student stated that he had written an informational text before. In addition, some students were not fully aware of the genre of the text they wrote, and their experience with informational text, in general, was quite insufficient. Below are some excerpts from student opinions.

Meltem: I don't remember if I have ever written an informational text. I guess I haven't.

Burcu: I wrote a recipe once. Does that count as informational text?

Teacher: Did you use any strategy when writing informational texts?

Yiğit: I didn't. I wrote what came to my mind.

Vedat: We have not received any training on this before. We were just taught that informational texts are texts that give information.

İsmail: When we were in the third grade, we read informational texts. However, a technique on how to write them was not shown.

Mert: I don't know the strategy of writing an informational text. When I write a story, I write without using a strategy.

The researcher's observation regarding the students' situation while writing their texts before the intervention is as follows.

Before starting to write the text, the students were undecided about what kind of fiction they would write. They had difficulty in outlining their writing. They spent a while thinking about exactly what to write. There were students who started the text and thought that it did not exist after a while, asked for new paper, or deleted what they wrote. Some students started writing immediately without any planning. Some students also tried to exchange ideas with each other about what to do while writing informational texts, but they could not help each other. Some students spent so much time deciding what to do that they could only write a paragraph of a few sentences at the end of the time. Some students seemed to get bored of writing. Some students who had difficulty writing informational texts asked the teacher if they could write a story. These questions also show that they were more familiar with story writing. (Observation notes, week 1)

### Results of the Intervention Performed by Applying the All About Books Strategy

When the books written by the students were examined according to their subjects, in the process performed with the "all about" books strategy, it was observed that 11 students preferred to write about animals, five students about space, and four students about technology products (Table 3). The results determined according to the rubric on the books written by the students are presented in Table 3.

Table 3  
*Student Scores on All About Books*

A. A. = All About	Narration and Content						Form			Process	Score
	Find ing a title	Text Secti ons	Explai ning the Main Idea	Suppo rting Idea	Vocab ulary	Sema ntic Integr ity	Transfe rring Informa tion	Legibi lity	Spellin g and Punctu ation	Timi ng	
A. A. Airpla nes	3	3	3	4	4	3	2	4	4	4	80
A. A.	4	4	3	3	4	4	3	4	3	4	88.

Blue Planet											75
A. A. Octopuses	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	91.25
A. A. Bees	3	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	4	88.75
A. A. Football	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	92.5
A. A. Computers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	72.5
A. A. Butterflies	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	95
A. A. Space Exploration	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	98.75
A. A. Dinosaurs	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	93.75
A. A. Space	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	97.5
A. A. Leopards	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	91.25
A. A. Praying Mantis	3	3	4	3	3	4	3	4	2	3	82.5
A. A. Computer Viruses	3	2	3	4	3	3	2	4	3	2	71.25
A. A. Mysterious Planets	4	4	3	3	4	4	2	4	4	4	86.25
A. A. Robots	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	4	3	4	80
A. A. Elephants	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	98.75
A. A. Snakes	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	96.25
A. A. Lions	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	4	3	2	71.25
A. A. Planets	3	4	3	3	3	4	3	4	3	4	83.75
A. A. Cats	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	91.25
A. A. Cheetahs	3	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	90



3.19	3.66	3.38	3.52	3.71	3.76	3.28	3.76	3.23	3.66	87.67
------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	-------

As can be seen in Table 3, the average score of the students, according to the rubric, is 87.67 out of 100. In other words, while the students' informational text writing levels were at a moderate level before the intervention, they reached a high level at the end. The scores of the students increased in all the criteria in the rubric.

The advantages and challenges encountered in the researcher observation notes and teacher diaries in the process carried out with the All About Books Strategy are presented in Table 4.

As stated in the observation notes and teacher diaries, students showed a great interest in writing books. Therefore, a high level of participation and interest in the lesson was observed. At the end of the process, the students understood the difference between informational and narrative texts and made progress in writing informational texts. It was observed that this process also helped students develop positive attitudes towards writing. The students were also reported to have gained the skills needed to use the writing program. It was also observed that the students were in a hurry to write books, they wanted to start writing as soon as possible, so they tried to keep the research process short by turning to internet resources. For this reason, the importance of resource diversity and the importance of using multiple resources during the research was emphasized. The difficulties experienced by some students in using the program during the book writing process were resolved by guiding the students.

Table 4

*Advantages and Challenges Expressed in the Observation Notes and Teacher's Diaries during the Implementation of the All About Books Strategy*

Advantages	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The process of writing a book aroused great interest in students. When the students learned that they were going to write a book, they were highly motivated. Class participation and interest were at a high level.</li> <li>• The students' ability to use a writing program improved. They learned to use features such as preparing covers, adding contents, page numbers, figures, and graphics.</li> <li>• Significant progress has been made regarding informational text writing. Students clearly understood the difference between story and informational text.</li> <li>• Writing a book was a novel and a remarkable experience for students. In this way, students develop a positive attitude towards writing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students found journaling a bit boring as they focused on writing books.</li> <li>• Students had difficulty diversifying the sources while doing research. They generally preferred to do research on the Internet.</li> <li>• They were too hasty in completing the book.</li> <li>• Some students had insufficient computer skills. These students had some difficulty in writing.</li> <li>• Due to the lack of computers and the inability to use a separate classroom, the institution needed preparation every week, which was a bit tiring.</li> </ul>

The results obtained from the student diaries in the process of applying the All About Books Strategy are presented in Table 5.

Table 5  
*Analysis of Student Views on Using the “All About” Books Strategy*

Theme	Subtheme	Code	f
Development	Writing	Writing an informational text	8
		Authorship	4
		Quick writing	1
	Knowledge	Exploring the differences between text types	11
		Getting informed on the subject	8
		Researching	6
Skill	Using a program	4	
	Enjoyable-Fun	13	
Feeling	Positive	Happiness	4
		Feeling like a writer	3
	Negative	Anxiety	1
		Writing program	6
Difficulty	Technique	Internet	1
		Accessing and collecting information	5
	Information-data	Expressing information	2
		Identifying important information	1
	Time	Writing on time	2
	Demand	Time	Having extra time
Becoming practical		Writing more	1

Examining Table 5, the students' opinions about the process carried out with the strategy of all about books are grouped under four themes: “development,” “feeling,” “difficulty,” and “demand.” Some examples from the student diaries are presented below with the relevant code by direct quotations.

Elif: I have learned how to write informational texts. I learned what an index is, that there should be things like graphics in informational texts, that information about the author should be written in books, that we should not only get information from internet sites when writing informational texts, and the language of the computer. (Writing an informational text)

Arif: We have gained writing skills. We did research just like a writer. We wrote book chapters, designed covers, and printed books. (Authorship)

İsmail: The informational text has many differences from the story. I didn't know some of these. No false information is given in informational texts. Feelings and thoughts are not mentioned. No heroes or events. These are the most important differences. By paying attention to these, informational text can be written. (Exploring the differences between text types)

Zeki: While researching information to write a book, I have learned more about the space. I did not have such detailed information. I did not know the distances of the planets from each other. I didn't know about dwarf planets. I had no idea how the solar system was formed. (Getting informed on the subject)

Cansu: I have learned to do research. I have done a lot of research on cheetahs. I have tried to gather information from reliable sources. I have learned how to search for information. My research skills have also improved. (Research)

Zeki: I had a hard time finding information from different sources. It might have been easy to copy from the Internet, but we had to do a lot of research to multiply the sources. (Difficulty in accessing and collecting information)

### **Results of the Intervention Performed by Applying the Frames for Writing Biographies Strategy**

Before starting to write a biography, some questions were asked about the students' experiences in writing a biography, and only one student stated that he wrote a biography about himself. It was observed that other students had not written a biography

before. In addition, it was determined that the students had not received any training on biography, and they did not know any technique or strategy for writing a biography.

Before the biography writing process, students were asked to write a biography of a person or a relative whose life they knew about very well. The results emerging from the analysis of the biographies written by the students are presented in Table 6.

As seen in Table 6, 11 students preferred to write a biography of one of their family members or someone in their close social network. Four students preferred to write biographies about an important leader who left an indelible mark on history. Apart from this, six of the biographies are about science, art, sports, and cinema. One student was observed to write his brother's first name, and another to write her sister's full name. To keep the participant information confidential, these names were changed to "my brother" and "my sister".

Table 6

*Scores on Biographies Written by Students Before the Intervention*

Text Title	Narration and Content						Form		Process	Score	
	Finding a title	Text Sections	Explaining the Main Idea	Supporting Idea	Vocabulary	Semantic Integrity	Transferring Information	Legibility	Spelling and Punctuation		Timing
My Sister	3	2	2	2	3	2	3	3	3	4	63.75
Our Prophet Muhammad	3	3	2	2	4	4	3	4	4	4	78.75
The Man that Makes Us Laugh	4	3	3	3	4	4	3	4	3	4	86.25
Little Rascal	4	3	2	2	4	3	3	4	4	4	77.5
The Great Architect	4	2	2	2	3	3	2	3	4	4	67.5
Biography of My Dad	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	60
My Mom	3	1	1	1	2	1	2	4	4	4	47.5
Nikola Tesla	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	76.25
My Young Brother	3	2	3	3	2	2	2	3	4	4	65
My Brother Fatih	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	3	4	56.25
Sultan Mehmet	3	3	4	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	87.5
My Dear Family	4	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	1	4	60
Brother Barış	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	81.25
Prophet	3	3	2	2	4	4	3	4	4	3	77.

Muham mad											5
King Grouch	4	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	4	73. 75
Reyyan Came	4	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	4	60
Mustafa Kemal Atatürk	3	2	3	2	4	2	2	3	2	4	65
Mr. Goal	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	93. 75
My Dad is My Friend	4	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	4	47. 5
My Dear Gokce	4	2	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	4	66. 25
Frida Kahlo	3	4	3	2	4	4	3	4	4	4	85
	3.48	2.33	2.48	2.33	3.10	2.76	2.52	3.33	3.19	3.95	70. 30

As shown in Table 6, the average student score is 70.30 out of 100. In other words, the levels of gifted students were good before the implementation of the biography frames strategy.

The results of evaluating the biographies written by the students using the rubric are presented in Table 7.

Table 7  
*Scores on Biographies Written by Students After the Intervention*

	Narration and Content							Form		Proc ess	Sco re
	Findi ng a Title	Text Secti ons	Explai ning the Main Idea	Suppor ting Idea	Vocabu lary	Sema ntic Integr ity	Transfe ring Informat ion	Legibi lity	Spelling and Punctua tion	Timi ng	
Yusuf the Great Wrestler	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	93. 75
Marie Curie	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	91. 25
The Man that Makes Us Laugh	4	4	3	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	90
Oktay Sinanoğlu	3	4	3	3	3	4	3	4	4	4	85
Mimar Sinan: Master of Masonry	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	96. 25
Sinan Yusuf Architect	3	4	3	3	3	4	3	4	3	4	83. 75
Sinan Inventor of the Telephone	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	90
Nikola Tesla	3	4	3	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	87. 5
Frido	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	87.

Kahlo											5
Master of the Electric: Tesla	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	96.25
The Conqueror of Istanbul	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	100
Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	98.75
Brother Barış	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	97.5
İbn-i Sina	3	2	3	2	3	2	2	4	4	3	65
Selçuk Bayraktar	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	91.25
Thomas Alva Edison	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	93.75
Biography of Pocket Hercules Naim Süleyman oğlu	3	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	91.25
Aziz Sancar	3	3	4	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	88.75
Alexander Graham Bell	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	93.75
Louis Pasteur	3	3	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	85
The Queen of Painting	4	4	3	3	3	4	3	4	4	4	87.5
	3.38	3.71	3.19	3.57	3.61	3.85	3.52	4	3.90	3.95	90.17

As seen in Table 7, 11 students preferred to write about scientists and inventors, six students preferred to write about artists, and two students preferred to write about athletes and leaders. Two biographies were written by different students about Alexander Graham Bell, Nikola Tesla, Frido Kahlo, and Mimar (Architect) Sinan. The average student score was 90.17 out of 100. In other words, the gifted students' level of writing informational texts was observed to increase to a high level after the implementation of the strategy of frames for writing biographies.

The advantages and challenges noted in the observation notes and teacher diaries in the process carried out with the biography frames strategy are presented in Table 8.



Table 8

*Advantages and Challenges Expressed in the Frames for Writing Biographies Strategy Process in Observation Notes and Teacher Diaries*

Advantages	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students wanted to write biographies in the form of book. Their interest in writing books was at a high level.</li> <li>• Class participation and interest were at a high level.</li> <li>• Most of the students wrote a biography for the first time. Awareness of the biography genre has grown.</li> <li>• Informational text writing skills improved.</li> <li>• Their ability to search for information has improved.</li> <li>• Awareness was raised about accessing different sources.</li> <li>• They have become eager to rewrite their texts.</li> <li>• Students have gained the ability to evaluate and criticize each other's texts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interaction among students has decreased due to the transition to distance education.</li> </ul>

Based on the observation notes and teacher diaries, it was evident that the students exhibited a strong enthusiasm for writing informational books. They were excited to write their own books, resulting in their active participation and high interest in the activities. It was also stated that they developed an awareness of the biography genre, and their skills in writing informational texts improved. A critical step in writing a good informational text is searching for information. It was also observed that the process improved students' research skills and increased their awareness of accessing different sources. However, due to distance education as part of the pandemic measures, interaction between students was limited compared to the period of face-to-face education. The results obtained from the student diaries regarding the Biography Writing Frames Strategy process are presented in Table 9.

When Table 9 is examined, the students' thoughts about the process carried out with the strategy of biography writing frames can be seen to fall under three themes: "development," "feeling," and "difficulty." The themes are similar to the themes that emerged in the process carried out with the strategy of "all about" books, which might be because both processes are about writing informational texts, that is, the processes are similar.

Table 9

*Analysis of Student Views on the Frames for Writing Biographies Strategy*

Theme	Subtheme	Code	f
Development	Writing	Writing a Biography	7
		Writing an Informational Text	3
		Authorship	2
		Self-expression	1
	Knowledge	Getting informed about the person	5
		Learning new words	1
		Research	4
	Skill	Using a computer	4
		Evaluation	2
		Summarizing	1
Planning		5	
Feeling	Positive	Planning the time	2
		Enjoyable-Fun	11
		Exciting	5
	Negative	Scientist	2
		Empathy	1
Difficulty	Information-Data	Tiring	1
		Finding images	3
		Accessing information	1

Due to the size of the research, a limited number of direct quotations related to the theme and sub-themes were included. Below, some examples from the student diaries are presented with the relevant code by quoting directly.

Cansu: I have learned the intricacies of writing a biography. First of all, you need to choose the person you will write about carefully and make a good plan. Otherwise, you can get lost in the information. The biography frame has made our job so much easier here. After completing it, it became easier to write. (Writing a biography)

Aylin: I got better at writing informational texts. The more I write, the better my writing gets. I don't make mistakes like I used to. I try to give more information, to make better sentences, and not to make spelling mistakes. (Writing an informational text)

Vedat: We have constantly evaluated each other's work. This has been very helpful. We have had the chance to see the shortcomings in our books. I realized that I learned a lot while criticizing each other. (Evaluation)

Burcu: I gathered a lot of information to write a book. I needed to summarize so much information. Therefore, my ability to summarize has improved. (Summarizing)

İsmail: Biography frames allowed us to act in a planned manner. Because if we think of the biography book as a structure, the biography frame becomes the basis of that structure. (Planning)

The reflections from the teacher's diary about the process are presented below.

Biography frames have made it very easy for students to write biographies. When they complete the frame, most of the biography they will write is complete. Only some additions and corrections remain. In this sense, I think the frame is quite useful. (Teacher's Diary, Week 8)

The score distribution of all informational texts written by the students is presented in Table 10.

Table 10  
*Change of Scores*

	Average Score
First informational texts	54.76
“All about” books	87.67
First biographies	70.30
Final biographies	90.17

As can be seen in Table 10, gifted students’ level of writing informational texts was moderate at the beginning. At the end of the writing process carried out with the strategy of “all about” books, their scores increased to an advanced level. When the first biographies written by the students are examined, they are observed to be at a good level. This is significant in terms of showing students’ progress in writing informational texts compared to the beginning of the process. Considering that the students had not written a biography before, it can be said that the information gained in the process with the strategy of “all about” books was transferred by the students to the biographies. At the end of the biography writing frames process, the students reached a high level of 90.17.

## Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions

### Students’ Informational Text Writing Skills Before the Intervention

At the beginning of the process, the students’ ability to write informational texts was at a moderate level. We have not encountered a similar study conducted in Türkiye with gifted individuals that we can directly compare this finding of our study. However, Şengül (2015) found the writing skills of gifted students not to be at the desired level and that writing is an area that needs to be developed in these students. In our research, we observed that when asked to write an informational text, some of the students did not fully remember the informational text features, tried to get help from each other on how to write, and did not enjoy writing a text very much. Ataman (2011) also concluded that gifted students are more reluctant in their writing studies than their peers, which negatively affects their writing attitudes. Master (1983) also mentions that the idea that gifted people have a high level of writing skills is just a misconception. According to Master (1983), what causes this misconception is that these students quickly fill out the exercises in the workbooks or answer the questions in the textbooks faster and more accurately than their peers. However, there is no absolute relationship between these skills and excellence in writing.

There may be many reasons why students are not at a sufficient level in terms of informational text writing skills. One major reason is that informational text writing activities are not given enough space in schools. Before the intervention in the current study, some questions were asked to understand the experience and knowledge of the students on informational text writing, and all of the students stated that they did not

receive any training on informational writing and did not know any strategies about it. Some students were not fully aware of the genre of the text they wrote and their experience with informational texts in general was quite insufficient. Some research results in the literature overlap with these findings. For example, the studies conducted by Ungan (2007), Karakoç Öztürk (2012), Yaylı and Solak (2014), and Bilgin (2018) reveal that inadequate time is allocated to teach writing in schools. This problem is not only experienced in Türkiye. For example, Brindle et al. (2016) found that 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>-grade teachers spend an average of 15 minutes a day on writing, and students write about 25 minutes a day. According to the 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2011), about a quarter (21%) of high school seniors in the United States do not meet the standards of core competency in academic writing, while only 3% of students are considered advanced level writers.

### **Intervention Applying the “All About” Books Strategy**

After the intervention was carried out with the strategy of “all about” books, the average scores the students got from the texts they wrote reached a high level with 87.67. No study could be identified in the literature using the strategy of “all about” books, to which we can directly compare the results of our study. However, some studies have used different strategies, and progress has been made in writing informational texts. For example, self-regulated writing instruction in secondary school students (Müldür, 2017), students in need of special education (Chalk et al., 2005; Özmen, 2006), and other study groups (Festas et al., 2015; Mason et al., 2006; Uygun, 2012) was found to result in improvement in informational text writing skills. Furthermore, Şener and Kana (2018) used the techniques of making connections between texts and writing introductory chapters in their research, examining the effects of writing techniques on secondary school students’ ability to write informational texts. Additionally, Beydoğan (2011) found that brainstorming, clustering, and mind mapping improve students’ ability to write informational texts. When international studies on the subject are reviewed, it is seen that different strategies and techniques, such as ebooks for teaching informative text writing (Mathia, 2015), project-based teaching (Duke, 2016), teaching structure (Hebert et al., 2021), and speaking strategy for writing (Corbett & Strong, 2011) are used. The current study differs from other similar studies in that the strategy used is flexible enough to be used at all grade levels and that it organizes and facilitates the process for novice students. Furthermore, with the “All about Books” strategy, an informative book has emerged rather than an informative text. The fact that students’ writings turned into a product like a book at the end of the process made them feel like writers and facilitated their development of positive attitudes towards writing. In addition, since the process progressed in the form of writing a book, it became possible to acquire skills such as preparing the cover, contents, index, and bibliography pages and using graphics, tables, and visuals to display the information in an organized manner.

The current study found that students’ views on applying the strategy of “all about” books can be gathered under the themes of development, feeling, difficulty, and demand. There are sub-themes of writing, knowledge, and skills under the theme of development. The students state that they have improved in this process in terms of

writing informational texts, authorship, and quick writing. When the informational texts of the students at the beginning of the process and the books they wrote afterwards are compared, it can be clearly seen that they have made significant progress in writing informational texts. Many students participating in the study stated that they wrote informational texts for the first time. The presence of students who stated that they made progress in “quick writing” under the sub-theme of writing also draws attention. When students started to write informational texts for the first time before the intervention, they were observed to spend a significant part of the time thinking about what to write and how to write, failing to use their time effectively, and therefore some of them could not complete their writings. “All about” books strategy, which shows the roadmap of how to write an informational book for students step by step, accelerated the writing process. The use of the writing strategy also prevented the students’ writing anxiety, which was manifested by the questions of what to write and how to write. Similarly, in his research aiming to develop the informational text writing skills of secondary school students, Şener (2018) found that students had difficulty deciding on how to outline their writing, how to start writing, and what techniques to use to enhance their writing. In the same study, it was stated that although the students were willing to write, they had difficulties in the entire process of producing informational texts, and they experienced uneasiness because they did not know what to do during the writing process. In their research, in which they tried to determine the writing problems at primary and secondary schools, according to teacher opinions, Tok and Ünlü (2014) concluded that most students had the problem of not making a writing plan.

Regarding the sub-theme of knowledge, the students reported development in discovering the difference between text types and being informed about the subject of the writing. The statements of the students that they discovered the differences between the text types are meaningful in that they show that they are familiar with the narrative genre but do not have full knowledge of the characteristics and structure of the informational texts. At the beginning, it was observed that the students did not have much idea about the informational texts, except that they were informational texts. However, the students discovered the difference between the two text types during the intervention process. They examined the books of both text types and tried to find their differences in form and content. Marinak and Gambrell (2009) recommend examining informational books and having interactive reading-aloud exercises to explore how meaning is created in informational texts.

Under the skill sub-theme, statements regarding the development of research and program use skills are listed. During the intervention process, most students were observed doing internet research on the subject they were to write. For this reason, the importance of diversifying resources was emphasized, and students were advised to use different resources. When the bibliography sections of the books were examined, it was found that although there were a higher number of internet resources on the subject, resources such as books, magazines, and documentaries were also used by the students who tried to diversify their resources. Another observation made in the process is that the students developed their research skills. Students acquired new research skills, such as using keywords in search engines, accessing online journal archives, using indexes, and accessing copyright-free images. Kana and Şener (2021) also revealed that secondary school students realized the importance of research for writing at the end of



their informational text writing activities and that pre-writing research improved their texts. Another skill that the students stated that they acquired in this process is to use writing programs. While some students were good at using the program, some were observed to have just learned some features in the writing program, such as placing figures and pictures, preparing a cover page, and page numbering.

While the students expressed their positive feelings about the process as “enjoyable-fun,” “happiness,” and “feeling like a writer,” only one student had “anxiety” caused by writing an informational text for the first time. It is very important for students to see the process as fun, to be happy, and to feel like a writer. These thoughts are meaningful because they indicate that students have developed a positive attitude towards writing. Notably, when students heard that they were going to write a text, they were not very happy with it before the intervention, but they had positive feelings at the end of the intervention process. This also shows how important it is to present a strategy that will guide students in their writing studies and to guide them by eliminating the uncertainties in the writing process with various strategies and techniques.

There were also some difficulties with the process. The difficulties most frequently cited by students were technical. Using the writing program and the Internet were some problems experienced. Some of the students stated that they had some difficulties while using the writing program while writing a book. Placing images with text, designing the page, and creating graphics were some of the difficulties mentioned. Some difficulties stand out under the information-data sub-theme, such as “accessing information” and “gathering information,” “expressing information,” and “identifying important information.” The necessary arrangements and activities were made to address all these difficulties in the process of writing the book. Considering that the majority of students wrote an informational text for the first time, it is normal to experience such difficulties. Under the sub-theme of time, it is observed that the opinion of not being able to complete writing within the given time is expressed. One such student who had a problem with time changed the subject and therefore lost a significant amount of time. Another student stated that she could not write as much as she wanted, and the time was insufficient. The students’ request for additional time and more practice in writing is noteworthy. To summarize, although the students had some difficulties in applying the strategy of “all about” books, they reported improving their skills, such as writing informational texts, discovering the difference between text types, doing research, and using the writing program.

### **Intervention Applying the Biography Frames Strategy**

The first biographies written by the students were determined to be of a good standard. The knowledge gained by the students on writing informational texts in the process of “all about” books is also reflected in the writing of biographies. The aspects of the biography genre that differ from the “all about” books may have prevented the students from reaching a high-level average by having some difficulties in writing. Despite this, the students were found to have increased their scores in all criteria in biography writing compared to their first informational text. Another point that should be emphasized is that at the beginning of biography studies, students wanted to write biographies in the form of a book, which is significant since it shows that students were

motivated towards writing. In addition, the students wanted to print their books and stated that this made them feel like writers. Supporting this finding, Olthouse (2010) concluded that gifted students are positively affected by the publication of their writings.

Biography is one of the most rarely used genres in Türkiye (Firat, 2012). However, biography is a very effective genre that can be used in teaching many subjects. According to Dedeoğlu (2019), biographies present important role models for children who want to learn about other people. Undervaluing the genre of biography is also evident with the scarcity of scientific studies on biographies in Turkey. Reviewing the related literature reveals only a few studies on the use of biographies. For example, no study could be found that measured the biography writing skills of students in Turkey. However, biographies can also be widely used at the primary school level. For example, Aiesi (2016) conducted a study in which 1<sup>st</sup>-grade students wrote biographies about their friends and revealed that students in this age group could write successful biographies with the necessary support. Studies highlight the many benefits of using biography in lessons, such as introducing multiple perspectives (Morgan, 2009), content teaching (Murry et al., 2021), and value teaching (Minaz & Taş, 2020).

In the current study, when the biographies completed by the students at the end of the intervention were scored with the rubric, it was determined to be at a high level, with 90.17. Considering that the average score of the first biographies was 70.30, it can be concluded that the students made significant progress in writing biographies. It was determined that the biographies written by the students using the biography writing frames made progress in all dimensions of the rubric compared to the first biographies.

Examining the student diaries, student views on using the strategy of biography writing frames are grouped under three themes: development, feeling, and difficulty. There are four sub-themes under the development theme: writing, knowledge, skills, and planning. The students stated that they made progress in writing biography, informational texts, authorship, and self-expression under the sub-theme of writing. In the sub-theme of knowledge, the students stated that they improved in increasing their knowledge about the person they wrote about and learning new words. Studies (Maloch, 2008; Pappas, 2006; Pappas, Varelas et al., 2003; Webster, 2009) reveal that students who interact with informational texts improve their vocabulary and acquire scientific discourse. Webster (2009) found that using informational texts positively affects the science learning of first-year students. Brabham et al. (2000) concluded that primary school students' content knowledge and vocabulary improved after reading informational books. When the skill sub-theme is examined, it is seen that the students have improved in terms of research, computer use, evaluation, and summarizing. Planning is another area where students report having made progress. Under the sub-theme of planning, student opinions are gathered under planning the writing and planning the time. The students' feelings about the process were gathered under two sub-themes: positive and negative. Under the positive sub-theme, the students stated that the process was enjoyable, and that they felt like scientists and empathized, while under the negative sub-theme, there was a statement that the process was tiring. They also reported difficulties in the process, such as finding images and accessing information.

Another observation in the research is that students helped each other while writing informational texts and improved each other's texts with their suggestions. Aiesi (2016) found that 1<sup>st</sup>-grade students write more meaningful and in-depth texts when they work with their peers and share their writings. Maloch (2008) states that the use of informational text in the classroom encourages students to participate actively, while Moss (2008) states that it increases meaningful discussions around the text. Maloch and Zapata (2014) also state that interaction with informational texts is a social action for students.

Another key finding emerging in our research is that students in primary school can write informational texts and enjoy them when adequate support is provided. Non-fiction texts are perceived as unusual and challenging for young readers (Maloch & Bomer, 2013). In the past, it was thought that young children could not write informational texts (Wollman-Bonilla, 2000). The idea that students do not want to read informational texts at an early age, that these texts are not suitable for them, and that they cannot write informational texts is wrong. For example, Smolkin and Donovan (2003) found that young learners, especially boys, are interested in informational books. Likewise, Kletzien and Szabo (1998), in their study with students up to third grade, determined that although their teachers predicted that they would prefer stories, students chose books that were as informational as stories for independent reading when they were presented with an option.

In summary, an action plan that included "all about" books and biography writing frames strategies was implemented with gifted students with intermediate level informational text writing skills. These strategies served as the skeleton for the students to construct their texts. Writing strategies are beneficial for students who do not know what to write, where to start, and how to shape their text because it is impossible to write a good text haphazardly. In this sense, both strategies served as a guide for non-professional students in writing, which seems to have helped students gain self-confidence in writing and develop a positive attitude towards writing. Finally, the present study makes an important contribution to the relevant research literature in that it includes easily applicable and adaptable strategies for teachers who want to improve their students' ability to write informative texts, draws attention to neglected genres in Türkiye such as biography, and makes students feel like writers by helping them to create a product (book) at the end of the writing process.

### **Suggestions**

Considering the findings obtained in the research, some suggestions are made for teachers, researchers, and curriculum designers.

#### ***Suggestions for Teachers***

- Informational text writing practices should be given a stronger focus in schools.
- Classroom discussions examining books representing different text types should be included to allow an exploration of the differences between text types.
- Informational text writing activities should be paid stronger attention to in schools.

- Students should be given sufficient opportunities and guidance to write informational texts.
- Writing studies should be concluded with a product such as a book.
- Students should be encouraged to write on topics of interest and curiosity.
- Different types of informational texts should be included in informational text writing activities. A variety of genres such as biography, criticism, news article, and travel writing can be used easily in classrooms.
- Students should be guided to diversify the sources they use while writing informational texts.
- Students should be given the opportunity to evaluate each other's texts.
- Feedback is very important in the writing process. Evaluation and feedback should not only be product-oriented but should be spread throughout the process.

### ***Suggestions for Researchers***

- This study was conducted with gifted students. Similar studies can be conducted with students of normal intelligence and different grade levels.
- In-depth research can be conducted on what kind of changes the strategies used in the research cause in the affective domain (attitude, anxiety, self-efficacy, etc.) in writing informational texts.
- Further research can be conducted to find answers to questions such as how much time is devoted to writing informational texts in schools and the distribution of books in classrooms or school libraries by genre in Turkey.
- Research can be conducted on which text types are preferred by gifted students in reading and writing.

### ***Suggestions for Curriculum Designers***

- The outcome “(The student) writes informational texts” is included in the Turkish Language Curriculum (MEB, 2019) for the first time at the 4<sup>th</sup>-grade level. Learning outcomes related to informational text writing should be included in the curriculum at an earlier age.
- In the Turkish Language Curriculum (MEB, 2019), the text types that should be in the textbooks are specified, and the biography are included in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade for the first time. Texts such as biography should be included in textbooks at a much earlier age.
- The Turkish Language Curriculum (MEB, 2019) states that one hour of the Turkish course per week should be devoted to writing. Considering that the Turkish course for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades of primary school is eight hours a week, one lesson hour is insufficient for writing practices, which should be extended.

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### Statement of Responsibility

Author 1: Conceptualization and methodology, writing-original draft preparation, visualization, investigation, data curation, formal analysis, editing. Author 2: Validation, data curation, formal analysis, writing-review and editing, supervision

### Conflicts of Interest

No potential conflict of interest was declared by the author.

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