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A GUIDEBOOK FOR IMPLEMENTING
A WRITER'S WORKSHOP

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Education: Reading

by
Kimberly Mackay Hartnett
June 1998


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ABSTRACT

The area of reading instruction has reached a level of controversy in California that puts it in the front pages of local papers as often as it comes up for discussion at school district board meeting. Task forces have been created, standards drafted and new reading programs adopted. The buzz word permeating all of these actions is that of "balance". This project contends that the issue of balance includes the teaching of writing as well as the teaching of reading in a balanced literacy program. Research and experience show that a literacy program will not be efficient and appropriate for all students if effective writing instruction is not included.

Writing instruction will be effective when it includes the elements of time, choice, demonstration, purposeful practice, instruction through conferencing and evaluation. The strategy of writer's workshop incorporates all of these elements into a daily classroom routine. Unfortunately, today's beginning teachers receive very little information about the teaching of writing or the implementation of a strategy like writer's workshop. This project attempts to fill in that gap.

The purpose of this project is to provide beginning teachers or teachers new to writing instruction with a step-

by-step guideline for implementing writer's workshop in a K-3 classroom. The first eight weeks of writer's workshop are outlined and defined complete with prompts and reflections teachers can use to make this strategy responsive to the needs of their students. It is designed to act like "training-wheels" for beginning teachers. While this project does not pretend to be the only way to effectively teach writing, it is one way for the newest members of the profession to get writing instruction started in their classrooms from the first day of school.

When balanced literacy includes daily writing instruction, effective literacy programs will exist in today's classrooms. This project helps teachers new to the instruction of writing develop a daily writing program that meets their student's needs.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
CHAPTER ONE- The Problem	1
CHAPTER TWO- The Research	
The Needs of Beginning Teachers Entering Classrooms	21
The Importance of Teaching Writing Daily	26
Balance as it Applies to the Teaching of Reading and Writing	29
The Format of Writer's Workshop	32
Spelling and the Teaching of Conventions	39
In Conclusion	41
CHAPTER THREE- Goals and Objectives	43
APPENDIX A: Guidebook for Writer's Workshop	
Introduction	47
The Elements of A Good Writing Program	51
The First Two Weeks	63
The Next Six Weeks	96
APPENDIX B: The Forms Used for Writer's Workshop	114
REFERENCES CITED	121

CHAPTER ONE- The Problem

California is bulging at the seams with school age children. To make matters worse, the state is demanding class-size reduction to a ratio of twenty to one in grades K-3. As a result, more and more beginning teachers are standing in classrooms for the first time than ever before. Many of these beginning teachers have completed a university credential program but even more of them are "interns" and emergency credentialed teachers with little or no training to teach. These new teachers are well meaning and enthusiastic, but they have been ill-prepared to set up, monitor and implement an effective education program for the 20-30+ children in their charge. Nowhere is this more evident than in the area of literacy instruction.

Beginning teachers are victims of a system that is guilty of two levels of neglect. The first level involves those teachers who followed the path of fifth year credentialing after baccalaureate graduation. They have chosen to enroll in state legislatively mandated university training with the student teacher component and assume that this fifth year will provide them with the preparation necessary to successfully implement an effective classroom program (Giem, Norman & Dillon, 1997). In the area of literacy learning, this currently comes down to one quarter of coursework in a reading methods class. Although the state

legislature is considering adopting new regulations to increase this requirement, my experience with beginning teachers documents the reality that beginning teachers in classrooms now have been given nothing more than a survey-type approach to teaching one of the most complex and important aspects of an elementary classroom program. This survey-approach may provide survival skills in the first year, but I believe that mere survival is much less than the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (1997) had in mind.

During this one quarter reading methods class, assessment is hinted at, strategies are mentioned and implementation is observed but seldom undertaken over time in a real classroom setting. Many of these future teachers leave this quarter of methodology with a rudimentary knowledge of how to structure and implement an effective classroom literacy program. I believe that unless this knowledge is supplemented by district or school site trainings, these teachers will be unable to successfully teach all the children in their class the basics of literacy instruction.

The second level of neglect effects a large percentage of beginning teachers standing in classrooms today. Because of the demands that a rushed class-size reduction policy has placed on schools, many beginning teachers have been hired

without completing any kind of credential program. They are in the process of acquiring the credential since this is the requirement of their intern, emergency credentialed status but most of them have not even had the benefit of the typical quarter of reading methods.

The neglect of preparation these beginning teachers have received is unconscionable when you look at the results it creates for many California school children. Nowhere is this more disastrous than in the area of literacy instruction.

It has become common consensus that if children can read they can succeed in school and ultimately in this society. It appears to me that although we have been teaching children to read through public education for over a century, when the goal of public literacy instruction is more than functional literacy, the stakes are raised in public school classrooms. This leads to the challenge of how to teach every child in California's classrooms to read as well as reach their literacy potential.

The controversy surrounding literacy instruction goes beyond the area of reading and has led to the use of the term "balanced literacy". In these politically correct times, this phrase is being used by all opposing philosophical camps lining up to define strategies, materials, and the teaching points of an effective language arts program. Currently "balanced literacy" is being used by the back-to-basics

conservatives in their cry for more "systematic phonics and spelling instruction"(Collins, 1997, pp. 78-81). At the other end of the spectrum "balanced literacy" is a cry for more holistic literature-based instruction (Shannon, 1991). It is obvious that "balance" as it applies to literacy is viewed differently based on the models of reading being described. When the State Board of Education approved the new standards for reading and writing (1997), they compromised in the name of balance by taking a little from all the dominant models of reading and created a document that requires word analysis and systematic vocabulary development" (p.2) as well as "reading comprehension"(p.6) and "literary responses and analysis" (p. 10). In the area of writing, "writing strategies" (pp. 15-17) and "writing applications" (pp. 18-21) are standardized. It appears that the state is attempting to address the issue of balance by combining systemic, explicit phonics and spelling from the decoding approach to literacy instruction, with a skills approach using more word knowledge(Routman, 1996, p. 105) and the meaning-centered approach of holistic instruction. I am even more concerned about the overemphasis on the teaching of reading in these standards and the apparent diminished role of the teaching of writing. Looking at the standards for first grade, there are 29 required standards in the areas of reading and only 5 in the area of writing. If balance is the

goal of an effective literacy program, how can we achieve this if the state is overemphasizing the teaching of reading at the expense of the teaching of writing.

Many university credential programs do not address writing in the methods courses due to time constraints. Now the "Reading and Writing Content Standard for Kindergarten through 12th Grade" (1997) also de-emphasizes the teaching of writing. It is my concern that an effective literacy program for all children cannot be accomplished unless writing is as strongly taught as reading. I am also concerned that beginning teachers are not getting the pedagogy, methodology and most importantly the theoretical encouragement or professional experience to realize what experience has shown me about the importance of writing in a balanced literacy program.

Harste and Burke (1979) state in their article "Understanding The Hypothesis: It's the Teacher that Makes the Difference" that "to improve reading instruction, it is necessary to train better teachers of reading rather than to expect a panacea in the form of materials" (p.1). I believe that in order to improve reading instruction, we must train better teachers of writing also. In addition they state that "the key component of the teacher variable is the teacher's theoretical orientation" (p.2). One quarter of reading methods may only scratch the surface of a "theoretical

orientation" to the teaching of reading and doesn't even begin to address the teaching of writing. I believe that without a strong, personal belief system about the effective implementation of a balanced literacy programs all the state mandated standards, and standardized testing will not help children become more than functionally literate users of language.

The current state mandated readings methods classes required in credentialing programs scratch the surface of literacy development but these classes do little to expose beginning teachers to research on how children become literate (Beno, Dolan & Giem, April 1997). Instead they imply that by implementing a series of strategies (i.e. shared reading, read aloud, guided reading, interactive writing) children will learn to read. Yet, without knowledge of how children actually process print, I believe these strategies can be pointless because they do not give teachers the tools to modify strategies based on individual and group processing needs. If teachers are not addressing the instructional needs of the students they teach, they may be wasting very limited instructional time.

In addition, I believe that when the issue of balance refers to all of the language arts: reading, writing, speaking and listening, emphasis in classroom literacy programs will better meet the needs of all the students by

providing more purposeful and strategic teaching. It appears that many reading methods classes put little emphasis on the teaching of writing as a complementary and critical component of a good reading program (Clay, 1991, p. 86). When this is true, how can a balanced literacy program be achieved?

Unfortunately today, some beginning teachers walk into classrooms with a hint of what a reading program is and no concept of the instruction of writing. They are left to depend upon district trainings, which until recently was too little, too late, if offered at all, and teacher's manuals from the latest published reading program. As a classroom teacher piloting the new language arts materials and a member of the adoption committee for my school district, my experience with the newest version of reading programs is that writing is incidental or optional. In the latest program published by Harcourt Brace called Signatures (1997), writing in first grade is nothing more than a version of "daily oral language" in written form (Farr, Strickland, pp. T52-T54). Research on language arts from the socio-psycholinguist approach of literacy instruction concludes that writing is a necessary component of a reading program and through an effective writing program, students become better readers (Clay, 1991). In addition, it has been discovered that many emergent readers "can write first and read later in school settings" (p. 86). I believe that when

school districts and universities do a better job of working together to prepare and support new teachers in implementing a balanced classroom literacy program that emphasizes writing instruction as strongly as it emphasizes reading instruction the students will then benefit from a balanced literacy program.

To confuse the problem of writing instruction even more, the newly adopted state standards demonstrate a strong stand on the systematic teaching of spelling. It can be agreed that moving to conventional spelling is the goal for all literacy programs, however spelling is nothing more than a tool for writing and without a comprehensive writing program, spelling becomes nothing more than an act in memorization that has little meaning and as a result little transfer to writing. As Clay (1991) states, "writing is real and interesting when children have their own purpose for doing it" (p. 86). When a classroom writing program requires nothing more than identification of the naming part and telling part of a sentence in a worksheet format, how will students find the purpose for writing? In addition to having ineffective writing instruction, my experience as a teacher of reading has shown me that this type of instruction will also effect the reading potential of the students involved with it.

It seems obvious to me that when beginning teachers

understand that balance refers not only to phonics in balance with meaning making but it also refers to the teaching of writing in balance with the teaching of reading, then will students receive a literacy program that will take them beyond just a functional use of language. Clay (1991) reminds us that "it is important to foster the child's desire to explore writing at the same time as he is learning to read" and that few "discussions of early literacy see these two activities as complementary" even though it is common sense that "what is learned in writing becomes a resource in reading and vice versa" (p. 96). Donald Graves(1994) points out that "our job . . . [is] to show [children] how reading and writing can help [them] enjoy [their] world more fully" (p. 184). I contend that beginning teachers need this information at the start of their careers so that they can better achieve what the state mandated standards (1997) imply: when public education teaches all children in California to become effective users of all forms of language, all members of society will benefit.

When I began teaching, I needed a job. That's why I went into teaching. I had no emotional calling for it, I actually believed that it was nothing more than a stepping stone to bigger and brighter, or to be more honest, a flashier future that was simply on hold due to the economic restraints of years of undergraduate education. I walked

into my first grade classroom and saw a set of "readers" on the counter. I found the teacher's guide, took it home and spent my savings on Frank Schaffer ready-made bulletin boards. Even though I had no intention of making teaching a career, I constantly thought about the good teachers I'd had throughout my life and aspired to follow that path as opposed to the models of the mediocre teachers that dominated my early education.

My first months were spent struggling with the routines and procedures of the elementary school culture as well as the management and discipline of my own classroom. I faithfully assigned "seatwork" as recommended by other first grade teachers and attempted to make stories about "Buffy and Mack" exciting so the children would enjoy reading. I loved to read and I wanted them to love to read too. I remember one of the earliest lessons directed me to "teach" the words "was" and "went". No matter how clever I got, or how many worksheet practice pages these kids did, they could not differentiate between these two words. The fact that they are visually very similar and interchangeable in the text was not mentioned by the Teacher's Manual or during lunch room discussions. But what the kids were telling me was just that. I was learning about how children process print from the children themselves and it was up to me to be as observant and open-minded as possible so that I could respond

and react appropriately. Through many of these experiences I discovered early that "teaching is a mystery" (Calkins, 1994, p.54) and while others made excuses for why children could not read, I sought information that would help me make sure that they did learn and enjoy reading.

I was a new teacher at a time in California when change was the norm. The 1987 English Language Arts Framework had just come out and the way reading had been taught for decades was being critically evaluated. That first year was the last year Buffy and Mack spent in my classroom because the following school year books referred to as Core Literature were sitting on my shelves. Although I was no better prepared to use these materials I sensed, because of my love for good literature, that this was a good thing.

This was also the year that I discovered Brian Cambourne, the McCrackens, Don Holdaway, and most importantly Donald Graves and Lucy Calkins. Because of my school's status as a Chapter One school, much money was spent on staff development and conference attendance. I was a new teacher. I was also a sponge for information. I went to every training and conference I could with my principal's blessing. It was this year, my second year of teaching, that I discovered the art of teaching. I discovered what was possible. I met teachers who were making reading enjoyable and exciting. I also quit checking the want ads for a new

job. But the most important thing that I discovered was that when teachers implemented an effective, purposeful daily writing program, young children could and did write. In addition, I discovered that children have to write daily to succeed as readers.

As a writer myself, this struck a chord with me. I have always loved to write creatively and majored in writing as literature in college. I loved the classrooms that let me write about what I wanted to write and dreaded the prompts from more traditional teachers. In Cambourne's 1988 book The Whole Story he includes choice for "learners to make their own decisions. . . [as a critical component of a] . . . model of learning as it applies to literacy" (p.33). He also argues for "immersion, demonstration, expectation, practice, approximation and response [and finally] engagement" (p.33). "Without the learner's engagement with the demonstrations which are made available by the persons or artifacts which surround/immerse him, they will wash over him and pass him by" (p. 51). Cambourne applies this to all "literacy learning" but I took it very seriously and applied it whole heartedly to my teaching of writing in first grade. I actually left my reading program in a mediocre, holding pattern and turned my classroom into a writer's workshop those first years. Not surprisingly, my kids learned to read and enjoyed it. Even more interestingly, veteran teachers

who had closed their doors to me earlier began stopping by to see how I "used those journals to get those kids to write so much" (Linn, May 1990).

I have always maintained some basic beliefs about children as learners. What I was reading, hearing and learning during this period of my professional development reinforced and put into practice what I intrinsically believed. Lucy Calkins (1994) states that "ninety percent of children come to school believing they can write" (p. 62). By first grade, children were coming to my classroom already defeated as writers. I wanted them to learn the lessons of the power of written communication that I had and I knew that I didn't have time to lose if they were already feeling unsuccessful. I also knew that the choices and selections I made as a teacher were a reflection "about [my] attitudes toward children and their literacy" (p. 63). I believed they could succeed and therefore they could. To me it was that simple.

I also believed that when teaching is a dictatorship, learning can be stifled. As long as I was solely in control, my students would never take responsibility for their actions and their learning. I had to move away from the traditional lecture model that was dominating classrooms at the time. By doing this I discovered what Forester and Reinhard talk about in The Learner's Way (1990) "as the teacher relinquishes

control over the children's every move, so the children release the teacher" (p.293). My classroom became a busy, noisy place where learning was exciting and I didn't have all the answers. I actually began to enjoy going to work everyday. A "climate of delight invigorat[ed]"(p. 295) my classroom.

I was learning how to "adapt teaching to children's ways of learning" (p. 137). I learned that "children learn from models" (p. 139) and that "modeling[demonstrating] the behaviors children are expected to learn" is one of the "three principal ways that parents teach"(p. 138). "Allowing children to practice to their hearts' content" and "providing feedback that acknowledges the meaning of what the child have said " (p. 139) are the other two principals. I also learned that this format of model, practice, feedback is very conducive to the teaching of writing and spelling and this became the structure of my daily writer's workshops.

My classroom today is completely structured in this workshop format, but early on, I tackled writing first. By using this format for writers workshop I was able to attend to the wide variety of "writing behaviors and continuums of growth" (Calkins, 1994, p. 57) and also address the learning conditions as described by Cambourne (1988).

My beliefs about children as writers expanded and I began to develop some conclusions about teaching writing from

my experiences as a writer as well as my experiences with children as writers. Harry Hood, 1997, author of Left to Write Too states some "key conclusions" about teaching writing:

Children learn best when they write for real purposes and audiences, in a variety of written forms. Learning is a social activity: writers need readers, and writing conferences teach children to question their writing. Learning to write is a developmental process. Writing "workshops" are the best way to learn how to teach writing. Demonstration and modeling are two powerful strategies. Teachers must use a variety of approaches to teach writing. You can use what you know about teaching children to read and apply it to teaching children to write. (p.9)

I concur with this text written primarily for New Zealand teachers. I believe it applies to student learners across the globe.

The California Standards for the Teaching Profession (1997) document a standard for "understanding and organizing subject matter for student learning" (p. 12). To be proficient in the standard "teachers [must] exhibit strong working knowledge of subject matter and student development". They have to be able to "identify and understand the key concepts, underlying themes and relationships in the subject area" taught. When "reading goes hand in hand with writing" (Hood, 1997, p. 10) then instruction better meets the needs

of literacy learners. Therefore, it would be necessary for beginning teachers to have as much emphasis on the teaching of writing as they have about how to teach reading.

This standard also requires that "teachers continue to keep subject matter knowledge current" implying that the status quo of literacy instruction is no longer good enough. For beginning teachers this is problematic. The current requirement of reading methods classes in university programs is dictated by state credentialing mandates. Universities recognize the need to better address the preservice training in literacy instruction but are often unable to address the need due to market constraints and state mandates (Gray, November 1997). As a result, the state is currently passing legislation to force school districts to provide "individualized induction programs" (Beginning Teachers Support and Assessment [BTSA] training, 1997) for all beginning teachers. This two year process is designed to tie the California Standards to the training provided to beginning teachers at the district level. In this way perhaps, the issue of a balanced literacy program that includes writing as a partner component to reading may be addressed.

A team of researchers at Purdue University (Niersthemer, Hopkins & Schmitt, 1997) conducted a study of preservice teachers in their undergraduate methods courses. Titled "But

I Just Want to Teach Regular Kids!: Understanding Preservice Teachers' Beliefs About Teaching Children Experiencing Difficulty Learning to Read". This study found that "the disillusionment our students experience is embedded in the deeply rooted beliefs about children and literacy learning" (p. 16). In addition they found that "preservice and novice teachers have unrealistic beliefs about teaching in general" and "reentry to schools delivers a mild to moderate shock when they find their images of students, teachers, and schools are inappropriate" (p. 17). Like Harste and Burke (1979), these teachers of preservice teachers found the theoretical orientation of teachers to be critical to the success of their students. Without a child-centered orientation to learning "the majority of preservice teachers assigned responsibility to someone else" (p.21) when a child failed to succeed at a given task.

I believe it is critical that there is more emphasis placed on "assessing preservice teachers' beliefs" (Niersthemer et al, 1997, p. 23) about literacy instruction especially as it applies to the teaching of writing. It is also necessary to "provide appropriate experiences in teacher education programs" and induction/beginning teacher programs that "will ensure that prospective teachers develop 'it can be done' and 'it is my job' perspectives about teaching" (p.21) writing. If this is not done in preservice,

credentialing programs these teachers need access to this information through district and site level beginning teacher support programs.

Much of the research and pedagogical experiments on writing tell us that "writing should not be delayed while reading or grammar is developed first" (Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 1993, p. 49). In the same way, the teaching of writing "should not be delayed" while beginning teachers struggle with the ineffective manuals of the latest reading program. If writing instruction is not started early, "one of the prime ways of advancing reading achievement and mastering the conventions of language" (p. 49) may be lost.

It is through my discovery of how to teach writing that I gained my passion for teaching. This passion has crossed over to all content areas and I am as motivated to develop an effective workshop format for reading, math, science, social studies, etc. as I was for writing. I see writing now as more than communication with others. Writing "involves us in reflective thought and in the selection and arrangement of appropriate language. The practice gained through this experience becomes part of the thinking tools used in subsequent productions" (Dancing with the Pen, The Learner as a Writer, 1992, p. 9). I want my students to be thinkers and writing is the tool I use to demonstrate this. It is the tool that allows them to practice and it is the tool for which I

give appropriate feedback. But it has taken me many years to come to these conclusions and develop an effective workshop format. If "reading and writing, like talking and listening, are inseparable processes" (Clay, 1991, p.10) can beginning teachers provide an effective reading program without addressing writing? While there are indications that changes are occurring at the state, university and district levels, the immediate need for beginning teachers in classrooms now creates the purpose for this project.

The potential of many of California's students may not be reached if the teaching of writing is not a part of a balanced classroom literacy program. With the current inability of many university credential programs to meet this need, it falls to school districts and school sites to provide the training, resources and experiences that will create a generation of teachers who do teach writing daily. Unfortunately we cannot afford for them to figure it out on their own the way I did. As Regie Routman, states in her book Literacy at the Crossroads (1996) "we must assume the noble job of public school education in a democracy-that is, we must successfully educate all the children who come to us, no ifs, ands, or buts"(p.22). I would like to reword that to include "when we educate all the beginning teachers who plan to join us in "the noble job" we will have moved closer to "successfully educat[ing] all the children who come to us in

the areas of literacy instruction using a balanced approach that includes reading and writing. Chapter two discusses some of the literature written about the teaching of writing and examines issues that stand out. This combined with the needs of beginning teachers entering the classroom defines the need for guidance, structure and support that this guidebook may provide.

CHAPTER TWO- The Research

In reviewing the literature on the teaching of writing, the following issues stand out when considering the teaching of writing in beginning teachers' classrooms: the needs of beginning teachers entering classrooms, the importance of teaching writing daily, balance as it applies to the teaching of reading and writing, the format of writer's workshop, spelling and the teaching of conventions.

The Needs of Beginning Teachers Entering Classrooms

The role of teaching is varied and complex. The newest members of the profession embark on a career that requires them to put into practice deep seated beliefs about how children learn as well as how best to teach them. For many of these teachers, their own beliefs are not well established and yet everything they do in the classroom is a reflection of their tentative beliefs. Nowhere is it more obvious that "translating beliefs into practice involves teachers in decisions about their own teaching practice" (First Steps Writing, 1995, p. 4) than when working with these teachers. Many teachers agree with Lucy Calkins (1994) when she states "teaching is a mystery" (p. 54). Veteran teachers know that teaching involves an endless stream of decisions made sometimes on a minute-by-minute basis. The decisions and the selections that we make as teachers "reveals [much] about our

attitudes toward children and literacy (p. 63). It reveals our personal as well as professional beliefs about children, literacy and learning. These decisions are also based on experience and mastery of strategies, assessments and methodology that has developed over time. As Clay(1991) states, "the essence of successful teaching is to know where the frontier of learning is for any one pupil on a particular task" (p. 65).

How then do beginning teachers acquire the attitudes, experience and mastery necessary to make careful decisions for their students? Recent research shows that many beginning teachers attitudes are often based more on the mythical past of their own public education experience than on sound pedagogy, research or classroom experience (Niersthemer, Hopkins & Schmitt, 1997). The California Standards for the Teaching Profession (1997) expect teachers to "become reflective practitioners who actively seek to strengthen and augment their professional skills, knowledge and perspectives"(p. 3). However, many beginning teachers do not have much more than some basic methodology and a set of teacher's editions when they begin. Since "teaching is more than methodology" (p.3), beginning teachers need "support, mentoring and assessment during the early years of teaching" (p.3) so that they can develop a theoretical base from which to make these day to day decisions. Without a sound "theory

as a system of assumptions through which experiences are organized and acted upon" (Harste & Burke, 1979, p.2) beginning teachers will struggle when they attempt to "design lessons that challenge students" (The California Standards for the Teaching Profession, 1997, p. 16) in all content areas but especially in the area of writing instruction.

Beginning teachers are often assigned mentors if they participate in a program such as Beginning Teachers Support and Assessment (BTSA). When asked what would be beneficial for beginning teachers as they begin to set up and implement a classroom writing program, beginning teachers in this program who were interviewed requested someone to "evaluate my plan. I need someone to tell me here's what we want you to have in [my] . . . program. That way it would save me time and energy" (Hemp, 1997 p. 3). Other beginning teachers expressed a need for "inservicing as to how to schedule their day with a small packet of information describing teaching techniques" (Dolan, 1997, p. 3), "a presentation to help teachers understand how to manage/use/implement" (Giem, 1997, p. 3) language arts strategies, observation of teachers implementing a balanced approach and "handouts on how to set up an effective program" (Beno, 1997, p.3). Access to professional texts not acquired during preservice training was mentioned by many of the

beginning teachers. One beginning teacher shared a two-page handout titled "Getting Guided Writing Started in Your First Grade Classroom" (Pinnell, 1997) that she claimed was helpful. This handout lists general activities and strategies used in a sequential, week by week format (Beno, 1997).

In addition to mentor support, teachers participate in district and school site trainings at the beginning of the year and during Sight Improvement Plan (SIP) days throughout the year. The beginning teachers emphasized the need for site or district training at the beginning of the year (Giem, Beno, Dolan & Hemp, 1997) above and beyond their preservice, university training. A BTSA handout from one of the early trainings defines the "phases of first-year teaching"(1997). These phases include the "anticipation phase, survival phase, disillusionment phase, rejuvenation [and finally] reflection" (pp. 7-8). This handout begins by defining the anticipation phase as a period when "new teachers enter with a tremendous commitment to making a difference and a somewhat idealistic view of how to accomplish their goals" (p.7). This phase "begins during the student teaching portion of preservice preparation. . . [and continues]. . . through the first few weeks of school" (p. 7). The next phase of first year teaching, the survival phase, "is very overwhelming for new teachers" (p.7). New teachers are "instantly bombarded with

a variety of problems and situations they had not anticipated" and these teachers are "struggling to keep their heads above water" (p.7). This information would suggest that the best time to provide the training requested by the beginning teachers would be within the anticipation phase and not during the survival phase.

Following the survival phase, disillusionment takes over "after six to eight weeks of nonstop work" (p. 7). During this phase, "many new teachers get sick . . . [and encounter] back to school night [which] means giving a speech to parents" an uncomfortable position for many new teachers. In addition, parent conferences and evaluations by principals occur during this phase. "This is a very difficult and challenging phase for new entry into the profession" (p.8). This would also not be an ideal time for training sessions dealing with new concepts to be scheduled. Unfortunately this is the time that the BTSA program schedules two out of four of their beginning teacher trainings.

The needs of beginning teachers are great. The research shows that the timing and format of any type of supportive resource is critical to its ability to effectively assist these teachers.

The Importance of Teaching Writing Daily

The teaching of writing is an important component to the teaching of reading. There are many successful writers in our culture, we read them daily. Writing is also a tool for communication used daily. Then where is writing taught and how did we learn to communicate with print? Donald Graves (1994) conducted a study for the Ford Foundation on the status of writing and interviewed "people from all walks of life about their learning and writing experiences in school" (p.4). What is significant about this study is that "38 of the interviewees were professional writers but not one of them learned to write in school" (p.4). Most could not cite "a single teacher who had helped them say something worthwhile" (p.4). If the "first and most important use of language is to communicate with others" (Dancing with the Pen, 1992, p. 9) how can today's schools teach this form of language, writing, in such a way that even professional writers cannot give credit to a single educator? Writing is a tool that allows us to "transcend ourselves and to affect other people" (Graves, 1994, p.34). In a democracy, writing is the tool that gives us a political voice and allows us to "transcend oneself in space and time" (p. 34).

But writing is more complex than just another form of communication. As Dancing with the Pen (1992) goes on to say:

trying to express what we really mean involves the active exploration of ideas. This process involves us in reflective thought and in the selection and arrangement of appropriate language. The practice gained through this experience becomes part of the thinking tools used in subsequent productions. (p.9)

Writing is an act in thinking, and logic and organization. Through writing, clarity is practiced and refined. It is through writing that students have the opportunity to express "the knowledge and understanding that [they] already have about life" (Short & Burke, 1991, p.34).

In some ways, writing is a more difficult activity to do than the act of reading. Once the mechanical system of print is mastered, reading is a meaning gathering activity. It requires translation and interpretation of that which is already written. Writing on the other hand, also requires mastery of the print system, but meaning is created in the act of writing and creation often requires some form of risk. Graves (1994) reminds us that "writing is a sweaty business. The act is so painful that most delay writing. . . until pure terror takes over" (p.31). Many classroom teachers also feel terror about their own writing and therefore may delay the teaching of it because of their own discomfort. Zemelman et al (1992) state that "all children can and should write" (p. 49). It is a tool for communication that can no longer be

ignored or delayed. In their book Best Practice: New Standard for Teaching and Learning in America's Schools they go on to state that "children of all grades need sufficient writing time to fully complete and reflect on communicative tasks, for writing is one of the most complex and important of academic abilities"(p.50). In addition, it cannot be overstated that writing is the best practice for reading. Simply put, "when children do writing they quite naturally begin to read what they have written. They read what they themselves have written more easily than unfamiliar material" (Clay, 1991, p.86). This is a critical issue for beginning or emergent readers. It is important that "writing not be delayed while reading or grammar is developed first; rather, experimentation with the ingredients of written language is one of the prime ways of advancing reading achievement and mastering the conventions of language" (Zemelman et al, 1992,p.50).

Research shows that writing is a critical academic endeavor and when started early in a student's educational career can enhance a student's success in other academic areas. Therefore, when writing is taught effectively in schools, children have a better potential to succeed. However, the strategies used to teach writing can affect the attitudes and success of those students. In Becoming Literate: The Construction of Inner Control (1991) Marie Clay

reminds us that "some styles of teaching may facilitate the development of independent, constructive learners and some styles of teaching may either confuse the learners or impede progress towards independence" (p.62). If the goal of teaching writing is to help students develop the ability to communicate with print, then writing is a necessary component of every language arts program. When we teach writing early and often in schools, this goal can be accomplished.

Balance as it Applies to the Teaching of Reading and Writing

It is a fact that one of the main functions of schools is to teach the newest generations of citizens to read. Public school has been doing this for centuries. It can also be argued that writing has been taught in schools for decades. However, Donald Graves (1994) notes that virtually all literacy programs were geared to helping people learn to read. None of them stressed the importance of a "citizen's ability to write" (p.44). When writing was taught, "many teachers did not view writing as a complex developmental process. They were more concerned with the finished product which they evaluated without regard to the way it was produced" (Dancing with the Pen, 1992, p.7). Short and Burke (1991) describe writing in schools as "filling in blanks on workbook pages and writing about creative writing topics for the teacher" (p.38). This approach to teaching writing

follows the skills model of teaching reading but does not view "writing as a tool for learning" (Practical Ideas for teaching writing as a process, 1987, p.2).

A holistic model of reading views writing as a language used for communication, clarification, logic, thought and organization. Within this model, the goal of a classroom writing program would not be a perfect essay, letter or creative writing piece. As Lucy Calkins (1994) eloquently states "the goal [of a writing program] is fluency and voice, for the lilt of oral language to come through in a child's writing"(p.88). She goes on to state that "all children need to be invited and expected to join us in all of this purposeful writing" (p. 60).

In a decoding model of teaching reading, writing instruction is nothing more than handwriting practice of correct letter formation, "word awareness and letter recognition" (Adams, 1990, p. 374). This approach advocates that children "should seek to develop [these skills] in kindergarten and preschool-well before first-grade" (p. 374). Children who do not master this item knowledge run the risk of "fail[ure] in school forever" (p. 374). However, Fountas and Pinnell (1996) state that "the ultimate goal of learning about letters and words is for children to use this knowledge as they read and write text" (p. 176). The decoding model and skills model of teaching reading de-emphasize the writing

of whole texts until isolated item knowledge is mastered.

Writing cannot be delegated to the Friday writing prompt or workbook page on parts of a sentence anymore than reading can be learned using SRA kits. When reading and writing pervade all aspects of a classroom program, true literacy results. "A classroom must be an environment in which the child becomes aware of the need for reading and writing in everyday life" (Clay, 1991, p.97). Writing must be purposeful and meaningful for students, with the prime goal being clarity of message for the audience intended. Because "the reader is the shadow of the writer and the writer is the shadow of the reader" (Hood, 1997, p.10), when reading and writing are taught as they exist, "hand in hand" (Dancing with the Pen, 1992, p.1) there will be a focus on meaning.

In addition, reading and writing are the tools that open up the other areas of the curriculum and provide us with a voice to express our knowledge and wonder. Therefore, reading and writing "should extend throughout the curriculum" (Zemelman et al, 1992, p.54). "When topics matter to them, children work hard to express themselves well and are willing to invest time and effort in crafting and revising their work" (p.50).

It is important to teach writing in a classroom literacy program. "Unless children see themselves as authors with something to say, as writers with the power to initiate texts

that command the attention of others, they may remain as sheep both in the classroom and later in the larger society" (Graves, 1994, p.45). In a balanced approach to literacy instruction, "concepts about the nature of language in print apply to both activities: what is learned in writing becomes a resource in reading and vice versa" (Clay, 1991, p.96). When our classroom programs reflect equal emphasis on reading and writing, children will develop as successful users and manipulators of print. Writer's workshop is a strategy that reflects this equal emphasis.

The Format of Writer's Workshop

Writer's Workshop is a strategy and structure that supports writers and helps to organize and structure teachers and classrooms. Writing is a "studio subject" (Graves, 1994) where children are invited "to do something I am already doing. . . I write along with the children" (p.47). There are some key elements that reflect the beliefs of educator's implementing a writer's workshop format. These elements include: time, demonstration, purposeful practice, response, and evaluation (Graves, 1994).

The first element, time, is perhaps the most critical. When time is provided in a consistent, structured way it helps form the basis for daily writing. "If students can't write at least four days out of five, they will make little

headway or have too little time to listen carefully to a piece that is going somewhere" (Graves, 1994, p.113). When children write everyday, during regularly scheduled time that is uninterrupted and structured with clear and organized routines and procedures, children understand the value of writing. In addition, when children have enough time to rehearse, write, rewrite and share with others without rushing they experience the power of communication without frustration.

Demonstration is the second critical element of writer's workshop. Demonstration involves an expert, the teacher, demonstrating what a writer does. "You demonstrate constantly with mini-lessons that pinpoint the specific skills writers need in order to write well" (Graves, 1994, p.113). You may demonstrate a procedure such as what to do when you finish a piece, model a specific mechanic of writing such as the punctuation of a sentence or use demonstration to address content issues such as clarity and word choice. Trade books can also be used as demonstration texts to explore good story leads, or the format of poetry. "When you write with your students, you show them what writing is for" (p. 113). You also give them a realistic idea of what you expect from your students as writers and "help student's get started"(Zemelman et al, 1992, p.51). Demonstration occurs at the beginning of writers workshop when the whole group is

assembled around a demonstration piece, during conferences when individual or small group instruction is addressed as well as during sharing/response sessions. The choice of what mini-lesson is appropriate for group and individual instruction is based on evaluation and assessment of student's individual and group needs (The California Standards for the Teaching Profession, 1997).

Purposeful practice involves choice of topic, genre, and form by the writer. It makes up the bulk of the writer's workshop time. Short and Burke (1991) talk about "many uninterrupted 'doing' experiences for purposes that are meaningful to them as learners" (p. 38) as well as "uninterrupted engagements with meaning" (p.36). In addition, purposeful practice "provides opportunities for all students to learn at their own pace" (Dauterive & Eastin, 1997, p.18). It is important for teachers to understand that purposeful practice can be one of the hardest parts of writer's workshop to get started. This is especially true with very young writer's who are emergent in their knowledge of the mechanics of print. In writer's workshop, "the children are expected to write from the start. Many can but some are reluctant to try it out at first" (Clay, 1991, p.87). This is why encouragement and acceptance are critical for these students. When children learn to be risk takers and try, they can "gain the confidence to go ahead and try

spelling some words on their own, according to the way they sound" (p.87) as well as working out the mechanical complexity of syntax, punctuation and voice.

While the majority of the class is still requiring encouragement, the purposeful practice portion of writer's workshop starts out for shorter periods of time. "What our students do as writers will largely depend on what we expect them to do and on what they've done in the past" (Calkins, 1994, p.113). However, with daily practice and demonstration, purposeful practice will evolve into the longest portion of writer's workshop.

Response is critical for all writers. There is no purpose to write if you do not have a reader or audience in mind who will give feedback to the writing. Even in personal journal writing, a reflective self takes on the role of audience. Awareness of audience causes writers to clarify and refine the message written. The response an audience gives informs the writer of the effectiveness of the message. In addition, audience causes us think and rethink the message we intend to present.

It is in talking with others that we begin to be able to hear ourselves and to consider other perspectives. As we recognize our reader needs in reacting to another author, we begin to be able to plan for other readers' needs in reacting to our own authoring. We understand

and develop our own thinking through trying to explain it to someone else and we consider new perspectives through listening and building from what others have to say. When we talk with others about what we have read or written or drawn, we learn to step outside the process and take a more analytical perspective. We are able to think through our 'rough draft' ideas with others instead of being forced into immediately having to produce final draft thinking. (Short & Burke, 1991, pp.40-41)

All writer's need an audience. In a classroom setting, when audience is more than a teacher's grade, student writer's will begin to understand the importance that clarity has to the message. "Students need real audiences, and a classroom context of shared learning" (Zemelman et al, 1992, p. 53). Share circle or author's chair provide classroom writer's with a positive audience that will listen, encourage and help them clarify what they are trying to say in writing. "Writing is a social act. Writers write for audiences. Teachers work to provide a forum for authors to share their work, as well as to help their authors learn how to be good readers and listeners to the texts of others" (Graves, 1994, p.146).

Response also refers to published, finished product. Writer's do take some writing to a completed stage. However, "only a small percentage of the meanings we construct go on

to be formally published" (Short & Burke, 1991, p.42). This is also true in writer's workshop. Approximately twenty-five percent of all writing is taken to publication, and it is the author's choice what is published. "The original decision to go public needs to be a functional one. There has to have been a learner perceived need or purpose" (p.42).

Response, in the form of share circle or publication is a critical element of writer's workshop. "Where publication has not been part of the writing program, or has been treated in a casual manner, there has been a general lack of interest in writing" (Dancing with the Pen, 1992, p.71).

When classroom literacy programs include good writing instruction, balanced, purposeful literacy takes place. There are some consistent elements involved in setting up and implementing a good writing program. Regie Routman (1996) states what we can do to provide good, "solid writing instruction":

give daily time to writing, find out what students "ache with caring" about, model yourself as a writer, no matter what the grade level, do some shared writing regularly, encourage student to writing in many genres, teach more conventions, be realistic about revision, model sharing and response.(p. 87-88)

In addition, Kathy Short and Carolyn Burke (1991) argue that a writing program should:

support and monitor student autonomy and choice during learning experiences, help all students to learn, practice, internalize and apply subject-specific learning strategies and procedures, engage all students in opportunities to examine and evaluate their own work and to learn from the work of their peers, help all students to develop and use strategies for knowing about, reflecting on and monitoring their own learning, and encourage students to take risks and be creative.(pp. 8-9)

These elements are a part of an effective writer's workshop. Writer's workshop provides a structural format that supports writers and helps teachers organize and manage what may be a challenging subject. More importantly it provides "the necessary time for writing" that give students "the power to think and express their thinking in a clear manner" (Graves, 1994, p. 113). Graves believes that if you cannot communicate with writing you run the risk of losing "part of your birthright as a citizen in a free society. Writing is not the property of a privileged elite. Students write about what they know. . and they share what they write with a variety of audiences--through small groups, whole class groups, and publishing their work" (p.113). All of this is possible because of the daily chunk of classroom program

called writer's workshop.

Spelling and the Teaching of Conventions

Writing cannot be taught without some attention given to the learning of spelling conventions. If spelling is not addressed, writing becomes an inaccurate, confusing and flawed tool for communication. Burke and Short (1991) state that "there's no doubt that students are doing more writing today. Unfortunately there are still too many classrooms where much of the writing is illegible, sloppy and filled with misspellings of basic words' (p.110). Regie Routman (1997) commands us to "teach more conventions" (pp. 87-88). Spelling and conventions are important and writing programs are obliged to address them as a tool for clarity or they run the risk of public criticism. If the whole purpose for writing is to express meaning for an audience, then spelling and convention will assist the reader to clearly understand the message. When student writer's understand this relationship, they will understand the power of writing.

Conventions belong to all of us. In acquiring them we gain the power to say new things, extend our meaning, and discover new relationships between ideas.

Conventions are tools, we, as teachers, want to give away. The more we give them away through mini-lesson demonstrations, the more children will regard them as a

vital part of their writers repertoire.

(Graves, 1994, p. 210)

But this does not mean that invention and approximation (Cambourne, 1988) do not have a role in writing.

"As long as writing is directed toward ourselves, it need only be functional. Much can go unstated, spelling may be invented, and redundant cues such as capitalization, punctuation, and spacing may be disregarded. As long as we can read what it says, the piece is functional"

(Short & Burke, 1991, p.43).

It is important to note that when writing goes public, and the writer is not the only audience, then and only then, do convention and spelling realistically matter. "Conventional spellings exist to support the reader, not the writer" (p.43).

The best way to teach grammar and spelling is "in the context of actual writing" (Zemelman et al, 1992, p.52). Teaching skills does not necessarily mean "skills based teaching". As Regie Routman (1996) states "when I teach skills, I am not talking about the 'skills based' teaching that focuses on isolated, simplistic, and decontextualized bits of information. I am talking about all the conventions of written and spoken language that enable students to

communicate more effectively in their lives" (p.105).

When spelling and conventions are taught in conjunction with purposeful writing, children can effectively use the tools of writers. "Fluency and free writing are not sufficient" (Routman, 1994, p.105). Writing is a tool for communication, thinking, logic and organization. It needs to be free of ambiguity and strive for clarity. Spelling and conventions are the tool that help the writer achieve this goal. "If our writing and speaking patterns are careless and sloppy and are furthermore incorrect grammatically and full of misspellings, the public will likely assess us as inept and barely literate" (Routman, 1994, p. 106). As educators, it is our job to ensure that our students literacy levels are the highest most effective possible.

In Conclusion

"Writing is real and interesting when children have their own purpose for doing it" (Clay, 1991, p. 86). Writing is a critical element of a balanced literacy program. It is a complement and counterpart to any reading program and without it, children may not learn to read to their potential. According to the research cited, when writing is taught by teachers, including the newest members of the profession, children's literacy proficiency increases. Using a format like writer's workshop that provides the key

elements of time, demonstration, mini-lessons, response and evaluation, classroom programs can effectively implement the elements necessary for children to develop as writers. In addition, when spelling and conventions are taught in the context of actual writing, the personal communication writing creates may go to a more public audience than the writer himself.

The research documents and supports these issues as shown. It is important that we now assist all teachers, but especially beginning teachers, with a format for guidance that they can access easily, as they implement an effective writing program.

CHAPTER THREE- Goals and Objectives

The goals of this project are three fold. The first goal is to provide a resource for beginning teachers that will assist them in their implementation of a balanced literacy program. The objective of this goal is to provide a resource that will take beginning teachers step by step through the first 8 weeks of school. This resource will provide them with information and suggestions on the strategies, classroom set-up and mini-lessons that would help them begin to implement a writing program in an elementary classroom. By providing this resource, beginning teachers would have the requisite tools and structure to implement a balanced program from the first day of school regardless of their previous training or experience.

Students in the classrooms of beginning teachers are as entitled to an effective literacy program as the students in the classrooms of more experienced teachers. Therefore, the second goal of this project is to make sure that students have the opportunity to participate in a quality writing program that will assist their literacy development even if they are sitting in the classrooms of beginning teachers. The objective of this goal is to provide developmental information about the nature of writing through a guidebook that will assist teachers considering a child-centered, individually appropriate program for each student using a

writer's workshop strategy. By providing a quality writing program for all students, the literacy abilities of these students will increase and they will have the potential for more success in educational as well as in social settings.

The final goal of this project is to help teachers develop their own belief system about the importance and priority of teaching writing in the elementary grades. The objective of this goal is to provide classroom teachers with a list of resources and recommendations of professional texts that will address specific areas of concern within the teaching of writing. This project does not intend to provide these actual texts, but to act merely as a guide for teachers in their own professional development.

A major limitation of this project is its availability. Beginning teachers will only have access to this guidebook as they become aware of it's existence through word of mouth or participation in Beginning Teacher Assessment and Support (BTSA) networking. This resource is also only as useful as the teacher using it chooses to make it. If the guidebook is read and explored before the school year begins, it may help beginning teachers get off to a good start from day one. However, many teachers may receive this document after the start of the school year. This may diminish its effectiveness because the format of the guidebook is designed for setting up for the first eight weeks of the schoolyear

which implies prior to the first eight weeks of the schoolyear.

In addition, experienced teachers may benefit from this guidebook due to its elaboration on the strategy of writer's workshop. Once again, access will be an even bigger obstacle for these teachers due to the lack of collaboration most classroom teachers experience and their additional isolation from training programs like BTSA.

When a child rushes home to create a piece of writing to share with a teacher the next day, or a disruptive child hands a phonetically spelled note of apology to his teacher when he walks in his classroom, then teachers will know that an effective writing program is in place. When a child writes a poem using the pattern of one read repeatedly in class, teachers will see the power of writing as a tool for reading instruction. When a handwritten sign appears on the class calendar reminding the class that the library books acquired during the recent field trip are due soon, teachers will know that writing is a tool for communication in their classroom. And finally, when the children beg to have their "journal time" instead of almost any other activity including recess and school performances, then teachers will know that they have created a community of writers who are empowered to communicate with print and are compelled to do it on a regular basis. These scenarios are exemplars of the ultimate

goal of this project. The resource guidebook for Writer's Workshop is the tool designed to assist any teacher beginning or new to writing who uses it to meet this goal.

APPENDIX A: Guidebook for Writer's Workshop

Introduction

Writing has been a powerful tool for me all of my life. I cannot think of a time when I did not consider myself a writer. However, I don't define myself as a writer because I have written "the great American novel" or even because I now support myself as a writer. I define myself as a writer because I use print as tool to express myself on a daily basis. I am at my most articulate when I write, more so than when I speak, or even think. Writing helps me to think because it forces me to wrestle with clarity, letter by letter. I began this wrestling match early in my life.

I received a traditional education at the hands of the tax payers that delegated writing to a once a week activity. Called "Creative Writing" it was fit in between music appreciation and art and usually happened only on Fridays. When I look back on it, I see that this time was probably when my teachers wrote their lesson plans for the upcoming week.

Most of my classmates dreaded creative writing. However, when others moaned during the weekly assignments in my elementary classrooms I reveled. I relished it. I planned for it all week long. As an avid reader, I longed to create the visions and feelings I read about; to write what I

felt, or thought I felt; to create characters and stories I made up; to show others what I can say, see and share. Creative writing time was my chance to try this out on a real audience, usually my teacher, but sometimes my peers, if my writing was chosen as the one to be read out loud that week.

Writing once a week was not enough for me just like reading once a day during reading groups was never enough. I scribbled characterizations of my classmates instead of taking notes as often as I snuck a novel and read it inside my textbooks. Because of this need, writing began to flow into my life at home. It had to, school did not provide the time needed.

I used writing as an opportunity to share my views, to create alternate realities or to explore ideas I believed no one else could possibly have. And because I liked to write, as I liked to read, I wrote often, letters, notes, journals, even the premature beginnings of novels. I read more and wrote more outside of the academic setting of school.

I actually started a novel in sixth grade. I had pulled out an atlas and followed a highway through the west. I love the west. The main character, a sixth grade girl, was traveling along this highway. Why she was traveling and where she was going was never articulated. Crammed with flowery descriptions and no plot whatsoever I showed the first chapters of this novel to my mother and step father.

They pooh-poohed it and dashed my budding efforts telling me that I should stick to things I knew about. I was crushed. I had no experiences in my life that felt worthy of print so I dropped the writing into the trash, never to be resurrected again. But a valuable lesson about the act of writing came from this experience that I may not have learned without it.

My willingness to write has been a great asset for me. I have learned that being able to communicate with print puts you a step ahead of many others. I believe that everyone should have this power. This is why the strategy Writer's Workshop has been so appealing and successful for me as an elementary school teacher. I see it as an opportunity to show children, early in their educational careers, the power and pleasure of writing.

My demonstrations of writing as a child came from the books I read, Writer's Workshop provides demonstrations of many genres, conventions, and organizational structures on a daily basis. I practiced writing at every opportunity on my own, Writer's Workshop provides consistent practice on a daily basis in the classroom.

Response for my writing is as important for me as it is for all writers. But the responses I got for my writing in school consisted of a letter grade or a criticism about some technical aspect. So critical was the response at times that my piece of writing was devalued and often destroyed. The

responses I received for my writing rarely helped me develop as a writer. In contrast, Writer's Workshop provides response through sharing circle and publication that helps the writer develop and build on the challenges they are taking on.

It is exciting for me to see the challenges my students are taking on during the Writer's Workshop in my classroom. I am thrilled when the children demand writing time every day even on celebration days or school performances. I am touched when I hear their stories that are based on experiences that they realize are valuable to others. I tear up when I receive notes of apology written at home, with crayon because I know these children understand the power of print. Not only the power and pleasure of reading print, but the challenge of producing print that is meaningful to themselves and their audience. This is why I use and encourage others to try this strategy called Writer's Workshop. I hope that every teacher that understands the power of writing will take a chance and work to implement their own Writer's Workshop in their own classroom.

The Elements of a Good Writing Program

Writer's Workshop is a strategy and structure that supports writers and helps to organize and structure teachers and classrooms. Unlike other strategies used in today's classrooms, Writer's Workshop is a "studio subject" (Graves, 1994) where children are invited to participate at their academic and developmental level along with the expert/teacher.

There are some key elements that I address every day in my Writer's Workshop format. These elements include: time, demonstration, purposeful practice, response, conferencing and evaluation (Graves, 1994).

Time

The first element, time, is perhaps the most critical. There is no point in even attempting Writer's Workshop if you cannot commit a minimum of 4 days a week/one hour per day to it exclusively. Writer's need to develop the habit of writing. This is as true for professional writers as it is for the emergent writers in my classroom. Emergent writers are not only those writers in the early primary grades (K-1) but any writer who is new to the task. Depending upon previous classroom program, it is very possible to have emergent writers in third grade classrooms. When writers have the chance "to listen carefully to a piece that is going

somewhere" (Graves) over time, they will have the chance to mold it and modify it to meet the needs of their audience. In addition, when children have enough time to rehearse, write, rewrite and share with others without rushing, they experience the power of communication without frustration. Anything less than 4 days a week will not provide the time necessary.

Unfortunately, teachers learn some of the most valuable lessons about teaching, the hard way. Steven is a special education student in my classroom. He just recently began spending two hours a day working with a resource specialist on reading and math. Unfortunately, Steven is pulled for this extra help during part of Writer's Workshop three days a week. Although Steven has obvious learning problems, he has always been an enthusiastic reader and writer up to this time, but I notice that he is becoming more and more frustrated with his writing. I believe it is because he only spends two complete days participating in our hour long Writer's Workshop.

Before the pull-out schedule began Steven would work on a piece of writing for days, not beginning something new until the current piece was completed and shared. Now he writes isolated sentences that have no connection and he has even had days when he writes nothing but his name, over and over again. Steven is illustrating his need for time as a

writer. He is frustrated because too much time has elapsed between his writing experiences and he is unable to recall where or what he is trying to say. The experience Steven is now having with writing is an example of how writer's respond when adequate time is not given. Donald Murray is quoted as saying "If you only write with children 3 days a week or less, you do nothing more than show them that writing is hard and that teaching it is even harder." Unfortunately, this is the lesson Steven has confirmed for me.

Writing is hard. By making it a habit that meets a need, it becomes less hard, it even becomes a challenge. Provide time for children to write every day and they will look forward to this challenge and grow to expect it as part of their routine.

Demonstration

Demonstration is the second critical element of my Writer's Workshop. Demonstration involves an expert, the teacher, demonstrating what a writer does. That demonstration may show a procedure such as what to do when you finish a piece, model a specific mechanic of writing such as the punctuation of a sentence or use demonstration to address content issues such as clarity and word choice. Trade books can be used as demonstration texts to explore

good story leads, the format of poetry or how episodes effect story, etc.

Demonstration occurs at the beginning of Writer's Workshop when the whole group is assembled around a demonstration piece that may already be created and in need of editing, or blank page that you are getting ready to start. Demonstration involves mini-lessons. The choice of what mini-lesson is appropriate for group and individual instruction is based on evaluation and assessment of student's individual and group needs.

When I work with new teachers, demonstration is the most uncomfortable part of Writer's Workshop for them. But it is critical because writers, especially emergent writers, need example and that is what demonstration provides. Writers as learners, also need to know what your expectations are for them. Demonstration is your chance to tell them. I remind teachers that in Writer's Workshop, you are more of a participant than an expert. But, you are a participant who has more experience than the students have and you are sharing what you know. Therefore, demonstration may not be perfect. You are thinking aloud as a writer and writing is messy. Show your students the mess, so that when they find themselves in a similar position, they know what to do. That is what demonstration is. And it will take no more than 7-10 minutes as a daily element of your writing program.

Purposeful practice

Lucy Calkins once said at a conference I attended recently, "What is with all those dead-end journals?" I added purposeful to the element of practice to try to answer her question. Purposeful practice can be done in a journal, or on a cardboard box, but it is practice that is going somewhere, it is moving towards something. It is not just print on a page, as many classroom journal experiences have become.

Purposeful practice makes up the bulk of the Writer's Workshop time. It involves choice of topic, genre, and form by the writer as well as writing, rewriting, sharing and editing. This is the time when the students become writers. Following your daily demonstration, students go to work on whatever piece of writing they choose. It may be a narrative they started yesterday, or it may be a completely new piece based on something they got from your demonstration. What is important about purposeful practice is that the writer chooses what they are going to work on and they are provided with uninterrupted time to do just that.

In addition, purposeful practice provides opportunities for all students to learn at their own pace. When my Writer's Workshop is in full swing, purposeful practice takes up to 45 minutes. But at the beginning, with a new group of writers, it is one of the shorter parts of the workshop and may only

last for 5-10 minutes with emergent or reluctant writers. Encouragement and acceptance are critical for these students. If they learn to be risk takers they will eventually gain the confidence to go ahead and write. This will be the focus of your early mini-lessons. Eventually, with persistence, the students will become confident enough to start subtly asking for more time to practice. They may stay in at recess, or request to take their journals to recess. They are writers who need to write. Your persistence and faith in purposeful practice has helped them get there.

Response

All writer's need an audience that will help them know if their message is clear. Without an audience, there truly is no need for a message. For emergent writers positive response is what will often keep them writing. In my classroom, I provide response daily through share circle at the end of the Writer's Workshop time. A few children read the piece they are working on and a positive audience listens, encourages and helps the authors clarify what they are trying to say in writing. The number of children who share, varies with each share circle and is very dependent upon the time constraints of the day. I choose the children who share, and I choose them specifically so that I can make a positive statement about some aspect of writing that they

have begun to try or have mastered. Of course, the responses made are modeled often by the teacher and may serve as mini-lessons in themselves about what to expect and say as response to writing. Share circle provides a forum for writers on works in progress. It helps these authors know if what they are trying to say is clear.

Response in my class, also refers to published, finished product. Writer's do take some writing to a completed stage. But in my class only about 1 in 4 pieces of writing are taken through the complete publishing process. It is the author's decision about what is published. Published pieces are edited and illustrated so that they are appropriate for public consumption.

Conferencing

Instruction is a crucial element for all developing writers. Some children gain the information they need through whole group demonstrations and instruction. But most children require some individualized or small group instruction. This is accomplished in my Writer's Workshop through conferencing.

Conferencing looks different on different days at different times. I use a varied repertoire of conferencing strategies during Writer's Workshop. My approach to conferencing is based on the needs of the group. However,

there are some conferences that occur daily. These are the conferences that are constants in my classroom; butterfly conference; editing conference; and small group conference.

Butterfly conference-

At the beginning of Writer's Workshop I "touch" on every child in the room. I use the excuse of date stamping every child's work as I ask them what they are working on, how it is going, or what they plan to do next. It reminds me of a butterfly lighting on the flowers in a garden. I gently touch and coax and encourage every child in the room, but they are unaware that my real intention is to keep track of each child and to let them know that I care individually about what they are doing. Butterfly conferences also help me to anticipate potential problems that may be arising for the students that I may want to address during demonstration mini-lessons or small group instruction or simply with a word of encouragement during this butterfly conference

Editing Conferences-

This type of conference is used when a child has selected a piece to be published and has rewritten it upon another piece of paper. During the rewrite the child has addressed the items that exist on our class editing checklist (which is generated by the class throughout the year) and is

ready to sit with me for final revision. This conference is one-to-one with the child and teacher sitting together to discuss this one piece of writing. Content is always addressed first with the question being raised, "Does it make sense?". Once we have revised to make it make sense we address the genre and examine the format for that genre. For example, if a letter is being written to Santa Clause, these genre considerations are discussed: Is there an appropriate greeting?; Is the first line indented? Is there a comma after the closing? The format of a letter has been previously addressed in many mini-lessons during demonstrations, now I am holding this child accountable for this knowledge.

Finally we address technical issues such as grammar, punctuation and spelling. I try to focus in on no more than 2-3 teaching points during this conference and base my focus on the needs of the child as a writer, not the needs of the piece. The information discussed during this conference is documented in an anecdotal record sheet that states what the child had done and what the teaching points were. A copy of the revised, edited rewrite is also kept and stored in a writing portfolio. Children publish approximately once a month and meet with the teacher for a short, 8-10 minute editing conference prior to this publishing.

Small group conference

Because editing conference is not as frequent as many children require, I have a small group conference with every child at least once a week. This type of conference is similar in nature to guided reading in reading instruction. The small groups are ability, flexible groups of no more than 4-5 students that are only together for this particular conference. The students bring their journals to this conference and share what they have been working on. My prompts guide the children to explore and discover concepts they may not have considered as writers. For example, a group of second graders who have been working within the genre of story are now ready for the convention of quotation marks for dialogue. I prompt them to find a part of their story that has a character speaking. They read aloud this section. I explain the convention of dialogue/quotation marks. We discuss, using each of the student's examples, how this convention would be used. I send the students off to their tables to work on their stories to try to add some more dialogue.

At future meetings with this group, we will discuss how they used dialogue and share how they punctuated it. The strategies discussed during these conferences are revisited in subsequent conferences and expectations are made for these students based on this instruction.

Small group conferences help me keep in touch instructionally with each child in the class. I keep a class grid that contains each group and document what I observe as well as what teaching strategy I may have been working on. I also jot down what to look for in future sessions with each group. These groups are very fluid and the membership of each group changes as individual students progress in writing. The children do not know when they will be called or for what. It is a very fluid type of schedule.

Conferences evolve and change as the needs of the group change. But these conferences described are a daily constant in my Writer's Workshop.

Evaluation

Ongoing evaluation and assessment keep me on the cutting edge of my student's needs as learners. Only if I know what my students know can I provide them with the support and mini-lessons necessary to help them keep moving and growing as writers.

During Writer's Workshop, I assess on a daily basis. I observe what students are controlling as writers and I examine what is new for them that they are taking on. I examine students writing, their first drafts as well as their rewrites and finished publications. I also talk to students about their writing and about writing in general. I talk to

them during one-on-one conferences as well as small group mini-lessons. This gives me valuable information about how students feel about writing, and where they see themselves as writers. Finally, I have a firm understanding of the expectations for writers at their age, grade and stage of development so that if a child is not taking on a new challenge I can encourage them to do so. I keep anecdotal records, writing samples and developmental continuums on each child and I update them frequently.

Using all the information gathered through assessment, I evaluate how each child is doing as a writer. This helps me to plan my whole group mini-lesson demonstrations as well as guides me in my discussions with individual students and parents.

Without evaluation as a part of Writer's Workshop my teaching would be haphazard at best. Evaluation and assessment provide the information I need to implement a Writer's Workshop that is effective for all the students in my classroom.

Getting Started

When I think of beginning Writer's Workshop I always think of the saying that the longest journey begins with the first step. The same is true in writing instruction. At

some point you have to just start it. I always begin my Writer's Workshop on the first day of school. It is the one constant in that very hectic, stressful 6 hours. This is how I start Writer's Workshop. It is by no means the only way to start it, but it has worked for me for over 10 years. I do not encourage anyone to completely adopt what I suggest because this works for me due to my experience, teaching style and students. I do encourage you to adapt this version of Writer's Workshop to your classroom and teaching style and make it your own. Only then will you be successful and provide effective writing instruction for your students.

The First Two Weeks

Day One

Time: 30-45 minutes (may take the full hour for older students)

Materials: single sheets of unlined paper for
each child(K-1)

single sheet of lined paper for each child (2-3)

pencils, erasers for each child

date stamp

large unlined paper for teacher demonstration

markers

Demonstration:

Set up- Children are assembled together on the rug in front

of the teacher demonstration paper. I clip my demonstration paper to a piece of cardboard and set it on an easel at an angle so that all the children can easily see the paper. Mini Lesson-Today you are simply showing the children what you mean by writing, and inviting them to give it a try.

I always begin my demonstration with some sort of oral story. The first day of school it always has to do with the hectic nature of my morning as I try to leave the house. I embellish my story and often stray very far from the truth because I need to hold the attention of my audience and model my enthusiasm for telling this story.

After I have told the children my story, and I reiterate that this is my story, I ask them to retell it to me. Then I ask them how did I start. And finally what should my first sentence be. For very young children(K-1), you may want to draw the story as the children are retelling it. Then have the class generate a sentence with your help to write under the drawing. Older children (2-3) should see writing as print and not drawing.

Once the children have given me the first sentence, I ask them what would be the first word and we write the sentence together. I control the pen at this point, but the children help me with the spelling, spacing and possible punctuation. Once the sentence is written, we reread it together and talk about what happened next. This sets up our

demonstration for the next day. It also helps children to begin to see how writer's plan what they are going to write. So not drag this first demonstration out with too much instruction, or too many sentences. Give the students a taste, but don't overwhelm. They will think you expect them to produce what you have. Be reasonable!

Purposeful Practice:

By this time the children are usually dying to tell you what happened to them this morning. I use this enthusiasm to send them off to their own writing. I prompt them with: "I can't wait to hear about your morning, but I don't have enough time to hear all of your wonderful stories. So I would like you to take this piece of paper and tell me your story the way I told you mine." Then I pass out a single sheet of paper to each child. Some of the children will rush to their tables and get right to work. Many of the children will glare at you, unsure of what to do. Keep the children who are unsure on the rug with you and talk about what and how you wrote your story: How you told it first, then drew a picture, then thought about what happened first, etc. Allow these children to tell you their story and help them come up with what they will draw or write first. Send them off to their tables when they are ready.

Conferencing

This first day a butterfly conference is all you should plan on. You are beginning to establish the routine of Writer's Workshop and this is your instructional focus this first week. You cannot even consider pulling groups of children until some independence is established with the group.

When all the children are working, go around and stamp every piece. Positively comment on specifics in their piece. Avoid comments like "that is good." Praise can be a wonderful teaching tool so praise their specific efforts:

"I like the way you got started on you own"

"I can tell you are writing about . . . because of the . . ."

"Your illustration matches your words nicely."

Response

As the child begin to complete their work, be sure to have something available for the ones who finish first can go to. I always make the books in the library available and begin this first day by having the children who finish first "go read a book on the rug."

When most are finished, ask them to come to the rug with their writing. I always refer to their work during Writer's Workshop as their writing even though they may only do an

illustration. I am setting up the expectation and language of Writer's Workshop.

In this circle each child is allowed to share their writing. (k-1) If their is print on the page, I praise this. I also may ask the student how they know which letters/words to use.

(2-3) I want the students to read what they wrote not what they plan to write so I ask the children to keep the writing on the rug, this way I can see it as they read it. Those children who wrote with some convention (sentences, punctuation, etc.) I will praise and ask them to explain their convention. ("I notice you used an exclamation point at the end of that first sentence, why did you do that?")

This first response session must be very positive so that the children feel safe to try this "writing thing" again. Avoid technical criticism ("None of you put periods at the end of your sentences.") and teach with praise ("I am so excited about your writing today, I have learned so much about your morning from your stories, I can't wait to see what you are going to write tomorrow").

Evaluation/Reflection

I collect all the writing from this first day and look carefully at what I know about my students as writers from these samples. The questions I reflect on are:

K-1 What does the drawing show me about the child's level of maturity? fine motor control?.

Is there any print, or attempts at print?

Did the child label and write their name on the paper?

Did they go right to the task or did they need more encouragement?

2-3 How much print did the child use?

Does the writing tell a thought? a story?

What conventions does the child use? sentences? punctuation?

Did the child write their name or otherwise label?

Did the child use lines on paper appropriately?

Other reflections to consider:

What would be the best way to store the children's writing?

What format of paper would be more appropriate for this group? lines? room for pictures?

Did the children have enough time during purposeful practice? too little time? too much?

Day Two

Time: 30-45 minutes (longer for older students)

Materials: writing material for each child
pencils, erasers for each child
date stamp
writing from day one both teacher's and student's
large unlined paper for teacher demonstration
markers

Demonstration:

Set up- Children are assembled together on the rug in front of the teacher demonstration paper.

Mini Lesson- Today you are simply showing the children what you mean by writing, and inviting them to give it a try. We are also demonstrating how to continue a piece of writing over time and showing how this will be a daily occurrence in this class.

Reread what was written yesterday. Discuss as a group what happened next in the story. Help the children to go from the whole story, to what happened at the beginning, to a sentence to write next (for younger children, you may draw first). Elicit help from the children about spelling, spacing and punctuation. Reread today's writing when done.

Purposeful Practice:

Pass out the writing from the previous day. Have each

child share their writing with their neighbor. Once all the writing is shared, ask the children if anyone would like to share what their next sentence will be. Then ask what is the first word of that sentence. Have as many children share their sentence/word that they will start with as necessary. Keep any reluctant writers on the rug with you and provide them with as much support as needed to get them started. Most children can write the word "I" so this is usually where I try to get my reluctant writers to start.

Conferencing

A butterfly conference is enough right now. Go around and stamp every piece of writing. Positively comment on specifics in their piece. I carry a clip board with post-its to jot notes about how or what specific children are doing. This will be the beginning of your anecdotal records for assessment.

Response

When most are finished ask them to come to the rug for Share Circle. Use the terminology of the workshop so that the children are familiar with what is expected at each part.

Have the children share yesterday's writing as well as today's. Positive praise may include how well the two days writing connect. Give every child who wants to the chance to

share. This part may be the longest part of the whole workshop, these first weeks.

Evaluation/Reflection

Collect all the writing and consider your new information. Compare it to the reflections you observed about yesterday's writing. Are there any patterns in the class? gaps? Who takes to the task readily? Who has been reluctant both days? Why could this be?

Look over any anecdotal notes you made and select 3-5 more children to observe during the next session.

Other reflections to consider:

How will you maintain anecdotal notes?

What system can the children maintain for storage of materials?

Day Three

Time: 30-45 minutes (longer for older students)

Materials: writing material for each child (same as previous days)

pencils, erasers for each child

date stamp

writing from day one and two from both teacher's and student's

large unlined paper for teacher demonstration
markers

Demonstration:

Set up- Children are assembled together on the rug in front of the teacher demonstration paper.

Mini Lesson- Today we are concluding the story started on the first day of school. We are demonstrating that writing continues over time.

Reread what was written the previous two days.

Discuss as a group how the writing should end. You may decide to end it differently than the original way you told. That is good. It shows children that writer's change their minds and writing evolves over time. Help the children to go from the whole story, to what happened at the beginning, to a sentence to write next (for younger children, you may draw first). Elicit help from the children about spelling, spacing and punctuation. Reread today's writing when done.

Purposeful Practice:

Pass out the writing from the previous days. Go through the same neighbor sharing of what has been written that you had the children do yesterday. Once all the writing is shared with a neighbor, ask the children if anyone would like to share what their next sentence will be. Then ask what is the first word of that sentence. Have as many children share their sentence/word that they will start with as necessary. It should be fewer than yesterday, but be flexible. Again, keep any reluctant writers on the rug with you and provide them with as much support as needed to get them started. Some of the prompts I use with these children are: What happened after that? (when they share the previous days writing) Who was there? Why did you do that? How would you say it? I treat these children as a mini group and have them help each other with my facilitation through prompting. Eventually they will learn how to help each other if you model this enough. Remind the children that it would be all right to complete this writing today like the teacher did.

Conferencing

A butterfly conference: Positively praise any child who is obviously ending their writing. This will motivate others to work towards conclusion. Take anecdotal notes on your clipboard of 3-5 students.

Response

Ask the children to get ready for "Share Circle". Note how many knew what you expected of them. Remind the others what share circle is and how we get ready for it. Positively praise those children who move to share circle without disruption. Reinforce share circle rules by praising those children who demonstrate them. If you require journals on the rug, praise those who do. Share Circle rules in my class include; journals on the rug; active listening; positive; specific comments; no pencils.

Have the children share their three days of writing. Positively praise their attempts, especially those who may have concluded their story. Those who have not concluded their writing, you may want to ask what they plan to write next. Give every child who wants to the chance to share.

Evaluation/Reflection

Collect all the writing and file writing that was obviously concluded today. This writing is the baseline for each child's writing progress this year. Consider the purposefulness of the other children's continuing on this writing. Should they? If not, how will you move them on to another piece of writing?

Look over any anecdotal notes you made and select 3-5 more children to observe during the next session.

Other reflections to consider:

How did the group respond to the prompt of "get ready for Share Circle"? Did they know what you meant? Were they noisy? pushy? What do they need to be reminded of and how can they be reminded in a positive way? What is my permanent format for writing going to be for these students? journals? single sheets? Plan some time to get these materials ready. You will introduce them at the next Writer's Workshop.

Day Four

Time: 30-45 minutes (longer for older students)

Materials: Journals for each child (or whatever writing

material you decided on

pencils, erasers for each child

date stamp

large unlined paper for teacher demonstration

that is similar to the paper you have for the

children

markers

Demonstration:

Set up- Children are assembled together on the rug in front of the teacher demonstration paper.

Mini Lesson- Today's lesson will be about the procedures of using the journal (or whatever writing materials you have

chosen).

A word about journals:

I do use journals in my classroom but I create them as needed simply by stapling 20-30 sheets of paper within two sheets of construction paper.

K-1- my first journal is blank with no lines. Emergent writers often use illustration for their rehearsal/thinking stage before writing. I do not call only illustration writing but I do allow emergent writers to begin there.

2-3-the paper used in this journal has lines with space between the lines for editing. At this level I do not encourage drawing for rehearsal. I agree with Lucy Calkins that this should not be necessary for this level. So I do not use paper with boxes or space for illustration.

I call this demonstration the journal inservice. I very clearly and carefully explain how to use the journal, from the simple opening to each page to the more complex of what to do when I finish a page. Don't tell too much, instead demonstrate on your own journal version what you expect. My

own expectations for journals are that paper is never wasted, names are always written at the top of each page, and I expect every child to be responsible for their own journal, from taking it out to putting it away. This is what is demonstrated today and reinforced throughout the week.

Purposeful Practice:

Pass out journals and send the children to their tables. You may need to brainstorm ideas to write about for your reluctant writers. As always, provide the support needed.

Conferencing

A butterfly conference: Positively praise any child who are using the journal appropriately. You may need to remind them of where the journals go after share circle. Be sure to date stamp at the top of the page the child has started. Take anecdotal notes on your clipboard of 3-5 students.

Response

Ask the children to bring their journals to "Share Circle". Use this format to discuss the use of journals. How did the children do? Do they like this writing material better than the single sheets from previous days. Any problems or questions? Be sure to have the children put their journals away and praise those who do appropriately.

Evaluation/Reflection

Review the anecdotal records from the day.

Was the procedure for journals difficult for them?

What problems might need to be addressed in mini lesson tomorrow?

Which children had trouble getting started with their writing? Is there a pattern for these children?

Day Five

Time: 30-45 minutes (longer for older students)

Materials: Journals for each child
pencils, erasers for each child
date stamp
teacher journal
markers

Demonstration:

Set up- Children are assembled together on the rug in front of the teacher demonstration paper.

Mini Lesson- Today we will continue with the "journal inservice".

As I write in my own journal in front of the children, I am "thinking out loud" about how to use my journal. Today, I am also going to model what to do if you can't think of anything to write. I begin this by rereading what I have previously written. Then I orally talk about how I could extend this,

or perhaps an idea this might give me for new writing. Once I have orally come up with an idea, I ask the children for help with what happened first, what my first sentence is and then what my first word is. Then I remind the children to reread their previous writing in their journals before they begin writing.

Purposeful Practice:

Pass out journals and send the children to their tables. Remind those who are reluctant writers to begin by rereading what they have previously written.

Conferencing

A butterfly conference: Date stamp journals and discuss with the children what they discovered when they reread their previous writing. Ask them how their previous writing helped them with their writing today. I believe it is important for children to verbalize their thinking because it helps them to clarify what they do and it also provides ideas for the other children who may not have thought of "doing it" that way.

Response

Ask the children to bring their journals to "Share Circle". Because I want the children to see writing as an

ongoing activity, I ask the children who added to a previous writing to share today. I do not say anything negative about those who started new writing today, but I want to encourage the children to continue writing a piece over time and selecting those who did to share is a very motivating and positive way to do it.

Evaluation/Reflection

Review the anecdotal records from the week. How is your procedure for anecdotal collection working? Are you able to understand the notes you have jotted down. Anecdotal observation is a critical assessment tool so now is the time when I review and refine my procedure for collection and analysis. Talk to other teachers about how they manage this task. Make some notes about what to try and select 3-5 students to observe at the next writing session. Was the procedure for journals difficult for them? What problems might need to be addressed in mini lesson tomorrow? Which children had trouble getting started with their writing?

Writer's Workshop Week 1 Overview

Materials/time	Demonstration	Conferencing	Reflection
<p>Day One</p> <p>K-1: 30-45 minutes 2-3: 45-60 minutes</p> <p>paper for ea. child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •pencils/erasers •date stamp <p>paper for demonstration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •markers 	<p>Mini-lesson:</p> <p>Show children what you mean by writing and inviting them to try.</p>	<p>Butterfly:</p> <p>Date stamp and provide positive feedback for all attempts</p>	<p>K-1: Did any child use print? Did they go right to the task? Who was reluctant?</p> <p>2-3: How much print was used? Is their thought or story structure to the writing?</p>
<p>Day Two</p> <p>K-1: 30-45 minutes 2-3: 45-60 minutes</p> <p>paper for ea. child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •pencils/erasers •date stamp <p>paper for demonstration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •markers 	<p>Mini lesson:</p> <p>Continue to demonstrate what you mean by writing and demonstrate how to continue a piece over time.</p>	<p>Butterfly:</p> <p>Date stamp each piece and begin to jot notes about what and how the children are working.</p>	<p>Are there patterns developing? Gaps that are beginning to appear?</p> <p>also: How will you maintain notes taken? Where will materials be stored?</p>
<p>Day Three</p> <p>K-1: 30-45 minutes 2-3: 45-60 minutes</p> <p>paper for ea. child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •pencils/erasers •date stamp <p>paper for demonstration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •markers 	<p>Mini lesson:</p> <p>How to conclude a piece of writing after working on it over time.</p>	<p>Butterfly:</p> <p>Date stamp each piece and positively praise children who are completing this piece. Continue to jot anecdotal notes.</p>	<p>How did the group get ready for "share circle"? How many did not conclude their stories?</p> <p>also: What will be the permanent format for writing materials?</p>
<p>Day Four</p> <p>K-1: 30-45 minutes 2-3: 45-60 minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •journal for ea. •pencils/erasers •date stamp <p>•journal for demonstration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •markers 	<p>Mini lesson:</p> <p>Demonstrate procedures for using journals.</p>	<p>Butterfly:</p> <p>Date stamp each piece. Positively praise children who are using journal appropriately. Continue to take notes.</p>	<p>How did the children handle the journal format? What were the problems? How could they be addressed in the future? Were materials put away appropriately?</p>
<p>Day Five</p> <p>K-1: 30-45 minutes 2-3: 45-60 minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •journal for ea. child •pencils/erasers •date stamp 	<p>Mini-lesson:</p> <p>Continue demonstration of how to use the journal, model what to do when you can't think of anything to write.</p>	<p>Butterfly:</p> <p>Date stamp as before and discuss with children how rereading helped them with their writing today.</p>	<p>Review anecdotal records from week. Can you understand them? Is your procedure for collection working?</p>

The Second Week

This week we are discussing the writing we have been doing and defining it as narrative. Through the demonstration mini-lessons, the elements of narrative will be modeled. Narrative is the first genre of writing that I begin the year with because I find that most children can talk about themselves and something that has happened to them. For emergent writers, the genre allows for the use of the word "I" one of the first ones even many kindergarten children can handle. We will also be fine tuning the procedures for share circle. In addition we will be reflecting on the children's mechanical strategies for known and unknown words in writing. As in Week One, continue taking anecdotal notes on 3-5 students each day.

A Word about Sight Words:

My training in Reading Recovery has helped me to see the need for children to develop a bank of known sight words. These words act as anchor words when children read new texts and help children in writing to write fluently and clearly. I use the strategy of Word Wall and Making Words developed by Patricia Cunningham (1996). Due to my holistic beliefs I do not randomly select sight words to be added to our class word wall. These words come from the reading done during Shared Reading and from the writing that I observe during Purposeful Practice. Once these words go up on the Word Wall, they are reviewed using strategies mentioned in Phonics They Use (1996) and children are held accountable for them in their writing. Word Wall Work as described by Cunningham is not part of the hour designated as Writer's Workshop, but it is done daily.

Day One

Time

30-60 minutes depending on developmental level of students

Materials

student journals

writing materials

date stamp

teacher demonstration journal/markers

Demonstration

Mini-lesson: Today we are reviewing writing done the previous week by rereading last week's writing. This is a good model for the children and helps them to come up with connections to past writing or ideas for new writing. Next I will orally tell about an event that happened to me. If time, I will write, with student spelling assistance one or two sentences.

Purposeful Practice

As children are dismissed to journals, discuss with them what they are working on today. Are they continuing a piece or beginning a new one? As before, keep reluctant writers on the rug and do a small group discussion/conference with these students to help them come up with ideas, the first sentence and the first word.

Conferencing

Butterfly Conference: Date stamp the journals where the students begin writing today. Discuss the event they have chosen to write about.

Response

Call the children to the rug by saying it is time for Share Circle. Have the children share the event they are writing about and how they started this narrative.

Reflection

Consider how many children had difficulty coming up with an event to write about. How many had an event but struggled to get it on paper? Why did they struggle? Was it word knowledge they lacked or did they just have trouble getting started? How many knew what to do when Share Circle was announced?

Day Two

Time

30-60 minutes depending on developmental level of students

Materials

student journals

writing materials

date stamp

teacher demonstration journal/markers

Demonstration

Mini-lesson: Today we are continuing the genre of narrative. Reread what was written the day before. (When you reread with children in a demonstration mode, always invite them to reread with you). Discuss the event you told yesterday and ask the children what the next sentence should be. Repeat this sentence with the children a couple of times, then ask the children what the first word would be. See if anyone can spell it for you. If it is a "tricky word" demonstrate saying it slowly and writing the sounds you hear.

Purposeful Practice

As the children get ready to go to their journals, ask each child what their next sentence will be. Help those who need it come up with a sentence. You may need to help some children generate a sentence.

Conference

Butterfly conference: Date stamp journal where child begins writing. Note which children are rereading and getting right to work. Help the more reluctant writers with their first sentence/word. Remind all students to reread before they write.

Response

Share Circle: As the children read their writing, ask the group who has an idea for the writing. Then ask the children to state the idea in a sentence. Take it further, if needed, ask the child who is providing the idea what would be the first word for that sentence. Ask the child sharing, Do you have an idea for tomorrow? Move around the circle, following this questioning with as many children as time allows.

Reflection

Note the amount of writing being done daily by the students observed. Is there more drawing happening? Are they copying from the room? their neighbors? What mini-lesson or instructional point would be appropriate next?

Day Three

Time

30-60 minutes depending on developmental level of students

Materials

student journals

writing materials

date stamp

lined chart paper/markers

Demonstration

Mini-lesson: Today's mini-lesson is a procedural review. A couple of times a month I use demonstration lessons to review some of the procedures of Writer's Workshop. This review generates a chart that is displayed in the room and referred to when a procedure is in question or is not working and must be discussed.

Share Circle is the procedure to be reviewed. A review always begins with discussion about the rules and expectations for Share Circle. Use questioning techniques that require the children to articulate what they understand about this procedure. For example ask them what is Share Circle? When do we have it? What is your job during Share Circle? What is not helpful to do during Share Circle? After you have discussed these questions, write in front of the children the rules for Share Circle. Have them help you

with spelling, punctuation, etc. as much as possible.

Discuss the best location for the chart when it is completed.

For emergent writers, you may select a couple of children to illustrate the different rules to support their reading of it.

Purposeful Practice

Date stamp as always. More of the children may stall due to the change in demonstration genre. Assist them as before by discussing what they had written about previously and what they planned to say today. Encourage them to share their writing with each other and discuss possible ideas like they have done in Share Circle.

Response

When Share Circle is called, note any change in behavior after demonstration. This would be a good time to praise individual students by referring to the chart created and rereading those things observed when Share Circle was announced. If time allows, have children share and give ideas as done yesterday.

Reflections

How well did the mini-lesson on Share Circle work? Did you notice any children referring to the chart during the

writing session? How many rules are becoming automatic?
Would it be worthwhile to review this again? Can you hold the children accountable for these rules consistently? Do the ideas generated in Share Circle seem to be used in writing the next day?

Day Four

Time

30-60 minutes depending on developmental level of students

Materials

student journals

writing materials

date stamp

teacher demonstration journal/markers

Demonstration

Mini-lesson: We are continuing our modeling of the genre of narrative by rereading all that we have written and discussing possible ideas for today's writing. When I discuss ideas with the children, I positively thank each child for their idea and then tell them, because this is my writing, that this is how I am going to continue it. I state my next sentence and go through the process of slowly articulating it to get to my first word. Then I write the next section with

the children's assistance. For emergent writers I do not write more than a sentence or two because I am painstakingly demonstrating how to sound out words. Non-emergent writers do not need as much sound/symbol demonstration so I tend to write more with them at each demonstration. It is important to remember that demonstration is still only 7-10 minutes long.

Purposeful Practice

Send students off that know what they are going to write about. Work with the reluctant writers to help them get started.

Conferencing

Butterfly Conference: Date stamp journals where children begin their writing today. Note how many are going straight to writing without assistance or intervention. Praise those who are "doing their job" and showing independence as writers. Encourage others to discuss their writing with their neighbors.

Response

Share Circle: To reinforce this concept of independence I would select children to share who went right to work and I would ask them to share where they get their ideas and how

they get started. Their reflections may help the more tentative writers in the group with some ideas.

Reflection

Rereading is critical for writers. As you observed the children during conferences and Share Circle, how many successfully read back their writing? How many stumbled on words or sections of their writing? Are you noticing any conventional spelling used consistently? What are they doing if they don't know a word?

Day Five

Time

30-60 minutes depending on developmental level of students

Materials

student journals

writing materials

date stamp

teacher demonstration journal/markers

Demonstration

Mini-lesson: Continuing your narrative started on Monday, reread it and as you write the next part, talk out loud about what you do when you come to a word you don't know.

Demonstration slow articulation by having the children say the word with you 3-5 time slowly. Then ask the children to raise their hands if they heard something they know. When they give you an appropriate letter, have the children help you find out where the letter would go in the word by saying the word slowly and running your finger on the paper until you hear the sound. Do this with most of the obvious consonants and then move on to the vowels. I do not believe that young children (K-1) can accurately hear most English vowels so I don't worry about vowels at this time with K-1 students, but 2-3 graders should be beginning to hear, notice and use vowels and vowel patterns. Therefore, I would have them help me find obvious vowels in my unknown word.

This mini-lesson format for what to do when you don't know a word is done daily as long as the children are struggling with strategies for unknown words. The final step I demonstrate is circling this unknown word to show that I worked on it but I'm not sure about it. Circling the word helps later when we move into editing and personal spelling lists.

Purposeful Practice

Continue as before.

Conferencing

Butterfly conference: Date stamp as before. Praise those children who are obviously attempting to do something with unknown words. Note any circles or sounding out as you touch on each child.

Response

Share circle: Depending upon the success of the demonstration, I may have the children share a circle word they worked on today. Using a white board I would then go through the procedure of sounding out with the whole group to "check" on the word. If demonstration was not implemented by the children, too new or abstract for them, I would continue with an idea-type Share Circle.

Reflections

I am planning to introduce the first words on the Word Wall next week so I need to know what words, if any, the majority of the children know. What words would be useful to them? In addition, I need to assess the children's use of the genre of narrative. Are they continuing with the same narrative? Does it change daily? Are the children becoming independent as writers or are they still dependent upon me to tell them what to do? How can I address this next week?

Writer's Workshop Week 2 Overview

Materials/time	Demonstration	Conferencing	Reflection
<p>Day One</p> <p>K-1: 30-45 minutes 2-3: 45-60 minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •journals for ea. child •writing materials •date stamp •teacher journal 	<p>Mini-lesson:</p> <p>-Begin narrative format. Orally tell narrative of event that happened to you. Begin to write on journal.</p>	<p>Butterfly:</p> <p>Date stamp and discuss event that children may be writing about.</p>	<p>Did any child have trouble coming up with a narrative event? Why? Who is struggling with the act of writing?</p>
<p>Day Two</p> <p>K-1: 30-45 minutes 2-3: 45-60 minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •journals for each child •writing materials •date stamp •teacher journal 	<p>Mini lesson:</p> <p>Continue narrative demonstration by retelling what happened. You are demonstrating how to provide information in writing.</p>	<p>Butterfly:</p> <p>Date stamp in journal where child is beginning to write today. Praise those who provide more information in narrative.</p>	<p>Note in journal how much writing is being done each day by looking at the date stamps. Are children spending their whole time illustrating?</p>
<p>Day Three</p> <p>K-1: 30-45 minutes 2-3: 45-60 minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •journals for each child •writing materials •date stamp •chart paper 	<p>Mini lesson:</p> <p>Procedural inservice-Orally discuss the rules and expectations for Share Circle. Write these on chart paper as negotiated.</p>	<p>Butterfly:</p> <p>Date stamp in journal where child is beginning to write. Note how many go right to writing with no narrative demonstration.</p>	<p>After reviewing Share Circle rules as a minilesson, how many children had to be reminded? Should they be reviewed again? Are they automatic yet?</p>
<p>Day Four</p> <p>K-1: 30-45 minutes 2-3: 45-60 minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •journals for each child •writing materials •date stamp •teacher journal 	<p>Mini lesson:</p> <p>Continue demonstration of narrative retelling where and when event occurred. Write with the children's assistance.</p>	<p>Butterfly:</p> <p>Date stamp journals. Have the children reread what they have written. Comment on their conventions of narrative.</p>	<p>How many children could reread what they had written? Are they conventionally spelling any words? What do they do with unknown words?</p>
<p>Day Five</p> <p>K-1: 30-45 minutes 2-3: 45-60 minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •journals for each child •writing materials •date stamp •teacher journal 	<p>Mini-lesson:</p> <p>Continue narrative demonstration using narrative first then assisted writing.</p>	<p>Butterfly:</p> <p>Date stamp journals. Continue to have children reread what they have written.</p>	<p>What words would be appropriate for the word wall? What parts of unknown words are children using? the beginning? ending? vowels?</p>

The Next Six Weeks

Before we go on. . . .

As stated earlier, demonstration mini-lessons and conferencing are very dependent upon the needs of the students and the group as a whole. By reviewing anecdotal records and reflecting on the progress of the students, I keep up to date on my Writer's Workshop as a whole. But there are some conventions, procedures and "inservices" that I need to address. When and how you address them is very dependent on how your group is progressing. Very young writers, may need more time developing the strategies introduced in Weeks One and Two. Take the time. If your process for anecdotal collection and analysis is not working, take the time to fine tune it. What I am trying to say is you must adapt my ideas to fit your needs. So if I move into the convention of sentence in Week Three, and your students are still struggling with the rules of Share Circle, adjust for your students. This is meant to be a guideline, not the gospel. Just be aware that you are always moving towards something and keep your eyes on that horizon even if you may be temporarily stuck in traffic.

Week Three

This week I begin to address the convention of sentence. In my program these issues about this convention are addressed: What is a sentence; the punctuation of a sentence; the parts of a sentence (a naming part, a telling part); and different types of sentences (asking, excited, statements).

Set-up, Time, Materials:

These will remain the same throughout the week. As the students feel more confidence in their writing, purposeful practice may take longer so adjust this as needed. I usually shorten Share Circle time when this begins to happen.

Demonstration

Mini-lessons:

I use the five days of mini-lessons to: discuss sentences I have written looking for what makes it a sentence; have the children share a sentence they have written and discuss why it is/is not a sentence; use literature to find sentences to discuss; chart what a sentence is; etc.

Purposeful Practice

Be sure to use the language you have discussed about sentences. You may have the students reread previous

writings to look for naming parts of sentences, or have them share a "good" sentence with you when you stop by. It is important to "echo" the ideas and concepts you introduce in demonstration throughout the workshop over time.

Conferences

Butterfly conference: As I date stamp each writing, I ask the children what they are working on and what their next sentence is. I note the children who respond with an understanding of what a sentence is and those who do not. I am also using this week to observe the level of independence in the group. I need to consider beginning small group instruction conferences.

Reflections

How well does the group understand the concept of sentence? Are they developmentally ready for this? If not, how can I demonstrate it so that they begin to grasp the concept. Can I hold any of them responsible for this in their writing? Should I continue this for another week?

Although you revisit and echo earlier mini-lessons over and over again, it may be necessary to focus on a particular concept like sentence for more than one week. That's OK, do what the group needs. However, if most of the children are getting the concept, don't hold them back because a few are

still confused. This is the purpose of your small group conferences. It can be addressed for those students at that time.

Other things to consider: How independent is the group? Could they function without you if you were to work with a small group of children? Do they know what to do if they are having a problem? How can you help them become more independent? What rules do you need to begin to establish to make this possible?

Week Four

This week I go back to the genre of narrative and begin to define it a little more. By now the children have probably gotten good at "I can" or "I have" statements. We need to move into more detail in writing by introducing what I call the "w questions" of a recount: who, when, where, and why?

Set-up, Time, Materials:

These will remain the same throughout the week.

Demonstration

Mini-lessons:

I use the five days of mini-lessons to: reread past narratives I have written and ask the students the "w questions". I also begin to list possible answers to these

questions. During Share Circle I ask children to share the "who" in their narrative on Monday, the "When" on Tuesday, the "where" on Thursday, etc. I also might do a mini-lesson on what the students should or should not do when the teacher is working with a student or group of students. This could be charted if necessary.

Purposeful Practice

Echo the demonstration you presented as a mini-lesson. If you are focusing on the "who" then ask the children "who is in their narrative?"

Conferences

Butterfly conference: I date stamp each writing quickly, commenting as needed. Note how many students are working independently. Begin to jot down groups of students based on specific need. For example, those children who are still not sure of sentence conventions might be a group. Student's struggling to get more than one thought down at a time might be a group. Note this specifically in your anecdotal notes.

Reflections

How well does the group understand the concept of recount? Are they beginning to add more detail to their

writing? Are they continuing with the same writing over time or are they starting something new everyday? Can this be addressed in Share Circle? What would be appropriate to discuss with each group of children?

Week Five

This week we will be taking a breather from new concepts and revisit those we have worked on. We will also spend a lot of time discussing during demonstration and Share Circle what a writer does when they have trouble thinking of something to write about. I call this the "blank page" syndrome.

Set-up, Time, Materials:

These will remain the same throughout the week. Be sure to have extra journals on hand for those children who begin to complete their journals. Also chart paper will be necessary if you plan to chart the "blank page" syndrome solutions.

Demonstration

Mini-lessons:

This week I will write recount from start to finish. I try to think of an event the children know about that I can recount. In doing this, I will echo what we know about a

sentence, about writing words we don't know and about the importance of spelling Word Wall Words correctly. I will also be sure to include the "w questions" for my recount. I will also spend a little time each day asking the children what they are writing about and where they got the idea for that. Around the end of the week I will have the children help me generate a list of ideas and places to get ideas if you are suffering from the "blank page" syndrome. This will join the Share Circle rules chart hanging in the room.

Purposeful Practice

Because I am going to begin to pull small groups this week, I need to remind the students daily what our independent writing rules are. I also need to make sure that I am clear about my reactions to the breaking of these rules. For example, in my class if I am working with a student or group of students, I cannot be interrupted for any reason. But children always come up to me with a "gotta tell ya about it" emergency. I simply put up my palm and remind the student that I cannot be interrupted because I am working with a student. If I ignore the interruption, the interruptions begin to cease. But I have to be clear and consistent with this every time it occurs.

Conferences

Butterfly conference: Date stamp at the point where each child is writing on that day.

Small Group conference: This week I will pull one small group a day for a brief 5-8 minute conference. My teaching point is dependent upon the group but will most likely be a reiteration of the focus of a past mini-lesson. My main goal for this week's small group conferences is to get the group used to working independently when I am working with these groups.

Reflections

Jot notes about each small group worked with and reflect upon what would be an appropriately teaching point to consider next time for that group. Also consider the placement of each child in the groups. Is it appropriate? Are they personality compatible? Does anyone need to be moved?

Week Six

The second form of response, publishing, is looming on the horizon because a number of the children have completed a couple of pieces of writing. So this week we will begin to discuss and create our class editing checklist.

Set-up, Time, Materials:

These will remain the same throughout the week. You may want to keep handy any charts or writings you have created with the class about how to use a journal, what is a sentence, etc.

Demonstration

Mini-lessons:

This week I will take the recount written in Week Five and edit it for publication. I may begin the week by sharing a favorite book and talking about how the author got it published. I will be focusing on the editing aspect of publishing based on the mini-lessons of conventions we have already had. When a convention is discussed regarding my recount, it will be added to the chart titled "Editing Checklist". This checklist will include: Name on each paper, all Word Wall Words spelling correctly, unsure of words circled, sentences that have capitals and periods, all "w questions" answered, etc.

Purposeful Practice

Observe how many children may be rereading with editing in mind. Note this in anecdotal records and when you see it in small group conferences.

Conferences

Butterfly conference: Date stamp at the point of writing.

Small Group conference: Meet with any groups not met with from week before. Document what you observed when the children read their writing and what you discussed. Also consider what would be appropriate to look for and discuss at the next conference with this group.

Reflections

Consider which children may be ready to use the editing checklist and begin the publishing process. My criteria, which I discuss with the children first, includes how many pieces of writing they have written, and how independent they are working. Consider what your publishing process with entail. Will you hand write the finished product or could the children word process it on a classroom computer? Will you have the children rewrite their writing to be published so that editing is done on that sheet or do you feel comfortable editing right in the journal? How will you organize the published books? How long do you want each child to spend publishing their books? Will they go home? How will you manage this?

Week Seven

This week the publishing process will begin. I do have children rewrite their writing to be published because I do not feel comfortable writing in journals. I also set guidelines for rewrite that include all the items on the editing checklist as well as a title and author included. Once children have rewritten their writing, they go back to their journal to continue on a different piece. This way they are not waiting around for me to get to them and not doing any writing. I work with one to two rewrite/editing conferences a day. Then the children take their edited rewrite to the computer and type their story in. They have two days to complete the word processing. I finish what is not completed. Then I cut and paste their edited publication into a blank page/staples book and the children have two days to illustrate it and practice reading it. On the third day, the children read their published book to the class and then take it home. Each published book has a dedication page and a Reader's Response page where students and family can write their positive comments to the text. When the book returns to the classroom, the children read it to the principal and to other interested classrooms. Then the book becomes part of our classroom library and is mounted in the children "Collection of Written Works". The child goes back to journal writing as before. From rewrite to publication, this

process takes no more than one week in my classroom.

Set-up, Time, Materials:

Material needed for publishing the first books must be accessible and possibly labeled.

Demonstration

Mini-lessons:

Once again I use my edited recount from week five to demonstrate my classroom publishing process. Beginning with the steps for rewrite and continuing to the actual finished product I model what I do and discuss what I expect them to do when they have been asked to choose a piece of writing to be published.

Purposeful Practice

You might want to remind the children that four pieces of writing in their journals are required before publishing can be considered. Also reiterate that a piece of writing is not simply a page of writing.

Conferences

Butterfly conference: Date stamp each journal and observe how much writing each child has accomplished. During

this conference and Share Circle is when you will choose who is ready to publish.

Small Group conference: Continue as noted in small group plans and anecdotes

Editing conference: Take one child selected very slowly through the entire publishing process. Stick to the editing checklist for teaching points to edit. Ask the child to share what was done at each step of the process during Share Circle.

Reflections

Are the children anxious to publish? Is the publishing process you developed working? Are there too many steps? Not enough steps? What other materials would be helpful in publishing? How realistic is this publishing plan? Now is the time to refine and rework this process. Be sure to ask the children for input, they do have lots of good ideas. Be sure to share any changes you might make with the whole group.

Week Eight

This week I will be assessing how well these first weeks of Writer's Workshop have gone. We have been working in the genre of narrative with special emphasis on personal recounts. This week, I will assess the students knowledge of this genre by directing them to write a specific narrative. I ask the children to do teacher directed writing during about 10% of my writing program. Although the children dislike this type of prompt writing because they are used to having choice of topic, it is necessary for children to be able to write about specific topics within specific genres.

Set-up, Time, Materials:

What material I decide to use for directed writing. I do not use the journals for this type of writing. This writing will be collected and be part of the portfolio assessment system.

Demonstration

Mini-lessons:

I use the five days of mini-lessons to discuss the event I expect the children to recount. We are getting close to Halloween on my school schedule and at my school we have a storybook character parade at school. This is usually the event I choose. It is very memorable for the children and

they all participated in it. I begin this discussion by answering the "w questions" regarding this event. I usually chart this for emergent writers. Fluent writers would be required to create their own chart. I would also do a mini-lesson this week on sentence conventions and the editing checklist. Anything I intend to hold the children accountable for in their recount will be a mini-lesson this week. The last two days of the week, the children are required to write their recount of the Storybook Parade, edit it, and share it with the class. We make a big deal about this with the sharing of the recounts as a celebration. I use a rubric to score the writing and I share both the rubric and the score with each child. I want them to learn from their success' and their mistakes. I do emphasize the positive aspect of their score.

Reflections

Looking through the final recounts I reflect on the overall quality of the work. Did the children understand and demonstrate their understanding in this writing? How was their use of convention? I also take this time to compare this writing with the writing from the first day of class. How have the children grown as writers? How can I share this growth with them? their parents?

I also consider where to go from here. While I expect

the children to continue writing in the genre of narrative, what genre would be appropriate to move into next? story? letter writing? poetry? non fiction? Also what conventions are they ready to take on? These reflections will help me to plan my next weeks and months of the Writer's Workshop.

Writer's Workshop Week 3-8 Overview

Materials/time	Demonstration	Conferencing	Reflection
<p>Week Three</p> <p>K-1: 30-45 minutes 2-3: 45-60 minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •journals for ea. child •writing materials •date stamp •teacher journal •chart paper 	<p>Mini-lesson:</p> <p>-Focus=sentence discuss sentences written in teacher's modelling, student's sharing, published literature to explore what a sentence is; create a chart.</p>	<p>Butterfly:</p> <p>Date stamp and discuss what students are working on; what their next sentence will be; observe independence of group.</p>	<p>How well did children understand concept of sentence? Can I hold them responsible for this convention yet? How independent is this group?</p>
<p>Week Four</p> <p>K-1: 30-45 minutes 2-3: 45-60 minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •journals for each child •writing materials •date stamp •teacher journal •chart paper 	<p>Mini lesson:</p> <p>Focus=recount reread past narratives and explore how well they answer the "w questions": who, when, where, why, chart if necessary.</p>	<p>Butterfly:</p> <p>Date stamp and begin to consider grouping of students for small group instruction. These groups will be change often.</p>	<p>How well is the genre of recount understood? Are the children writing over time, or beginning a new piece daily? Can Share Circle address this?</p>
<p>Week Five</p> <p>K-1: 30-45 minutes 2-3: 45-60 minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •journals for each child •writing materials •date stamp •chart paper 	<p>Mini lesson:</p> <p>Use this week to write a recount from start to ending. Be sure to make the children aware of the "w questions" as you writing.</p>	<p>Butterfly: date stamp and quickly discuss progress. Small group: briefly discuss how writing is going with ea. group. Goal is to get class used to this procedure.</p>	<p>Take notes on small group encounters. Are there any obvious needs for each group? what would be an effective way to address these?</p>
<p>Week Six</p> <p>K-1: 30-45 minutes 2-3: 45-60 minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •journals •writing materials •date stamp •teacher journal •published book materials 	<p>Mini lesson:</p> <p>Demonstrate publication process by taking recount written in week 5 and publishing it. Be sure to discuss each part of the process.</p>	<p>Butterfly: Date stamp Small Group: Observe and document how well the children reread their writing in small group.</p>	<p>Are children able to reread what they write? Are they working independently? Is anyone ready to publish based on your criteria? How will you manage?</p>
<p>Week Seven</p> <p>K-1: 30-45 minutes 2-3: 45-60 minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •journals for each child •writing materials •date stamp •teacher journal 	<p>Mini-lesson:</p> <p>Continue publishing process from week six. Be sure to discuss expectations when they are asked to select a piece to be published.</p>	<p>Butterfly:Date stamp Small group: continue as noted in reflections Editing: select one child to take through editing process you have been modeling.</p>	<p>Are the children anxious to publish? Is the process working? With this set-up will each child publish at least once a month?</p>

Writer's Workshop Week 3-8 Overview

Materials/time

Week Eight

K-1: 30-45 minutes

2-3: 45-60 minutes

- directed writing materials
- date stamp
- teacher journal
- chart paper
- portfolio record keeping system set up.

Demonstration

This week is an assessment week. The genre of recount will be revisited. A shared class experience will be discussed and charted. Sentence and editing conventions will be modelled. Children will be required to write a recount of this event. These will be kept for portfolio evaluation.

Conferencing

Butterfly: date stamp
small group: based on needs of groups
editing: continue as before.

Reflections

What is the quality of the directed recounts? Are the children ready to move into another genre study or should recount continue to be studied? What new conventions are the children ready to take on?

APPENDIX B: Forms Used for Writer's Workshop

Name _____	DOB _____	Room _____	Grade _____
Written Language:	Reading:	Math:	

Form One-Anecdotal Record

Anecdotal Record is a form used to document daily observations and insights for each child in the areas listed. These records are updated as needed and used to plan individual, small group and whole group instruction.

1/98

Shelton beginning to use "."	Tony	James	Ben title reflects topic of writing
Brittney	Gerard	David	Kevin
Eric	Luciano	David B.	Charlter
Joey	Chris	Anessa	Alma working on non- fiction about deserts
Jessica	Kevin	Faige writing in 3rd person	Kandiss

Example of Use

Form Two-Anecdotal Recording Sheet

This form is used to collect information from daily observations. Write every child's name in a square. Place a small post-it over the name when observation is made. Write observation on post-it. Don't remove post-its until all boxes are covered. This way all children are observed regularly. When complete transcribe post it to Anecdotal Record sheet (form two) and start again.

WRITERS WORKSHOP

	NAME	DRAFT	EDIT	CONFERENCE	COMPUTER	PUBLISH
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						
19						
20						
21						

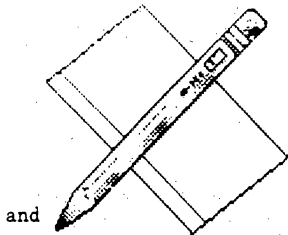
Form Three-Publishing Management Form

This form is used to manage the publishing process. Dates are placed in each column as steps of the process are complete. This forms help to keep track of where children are within the process.

WRITERS WORKSHOP

	NAME	DRAFT	EDIT	CONFERENCE	COMPUTER	PUBLISH	
1	Andrew	✓	✓	✓	✓	story	
2	Andrea	✓	✓	✓	✓	story	
3	Ben	✓	✓	✓	✓	story	
4	Britney	✓	✓	✓	✓	story	1/4
5	Chandler	✓	✓	✓	✓	letter	12/1
6	Chris D	✓	✓	✓	✓	story	11/3
7	David	✓	✓	✓	✓		
8	Eric	✓	✓	✓	✓		
9	Gerrit	✓	✓	✓	✓		
10	James	✓	✓	✓	✓	story	11/5
11	Jessica	✓	✓	✓	✓		
12	Joey	✓	✓	✓	✓		
13	Kandiss	✓	✓	✓	✓		
14	Kevin	✓	✓	✓	✓	poem	2/3
15	Luciano	✓	✓	✓	✓	story	12/1
16	Paige	✓	✓	✓	✓		
17	Tony	✓	✓	✓	✓		
18	Shelbi	✓	✓	✓	✓		
19	Kyra	✓	✓	✓	✓	letter	12/17
20							
21							

Example of use



Dear Parents,

Congratulations! Your child has published a book in Room 1. We have been writing in a journal every day and conferencing to edit with Ms. Kim to create this book. As an author, your child is very excited about this book and anxious to share it with you. Be sure to read this book with your child and have family members and friends write positive comments on the "Reader Response" page at the back of the book.

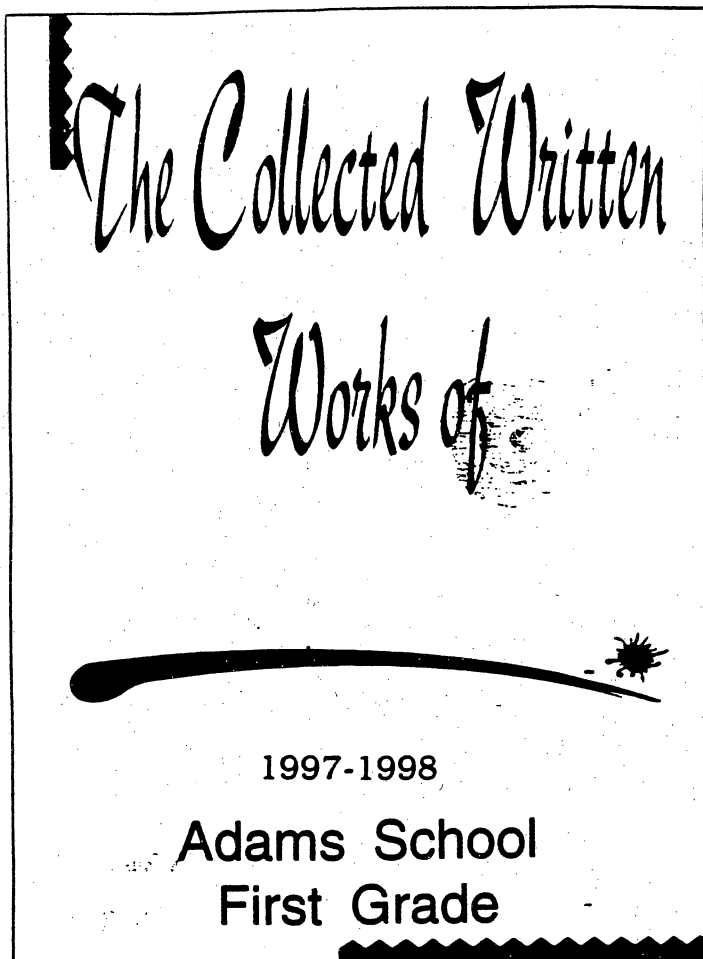
We are anxious to have this book in our "Published Book Library" in Room 1 so be sure to return it to class the next day with your child. All the books your child publishes will be bound as a "Collection" and sent home for good at the end of the year.

We know you are as proud of this book as we are. Your child will have an opportunity to share your positive comments with the rest of the class when the book returns. Be sure to visit our "Published Book Library" when you are in Room 1.

The Writers and Readers in Room 1

Form Four-Parent Publishing Letter

This letter is sent home with every piece of published work. It explains to parents the purpose of our publishing work and invites parents to celebrate this writer's success.



Form Five-Writing Scrapbook

This form is the cover for the published pieces each child creates. After writing is taken home and shared with parents, it is glued into this book and kept in the class library. At the end of the year, an author's tea allow the children to read their favorite writing to the audience and the scrapbooks go home.

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