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WRITING AS A TOOL FOR LEARNING

A Project

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in

Education: Reading

by

Ruth Paula Brown

June 1993

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Approved by:

ABSTRACT

WRITING AS A TOOL FOR LEARNING

Ruth Brown

California State University, San Bernardino, 1993

The purpose of this project was to describe the effectiveness of
teaching the writing process. Four different outlines of the
writing process were described and compared to each other. These
writing processes served as a basis for the curriculum developed
in this project. A teacher handbook was developed to help the
teacher convert the writing process into a useable format for
student authors. This teacher handbook further describes several
writing strategies which may be introduced to students to increase
their ability to use the writing process successfully.

Acknowledgement

Many thanks to my life partner and best friend...
Holin,
without your support I would have never made it.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Until recently, writing was primarily taught as a product
rather than a process. Educators concentrated on teaching
isolated skills via worksheets, workbooks, and the editing of
mechanical errors. Students learned that good writing was a set
of mastered skills such as spelling, punctuation, grammar, and
capitalization. In more recent years, educators have looked to
the value of writing as a tool for learning. Language education
has concentrated on teaching students to value the content of
their writing first before becoming bogged down in the mechanics
of writing. It has been said, "Authoring is a form of learning"
(Harste, Short, Burke, 1988, p. 9).

The authoring process engages students in a multitude of
learning experiences. Students use writing as a tool to grow
beyond themselves. The act of writing helps students synthesize
and analyze what they have learned about life.

The purpose of this project is to provide teachers with a
variety of writing strategies which they can introduce to students
to help them become better writers as well as independent
learners.

Theoretical Foundation

Whole language provides the theoretical foundation for a process approach to the teaching of writing. The goal of writing is to give students the responsibility for their own learning. The students are given a democratic say in what they learn. Students who are involved in writing make personal choices related to what and how they learn. According to K. Goodman, Bridges, and Y. Goodman (1988), "A whole language classroom is a democratic community of learners, and its curriculum is embedded in the culture and social experiences of the larger community" (p.4). Each student has a say in the educational process of their environment.

Whole language is a way of experiencing learning rather than a formula for mastering sequential skills. According to Blynt (1991), "Whole language is more than a methodology. It borders on a life-style" (p. 379). We bring to our learning what we already know and tie it in with new knowledge to make new meanings for ourselves. K. Goodman states (1991), "We learn what we need to learn to survive and make sense of the world. And we do so as we confront situations that need to be understood and as we are confronted with problems we need to solve" (p. 23). Students are more teachable when they are learning things that are important to them for the moment. The need for using writing strategies relies on the author s needs.

2

Because whole language is based on the student's need to make sense of his or her life, the student is continually interacting with his or her environment. Students are constantly engaged in searching for answers and questions. "In whole language classrooms there is time for thinking and time for growing" (Goodman, Bridges, Goodman, 1988, p. 4). Authoring can be interactive. Students look for answers and questions in a variety of resources including other authors. Student-authors also need time to think about what they are learning. Without thinking time, the writing becomes a ritual of unrelated activities.

Whole language learning builds on what the student already knows. When students see connections between what they already know and what they are learning, they formulate new links in the learning chain. "We learn easily what is relevant and meaningful, and we forget easily bits and pieces of knowledge that never come together" (Goodman, 1991, p. 23). If a piece of knowledge makes no sense in the student's web of learning, the student will not be able to spin this new information into the ever-growing web. Learning should be real, relevant, and authentic. As new writing strategies are introduced, the student is invited to take on new learning challenges through writing. The student is active in the decisions of what to write, what form to write in, who their audience is, and whether the piece will be published. Student choice makes writing real for the student.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

There is a growing body of literature which argues that writing should be taught as a process rather than a product. Several authorities on the teaching of writing have had similar findings in their research. Over the past twenty years, Graves has had one of the greatest impacts on the teaching of the process approach to writing. Before Graves' contributions to writing education, teachers approached writing from a spelling and mechanics point of view. Graves found that writing was not simply the task of editing for conventional spelling and mechanics, but that there were several aspects to the process of writing.

A second researcher whose work has had a landmark effect is Donald M. Murray. Like Graves, he began his research into writing as a process in the late 1960's. Murray has looked extensivly at writing at the high school and college levels. Also like Graves, Murray's research found that the teaching of writing in the past had concentrated on spelling and mechanical correctness rather than on the process authors are involved in when writing.

Lucy McCormick Calkins followed Graves' and Murray's theory of writing as a process. Calkins has expanded the discussion about writing in a process to the middle grades. Among her most significant contributions, Calkins has found that even very young and/or beginning writers go through writing phases similar to those of more experienced writers. This observation has provided

4

support for several process-oriented programs across the grades.

In recent years, Atwell has done a great deal of research dealing with writing in the middle grades, specifically grades six through nine. It is significant that Atwell began her work as a classroom teacher, and has grounded her theory through direct application. Atwell was greatly influenced by Graves, Murray, and Calkins. Through her own teaching experience and research, Atwell has found that when writers write, they are engaged in a process that goes beyond mechanical conventions. Atwell further found that when when writers write on a regular basis and write often, they are able to use the writing process more efficiently and effectively.

The literature reflects a continuity and clearly depicts writing as a process. All of the authors found that regardless of age or experience all writers go through similar phases when writing. All of the authors found that writing is more than producing perfect spelling and perfect mechanics in a piece of writing. As a result of the research of Graves, Murray, Calkins, Atwell, and others, there has been a thrust in education to teach writing as a process rather than a product.

This literature review will focus on two related topics: 1) the writing process and 2) the effectiveness of teaching the writing process.

The Writing Process

The phrase 'the writing process' often implies a method or set of rules for writing. On the contrary, the writing process is instead a theory that authors develop or create when they write. Donald Murray (1982) believes "the student should know there is a basic process for writing, practiced by most writers, but ultimately he has to learn the process for himself" (p. 12). There have been many attempts to describe the writing process. Following are four outlines of the writing process. Each of these outlines have similarities and differences.

The first outline of the writing process is taken from Write On: A Conference Approach To Writing by Jo-Ann Parry and David Hornsby (1985). Although Parry and Hornsby (1985) have formulated an outline of the writing process, they agree, "It is not to be interpreted as a blueprint for procedural steps that every child will follow" (p. 5). The writing process as outlined by Parry and Hornsby (1985) include five main parts; 1) experience, 2) rehearsal, 3) writing, 4) post-writing, and 5) audience feedback.

They acknowledge that each author may or may not follow the same path in the writing process. The first step in their outline is 'experience'. Experience is the idea or incubation phase. The author needs time to gather ideas and formulate questions that may need to be answered.

Once ideas have started to accumulate, the author informally begins to write in the mind. This is called the rehearsal phase. The rehearsal phase has no definite beginning or ending. The author may begin rehearsing what will be written before actually writing the piece or even while writing another part of the piece. Rehearsal happens any time the author thinks about the piece to be written. All authors will have their own rehearsal strategies. For instance, one author might surround himself or herself with images related to the topic to be written about in an effort to stimulate thinking about the piece being written. Rehearsal might consist of discussing, researching, scribbling, drawing, interviewing, note-taking, or constructing.

The writing phase includes drafting, revising, editing, rewriting, and proof-reading. During this phase, the author writes a rough draft and manipulates it until the content and mechanics are complete and polished. All aspects of the writing phase need not be done in a sequential manner nor does the author need to rewrite complete pages in order to revise and edit. The author may be ready to write the middle of a piece before writing the beginning, or the author may decide to revise a previously written paragraph before finishing another paragraph. Revisions may happen simultaneously while writing a draft. Editing may happen in much the same way. Authors are constantly jumping between the various aspects of the writing phase.

When an author is satisfied with the content and mechanics

of a piece, the next phase is post-writing. The author puts the piece into an appropriate format to make available to the reader. Finally, the intended audience has the opportunity to experience what the author wrote and can respond in relation to that writing. This phase is termed as 'audience feedback'.

Another outline of the writing process is taken from Creating Classrooms For Authors by Harste, Short, and Burke (1988). These authors use the term 'the authoring cycle' in reference to the writing process. These researchers recognize that the writing process begins with the author's personal life experiences. The authoring cycle continues in a circular pattern as follows: uninterrupted reading and writing, author's circle, self-editing, outside editing, publishing/celebrating authorship, and invitations/language strategy instruction.

Following the path of the authoring cycle, student authors begin with uninterrupted reading and writing. During this time the author is collecting ideas and information for writing followed by actually writing first drafts which are collected in an author's folder. Once the author has several drafts written, one is chosen for possible publication. This draft is brought to an author's circle (Harste, Short, & Burke, 1988, p. 19). The author's circle consists of a small group of authors. Each author brings a piece of writing that is being considered for publication. The authors take turns reading their piece for the group. In response, the group discusses the strengths and needs of the content of each piece read. Following the author's circle,

8

the author then makes revisions to the content of the piece and may do some self-editing (Harste, Short, & Burke, 1988). Once the author is satisfied with the content of the piece, the next step is to send the piece to outside editors. Outside editors consist of junior editors, other students, and a senior editor, the teacher. Using the editors comments, the author puts the piece into final publishing form and shares the published piece with an audience in some way. The author is now ready for an invitation to learn a new writing strategy or to begin a new piece of writing.

A third outline of the writing process, found in A Writer Teaches Writing by Donald M. Murray (1985), is much less step-oriented than the first two outlines described above. Murray's outline consists of three parts; 1) collect, 2) plan, and 3) develop. This researcher points out that an author may or may not follow these parts in any particular order. During the collecting phase of the writing process, the author gets ideas for writing. These ideas come from a constant flow of input from within the author and around the author. Authors need to be able to tap that flow for the ideas that demand the most attention. The author must also do some prewriting 'plans'. These plans are much like a mental draft of the piece to be written. Planning might include deciding on the focus of each part of the piece, experimenting with the organization of ideas, or trying out various word choices. Planning is much like working with a piece of soft clay in that the author can mold, shape, reshape, pinch, and pull at

9

the words until the piece looks ready to be fired permanently in the kiln. When the author is satisfied with the mental plans for writing the piece, the final step is to actually write the piece onto paper. This phase is refered to as the 'develop' phase. Murray points out that the author may move between phases randomly depending on the style of the author and the author's needs. For instance, the author may begin by collecting a few ideas while at the same time planning how to put these ideas onto paper.

The fourth outline of the writing process found in Writing: Teachers and Children at Work by Donald Graves (1983), is very similar to Murray's (1985) outline of the writing process. Graves describes the writing process in three phases, 1) choice, 2) rehearsal, and 3) composing. The first phase in Graves' outline is that of choice. An author must choose from his or her vast collection of ideas and memories to decide what to write about. Once an author has decided what to write about, the author begins rehearsing what will be written. This rehearsal may take on several forms such as, note taking, daydreaming, doodling, sketching, outlining, making lists, reading, or conversing. During the rehearsal phase the author is preparing for the composing phase of writing. The rehearsal phase allows the author time to collect and organize ideas that may be included in the actual piece of writing. The composing phase includes all aspects of writing from drafting to publishing. Graves points out that these phases can overlap each other. For instance, an author may think of a future writing topic while reheasing for a present

piece of writing.

When comparing all four of these outlines of the writing process, all of the authors agree that there is no one writing process. There are no set rules for publishing a piece of writing. Each author formulated an outline of the writing process as a foundation to work from when teaching students what it means to be author. There are many similarities between the four outlines discussed. Table 1 shows how each of these outlines parallels the others.

Each outline of the writing process begins with some type of idea accumulation. An author needs to have something to say before writing can happen. Parry and Hornsby refer to this as the experience phase. Harste et. al. refer to it as personal experiences. Murray names this phase as the collecting phase. Graves identifies this phase as choice. In each outline, this phase of the writing process suggests that the author gathers information to begin the writing process.

Once the writing process has begun and an author has some idea of what will be written, actual writing must happen. Some authors may plan or rehearse what will be written as suggested by Parry & Hornsby, Murray, and Graves. Harste et. al. suggests that an author may continue reading/researching while actually beginning to write.

While Harste et. al. have broken down the writing process into several parts, Graves, Murray, Parry, and Hornsby tend to put several pieces of the writing process under one label. Parry and

Hornsby label all writing done after the rehearsal phase and before actual publication as the 'writing' phase. Murray labels all writing done after the planning phase as the 'develop' phase. Graves labels all writing done after rehearsal as the 'composing' phase.

Harste et. al. outline of the writing process is the only one which includes a phase beyond publishing. Harste et. al. include an invitation/strategy lesson phase where the author may be invited to use a previously learned writing strategy or learn a new strategy for writing. By including this phase in the writing process, it seems to suggest authoring is an ongoing cycle. Parry and Hornsby include a phase labeled audience feedback. This phase suggests the author values the reader's response in so much as the author can use this feedback for future pieces of writing.

Harste, Short, and Burke's writing process appears much more sequential when compared to Graves, Murray or Parry and Hornsby, although all the authors of these four outlines of the writing process agree that writers need not follow a linear path in the writing process. Writers have the freedom to move between parts of the writing process as needed and as often as needed.

Effectiveness of Teaching the Writing Process

Understanding the use of the writing process is vital to the success of writing. Authors use the writing process as a tool to gather, organize, and record their thoughts and ideas. The

literature supports the premise that teaching the writing process is effective when helping students understand authoring and becoming successful authors.

Without a solid understanding of the writing process, writers often find themselves afloat on still waters where there are no winds to get them writing. According to Rose (1984) writer s block may be linked to the lack of understanding of the writing process. Often teachers and writers focus on the correctness of the mechanics and spelling when writing. When too much emphasis is put on mechanics and spelling, the author is not able to concentrate on the content of the piece being written. When this happens, the author is unable to take risks. Each piece of writing starts out as a final draft rather than as a rough draft to be revised and edited at a later time. Rose states that, "when a writer fixes himself on surface features on correctness or the perfect phrase - the thinking process might not be allowed to run its course" (p. 73). It is normal for an author to make some revisions and do some editing while writing a first draft. However, when the author cannot continue writing until every word is spelled correctly or until a phrase is perfect, writer's block may occur. The flow of thoughts is interrupted causing the author to forget what was to be written. Rose further states, "blocking can occur if assumptions, strategies, or certain kinds of rules, plans, and frames hold a writer too rigidly to a top-down or bottom-up orientation or in some other way restrict opportunistic play" (p. 11).

It is also true that if an author is held to following a sequential set of rules when using the writing process, this may further restrict the writer. Teachers need to present the writing process as a set of tools to be used as needed in the building of a piece of writing. An author needs to feel free to use the writing process tools as needed. Nancie Atwell states in her book, In the Middle , "Once kids have a general idea of procedures, and some of the language of the workshop, I want them to make their own decisions about what to do next as writers by looking at and thinking about their pieces of writing" (1987, p. 127). As students gain understanding of the writing process, it is important for them to become thoughtful writers. Thoughtful writers are able to make decisions about their own writing. One of the main goals of a whole language education is to make the students responsible for their own learning. The teacher's job is to share a variety of learning strategies with the student. It is the student's job to choose the strategies which help the student to learn the most effectively. Atwell posts a model of the writing process for her students to learn from at the beginning of the school year. After a month or so she removes this poster so the students will begin to make decisions about their own writing process. Atwell believes that if a student relies on following a poster guide of the writing process, the student is not making decisions about their writing.

It is important for young authors to understand that these tools have no set rules, but rather to understand the possible

Table 1

Parallels Between Four Outlines of the Writing Process

Parry & Hornsby (1985)	Harste, Burke, & Short (1988)	Murray (1985)	Graves (1983)
Experience	Personal Experiences	Collect	Choice
Rehearsal	Uninterrupted Reading and Writing	Plan	Rehearsal
Writing	Author's Circle	Develop	Composing
Writing	Self-Editing	Develop	Composing
Writing	Outside Editing	Develop	Composing
Post-writing	Publish / celebrate authorship	Develop	Composing
Audience feedback	Publish / celebrate authorship	Develop	Composing
	Invitations / Strategy Lesson		

15

uses of these tools. Several authors have stated that the writing process is as individual as the writer who uses it. An author writes with a basic knowledge of the writing process, yet the author has the freedom to use these writing tools as a carpenter would use a tool box. While building a piece of writing, the author may need an editing tool, followed by a drafting tool, while at the same time be holding a revising tool. Just as a carpenter would not be restricted to using a hammer only during the initial phases of building, so are authors not restricted to using the writing process tools at particular phases in the development of a piece of writing. Murray points out that the teacher needs to let the student know that there are no set rules/ processes to writing. Each writer has to find his or her own path in the writing process.

Authors need to understand the writing process in order to better use the tools they have available to them. Consider a carpenter who never understands how to use a screw driver. The carpenter would never be able to effectively insert a screw; thus possibly weakening the project being built. The same holds true for authors who never fully understand the writing tools available to them. Authors need to evaluate their own writing and know when it is important to pick up another writing tool when building a piece of writing. According to Murray (1982) writing is an evolving process. "There are no set rules, no absolutes, just alternatives. What works one time may not work another. All writing is experimental" (p. 17). An author may have a general

16

blueprint of what will be written, but the final product evolves

out of experimentation. The writing process tools aid the writer

in that experimentation.

In The Art of Teaching Writing Lucy McCormick Calkins

(1986) points out, "both teacher and students should bring all of

their skills, wisdom, and energy to the teaching-learning

transaction" (p. 165). Calkins outlines four types of writing

instruction. The first type of writing instruction involves the

use of ditto sheets and language arts textbooks. In this type of

instruction "neither the students nor their teachers invest much

energy in written work" (Calkins, 1986, p. 164). The second type

of writing instruction as described by Calkins involves the

teacher in the writing but the student is still very inactive in

the writing process. In this type of instruction, the teacher may

spend a great deal of time creating story starters, responding in

detail to everything students write, or editing all of the

students writing. The third type of instruction involves the

student a great deal more in the writing process, but the teacher

has little influence in the learning process of the student. In

this case the student writes freely with little or no formal help

to understand ways to better use the writing process. The teacher

is often concerned about too much intervention in the student's

natural learning. The fourth type of instruction as described by

Calkins includes strong influences by the student and the teacher.

The student brings what he or she has learned about the writing

process while the teacher helps the student see new approaches to

the writing process. The combination of teacher and student in the learning of the writing process for the student is the strongest support the student can get.

When comparing the four outlines of the writing process described earlier, it shoud be noted that Harste et. al. do not agree with other authors included in this literature review with regards to teacher involvement in the natural learning of the student. Harste et. al. point out that there should be little direct teacher instruction, but rather mostly student directed learning. The student according to Harste et. al. (1988) will naturally develop without a great deal of teacher intervention. For example, the teacher need only intervene in the student s writing when the student shows evidence that he or she is ready to use a particular convention or technique.

Graves (1983), Murray (1985), and Atwell (1987) all view writing education as having high levels of both teacher and student involvement. Calkins also (1986) belives there should be a high amount of direct teacher instruction as well as high amounts of student involvement when learning to use the writing process. Calkins, Graves, Murray, and Atwell all use some type of formal teaching with regards to various aspects of writing. Mini-lessons and conferences are two direct instructional techniques for working with students. In both cases, the teacher teaches the student in a short, three to five minute, lesson. The lesson may be taught to the whole class as an invitation, a small group lesson, or a one-to-one student-teacher conference. Calkins finds

the whole class lesson is effective as an invitation to the students to try on their own.

Another argument for the teaching of the writing process states that, when authors write, they are bringing together what they have learned to formulate new ideas of their own. Harste et. al. (1988) believe, "authoring is a form of learning" (p. 9). They further believe that as authors prepare to write, they often form several mental drafts of the piece before actually writing it down on paper. As authors mentally formulate these drafts, they are making connections between bits of information. Authors synthesize what they have learned to "construct and generate meanings for ourselves as well as others" (p. 9). When writers use the writing process, they have a focused plan of action to gather, synthesize, confirm or correct, and finally report their new knowledge.

It is important for students to recognize their learning as meaningful and important. It is not enough for the student to learn for a grade on their report card. Students gain more from their learning when the topic of study is important to them. The writing process used in a whole language classroom needs to reflect the student's needs and interests. By teaching writing as a process rather than a product, the student can be given the opportunity to learn and write about meaningful topics according to his or her needs or dersires.

Harste et. al. start the authoring cycle by having the students write several drafts. No formal assignment is given. No

Table 2

Parallels Between Five Approaches To Teaching Writing

Graves (1983)	Murray (1985)	Calkins (1986)	Atwell (1987)	Harste, et. al. (1988)
Direct Instruction	Direct Instruction	Direct Instruction	Direct Instruction	Direct Instruction
Teacher and Student Both Highly Involved in the Student's Learning	Teacher and Student Both Highly Involved in the Student's Learning	Teacher and Student Both Highly Involved in the Student's Learning	Teacher and Student Both Highly Involved in the Student's Learning	Student Directed Learning With Little or No Teacher Direction

story starter is written on the chalkboard. The students simply write about what interests them. From these initial drafts the students learn how to use the writing process tools to expand, detail, and refine what they have written. The teacher presents a variety of writing strategies that will further help the students learn from their writing. The student is continually invited to experiment with various writing strategies, yet the student has the final decision as to what works or does not work for their writing style.

Student choice is important to the validity of teaching the writing process. Without student choice, the writing process becomes another skill to be mastered rather than a set of tools to be used as needed. The writing process is not a recipe to be followed. The writing process is a foundation to teach from to help students understand their own learning patterns. Students who learn to use the writing process tools can be free to think, learn, and write about the world around them.

Goals, Objectives, and Limitations of the Project

The goal of this project is to provide regular elementary education teachers with a variety of writing process strategies which they can invite students to use when writing. There are two main objectives, 1) the teacher will

be able to describe key elements involved in the writing process and 2) the teacher will be able to demonstrate the use of at least two writing strategies for each key element of the writing process.

Limitations of this project involve teacher interest, teacher understanding of whole to part learning, and district support related to process over product when writing. It is always important that the teachers being educated are interested in using what they are being taught. Without teacher interest, there is the probability the material learned will not be used or may be used ineffectively. Teachers also need to have an understanding of what it means to learn from whole to part rather than part to whole as has been traditionally be taught. If this basic understanding is not evident, the teacher may focus on mastery of editing skills rather than the effectiveness of writing using all the writing process tools. Lastly, the district administration needs to be supportive of teaching writing as a process rather than a product. It is important that teachers feel at ease to take the risk of teaching writing process strategies. Without the support of the district administration, teachers will be restricted to teaching writing according to district policy which may not be consistent with writing process theories.

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Appendix A:

Teacher's Writing Manual

Every Student An Author

The Writing Process In Action
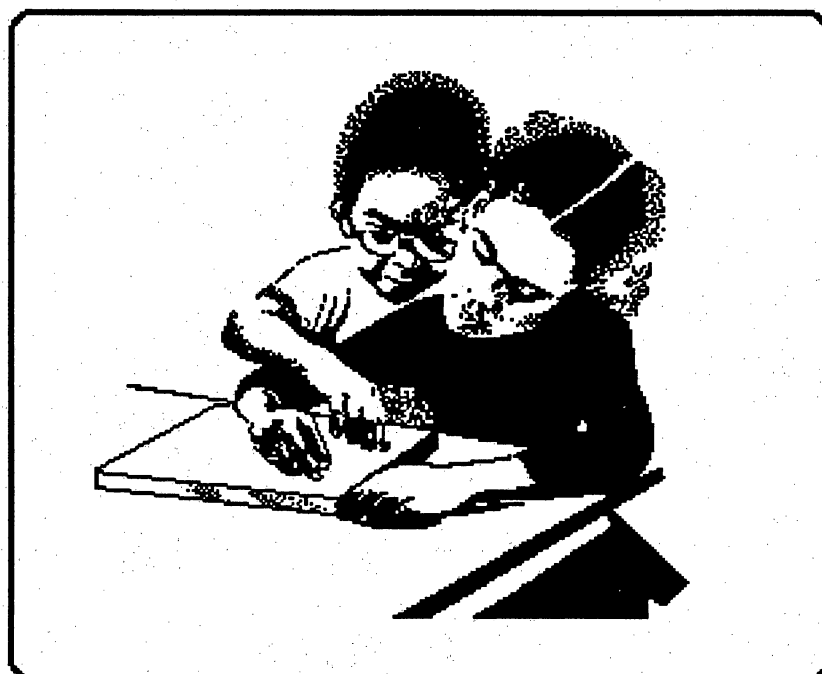
By
Ruth P. Brown
1993

Introduction

Children need to be prepared to think critically, make educated decisions, and communicate effectively with others in order to be productive, contributing citizens. Our job as educators is to not only teach children how to read and write, but also how to use these tools to learn on their own. One way to help accomplish this goal is to empower children as authors.

The writing process makes authoring real to students. Students use writing as a tool to grow beyond themselves. The act of writing helps students synthesize and analyze what they have learned about life. Through the implementation of the writing process, the students hear, see, and experience what it means to be an author.

The purpose of this project is to educate teachers in the techniques needed to understand, use, and teach the writing process in their classrooms. This manual will describe writing as a process and outline several writing and teaching strategies which can be used in the regular elementary education classroom.

One goal of teaching the writing process in the classroom is to give the responsibility of learning to the students. Teachers have the power to let the students become independent learners. As independent learners, students become empowered to think for themselves today beyond who

they were yesterday so they are prepared to look towards tomorrow.

Teaching the Writing Process

When teaching students to write, it is important for the students to first have an understanding of the writing process. There is no one single writing process, although there are some key elements included in all writing processes. All authors collect ideas for writing, write rough drafts, revise, edit, publish, and share their writing with others (see pp. 33-35). Students need to learn the basic function of each of these key elements, and they need to realize these elements of the writing process are not rules, but rather tools they can use as needed.

All authors collect ideas for writing. Authors search for possible topics for writing in a variety of ways. The author may look for ideas in music, T.V., art, pictures, magazines, books, newspapers, or other people (see pp. 35,39). During the collecting phase the author may spend time reading, taking notes, thinking, and discussing ideas with others.

The teacher may invite students to try a particular writing strategy that may help the student focus in on a topic. Invitations are a broader type of traditional teacher assignment. Rather than giving the student a topic to write

about, the teacher shares a technique that has no specific topic. The student has the choice to try the invitation, and the student has control over the actual topic of the writing. There are several writing invitations the teacher may introduce to the class (see p. 47).

Once an author has decided on a topic for writing, a rough draft needs to be written. During this phase, the author concentrates on getting ideas written down without too much concern for revisionand editing. As a teacher, you may want to suggest some helpful management tips to your students as outlined on page 40. After a rough draft has been written, the author can look back at the content of the piece. The author may decide to make some changes to the piece during the revising. It will be helpful to the student to learn some revising techniques and strategies. Page 48 outlines the use of 'author's circles' as a revising strategy. The author's circle allows the student to hear what other authors think about the piece that was written. This feedback can suggest to the author some possible changes he or she can make in the piece that was written. Page 41 offers some revising techniques that may make it easier for the author to add, delete, or move text in the piece written. Revising is a difficult concept to teach, although through mini-lessons and conferences, the teacher can give direct instruction to model specific writing strategies.

There are numerous topics for mini-lessons. A mini-

lesson is a short lesson (usually three to five minutes) in which the a specific strategy is taught. Mini-lessons can relate to management issues, the writing process, spelling conventions, mechanis of writing, or concepts related to the content of writing (see p. 45).

Another key element of the writing process is that of editing. There are three types of editors: self-editor, Jr. editor, and Sr. editor. Editing should not be the focus of a student s writing. For many years, teachers have taught writing to mean the mastery of conventional spelling and the mechanics/grammar of writing. Editing should be treated the same as revising, in that specific concepts can be taught in mini-lessons or conferences. One strategy students may use when editing is called COPS (see p. 42). COPS gives the student a four basic conventions to focus on when editing: 1) capital letters, 2) overall appearance, 3) punctuation, and 4) spelling. Often teachers tell students to edit their paper. Giving such a broad direction is too difficult for the young author to accomplish.

The teacher may decide to conduct an editing conference with a student (see p. 49). During an editing conference the teacher focuses on one or two conventions the student is ready to learn based on what the student wrote. Teaching too many conventions may overwhelm the student with feelings of failure or an inability to learn many concepts at one time. If the piece is being published for public reading, the

teacher can do final editing without the author after the editing conference has been held.

There are several management tips that can be helpful to the students when actually editing writing (see p. 57). Teaching the use of editor's marks and displaying a poster of these editing symbols will keep students from 'playing teacher.' Students often get very involved in 'playing teacher' when editing another student's writing, as a result, the editor may make a mess of the paper with exaggerated cross outs and comments. Another management tip that will help the editors involves making reference books available to the students. Reference books might include a variety of dictionaries, writing manuals, and a thesares.

Finally, authors need to be aware there are a number of reasons people write and a variety of ways to publish their writing (see pp. 52,58). It is important that the students have the tools and materials they need for publishing in a place where they can easily get what they need. Some teachers set up publishing centers to house these tools and materials.

Implementing the Writing Process

There are three main phases involved in the implementation of the writing process in the classroom: 1) teach, 2) guide, and 3) monitor (see pp. 44,45). The first

phase, teach, is a long process. The students are taught the writing process and how to use it in their writing. The teacher needs to model use of the writing process often. This can be done through group writing projects, the teacher writing in front of the students, or outside authors writing in front of the students. The students also need many opportunities to use the writing process with the teacher's support.

Once the students have a basic understanding of the writing process, the teacher needs to give the students many opportunities to write, yet the teacher needs to be available to guide the student to use the writing process effectively. This phase of the implementation is refered to as 'guide' (see p. 45). The teacher needs to encourage the students to use the writing process as tools to help them in their writing. It might be helpful at the beginning of this phase to introduce a writing process checklist to the students (see p. 46). The checklist is used as a record sheet of works in progress and the status of each piece of writing. This checklist may help the students focus on the key elements of the writing process when writing.

Finally, the last phase of the implementation is that of 'monitoring' (see p. 45). During this phase, the teacher's job is that of giving help only when needed. Students take on the full job of author and write for meaningful reasons. The students make decisions about using the writing process

based on what they have learned about the writing process.
The teacher should expect the students to act as real
authors.

The Writing Process

Collect Ideas
For Writing

Rough
Draft

Share
Writing

Revise

Publish

Edit
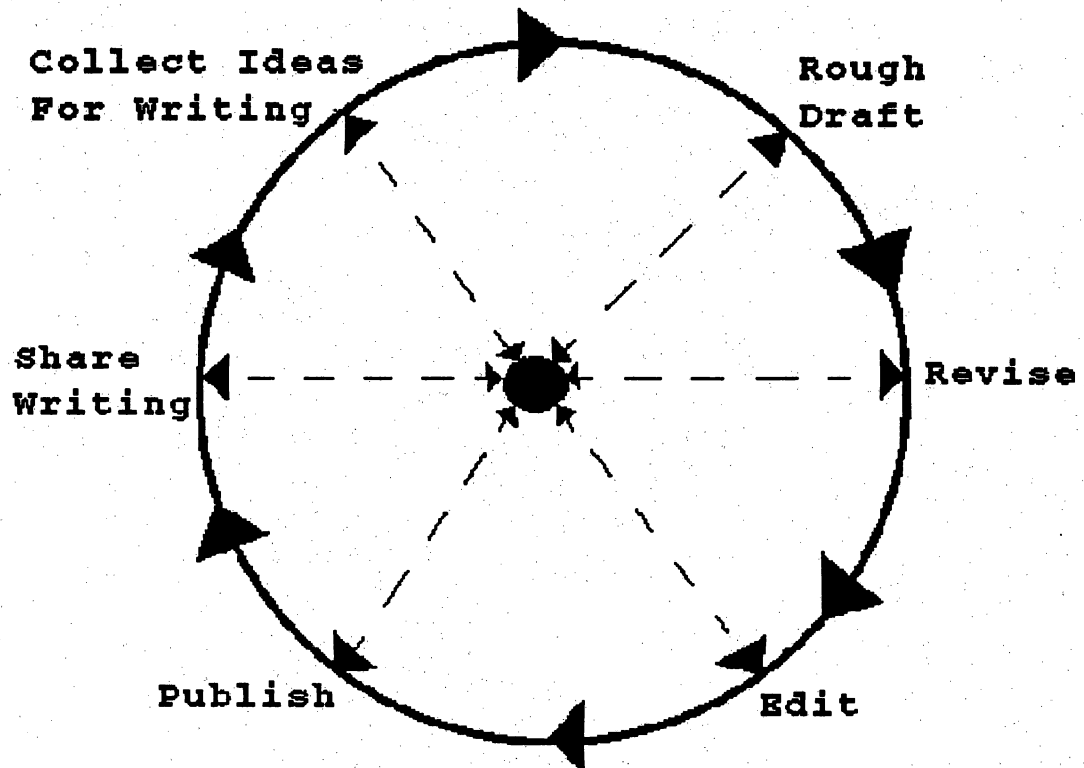
-- The author may stop at any
point in the process if needed

-- The author may repeat any part
of the process as needed

-- The author may move between the
parts of the process as needed
rather than sequentially

The Writing Process

1. Collect Ideas For Writing

2. Rough Draft

3. Revise

4. Edit

5. Publish

6. Share Writing

The Writing Process Outlined

1. **Collect Ideas For Writing**
   - The author looks for topics
     that interests the author for
     possible research and writing
   - The author spends time reading,
     thinking, taking notes, discussing
   - The author may use many resources
     such as: T.V., music, art, pictures
     magazines, newspapers, other people

2. **Rough Draft**
   - The author writes the content of
     the piece being written
   - The idea for the piece should be
     meaningful to the author

3. **Revise**
   - The author makes changes to the content
     of the piece

4. **Edit**
   - Self-edit
     * the author edits the piece as much
       as possible
   - Jr. Editors
     * other students help edit the piece
   - Sr. Editor
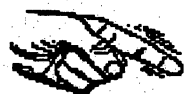   * the teacher or other adult

5. **Publish**
   - The author makes a final draft
   - The author needs to decide the form
     the final draft will take (i.e. picture
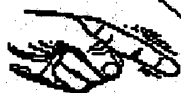   book, poster, letter, newspaper, etc.)

6. **Share Writing**
   - The author needs to share the published
     piece with the intended audience

Implementing
The Writing Process

Teach

Guide

Monitor

Implementing the Writing Process

I. Teach

- Be patient
- Give the students many opportunities to fully understand each part of the writing process
- Model often !!!
- Don't be surprised if it takes 1-2 quarters to fully teach the students

II. Guide

- Take the whole class through the full process
- The teacher needs to write in front of the class and show how other writer's struggle
- Be willing to walk through the process several times with several pieces

III. Monitor

- Step back and let go !!!
- Allow the students to choose their own topics
- Take time to work with the students as individuals
- Don't be frustrated by the noise and confusion at first
- Give support
- Treat the students as authors
- Expect the students to make decisions on their own

Writing in Progress Checklist   Author's Name :

Title of Piece	Rough Draft	Revise	Self Edit	Jr. Editors	Sr. Editor	Publish Date

GETTING IDEAS FOR WRITING

Think of things you might like to write about :

> Things that happened to you
> Things you think about
> Things you read about
> Things you learn about . . .

Chapter Books

Information Books

Picture Books

Places to get ideas :

Magazines

Your own Head !!!
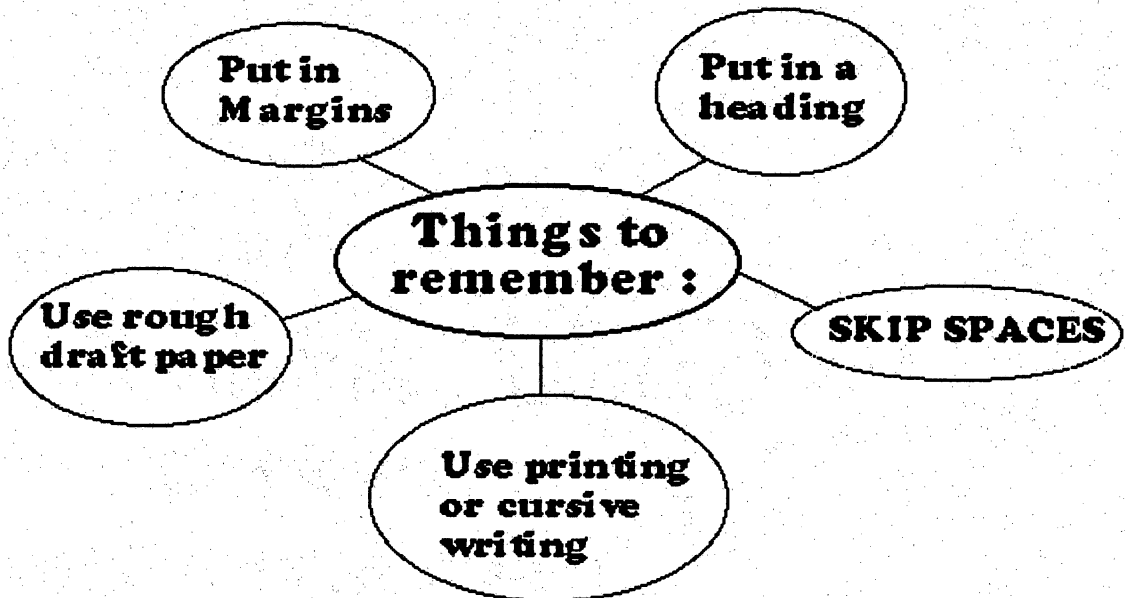
Movies and T.V.

Pictures
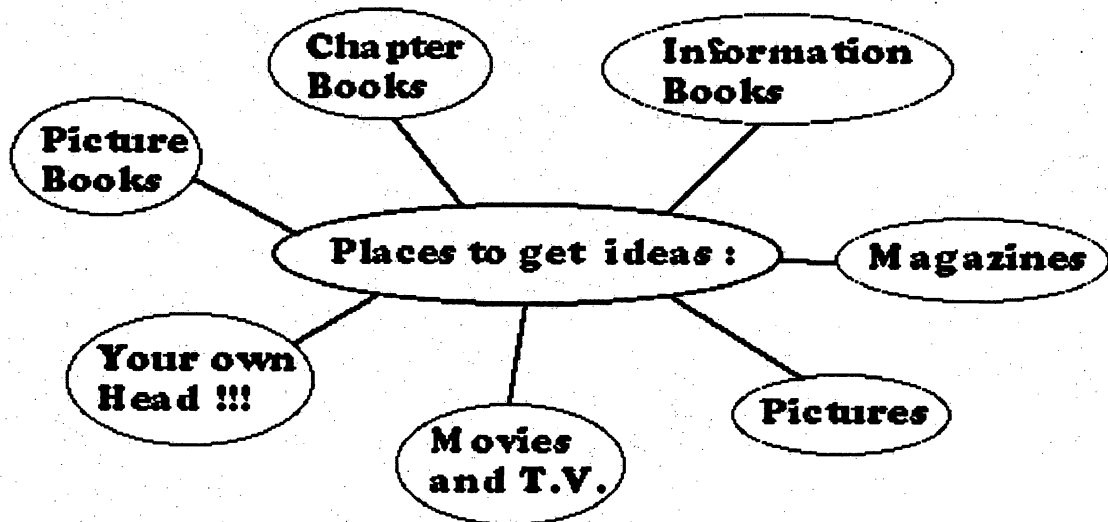
Keep a list of your writing ideas !!!

Rough Draft

Write your piece

Get all your thoughts down
Don't spend too much time on
spelling and punctuation

Put in
Margins

Put in a
heading

Things to
remember :

SKIP SPACES

Use rough
draft paper

Use printing
or cursive
writing

Keep all of your writing in your author's folder

Revise

Make changes to the content
of your piece to improve the
way it sounds.

What will you keep the same ?
What will you add ?
What will you change ?

Easy ways to change or add

To put in a few words just use the ∧ sign and write the words in above.
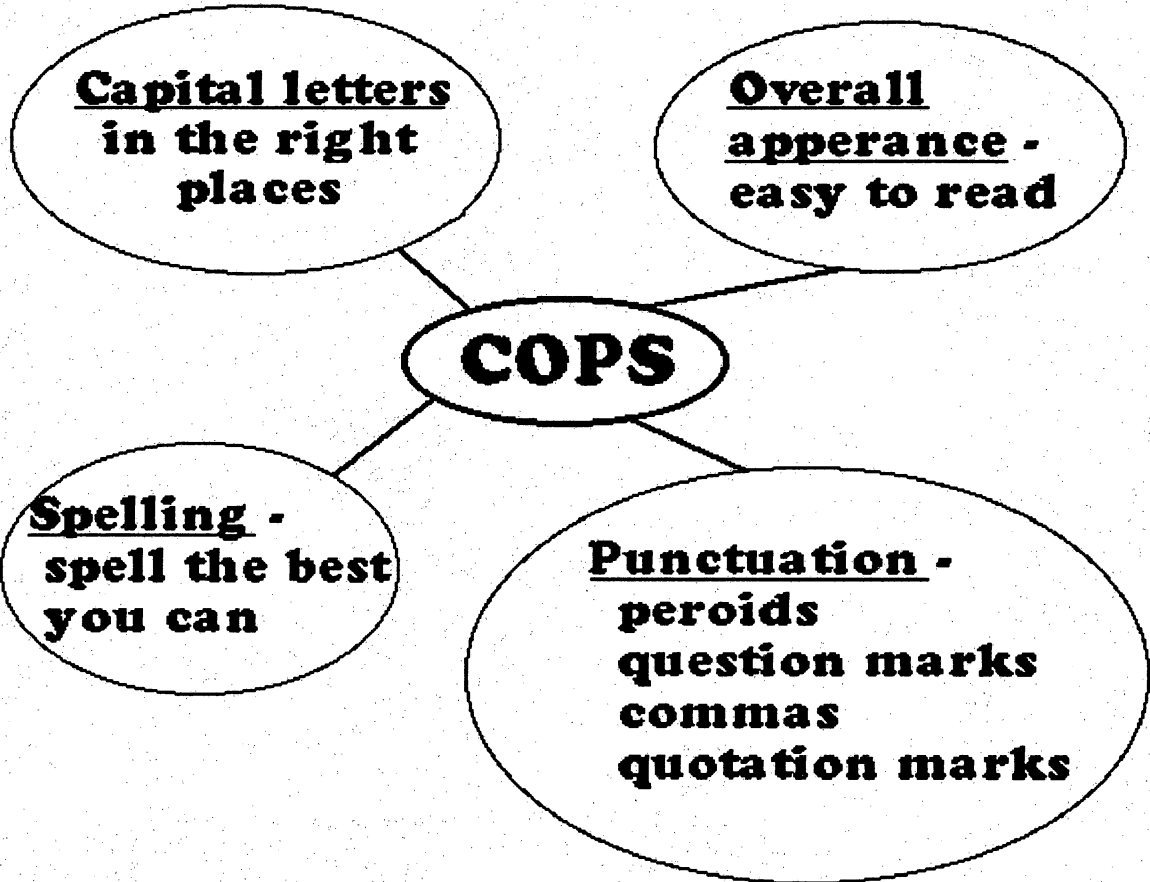
To take out or change a few words just use your eraser.

To put in a few sentences just put a * at the place where you want to add, then write the sentences someplace else.

To take out or change a lot of sentences just cut your piece apart and put it together the way you need it.

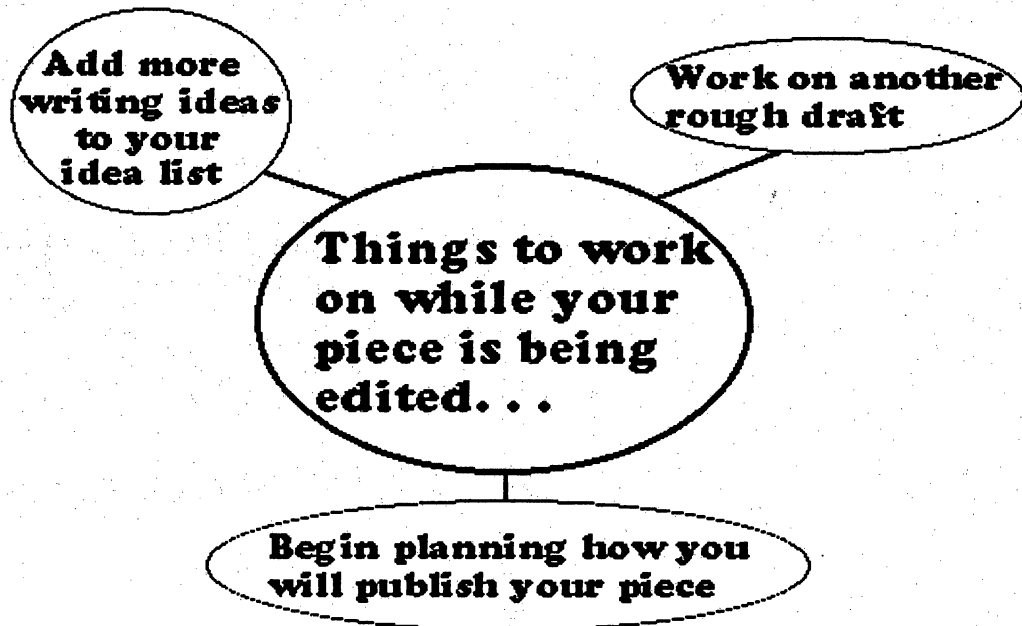# Self Edit

Edit your paper using the COPS method.

COPS

Capital letters in the right places

Overall apperance - easy to read

COPS

Spelling - spell the best you can

Punctuation - peroids question marks commas quotation marks

Jr. & Sr. Editors

Turn your piece in to be edited by the
Jr. and Sr. editors.

While your piece is being edited,
work on something else for your
author's folder.

Add more
writing ideas
to your
idea list

Work on another
rough draft

Things to work
on while your
piece is being
edited...
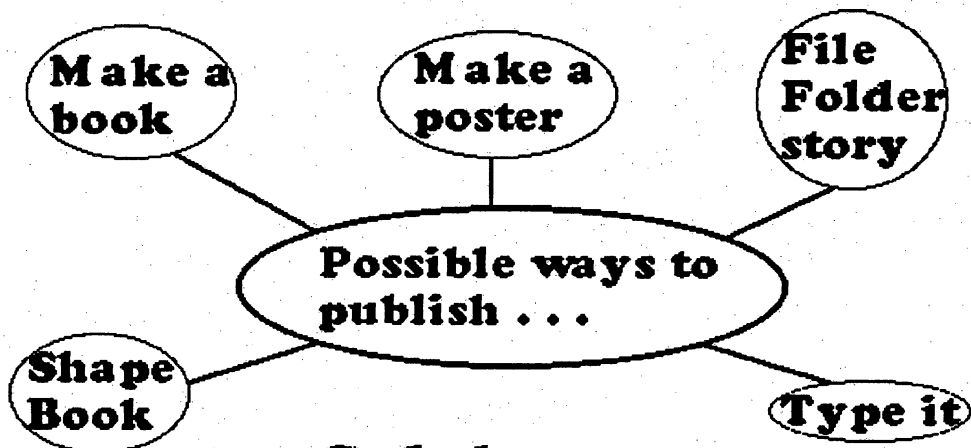
Begin planning how you
will publish your piece

Be available in case the editor's need to ask
you a question about your piece.

Publish

This is your final draft to
share with other people.

Decide how you
will publish your
piece.

Make a
book

Make a
poster

File
Folder
story

Possible ways to
publish . . .

Shape
Book

Type it

Celebrate
your final
draft ...

Share it with others!

Mini-Lessons

- Teach mini-lesson to students who are ready for them
- The teacher keeps an eye open for teaching moments
- Keep the mini-lessons short (3-7 minutes)

A Partial List of Possible Mini-lessons :

- Leads
- organization
- editing
- character development
- revising
- endings
- choosing a topic
- dialogue
- proofing
- issues of plausibility
- use of verbs
- use of adverbs
- use of nouns
- sentence combining
- planning fiction
- use of capitals
- letter writing
- storytelling
- poetry
- argument

Taken from :

Building A Literate Classroom
Donald H. Graves, 1991

Developing Content

First lines – The first line of any piece are the window to the rest of the piece.

Leads – Leads refer to the opening paragraph of a piece. They set the stage and mood for the rest of the piece.

Introduction to Characters – All aspects of a character need to be considered when the author first introduces the reader to a new character.

Plot – The piece needs to have storiness with a beginning, a middle, and an end. Timing is important to keep reader's interest.

Setting – The setting can influence many aspects of a piece. The setting helps the reader 'move into' the piece of writing.

Endings – Authors search very hard for just the right way to end a piece of writing to make sure the reader was left with the author's intended impression.

Character development – Characters in the piece should show some sort of change. Without change the piece is stagnant.

Conflict Resolution – Many student writing have an interesting build to the conflict, yet without any warning or reason the story ends with 'they lived happily ever after' or 'THE END.' Writer's need to show the conflict being resolved to satisfy the reader's curiosity.

Taken from :

Experiment With Fiction
Donald H. Graves, 1989

46

Invitations To Write

Wordless Picture Books :

1) 'Read' the book to yourself
2) 'Read' the book to a friend
3) Put a post-it note paper on each
   page of the story
4) Write the story onto the post-it
   note paper
5) Place the finished post-it notes
   into a blank book
6) Illustrate your story
7) Transcribe you story into the
   blank book

Picture Setting :

1) Find a picture a place that has no
   people or animals in it that makes
   you think of a story
2) Draw the characters you want in
   you story on seperate paper
3) Cut out the characters and tape them
   onto your picture setting
4) Tell your story to a friend
5) Now write your story

Taken from :

Revising

- remember revising is not the same as editing
- revising looks at the content and organizatio
- the students will need lots of practice before they are comfortable or willing to revise

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Author's Circle :

When an author needs to hear what other authors think about their piece of writing, an author circle is formed by the author who needs some feedback.

1) The author asks two other authors to come listen to what has been written thus far
2) The author may state what he or she wants the other authors to listen for in the piece of writing
3) The author then reads the piece two times orally for the other authors to listen to
4) After the oral reading, the listening authors respond verbally to the piece of writing

    Responses may include :
- telling what they thought of the piece based on what the writer asked the them to listen for
- tell three things that were interesting and one thing they are confused about or want to hear more about in the piece

5) The writer does not actually revise while at the author's circle, although he or she may decide to jot down a few notes for future reference
6) After the author's circle is completed, the writer takes what was shared in the circle into consideration for possible revisions (REMEMBER - the writer has the final say about their own writing !!!)

Taken from :
Creating Classrooms For Authors
Harste, Burke, & Short, 1988

Editing

- be patient ... the ability to edit
  is developmental
- look for teaching moments ... when
  a student begins to use a specific
  writing convention, that is the time
  to teach (if the student needs guidance)
- set up mini-lessons for a small group
  of jr. editors, then put these students
  to work using what they have learned
- display a chart of common editing marks
- have reference books available for
  student use (model using these books
  by using them in your own writing so the
  students will see you use them)

Editing Conferences With the Teacher :

• After a student has edited his or her own paper, the
  student places the piece in the teachers editing box.

• When the teacher gets a paper to be edited, the teacher
  calls the student over for an editing conference.

• • • What happens in an editing conference :

1) The teacher first looks for things the student did
   correctly and points these things out to the student
2) Next the teacher looks for patterns in what the student
   needs to work on
3) The teacher teaches one to two concepts so as not to
   overwhelm the student
4) After the student has had time to re-edit using what
   they have just learned in the conference, the teacher
   can finish the rest of the editing away from the student

Taken from :
The Art of Teaching Writing
Lucy McCormick Calkins, 1986

49

Publishing

- Make publishing materials
  available to the students
- Set up management guidelines
- Look for audiences for the
  students to write for

Partial List of Possible Publishing Forms :

- books
- stories
- reviews (book, movies
    resturants, products)
- author page (for books)
- directions
- notices
- newspaper articles
- reports
- interviews
- "How To" manuals
- Surveys
- questionnairel
- essays
- asdvertisements
- memos
- poems
- diaries
- scripts/plays
- comic strips
- rules
- proposals
- invitations
- journals
- crossword puzzles

- dedications
- brochures
- newsletters
- anthologies
- yearbooks
- book blurbs
- thank you notes
- greeting cards
- summaries
- recipes
- lists (for shopping, gifts,
          parties, trips, things to do)
- calendars
- messages
- bulletins
- posters
- signs
- charts
- letters
- postcards
- conversations
- want ads
- announcements
- song lyrics
- magazine articles

(Taken from : Invitations , Regie Routman, 1991)

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