Comprehensive Approach to Literacy Instruction

CALI

Writing Instruction Section

Jefferson County Public Schools
Philosophical Foundations

Writing well is not just an option for young people—it is a necessity. Along with reading comprehension, writing skill is a predictor of academic success and a basic requirement by colleges or employers.

- Writing Next
Preface and Rationale for the Writing CALI

The Jeffco Writing Section of the CALI (Comprehensive Approach to Literacy Instruction) serves to provide a synthesis of the pedagogy around writing, inspire conversations, and bring joy to the writing classrooms.

The Writing CALI is about HOW to teach the writer.

Student achievement in writing rests every day with teachers making professional decisions based on research. These professional decisions are also based on what the individual student needs to reach the curricular targets established by CDE and delineated in Jeffco’s CAP documents for Writing.

At schools in Jeffco and across the country, a coherent approach to writing is viewed as essential but elusive. Educators are engaged in conversations about how to significantly impact student achievement in writing, not only as viewed through the lens of standardized tests, but more importantly, when looking at the actual writing produced by students. A starting point might be to embrace the belief that, while writing is a complicated skill, teachers can help students become flexible, confident writers—writers who address each writing opportunity with an array of writing tools, an understanding of their options, and the ability to impact an audience.
Preface and Rationale for the Writing CALI

The Guiding Principles and Classroom Implications for K-12 Writing Instruction represents the best research about writing instruction from the most credible sources. It capitalizes on the progress made in the past thirty years, as teachers and researchers began to question writing pedagogy. In the 1970’s and 1980’s pioneers like Donald Murray, Donald Graves, Lucy Calkins, and Nancie Atwell began a substantive national conversation about how writing is taught and learned. National, state, and district standards in the 1990’s brought a laser-like focus to what students need to know, understand, and demonstrate in regard to writing. An emphasis on writing for varied purposes, subjects, and audiences, in addition to the Six +1 Traits of Writing, caused more purposeful and focused instruction and assessment. In 2000, Scope and Sequence documents for Jeffco’s writing standards further defined what should be taught and when. More clarity for Jeffco teachers and principals came in 2007 with the implementation of the Curriculum Alignment Project (CAP).

Research published in the 2007 Writing Next report identifies instructional elements that have shown clear results for improving students’ writing. New Colorado K-12 Academic Standards, adopted in 2010, continue to inspire dialogue around writing instruction and present the focus for instruction. Jeffco’s curriculum mirrors those standards.

Writing Next Research: The highlights of the research compiled in the 2007 Writing Next report follows on the next page. The report is firm in its findings that none of these factors operate in isolation, but rather in a cohesive fashion. The Writing CALI reflects this research.

Jeffco’s Guiding Principles and Classroom Implications for K-12 Writing Instruction: Can be used as a catalyst for school-wide or grade-level conversations. It cracks open the research in Writing Next to show how this research plays out instructionally, what students should be doing, and what the environment is like to promote writing achievement.
Writing Next: Effective Strategies to Improve Writing of Adolescents in Middle and High Schools (2007) recommends Eleven Elements of Effective Adolescent Writing Instruction:

1. **Writing Strategies**, which involves teaching students strategies for planning, revising, and editing their compositions
2. **Summarization**, which involves explicitly and systematically teaching students how to summarize texts
3. **Collaborative Writing**, which uses instructional arrangements in which adolescents work together to plan, draft, revise, and edit their compositions
4. **Specific Product Goals**, which assigns students specific, reachable goals for the writing they are to complete
5. **Word Processing**, which uses computers and word processors as instructional supports for writing assignments
6. **Sentence Combining**, which involves teaching students to construct more complex, sophisticated sentences
7. **Prewriting**, which engages students in activities designed to help them generate or organize ideas for their composition
8. **Inquiry Activities**, which engages students in analyzing immediate, concrete data to help them develop ideas and content for a particular writing task
9. **Process Writing Approach**, which interweaves a number of writing instructional activities in a workshop environment that stresses extended writing opportunities, writing for authentic audiences, personalized instruction, and cycles of writing
10. **Study of Models**, which provides students with opportunities to read, analyze, and emulate models of good writing
11. **Writing for Content Learning**, which uses writing as a tool for learning content material

These eleven elements work in concert and are not meant to be focused on individually. The blending of these elements will generate the biggest return.

As you read the *Writing CALI*, take note of how these research-based strategies are represented throughout the document.
### Jeffco Guiding Principles and Classroom Implications for Writing Instruction, K-12

#### At-a-Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Writing is a complex skill that can be taught; teachers can help students become better writers.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. Writing is a tool for thinking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Writing, reading, speaking, listening, and viewing are interdependent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Writing occurs within the context of a community of learners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Motivation, engagement, and stamina are essential to writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Writing is a personalized and recursive process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Writers engage in purposeful study of the kinds of texts they will write.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Writers consider context: purpose, subject, and audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Writing develops through meaningful practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Conventions of finished and edited texts are important to readers and, therefore, to writers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. Writing instruction and student learning must be informed by:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>° on-going assessment of student work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>° feedback for use in revision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>° evaluation to chart progress over time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Click here](#) for the full document—*Jeffco Guiding Principles and Classroom Implications for Writing Instruction K-12.*
How to Use This Document

The Writing CALI is a synthesis of the research and ideas from writing experts across the country. The Writing CALI further refines how teaching and learning about writing looks and sounds in a classroom. As a springboard for dialogue among principals, teachers, instructional coaches and families, the document requires conversations to make it come alive.

It is recommended that readers exploring this document consider it in chunks, identify a purpose for reading and read for relevant information. None of the components of the Writing CALI operate in isolation. The whole is greater than the sum of the parts. All parts of the writing workshop must be used in concert to teach the student writer.

Consider to what degree are the following occurring...

- vertical and horizontal conversations around writing and writers?
- implementation of structures of writing workshop?
- writing taught through demonstration-modeled, shared/interactive lessons?
- adjustment of instruction based on formative data captured in conferences?
- support for teacher reflection on instructional practice?

Writing Workshop = The Jeffco Writing Literacy Block

First and foremost Writing Workshop must be in place.

- Routines and Expectations
- Structures and Components
- Conferring

Implement the research from Writing Next.

The elements identified in the meta-analysis in Writing Next should not be seen as isolated, but rather as interlinked.

- For instance, it is difficult to implement the process writing approach (element 9) without having peers work together (element 3) or use prewriting supports (element 7).
- The Jeffco Guiding Principles and Classroom Implications for Writing Instruction, K-12 further delineates this research by identifying how the research is operationalized in the classroom—what the teacher does, what the student does, and the classroom environments.

Enjoy the journey!
Writing Workshop

Structures for Teaching Writing

Jeffco Writing Block = Writing Workshop

The structures of the Jeffco Writing Block are designed to scaffold student writers to independence and proficiency using differentiation and the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model. The writing block is the place for direct, explicit instruction in the content of writing.

Note that the writing block is 60 minutes in grades 1-6 in order to accommodate a complete daily Writing Workshop that includes 40 minutes for students to actively write.
What is writing workshop?

Writing workshop is an organizational structure that allows students to operate at different stages of the writing process at any given time. The teacher's job is to assess, confer, and provide explicit instruction to support and extend the reach of his or her student writers.

The whole idea behind writing workshop in classrooms grew out of the understandings that people who teach developed [as teachers of writing] when they looked at what people who write do. And the best writing workshops I know never stray far from the mission: to match the work in the classroom to the work of writers in the outside (of school) world.

- Katie Wood Ray

As teachers use writing workshop, they consider:

- What supports do students need or what opportunities exist to challenge proficient writers?
- What KUD’s from CAP need to be re-taught or re-examined?
- How can I...
  - check for understanding along the way,
  - adjust instruction,
  - consider the ‘just right’ amount of scaffolding without taking the learning opportunity away from students?
- How can the mini-lessons be directly tied to student-need to scaffold each learner to the learning targets established in Jeffco’s curriculum?
- What small groups can be formed?
- What do I need to know to teach the students how to be effective writers?

Writing workshop builds students' fluency in writing through continuous, repeated exposure to the process of writing.
The Gradual Release of Responsibility for Student Writers

“The gradual release of responsibility model of instruction suggests that the cognitive load should shift slowly and purposefully from teacher-as-model, to joint responsibility, to independent practice and application by the learner.” (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983)

- Fisher and Frey, 2008

Recursive Steps of Explicit Strategic Instruction

- The teacher explains what makes up a strategy.
- The teacher explains why this strategy is important.
- The teacher explains when to use the strategy in actual writing.
- The teacher models how to perform the strategy in an actual context and the students observe.
- The teacher sets up guided practice and supports students during class as they try a strategy. Continue guided practice until students can explain the strategy and its usefulness and can use it with a variety of contexts.
- Students independently use the strategy in different contexts.

A Structure for Instruction that Works

(c) Frey & Fisher, 2008
### Structures for Teaching Writers

**Comprehensive Writing Framework**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Grouping</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Modeled/Demonstration</td>
<td>Whole class, small group, or individual</td>
<td>Mentor text of any genre, mode or type to illustrate instructional focus.</td>
<td>Makes the teacher’s thinking and writing visible to the student through thinking aloud, modeling, and demonstration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Focus Lesson)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I do.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shared/Interactive</td>
<td>Whole class or small group</td>
<td>Text constructed as a collaborative group with a specific instructional focus.</td>
<td>To guide and explicitly instruct students in structure, style, and conventions through scaffolded collegial writing. Invites student participation in a safe and collaborative environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Focus Lesson)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I do” and “We do.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided</td>
<td>Small groups with similar needs</td>
<td>Student text</td>
<td>Bridges shared and independent writing, scaffolding to support student towards independence. Focus on one/two teaching points based on needs as evidenced in student writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Guided Instruction)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You do” and “We do.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Individual work and Collaborative groups</td>
<td>Student text</td>
<td>Practice and application of writing skills and strategies while developing stamina. The goal: scaffolding and teaching to independence. This structure provides independent practice of writing skills and strategies that have been previously taught.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You do.”</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You do it together.”</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Specific information to teach writers in each of the above structures is found in the CALI section – *Structures for Teaching Writers*
Jeffco’s Literacy Block Components for Writing Workshop

No matter what writing resources or supports are used in Jeffco classrooms (such as commercial programs, professional writing resources for teachers), the structures and times delineated in the Jeffco Literacy Block are to be followed. There will be variants of these minutes in professional books and programs so use of the times set in the Jeffco Literacy Block is critical. The Literacy Block structures and times are critical since it provides symmetry across Jeffco and fits within Jeffco’s Instructional Day for grades 1-6 classrooms for all contents.

Kindergarten teachers: Refer to the Jeffco Literacy Blocks for Kindergarten since the length of a Kindergarten Day varies.

The WRITING BLOCK within the Jeffco Literacy Block
(60 minutes)

MINI-LESSONS 10-15 minutes total
Model/Demonstration “I do.”
- Thinks aloud while writing
- Models to write text
- Teacher writes

And/or

Shared/Interactive “I do. We do.”
- Teacher and students contribute
- Scaffolded conversations
- Students ‘share the pen’ when writing together (interactive)

WRITING TIME/CONFERRING 40 minutes
Using the Writing Processes: Prewriting/rehearsal, draft/compose, revise, edit, publish

Guided “You do. We do.”
- Teacher confers with and explicitly instructs individuals or small groups of students

Independent “You do.” “You do it together.”
- Daily time for all students to write for a variety of purposes and audiences in a variety of forms and modes
- This is work time independent of the teacher—either individually or collaboratively

CLOSURE or SHARE TIME 5-10 minutes
## Writing Workshop at a Glance

*Writing Workshop at a Glance* provides a snapshot of the big ideas of the structures of Writing Workshop. The documents on the following pages are intended to be used as a catalyst for conversation around instructional practices, for self-reflection and self-evaluation, and peer feedback.

### Suggested uses include:

- **To prompt conversations around writing instruction**—vertically and horizontally between teachers, instructional coaches, and the principal.
- **To focus lesson studies.**
- **To analyze the individual components of the structures within writing workshop as they play out in the classroom setting and the impact on student learning.**

### Questions to consider...

- **To what degree do my classroom practices match the descriptors in the left hand column of the Writing Workshop at a Glance?**
- **What are one-two descriptors that I need to know more about?**
- **What are one-two descriptors that I need to work on?**
- **How might I use the following to hone my craftsmanship to teach student writers?**
  - *The Writing CALI*
  - *Professional resources listed in the CALI*
  - *Peer observations*
## Writing Workshop at a Glance

### Mini-Lesson: Modeled/Demonstration

*Total time for the Mini-lesson is 10-15 minutes using either Model/Demonstration or Shared/Interactive.

**Time Frame:** 10-15 minutes*

**Format:** Whole Group/ Small Groups/ Individual

**Purpose:** Teacher models/demonstrates what writers do and makes their thinking visible. Students see a strong writing sample generated by the teacher. The mini-lesson is a link to the students’ own writing for improvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mini-Lesson: Modeled/Demonstration</th>
<th>Observation Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-15 minutes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**The teacher:**

- begins with a 10-15 minute writing lesson that focuses on one teaching point.
- includes demonstration or explicit modeling with example(s).
- shares his/her own writing and writing process with students.
- makes thinking transparent as he/she write.
- labels their cognitive and metacognitive processes (e.g., *Since I know persuasive writing uses emotional words to persuade the reader, I am going to check my writing for these. –or- I am going to narrow my focus. So as I reread I will mark out extra details that do not move the action in my piece.*)
- explicitly teaches a transferable strategy or skill students can use to make their writing stronger or more effective.
- links mini-lesson and writing time.
- uses mentor text/writing samples to provide scaffolding for writers.
- analyzes student writing to generate teaching points for future mini-lessons.

**The student:**

- Engage actively.
  - Teacher preplans for turn & talks or partner sharing opportunities.
  - At the end of mini-lesson students turn and talk about what they saw or what they plan to do next.

Kindergarten teachers, please refer to the Kindergarten *Jeffco Literacy Block* for adjustments to time frames for Kindergarten.
**Mini-Lesson: Shared/Interactive Writing**

*Total time for the Mini-lesson is 10-15 minutes using either Model/Demonstration or Shared/Interactive.*

**Time Frame:** 10-15 minutes*

**Format:** Whole Group/ Small Groups/ Individual

**Purpose:** Teacher uses shared or interactive writing as a scaffold in the writing process. Shared writing embodies the focus lesson with the teacher doing the writing and most of the thinking. Interactive writing is shared writing with the addition that students also serve as scribes and thinkers. As in **modeled/demonstrated writing**, students see a strong writing sample generated by the teacher with the addition of student collaboration in **shared/interactive writing**. The mini-lesson is a link to the students’ own writing for improvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mini-Lesson: Shared/Interactive Writing</th>
<th>Observation Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-15 minutes</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The teacher:**
- begins with a 10-15 minute writing lesson that focuses on clear lesson point(s).
- shares her/his own writing and writing process with students.
- makes thinking transparent as they write.
- labels their cognitive and metacognitive processes (*e.g. As I am writing today, I remind myself of who my audience is. or Today as I writer I needed to remind myself to consider our critical attributes chart and find evidence of these in my writing.*)
- explicitly teaches a transferable strategy or skill students can use to make their writing stronger or more effective.
- links mini-lesson and writing time.
- displays their writing as a mentor text.
- analyzes student writing to generate teaching points for future mini-lessons.

**The students:**
- engage actively.
  - At the end of mini-lesson, students turn and talk about what they saw/learned or what they plan to do next.
- incorporate the strategies modeled in shared/interactive.

**The teacher and the students:**
- teacher preplans for turn & talks, partner sharing opportunities, times for the students to scribe and compose (interactive writing).
- interactive writing: teacher shares the pen and writing with the students.
## Writing Workshop at a Glance

### Writing Time/Conferring

**Time Frame:** 40 minutes

**Format:** Students transition from mini-lesson to independent writing. Students write individually or collaboratively. At times, students confer with partners. The teacher circulates to confer and collect formative data with individual students. At times, the teacher instructs small groups. Students use anchor charts and rubrics to self-evaluate.

**Purpose:** Writing time is a sustained time to write to build stamina and writing skills and strategies. Students practice skills, strategies, and writing crafts to develop their writing skills. The teacher collects formative data and provides feedback to students.

**NOTE:** Students who are not conferring with teacher or peers are writing independently.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The teacher:</th>
<th>Observation Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- confers with individuals. Conferences include:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- feedback,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- specific reinforcement,</td>
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<tr>
<td>- teaching point(s), and</td>
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<tr>
<td>- establishes next steps and a goal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- meets with small groups of writers with similar instructional needs when necessary (Guided Writing).</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- stops writing for a mid-workshop mini-lesson/teaching point.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- is <strong>2-5 minutes long</strong>.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>- is based on the teaching point of the mini-lesson and/or data the teacher is collecting from observation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- uses rubrics for formative and summative assessments and to help children self-assess.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- collects formative assessment data to support writers and plan future mini-lessons based on students’ needs.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The students:**

- work on their own writing for about 40 minutes.
- cycle through the writing process regularly: brainstorm/rehearsal, draft, revise, edit, and publish their writing.
- are able to select their own topics within a unit of study.
- gather entries and collect story ideas in their writer’s notebooks.
- use anchor charts and rubrics to self-evaluate and set specific writing goals.
**Writing Workshop at a Glance**

### Closure or Share Time

**Time Frame:** 5-10 minutes  
**Format:** Whole group

**Purpose:** Provides the opportunity to reinforce the teaching point as applied by a student writer. Provides time to celebrate accomplishments and gives the child time to reflect. Solidifies the learning and allows the teacher insights on misconceptions and next lessons.

#### The teacher and the students:
- end writing workshop with 5-10 minute closure or share time.
  - Students may share with partners, in small groups, or with the whole group.
  - Connections to the teaching point are made and children have an opportunity to show each other what they’ve accomplished.
  - Possibilities for Closure or Share Time
    - Students receive feedback and input from peers in order to hear what they are doing well or need to revise.
    - Students use language from anchor charts and rubrics to give feedback.
    - The opportunity is evident for students to self-evaluate and reflect on their personal goals.
    - The teacher may highlight two or three children’s work that illustrate and extend the mini-lessons.

- At times, closure is used to reflect on the writing process and their writing community.
  - *What did we do today that helped me as a writer?*
  - *How did we adhere to our classroom writing norms today?*
  - *What would improve our writing workshop?*

- The teacher refers back to the posted Essential Questions for the Unit of Study, e.g., *What makes a feature article a feature article?*
More details...

Specifics about Writing Workshop

The following pages delve more deeply into the major components of the writing time (Writing Workshop) in the Jeffco Literacy Block, providing details and “how to’s” about the following topics:

✓ Structures in the Writing Workshop

Organizational Structures for Instruction
- Mini-lessons
  - Demonstration/Modeled Writing
  - Shared/Interactive Writing
- Guided Writing
- Independent Writing
- Collaborative Learning in the Literacy Block

✓ Instruction
- Additional Supports for Writing Instruction Document
- Genre, Six-Traits, and Craft Studies Working Together
- Early Writers
- Learning to Write and Writing to Learn

✓ Details for a Successful Writing Workshop
- Launching the Writing Workshop
- Writer’s Notebook
- Immersion and the Use of Mentor Text
More details...

Specifics about Writing Workshop

✓ Structures in the Writing Workshop

Organizational Structures for Instruction

- Mini-lessons
  - Demonstration/Modeled Writing
  - Shared/Interactive Writing
- Guided Writing
- Independent Writing
- Collaborative Learning in the Literacy Block
Mini-Lessons

Mini-lessons power our curriculum. Once we learn how to lead strong, efficient mini-lessons, we find we have a power chip that never quits. It generates strong teaching each day, each year. When teachers study the craft of effective mini-lessons, this work can change our teaching not only in the writing workshop but also in every discipline, and it can improve not only our whole-class, but also our small-group instruction.

- Adapted from Lucy Calkins, The Nuts and Bolts of Teaching Writing

According to Bonnie Campbell Hill and Carrie Ekey (2010), most mini-lessons for writing fall into one of these categories:
- Traits, craft, or qualities of good writing
- Procedures (such as using a writer’s notebook, and routines within writing workshop)
- Specific genres and text features
- The writing process (finding topics, revision, publishing)
- Writing Strategies (such as rereading and elaborating)
- Using literature as invitations or examples
- Conventions and mechanics
- Providing feedback (such as during peer conferences, and author’s chair sessions)

Consider keeping a writer’s demonstration notebook filled with pre-created mini-lessons tied to the ‘Knows and Dos’ from Jeffco’s Curriculum. In the sample below, the teacher could use sticky notes to add other examples with students and be able to reuse this mini-lesson as often as student data warrants.

"Writers reach not for the ornate or the impressive word, but for the true word, the precise word." ~ Lucy Calkins

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st try</th>
<th>more precise try</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I watched my mom as she combed her hair.</td>
<td>I studied my mom as she lifted the blue plastic pick to her curls. Flff. \ Flff, Flff.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mini-Lessons

How might teachers grow in the art and craft of teaching writers?

There are a variety of steps that teachers may consider as they learn and grow as teachers of writers. Here are a few to consider:

- Take classes and attend workshops to hone the craft of teaching.
- Book studies—many titles are suggested in the Writing CALI.
- Lesson study—many teachers invite peers, instructional coaches, and principals to observe a single mini-lesson or a series of mini-lessons. They confer about what the observer(s) notice, the teacher reflects, and adjusts teaching while continuing to perfect their craft.
- Some teachers elect to video tape a variety of their own mini-lessons. Teachers save, review, and learn from the recorded lessons over time. Teachers often evaluate their impact on student learning and adjust as appropriate.

Components of a mini-lesson

“Mini-lessons power our curriculum.”

- Lucy Calkins

Lucy Calkins defines the components of effective mini-lesson:

- **Connect** the learning.
- **State** the learning target.
- **Teach and model** how, when, and why.
- **Link** so students will transfer the skills/strategies to their own writing.

Teachers spend the bulk of the time in the 10-15 minute mini-lesson in the TEACH component. The CONNECT, STATE, and LINK components are brief. All components are important for student learning.
Mini-Lessons

Components of a mini-lesson...

⇒ Connect
  - Repeat the teaching point from yesterday: (“Yesterday, we learned…”)
  - Consolidate earlier learning: (“So far in this study you have learned…”)
  - Refer to earlier unit: (“When we studied…”)
  - Share student writing excerpts from yesterday to illuminate: (“Let’s learn from what you wrote…”)

⇒ State
  - State the goal clearly (“Today, we are going to focus on how we can add details that will engage the reader…”)
  - Try to generalize the teaching point for all writers, and in many writing contexts. Think of transferability. (“Today you will be making many individual choices as you write your stories, yet I want to focus on something that ALL writers do when they write stories…”)

⇒ Teach (Model/Demonstration and/or Shared/Interactive)

  Model/Demonstration: You write in front of students, making your thinking transparent as you write.

  Or

  Shared/Interactive: Writing is a shared experience with students.

In both formats...
  - Tell, then show: Tell students what they are going to learn, and then show them examples of the types of writing they are going to produce. Models can come from published material or from students. The “showing” part of the lesson should involve helping students to understand effective writing processes, so the teacher or a student may demonstrate how to write a particular piece during this type of lesson.
  - Active engagement: Students must be engaged during the mini lesson in order to become better writers. They might talk to a partner and/or share ideas with small or large groups during the mini-lesson. The goal is to get the students thinking about how they can become more effective writers.

⇒ Link
  - Crystallize: (“Today, we focused on how even one specific example can make our essays more meaningful…”)
  - Generalize: (“We learned something that will help you as a writer today and every time you write.”)
  - Transfer to what you have noticed about student writing: (“Today, we focused on creating strong leads because I noticed how this would support your narrative writing.”)

See the Gradual Release Model earlier in this section for more details and ideas to apply to the mini-lesson component of writing workshop.

Also, see the Jeffco Literacy Blocks.
Mini-Lesson: Model/Demonstration
Focused Lessons in the Writing Workshop

During modeled writing, a type of demonstration writing, the teacher actively writes in front of the whole class, small groups, or individuals through conferences. The purpose of modeled writing is to demonstrate how writing and writers work. The teacher is an author and an expert. The teacher models how to write while “thinking aloud” as they compose and interact with their writing in front of the students. The teacher thinks aloud as they are modeling so that students can hear an author’s (the teacher’s) "in the head" processes.

A major tenant of modeled writing is that the teacher does all of the writing. In the gradual release of responsibility, modeled writing is the “I do” part of the model. This is not an interactive time between the teacher and the students. The students observe the writer (the teacher) composing text. Modeled writing should take between 10-15 minutes.

The focus of the modeling can take several different avenues. The teacher can model any part of the writing process from how to select topics, demonstrate how to organize their information, or how writers use mentor texts as a model for writing. A teacher reveals through modeled writing how choices are made to pick an idea, how to select words, or which format to use. Or the teacher may lead the students through their thinking to revise a piece. At another time, the editing process could be the focus. For early writers, the teacher may model print concepts, how writers draw to relay a message, or how writers use phonics to spell in addition to the ideas above.

Why Is Modeled Writing Important?

When we write in front of our students,

- we provide a positive model for our students. We display that we value writing and find it useful.
- we give ourselves a chance to test our own writing assignments. When we write about the topic and find out if the topic or focus is viable.
- we help demystify the act of writing. Students often think that experienced writers find writing easy or have some magic ability to "get it right the first time." If we share our projects or write in front of our students, they can see what a sloppy, difficult act writing is for all writers.
- we learn empathy for our students. Writing can be a struggle, and this fact is easy to forget if we don’t wrestle regularly with it ourselves.
- we become partners in a community of writers, full participants in our classroom writing workshop.

- Adapted from “Becoming Your Own Expert- Teachers as Writers” by Tim Gillespie, National Writing Project
Mini-Lesson: Model/Demonstration
Focused Lessons in the Writing Workshop

What are the components to a Modeled/Demonstration Writing lesson?

In Better Learning through Structured Teaching (Fisher and Frey, pages 31-33) outlines components to a think aloud.

- Keep the focus of the think aloud tight and brief. Don’t get carried away with a long monologue.
- Pay attention to your own thinking processes as you design your think aloud. As adults we are very adept at many skills. Slow down and unpack your own thinking and understanding.
- Find your authentic voice when you think aloud. Use lots of “I” statements.
- Think like the expert you are.
- Name your cognitive and metacognitive processes. “Labeling is critical if students are to build their own metacognitive awareness.” (Fisher and Frey) Note: This also ties to NAMING and NOTICING from Peter Johnston in Choice Words.

Guidelines for Modeled/Demonstration Writing:

| Plan in your head.          | Decide in advance your focus or topic.  
|                            | Write down key ideas that you want to remember.  
| Do not prewrite, but tell your story before you begin writing. | It is important for students to see and hear you think out loud before you compose.  
| Demonstrate your writing process by thinking aloud. | This makes writing visible for your students.  
| Share your thinking and decision making. | This makes your thinking process visible for your students.  
| Reread as you write to check/revise your writing so far and help you decide what to say next. | Explain to students that rereading helps you know what to say next, what might not be clear, and helps you check that your words match your message.  
| Apply conventions. | The main purpose of demonstration writing is to show how to draft a clear, interesting message, and, of course, conventions are an important part of that content.  
|                            | Do not overdo the focus on conventions. Do not comment on every convention.  
|                            | Wait to emphasize conventions until students have quality content.  

- Adapted from Regie Routman, Regie Routman In Residence, Writing for Audience and Purpose
Mini-Lessons – Shared/Interactive Writing
Focused Lessons in the Writing Workshop

Shared writing enables teachers to make the writing process visible to their students. Shared writing has the teacher doing most of the work and the students helping - “I do, you help”. The writing is constructed with a specific instructional focus. Shared writing embodies the focus lesson of the gradual release of responsibility model. Lessons in shared writing are ten to fifteen minutes. (See the Jeffco Literacy Blocks.)

The purpose of shared writing is to guide and explicitly instruct students in structure, style, and conventions through collegial writing. Shared writing models the thought processes involved in writing and allows students to engage in and focus on the process. The teacher and the students work together to develop a piece of writing.

The teacher decides how much scaffolding is needed. Depending on the students’ needs and instructional focus, the teacher may begin with modeled writing (“I do”) and move to shared writing (“We do”) in the same lesson.

In shared writing the teacher is the scribe. This allows students to focus on the thinking involved to write the piece. The writing is written on chart paper or a white board and large enough that everyone in the group to see the writing. Shared writing can be a short piece that is finished at one time, or longer and stretch over several days.

Interactive writing is very similar to shared writing. The only difference is whether or not individual children write some of the letters/words. In shared writing, children participate actively in composing the text, but the teacher is the scribe. Interactive writing is shared writing with the addition that students also serve as scribes; they take turns holding the pen and writing the letters and words of the message. Young students love to write letters and words on large chart paper and the advantage to having them do so is that the writing is more child centered. Interactive writing can be done in large or small groups, or one-on-one with children.
Mini-Lessons– Shared/Interactive Writing
Focused Lessons in the Writing Workshop

When can I use shared writing?
Shared writing models the thinking a writer does before, during, and after they write a piece. There are many times across the school day and in the school year that teachers can employ shared/interactive writing. Teachers can use shared writing as a scaffold when students will be asked to explore a new genre. At other times teachers can model the stages of the writing process, how to write in a particular genre, as well as craft and elaboration strategies.

Regie Routman identified a variety of purposes and audiences with which to use a shared writing structure.

- Writing a class thank you letter, invitation, or request for information instead of having each student write a separate but similar one
- Composing a class newsletter to parents
- Retelling a familiar story and/or creating a new version
- Reviewing a field trip or other class experience (this often becomes a booklet)
- Keeping a class record of important learning experiences
- Creating rubrics
- Making signs and charts that list school rules related to safety and decorum
- Establishing editing expectations
- Model the revision process

- Adapted from Regie Routman, Conversations, pg. 38

For shared/interactive writing to have its greatest impact on student learning there are steps teachers can take after “completing” the pieces.

- Writing is displayed- anchor charts and revisited for shared or independent reading.
- Students are encouraged to use the anchor charts as a mentor text.
- Strategies/skills modeled in shared/interactive writing are reinforced in the student’s writing.
- Teachers reinforce strategies/skills taught in the large group in small group instruction.

Resources to Find Out More about Shared Writing

Guided Writing
Small Group Instruction in the Writing Workshop

Guided writing is an instructional framework used by teachers to support students with their writing.

After watching the teacher model or share writing, the students can work together with peers on the same skill or strategy. A major tenet of guided writing is that the students do the writing. Guided writing provides students with an opportunity to develop, organize, and practice their writing with close support of the teacher.

In the gradual release of responsibility, guided writing is the “We do” part of the model. Guided writing has the teacher working with students as a guide, and then by the student’s side as they take on more independence. Guided writing is guided practice - a time for students to receive scaffolding or support while they write.

The teacher observes, prompts, and monitors the students during the act of writing, ensuring the skills and strategies learned ... are applied to produce accurate, fluent, and expressive writing. The areas you focus on in guided writing are exactly the same as those in independent writing, except that you are working with a small group instead of with individuals.

Is Guided Writing the same as Guided Reading?

Guided writing differs from guided reading. Regie Routman states that “guided writing is not parallel to guided reading”. Lori Oczkus further states, “if we suggested that teachers meet with small guided writing groups as often as they meet with their guided reading groups, they simply wouldn’t do it. It would be wonderful if we could provide such targeted small-group instruction, but it would be a logistical nightmare. There aren’t enough hours in a day to rotate through four or five small writing groups.”

Like Guided Reading | Not Like Guided Reading
--- | ---
Guided Writing can occur in a small group. Ideally, a group consists of 4-6 students. | The teacher meets with small groups of writers when necessary.
- Guided Writing groups do not meet on a regularly scheduled basis.
- It is possible for a group to only meet together once, with groups reforming continuously based on need.

The teacher guides the group, with the students doing most of the work (gradual release model). | Guided Writing groupings are based on ongoing formative assessments.

Guided Writing can be the whole class working on the same concept in table groups.
Guided Writing
Small Group Instruction in the Writing Workshop

Guided writing can occur in various configurations.

Writing experts acquiesce that there is not only one way to use guided writing. Configurations need to be based on the needs of the students. The teacher remembers that all students need the opportunity to practice new skills and strategies with varying levels of teacher support before they are ready to take these skills and strategies on independently.

Some of these configurations include:
- Whole class where pairs of students are all working on previously taught skills/strategies to produce one piece of writing,
- Whole class where students are working in small groups to write one piece of writing that displays their understanding of previously taught skills/strategies,
- Small temporary groups of students who need more practice with previously taught skills/strategies,
- One-on-one during a conference.

Why is guided writing important?

“Guided writing provides small group guidance during drafting to support the entire process more effectively.”

- Margaret Mooney

In writing, many teachers move from modeled writing, to shared or interactive writing, and then release the writing over to their students. Or teachers may model the writing and then ask students to create a similar model. In both cases, guided practice is missing. Students need time to practice the skills with their ‘coach’ - their writing teacher - close by to give pointers, offer advice, or correct them before they develop inaccurate concepts or poor habits.

Other benefits of guided writing include:
- More modeling takes place and more ideas to incorporate into independent writing.
- Graphic organizers and other scaffolding tools help students move into independent writing.
- Students receive immediate teacher feedback.
- Teachers have immediate formative data.
- Students have more conferences with the teacher and their peers.
- Other students may benefit from listening in.

- Adapted from Lori Oczku, Guided Writing
Guided Writing
Small Group Instruction in the Writing Workshop

An example of a guided writing lesson...

At the beginning of the year, the teacher has had the class looking at Slice of Life writing examples to uncover “What makes Slice of Life writing a Slice of Life?” (Essential Question from CAP) The class has spent several days as a whole class and then in pairs uncovering the critical attributes of Slice of Life writing. These noticings have been written on an anchor chart for the entire class to reference. One of the class noticings is that authors start Slice of Life writing with the time/place (setting) in the beginning of the piece.

The teacher has modeled in his writing how to start a Slice of Life writing to include time/place (setting) in the beginning of the piece. The class also wrote several beginnings as a whole class that includes the time/place.

After these lessons, the teacher releases the class to work on their own Slice of Life writing that includes time/place (setting) in the beginning. As the teacher circulates to confer with students, he notices that five of his students are struggling with this concept. He pulls them into a guided writing group.

The group goes over the examples the class wrote and what a writer thinks about to write a beginning with time/place that moves a story along. They orally rehearse with each other how they might start their pieces. Students listen to each other for the time/place elements in their beginnings. After the oral rehearsal, each student writes their ideas while the teacher remains with the group to guide them as needed. To close this lesson, the teacher asks: “What did you learn as a writer?”

Resources to Find Out More about Guided Writing

In fostering independence, teachers must prepare students to...

- understand and internalize the routines of the writing process and the writing workshop.
- problem solve on their own or with a peer so they are capable of sustained writing.
- know and work towards their individual goals.

- Adapted from One to One by Lucy Calkins

Teaching toward independence is our goal and means that we “hold our teaching accountable”. On leaving a conference with a child, that child can and will continue on their own.

The key is not to over-scaffold. When we over-scaffold, we leave a child unable to continue towards independence.

Independent Writing

Independent writing is a sustained time for students to work on their own writing. It is the time students are working independently of the teacher. The Jeffco Literacy Blocks provide 30-40 minutes of independent writing time. Students write in their notebooks, work on drafts, and edit or publish work. Students select a topic within the unit of study. Students work independently while teachers are conferring with individual students or working with small groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Format</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students engage in the writing process, sometimes using a writer’s notebook and at other times, drafting, revising, editing, or publishing a piece of work. Students sometimes use sketching as a way of capturing meaning in visual images.</td>
<td>• understand what writers do and how they make a place for writing in their lives</td>
<td>Individual or collaborative work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Fountas and Pinnell, Guiding Readers and Writers 3-6

As students engage in independent writing of their own pieces, the teacher moves around the room to confer individually or work with small groups of students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Role</th>
<th>Student Role</th>
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</table>
| • One on one, over the shoulder, small group  
• Collect formative assessment data to support writers and plan future mini-lessons  
• Guided writing groups | • Generate new ideas  
• Reread writer’s notebook to select idea  
• Confer with teacher  
• Write, write, write  
• Take risks |

Resources to Find Out More about Independent Writing

Some thoughts to consider...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The gradual release of responsibility model stipulates that the teacher moves from assuming ‘all of the responsibility for performing a task... to a situation in which the students assume all of the responsibility’.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How can I plan for collaborative learning as I plan shared and guided instruction?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Since collaborative learning is not the time to introduce new information, how can I plan for transfer and application of learning in the collaborative setting?</td>
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</table>

Specific skills such as leadership, decision-making, trust building, turn taking, active listening, and conflict management must be taught. Using language as a tool for learning is another component of collaborative learning.

| How can I use the gradual release model to both teach and assess student use of language as a tool in collaborative learning situations? |
| What are ways I can intentionally teach specific skills that support efficient and effective collaborative learning? |

Misconception Alerts:
- Collaborative Learning just happens.
  - Not quite ~ the teacher intentionally plans for collaborative learning. Collaborative learning ties to previously taught skills/strategies.
  - As teachers plan focus lessons and guided practice, they also plan for meaningful collaborative learning.

- It is too difficult to hold individual students accountable.
  - Thinking individual accountability through as you plan is critical ~ and then teach students their roles and responsibilities to the group work and individual work.
  - The key to collaborative learning is the requirement for independent products from group collaboration.
  - This approach differs from many group-learning situations in which one product is produced.
    - That is not the case in collaborative learning as used in the gradual release framework.
    - For these reasons, collaborative learning is not necessarily the same as cooperative learning.

- Every lesson has to have a collaborative learning component.
  - Not so! The teacher plans for collaborative learning as it is appropriate to the learning objectives. Students just don’t ‘do’ collaboration ~ it is intentionally planned ....and intentionally taught.
  - It must serve a purpose.
To be able to reflect on and assess their own learning, to plan next steps, to apply their learning in novel ways—these are the ultimate goals we hold for our students, which thoughtfully designed group work can move students towards.

- From Productive Group Work, p. 112

**Collaborative Learning Connected to the Literacy Block**

Possibilities for intentional collaborative learning in the Literacy time:

- **Students work in collaborative learning groups:** During the time the teacher is meeting with guided groups, such as when the teacher is with:
  - guided reading groups,
  - conferring in writing, and
  - guided groups in word study.
  - The teacher is not available to the collaborative learning groups because the teacher-focus is on the guided groups.

  *Note: In literacy instruction, the teacher spends the most time in guided groups.*

- **Brief diagnostic observations prior to teacher joining a guided group:** Periodically, the teacher may take a few minutes after planned, meaningful collaborative learning begins and prior to the teacher joining a guided group to listen into the collaborative learning to gather formative assessment data.

- **“Catch and Release”:** During pre-planned BRIEF stops in modeled and shared instruction, where the teacher releases the learning to partners/triads to ‘turn and talk’ about the learning in the lesson.

  - Teacher listens in to gather assessment data (formative/observational data).
  - The teacher observes the content of the ‘turn and talk’, listening for misconceptions. This data can then be used to form fluid guided groups or take back into a whole group model/shared.
  - The teacher also notes participation and engagement in a brief ‘turn and talk’ - Do I need to teach/reteach HOW to work in effectively and efficiently collaborative learning? [using language as a tool for learning]

**A sample of resources to support collaborative learning decisions:**

More details...

Specifics about Writing Workshop

✓ Instruction
  - Additional Supports for Writing Instruction K-6
  - Genre, Six-Traits, and Craft Studies Working Together
  - Early Writers
  - Learning to Write and Writing to Learn
The Additional Supports for Writing Instruction provides instructional content which mirrors topics in the Jeffco writing curriculum delineated on the Planning Templates. These topics are further refined on the Jeffco Writing Curriculum Maps. The Additional Supports for Writing Instruction are an integral part of the Writing CALI. This document resides in an electronic medium. Access this critical part of the Writing CALI from several places, including from the Writing Curriculum Maps and from the English Language Arts (ELA) button on teacher’s grade level blackboard site.

The list of content found in this document is not meant to be finite. It is kept in the electronic format to provide rapid response to questions from the field. Updates appear periodically.

Refer to the Additional Supports for Writing Instruction Document as a:

- Ready-reference for a synthesis of topics for writing instruction tied to Jeffco’s curriculum
- ‘Jump-start’ on critical attributes of genres and forms
- Source for instructional ideas

A sampling of topics found in the document...

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<th>Page</th>
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<td>Thoughts to Consider as Teachers of Writers</td>
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<td>Biographical Sketches/Profiles</td>
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<td>Conventions, Grammar, and Mechanics</td>
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<td>Descriptive Writing</td>
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<td>Drawing and Our Young Writers</td>
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<td>Family Stories as Literature</td>
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<td>Feature Articles/List Articles</td>
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Click here for a link to the Additional Supports for Writing Instruction.
Genre Study, Six-Traits, and Craft Studies Working Together

**How do genre study, six traits, and craft studies work together?**

To answer that question, it helps to think of craft studies as a subset of the traits and these writing techniques and writing skills are what students learn in the Writing Workshop (mini-lessons, guided writing lessons, in conferring) during genre study.

Keep in mind that writer’s craft lessons are a subset of the 6+1 Traits of Writing.

The teaching and learning of writing techniques occur during the genre study.

Within each genre and form, the 6-Traits can be found. By knowing the critical attributes of the genre in a unit of study, the teacher knows which traits of writing to highlight in instruction—in mini-lessons, in guided writing, in conferring. For instance, in persuasive writing, organization and word choice are critical. When writing a “Slice of Life” piece, the ideas are important. So knowing that particular traits are critical in a particular type of writing, the teacher consults CAP to see which nuance of a trait is to be highlighted for instruction. The Jeffco Additional Supports for Writing Instruction is also a help with this.

**TIP**

The teacher chooses the lesson focus for traits and writing crafts carefully. Carl Anderson gives a great example around the trait of WORD CHOICE: Word choice isn’t about teaching ‘sparkly’ words. It is about teaching precision of language. Words are the component of details. It is about precision of nouns and verbs.

Consider your intent of lesson foci carefully:

- Am I teaching ‘sparkly’ words? Or am I teaching students about the precision of language? Which is most transferrable to many contexts in the life of the writer?

**Resources to find out more about genre study, writing techniques, traits and crafts:**

- Ralph Fletcher, *Craft Lessons.*
- Vickie Spandel, *Creating Writers.*
- Vicki Spandel, *Seeing with New Eyes*
- Katie Wood Ray, *Study Driven: A framework for planning units of study in the writing workshop.*
- Jeff Anderson, *Mechanically Inclined—Building Grammar, Usage, and Style into Writer’s Workshop*
See the Appendix for a Developmental Writing Continuum for Early Writers.

This continuum provides ideas for teachers to target instruction for early writers. The continuum supports decision making about instructional next steps for our developing writers. Teachers scaffold toward the next developmental level from where the student is performing.

Teaching Tip for Early Writers...

Providing opportunities for early writers to communicate through drawing is a critical component in moving towards conventional writing. When a student knows little about letters and the alphabetic principle, drawing is a place to start. Drawings convey what a child knows, thinks, and feels.

- See the Jeffco Additional Supports for Writing Instruction for more on this topic!
Learning to Write and Writing to Learn

What is the difference between Learning to Write and Writing to Learn?

How do they connect and compare?

Learning to Write is about students learning **how** to write. Writing to Learn is where students connect the dots of their learning.

- **Learning to Write** - students receive explicit instruction in the sub-skills and processes for writing.
  - Students learn transferrable skills in the writing workshop format (the Writing Literacy Block) where the gradual release model is used.
  - Learning to write is about **HOW** to write.
  - Teacher use the Jeffco Framework for Planning and Teaching Writing. See this section in the CALI.
  - Students are engaged in the processes of writing where the gradual release of instruction model is used—*I do, you do, you do collaboratively, you do independently.*
  - See **Teaching vs. Assigning Writing** in this section.

- **Writing to Learn**
  - Students are taught how to **Write to Learn**. See sidebar.
  - In Writing to Learn, writing is a means to extend and deepen students’ knowledge.
  - Writing acts as a tool for learning subject matter.
  - It is not uni-directional—writing to learn isn’t about the students writing down what the teacher says.
  - With writing to learn, the learning is interactional and social in nature.
  - Writing opportunities are provided for students to think critically about content information, to refine and remember, and to figure out what they don’t know yet.
  - The key is that students have been taught **HOW** to write this way—that would be in Learning to Write.
Learning to Write and Writing to Learn

So Learning to Write is about instruction in HOW to write and Writing to Learn is writing to think critically about content information. How might that look?

- Writing to Learn can take many forms for many audiences. The writing ranges from less formal writing to formal writing.
- Examples:
  - Less formal = an exit ticket
  - A bit more formal = a summary or reflection
  - Formal = a research paper
- As with Learning to Write, students need numerous occasions to write across a variety of contents, purposes, and audiences.
- Writers need to write often so that they make their thinking—their process of thought—apparent to themselves.
- Ideas for Writing to Learn Across the Instructional Day:
  - Notes, lists, brainstorming, graphic organizers, developing questions, free writing, drawing, sketches
  - Short constructed responses, summaries, reactions, reflections, letters, emails, blogs, research reports, lab reports, synthesis of learning.
- REMEMBER—students need to be taught HOW to write in the above forms. See the writing unit of study—Learning to Write about Writing to Learn in grades 2-6.

Writing to Learn
- Connect and clarify ideas
- Think critically about content information
- Refine and remember
- Figure out what you don’t know yet

Learning to Write
- Engage in processes of taking a piece from ‘ideas’ to ‘completion’
- Purpose, subject, audience, situation
- Sub-skills and processes
- Genre study
## Learning to Write and Writing to Learn

**What are some ways to crystallize or clarify learning using Writing to Learn?**

**Writing to Learn** is about connecting the dots in learning. To prompt student thinking about their learning, the following prompts can be used:

- What is the big ideas of today’s learning in _______ and what are three things I need to remember?
- Write and/or draw a description of _______ as you now understand it.
- Make a bulleted list of the elements of _______ you are learning about.
- Write a letter or draw a picture to another student explaining how you arrived at your answer (or how you figured it out or your thinking), e.g., problem-solved, solved in order to communicate reasoning.

**Teach how** to write this way—mentor texts, modeled writing, etc. This type of writing serves to clarify and crystallize learning, as well as provides the teacher an insight to content learning. Writing to Learn is used throughout the day—in reading, writing, word study, mathematics, science, social studies....

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**“What is “good” writing instruction? Assigning is not instructing.”**

- http://www.doe.in.gov/olt/docs/writing_resources.pdf

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## Teaching vs. Assigning Writing

Kylene Beers, a renown teacher and researcher, likens the differences between TEACHING and ASSIGNING this way.

**Am I instructing or giving instructions?**

Apply the same thinking to writing. If you ask students to write something (a review, a report, a summary, a reflection, write up a science observation, an communication of math reasoning, ticket out the door, whatever), ask yourself if you have instructed them HOW to write what you are asking them to write—that is what you will find throughout the **Writing section of the CALI**.

- Explicit instruction: Have I modeled how to write what I am asking them to write?
- Mentor text: Have the students read the type of text I am asking them to write?
- What type of writing skills and strategies do students need to in order to write what I want them to write? Have I referred to the **Writing Planning Templates**?

**IMPORTANT!** Don’t just make up the writing skills and strategies. The **Writing Planning Template** has skills/strategies paced out to scaffold student learning.
More details...

Specifics about Writing Workshop

- Details for a Successful Writing Workshop
  - Launching the Writing Workshop
  - Writer’s Notebook
  - Immersion and the Use of Mentor Text
Launching the Writing Workshop

**How do I begin?**

Writers benefit from having structures within the writing workshop. During Launching the Writing Workshop, teachers will:
- establish routines and procedures for writing workshop;
- set up the steps in the writing process;
- provide support through conferences; and
- get students started in their Writer’s Notebook (grades 2-6)

There are many ways to implement the writing process. Think about how time will be divided between mini-lessons, writing time, and closure as the workshop is launched and routines are practiced and established.

**The basic format for writing workshop:**

- **The Mini-Lesson**
  Direct instruction - in the form of a mini-lesson - is the first part of each writer’s workshop. A mini-lesson is the modeling and demonstration of a target skill: it is your lesson plan for teaching writing. Any skill that needs to be taught to your students can be taught under the structure of a mini-lesson. Don’t be afraid to use the mini-lesson to teach even the simplest skills.

- **Sustained Independent Writing with Conferences**
  To become a proficient writer you have to practice writing. The largest portion of your workshop time should be spent in independent practice. Children must be given a large amount of uninterrupted time to practice their writing. Students need to know that they have an audience who will be reading what they write. While the students are engaged in independent practice the teacher is conferencing with students individually or in small groups.

- **Closure or Share Time**
  Closure is a critical piece of any learning. Closure cements the learning. Effective closures build metacognition/reflection. Examples of closures include:
  - Partner share of a section of writing that displays ________ (focus of the mini-lessons)
  - Examining such questions as:
    - What did you try as a writer?
    - What new ideas do we have about the question we have been exploring? (revisiting the essential question(s) of the study)
    - How did we perform as a writing community today?

---

**Organizing the Writing Workshop**

The basic format for writers’ workshop ...  
- Mini-Lesson
- Sustained Independent Writing Time
- Conferences
- Closure or Share Time

- Adapted from Linda J. Dorn & Carla Soffos, Scaffolding Young Writers

**Note for Grades 2-6:**
In the first unit of study for writing, “Slice of Life” writing is incorporated into the launching of the Writing Workshop. During this unit of study, teachers set up the steps in the writing process and establish routines and procedures around a specific writing focus of a “Slice of Life” writing (personal narrative).
Launching the Writing Workshop

Questions to Consider as the Writing Workshop is Launched

- What are the expectations before, during, and after writing time?
- How are these expectations conveyed to students?
- How do I develop predictability into writing workshop?
- How do I incorporate shared, guided, and independent writing?

Seven Keys for a Successful Writer’s Workshop

1. Writers’ workshop needs to be a daily part of your schedule.
2. Intentional reading/writing connections should be embraced.
3. All three parts (mini-lesson, independent practice with conferring, and closure/sharing) need to be in place.
4. The writing process should be defined. Expect that students will have pieces in various stages of the writing process. Most pieces will not be published.
5. The teacher must model writing often and throughout the day.
6. All students need the opportunity to conference with the teacher at least once a week.
7. All students need to feel their classroom is a safe environment for sharing their writing.

- Adapted from Connie Campbell Dierking & Sherra Ann Jones, Growing up Writing

Some Key Research Findings

- Write every day.
  Students need to write every day for varied purposes and audiences to become fluent, competent writers. (Graves 2004; Fletcher 1993; Murray 1989)

- Emphasize writing as a process.
  Student achievement in writing is greater when teaching approaches emphasize writing as a process rather than as a product. (Graves 1983; Hillocks 1984; Cotton 2002)

  Writers need demonstrations (teacher writing, shared writing, student writing, published authors) along with opportunities to talk about and try out various forms with sufficient time for practice, guidance, and feedback. (Graves 1994; Ball and Farr 2003; Routman 2000a)

- Recognize the influence of conversation and language-rich classroom.
  Purposeful conversations about writing improve writing. (Routman 2000a; Strickland and Feeley 2003; Peterson 2003)

- Regie Routman, Writing Essentials

Our goal is to offer children the opportunity to bring their lives to school and to put their lives on the page. We want to teach all children that the writing workshop is an opportunity to make and convey meaning.

-Lucy Calkins, Primary Units of Study

Writing Next Research Findings: Process Writing

Use an approach, which interweaves a number of writing instructional activities in a workshop environment that stresses extended writing opportunities, writing for authentic audiences, personalized instruction, and cycles writing.
Writer’s Notebooks
A Tool to Support Writers...

As a place to practice writing, a writer’s notebook serves as a space for student writers to generate ideas, to play with words/language, and practice what they know about texts, genres, spelling, and grammar. Since the contents of the writer’s notebook is a student’s space for ideas, it is not graded by the teacher. Students personalize their writer’s notebooks. Teachers guide how the notebook might be organized into sections.

The Writer’s Notebook is a place for students (and adults) to collect the treasures of topics that take place in their minds and in their world. While the actual content of a Writer’s Notebook is dependent on the writer, many famous authors provide ideas for writers to include in their notebooks:

- Ideas for future writing topics
- Sketches, cartoons, and doodles
- Poems, short stories, song lyrics
- The beginnings of writing that may or may not be finished
- Reflections and memoirs
- Lists (e.g., top 5 reasons why... or lists of quotes)
- Biographical information
- Question lists
- Places to visit
- People to meet
- Topics to explore

What goes in the Writer’s Notebook?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In the Writer’s Notebook</th>
<th>Out of the Writer’s Notebook</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Entries</td>
<td>Drafts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding Patterns in Writing</td>
<td>Revisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collecting Around a Topic</td>
<td>Editing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revision Strategies</td>
<td>Final Copy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editing, Grammar Notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Considerations for a writer’s notebook:

- Is it easily portable?
- Does it provide a standard-sized page?
- Is it easily replaceable when it becomes filled?
- Is it a size that will be easy for you to collect and read?
- Do you have a plan for where students will put their class notes and/or handouts?
- Will students be able to personalize the notebook?
- Is it important to take pages in and out of the notebook? Does your notebook support this?
- Is the notebook easy for all students to manage?
Immersion and the Use of Mentor Texts

To uncover genres through genre study in the writing workshop, teachers and students constantly ask, “What have I read that is like what I am trying to write?”

As students are immersed in a certain genre such as narrative, they should be exposed to multiple forms of narrative writing in both printed and digital configurations. The close study of a genre allows students to identify the genre’s critical attributes, which can be charted and posted as an anchor resource for student writers to use throughout the year.

- Katie Wood Ray

In Writing Next, the meta-analysis of writing research identified that when students engage in inquiry activities and the study of models, writing improves. Genre study in the writing workshop encompasses both inquiry and the study of models.

How does that play out? To immerse students in a genre, teachers pre-select mentor texts that exemplify critical attributes of the genre. Prior to student immersion, teachers pre-determine the attributes by immersing themselves in the genre.

Then as teachers move into the instruction phase of the genre study, teachers and students read and discuss mentor text and check students’ growing understanding of the genre by asking:

- “What are you noticing about ___ writing?”
- “What makes ___ writing ___ writing?” {Ex: What makes informative writing informative writing?}
- “What else have we learned about this genre?”
- “What did the author consider/need to know before s/he could write this piece?”

Consider: What will my students be reading (immersed in) during writing workshop in order to support their learning about this type of writing?
Immersion and the Use of Mentor Texts

What is a mentor text?

Mentor texts are pieces of literature that we can return to again and again as we help our young writers learning how to do what they may not yet be able to do on their own... They (mentor texts) become our coaches and our partners as we bring the joy of writing to our students... Mentor texts serve to show, not just tell, students how to write well... We introduce them as read alouds, appreciating and responding to them as readers. Then, we revisit them through the eyes of a writer.

- Excerpt from Mentor Text, Lynne R. Dorfman and Rose Cappelli

Tips for Immersion and Use of Mentor Texts:

- Teachers consult the Jeffco Writing Curriculum Maps for possible forms in the upcoming unit of study.
- Teachers look for short texts that represent the form in the genre which is the focus of the study.
- Teachers read many examples of the types of writing they expect students to do.
- For 3-5 days during writing workshop, students explore with teacher guidance the mentor texts the teacher pre-selected. The teacher guides the students to the critical attributes.
- The critical attributes are charted on an anchor chart. The anchor chart is a working document that is used and referred to throughout the unit of study.

Do students write during the 3-5 day IMMERSION?

Students write every day! Here are some ideas about what the writing may look like during the 3-5 day immersion.

- Our young writers need to apply the learning immediately, so their writing in writing workshop may be application of the learning from immersion on the same day.

- For our other writers, they may be working on the following after reading and discussing mentor texts:
  - Work on their ‘novel’ or ‘back up work’. Students often like to write longer ‘novel’ type pieces and this is an opportunity for them to do so. ‘Back up work’ refers to incomplete writing pieces, pieces they would like to revisit, or ideas that have not been started yet. Their Writer’s Notebooks is a great source for them.
  - Students may be exploring the genre in a variety of ways:
    - Read more mentor texts— and identifying the critical attributes begun on the Anchor Charts;
    - Brainstorm (developing ideas); and
    - Begin to research their topic (this works well with persuasive and non-fiction writing).

During the IMMERSION phase of the genre study, students write every day.
WRITING PROCESSES

“We don’t want to teach our students *the* writing process; rather, we want each one of them to find *a process* that works for him or her. This process will inevitably differ from student to student.”

- Ralph Fletcher and JoAnn Portalupi
Writing processes are any of the activities or thinking strategies used to compose a piece of writing. These are sometimes described as cycles of planning (generating ideas, setting goals, and organizing), translating (putting a plan into writing) and reviewing (evaluating and revising); or they can be categorized as activities such as prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. - Nagin, Carl and the National Writing Project

WRITING PROCESSES

The writing process is complex and each writer has their own process.

Most graphic representations of the writing process show it as circular, where the writer moves from brainstorming or rehearsing to drafting to writing to revising and so on. This is far from the work that writers actually do.

- Some writers may move fluidly from one part of the writing process to the next.
- Other writers may linger in one part for a long time, move quickly through another stage, and then skip one of the stages altogether.

“Writing is a non-linear and recursive process. It cycles and recycles through subprocesses (inquiry, drafting, revising, editing, publishing, and reflecting).”

- Adapted from Jeffco Guiding Principles and Classroom Implications for Writing Instruction, K-12

...a key problem in discussing - or teaching - the writing process is that in order to analyze the process, we must give unnatural priority to one element of the writing process ...

The danger is that we never recombine the elements... These stages blend and overlap, but they are also distinct.
**USING WRITING PROCESSES**

**Writing processes** provide students with the necessary framework in order to write for a variety of purposes. Writing processes also provide students with a *way of thinking* about their writing.

As students move in and out of the process, combined with teacher modeling through mini-lessons, they will gain lifelong skills. The goal is for students to make this process ‘their own’. The elements of the writing processes are generally defined as *prewrite/rehearsal, draft/compose, revise, edit, and publish*.

The following chart illustrates writing processes. Keep in mind that writing processes are *recursive*—that is, the writer makes decisions to intentionally move back and forth between the elements of the writing processes prior to a finishing or setting aside a writing piece.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PREWRITE/REHEARSAL</th>
<th>DRAFT/COMPOSE</th>
<th>REVISE</th>
<th>EDIT</th>
<th>PUBLISH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Is any planning activity that helps the writer generate ideas, images, viewpoints to be developed into a piece of writing.</em></td>
<td><em>Is where the writer takes the blank piece of paper and their writing takes shape.</em></td>
<td><em>Rereading is important to stress during revision.</em></td>
<td><em>Use the “knows” and “dos” delineated in CAP as a guide to ensure style and clarity of words, sentences, and paragraphs.</em></td>
<td><em>Confirms students’ identity as a writer.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Includes all the cognitive warm-up work that precedes the actual writing.</em></td>
<td><em>If a writer is having difficulty in composing, they might benefit from additional time rehearsing orally.</em></td>
<td><em>During revision, the writer is focused on the content of the writing.</em></td>
<td><em>All changes and corrections the writer makes are so that the reader has clarity.</em></td>
<td><em>Ties back to audience.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The writer...**
- *considers purpose, subject, and audience*
- *gathers and records information*
- *narrow subject and finds the focus of the writing*
- *chooses a mode and form to best communicate ideas*

**The writer...**
- *transforms information gathered into the selected form of writing*
- *commits ideas to paper*
- *develops reflective and problem solving strategies*

**The writer...**
- *evaluates the content of the writing according to established criteria*
- *confers with others*
- *strengthens details by adding new information, rearranging, rewriting, or cutting unnecessary ideas*
- *sequences ideas logically*
- *focuses introduction and conclusion*

**The writer...**
- *proofreads for errors - mechanics - usage - grammar - spelling - punctuation*
- *confers with others*

**The writer...**
- *produces a text that enhances the ability of the reader to understand and connect with the message by*
  - *writing legibly or word processing, using appropriate font size and style*
  - *including illustrations, graphics, or captions as appropriate*
- *connects to and shares the writing to the intended audience*
Questions Writers Ask

As teachers of writing, the questions writers ask themselves become an important focus of instruction. These questions are paramount to effective writing. Effective writers use these questions to decide all components of their writing—from form, topic, word choice, organization, style, even grammar and conventions. What is writing’s job? …to communicate ideas to the reader. Writers consider purpose, subject, audience—Why am I writing, what am I writing about, and who am I writing for? By addressing these basic questions, the writer begins to formulate how best to communicate his/her ideas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Why am I writing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What purpose does my writing serve?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‒ To inform or explain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‒ To investigate or analyze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‒ To influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‒ To entertain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‒ To inspire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‒ To reflect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• What am I writing about?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What do others want or need to know about?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What am I interested in that I would like to write about?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUDIENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• For whom am I writing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What do I know about my audience?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FORM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• What forms of writing will best communicate my purpose and subject to my audience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What have I read that is like what I am trying to write?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Prewriting/rehearsal might involve:

- Discussion of the topic with peers
- Lists
- Using graphic organizers
- Drawing
- Free writing
- Journaling
- Brainstorming—individually or as a group
- Webbing/mapping/clustering
- Topic or word chart
- Image streaming
  (transplant yourself to another place or time and describe from a first person point of view)

Interestingly enough, both Lucy Calkins and Carl Anderson refer to prewriting as rehearsal. Thinking and living like a writer means that a student might write a lot before actually finding and developing a topic, so the term prewriting may be misleading.

WRITING PROCESSES

Prewriting/Rehearsal

Writers use prewriting to ‘get the juices flowing’ for writing. The teacher demonstrates how to use **prewriting and rehearsal** so students have a process they can replicate in all of their writing. It is a **flexible process**. Students are exposed to a variety of prewriting strategies so that they find a way that works for them. Teachers scaffold students to learn how to prewrite by modeling and demonstrating through **thinking aloud** and **writing in front of students**.

Prewriting is any planning activity that helps the writer invent content and generate ideas, images, viewpoints, and so on, to be developed into a piece of writing.

Methods include brainstorming, free writing, discussion, drawing, and role playing. Prewriting, also called **rehearsal** or **brainstorming**, includes all the cognitive warm-up work that precedes the actual writing.

Myth:
The prewriting stage of the writing processes is a rigid routine that usually includes a graphic organizer such as a web.

Busted:
According to Ralph Fletcher, the prewriting stage of the writing processes should allow students to choose how they want to rehearse a piece of writing. Although you want to show students many ways to rehearse their writing, it is important to give them the opportunity to choose their avenue.
Draft/Compose

**Drafting**, also called composing, is when the writer commits ideas to paper.

During the **rehearsal** or **brainstorm**, the student had the opportunity to generate ideas and find the focus of their writing. **Drafting** is when the writer takes the blank piece of paper and their writing takes shape. Early writers or those who are struggling may benefit from “thinking of writing as talking on paper.” If a student is having a difficult time with composing they might benefit from additional time rehearsing orally.

Students will spend much of their time drafting pieces. Some of these pieces will go through the complete writing process and be published and others will stay in draft form. At a later date, the writer might revisit a draft to pull ideas from or to continue on this piece. Keeping drafts in a writing portfolio over the year, allows the writer and the teacher to revisit the pieces for a variety of reasons, such as to look at trends in their writing, growth over time, or whether the piece is worth continued work.

**Drafting requires stamina.**

Lucy Calkins states that in writing, “Volume and stamina matter. It is almost impossible for a child to write well if that child doesn’t write fluently, because writing well involves elaboration.” Students need to **write each and every day** to become skilled writers. And they need **sustained time to write**. By having students date each day’s writing and keep all their writing in a writing portfolio, the teacher has a body of evidence of the student’s writing process and progress.

**Note:** The student portfolio is occasionally ‘cleared out’ so that it does not become too bulky.
**Revise**

*The writer RE-VISIONS by looking at the content of the writing.*

---

**Revision is often confused with editing.**

*Simply stated, during revision, the writer is focused on the content.*

---

**Most adult writers simultaneously compose and revise.**

Teachers need to slow down their writing processes and think about their revision processes. Initially, students need to understand what is meant by revision and how to revise. At a later time, they will experience how drafting and revision are not linear, but recursive.  

*Most writers end up revising as they reread lines or sections they’ve just written.* It’s important to demonstrate the recursive nature of the writing process with our own texts.” (Campbell and Ekey, 2010.)

**Students need models of how to revise well.**

To revise well, students need models of how to revise - how to go back to a piece of writing and look at it “with new eyes”. One strategy that is important to stress during revision is rereading. **Rereading a piece aloud reveals how the piece sounds to the reader.** Students also need to see and understand that writers may “let a piece sit” for a day or two and then return to the writing. Time allows a chance to detach from the piece and truly “see it with new eyes”.

---

**Myth:**

Revision means writing many drafts.

---

**Busted:**

For early writers, revision may be adding or deleting a word or two. Early writers may go from writing a single draft with revisions as their final copy.

For more experienced writers, revising their writing may have multiple sections revised, additions made to make the writing clearer, and deletions of unnecessary information. They, too, may have only one to two drafts with revisions before they produce a final copy.
Revise
The writer RE-VISIONS by looking at the content of the writing.

Revision is a chance to improve the communication in the writing by looking at writing techniques...

- look at the content of the piece;
- ask if the writing says what the intent was;
- check if the writing stays on topic;
- see if the piece flows;
- ask if the piece is well-organized or would another structure work better;
- check for clarity of language and ideas;
- ask if the appropriate form for the intended audience and purpose was selected;
- check for repetitive information; and
- check word choice for precision of language.

Tips for keeping revision manageable:

- Model your revision process aloud with your own writing.
- Teach rereading as a revision strategy.
- Teach revision as part of the process, not something only done at the end.
- Have students write and revise short pieces (long ones are too daunting).
- Revise only the best work.
- Revise for one thing at a time.
- Demonstrate concrete strategies for adding, changing, and deleting text (sticky notes, carets, cutting and pasting).
- Have students share, as well as reflect on their revision strategies.

- Adapted from Campbell, Bonnie Hill and Carrie Ekey, Enhancing Writing Instruction, 2010

How might you gather information from a conference to inform revision?

See the Conferring Section for ideas.
**Edit**

Editing is a part of the writing processes that is often misinterpreted or misunderstood by both teachers and students. Quite simply, editing is where the writer prepares a text for publication by correcting errors. These errors involve standard English conventions, such as spelling, syntax, mechanics, grammar. Students need and deserve to be directly taught standard English conventions. *Just how do you effectively teach these conventions that truly teach for understanding that is transferrable?* There lies the tension in this part of the writing process. **See the text box to the left for a resource.**

**Editing is about bringing clarity to the reader.**

Clarity in writing includes standard spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Without these, the best writing will be confusing to the reader.

Fountas and Pinnell refer to editing as the changes and corrections a writer makes so that his/her work conforms to conventions. Standard punctuation and word usage were established for good reason: *they make the writing more intelligible to the reader.*

**Teacher and Student Roles in the Editing Process:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Role</th>
<th>Student Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>❖ Teaches students how to use editing tools and when to seek out support for editing</td>
<td>❖ Use resources appropriately to assist in editing writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❖ Does not serve as the “copy editor” of student work</td>
<td>❖ Engage in peer editing, with an eye toward clear, effective communications</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- From the Jeffco Guiding Principles and Implications for Writing Instruction, K-12

**Myth:**

Some students are lazy about editing.

**Busted:**

When students aren’t invested in their writing, it is perhaps that are not interested in the topic. No interest in the topic equals little investment in the editing. Another indicator of poor ability in editing could mean that we haven’t given our students the time or the strategies to use for editing.
Edits

Use focused lessons in the mini-lessons, small group, and in the writing conference to teach editing strategies.

Ideas for editing lessons:
- Capitalization
- Spelling
- Punctuation
- Legibility *(penmanship, spacing)*
- Grammar and syntax
- Sentence fragments, sentence clarity, combining sentences
- The convention of paragraphing
- Presentation *(form and format)*
- Unnecessary words

Editing strategies to teach students include:
- Read your writing to yourself.
- Read your writing aloud, to yourself or to a writing partner.
- Give your writing to someone else to edit.
- Read your writing backward to help you focus on the spelling of each word.
- Use spell- and grammar-check features of your word processing program.
- Ask a friend who is an excellent speller.

**Use the CAP as a guide to ensure style and clarity of words, sentences, and paragraphs.**

When a writer edits, they consider their readers point of view. All changes and corrections the writer makes are so that the reader has clarity. Standard punctuation and word usage make the writing intelligible to the reader. A writer spends 90% of their time on what to write and how to say it. The last 10% is used on editing.

- Adapted from *Enhancing Writing Instruction* by Bonnie Campbell Hill and Carrie Ekey

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**Editing and Proofreading Marks**

Teaching students editing and proofreading marks should be done in the context of the writing workshop with only a few relevant marks at a time. These tools and strategies can be taught while conferring individually with a student, during guided writing, or with a mini lesson. A caution about turning the editing marks into a checklist. Jeff Anderson advises referring to the any checklist as an organic checklist which would be a tool that grows over time through student input and writing. This organic checklist becomes an anchor chart that students can refer to as needed until internalized. See the Appendix for an example of Editing and Proofreading Marks.
Publishing can play a worthwhile support role in your writing program, but the most valuable thing it can do is to motivate your students to write, revise, and edit. Publishing of any kind that accomplishes that research-based goal is sufficient; so don’t get carried away!

- Patricia M. Cunningham and James w. Cunningham

Classroom environments should include both unpublished and published work from students, teachers, and other authors. Visual celebrations of student work that are exemplary or demonstrate growth should also be displayed in the classroom.

“For me, publishing has less to do with choosing fancy fonts, creating elaborate covers, and adding work to portfolios, and more to do with going public in very real ways. Publishing means finding places in the world for our students’ writing to touch many audiences and to do good work. There needs to be many ways to make publishing less of an intrusive special event. The last thing busy teachers need is to stop all their regular work to engage in a publishing extravaganza.”

- Shelley Harwayne Writing Through Childhood

**Myth:**
All students’ writing should be taken to completion and published.  

**Busted:**
Teachers must think about the purpose for having students publish and keep in mind:
- *Is this piece worth publication?*
- *How polished does the piece have to be?*
- *Who is the audience?*

Not all pieces need to be published. Often, student writing is personal and not for an audience.

*Length has nothing to do with quality and its quality we’re after.*

- Regie Routman, Writing Essentials
Publishing - Ways to share and celebrate the writer:

- Create a Golden Lines/Great Lines bulletin board
  - Idea: tie this form of publishing to self-reflection.
  - What line or piece of the writing (excerpts) best exemplifies/represents the ____________ (from the focus of the learning) and why?
  - What line or piece of the writing most shows your growth as a writer and why? (This display might include the line/selection from the writing before and after revision to show the learning from the mini-lesson or writing goal set.)

- Frame the Writing
  - Idea: purchase inexpensive frames and display writing on the wall

- Publish a class newsletter
  - Idea: ask parent volunteers to help with this

- Share your work with another grade level
  - Idea: older students enjoy sharing with younger ones. This is great for study-buddies!

- Invite parents into the classroom for students to share in small groups, reading aloud their own writing.

Publishing student work helps readers and writers see the connection between reading and writing.

A publication for early writers could simply be something they read aloud to the class or an individual. Early writers do not usually rewrite since their first draft is their final draft.

For older, more capable students, completion of the process including the occasional publication confirms their identity as a writer. In the intermediate grades, teachers set expectations for publication, including how many pieces within a timeframe will be published and the criteria for publication.
To learn more about Writing Workshop and Writing Processes, check out the following books...

- Lucy Calkins, *Units of Study (K-2 and 3-5)*
- Ralph Fletcher, *Writing Workshop*
- Matt Glover, *Engaging Young Writers*
- Bonnie Campbell Hill and Carrie Ekey, *Enhancing Writing Instruction*
- Mark Overmeyer, *When Writing Workshop Isn’t Working*
- Katie Wood Ray, *About the Authors: Writing Workshop with Our Youngest Writers*
- Katie Wood Ray and Lester Laminack, *The Writing Workshop: Working Through the Hard Parts (And They’re All Hard Parts)*
CONFERRING

Conferences are short, focused sessions...

Lucy Calkins explains that a conference is made up of three parts: research, decide, teach. I would add a fourth component: make a record. Thinking of conferences this way can really help us refine the teaching that we do [in conferences] ...

Research means that we find out how the student’s writing is going first. Then, based on how it’s going, we decide what would make sense to teach the student, and once we do that, we teach it to him or her in an individualized, on-the-spot focus lesson. When we finished, either the student or the teacher (or both) makes a record of the conference by jotting down its essential content.

- Katie Wood Ray
Conferring with Student Writers

The main functions of the conference are to teach and to assess.

Conferring forms the foundation of effective instruction. It provides an authentic context for ongoing assessment and responsive teaching.

The teacher’s role to...
- Create conditions necessary to help students adapt and develop their skills and strategies as writers.
- Nurture students to think through their writing using strategic problem solving.
- Create the situations for learners to think about the metacognitive moves they make as they grapple with the intricacies and nuances of writing.

Conferring is the heart of the writing workshop. Indeed, it is the very heart of teaching writing itself. Conferring is hard. When done well, it can change the course of a writing life forever. And the only way to become better at conferring is to begin.

- Lucy Calkins

confer
1530s, from M.Fr. conférer (14c.) "to give, converse, compare," from L. conferre "to bring together," figuratively "to compare; consult, deliberate, talk over," from com- "together" (see com-) + ferre "to bear" (see infer). Sense of "taking counsel" led to confer-ence. The meaning "compare" (common 1530-1650) is largely obsolete, but the abbreviation cf. still is used in this sense. Related: Conferral (1880).

- From the Online Etymology Dictionary
We are teaching the **writer**, not the writing.
Our decisions must be guided by ‘what might help this **writer**’
rather than ‘what might help this writing’.

- Lucy Calkins

**What are writing conferences?**

- The main functions of a conference are **to teach** and **to assess**.
- Conferences have a predictable structure. Carl Anderson calls it an ‘oral genre’.
  - ‘Writer to writer talk’.
- Conferences provide an authentic context for ongoing assessment (formative process) which informs next instructional steps - **responsive teaching** and **differentiated instruction**.

**What do I teach in writing conferences?**

- When you confer with a student, it isn’t your job to fix or edit the student’s writing. Rather, it’s to teach the student one writing strategy or technique to use in a current piece of writing and continue to use in future writing. (Carl Anderson)
- Keep Lucy Calkins in mind: “We are teaching the writer, not the writing. Our decisions must be guided by ‘what might help this writer rather than ‘what might help this writing’”.
- Carl Anderson reminds us: The writing process itself is the focus of many conferences. Students need a repertoire of strategies to help them prewrite (or to rehearse a topic before drafting/composing, or to compose, revise, edit).
- Many conferences focus on the qualities of good writing and how to be imitators of writing.
- Student-needs will guide your instructional decisions for what to teach in the conference.
What are predictable components in a conference?

No matter what the setting, the writing conference has predictable components...

- Enter the conference to find out where the student is in applying the teaching from the mini-lessons
- Give feedback
- Teaching point
- Goal setting/accountability/next steps
- Make a record

See the Conferring with Student Writers QUICK REFERENCE pages for details about each component of the conference. The Teacher Language Ideas provide ideas for words to say during the conference.

How does conferring connect with assessment?

Record keeping is a must in the conference!

- Since conferences are used to both teach and to assess, record keeping from conferences provides assessment data and becomes part of a body of evidence.
- The anecdotal/professional monitoring notes which accompany a conference can be used to:
  - Look at class or individual student trends.
  - Plan next steps for instruction.
    - Use data from conferences to decide if a whole group mini-lesson is needed if most students are not able to apply the mini-lesson learning.
    - If only a few students are not able to apply the learning, a small group lesson is appropriate.
  - Gather a body of evidence to add to other performance evidence in order to evaluate overall writing performance.

“We are teaching the writer, not the writing.”

How will I teach the writer to be a strategic problem solver?

“Conferences need to be kept short, not necessarily because that’s the best way to teach an individual, but because we have lots of individuals to teach. A good conference lasts anywhere from about two to seven minutes.”

- Katie Wood Ray
  The Writing Workshop

Core Writing Instruction
January 2011

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Golden, Colorado
When can I hold writing conferences?

**TIP:**
- Every 6-8 mini-lessons should be on conventions.
- Every 3-4 individual conferences should be on conventions.

- **Comprehensive Approach to Literacy Instruction**
  - **January 2011**

- **TIP:**

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  - Every 3-4 individual conferences should be on conventions.

How do conferences look and sound?

- The teacher needs to be in the conference as a **reader** before they are there as a corrector.
- The teacher intentionally reads a **small portion** of the writing.
- Keep conferences short and moving along briskly.
- Celebrate first, then question, probe, and confer to move the writer along.
  - What is the student applying from the mini-lessons?
    (Specific reinforcement—a ‘glow’)
  - Where can they go next? (cue, question, and prompt—a ‘grow’)
  - Move the writer along in relation to the targets of where they need to be as set forth in the knows and do’s in the CAP documents.

**CONFERRING WITH STUDENT WRITERS**

- Usually writing workshop begins with a short whole group mini-lesson. The teacher is explicit about what the students work on during independent writing time for 30-40 minutes or within their work in purposeful collaborative groups.
- During this writing time, the teacher circulates around the classroom and confers with students.
  - One-on-one
  - Small group/table conference
  - Over-the-shoulder check-In conference
- Hold writing conferences in the writing workshop, as well as **anytime students are writing** in your classroom.
  - Conferring in the writing workshop follows the components set forth in this section of the Writing CALI.
  - Writing conferences can be held when students are writing in contents outside of the writing block. For example, if students are writing an informational piece in social studies to explain ______, the teacher may notice that a student is not applying previously taught writing skills and strategies. The teacher takes a few minutes to confer with the student and to remind the student what was learned in the mini-lessons and holds them accountable to apply that learning.

The teacher language used in the conference is situational depending on where the student is in relation to the learning objectives.

**See the Conferring With Student Writers pages for teacher language ideas to use to prompt specific student actions.**
The first part of the writing conference: (2-3 minutes)

- **Enter the conference:** *Where are the students in their writing?* Research this through asking questions.

  Example questions:
  - How’s it going?
  - What work are you doing as a writer today?
  - What can I help you with today?
  - What decisions have you made as a writer?
  - I wanted to check back with you...

- **Ask follow up questions, such as:**

  Example questions:
  - Where are you in the writing process?
  - What strategies are you using in this stage of the writing process
  - What are you doing to write this piece well?

  See page in this section on **TEACHER LANGUAGE** for ideas in order to target your language.

- **Read the student’s writing.**
  First, the teacher is a **reader** of the student work—before moving into teaching.
  - Reading the student’s writing helps identify one area of need.
  - Focus on a **part of the writing.** Usually it isn’t necessary to read an entire entry or draft.
  - By the end of the first part of the conference, an **area of need** is identified.

Through observations, the teacher already has a sense of how students are applying the learning from the writing mini-lessons.

Hold students accountable in the conference for the techniques and strategies **previously taught.**
The second part of the writing conference: (4-5 minutes)

- Teach the writing strategy or technique.

  - **Give feedback**
    - Point out something the student is doing well—celebrate!
    - Also name the area of need.
    - Give feedback on the goals that have been previously set.

  - **Teach**—based on how it’s going, decide what would make sense to teach the student.
    - Use an individualized/on-the-spot focus lesson.
    - Start by naming and defining the specific writing strategy.
    - Think aloud about how you problem-solve writing.
    - Show mentor text that has the writing strategy or technique.
    * IDEA: keep a tote to travel with you for conferences of the types of text that represent writing skills and attributes that you have been teaching in the mini-lessons.

  - **Goal Setting/Accountability/Next Steps**
    - Establish next steps and a specific goal.
    - Set expectations that the student will apply a previously taught technique/strategy—immediately in the piece and beyond.

- **Make a record**
  - Record the conference on a note taking grid.
  - See the Appendix for sample forms.
  - As a professional, your anecdotal/professional monitoring notes become a body of evidence.

**See the following pages for specific teacher language ideas to use in the conference components above.**

Language chosen is situational—what teacher language will prompt the student to move forward as a writer?

When conferring with student writers, teachers need to select language to teach strategic writing skills and strategies. It is about the writer, not the writing. Teach strategic thinking through conferring!
### Teacher Language Ideas

To promote **metacognition** and **transferrable thinking skills** for writing techniques and strategies

#### Specific Questions You Can Ask

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When the Conference is Focused on This Quality of Writing...</th>
<th>Specific Questions You Can Ask</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meaning</strong></td>
<td>◦ What are you trying to say in this piece?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>◦ What do you want readers to know about your topic when they read your piece?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>◦ Why have you included this section?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>◦ What kinds of parts have you included in this piece?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>◦ What are you trying to do in your lead?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>◦ What are you trying to do in your ending?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>◦ How is your piece organized?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>◦ Which parts are the really important ones that help you make your points?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Detail</strong></td>
<td>◦ Why have you included this detail?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>◦ Are there any details you don’t think are necessary?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>◦ What kinds of details have you included in your piece?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>◦ Which words have you selected to help you give readers a picture of what you’re talking about?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Voice</strong></td>
<td>◦ How have you tried to get your voice into your writing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>◦ How have you written your sentences to give your writing voice?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revision</strong></td>
<td>◦ Where have you revised your ideas? Why did you select that part to revise?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>◦ What other ideas have you considered changing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conventions</strong></td>
<td>◦ What are you looking for as you edit?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>◦ What kinds of edits have you made? Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>◦ How have you been using semicolons (or any other punctuation mark that you’ve given mini-lessons about) in your writing?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from *How’s It Going* by Carl Anderson
## Teacher Language Ideas

To promote metacognition and transferrable thinking skills for writing techniques and strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Language Ideas</th>
<th>Specific Questions You Can Ask</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Conferring Leads        | ◦ *How’s it going?*  
                        | ◦ *What work are you doing as a writer?*  
                        | ◦ *What can I help you with today?* |
| Questions to Nudge Students to Say More | ◦ *Could you say more about that?*  
                                        | ◦ *What do you mean by...?*  
                                        | ◦ *Could you explain what you mean by...?* |
| Questions that Grow Out of Your Knowledge of What Writers Do | ◦ *How have you planned out your draft?*  
                                                                | ◦ *What’s the focus of your piece?*  
                                                                | ◦ *What kinds of revisions have you made?* |
| Questions About Students’ Writing Strategies | ◦ *How are you going to do this work?*  
                                        | ◦ *What strategies are you going to use to do this work?*  
                                        | ◦ *How are you planning to get started with your draft?* |
| Questions that Come from What You Already Know About the Student | ◦ *Have you done some of the revision work you tried in your last piece?*  
                                                                  | ◦ *How did you pick the idea for your draft this time?* |
| Questions Connected to the Mini-Lessons | ◦ *Have you tried out what we talked about today in the mini-lesson?*  
                                               | ◦ *Remember we talked yesterday in the mini-lesson about revision strategies?*  
                                               | ◦ *Have you used any of them to help you revise?* |
| Questions About a Student’s Decisions | ◦ *Why did you pick these places to add-on?*  
                                        | ◦ *Why did you decide to structure your draft this way?*  
                                        | ◦ *Why did you repeat this line several times?* |

Adapted from *How’s it Going* by Carl Anderson
To learn more about conferring, check out the following books...

- Carl Anderson, *Assessing Writers*
- Carl Anderson, *How’s It Going? A Practical Guide to Conferring with Student Writers*
- Carl Anderson, *Strategic Writing Conferences*
- Bonnie Campbell Hill & Carrie Ekey, *Enhancing Writing Instruction*
- Mark Overmeyer, *What Student Writing Teaches Us: Formative Assessment in the Writing Workshop*
- Mark Overmeyer, *When Writing Workshop Isn’t Working*
- Katie Wood Ray, *The Writing Workshop*
- Regie Routman, *Writing Essentials*
- Holly Slaughter, *Small-group Writing Conferences*
ASSESSMENT

Assessment gets to the heart of teaching and lets us decide how and when to offer support to writers.

- James and Kathleen Strickland
Comprehensive Approach to Literacy Instruction
Writing CALI

Assessing Student Writing
Types of Assessments

- **Classroom/Diagnostic Assessments** – conducted at any time throughout the year and can be developed by the classroom teacher. Feedback is immediate and detailed.

- **Formative Assessments** – include ongoing observations through quizzes, performance-based assessments, probing questions, and the outcomes suggest future steps for teaching and learning.

- **Interim Benchmark** – a measurement of group performance against established benchmarks that gauges student progress toward district/state benchmarks at several strategic points during the school year. (i.e., DIBELS and Acuity)

- **Progress Monitoring** – an ongoing collection of student academic performance that measures expected growth toward an aligned curriculum throughout the year. Students’ academic performance is measured on a regular basis and instruction and intervention strategies are adjusted as needed (YPP, DIBELS progress monitoring tools)

- **Summative** – a point in time measure at the culmination of a teaching/learning process for a unit, subject, or year’s study. (i.e., CSAP, BEAR, K-1, ESGI)

Q & A

Q: Why is there such a heavy emphasis on student assessment?

A: A comprehensive assessment program is a powerful tool for increasing student achievement! Research shows that all across the country, individual schools and school districts have experienced dramatic improvement in student motivation, productivity, and achievement when staff, students, and parents change the way they think about and use assessment results.

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Assessing Student Writing

Assessment occurs throughout the writing workshop.

Assessment begins with the end in mind.

*What are the learning targets for students?*

Clearly defined writing targets based on the Standards are delineated in knows and do’s in the writing CAP documents. Being clear on what students should *know, understand,* and *be able to do* enables teachers to know what the goals are for their students.

Prior to beginning instruction, teachers need a clear understanding of the goals held for students. Based on those goals, teachers document their observations of students in action. Teachers then reflect and analyze these observations in order to make informed decisions about future instruction. Also, teachers use this data to evaluate student performance.

Additionally, teachers must acknowledge the intended use of their assessments.

- *Are the assessments to determine what the students have learned and to adjust teaching?* {Assessment for learning—formative assessment}
  - Teachers use formative assessments to provide feedback and to guide instruction. During writing workshop, most of the assessments will be formative - assessment for learning.
- *Or is the assessment to learn if students are where they are expected to be for a grading period or at the end of the year?* {Assessment of learning—summative assessment}
  - Learning is ‘summed up’ in summative assessments.

Teachers have numerous opportunities to assess students’ writing every day.

- In conferences:
  - *One-on-one conferences*
  - *Over-the-shoulder check-in conferences*
  - *Small group conferences*
- Conversations before writing
- Writing in content areas
- Responses to literature
- Ticket in the door or exit tickets
- Reflections of learning

Gather assessment data any time the student writes.
In order to move all students forward in their writing, teachers need to use an arsenal of writing assessments in concert. Below represents a way of seeing how to capture data about student writing. Subsequent pages in the Writing CALI provide further insights into this process.

**Performance Tasks:**
- **Summative ('of' learning):** Evidence of application the work of the mini-lessons along the way (portfolio), the writing process, and including student reflection on the process.
- **Summative ('of' learning):** Final product – to reflect qualities on rubric
- **Summative and Formative ('of' and 'for' learning):** On-demand writing

**Other Evidence:**
- **Diagnostic (used for both 'of' and 'for' learning):** analysis of writing to glean what student knows, understands, and can do
- **Self assessment/self-evaluation, and goal setting ('for' learning):** students use the rubric along the way and at the end of the study as self-assessment/self-evaluation
- **Progress Monitoring (used for both 'of' and 'for' learning):**
  - Professional Monitoring notes – through conferring with student writers
  - The writing process and evidence of work along the way, including student reflection on the writing process
  - Evidence of application the work of the mini-lessons (portfolio).

How might summative and formative assessment data be used in concert to provide the ‘surround sound’ of your students?
Formative Assessment

Through conferences, looking at student work, or a body of student work, the teacher assesses the writer(s) to make instructional decisions about next steps for an individual student or groups of students.

“To gather information, we must not only read student writing but also observe students at work and talk about them about their writing in conferences. And the only way for us to be able to gather information about students in all these ways is to assess them when they’re in writing workshop.”

- Carl Anderson

While assessing students, the teacher is looking at what the child can do—what they have under control. After this, they are also looking for the errors the student is making.

Teachers need to be cautioned from going on what Carl Anderson calls ‘error hunts’.

“When we go on error hunts in student writing, however, we are missing opportunities to learn about what the students do understand about writing sentences, using punctuation, and spelling words. Thus, we’re missing opportunities to get the information we need to be able to teach students to use the convention of written English with more and more precision.”

According to researchers, student errors fall into two categories:

- Careless errors
  - Careless errors are ones that we make because our attention is usually focused on content and craft.

- The type of error that shows the student is growing as a writers.
  - Errors that writers make that show they are growing as writers illustrate that the writer is on the edge of new learning (in the Zone of Proximal Development).

Constance Weaver found “one of the problems with overreacting to error is that it stunts our students’ growth as writers”. 
Formative Assessment

Teachers can collect assessment information on their student’s writing in many ways. Anecdotal notes—on both the product of writing as well as the process of writing—assist the teacher to keep accurate records of student progress and learning needs.

Consider: What does the student have under control and what are my next instructional moves?

Record keeping comes in a variety of formats. Noting what the student has under control and what the teacher needs to teach the student or group of students is essential. Using the Knows, Understands, and Able to Do’s from CAP will provide foci for the teacher and the student.

Collecting assessment information of a student’s writing is not enough. The next step is to provide students with appropriate feedback on their work.

- varied (oral or written), and timely prior to the completion of the final product
- specific and positive in tone
- respond to students’ work as a reader rather than as a critic or judge
- models appropriate feedback (both written and oral) practices for students and create structures for peer feedback
- mark only a few types of errors in a student’s writing, and follow such marking with instructional support for the student

_- Jeffco’s Guiding Principles and Classroom Implications for Writing Instruction, K-12_

Sample Record Keeping Forms

SEE THE APPENDIX FOR SAMPLE ANECDOTAL NOTE FORMS FOR RECORD KEEPING.

COLLECTING ASSESSMENT INFORMATION ON WHAT HAS BEEN TAUGHT:

Record keeping is a critical component for teaching and assessing students.

As teachers confer with students and collect other assessment data, focus on what has been taught in the mini-lessons.

Next step: Goal setting based on feedback of where the student is performing in relation to the targets established in the Knows, Understands, and Able to Do’s in the Writing CAP.
Formative Assessment
Feedback, Student Self-Assessment, and Goal Setting

Feedback, self-assessment/reflection, and goal setting intertwine to provide a basis for students moving forward as writers. The three should not be separate activities for students and teachers. One informs the other.

Thoughts to ponder…
...feedback is intimately related to goal setting.

Clear goals establish an initial target. Feedback provides students with information regarding their progress toward that target. Goal setting and feedback used in tandem are probably more powerful than either one used in isolation. In fact, without clear goals it might be difficult to provide effective feedback.

- Robert Marzano, The Art and Science of Teaching

Characteristics of effective feedback:
- Must be intelligible so that students can grasp its significance and use it both as a self-assessment tool and as a guide for improvement.
- Must focus on particular qualities of the student’s work.
- Must provide advice about how to improve the work and set an achievable target.
- Must evolve as students acquire new skills.
- Uses language and concepts that the student can handle.
- Is on-going - it occurs before, during, and after learning.
- Provides opportunities for students to notice their own strengths and to feel in control of the conditions of their success.
- Should refer to particular genres and the elements, techniques, and strategies associated with them—it is specific to the task.

- Adapted from the works of Black & Wiliam, Hampton, Wiggins and others
Formative Assessment
Feedback, Student Self-Assessment, and Goal Setting

Self-Assessment involves goal setting and reflection...

Students set goals for themselves as writers and regularly check back with these goals to determine how they are doing. A balance of process and product goals promotes the development of writers.

“Goal setting allows students to demonstrate what they know about themselves as writers, and goals aligned with this knowledge can provide opportunities for growth.”

- Mark Overmeyer

After students have set a goal(s), they need to develop a plan of how they are going to achieve this goal. Mark Overmeyer describes two ways students can achieve their goals.

- One way is to set aside time to allow students individually to work on their goals as they write each day, perhaps by starting with a quick conference with the teacher or a peer to discuss what could be accomplished in a class period or a week.
- Another way to structure the workshop is to actually provide specific time, space, and materials for students to focus on the practice.
  - Having time to practice would occur once or twice a month.
  - Having a time (day) to focus on practice should not replace the writing workshop.
  - Asking students how they will achieve their goals is another means to lead students to independence.

Self-assessment and goal setting of writing builds independence and is critical to high student achievement. Jeffco’s Guiding Principles and Classroom Implications for Writing Instruction, K-12, addresses students assessing their own writing.

Specifically, students are to:

- maintain and work toward clear product goals;
- set and achieve their person writing goals;
- evaluate their writing skills through the use of ongoing reflection on individual writing growth;
- listen to and read others’ writing and give global, specific, and positive feedback; and,
- use feedback from self, peers, and teacher to evaluate, revise, and transform their writing.
Formative Assessment
Feedback, Student Self-Assessment, and Goal Setting

Ideas to support feedback, self-assessment, and goal setting include:

- Ask students to self-assess their writing processes and products on a regular basis. When they focus on specific areas for improvement, teachers can more easily monitor their progress.
- Ask students for ideas about how they might practice in order to improve.
- Provide specific practice times in class that support student-identified needs.
- Ask students to reflect on their progress often so they can keep track of how they are doing.

- Adapted from Mark Overmeyer, What Student Writing Teaches Us

Observation questions that teachers might consider as students are self-assessing their writing:

- Do the students comment on the writing itself (content, conventions) or their writing process (drafting, applying crafts, revising, editing, etc.)?
- Do the students connect what they do as writers to what they have seen authors do?
- Are they utilizing what you are celebrating and teaching during conferences?
- Are they able to name their strengths and what they need to work on?

- from Regie Routman in Residence
Formative Assessment
Feedback, Student Self-Assessment, and Goal Setting

Pulling all of this together, consider:

How can you use teacher language from conferring - your feedback - be used to support students in effective self-assessment and goal setting? The goal setting and self-assessment parallels the feedback.

Ideas for student self-assessment and goal setting:

- Take the language used in conferences.

- At the end of a study, select 2-3 questions that student attach to their final product.
  - What selection of your writing are you most proud of and why?
  - What are two specific ways I improved (revised) your writing? (This is not about spelling, grammar, etc.)
  - After writing this piece, what did I learn as a writer? What will I work on next time?
  - What are two specific ways you improved (revised) your writing (not edited)? How did that revision improve your writing?

- Use rubric descriptors - descriptors tied to the critical attributes - for students to use along the way, as well as at the end of the unit of study to self-assess and set goals.
  - Write down a sentence(s) (or highlight) from your published piece that best represents the learning from this unit of study.
  - To what degree does my writing represent ________? What is my evidence? (highlight evidence from the writing)
**Summative Assessment**

Summative assessments usually are a measure of the student’s learning at a point in time. A key to summative assessments is that they are meant to gauge the student’s learning associated to the content standards. A summative assessment can be given during the school year to determine what the students know and do not know.

Summative assessments are often associated with high-stake standardized tests, such as CSAP or BEAR. There are also opportunities for the teacher to assess the student’s learning during the year or to administer summative assessments. In the classroom, a summative assessment is generally used as part of a body of evidence in the grading process.

**Summative assessments...**

- should encompass formative assessments that preceded it.
- should match material taught.
- should align with content standards.
- may be tied to a final decision, grade or report.

As professionals, teachers make decisions about what to assess in relation to the curriculum delineated in CAP. Teachers ask themselves: *Am I assessing at this time for such specifics as:*

- a particular trait(s)?
- a critical attribute(s) of a genre?
- the writing process(es)?
- a holistic perspective?

**Important questions to consider from any assessment...**

- What are the instructional implications of this data?
- What actions will I take to differentiate instruction through the use of the structures for teaching writing in Writing Workshop?
On-Demand Writing as Summative Assessment

Developing independent writers is the goal of writing instruction.

The definition of summative assessment is a point in time measure at the culmination of a teaching/learning process for a unit, subject, or year’s study. Students need to ‘own’ the writing skills and strategies taught. A summative writing task offers students the chance to transfer and reapply writing skills and strategies.

Use the Jeffco Writing Curriculum Maps. There are several opportunities for teachers to gather summative data on their student’s writing after completing a unit of study.

Below is an illustration of gathering summative data as students are asked to transfer and reapply the skills and strategies learned.

In grades 2nd -6th, students begin their year learning about Slice of Life writing. After the completion of this unit, the teacher gives the students a couple of days to write about topics of their choice. After this time, the teacher has the students complete an “on demand” writing. Students are asked to write another Slice of Life, another episode in their life that has meaning for them. This writing is “on demand” because the teacher gives the assignment and the students complete the writing in one or two writing periods without teacher assistance. After the “on demand” writing is completed, the teacher scores this writing and assesses what the student has learned. To calibrate writing expectations, scoring several pieces of writing with colleagues is advised.

“Writing on demand” assists the teacher to answer these questions:
- Can the student transfer and apply – independently – what has been taught?
- How am I backing off scaffolding of the student during guided instruction so that the students are able to do this task independently?
Rubrics, while they are meant to clarify expectations, can be misused. Rubrics and checklists are tools for feedback. When we are using them for summative or formative assessment purposes, we must be intentional or they may be as ineffective as a grade on top of a paper with no explanation.

- Mark Overmeyer, What Student Writing Teaches Us

An instructional rubric is usually a document that describes varying levels of quality, from excellent to poor, for a specific assignment. It is usually used with a relatively complex assignment, such as a long term project, an essay, or a research paper. Its purposes are to give students informative feedback.

- Heidi Goodrich Andrade

**Using Rubrics in Writing**

Rubrics are scoring tools that provide set targets for students and teachers. Using standards and a set of criteria defines the expectations for a form of writing. A rubric can be developed as a summative tool, such as the ones used by CSAP or other high stakes tests, or as a formative tool. Summative rubrics can be a resource for goal setting if the students have the rubric and their scores in a timely manner. Formative rubrics set targets and can be used by the teacher and student to define instructional next steps. Many resources classify a formative rubric as an instructional rubric.

Popham discusses rubrics in the following manner: **Well-formed rubrics, for instance, those containing a modest number of well-described evaluative criteria, help students understand what they are supposed to be learning.** Weak rubrics, those with too many ill-defined evaluative criteria, usually are of little help to students or to the teacher. If you intend to use rubrics as a key way of clarifying curricular expectations, be sure to do your homework so that you can tell the righteous rubrics from the repugnant ones.

**Why use instructional rubrics?**

Rubrics...

- Provide tools for both teaching and assessment.
- Support students with self-assessment.
- Can define critical attributes for a writing genre.
- Help make the teacher’s expectations clear.
- Provide a common language about writing.
- Support student learning.
- Help students and teachers define “quality”.
- Help parents understand the targets for their child to be successful.
- When constructed with students, gives students and teachers joint understanding.
- Provide information about what students can do.

“Using rubrics only to give a single score is a summative assessment which won’t consider information for instruction. When thoughtfully crafted and used with discretion and understanding, rubrics can be among the most useful instructional tools we have. They give us direction and a basis for conversation.”

- Spandel, 2006
Using Rubrics in Writing

What are the key elements to a well-written instructional rubric?

- **Clear and precise descriptors:**
  - *Descriptors* that are precise are generally more helpful. Precise descriptors such as:
    - “Beginning engages the reader and indicates the location of the story and introduces character(s)” supports the students to know the expectations for the beginning of their narrative writing.
    - Whereas, “Has an engaging beginning” is too vague for the writer to know what is expected.
  - *Vague* descriptors such as “few”, “several”, “many” are not helpful for the teacher or the students.
  - *There* is a caution not to be overly precise. For example, asking students to write three similes in a piece of writing will not necessarily produce a well-written piece.
- **Contain specific language in a brief way.**
- **Written in language that the students understand.**
- **Guide students to what they need to do in the future to improve their writing.**
- **Are always a work in progress.**
- **Fit on one piece of paper or less.**
- **Accompanied by examples of student work that exemplify the levels described in the rubric.**

---

Adapted from *The Skillful Teacher* by Saphier and others, 2008

How do I develop an instructional rubric using inquiry with my students?

- Prior to a writing unit of study, teachers identify the critical attributes of the chosen genre.
- While reading mentor texts of this genre with the students, the teacher charts the attributes and characteristics.
  - *What are you noticing about _____ (e.g., Slice of Life) writing?*
  - *What makes _____ writing _____ writing? (e.g., What makes persuasive writing persuasive writing?)*
  - *What else have we learned about this genre?*
- Students continue to read mentor texts, refine their noticings, and add to anchor charts.
- Teacher, with the class, looks at the attribute charts and together design a rubric choosing key attributes for the particular genre.

Final Thoughts... Consider these questions before creating a rubric:

- How will using a rubric improve student writing?
- How will students use the rubric to set goals?
- How will students create the rubric with the teacher?
- Is there another method, strategy that can be used, other than creating and using a rubric, that will improve student writing?
- How will the teacher use the rubrics to guide instruction?
- When it is productive to only identify proficient and advanced levels on the rubric?
To learn more about Assessment, check out the following books...

- Carl Anderson, *Assessing Writers*

- Sally Hampton, et al., *Using Rubrics to Improve Student Writing*

- Mark Overmeyer, *What Student Writing Teaches Us: Formative Assessment in the Writing Workshop*

- William Popham, *Transformative Assessment*

THE FRAMEWORK FOR PLANNING and TEACHING WRITING: Genre Study

While students do need to know and understand qualities of each genre (and we teach them), successful writing in a specific genre involves applying what students know about all effective writing. Research suggests that “the strategies of production are generalizable to other comparable tasks. When instruction is aimed at developing a particular narrative, students may not learn those strategies of production for use independently.”

That is, when we focus too closely on the genre rather than on producing excellent writing—students may not transfer what they learn to other forms of writing.

- Regie Routman, Writing Essentials

We are teaching the writer, not the writing.
Framework for Planning and Teaching Writing: 
**Genre Study**

**Big Ideas**

- **PLAN**
  for teaching the writing genre (2-3 weeks prior to the study)

- **IMMERSE, DISCUSS, and CHART “Reading as Writers”**
  immerse students in the genre

- **DEMONSTRATE/MODEL/SHARE**
  in the genre... this process is recursive—not linear; occurs throughout the study and is based on your noticings in conferences

- **PREPARE**
  students for writing in the genre (Prewrite/rehearsal)
  Set expectations, model scaffolded conversations, provide time and guidance for students to prewrite/plan their thinking piece

- **SUSTAINED TIME TO WRITE**
  interwoven with focused lessons tied to student needs in relation to the established learning targets established in CAP

- **CONFER about content**
  with students on content during and after drafting using over-the-shoulder, group, individual conferences to move the writer forward

- **CONFER about editing expectations**
  with students on editing expectations after ideas-revision is underway

- **CELEBRATE Publish**
  encourage students to do more in the genre to transfer their learning

---

**INTENDED USE OF THE FRAMEWORK**

This framework is intended as an overall picture of planning how to teach students to write in any genre and not intended as a day-by-day plan.

Genre Study

Genre study is a focused inquiry into the critical attributes of a genre in order for students to develop as readers and writers.

Beyond inquiry into the critical attributes of a genre, students develop understanding of writing through focused instruction of the knows, dos, and understandings delineated in the Jeffco curriculum (CAP). The writing workshop model is used.
### PLAN

for teaching the writing genre - the teacher immerses themselves in the genre as they plan (2-3 weeks prior to the study)

#### Teachers

2-3 weeks prior to the study....

- Use the Jeffco Writing Curriculum Maps to identify genres and timeframes.
- Then use the Writing CAP Documents for the underlying writing skills and strategies that are the focus in a particular timeframe and writing unit of study.
- Gather many examples of the genre.
- Immerse themselves in the genre first – prior to teaching—in order to become familiar with the critical attributes and elements of the genre. How can you teach it if you don’t know it?
- Focus on meaning and teach whole-part-whole
- Consider how discrete parts of the 6+1 traits of writing and crafts play out. Be specific, not broad. Tie back to the KUD’s on CAP.

#### Resources for Planning

- CAP Documents
- Additional Supports for Writing Instruction (SEE THESE FOR CRITICAL ATTRIBUTE IDEAS)
- Mentor texts
- Guiding Principles for Writing Instruction and Classroom Implications
- Writing CALI
- For further resource ideas, see the Writing CAP, the Additional Supports for Writing Instruction, and the Jeffco Approved Writing Resources
- Collaborate, e.g., team planning, vertical conversations
- Other school personnel, e.g., Instructional Coach, Teacher Librarian, ESL Resource Teachers, G/T Resource Teachers, Art, Music, and Physical Education teachers

#### Desired Outcomes

*Students*....

... suggest possible audiences for their writing.
... suggest topics for writing.
... start to suggest books in a particular genre from the library or the classroom library for read-aloud.

#### Ongoing Assessment - Formative Assessment/Progress Monitoring

**Teachers...**

- Find out what students already know about the genre and chart their responses.
- Use student response (their knowledge, questions, omissions, confusions) to guide teaching.

**Think:**

- What else do students need to know and understand before they can successfully write in this genre?
- What do I need to do, say, read, model, show, and explain before they are ready to effectively write on their own?

"Desired Outcomes" form the basis for assessment and evaluation of the transfer of learning.
## IMMERSE, DISCUSS, and CHART

“Reading as Writers”

### Teachers

3-5 days as students ‘read as writers’...

- Provide many examples of the genre to students (teacher reads to students, or if appropriate, have students independently and/or partner read books).
- Familiarize students with the features of the genre and facilitate NOTICINGS/ANCHOR CHART creation.
- Lead students to discover the critical attributes of the genre. *(NOTE: The teacher pre-determines the attributes during their PLAN phase. Students may come up with attributes for the anchor chart that the teacher did not predetermine!)*
- Have students browse and examine these materials with teacher guidance.
- Tie to curriculum set forth in the CAP documents.
- Guide students to continue independently write in genres that have already been taught.

### Desired Outcomes

**Students**...

... spend time reading and getting to know the texts they will study.
... notice the characteristics (context, form, purpose, audience, etc.) of the texts.
... think about the processes writers use to craft texts like the ones they are studying.

### Ongoing Assessment - Formative Assessment/Progress Monitoring

**Teachers**...

- Have students read and discuss mentor text and check students’ growing understanding of the genre by asking:
  - “What are you noticing about ___ writing?”
  - “What makes ______ writing ______ writing?” *(Ex: What makes informative writing informative writing?)*
  - “What else have we learned about this genre?”
  - “What did the author consider/need to know before s/he could write this piece?”

- Chart noticings (characteristics and attributes) on a **class anchor chart**.
- Plan opportunities for students to continue to read mentor texts, refine their noticings, and add to **anchor chart**.
- Guide students to name the characteristics of the genre as part of building a content-specific vocabulary for the genre.
- Further check for understanding through collaborative written responses from small groups or partners, or by individual responses.

### Resources

- Other school personnel, e.g., Instructional Coach, Teacher Librarian, ESL and G/T Resource Teachers, Art, Music, and Physical Education teachers
- Mentor texts
**FRAMEWORK FOR PLANNING AND TEACHING WRITING**

### Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Focused Lessons</strong> (mini-lessons, guided writing, and during conferring as appropriate...)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Demonstrate/model/share is <strong>explicit instruction</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Discuss audience and purpose for this writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Write in front of students to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Think aloud first to model choosing a topic and narrowing the topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Develop the topic and do the writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Think aloud during writing (i.e. model and emphasize rereading, using the writing process, and qualities of good writing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• At times, follow demonstration with shared writing (topic and story are negotiated with students as the teacher does the writing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Create and <strong>actively use</strong> anchor charts with students for the critical attributes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The <strong>process is recursive</strong>—revisit the demonstration and/or shared writing—depending on teacher noticings in the writing conferences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Big Idea:

**Teachers observe their students to inform next instructional steps to demonstrate/model/share...**

- **How is what I am learning about my students in shared writing informing my demonstration or guided lessons?**
- **How is what I am learning about my students in conferences to inform my next instructional steps?**

**Also...**

- **What supports do students need or what opportunities exist to challenge proficient writers?**
- **What Essential Questions and Learnings from CAP need to be re-taught or re-examined?**
- **What small groups can be formed?**

### Desired Outcomes

*There is evidence of rereading in the students’ drafts of application of the demonstration/model/share.*

Students apply the learning as evidenced by:

- cross out to delete sentences or parts of sentences.
- cross out words and make changes in word choice while they write.
- use carats to insert words or phrases they may have missed or want to add.
- may have used “cut and paste” to add multiple sentences or a paragraph.

### Ongoing Assessment - Formative Assessment/Progress Monitoring

**Teachers...**

Ask students, “**What did you notice about my writing?” “What did you notice about what I used to create my writing?”**

Check to see if students are picking up on your writing process, for example:

- Rereading (to figure out what to say next, to revisit and rethink what you’ve just written)
- Revising as you go; some editing as you go
- Composing a lead to capture reader’s attention
- Thinking about word choice, as well as the critical attributes you’ve listed together on **class anchor chart**.
PREPARE

Students for writing in the genre (Prewrite/rehearsal)
Set expectations, model scaffolded conversations, provide time and guidance for students to prewrite/plan their thinking piece

Teachers

Prewrite/Rehearsal...
- Revisit criteria and set expectations.
  - Criteria come from application of mini-lessons and critical attributes from noticings.
  - Set expectations for the writing workshop.
- Revisit chosen audience for student writing.
- Have public, in-depth conversations with one or two students (whole class and/or small group, “fishbowl”)
- Allow students to practice structured conversations with a partner.
- Demonstrate planning options for Prewriting/Rehearsal, such as:
  - Brainstorming
  - Listing
  - Telling the story out loud to a partner

Desired Outcomes

Students...
- are able to identify the critical attributes of the genre in their own writing.
- write with more confidence; they get started quicker and write for longer periods of time.
- are able to talk about the purpose and audience.
- begin to understand what it means to narrow the topic.
- understand that “adding details” means making the piece more interesting to the reader, creating a picture in the readers’ minds, etc.

Ongoing Assessment - Formative Assessment/Progress Monitoring

Teachers...

- Have students restate what they are to do.
- One way to do this is to co-create a simple rubric, culled from the class anchor chart.
- If you’ve done a good job frontloading, almost all students will be ready and prepared to write.
- Ask something like, “Who still needs help with a topic or getting started? Ok, stay with me, and I’ll help you.”
- Have public scaffolded conversations with those several students till they are ready to begin writing on their own. Students start planning a piece by talking to a partner.
SUSTAINED TIME TO WRITE
interwoven with focused lessons tied to student needs in relation to the established learning targets established in CAP

Teachers

- If the audience was not predetermined, negotiate the audience with the class or with individual students.
- Stop writing for a brief mid-workshop mini-lesson/teaching point (2-5 minutes). Base the teaching points on previously taught concepts and formative data collected through conferences.

Use the following recursively during sustained time to write:
- Teach focus lessons to support student needs (through group mini-lessons, in over-the-shoulder check-ins, and in individual conferences).
- Continue to model and use shared writing, adjusting instruction based on the needs of the students.
- Not a linear process.

Desired Outcomes

Students...
- are able to write for at least 30-40 minutes as they mature as writers.
- begin to ask you or a classmate, “Read this. Does this make sense?”
- know how and when to seek help and find resources. They may reread books used during immersion to find inspirations for:
  ◊ leads
  ◊ endings
  ◊ word choice
  ◊ organization
- monitor and apply writing goals they set at the end of the last study.

Ongoing Assessment - Formative Assessment/Progress Monitoring
- Students imitate specific characteristics of the genre being studied.
- Students revisit the anchor charts.
- When students are engaged in writing and know what to do, the room has an engaged working hum.
- No one asks, “How long does my writing have to be?”
- The teacher is able to conduct conferences, uninterrupted by other students.
- When things do not go smoothly during writing time, ask, “What happened today that worked well?”
- And then, “What do we need to work on? What can you do so that things run more smoothly tomorrow?”

This is a time when writers commit their ideas to paper and the writing takes shape.

Benefits from sustained time to write include development of student stamina and writing fluency, as well as practice, transfer, and reapplication of writing skills and strategies.
CONFER about content
with students on content during and after drafting using over-the-shoulder, group, and individual conferences

Teachers

- Celebrate the work and the writer’s strengths
- Focus on content first
  - During a conference of any kind, for the first reading, ask the writer to read the story and try not to look at the child’s paper (so you can first concentrate on what the child is trying to say).
- Acknowledge the child and the hard work he/she has put into this piece of writing—respond as a reader
- Use public conferences for making teaching points and having focus lessons (mini-lessons)
- Identify what the writer needs to move forward
- Begin with content, organization, and meaning before editing conferences
- Teach students to value revision
- Revise your writing in front of students

Desired Outcomes

Students...
... are willing to make changes.
... are willing and able to use the suggestions on sticky notes to improve their writing for the reader.
... are confident and comfortable in the author’s chair.
... pick up on suggestions made to other students during public conferences.
... understand that revisions are for the reader.

Ongoing Assessment - Formative Assessment/Progress Monitoring

- Use conferring as a formative assessment recognizing the writer’s strengths and opportunities for growth
  - Focus on content first
  - Acknowledge the child and the hard work he/she has put into this piece of writing
- Use group, over-the-shoulder, and individual conferences for making teaching points and focus lessons (mini-lessons)
- Identify what the writer needs to move forward
- Begin with content, organization, and meaning
- Teach students to value revision
- Revise your writing in front of student
CONFER about editing expectations
with students on editing expectations after ideas-revision is underway, using over-the-shoulder, group, and individual conferences

Teachers

- Involve students so they are part of the decision-making in determining what they are able to do independently.
- Hold students accountable for what is agreed upon and what has been previously taught.
- Hold editing conferences (individual and/or peer conferences) once students have done all they can on their own.
- Model/demonstrate an editing lesson every 6-8 lessons in the mini-lesson and every 3-4 times as they individually confer with a student writer.

There is a difference between revision and editing:
- A writer revises for ideas
- A writer edits for standard English conventions (grammar, spelling, usage, punctuation)

Desired Outcomes

Students...

... use an editing chart to independently edit their papers.
... are aware of the expectations for editing.
... seek out the help of student editors when appropriate.
... are able to articulate their questions about punctuation, capitalization, spelling, grammar.
... show increasing competence in editing by not having to “go back” and fix errors that they missed.
... show they understand that good editing shows respect for the reader.

Ongoing Assessment - Formative Assessment/Progress Monitoring

Use students’ responses during the shared writing to set editing expectations to determine what they know, how high their expectations are, and what you need to teach them.

Note whether or not students are taking responsibility for doing most of the editing work. This observation tells the teacher where to go next with the student regarding editing.
Celebrate Publish
encourage students to do more in the genre to transfer their learning

Teachers

- Think about using a variety of publishing options. *(Not all writing will be formally published)*
- Share with the intended audience so students will understand that writing is a purposeful, powerful form of communication and to celebrate students’ efforts.
- Make pieces available for students to read.
- Provide opportunities for students to transfer and reapply the learning in new situations.
  - Expect that students will transfer and reapply the learning with independence. *How have I set the students up to be independent?*

Desired Outcomes

Students...

... transfer their learning as shown by application outside of the study—across the day, unprompted.
... notice the characteristics of the genre studied without prompting.
... start to suggest books in a particular genre from the library or the classroom library for read-aloud.
... can identify what they tried as a writer and what they have learned.
... celebrate their writing accomplishments.
... set goals for future writing.

Ongoing Assessment - Formative Assessment/Progress Monitoring

- Students choose to write a variety of genres.
- Students are accurately representing the characteristics of a genre in their writing.
- Students choose to engage in the genre outside of the study.
- The teacher asks, “What did you learn?” and “How else might you use this genre?”

INDEPENDENCE IS THE GOAL– It is about teaching the writer, not the writing.
STUDENTS NEED TO ‘OWN’ THE WRITING SKILLS AND STRATEGIES TAUGHT.

AVOID OVER-SCAFFOLDING throughout the study!

- Can students transfer and reapply the learning outside of the study?
- How have I set students up for this expectation?
- How am I using ‘mini-assessments’ along the way to monitor student independently transferring and re-applying the learning from the mini-lessons?
- How am I releasing responsibility to the students for application of the learning?

Publishing can take many forms. It does not need to be an extravaganza.

“Publishing means finding places in the world for our students’ writing to touch many audiences...”
- Shelley Harwayne
WRITING MYTHS BUSTED!

Myth:
During the immersion phase of the genre study, the critical attributes are ‘constructed’ with the students ‘on the spot’.

Busted:
To a degree... yes, but not totally. The students and teacher ‘construct’ the anchor chart together as the students are immersed in mentor texts. The students read text of the type they are expected to write, containing the critical attributes of the study. But...as the unit of study is planned, the teacher immerses him/herself in the genre first and has a clear idea of the critical attributes. Although class anchor charts are created together with the students (as the students “read as writers”), the teacher knows the direction they are going.

- The teacher knows the critical attributes of the genre through their planning of the unit of study.
- The teacher uses the Jeffco Additional Supports for Writing Instruction to guide their thinking.
- The teacher uses cues, questions, and prompts to scaffold the students to unpack the critical attributes from the mentor texts to place on the class anchor chart.
- Students will more than likely come up with critical attributes you may not have considered as you pre-planned. Celebrate!

Myth:
Reading time is used for the immersion phase of genre study.

Busted:
Think of the Jeffco Literacy Blocks and the purposes for each of the structures. Although students are purposefully exposed to a variety of genres during INSTRUCTIONAL READ ALOUDS, SHARED READING, and GUIDED READING, the focus in those reading structures are to teach how to read those texts. The immersions phase of a writing study occurs in the WRITING BLOCK for 3-5 days, not in the READING BLOCK.

Myth:
Students don’t write during the IMMERSION component of the study.

Busted:
Students need to write every day! As students ‘read as writers’ during the Immersion part of the study, students work on their ‘novel’ or ‘back up work’. Students often like to write longer ‘novel’ type pieces and this is an opportunity for them to do so. ‘Back up work’ refers to incomplete writing pieces, pieces they would like to revisit, or ideas that have not been started yet. Their Writer’s Notebooks is a great source for them. Students may be exploring the genre by beginning to develop ideas or by beginning to research their topic.
To learn more about Genre Study, check out the following books...

- Heather Lattimer, *Thinking Through Genre*
- Katie Wood Ray, *Study Driven*
- Regie Routman, *Writing Essentials*
Actions for Planning a Writing Unit of Study

⇒ Guide for Initial Teacher Actions

⇒ Writing Unit of Study Planning Models  *[Grades 1, 3, and 5]*

⇒ Calendars for Planning Writing Unit of Study Models

⇒ Description of How to Use the Writing Unit of Study Planning Organizer

⇒ “Ripped from a Plan Book”—examples of a day in the Writing Block  *[Grades K, 2, 4, 6]*
Planning for a Writing Unit of Study: Guide for Initial Teacher Actions

- What is my data—both formal and informal—about my student’s writing?
- Look at the Writing Curriculum Map for my grade.
  - Note the title of the Unit.
  - Choose a form of writing based on student needs, conversations with team mates and other grade levels, connections to other contents, etc...
- Look at the current and the next Planning Template. Compare Knows and Demonstrates.
  - What will still be there the next time frame?
  - What will go away?
  - What is new?
- Knows and Demonstrates
  - On the current Planning Template, mark out Knows and Demonstrates that students have under control or mastered.
  - Highlight the Knows and Demonstrates that student’s need to learn. When you plan, consider if the Knows and Demonstrates are whole class lessons or small groups.
  - Looking at the Knows and Demonstrates, find Essential Questions that complement these.
- What are the Critical Attributes?
  - Immerse yourself in the genre by looking at mentor text for the form you have chosen. Explore “What makes ______ writing _______?”
  - Unpack the critical attributes through that immersion as part of the planning process.
  - Review the Jeffco Writing Support Documents for the genre.
  - As you plan and immerse yourself in the genre through looking at mentor texts, consider the 6-Traits to identify Critical Attributes.
- Focus Lessons
  - Knowing the Critical Attributes and the Knows and Demonstrates, what might be some focus lessons I need to plan for? (Whole group and small group)
- Expectations
  - Timeline, length, publishing format, other considerations...
Thoughts on Implementing Genre Study

The writing workshop format is used during all phases of the genre study. During the IMMERSION phase, it makes sense that your mini-lessons would become a bit longer.

- The nature of the discussion as the anchor charts are built with the students requires a bit more time than a 10-15 minute mini-lesson.
- However, still allow time for students to write during the IMMERSION phase. See the Immersion ideas earlier in the CALI.
- Ensure that you close your mini-lessons by revisiting the learning goal from the beginning of the lesson and launch the students into sustained time to write.

Keep in mind the IMMERSION phase occurs in the writing block.

- An idea to consider is to introduce 1-2 texts you will be using well before the actual IMMERSION phase in the Writing Workshop. This could be done in an instructional read aloud or in shared reading:
  - At this time, the focus is not on the critical attributes, but rather on reading skills and strategies.
  - Students are ‘reading as a reader’. When students move into IMMERSION of the genre during writing workshop, the students are ‘reading as a writer’.
  - *How does this help you as a reader vs. how does this help you as a writer?*
- As always, reading widely and in a variety of genres—fiction and non-fiction—supports students to learn how to comprehend as a reader and how to mimic writing. This wide exposure also builds background knowledge and vocabulary.
## Writing: Unit of Study Planning Organizer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit of Study:</th>
<th>Unit Time Frame:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### BIG IDEA:

**Students understand that:**

### Essential Learnings: (from Planning Template)

- Pull from CAP

### Possible Focus Lessons

- **During planning:**
  - As a professional, I anticipate needs my students may have to reach the learning targets of the unit and what may need to be taught in focus lessons.
  - Adjustments are made to the anticipated lessons as the unit of study gets underway.

- **During the study:**
  - What am I learning about my students in conferring and in guided writing that will inform focus lessons?

- What are student mentor texts that reflect the type of writing I want students to write?

- Consult with teammates and Teacher Librarian to find mentor texts.

### Instructional Resources:

- Mentor Text:
  - What are student mentor texts that reflect the type of writing I want students to write?
  - Consult with teammates and Teacher Librarian to find mentor texts.

### Definition of the Genre:

- Consult the Jeffco Additional Supports for Writing.

### Critical Attributes of the Genre:

- Immerse yourself in the genre.

### Expectations

- Timeline
- Length
- Publishing Format
- Other

- Refer to the timeline on the Jeffco Writing Curriculum Maps. What are student mentor texts that reflect the type of writing I want students to write?

- Consider as you plan: Do I want a published piece? What will the finished product look like?

- Identify who the audience is…

### Additional Supports

- Consult the Jeffco Additional Supports for Teaching Writing in the Writing CALI.
# Writing Unit of Study Planning Model

## Grade 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit of Study:</th>
<th>1st Grade “Non-Fiction”</th>
<th>Unit Time Frame: 3-4 weeks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**TOPICAL UNDERSTANDING:** Writers use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic. Writers organize their writing using specific non-fiction features.

**Students understand that:**
Pictures can accompany non-fiction writing to help readers understand the information.

**Possible EQs:**
- What is the craft of non-fiction writing?
- What do writers have to teach that readers don’t already know?

## Essential Learnings: (from the Planning Template)

**Students will know:**
- Ways to add details to writing
- Concept of complete sentences

**Students will be able to:**
- Organize information into categories
- Use facts to develop a topic
- Begin to edit text for complete sentences

## Possible Focus Lessons:

- Non-fiction writers have to read lots of non-fiction text to build background knowledge before they write
- Non-fiction writers work to write the information in their own words
- Visual information, such as graphs, pictures and labels, help give the reader more information
- A table of contents or an index is helpful to the reader in finding and locating information
- Non-fiction writers take notes that are quick and do not include works like a, and, and the.
- Writing words in bold make the reader stop and recognize, “This word is important for me to know.”

## Instructional Resources:
- Chart or butcher paper, markers (Anchor charts)

## Mentor Text:
- Student writing samples (without names)
- *Are You a Butterfly?* By Judy Allen and Tudor Humphries (Backyard Book series) (Shows that writers sometimes begin with a question)
- *It’s a Frogs Life* by Steve Parker (Books can look like a real diary or journal with photos and notes taped inside)
- *What Do You Do With a Tail Like This?* By Jennifer Owings Dewey (Creating a catchy title can grab a reader’s attention)
### Writing Unit of Study Planning Model

**Grade 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit of Study: 1st Grade “Non-Fiction”</th>
<th>Unit Time Frame: 3-4 weeks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Definition of the Genre:**
Non-fiction writing or informational writing explains or gives specific facts about a topic using non-fiction features as a primary focus.

**Critical Attributes of the Genre:**
- Title often reveals what the reader will be learning
- May give a sequence or method for the reader to follow
- May use colored ink or ALL CAPS for critical directions or words for emphasis
- May include charts, graphs, diagrams, or photos with insets that provide visual detail.
- Each step or direction ends in a period; uses commas after an introductory phrase and a series of directions in the same sentence
- Closure

**Who is the audience?**
The audience includes parents during conferences and older grade buddies.

**What is the purpose?**
The purpose for writing is to inform in an engaging manner.
Calendar for Writing Unit of Study Planning Model

Grade 1 Non-Fiction Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe: 15 Days</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing Unit of Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st Grade Non-Fiction Writing Based on Student Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Unit/Comprehension Model/Demo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Unit/Comprehension Model/Demo</td>
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### Writing Unit of Study Planning Document

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit of Study:</th>
<th>Unit Time Frame:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Punctuation</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**BIG IDEA:** Authors think about punctuation and how to use it effectively.

**Students understand that:**

Punctuation enhances text

**Essential Learnings:**

- What ending punctuation is and how/when to use it

**Possible Focus Lessons:**

- **Capital letters**
  - Proper nouns
  - Begin a sentence
- **Ending punctuation**
- **Why is it necessary**
- **Other types of punctuation and how it enhances text**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Resources:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentor Text:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <em>Yo! Yes?</em> laschka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Punctuation Takes a Vacation <em>Robin Ruiver</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <em>No David!</em> shannon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <em>Tiger Can't Sleep</em> by S.J. Fore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <em>Eek! Creak! Snicker</em> sneak Rhonda Bowler Greene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <em>The Very Noisy Night</em> Diana Tendy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Possible FAQs:**

- How can/does punctuation enhance text?
- What are some interesting ways authors use punctuation?
- What types of punctuation end sentences (end a thought)?
- When are capital letters used?

**Writing Unit of Study Planning Model**

**Grade 1**

Page 1
Writing Unit of Study Planning Model
Grade 1

Page 2

Unit of Study Planning Document

Personal Narrative

Fiction

Definition of the Genre:

Critical Attributes of the Genre:

"..."

? ?

""

Use punctuation to enhance text

Punctuation gives the reader information

* Signals end of a sentence

Expectations

Who is the audience? Readers

What is the purpose? Enhance text for the reader; i.e., you

How to read the text i.e., you

Timing: 2 weeks

Length: Book

Publishing Format: Copy and rewrite into a book
# Writing Unit of Study Planning Model

## Grade 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit of Study:</th>
<th>3rd Grade Non-Fiction Writing</th>
<th>Unit Time Frame: 4-5 weeks (20-25 days)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Form:</td>
<td>“How-to” Procedural Writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BIG IDEA:** Patterns and structures help us understand words and texts.

## Students understand that...

Information can be collected, stored, and shared using multiple text forms.

### Possible EQs:
- How do writers organize “how-to” writing?
- Why is it important for authors to include specific content vocabulary or vocabulary from text in their writing?

## Essential Learnings: (from the Planning Template)

### Students will know:
- Notes and lists are ways to represent learning (writing)
- The Writing Processes: prewrite/rehearsal, draft/compose, revise, edit, publish
- The critical attributes of “how-to” writing

### Students will be able to (Dos and Essential Learnings):
- Develop supporting visual information (charts, maps, illustrations, models).
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
  - Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension.

## Possible Focus Lessons:

- Introducing “how-to” writing
- Modeling multiple “how-to” writings – think alouds
- Model implementing critical attributes of “how-to” writing (think alouds, model/demonstration)
- Model goal setting and personal execution of specific Essential Learnings in own writing
- Management of facts and details gathered from resources (e.g., graphic organizers, note cards, computer software)
- Rubric creation & implementation
- Use of non-fiction text features (e.g., photos, illustrations, timelines, stages in a process)
- Crafting an inviting beginning/introductory paragraph that sets the purpose and context
- Revision of word choice and organization for clarity of steps of the procedure being described in the “how-to” writing

## Instructional Resources:

### Mentor Text:
- Student writing samples (without names)
- *Draw It! Sports Stars* and *Draw It! Fashion Design* by Tiffany Peterson
- *Making Salsa* ([www.readinga-z.com](http://www.readinga-z.com))
- Check *Time for Kids, Weekly Reader, National Geographic for Kids*, etc.
- Sincerely Yours, *Writing Your Own Letter* by Nancy Loewen (©2009, [www.picturewindowbooks.com](http://www.picturewindowbooks.com) for additional titles)
- *How to Play the Hawaiian Ukulele, 10 Easy Lessons* by The University of Hawaii Curriculum Research and Development Group (©2000, University of Hawaii)
- *Juggling for the Complete Klutz* by John Cassidy and B.C. Rimbeaux
## Writing Unit of Study Planning Model

### Grade 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit of Study: 3rd Grade Non-Fiction Writing</th>
<th>Unit Time Frame: 4-5 weeks (20-25 days)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Essential Learnings continued:
*(from the Planning Template)*

**Students will be able to (Dos and Essential Learnings):**

- State main ideas and include sufficient details or facts for appropriate depth of information (naming, describing, explaining, comparing, use of visual images).
- Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details.

- With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
  - Capitalize appropriate words in titles.
  - Form and use the simple verb tenses. (e.g., I walked; I walk; I will walk)

- Ensure subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement.

- Form and use comparative and superlative adjectives and adverbs, and choose between the depending on what is to be modified.

- Form and use possessives.

- Consult reference materials, including beginning dictionaries, as needed to check and correct spellings.

### Possible Focus Lessons continued:

- Using temporal transition words or phrases, if appropriate
- The punctuation of “how-to” texts
- Scaffold to small group shared writing with lesson foci on specific Essential Learnings and attributes needing support

### Instructional Resources continued:

- Chart or butcher paper, markers (Anchor charts)
## Writing Unit of Study Planning Model

### Grade 3

| Unit of Study: | 3rd Grade Non-Fiction Writing | Unit Time Frame: 4-5 weeks (20-25 days) |

### Definition of the Genre:
Practical how-to writing explains how to do something or how to make something. May try to convince the readers that it would be interesting thing to do or make.

### Critical Attributes of the Genre:
- Title reveals what the reader will be doing, making, or what you will accomplish
- Text explains the process to accomplish a task
- Directions are written in specific, sequential order, if required; language is specific enough to allow the reader to replicate the procedure
- Steps are often numbered, generally begin with verbs, and are usually connected with transitional words and/or phrases
- May use colored ink or ALL CAPS for critical directions or words for emphasis
- May include charts, graphs, diagrams, or photos with insets that provide visual detail for a step or multiple steps
- Give helpful hints, tips, or warnings to avoid or correct anticipated problems
- Each step or direction ends in a period; uses commas after an introductory phrase and a series of directions in the same sentence
- May tell the benefits of learning the process
- No closure since it is not appropriate for this type of text

### Who is the audience?
The audience includes parents during conferences, 1st grade study buddies, and possible class book to include in the school’s LMC.

### What is the purpose?
The purpose for writing is to inform.
**Timeframe: 20-25 Days**

Writing Unit of Study: **3rd Grade Non-fiction Writing - ”How-to” Procedural**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Immerse students in “how-to” procedural mentor texts; chart noticings/attributes</strong></td>
<td><strong>Conferring</strong> (with reflection, goal setting, practice &amp; transfer of skills to writers’ notebooks)</td>
<td><strong>Students Prewrite/Rehearse/gather information for topics</strong></td>
<td><strong>Conferring</strong></td>
<td><strong>Model/Demonstration Mini-Lessons based on data from elevated needs through student observations &amp; CAP</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conferring</strong></td>
<td><strong>Model/Demonstration Mini-Lessons based on data from elevated needs through student observations &amp; CAP</strong></td>
<td><strong>Conferring &amp; Small Group Instruction</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sustained Writing Time</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sustained Writing Time</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Conferring & Small Group Instruction** | **Publishing Student Texts** (could be published on a slide show, web page, classroom blog, or through word processing) | **Publishing Student Texts** (could be published on a slide show, web page, classroom blog, or through word processing) | **Time to Celebrate!**
What goals were met?
What goals need to continue? What goals need to be set? | **2-day On Demand Writing “how-to” procedural**
(prompt tied to a familiar procedure; could be tied to a procedure in any content) |

**Calendar for Writing Unit of Study Planning Model**

Grade 3 Non-Fiction Writing
**Writing Unit of Study Planning Model**  
**Grade 5**  
page 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit of Study:</th>
<th>5th grade Persuasive Writing</th>
<th>Unit Time Frame: 3-4 weeks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**BIG IDEAS:**  
Persuasive texts cause readers to think, feel, or both. Persuasion is a process to convince others to accept our points of view, ideas, or perspectives.

**Students understand that...**
- Writing to persuade states the author’s point of view.
- Facts support opinions.
- Persuasion is a process to convince others to accept our points of view, ideas, or perspectives.
- Persuasive writing usually has strong arguments (facts and reasons) that prove or support the main idea.
- Writers select forms for a variety of subjects and audiences in order to effectively convey messages.

**Possible EQs:**
- What makes persuasive writing persuasive writing?
- Why try to persuade others?
- Why argue?
- What are the characteristics and structures of persuasive writing?
- How are facts used to support opinions?
- What language do authors use to persuade their readers?

**Essential Learnings: (from the Planning Template)**

**Students will know:**
- Characteristics of writing purposes: to influence or persuade.
- Subject, audience, and purpose.
- Paraphrasing.
- Correct capitalization in writing including dialogue.
- Plagiarism.

**Students will be able to:**
- Consult and list multiple sources for research.
- Express thought in own words (paraphrasing vs. plagiarism)
- Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
  - Include cause and effect, opinions, and other opposing viewpoints in persuasive writing
  - Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer’s purpose

**Possible Focus Lessons:**
- After reading several mentor texts, focus on the introductions. What makes them powerful? interesting?
- Generate lists of words the evoke strong emotions
- What are the difference between facts and opinions? How to write each
- Where to obtain facts that support opinions
- Developing a plan for persuasive writing- stating opinion, facts, argument for, addressing the argument against
- How to embed questions into persuasive writing
- Types of appeals - emotional and logical
- Organization patterns for persuasive writing

**Instructional Resources:**
- Chart or butcher paper, markers (for Anchor charts)

**Mentor Text:**
- Student writing samples (without names)
- Commentaries from newspapers, magazines, etc...
- *Should There Be Zoos? A Persuasive Text* by Tony Stead
- *Persuasive letters* by Benchmark
- Commentaries by Leonard Pitts, Mitch Albom and others (find these online)
## Writing Unit of Study Planning Model

**Grade 5 page 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit of Study: 5th grade Persuasive Writing</th>
<th>Unit Time Frame: 3-4 weeks</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Essential Learnings continued: (from the Planning Template)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Possible Focus Lessons</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Link opinion and reasons using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., consequently, specifically)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use figurative language when the use supports the purpose of the writing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use accurate and precise vocabulary to support a position.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Select words to create clear images for the reader.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Definition of the Genre:**

*Persuasive writing is the writer’s chance to convince the reader to think the way s/he does about something.*

**Some Critical Attributes of the Genre:**

- Opinions clearly stated with reasons to support the opinions
- Uses quotes, facts, statistics to support their opinion
- Conclusion mandates/demands that something happens OR restates position/opinion/belief
- Language- may use flattery, hyperbole, exaggeration
- May address opposing point of view
- May use rhetorical questions
- Punctuation- uses question marks for questions and exclamation marks to emphasize
- Involves the reader using words like “we” or “our”
- Repeats a word or phrase to get their point across

**Who is the audience?**

Audience is critical for persuasive writing. Each student will identify who their audience is prior to writing.

**What is the purpose?**

The purpose for writing is to persuade the reader to agree with the writer.
Comprehensive Approach to Literacy Instruction

Timeframe: 19 days
Writing Unit of Study: 5th grade Persuasive Letters

Calendar for Writing Unit of Study Planning Model
Grade 5 Persuasive Writing

Week 1
- Immerse
- Student choice writing
- Confer

Week 2
- Immerse
- Model/Demo
- Student choice writing
- Students prewrite/rehearse
- Confer/small groups

Week 3
- Mini lessons based on students' needs
- Sustained writing time
- Conferring/small groups

Week 4
- Publish
- Celebrate!
- Student self-reflection, what they learned, goal setting
- On-demand writing (2 days)
- Writing to a persuasive prompt
- Finish on-demand writing
- New unit
- Immerse
- Student choice writing
- Confer

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January 2011
Core Writing Instruction

Comprehensive Approach to Literacy Instruction
Writing CALI
8:15-11:15 Kindergarten—LITERACY BLOCK
10:15-11:15 WRITING (Writer’s Workshop) 30 minutes

Writing Mini-Lesson—7 minutes:
Background: The teacher is focused on drawing adds details to writing (see Writing Curriculum Map).

Teacher has immersed students in picture books, focusing on details in pictures.

Using a picture book, such as Cynthia Rylant’s Scarecrow, help students notice ways the author uses illustrations to add depth and details to the text.

Writing/Conferences—18 minutes:

- teach and gather formative assessment for diagnostic and progress monitoring as students write

STUDENTS:
Students continue to work on writing/drawing while adding detail to their writing/drawings. Students may or may not use the idea of adding details to their writing/drawings from the mini-lessons depending on their ability at this time.

TEACHER:
- Checks in with individual students and has “over the shoulder” conferences focused about adding details to their drawings and writing.
- Jots down anecdotal notes on students about strengths and opportunities for their growth as writers to make instructional decisions for tomorrow’s lesson.
- Scaffolds students to their very next step. For example,
  - a child that has stick figures could add clothes;
  - a child with detailed figures could add scenery, etc.
  - a child using a circle with eyes for a figure could add legs and arms;
  - a child who uses beginning consonants is encouraged to add ending sounds.

Writing Closure—5 minutes:
The teacher pulls all students together as a large group and asks, “How do details help the reader enjoy and understand your writing?”
8:15-11:15 Second Grade—LITERACY BLOCK
10:15-11:15 WRITING (Writer’s Workshop) 60 minutes

-writing Mini-Lesson—10 minutes:
Background: The teacher is focused on character descriptions (see Writing Curriculum Map).

Using a book about a famous person, the teacher reads aloud while having the students focus on how the author uses character descriptions to bring life to the writing. Since this is a new focus, the teacher has planned several places to stop in the book and model their thinking. The descriptions will be written on a class anchor chart entitled, “Words that Bring Characters to Life”.

-writing/Conferences—40 minutes:
- teach and gather formative assessment for diagnostic and progress monitoring as students write

STUDENTS:
Students continue to write narratives and are encouraged to give it a go to include descriptions.

TEACHER:
• The teacher checks in with three students and has “over the shoulder” conferences focused on KUD’s and Essential Learnings from August-November.
• After these conferences, the teacher pulls a small group to work on endings. The teacher has determined by informal assessments that this group needs explicit instruction on endings.
• The teacher jots down anecdotal notes on students about strengths and opportunities for their growth as writers to make instructional decisions for tomorrow’s lesson.

-writing Closure—10 minutes:
Students have a quick standing conversation with a partner and share where they have tried to add description to their writing.
The teacher pulls all students together as a large group and asks, “How do character descriptions bring life to writing?” Students engage in a Think-Pair-Share.
12:20-2:35  Fourth Grade LITERACY BLOCK
1:35—2:35  WRITING (Writer’s Workshop)

Writing Mini-Lesson—10 minutes:
Background: Students have begun inquiry on “What makes persuasion persuasion?” for a unit on persuasive writing.

Mini-lesson for today is to continue this inquiry. Students review attributes listed on their anchor chart that they have discovered from previous mini lessons. Students pair up to look at a common piece of text and determine additional attributes to add to their class anchor chart entitled “What makes persuasion persuasion?” After partner discussion, the teacher pulls the class back together and they discuss ideas to add to their class chart.

Writing/Conferences—40 minutes:
- teach and gather formative assessment for diagnostic and progress monitoring as students write

STUDENTS:
- Students continue to work on choice writing or pieces from earlier in the year.
- The students work independently writing or peer conferring when not meeting with the teacher (see below).

TEACHER:
- The teacher meets with one preselected group of 4 students (determined by informal assessment of student writing and writing behaviors) for about 10 minutes.
  - The teacher has observed that this group of students often has a difficult time developing a list of possible topics to write about.
  - The teacher confers with the small group on possible topics so that they will have ideas to share on the next day when the whole class will brainstorm possible topics.
- After meeting with this small group, the teacher has brisk ‘over the shoulder’ conferences with about three to four individual students on individual needs related to the KUD’s and Essential Learnings on CAP.
- The teacher jots down anecdotal notes on students about strengths and opportunities for their growth as writers to make instructional decisions for tomorrow’s lesson.

Writing Closure—10 minutes:
The teacher pulls all students together as a large group and ends the lesson by revisiting the question “What makes persuasion ‘persuasion’?” Students partner share how they know a piece of writing is persuasive.
1:05—3:15  Sixth Grade LITERACY BLOCK
2:15—3:15  WRITING (Writer’s Workshop)

**Writing Mini-Lesson**—10 minutes:

**Background:** Students have begun inquiry on informational text exploring “What makes informational writing informational writing?” and “How do authors engage their readers in informational writing?” The form they are using is BROCHURE and the topic is a country in the Western Hemisphere. Students have been through the IMMERSION stage of this genre study around informational texts and moved through planning and drafting in the writing process.

Now as students write their own informational text, an area of need has arisen from the group as a whole is around the use of transitional phrases. Today’s skill lesson ties back to the KUD’s on CAP. Through assessment notes in conferences as students are writing their own informational piece, the teacher observed a teaching point they all needed as a class around transitional words. **This is one-day craft lesson** to explore “What makes writing flow?”

In the mini-lesson for today, the teacher uses a mentor text which contains effective transitional phrases that are natural-sounding/not ‘stilted’; ask the students prior to a shared reading: “What makes writing flow?” Chart transitional phrases to create the beginnings of an anchor chart for transitional phrases. (10 minutes)

**Writing/Conferences**—40 minutes:

— teach and gather formative assessment for diagnostic and progress monitoring as students write

**STUDENTS:**
Students continue to work on their own informational text according to their research plan [when not meeting with the teacher (see below)].

- The students work independently—giving it a go to adjust/add transitional phrases per the mini-lesson.
- The students may engage in peer conferring on transitional phrases as today’s topic.

**TEACHER:**
- The teacher meets with two preselected group of 4 students (determined by informal assessment of student writing and writing behaviors) for about 10 minutes each.
  - Through targeted observations over the last few days, the teacher determined that:
    - One group of students often has a difficult time using transitional phrases and this small group will benefit from targeted instruction following the mini-lesson today.
    - The focus of the second small group lesson will be on the critical attributes of informational texts through reading together some of the mentor texts.
- After meeting with these small groups, the teacher has individual conferences (about 4-5 minutes each) with about 3-4 individual students regarding individual needs related to the KUD’s on CAP.
- The teacher jots down anecdotal notes on students about strengths and opportunities for their growth as writers to make instructional decisions for tomorrow’s lesson.

**Writing Closure**—10 minutes:

The teacher pulls all students together as a large group and ends the lesson by revisiting the question “What makes writing flow?” Students partner share an example or two from their writing of how transitional phrases impact the reader.