

HANSEN'S COMPONENTS FOR WRITING WORKSHOP



TIME

“Writing takes time. It is hard to pop in and out of a writing world.”

Cathy Roller, 1996

- Students need a block of time to write that begins on the first day of school and continues from day to day.
- Writers need long blocks of uninterrupted time.
- Students need to write often and on a regular schedule.
- Writing is hard work and requires much practice.
- Writers need time to choose topics.
- When students write often they start to look at their world as an arena of writing topics and usually come to writing class with a topic in mind.
- Writers need time to think
- Writers need time to interact with other writers.
- Writers need time to show their excitement.
- Teachers and students read and share each other's writing.
- Writing teachers are writers.

CHOICE

- Writers decide what to write.
- Students are responsible for deciding what to write about.
- Topic choice gives students the chance to do their best.
- Children get ideas from professional authors.
- By sharing their writing with peers, students discover additional writing options.
- Everyone honors the writer's purpose.
- Writers change their intentions as they write.
- Writers decide which writing strategies and format to use.
- Writing often begins by talking.

RESPONSE

Responsibility between teachers and students:

- We understand students know something and that they can write.
- We teach writing by responding to student drafts (in process as well as finished).
- In conferences we find out where the student is and help the student move ahead.

Responsibility among students:

- Students respond to what their classmates know.
- Students teach each other.

- Writers share what they know.
- Writers have conferences (response sessions).
- Writers discuss and confer with each other.

Responsibility to self:

- Students decide what to write about, what form the writing will take, what information to include, who to share it with, and whether to take a draft to final copy.

STRUCTURE

The teacher moves among the students:

- We demonstrate our sense of authority.
- We demonstrate the discipline of work.
- We spend time listening to our students elaborate on their writing.
- We write and share our writing with our students.
- We value the writer's control.

The students work together:

- Students share their excitement.
- Students ask each other for help.
- Students learn content from each other, generate ideas, learn new mechanical skills, and strive to keep each others' interest high.
- Students have all-class, small group, or individual conferences about their writing.
- Students like writing together.

The students work alone:

- Students can plan their writing because they know on which days they will write, at what time and how they will be spending their writing time.

COMMUNITY

A supportive community:

- Writers support each other and value the contribution of others.
- We know that everyone is an interesting person.
- We foster a climate of trust and acceptance.
- We learn from each other and talk about the way our fellow students write.

A diverse community:

- We foster diversity
- Diversity pushes our thinking.
- Daily whole class conferences provide time for all to learn from and to receive help from the group in all its diversity.

Sense of self within the community:

- We join a community of readers and writers.
- Our community values us.
- Write for each other **not** for just an audience of one (i.e. the teacher).

A Sample Writing Block: A “Writer’s Workshop”

Whole Group Gathering (5-10 min.)

Possibilities:

- Writing modeled by teacher
- Procedural lessons (for example, where to get materials)
- “Mini lesson” (for example, a composition or usage skill)

Status of the Class (3-5 min.)

- “What are you going to write about today?”
- “What will you be working on today?”
Encourage students to use appropriate writing terms (examples: draft, revising, editing, final draft, etc.)

Writing (20-40 min.)

Teacher:

- Conferences with students

Students:

- Write on topics of their choice and conference with peers and/or teacher
- Revise, edit, and publish chosen pieces of writing

Gathering/Sharing (10-15 min.)

Students voluntarily share writing, comments, and suggestions, and celebrate their authorship (whole group or small group).

STATUS CHECK

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Mini-lesson					
1.					
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Recording Symbols
 D-1=Draft #1 D-2=Draft #2 RW=Rewriting Final Copy
 E/Con=Editing Conference With Teacher
 S/Con=Conference With Another Student
 RV(D#_)=Revising on a draft AS=Author Share

WRITING WORKSHOP

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

I. BEFORE STARTING THE WORKSHOP

A. SET UP CLASSROOM

_____ Writing Center – space where students can go to get supplies, tools, check references, etc.

_____ Labeled Trays – designated trays for students writing (ex: Writing Ready to be Edited)

_____ Permanent Writing Folders – area to file all pieces so students have access to their writing throughout the school year

_____ Notebooks or Daily Writing Folders – container and space to store items

_____ Conference Corners – a place where writers can talk or confer with each other

_____ Area for Mini-Lessons and Group Share – an area for students to gather as a group

_____ Forms – space to keep copies of miscellaneous forms

B. CREATE PREDICTABLE ROUTINES

- Transition from mini-lesson to writing time
- Decide **what** students will be doing during writing time. Think about **where** and **how** they will do these things. Possibilities include:
 - Working in their notebooks
 - Composing, revising, or editing drafts
 - Studying model pieces of literature
 - Having peer conferences
 - Getting writing supplies, literature, reference from writing center
 - Getting a piece of writing ready for publication
- Designate a specified number of minutes as silent writing time
_____ minutes (No Talking, No Walking)
- Establish consequences for students who consistently fail to realize their plans or goals – hold students accountable.

II. FIRST FEW WEEKS OF WORKSHOP

POSSIBLE MINI-LESSONS (Expectations & Procedures):

- Describe the roles of the students and the teacher during workshop.
- Demonstrate how writers use their writer's notebooks or daily folders to collect and develop ideas.
- Develop a repertoire of strategies so students can find ideas to write about (Combats the statement, "I don't know what to write about."):
 - Making a sketch
 - Looking around the room and letting the objects and people they see spark ideas
 - Getting ideas from rereading the pieces in their writing folders or entries in their writer's notebook
 - Thinking back over the last several days of their lives
 - Free-writing
 - Thinking about something they have recently read, and then writing about what it made them think about
- Teach the following strategies for words they don't know how to spell
 - Saying a word slowly ("stretching" it out) and listening for the sounds
 - Using an alphabet chart while stretching out a word
 - Using the "word wall" in the classroom
 - Asking a classmate how to spell the word
 - Taking their best shot at it and waiting to verify it later
- Teach strategies for getting unstuck and saying more about the topic
 - Rereading what they've written so far to jumpstart their thinking
 - Free-writing about the topic
 - Sketching what they're writing about
 - Reading what they've written to a classmate and having that classmate ask them questions
- Define what students can do during writing time (post a chart)
- Explain and define stages in the writing process (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing)
- Explain rules for the writing center and conference corners
- Teach procedures to follow when done with draft
- Teach students how to make plans and set goals – At the end of mini-lessons, before students begin to write, try one of the following strategies:

- Ask students to turn to a classmate and tell what they'll be doing that period, and how much they plan to write.
 - Have students write their plans and goals on Post-Its. These can be placed at the top of the draft they're working on.
 - Have students jot down their plans and goals in an "assignment box" in their writers notebooks.
 - Ask students in turn to say their plans and goals aloud
- Publish frequently (sharing finished drafts with an audience):
 - Primary – Once every two weeks
 - Intermediate – Once a month
 - Post publication dates in advance
 - Teach students there are other places to go for assistance when the teacher is conferencing with other students:
 - Look at a piece of writing by an author and see how he/she handled the problem.
 - Ask a classmate for help in a peer conference.
 - Bring the problem to their response group.
 - Help students discover that writing can be worthwhile
 - Read aloud literature. When they are moved by literature, students begin to understand that they, too, can have the same impact on readers.
 - Share your own writing.
 - Read aloud pieces written by students who are excited about writing.

III. REMAINDER OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

CONTINUE MINI-LESSONS: INCREASE EMPHASIS ON CRAFT AND SKILLS. Attend to procedures as needed.

IV. GENERAL MANAGEMENT TIPS:

- Don't take on the role of the "gatekeeper". Allow students to move from one stage of the writing process to another when they decide they're ready.
- Confer with students wherever they are in the process of writing their pieces.
- Make your presence felt around the classroom.
 - Circulate around the room as students settle into writing time.
 - Confer where students write.
 - Between conferences, take a minute to walk the room.

This piece of writing demonstrates that your child:

- Is a willing writer.
- Knows to write from top to bottom.
- Knows to write from left to right.
- Has good spacing between words.
- Hears beginning, middle, and/or ending consonant sounds.
- Hears vowel sounds.
- Uses endings (ed, ing, etc.)
- Spells frequently used words correctly.
- Transfers spelling generalizations.
- Uses punctuation.
 - Emerging
 - Developing

Comments:

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 - Extending

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