

Why WRITE?

Every Day...
Every Chance You Get...

Making Connections

"For every minute we spend reading, we spend a minute learning about writing and spelling. It's a connection not to be ignored."

~Constance Weaver, 2002

Notebook ~~Writing~~ Know-How

- or -

Everything I Need to Know About
Writing I Learned from
Nicholas Sparks

Write, Write, Write!!

The purpose of the notebook is to provide a place for students to practice writing using tried and true strategies.

"Here's the secret of writing; there is no secret." ~Ralph Fletcher

Launching the Notebook

Choose a notebook for your students that reflects your teaching and organization style.

Inside the Notebook

Table of Contents? (Inside cover)

- List strategies, dates and page# where they are located

Write from both front and back?

- Personal writing from front
- Notes from lessons from back

Who's doing all the work?

If you are working harder than your students are on their writing... something is terribly wrong!

So... how DO you get your students to write?

Pre-Writing

The Element of Surprise...

How to Trick Them into Writing!

History of a Name

How: Students write about their name or family name. How did they get their name? Tell a story about their name.

Why? The naming of something or someone is significant to writers. Understanding the history of a name leads to a much deeper understanding of that topic.

The Power of Persuasion

How: Write about something that you were successful in persuading someone to do.

Why? We are all skilled at persuasion, but we don't always stop to reflect on our skill. Can build confidence in a student's abilities.

Writing from a List

How: Make a list on a self selected topic. Star or highlight things on the list that they believe they could write more about.

Why? It's an easy, reasonable task even for students who struggle as writers.

Daily Pages

How: Provide students 10 minutes or so at the beginning of each class to simply write whatever comes into mind.

Why? It clears their heads of the clouds life leaves behind and prepares them to think more deeply.

Student Concerns

How: Ask students to brainstorm things going on in the world today - their school, community, state, etc. - and have them pick one to write about.

Why? If students are going to speak as citizens who want to see change, they must write about things that concern them.

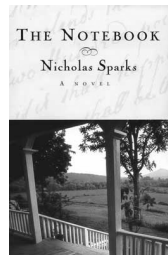
Observations

How: Make students more aware of their surroundings by reminding them that good writers use their senses. Have them write about things they observe.

Why? Writers need to create moods, settings, and pictures in the reader's mind.

Observations

Where do you think Sparks got his inspiration from? What kind of notebook entries led up to this piece?



Rereading and Highlighting

How: Have students read their entire notebook - word for word. Highlight interesting words or phrases.

Why? Writers need to get in the habit of rereading their work. They will often find ideas they want to think about in a new way.

Lifting a Line

How: Have students look at the sentences they highlighted previously. Choose one for their next entry.

Why? Gives writers a fresh start with an idea that may have been lost in another entry. Develops **Ideas** and **Fluency**... a great lead into working with Leads.

Rain fell that night, a fine, whispering rain.

Inkheart by Cornelia Funke

No one is staring at you, I promised myself.

Breaking Dawn by Stephenie Meyer

Once in some near-forgotten time a traveler, making his way across these mountains on foot, wandered into our valley which is known as Trial.

Where the Lilies Bloom by Vera and Bill Cleaver

I've watched you through his eyes, I've listened through his ears, and I tell you he's the one.

Enders Game by Orson Scott Card

Expectations

Be prepared for the "what-ifs"!

Notebook Expectations

The Student will...

1. write daily at school and at home >3x/week.
2. find topics from life, reading, and natural curiosity.
3. use mini-lesson strategies before working on something else.
4. mark entries too personal to share w/ the teacher.
5. respect the integrity of the notebook.
6. practice what they know about conventional spelling and grammar.

The Teacher will...

1. provide time each day for students to write.
2. teach strategies as ways to discover new topics. Conference w/ students.
3. teach mini-lessons regularly to teach better writing.
4. respect marked entries.
5. share their own writing and not "bleed" on student entries.
6. teach rules of grammar and treat notebook as a place for practice.

Kneading Notebooks

With a little TLC it will be worth it in the end...

Finding Patterns

Finding patterns in writing will help students see what they are subconsciously thinking about.

Developing a Topic

Students select one of their patterns to use as the topic to write a published piece.

Collect "Around" a Topic

- Once the topic is selected allow time for students to FOCUS
- Writers spend time researching, thinking and wondering about ideas

Multiple Entries for a Topic

Important step to help writers think through their pieces.

Leads to deeper, more thoughtful writing when students draft.

It's a balancing act.

"Nudging"

What to do when they're stuck!

Three by Threes

How: For three minutes students list as many three word phrases as they can about a topic.

Why? Helps students focus on parts of a larger topic. Students are forced to be specific and choosy about what they write. Helps to build fluency for timed writing.

Another Point of View

How: Share a story about a personal experience. Retell the story from another participants view.

Why? Being able to write from other people's perspective opens the writing to details, emotions, and events that may have been forgotten.

Point of View

Angel Girl
by Laurie Friedman



The Other Side
by Jacqueline Woodson



Museum Exhibit

How: Create a list of items that would be in a museum exhibit for a character or person in their narrative.

Why? Requires writers to think more deeply about who they are writing about. Leads to putting in details that allow the reader to infer information.

Drafting

Time to Draft

Just like letting dough rise...
their thoughts are mixed and
ready to rise.

Revising

When Writers Read

"I learned how to write from
writers. I didn't know any
personally, but I read."

~Cynthia Rylant

Great Leads

How: Students consider a variety of leads from various books. Groups generate different leads for a familiar book and then write or revise leads in one of their own pieces of writing.

Why? Exposing students to different kinds of leads helps students see the importance of voice and how people respond to the literature.

Mapping the Text

How: Provide an excerpt from a very richly written text and have students annotate the literary elements used. Then revisit the text and look for specific parts of speech - especially verbs.

Why? Gives students practice in the craft of reading like a writer and allows them to see how the piece was put together.

Poetry Pass

How: Provide several poems for students to annotate. Students then pass their poems through three or four students who add to the original annotation.

Why? Using poetry is a quick and manageable way to invite students to look at writer's craft and literary elements.

Charting Author's Style

How: Using authors you have studied, have students chart the various styles of writing that the authors used.

Why? This requires students to synthesize what they are learning about author's styles. It creates a reference tool to apply to their own writing.

Author	Style	Example	Text Reference
e. e. cummings	Similes that are oxymorons	"as small as a world and as large as alone."	Poem: "maggie and milly and molly and may"
Russell Freedman	Grabber leads in biographies	Action lead: "Painted and dressed for battle and singing war songs, the warriors formed orderly columns and rode out of their great encampment on the Powder River."	"Red Cloud" from <i>Indian Chiefs</i>

Editing

Writing Wrongs

How to spend less time editing and more time writing.

Color Coding Paragraphs

How: Underline different elements of paragraphs with different colors to provide a visual representation of what students need to do.

Why? Students often don't know how to make their pieces longer or where to add details. For example if there are not enough details it will be very apparent.

Playing with G.U.M.

How: Focus on one element/skill at a time. Have students use one of their own entries to practice on.

Why? Students who are weak in specific areas often become overwhelmed when given too many elements to identify. Wean them into looking for multiple errors.

Reading Backwards

How: Have students read their writing backwards in order to isolate each word. If they are unsure - circle it anyways.

Why? As students become more fluent readers, they begin to read for meaning instead of pronouncing individual words. Their brains replace the errors and they miss them entirely.

Publishing

Change the Audience

What now?

Who are they writing for?

Blogs

- www.classblogmeister.com
- www.edublogs.com

Forums

- www.proboards55.com

Webzines

*Search for websites specifically targeted at publishing teen writers

Assessing the Notebook

Reality check. Grades... ugh.

Rubrics

Create a rubric that covers all of the elements you require in the notebook. It's best to develop the rubric WITH your students so they fully understand what is expected of them!

Self Evaluations

This will allow students to think more deeply about where they started as writers, where they are now, and where they want to go.

Reflection Questions for Draft Letters

- What is your favorite part of this particular piece, and why?
- Are there any weaknesses you see in this piece, and why?
- What techniques have you tried that differed from your regular process?
- How does this piece compare to other pieces you have written?
- Does this piece connect to any mini-lessons we've done recently? Tell me how.
- What did you find difficult about this piece, and why?
- What really worked in this piece? Why did it seem to work well?
- What's one thing you would really like to do to improve the piece, if only you knew how to do it?
- What do you think is the one thing a reader is most likely to take away from your piece?

Evidence of Writing Accomplishment

Writing from a List

- Two or three pieces generated from a list

Observation

- Your best piece about an observation you made in life

Free Choice

- A free choice of anything else you think you wrote well

Evidence of Writing Craft

- Drafts of one of the five entries from Part A that show you can revise your writing so that a reader will better understand what you mean

Evidence of Writing Conventions

- Identify which two entry pieces from Part A show your best work of spelling, editing, capitalization, grammar, etc.