Writer’s Workshop

Getting Started
PONDER THIS...

“There is a great deal of data suggesting that improvements in writing will have a pay-off across the curriculum.”

- Lucy Calkins- *A Guide to the Writing Workshop Grades 3-5*
What is Writer’s Workshop?

- Writer’s Workshop is a framework for writing instruction and practice in the classroom.
NECESSARY FOUNDATIONS

“Writers do not write with words and conventions alone; writers write above all with meaning. Children will invest themselves more in their writing if they are allowed—indeed, if they are taught—to select their own topics and to write about subjects that are important to them.”

- Lucy Calkins - A Guide to the Writing Workshop Grades 3-5
What we know for sure

- Students learn to write best when they write frequently, for extended periods of time, on topics of their own choosing...
Components of Writer’s Workshop

- Writer’s Workshop follows a predictable pattern of:
  - Mini-Lesson (5-10 minutes)
  - Independent Writing (20-30 minutes)
  - Conferring (during independent writing)
  - Sharing (5-10 minutes)

TOTAL TIME: 30-50 minutes
What is a mini-lesson?

- A mini-lesson is explicit instruction in a specific writing technique taught in a short 5-10 minute period at the beginning of the workshop.
- There are four components to a mini-lesson and four types.
MINI-LESSON (10 MINUTES)

- **Connection**—access prior knowledge
  
  Teacher Talk: *Yesterday we..., Today I’m going to...*

- **Teaching**—one skill, method, four types:
  1. Procedures and Organization (routines)
  2. Strategies and Processes
  3. Skills
  4. Craft and Technique

  Teacher Talk: *I want to show you..., Watch and notice...*

- **Active Involvement**—opportunity to practice—turn and talk

  Teacher Talk: *I invite you to try it in your writing..., Turn and talk to your partner how you can...*

- **Link**—bring closure to the lesson by linking it to what has been previously learned

  Teacher Talk: *So today and everyday..., Now, you know that writers... As you continue your writing you may want to...*
What does a Mini-Lesson look like?

Whole Class Instruction: Teaching Students to Organize Information Texts to Support a Claim (5-8)

http://vimeo.com/55951303
INDEPENDENT WRITING/CONFERRING

What are the students doing?
- Writing daily.
- Determining the topics they will write about.
- Using writer’s notebooks and/or folder for organizing writing.
- Conferring with peers.
- “When you’re done, you’ve just begun.”

What is the teacher doing?
- Circulating the room, monitoring, conferring with individual students, encouraging and providing help as needed.
MID-WORKSHOP INTERRUPTIONS (1-2 MINUTES)

- Prepare for partnerships
- Reinforce the mini-lesson
- Teach a new mini-lesson
- Review and older mini-lesson
- Provide a behavior management reminder
SHARING (10-15 MINUTES)

- Students are given opportunities to share their writing pieces.
- This time allows writers to learn from each other and to see/hear good examples of writing.
- This time also allows for students to practice listening and speaking.
WRITER’S NOTEBOOK/FOLDER

- What *real* writers use
- Constant composition—may lead to larger pieces of writing...they may not.
- Provides a place to write and collect:
  - What really matters
  - What is in my heart
  - Things in my life, in this world, that I never want to forget
  - Things that haunt me
  - Odd facts, questions, odds & ends, lists, insights, quotes
  - Conversations, specific language or interesting words
Writer's Workshop Procedures

Why?

- Make the workshop run smoothly.

Examples

- What to do if they need to use the restroom or sharpen pencils.
- Save and date everything
- Write on one side of the paper and skip lines on a draft
- Write in ink so I can see your edits—never erase on your draft pieces
- Do nothing to distract me or other writers
- When you confer with me or others—use a 6 inch voice
- When you are stuck, use the resources in the room and the techniques you have been shown to help you
How Does 6 + 1 Traits fit?

Writer’s Workshop

Common Core

6 +1 Traits
Common Core

WRITING

1. Narrative
2. Informational/Explanatory
3. Argument

Common Core Writing Links: 6th, 7th, 8th
6 + 1 Traits

1. Ideas
2. Organization
3. Voice
4. Word Choice
5. Sentence Fluency
6. Conventions
+1: Presentation
6 + 1 Traits

- Organization
- Ideas
- Voice
- Word Choice
- Sentence Fluency
- Conventions
- Presentation
## 6 + 1 Traits and the 5 Steps of the Writing Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Writing</th>
<th>Drafting</th>
<th>Revising</th>
<th>Editing</th>
<th>Publishing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideas</td>
<td>Ideas</td>
<td>Ideas</td>
<td>Conventions</td>
<td>Voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>Voice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Word Choice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sentence Fluency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6 + 1 Traits

IDEAS

Focused Main Idea
Support Details
Sensory Details
6 + 1 Traits

- Lead
- Transitions
- Conclusion

Organization
6 + 1 Traits

VOICE

Dialogue

Author’s Purpose

Audience
6 + 1 Traits

WORD CHOICE

Strong Verbs

Figurative Language

Word Funeral
6 + 1 TRAITS

SENTENCE FLUENCY

Sentence Length
Flow
Sentence Beginnings
CONVENTIONS

Paragraphing

Subject/Verb Agreement

Commas

Common Core Language Links: 6th, 7th, 8th
6 + 1 TRAITS

Presentations

- Collaborate in Many Discussions
- Acknowledge Information Discussed By Others.
- Integrate Multimedia

Common Core Speaking and Listening Links: 6th, 7th, 8th