

SUSD Elementary Writing Program Overview



Elementary Writing Workshop Series - Session 2
Writing in Grades K-2

February 16, 2017 Parent Meeting
Presenter: Marion Dickel

Objectives



- Understand what writing workshop looks like in our K-2 classrooms
- Understand ways parents can help their children grow as writers

Why Write?

There are as many reasons to write as there are writers.

Writing is thinking. To write well is to think clearly.

— **David McCullough**



California Common Core State Standards

English Language Arts & Literacy in
History/Social Studies, Science, and
Technical Subjects

District Writing Goals

All students will master or exceed their grade-level CA Common Core writing standards.

1. Write **Narrative, Informative, and Opinion** pieces
2. Write with help and support from adults and peers
3. Write **using appropriate tools**, including digital tools
4. Write based on shared **research** or **personal experiences**
5. Write **routinely** over long and short periods for a variety of **purposes, audiences and tasks**

Why Writing Workshop?

- Students need **direct instruction** in writing skills and strategies and the opportunity to **practice** them.
- To grow as writers, students need to **write often and long**.
- Students **progress at different rates** and need instruction based on their strengths.
- Student **choice** as to what to write results in motivation and in intense, purposeful writing.

Teachers College

Reading and Writing Project

Units of Study

A Writing Workshop Curriculum

	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
K	<p>Launching the Writing Workshop (Information/Narrative): Students approximate writing by drawing and labeling first in all-about books and then in stories.</p>	<p>Writing for Readers (Narrative) : Students write true stories working to write readable words.</p>	<p>How-To Books: Writing to Teach Others (Informational): Students write informational how-to texts on a procedure familiar to them.</p>	<p>Persuasive Writing of All Kinds: Using Words to Make a Change (Opinion): Students craft petitions, persuasive letters, and signs that rally people to address problems in the classroom, the school, and the world.</p>
1	<p>Small Moments: Writing with Focus, Detail, and Dialogue (Narrative): Students take the everyday events of their lives and make them into focused, well-structured stories. Then they learn to breathe life into the characters by making them talk, think, and interact.</p>	<p>Non-fiction Chapter Books (Informational): Students write informational pieces that combine pictures and charts with domain-specific vocabulary and craft moves to create engaging teaching texts.</p>	<p>Writing Reviews (Opinion): Students create persuasive reviews of all sorts—pizza restaurant reviews, TV show reviews, ice cream flavor reviews, and finally book reviews that hook the reader, clearly express the writer’s opinion, and bolster their argument in convincing ways.</p>	<p>From Scenes to Series: Writing Fiction (Narrative): Students learn to “show, not tell” and use action, dialogue, and feelings to create a whole series of fiction books modeled after <i>Henry and Mudge</i>.</p>
2	<p>Lessons from the Masters: Improving Narrative Writing (Narrative): Students learn how to create engaging narratives by stretching out small moments and writing in detail.</p>	<p>Lab Reports and Science Books (Informational) Students read nonfiction texts to help them learn to design and write about experiments and other scientific information. Note: We also purchased the If . . . Then Unit: The How to Guide for Nonfiction Writing which gives a more general nonfiction overview.</p>	<p>Writing About Reading (Opinion): Students read closely and gather evidence from texts to craft persuasive arguments.</p>	<p>Poetry: Big Thoughts in Small Packages (Poetry): Students explore language. Students learn to use line breaks to express the meaning and rhythm they intend and use visualization and figures of speech to make their writing more clear and powerful.</p>

Writing Workshop Format

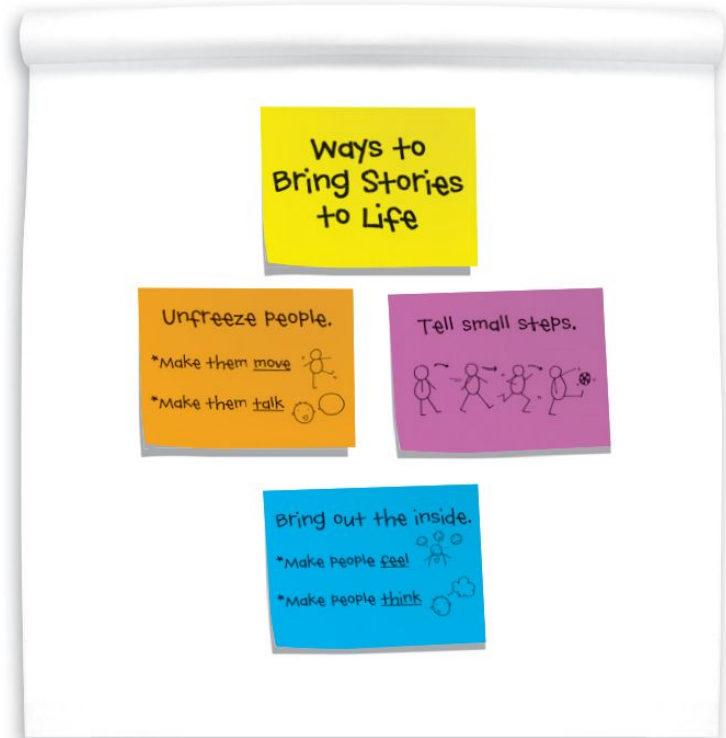
Component	Time
Mini-lesson	10 minutes
Independent Writing Time <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Teacher conferences● Small group instruction● Mid-lesson teaching point(s)	20-30 minutes
Sharing	5-10 minutes

Lucy Calkins: Why Mini-lessons



Mini-lesson

- Whole class instruction - the teacher provides explicit instruction of a writing skill or strategy
- Short - approximately 10 minutes
- Consistent structure
 - Connection
 - Teaching
 - Active Engagement
 - Link



Independent Writing Time



- Students work on **self-selected topics** within a unit of study.
- Students spend their time somewhere in the **writing process**: planning, drafting, revising, editing, or publishing.
- Students are **at various stages** in the writing process.
- **Teacher confers** with students individually or in **small groups** to meet individual needs.
- Students **do not publish everything** they write.

Conferring

- During independent writing time
- Teacher confers with individual students
- Consistent structure
 - Teacher quickly assesses student's goals - what the student is intending to do and has done
 - Based on assessment and conferring notes, the teacher teaches the next step - a needed skill or strategy (Learning Progressions)
 - Guided practice
 - Student returns to writing

Conferring: Writing True Stories Across the Pages



Learning Progressions

- Used for each genre (narrative, information, opinion)
- Describe grade-level expectations for each component of writing
 - Overall
 - Lead
 - Transitions
 - Ending
 - Organization
 - Elaboration
 - Craft
 - Spelling
 - Punctuation
- Common Core aligned

Learning Progressions example

Learning Progression for Op				
	Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2
STRUCTURE				
Overall	The writer told about something she liked or disliked with pictures and some "writing."	The writer told, drew, and wrote his opinion or likes and dislikes about a topic or book.	The writer wrote her opinion or her likes and dislikes and said why.	The writer wrote her opinion or her likes and dislikes and gave reasons for her opinion.
Lead	The writer started by drawing or saying something.	The writer wrote her opinion in the beginning.	The writer wrote a beginning in which he got readers' attention. He named the topic or text he was writing about and gave his opinion.	The writer wrote a beginning in which he not only gave his opinion, but also set readers up to expect that his writing would try to convince them of it.

Checklists

Name: _____ Date: _____

Opinion Writing Checklist

Grade 1

STRUCTURE

Overall	I wrote my opinion or my likes and dislikes and said why.				
	Did I do it like a first grader?	NOT YET	STARTING TO	YES!	
Lead		I wrote a beginning in which I got readers' attention.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		I named the topic or text I was writing about and gave my opinion.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transitions		I said more about my opinion and used words such as <i>and</i> and <i>because</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ending		I wrote an ending for my piece.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organization		I wrote a part where I got readers' attention and a part where I said more.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

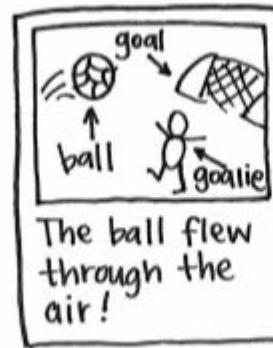
1. Overall
2. Lead
3. Transitions
4. Ending
5. Organization
6. Elaboration
7. Craft
8. Spelling
9. Punctuation

Checklists - Craft



I drew and wrote some details about what happened.

K



I used labels and words to give details.

1



skipped
ran
raced
walked



I chose strong words that would help readers picture my story.

2

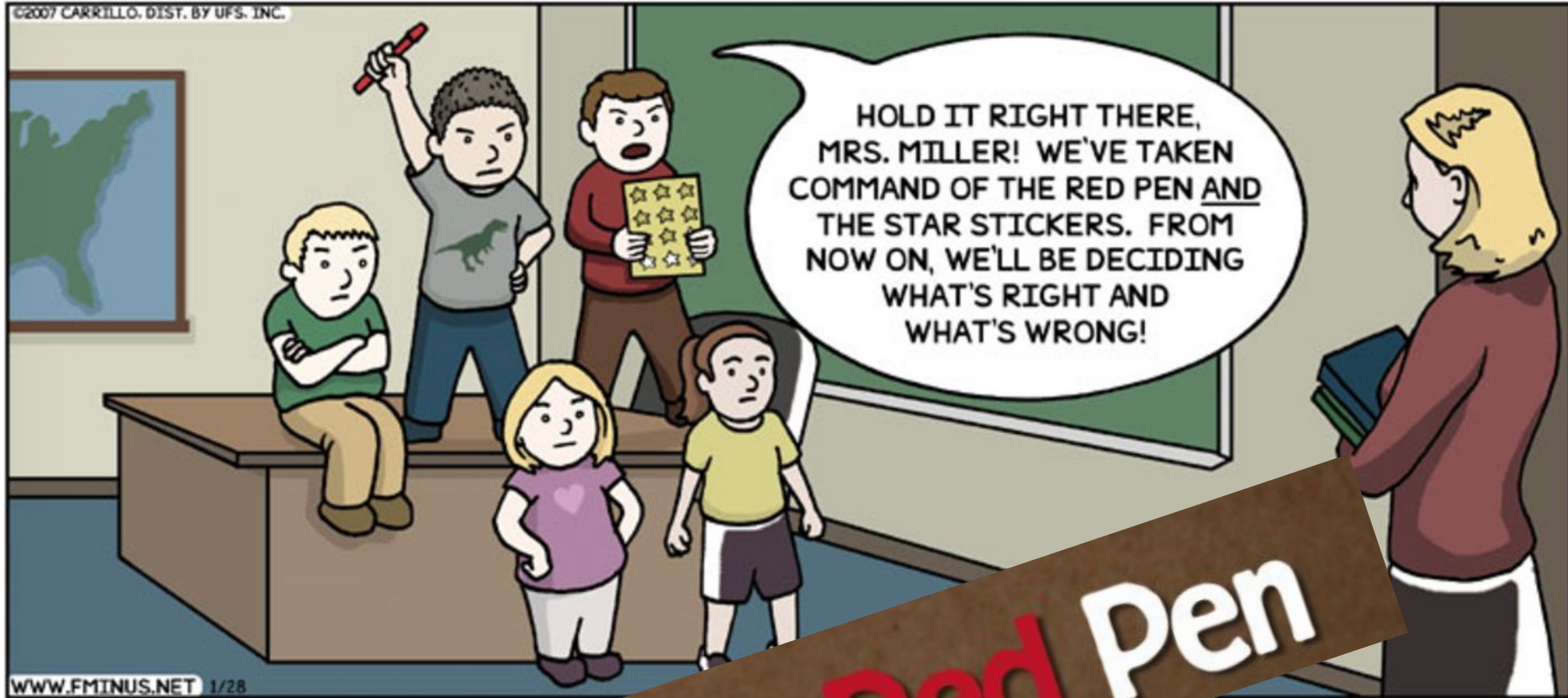
Sharing

- At the end of workshop
- Teacher reinforces a skill or prompts students to think about a new one.
- Students share their work or ideas in a whole group or with partners.

Publishing

- Students do not publish all of their work
 - The focus is on the process, not the final product.
 - The goal is for students to have many opportunities to practice each genre, **NOT** to create one perfect piece.
- Some publishing possibilities (there are many more):
 - Class books or anthologies
 - Partner sharing (in person, online)
 - Publishing party
 - Author's Chair
 - Presentations and Debates

How can parents help?



Develop independent writers

Parent Prompts to Help Kids Rehearse Their Writing

BASIC PROMPTS

- How will your (story/essay/article) go?
- Tell me about the parts.
- How will it start?
- Then what will come next?
- How do you think you want to end?
- What will be the most important moment in the piece?
- What will be the tricky part—where might it get confusing? Let me know when you're at that part, and we can talk it out if you want.

MORE ADVANCED PROMPTS

- Try out a couple of leads on me. Let's see which ones really get a reader interested.
- What are you thinking about pacing? How will you control tension?
- Do you want to tell everything at once, or let out the details bit by bit?
- What do you want your reader to know right away?
- What do you want your reader to wonder about?
- What are you saving for the ending?
- How are you going to tailor this piece to your audience?
- Do you have to explain any technical vocabulary?
- Is there a particular perspective or point of view you want to represent?
- Will you do anything to acknowledge other points of view in this piece?

Parent Prompts to Help Kids Elaborate

- There was something you said before that struck me . . . you have to get that bit in here!
- When you were talking about this, I jotted down this one idea/phrase that was very cool. . . . Is this something you want to add?
- Say more about this one part
- Wait a second, I'm going to jot down what you're saying. . . . Now take this—see if it works anywhere.
- How did that part we starred [or that part you said was most important] turn out?
- You know, thinking about how strong this piece is, it might be worth thinking about the beginning [or the ending] a little more. . . .

Tracking Growth



- **Student Self-Assessment and Peer Assessment with Learning Progressions and Checklists**
- **Rubrics**
- **Classroom Performance and Daily Work**
- **Conferring Notes**
- **Published Writing**
- **Benchmark Assessments (pre- and post- unit)**

Resources

- This presentation is available on the district website under Educational Services
- Upcoming Sessions:
 - Session 3: Writing in Grades 3-5
Tuesday, February 28, 9-10 AM, Saratoga Elementary MPR
- [Parents as Writing Partners](#)
- mdickel@saratogausd.org

Questions

