

# Introduction

## PPS Writing Units of Study

### First Grade

#### NOTE

This is the second edition of the Portland Public Schools (PPS) Writing Units of Study. The original units have been updated to better align with Common Core State Standards. In the process of revising, the original lessons were sometimes deleted or moved. The lesson numbers were not changed, but the pages were renumbered to be sequential in each unit.

#### Introduction to PPS Writing Units of Study CCSS Revisions

#### PURPOSE FOR REVISION

The PPS Writing Units of Study binders have been revised to align with the Common Core State Standards. The revisions reflect the increased rigor and changes to the required text types (genres) of writing. The focus of the work addressed the CCSS Writing Standards and Language Standard 2 (conventions). Some, but not all, of the other language standards may be taught within these units.

In the CCSS the term ‘text types’ is used to refer what was formerly know as ‘genres’ or ‘modes.’ The three types of text are Opinion, Informative/ Explanatory, and Narrative. Within the text types, it is expected that students have opportunities to research. Research, as defined in CCSS, is the gathering and organization of relevant information from experience, print, and digital sources.

In many unit overviews, you will notice a menu of options for incorporating the use of technology in the research and production of writing. This flexibility acknowledges that each building has access to a different level of support and resources. Therefore, the ability to meet Writing Standard 6 related to digital publishing will differ as well.

It is important that the content of all units that are listed on the year-long plan be covered in order to meet the required CCSS. Many of the units that were optional in

K-2 are now incorporated into one of the 3 text types. Optional units and lessons are clearly indicated on the revised table of contents. The K-2 units are designed to be taught in sequence, as lessons clearly build upon each other. In grades 3-5, the year-long plan is a recommended sequence, however lessons are not as dependent upon each other. It is acknowledged that content you teach in your classroom, such as science and social studies units, may influence when you might wish to teach individual writing units.

## **BINDER ORGANIZATION**

The revisions include a new binder table of contents listing the CCSS for each lesson, updated year-long plans, information about characteristics of text, and a new equity section to add to the introduction. Each unit also has an updated table of contents with CCSS listed, unit overview, and student goals, as well as an end-of-unit checklist. The unit overviews include changes to the unit, changes to specific lessons, and information relevant to the shifts from the former units to the current units.

The continuity of some of the lessons within a unit may be disrupted due to adding or deleting lessons and/or changing the order of the lessons. Teachers should check the section labeled ‘Connections’ to make sure the references to other lessons make sense within the revised sequence of lessons.

We would like to thank the teachers and administrators on the Revision Team.

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# Writing Year-Long Plan Grade 1

The year-long plan has been updated to reflect alignment with Common Core State Standards. It provides a suggested order of instruction because lessons build sequentially. The goal of these units is to provide teachers with resources to ensure that all K-5 students receive the instruction and writing opportunities needed to reach grade level expectations in writing, not to mandate a lock-step order for teachers to follow.

Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June
<b>Launching Writing Workshop</b> 23 Lessons	<b>Informative/ Explanatory</b> How-To 12 Lessons	<b>Personal Narrative</b> 17 Lessons  <b>Personal Narrative</b> Mechanics 15 Lessons	<b>Opinion</b> Author Study 12 Lessons	<b>Informative/ Explanatory</b> All About 9 Lessons	<b>Opinion</b> Letter Writing 13 Lessons	<b>Informative/ Explanatory</b> Research 9 Lessons (14 Sessions)			
<i>Units of Study</i>									

Conventions: Unit lessons will address specific conventions as a part of each unit. In addition, teachers should revisit and adapt conventions lessons based on the needs of their students.

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# Introduction to Units of Study for Grade 1 Writing

This notebook came about as a result of Portland Public Schools recognizing the need to support the teaching of writing in first grade. A committee composed of primary teachers from throughout the district was formed to look at the unique needs of first grade writers. The group task was to create units of study that teach to the first grade writing benchmarks while respecting the diverse skill levels of teachers and students.

After identifying our underlying beliefs about the teaching of writing, the committee members agreed upon the following points to guide our work.

This resource will:

- support both the novice and experienced first grade teachers.
- be a teacher-friendly guide or menu.
- be based on a writing workshop model.
- address the unique needs of the first grade writer.
- be aligned with district/state standards.
- provide K-5 articulation of district writing instruction.

You are encouraged to adapt, add, extend, or delete lessons, depending on your students' needs. The three-ring binder allows you to easily add, repeat or rearrange lessons. Every lesson contains space for notes. We hope you will use this space to record your ideas for revising and to remember adaptations, read-aloud titles, etc., for the next time you teach the lesson. There are a wide variety of mentor texts suggested and we hope you will use those that are familiar and easily available to you. We have also referenced many books found in the Scott Foresman Reading Street program that may be used as mentor texts.

The yearlong plan was developed to allow lessons to build sequentially and cover expected PPS first grade benchmark writing skills. You should feel free to change the order and add your own topics such as poetry, imaginative and/or persuasive writing. The goal is that all first grade writers have access to instruction and writing opportunities that allow them to meet expected benchmark skills, not to mandate a lock-step order for teachers to follow.

The lessons came from the collective knowledge and years of experience of all committee members. Some of the major resources/authors teachers relied on include:

About the Authors-Katie Wood Ray

Apprenticeships in Literacy: Transitions Across Reading and Writing-Linda Dorn

Columbia Teachers Summer Writing Institute

Craft Lessons-Ralph Fletcher and JoAnne Portalupi

Denver Public Schools-Grade 1 Units of Study (online)

First Grade Writers-Stephanie Parsons

Kid Writing-Eileen Feldgus

Mastering Mechanics-Linda Hoyt

Mentor Texts-Lynne Dorfman and Rose Cappelli

Portland Writing Project/Oregon Writing Project

Units of Study for Primary Writers-Lucy Calkins

Writing Through Childhood-Shelley Harwayne

Writing Essentials-Regie Routman

Please forgive us if we borrowed an idea unintentionally without giving credit where credit is due.

We would like to thank the teachers and administrators on the PPS Grade 1 Writing Committee who began this process and those who will continue to revise and develop this document.

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We would like to especially acknowledge Jeanne Anderson and Andrea Schmidt for the work they did to prepare this document for district publication. We also wish to thank Jennifer Podichetty and Stephanie Schiada for preparing the extensive teacher resource section.

NOTE: The units in this notebook are available online at the Inside PPS website.

Go to <http://inside.pp.k12.or.us>

Click on “*Office of Teaching and Learning*” at the righthand side of the screen

Click on “*Curriculum and Instruction*” at the lefthand side of the screen

Click on “*Language Arts*” at the lefthand side of the screen

Click on “*K-5 Language*” in the center of the screen

Click on “*PPS K-5 Language Arts Resources*” in the center of the screen

If you find templates, paper choices, or charts you would like to display or duplicate for classroom use, check the website. Many of the charts and templates in this notebook are available on the website for you to print out without a page # and footer. Many graphics are in color.

# Deliberate and Explicit Writing Instruction

*A Comprehensive Research-Based Approach to Gradual Release of Responsibility*

	<b>Modeling</b>	<b>Guided Practice</b>		<b>Independent Practice</b>
<b>Instructional Opportunity</b>  <i>Integrated Elements</i>	<b>Minilesson-Teach</b>  <i>(Procedures, Process, Editing Skills, Author’s Craft)</i>	<b>Minilesson-Active Engagement</b>  <i>(Procedures, Process, Editing Skills, Author’s Craft)</i>	<b>Differentiated Small Group/ Individual Conferences</b>  <i>(Procedures, Process, Editing Skills, Author’s Craft)</i>	<b>Applying Integrated Elements-Independent Writing</b>  <i>(Procedures, Process, Editing Skills, Author’s Craft)</i>
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• motivate all children to be writers</li> <li>• model the “thinking about” process of writing (ie. story topic, story content, the how-tos of organizing one’s ideas, the words to use, etc.)</li> <li>• develop fluency</li> <li>• develop reading/writing connections</li> <li>• introduce/develop writing mechanics</li> <li>• introduce/develop a variety of writing purposes</li> <li>• introduce/develop use of writers’ craft skills</li> <li>• develop/apply encoding skills</li> <li>• develop/apply new vocabulary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide guided practice applying writing strategies introduced during minilessons</li> <li>• create a common writing experience</li> <li>• allow all children to participate as writers</li> <li>• build and support children’s confidence and positive attitudes about writing</li> <li>• deliberately model concepts of print</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide deliberate writing instruction and guided practice</li> <li>• provide guided practice applying writing strategies introduced during minilessons</li> <li>• provide instruction based on each child’s writing level</li> <li>• develop independent writing behaviors and habits</li> <li>• provide practice applying self monitoring and correcting strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop independent writing behaviors and habits</li> <li>• apply writing strategies introduced during minilessons</li> <li>• practice applying self monitoring and correcting strategies</li> <li>• develop interest in a variety of genres</li> <li>• develop love of writing</li> </ul>

*Adapted from documents on the PPS Office of Teaching and Learning website*

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## Characteristics of First Grade Writers

1. First graders can tell more than they can write and/or draw. Their writing is embedded in oral language.
2. First graders possess a range of confidence, risk-taking and stamina.
3. First graders have a range of oral and written language skills (concepts of print, developmental spelling, organization and conventions).
4. First graders write about what they know, their daily lives and what is important to them.
5. First graders write with pictures and words.
6. First graders experiment with and imitate that to which they have been exposed.
7. First graders enjoy the independence of writing, the power of their words to express thoughts and the opportunity to describe experiences to an audience.

# Writing Workshop

## **DESCRIPTION:**

This model supports the PPS Literacy Framework utilizing modeling, guided practice, and independent practice. Teachers use minilessons to explicitly demonstrate and teach the organization, strategies, skills and craft of writing. Teachers provide blocks of time for students to practice the concepts during independent writing. Teachers confer with students/small groups during this time providing them with differentiated instruction. Students are given the opportunity to share their writing at the closing of writing workshop.

## **OUTCOME:**

Students will apply the strategies, skills and craft lessons learned from the minilesson to their writing.

## **ASSESSMENT:**

Collect samples of student writing to show growth over time. Look for evidence of progress in conventions and craft using anecdotal notes and other PPS writing assessment tools.

## **LOOK FOR:**

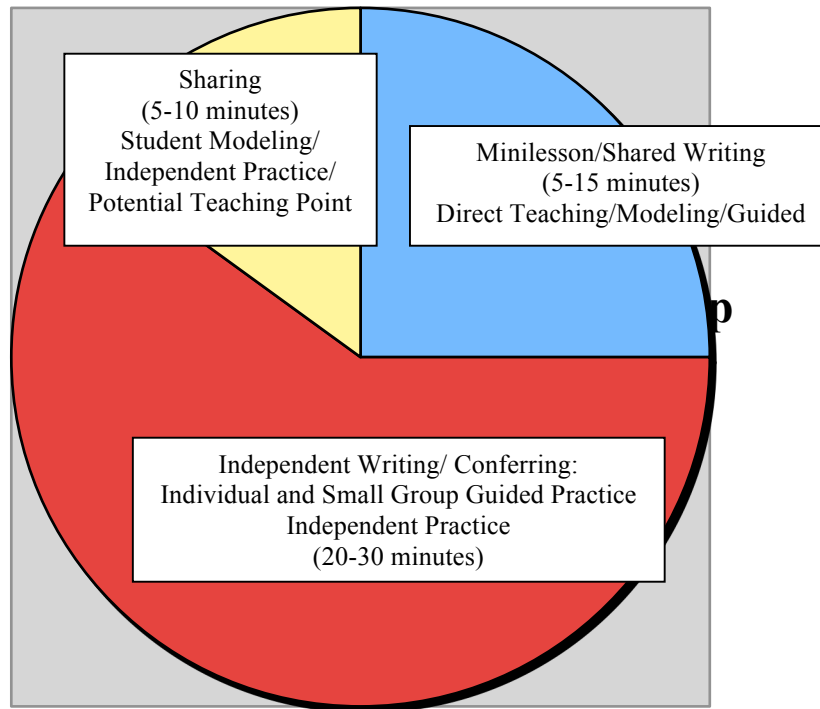
### **Teachers:**

- Use mentor texts to demonstrate effective writing craft
- Write in front of students demonstrating the specific instructional focus
- Use student work to guide instruction
- Provide opportunities for guided and independent practice
- Have individual writing conferences with students
- Provide additional small group writing instruction when needed
- Provide opportunities for students to ask questions and share work
- Display charts created during minilessons
- Display students' published work in the classroom

### **Students:**

- Apply content from minilessons to independent writing
- Refer to word walls for spelling high-frequency words
- Write on self-selected topics as well as teacher directed topics
- Write productively for sustained periods of time
- Work in various stages of the writing process
- Support one another with their writing
- Read their published writing

*Adapted from documents on the PPS Office of Teaching and Learning website*



## Writing Workshop Components

Quote from Writing Workshop: The Essential Guide by Ralph Fletcher and JoAnn Portalupi.

*Teaching kids how to write is hard. That's because writing is not so much one skill as a bundle of skills that includes sequencing, spelling, rereading, and supporting big ideas with examples. But these skills are teachable. And we believe that a writing workshop creates an environment where students can acquire these skills, along with the fluency, confidence, and desire to see themselves as writers. p. 1*

Quote from Writing Through Childhood: Rethinking Process and Product by Shelley Harwayne.

*In many ways, the workshop is, of course, not easy at all. The teachers have to be incredibly well prepared. Throughout the workshop, they have to be able to tap into what they know about the writing process approach, developmental issues in spelling, children's literature, and the reading-writing connection. They have to have the pulse of the class as a whole so that they can choose and prepare just the right mini-lessons. They have to know their children individually and extremely well so that they can coach them appropriately during conferences. (Harwayne p. 159)*

Quote from Writing Through Childhood: Rethinking Process and Product by Shelley Harwayne, p.159.

# Minilessons

Minilessons are short, focused, and direct. A minilesson is an opportunity to introduce an important skill that you will want to encourage your students to try out during independent writing. Frequently you will give all students an opportunity to practice the skill during active engagement. When the minilesson ends, students go back to their ongoing writing projects and focus on the goals they have set for themselves.

Minilessons are not a one-time deal. The same topic may be repeated throughout the year. For example, you will teach “choosing a topic” each time you introduce a new writing genre or project.

Minilesson topics vary depending on the needs of the class. Typically minilessons last about 10 minutes and fall into one of four categories:

- Procedural: Important information about how writing workshop operates. These include how to get and use materials, what to do when you’re done and peer sharing.
- Writing process: Strategies writers use to help them choose, explore and/or organize a topic including brainstorming, graphic organizers and lists.
- Editing skills: Information to develop understanding of conventions.
- Qualities of good writing (craft): Information to deepen students’ understandings of literary techniques: leads, endings, scene, point of view and transitions.

Adapted from Writing Workshop: The Essential Guide by Ralph Fletcher and JoAnn Portalupi. p.10-11.

## Minilesson Format

- Teaching Point: Choose one teaching point per lesson.
- Connection: Connect point to previous learning/lessons.
- Modeling: Model what you expect students to do.
- Active Engagement: Guide students through practice of the teaching point.
- Bridge to Independent Practice: Help writers discover the purpose for the writing they are about to do so they are prepared to get to work.
- Independent Writing/Student Conferences: Provide time for students to do independent writing while you conference with individual students or small groups.
- Closure/Sharing: Pull students back together and recognize the work they have done related to the teaching point.

Lucy Calkins includes “Tips for Minilessons” in The Nuts and Bolts of Teaching Writing, p. 60. The main points:

- Make connections short and beyond the obvious.
- Don’t over-rely on charts.
- Limit examples.
- Help children’s contributions matter.
- Use concrete visuals.
- Limit children’s contributions.
- Use familiar texts.
- Make your directions clear and consistent.
- Demonstrate often.
- Offer contrasts.

# Possible Topics for Writing Minilessons

## Procedural

Procedural minilessons provide important information about how writing workshop operates. These include how to get and use materials, what to do when you're done and peer sharing. Repeat procedural minilessons whenever needed to remind students of expectations and routines. Below are some examples of procedural minilesson topics.

- What is writing workshop?
- What are the writing materials?
- How to locate writing materials: paper, pencils, erasers etc.
- How to self-manage writing materials.
- Advantages of a quiet space.
- How to self-manage your writing behaviors.
- How to use classroom resources (Word Wall, Kid Crowns, posters, anchor charts, etc.).
- How to set-up writing folder/notebook.
- How to use a writing log.
- How to help yourself when no one is available to help you.
- What to do when you think you're done.
- What to expect and how to prepare for a teacher conference.
- How to share your writing with the class.
- Asking questions of an author and giving compliments.
- How to use writing checklists.
- Using highlighters as editing tools.
- Using special pens, revision strips, sticky notes for editing and revising.

## Writing Process

Minilessons focused on writing process offer students strategies writers use to help them choose, explore or organize a topic including brainstorming, graphic organizers, lists, and how to cut and paste to reorganize. Below are some examples of procedural minilesson topics.

- Logistics of Writing
  - Page orientation-where to put the picture and writing on the page.
  - Writing left to right and top to bottom.
  - Return sweep.
  - Spaces between words.
  - How to write legibly for an audience.
- Choosing a topic/what writers write about.
- Use illustrations to choose a topic.
- Picture conveys story: matching story to picture.
- Planning: make a picture of what you want to write about, turn and tell a friend, draw the picture, then write the words.
- Exploring different purposes for writing (lists, labeling, speech bubbles, etc.).
- Writing for different audiences.
- Using webs and T-charts.
- Adding more information or details.
- Using a caret ^.
- How to stick to a topic.
- How to organize information for writing.
- How to sequence your sentences (B-M-E) to organize your message.
- How to write for different purposes (use each time a new genre or purpose is introduced):
  - Personal Narrative
  - Letter Writing
  - How-To
  - All-About
  - Research
  - Poetry
  - Imaginative
  - Other
- How to reread your writing.
- Reread your story from the reader's perspective.
- Preparing work for publication.
- Making a title page.

## Editing Skills (Mechanics)

Minilessons focused on editing skills provide students with information to develop an understanding of spelling, punctuation and grammatical skills. Embedding this teaching into daily experiences with reading and writing is the best way to encourage students to learn and use conventions. Examples from mentor texts are the easiest way to embed the teaching of conventions in writing workshop. Choose mentor texts carefully and teach the lesson your particular students need at the moment. Below are some examples of editing minilesson topics.

- Spelling:
  - Listening for vowel sounds, including middle sounds
  - Stretching out sounds
  - Writing what you hear in a word – segmenting & blending
  - Modeling phonemic awareness skills (segmenting, blending, etc) in writing. Bridging writing and phonemic awareness
  - Using sound chart or alphabet chart
  - Introducing high frequency words (word wall)
  - Writing difficult words (multi-syllabic)
- Capitalization:
  - Capitalization for beginning of sentence
  - Appropriate use of lowercase letters
  - Capitalization of the word “I” and peoples’ names
  - Capitalization for titles and headings
- Punctuation:
  - Ending punctuation
  - Quotation marks
  - Dash
  - Ellipsis
- How to use pronouns correctly.
- Plurals.
- Subject/verb agreement.
- Reread for editing: Did I use periods? Did I leave spaces? Did I spell the words I know (word wall words) correctly?

## Craft (Revisions)

Craft minilessons help deepen students' understanding of literary techniques: leads, endings, scene, point of view and transitions. These topics are referred to as "author's craft" and are frequently taught through minilessons on revision. Mentor texts are a powerful avenue for teaching craft. Below are some examples of craft minilesson topics.

- Using rich and descriptive words.
- Including small details.
- How to create mind pictures/movies.
- How to choose specific words for communicating the best message.
- How to create strong leads:
  - Shocker
  - Question
  - Sound word
  - "Jump right in" lead
- How to use figurative language (similes, metaphors, personification, exaggeration).
- How to use sound devices (alliteration, onomatopoeia, rhythm).
- How to develop rich descriptions of characters.
- How to create descriptive settings.
- How to use vigorous verbs.
- Ending a story.
- Problem/resolution.
- Personal reflection ("inside story").
- Transitions:
  - Time order (next, second, last, finally)
  - Passage of time (three days later, after supper, sometimes, usually, actually)
  - Meaning (because, suddenly, soon, however, likewise, so)
  - Change of place (down the street, next door)
- Voice—how to make it sound like you (point of view, visual devices).
- Sentence fluency.
- Using examples of published literature to springboard ideas.
- Dialogue.



# Writing Minilesson Template

**First Grade Unit:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teaching Point:** Choose one teaching point per lesson.

**Standard(s):** Common Core State Standards are listed for each lesson.

**Materials:** Items you will need to have ready to teach the lesson such as mentor texts (preread), writing samples, charts and supplies.

**Connection:** (1-3 minutes) Putting today's minilesson into the context of the class's ongoing work. "*Yesterday we worked on . . . You remember how . . .*" The connection ends by telling children what will be explicitly taught today. "*Today I will show/teach you how . . .*"

**Teach (modeling):** Explicit language to teach children a new strategy or concept. Model what you expect students to do.

**Active Engagement (guided practice):** After teaching something, children are given the opportunity to try the new skill or strategy. Sometimes this is a "turn and talk" about what they've just seen demonstrated. Guide students through practice of the teaching point.

**Bridge to Independent Practice:** An invitation/encouragement/suggestion to children to use the skill and/or strategy taught during the minilesson in their day's writing. Help writers discover the purpose for the writing they are about to do so they are prepared to get to work.

**Conferring:** As students work independently, you meet with small groups of students or individuals. Ideally you will want to focus your conference on the minilesson teaching point of the day; however you will want to fit the individual conference to the needs of that particular student.

**Closure:** Pull students back together and recognize the work they have done relating to the teaching point. The closing/share usually reinforces the minilesson skill; however a different teaching point may be determined as you observe children writing independently.

**Reflection:** You are encouraged to adapt, add, or extend lessons depending on your students' needs. We hope you will record your practice and ideas for revising, and for remembering adaptations, adjustments, read-aloud titles, etc., for the next time you teach the lesson.

**Resources & References:** A list of resources and references used to create this lesson. You may also want to list resources you used teaching this lesson.

# Writing Minilesson Template

First Grade Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Teaching Point:</b>
<b>Standard(s):</b>
<b>Materials:</b>
<b>Connection:</b>
<b>Teach (modeling):</b>
<b>Active Engagement (guided practice):</b>
<b>Bridge to Independent Practice:</b>
<b>Conferring:</b>
<b>Closure:</b>
<b>Reflection:</b>
<b>Resources &amp; References:</b>

# Conferring

When you confer with a student, focus on content and craft first (before conventions). Give two praises and then one push. Help student evaluate progress toward the goal and, if the goal has been reached, set a new goal. Recording your conferences is essential. (See sample record sheet in Resources.) Try to conference with three to five students per day. Ideally, you will confer with every student each week. Remember, if multiple students are working on the same skill, you can pull several students for a small group conference. This is also a time to gather emergent writers in one location for more support and frequent teacher contact. (For more information on working with emergent writers, see Kid Writing by Eileen Feldgus.)

**The trickiest part of conferencing is the management.** Lucy Calkins has a great list of tips. Details on p. 41 of The Nuts and Bolts of Teaching Writing. The main points include:

- Keep moving so conferences can be short and frequent.
- Teach children never to interrupt when you are conferring.
- Occasionally, share with the whole class the teaching from one conference.
- Create systems of dealing with daily occurrences that don't require your intervention.
- Teach children how to solve predictable problems on their own.
- Concentrate on teaching the writing process, not on making every child's piece the best it can be.
- Create the expectation of a lot of writing work getting done each workshop time.
- Use strategy lessons when many children need the same conference.

## **Here are some questions to ask yourself about conferring:**

Where should I conduct my conferences?

- go to the student(s) in most cases
- provide enough room for you and students to move around
- encourage students to eavesdrop

What tools do I need to help me confer?

- conference records
- mentor texts
- sticky notes (sometimes you can leave a written message for students)

What do students need?

- their work-in-progress
- supply basket
- maybe a mentor text

# Sharing

There are several different purposes for sharing. It's a way to celebrate the hard work the students have been doing. It is also a way to reinforce the point of the day's minilesson as students share how they used what they learned. In addition, sharing provides an opportunity for students to reread their writing.

Originally people thought "author's chair" was the "way to share." It is, indeed, one way to share, but as we have grown in our teaching of writing, we have found a wide variety of ways to share, and it doesn't always have to be at the end. Here are some possibilities:

- **Author's chair:** a designated place in the classroom where the writer sits when sharing with the class. Sharing from the Author's Chair usually signified a particular form of response (e.g., help for work in progress, celebration or comments for finished work). Writing Workshop: The Essential Guide by Ralph Fletcher and JoAnn Portalupi.
- **Pair share:** direct the students as to which part to share i.e., only the part that reflects the minilesson focus; a favorite sentence; or read their entire piece.
- **Small groups** (e.g., table groups).
- **Pop-up share** (students pop-up from their seats and quickly share the way they used the minilessons, i.e., "pop-up share today will be your interesting lead.") Everyone who wants a turn, gets to share.
- **Teacher-selected share** (Share one or more samples you noticed during conferences that are solid examples of the teaching point. Alternatively you may want to ask a few students who have done work that illustrates your point to stand up and share (or show work on the document camera). See page 45-47 of Kid Writing by Eileen Felgus for further details on possible procedures for teacher-selected share.

Regardless of format, **sharing** has certain characteristics:

- It has a predictable structure.
- It provides another time to teach.
- It demonstrates what was taught in the minilessons.
- It allows many voices to be heard (it's not about just one child).
- It offers an opportunity to make students "famous."

## Other Helpful Hints

### Partnerships

Partners can be effectively used in a variety of ways during Writing Workshop. For example, assigned partners can be used for “Turn and Talk,” for prewriting conversations or for other active engagement activities that usually take place on the rug during or following the writing minilesson. Writing partners can also be an effective way for students to share their writing with one another at the end of Writing Workshop. Students might share a sentence with a special describing word or adjective, or a sentence that tells about the setting of their story with their partner.

We recommend that you create writing partners for students and change them throughout the year. This is a very helpful management tool in addition to being a valuable learning tool for students.

Partnerships can be based on behavior in addition to academic levels. You may want to have students at similar writing levels for PN1 and similar reading levels for PN2. Students have assigned spots in the meeting area. It is helpful to have ELL students seated close to you to enable easier access during them for the “Active Engagement” component of the lessons. Students should be in the habit of bringing their writing folders to the meeting area for the mini-lesson. Frequently, they will need them for the active engagement. (Tip: have them sit on their folders while you teach.)

### Lesson Notes and Tips

Throughout each of the units there are various notes and tips posted in the lessons. There may be tips on how to connect the teaching point to other parts of the curriculum, particularly to the daily morning message, or a suggestion to re-teach the lesson if you feel your students would benefit. There will also be a note about books to preread and materials to prepare prior to teaching the lesson.

### Paper Choice: Why?

We encourage you to provide various paper choices to your students throughout the year. The paper choice you choose will depend on the unit of study your students are working on. Provide a few choices at a time (perhaps 2-3) and teach your students how and why you use a particular paper type. We also encourage you to provide booklets for student use. Students will learn to plan out their stories on each page, helping them to sequence. Additionally, this format serves well as a precursor to paragraphing.

Some units have suggested paper choices in the “Teacher Resource” section at the end of the unit. You will also find paper choices at the Inside PPS website. If you download the file and print it yourself, you will get a master for copying that does not have the page number and footer across the page.

## **Editing and Revision Tools:**

Providing special tools encourages students to try out strategies they might not otherwise attempt. The main tool we introduce and then infuse throughout the year is the special pen. It starts off as the ‘editing pen’ and then as you teach craft/revision it becomes the ‘editing and revision pen;’ however, you may give it whatever name you choose. This is a set of class pens, all one color that students have access to (teacher workrooms frequently have boxes of felt tip pens). They use them only for fixing their writing (this also helps avoid the issue of students constantly erasing – when they erase it is difficult to see the progression of their thinking). In addition, let your students use sticky notes, tape and revision strips to add on to their writing, but don’t forget to teach them how to use these materials.

## **Using the Lessons**

The lessons in each unit have been written to flow from one to the next and frequently refer back to examples used in previous lessons so teaching lessons in order works well. Many of the skills will repeat in later units. However, please feel free to browse the table of contents and pull lessons from different units to supplement, extend, and/or re-teach concepts as needed.

## **Publishing Celebrations**

At the end of each unit of study, with the exception of letter writing, there is some form of a publishing celebration. It is very important to celebrate the children’s writing; however, the celebrations need not be elaborate. Sharing with a partner or reading buddy, posting writing on bulletin boards for all to see, inviting parents to come for tea, the possibilities are endless. Check out the suggested publishing lessons, and adapt and vary them to meet your needs.

# The Writing Cycle

It is important for all students to know how to access each part of the writing cycle as a tool, but it is unrealistic that all writers will progress through the cycle in the same order and at the same time.

**Prewriting:** Also referred to as rehearsal or brainstorming, this involves writing, talking, or thinking that is generative, open-ended, and meant to help a writer plan for the writing to come. Like all aspects of the writing cycle, this is a highly personalized process varying according to the writer and the specific task at hand (can be drawing a picture, making a list, talking, making a web, etc.).

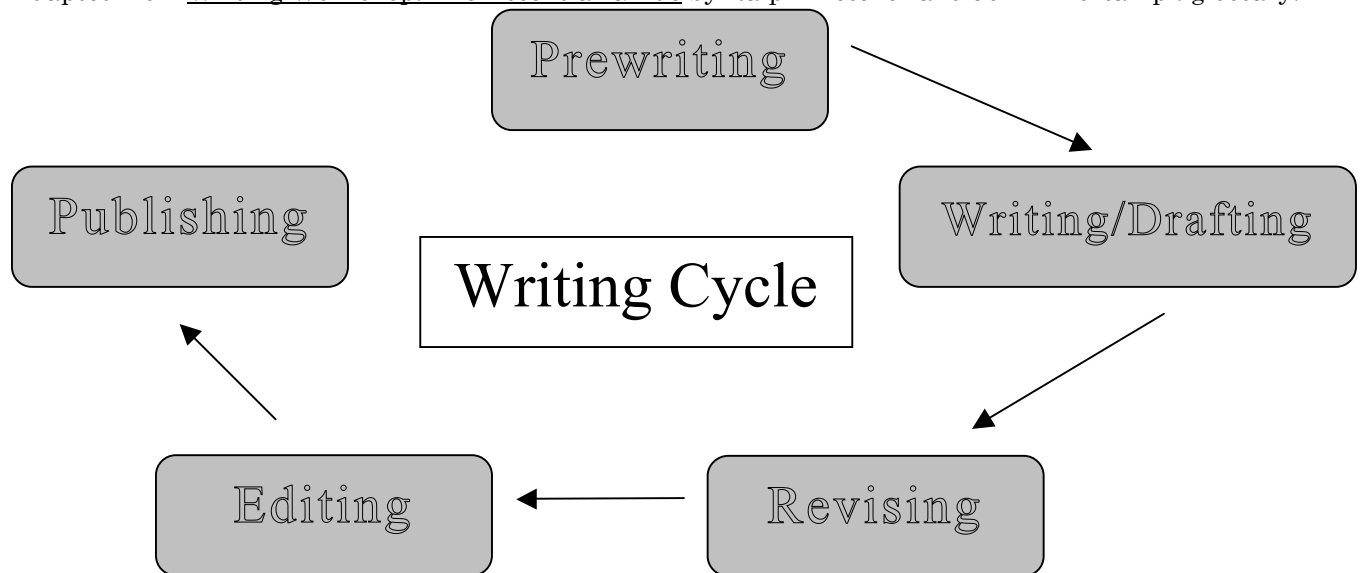
**Writing/Drafting:** The writing produced early in the process when the focus is on content and meaning. It includes composing, revision, and editing. (You will teach the three steps in isolation initially, and then teach the students to use them simultaneously as they work through their piece. For example, if you stop and reread to make sure you got your point across, you may notice a misspelled word and correct it at that moment even though editing was not your intent.)

**Revising:** Revising is about making meaning. This is the part of the writing cycle where students reread and make meaning-based changes in their draft in order to clarify, develop or sharpen their writing.

**Editing:** Editing is the process of rereading a text and correcting mechanical errors according to the standard conventions of language.

**Publishing:** The point where a piece of writing gets presented to an audience other than the writer. Most things do not get published and pieces that do get published are published in a variety of ways. The important part is that all students get a chance to publish. Some publishing options include celebrating with others (reading buddies, family members, etc.), hanging student work on a bulletin board, making class books, typing students' stories, publishing student work on the internet.

Adapted from Writing Workshop: The Essential Guide by Ralph Fletcher and JoAnn Portalupi. glossary.



# Launching Your Writing Workshop

**Setting routines and providing tools** students are able to access and use independently are vital to orchestrating a successful writing workshop. Students must know what to expect and what is expected of them.

*Teachers make the writing workshop look so easy. In some ways, it is. Every day, the same routines. Every day, the same materials in the same place. Every day, the teachers set aside big blocks of time. Every day, the children are eager to participate. Every day, the teacher coaches, nudges, supports, smiles, celebrates, and extends the children's work. Every day, the children groan when it is time to stop. (Shelley Harwayne, p. 159)*

**It is extremely important for you to decide what you want in your own classroom.**

- What do you value?
- What level of talk do you want in your classroom?
- Where are children allowed to work?
- What does a partner share look like?
- Where are supplies kept and which ones are students allowed to access?
- What do students do when you are busy?
- What writing resources will you have available in classroom?
- What will writing folders look like and how will student work be stored?
- Consider:
  - Pencil sharpening
  - Getting paper
  - Markers or no markers
  - Erasers or no erasers
  - What happens when the stapler or tape dispenser is empty?
  - Paper choices
  - Poster of what do you do when you're done

**Practice! Practice! Practice!**

**TEACH THE DESIRED BEHAVIORS THOROUGHLY AND REPEATEDLY.**

Spend a *few weeks* rolling out writing workshop so everyone learns the routines well.



## Characteristics of Text Type and Purposes

The lessons in this writing resource binder are organized by units of study. These units of study correspond to text types found in the Common Core State Standards. They include: Opinion, Informative/Explanatory, and Narrative.

The opinion lessons focus on supporting a point of view with reasons and information. The Informative/Explanatory lessons focus on examining a topic and conveying ideas and information clearly. The Narrative writing lessons focus on ways to recount an event or tell a story.

Although there are commonalities among all types of writing, each text type has unique characteristics. Teaching students to recognize and use these unique characteristics helps them write with greater clarity and purpose.

Below are tables listing characteristics or elements of each text type. Familiarizing yourself with this table may assist you in the planning and teaching of the lessons in each unit. *Please note, not all of these characteristics are taught at each grade level.*

### CCSS Writing Standard 1: Opinion Writing

Characteristics or Elements	Notes
<p>Organizational Structure:</p> <p><b>Introduction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• States a clear position, view or opinion, or topic</li></ul> <p><b>Body</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supporting paragraphs are linked to the topic</li><li>• Evidence is provided/cited as appropriate</li></ul> <p><b>Conclusion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Summarize, ask a question, circle back, etc.</li></ul> <p><b>Word Choice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Vocabulary specific to the subject and domain, and appropriately reflective of the text source</li><li>• Linking words to tie ideas and categories of information together</li></ul>	

## CCSS Writing Standard 2: Informative/Explanatory Writing

Characteristics or Elements	Notes
<p>Organizational Structure:</p> <p><b>Introduction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>States a clear position, focus statement or topic</li> </ul> <p><b>Body</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paragraphs are linked to the topic</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summarize, ask a question, circle back, etc.</li> </ul> <p>Uses transitional words to categorize ideas and information</p> <p>Develops paragraphs with a main idea/topic sentence and supporting details/evidence</p> <p>Follows a logical sequence to explain a subject</p> <p>Uses factual information based on prior knowledge/research</p> <p><b>Word Choice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Words that describe, explain or provide additional details</li> <li>Vivid verbs</li> <li>Precise nouns</li> </ul>	

## CCSS Writing Standard 3: Narrative Writing

Characteristics or Elements	Notes
<p>Organizational Structure:</p> <p><b>Beginning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong Lead or Opening</li> </ul> <p><b>Middle</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recounting of events, and/or character development</li> </ul> <p><b>End</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Satisfying Ending and/or Reflection</li> </ul> <p><b>Word Choice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transitional words and phrases</li> <li>Figurative language</li> <li>Dialogue, Blocking, and Internal Monologue</li> <li>Sensory details</li> <li>Precise nouns</li> <li>Vivid verbs</li> </ul>	

# Culturally Relevant Teaching

(prepared by Jody Rutherford and Kehaulani Haupu)

*“Culturally relevant teachers utilize students’ culture as a vehicle for learning.”  
(Ladson-Billings, 1995)*

## Introduction

This section on culturally relevant teaching begins with a brief overview of the changing demographics of public education. It next interweaves a definition of culturally relevant teaching with an opportunity for educators to consider the following questions:

- What do I need to know about myself?
- What do I need to know about my students?
- What do I need to know about my practice?

Finally, it provides two frameworks that are useful in developing culturally relevant learning environments, as well as two sets of questions for educators to consider when selecting curriculum, strategies, and assessments for writing workshop.

## What the Statistics Tell Us

“The growing presence of diversity in our public school population is the face of our future. While experiencing the largest influx of immigrant children since the turn of the last century (Banks, 2006), public schools are also dealing with more language and religious diversity than most teachers are trained to embrace effectively in their classrooms”(Eck, 2001; Garcia, 2005 as cited in Howard, 2006).

For those of us who choose to teach in racially and culturally diverse schools, we extend an invitation to embark on a journey toward new ways of knowing oneself, one’s students, and one’s practice, with the aim of creating culturally relevant environments for learning.

## Knowing Ourselves: The Role of Culture in the Classroom

- *What do I need to know about myself?*

Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995) coined the term “culturally relevant teaching” more than twenty years ago. In a chapter she wrote more recently for the book *White Teachers/Diverse Classrooms*, she suggests that culturally relevant teaching is less about “what to do” and more about “how we think—about the social contexts, about students of color, about the curriculum, and about instruction” (Landsman and Lewis, 2006).

She offers that culturally relevant teachers hold the belief that systemic racism exists, and therefore, “their vision of their work is one of preparing students to combat inequity by being highly competent and critically conscious” (p. 30 of Landsman and Lewis).

Our district-led *Beyond Diversity* training emphasizes a similar point about systemic racism: that it is the most devastating factor contributing to the diminished capacity of all children, especially children of color. Additionally, *Beyond Diversity* offers the following research-based assumptions:

- “You cannot address racial achievement disparities without talking about race.” Therefore, as a teacher, I need to become racially conscious and consider the impact of race in my own life.
- “A teacher teaches his/her culture primarily, the grade-level and/or subject matter standards secondarily.” Therefore, I need to be aware of who I am culturally since it impacts what I do in my classroom.

In other words, who I am racially and culturally will impact such decisions as how I set up my classroom, what routines I establish in my writing workshop, what mentor texts I choose and what examples I use to illustrate a point. This may sound like an undue amount of self-reflection, yet “When we clarify our own cultural values and biases, we are better able to consider how they might subtly but profoundly influence the degree to which learners in our classrooms feel included, respected, at ease, and generally motivated to learn” (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2000).

### **Knowing Our Students: How We See Our Students Matters**

- *What do I need to know about my students?*

“Culturally relevant teaching utilizes the backgrounds, knowledge, and experiences of the students to inform the teacher’s lessons and methodology” according to Professor Heather Coffey at the University of North Carolina’s School of Education. However, it’s not only what I know about my students that’s important—it’s what I believe about them and their right to educational excellence: To paraphrase Dr. Ladson-Billings, all students are capable, resilient, and full of possibility. School should be the vehicle for social advancement and equity for students of color. (Landsman and Lewis, 2006).

### **Knowing Our Practice: Culturally Relevant Teaching and How We Do It**

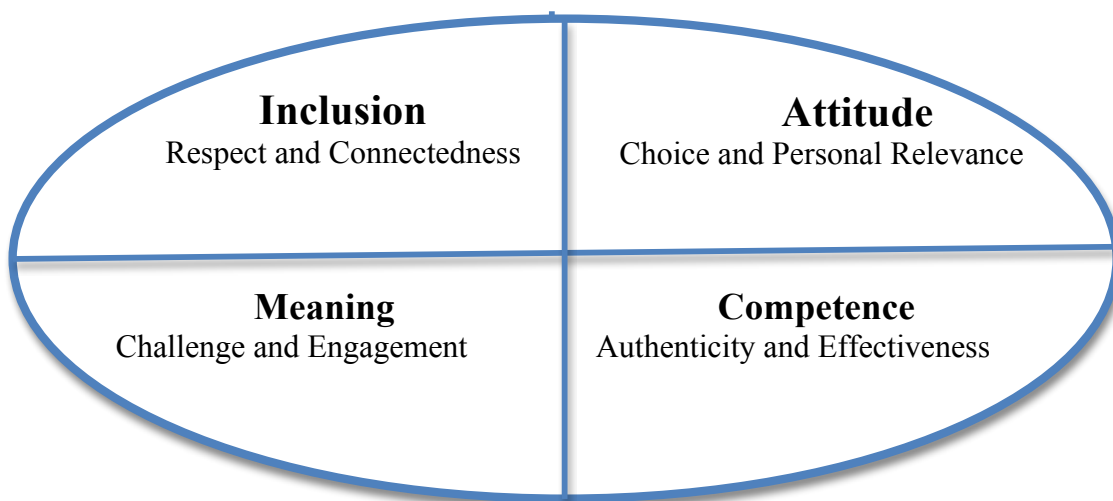
- *What do I need to know about my practice?*

Back to Dr. Ladson-Billings and culturally relevant teaching being less about “what to do” and more about “how we think.” So how do culturally relevant teachers think about the “what” and the “how” of their practice? Curriculum, the “what,” is a “cultural artifact and as such is not an ideologically neutral document;” therefore, it needs to be deconstructed and then reconstructed by reflective practitioners. Instruction, the “how,” consists of “a wide repertoire of strategies and techniques to ensure that all students can access the curriculum” (Landsman and Lewis, 2006).

What follows are two frameworks that are useful in developing culturally relevant learning environments, and which PPS teachers are beginning to use as they engage in the Collaborative Action Research for Equity (CARE) process through our district-wide equity work. This section ends with questions for educators to consider when selecting curriculum, strategies, and assessments for their Writing Workshop.

### **Ginsberg & Wlodkowski's Motivational Framework**

In the book *Creating Highly Motivating Classrooms for All Students*, Ginsberg and Wlodkowski offer four motivational conditions that culturally responsive teachers create in their classrooms:

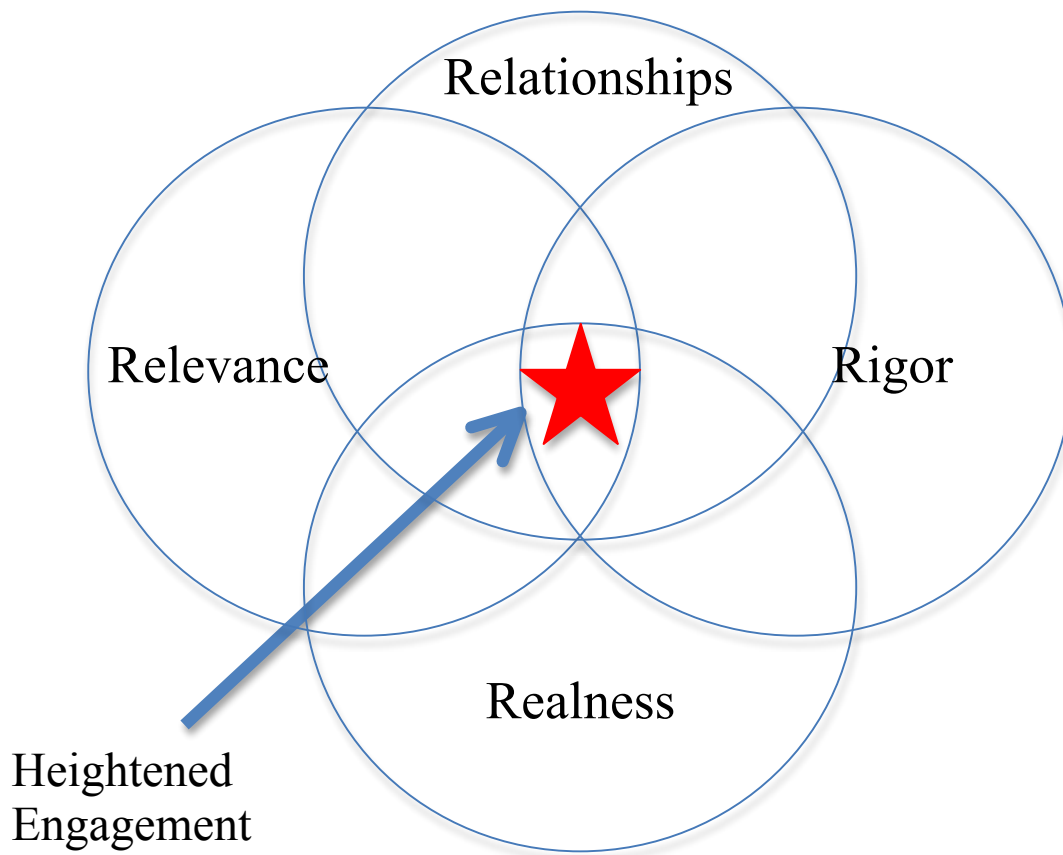


“Theories of intrinsic motivation respect the influence of race and culture on learning. According to this set of motivational theories, it is part of human nature to be curious, to be active, to initiate thought and behavior to make meaning from experience, and to be effective at what one values. These primary sources of motivation reside in all of us, across all ethnic and cultural groups. When people can see that what they are learning makes sense and is important according to their values and perspectives, their motivation to learn emerges. Like a cork rising through water, intrinsic motivation surfaces because the environment elicits it. What is culturally and emotionally significant to a person evokes intrinsic motivation.”

*Creating Highly Motivating Classrooms for All Students* (p. 3)

## The Four R's of Culturally Relevant Teaching

Pacific Educational Group offers Four R's that comprise Culturally Relevant Teaching:



### What Does Culturally Relevant Teaching Look Like?

To flesh it out a bit more, here are the four motivational conditions from the first framework matched up with the four domains from the second framework, this time with the evidence you would see in a classroom where those conditions/domains are present:

- Establishing Inclusion (Relationship)
  - Routines and systems are visible and understood by all students
  - All students are equitably and actively participating and interacting
- Developing a Positive Attitude (Relevance)
  - Students' experiences, concerns and interests are used to develop course content and are addressed in response to questions
  - Students are encouraged to express their point of view, to clarify their interests and set goals

Students are given real choices about how, what, and with whom to learn, as well as choices about how to solve emerging problems

- Enhancing Meaning (Rigor)
  - Students are encouraged to learn, apply, create, and communicate knowledge in challenging ways
  - Students have access to a number of safety nets that ensure their success.
- Engendering Competence (Realness)
  - Teacher clearly communicates purpose of lesson and criteria for excellent final products.
  - Teacher continually assesses progress and uses multiple forms of assessment, as well as asking students to self-assess.
  - Teacher creates opportunities for students to make explicit connections between prior learning and new learning, and between new learning and the “real world.”

**Questions to ask related to each of the above motivational conditions/ domains as it applies to Writing Workshop:**

Establishing Inclusion (Relationship): How does Writing Workshop contribute to developing as a community of learners who feel respected and connected to one another?

Developing a Positive Attitude (Relevance): How does Writing Workshop offer meaningful choices and promote personal relevance to contribute to a positive attitude?

Enhancing Meaning (Rigor): How does Writing Workshop engage students in challenging learning?

Engendering Competence (Realness): How does Writing Workshop create an understanding that students are becoming more effective in learning that they value and perceive as authentic to real world experiences?

**PPS Equity Lens Questions:**

- 1) Who are the racial/ethnic/language groups impacted by these lessons/this curriculum? What are the potential impacts, both positive and negative, to these groups?
- 2) Do these lessons/Does this curriculum ignore or worsen existing disparities or produce other unintended consequences?
- 3) What are the barriers to equitable outcomes for all student groups related to the work you’re doing?
- 4) How will you (a) mitigate the negative impacts and (b) address the barriers identified above?

## References:

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Singleton, Glenn E., and Linton, Curtis. (2005). *Courageous Conversations About Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools*. Corwin Press.

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# Meeting the Needs of All Students

Writing Workshop supports best practices for all students because it utilizes a gradual release model. In a gradual release model the teacher models (I do), then provides guided practice (we do) and finally provides opportunity for independent practice (you do). In order to best meet the needs of our diverse learners, the lessons include the following best practices:

- **Turn and Talk** allows process time for all students and gives peer support in articulating ideas in English.
- **ELD (English Language Development) sentence frames** for turn and talks support language development.
- **Active Engagement** gives students an opportunity to participate and practice the skill being presented.
- **Mentor Texts** include visuals and examples students can refer to during independent practice.
- **End-of-unit activity** allows students to share what they have learned with others. This may take the form of a celebration, a published piece, or an independent project. These activities allow the teacher the opportunity to informally assess students and re-teach skills as needed.
- **Conferring** includes opportunities for differentiated individual and small group instruction.
- **Sharing** provides opportunities for students to speak and listen to each other and practice language skills. Through sharing they get ideas from peers and build community.

## Sentence Frames

To increase the level of support for ELD (English Language Development) sentence frames, sentences can be written on sentence strips and posted when you call for sharing. Sentences can be explicitly read, following along with your finger and filling in the blanks with a few examples. All students can echo with you so that ELL students get a few practices before trying on their own. Make sure you use a gradual release of responsibility. You can scaffold the blanks within the framed ELD sentences depending on the level of your English learners. Give students a few of the basic options to pick from. For example:

“The story took place \_\_\_\_\_.”

in Portland / in the classroom  
at school / at the park / at home  
by the lake / by the pool / by the monkey bars

As teachers, we want to remember students have not had many opportunities to hear and practice correct English structure. Imagine yourself learning a foreign language—think of basic framed sentences that would allow you to offer your opinion and be part of a conversation. (Not all ELL students will be ready to read. It is important that they hear the pattern several times. Remember they need to speak, speak, speak and use

full grammatically correct sentences. Students using the contrived frames will naturally move on to creating varied sentences as they become more fluent in English.) If you have ESL support in your building, use them as a resource. They have access to vocabulary posters, picture dictionaries, and/or could help you build them.

### **Word Lists and Other Supports**

To further support ELL learners and other students with special needs, you may want to help them make many lists of words associated with their writing topic: lists of nouns, verbs, adjectives and prepositional phrases when applicable. Add quick sketches with the words when possible. This can be done in a small group conference or a minilesson depending on the number of students needing the support. You can use these lists for all of your students and challenge the higher-level English speakers to use synonyms, more vigorous verbs, or just be more specific. You can also track student growth by checking personal word lists before you help students add to them. These lists can become mini topic dictionaries for them to refer back to when writing. As teachers, we need to remember that the learners might already understand or have heard a lot of the vocabulary but are not accessing and/or using it spontaneously yet.

Any students needing support in transcription (phonetics) can be gathered in a small group and supported in getting started putting symbols to sounds. This is also a time to offer additional supports such as alphabet strips, word banks, labeled pictures and graphic organizers. Check back with this group frequently as you move around conferring with other students.

Graphic organizers can support students in being independent. A graphic organizer or scaffold paper for a specific project can assist students in getting started. It is important to determine which type of graphic organizer will support specific students depending on whether they need a web to brainstorm, or something linear to help them organize their thoughts, or something showing specific steps in order.

Because Writing Workshop is not silent, you may need to help students choose a workspace that provides less distraction. Sometimes headphones will cut the sound level enough to help a child focus. Study carrels can help students who are distracted by motion.

### **Practice**

Students need the freedom to try out the strategies presented in minilessons and to start and stop and move between projects. There is not an expectation that everything started will be finished. It is important for students to realize that writers sometimes start a piece of writing that they decide not to finish or to set aside for a period of time. When writers feel passionate about something, it's appropriate to take the time to write about it now rather than going back to something from a previous day. By the same token, writers may spend several days on a longer project. Allow students to express their creativity by taking on large projects, but also guide them in narrowing the project or letting it go when they lose interest.