

Writing Workshop

Mini Lesson: 10-15 Minutes

During mini lessons, I may make a suggestion to the whole class...raise a concern, explore an issue, model a technique, or reinforce a strategy. While my students are engaged in their own writing, I try to think of one thing I can suggest or demonstrate that might benefit them the most.

Examples of Mini-Lessons

Content Focus

- Getting an idea
 - making lists
 - things you love
 - writing from emotion
 - experiences
 - moments in time
- Adding detail
- Choice of words/ descriptive language
- Using "Sparkle Words"
- Great beginnings "Hooks"
- Clear endings
- Focus on one topic
- Developing a plan for writing
- Types of writing:
 - persuasive
 - descriptive
 - fantasy (imaginative)
 - narrative

Conventions Focus

- Use appropriate spacing
- Spelling phonetically
- Spell "High Frequency" words correctly
- Spell using analogies
- Capitalize I, names
- Capitalize beginnings of sentences
- Ending punctuation marks
- Quotation marks
- Commas
- Using appropriate grammar
- Using paragraphs
- Recognizing and correcting run-on sentences

Independent Writing

After the mini lesson, students work in their Writer's Notebook to collect entries that may later become published pieces of writing. The total writing time lasts for about 35-40 minutes, but during that time some students may be involved in conferences with the teacher or with their peers.

Students choose entries in their notebooks to take into "draft form." It is these carefully selected pieces of writing that will be taken through the process of editing and revising so that they can be published and shared with others. All entries in the Writer's Notebook do not become published pieces of writing. All published writing is added to each student's Writing Portfolio, and some pieces will even be put into student created books.

Conferencing

While students are involved in independent writing, I use this time to confer with my writers. I take notes during conferences to document students' progress and to plan future mini-lessons. During this time I may:

- Listen to students read their entries aloud
- Help students decide what they want to say
- Provide feedback
- Re-teach skills taught during mini lessons
- Teach necessary new skills
- Reinforce a writer's strengths