

WRITING IN OUR CLASSROOMS



Focus of Instruction

Writing is a complex task, involving ideas, language, words, spelling and transcribing or selecting letters. We need to teach all of these skills – and eventually students need to be able to do all of these, within the one task, to become writers.



Guiding Questions – All Students

Are your students using a writing tool that allows them to focus on the cognitive aspects of writing e.g. flip chart, keyboard, eye gaze system, iPad and app, pen or pencil?

Are all your students using writing tools that include access to all 26 letters of the alphabet?

Are your students writing for real reasons? (and remember – writing never involves copying and tracing; writing involves thinking of ideas, language, words AND transcribing)

Are you providing opportunities for students to share their writing with others e.g. via social media, to other staff or writer's chair?



Guiding Questions – Emergent Students

Are you giving your students lot of opportunities to learn the functions of writing without focusing on the form e.g. following through on notes handed to you, writing yourself reminders and then using them, writing a morning message?

Are you giving your students daily opportunities to write without standards using a writing tool with access to all 26 letters?

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Are you saying “now let me show you how I would write it” when a student has finished writing rather than interrupting them during the writing task?

Are you offering them a range of writing tasks, such as writing about play, personal experiences, high interest topics, classroom topics, letter writing & signing in?

Are you following through on writing tasks e.g. posting letters?

Are you writing for real reasons daily for your students e.g. morning message?

Do you have a daily/weekly shared writing activity, such as predictable chart writing?



Guiding Questions – Conventional Students

Are you modelling writing at the next level for your students before asking them to write?

Are you focusing your modelling of writing on different aspects of the writing task each day e.g. using the word wall, using capitals, using punctuation, thinking of ideas, thinking of your audience in planning writing, using different sorts of vocabulary, etc.?

Are you modelling aspects of writing for a while before you expect your students to start using them?

Are you including free writing once per week so that students learn to write regularly in assessment conditions?

Are you using the prompt “tell me more” to get students to extend their writing?

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Guiding Questions – Conventional Students

Are you teaching students to extend their writing using the 5W questions?

Are you teaching students to edit writing, starting with teaching them to edit your writing and then transitioning to their own, using an editor's checklist?

Are you encouraging your students to publish?



More Information

Remember also to look at:

<https://www.comprehensiveliteracy.com/writing-by-myself.html#/> (emergent)

<https://www.comprehensiveliteracy.com/writing.html#/> (conventional)