



Description of Reading and Writing Workshop

In reading and writing workshops, teachers promote independence and choice in their readers and writers. Students learn how to be better readers and writers by doing just that... they read and write for long stretches of time every, single day☺!!! Students choose topics to write about and select books they are interested in reading. Reading and writing workshop teachers give explicit instruction in strategies students can use as readers and writers (For example: “Elaborating in your narrative writing by using dialogue” or “Making inferences about characters by studying what characters do and say”). They also provide materials at different levels for their readers and writers so they can meet the various needs of their classes.

In writing workshop, students do their own revision and edit their own work, rather than teachers making those corrections for them. They also receive feedback on their writing from peers & teachers and learn the importance of writing for an audience. In addition, students learn how to work independently and make their own decisions about what they need to work on as both readers and writers.

Then and Now Chart for Writing Workshop

Back then	Now ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topics were often assigned • The writing assignment was finished within a day or week • Teachers often made corrections on our writing pieces • There was a strong focus on spelling and conventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writers learn strategies to come up with their OWN topics for writing • They learn different genres of writing (narrative, informational and persuasive) • Students work on their writing for 4-6 weeks cycling through the writing process • Young writers get support from their teachers during conferences and small group work • We teach that spelling and conventions are important but so is focusing your writing, elaborating in your writing, adding voice to your writing, organizing your writing, and so on.

Ways to Support your Young Writers At Home	Ways to Support your Young Readers At Home
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help them find a quiet space in which to do their writing. Make this their sacred writing place • Make sure they have the tools they'll need to do their writing- paper, pens, stapler, tape, scissors, post its • Encourage them to use the strategies they're learning at school when they're stuck. Try not to help too much! • Find things to compliment them on in their writing when sitting beside them. • Try using a timer to help them build stamina 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help them find a quiet space in which to do their reading. Make this their sacred reading spot. • Make sure they have the tools they'll need to do their reading- books, post its, pens, bookmark • Encourage them to use the strategies they're learning at school when they're stuck. Try not to help too much! • Find things to compliment them on in their reading when sitting beside them • Try using a timer to help them build stamina

Common Mistakes to Try to Avoid

<i>When supporting your young writer...</i>	<i>When supporting your young reader...</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telling your child how to spell words... Instead, encourage them to use the strategies they're learning in school! • Correcting their writing or making them write it over- this will only frustrate them and turn them off to writing... Instead, find things they are doing well and compliment them for taking risks as a writer! • Telling them what to write about... Instead, remind them that they can think of people, places and things they do! They can use the strategies they've learned at school!) • Have them write with pens rather than pencil (They will waste less time with erasing and sharpening!) • Have them set a goal for how much they can write... put a smiley face or x at the bottom of a page and then write, write, write! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telling your child the word when they are stuck... Instead, encourage them to use strategies they are learning in school! • When they get to a tricky part, you can say things like..."Give it a try..." then wait a few seconds and let them try it. If they are still stuck after you've counted to 5, then tell them the word (we don't want them to feel frustrated). • Pushing your child to read a book that may be too hard for them. (Try to pay attention to the types of books they read in school and what level they are... this will help you know what is most appropriate for your child) • Have them set a goal for how much they will read...put a post it at the page you're trying to get to and read, read, read!

Some Tips for Reading Aloud to Your Child

- Don't stop! If you have a 5th grader, they will still love to bond with you and listen to you reading aloud to them. It's a great opportunity to read books that may have difficult content and/or vocabulary. Also it's a great way to improve your child's *listening* vocabulary!
- Read in different genres.... Many readers tend to favor one genre over another. Reading fiction, nonfiction, poetry, short stories, articles & picture books will help your child become a more well rounded reader.
- Read aloud with different character voices. Try to be engaging. Remember it's about turning kids on to reading 😊!
- Ask questions about the text that require your child to think deeply. Things like, "Why do you think the character did that? What kind of character do you think that is who would act like that? What are you learning about the relationship between characters?" *These are inference questions, which force students to think beyond the text.
- When your child shares an idea about the text ask, "What makes you think that?" *This supports the Common Core Standards. Students need to use text evidence, connections to other books and their own lives to support their ideas.