



Specific Characteristics of a Strong Writers' Workshop

Student Work:

- There are frequent opportunities for students to regulate their writing behaviors, the writing environment, and the use of resources.
- Daily writing occurs at school and home, with students working on a wide range of composing tasks for multiple authentic audiences and purposes.
- Students select their own writing topics or may modify teacher assignments that are compatible with students' interests.
- Students work through the writing process at their own pace.
- Students present work in progress as well as completed papers to other students in and out of the classroom to receive praise and feedback.
- Students' written work is prominently displayed in the classroom and throughout the school.

Instructional Approach:

- Teachers intentionally adjust their instructional emphasis on meaning, form, and process to meet individual students' needs.
- Instruction covers a broad range of knowledge, skills, and strategies, including writing conventions, sentence and text structure, the functions and forms of writing, and planning and revising.
- Teachers overtly model the writing process, writing strategies and skills, and positive attitudes toward writing during teacher-directed mini-lessons.
- Follow-up instruction is provided to ensure mastery of target knowledge, skills, and strategies.

Routines:

- A predictable routine typically entails a mini-lesson, an individual progress check, independent writing and conferencing, and finally, group sharing.
- Regular student-teacher conferences are scheduled to discuss progress, establish writing goals and self-evaluation criteria, and provide individualized feedback, all in the context of high expectations.
- Cooperative arrangements are established where students help one another to plan, draft, revise, edit, and publish their written work.

- Teachers arrange for periodic conferences and frequent communication with families to discuss the writing program and students' progress.

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see Atwell, 1998; Calkins, 1994; Culham, 2003; Elbow, 1998a, 1998b; Fletcher, 1992; Fletcher & Portalupi, 2001; Graves, 1994; Spandel, 2001; Troia & Graham, 2003