



Ten Additional Attributes of a Top-Notch Classroom Writing Program

- Students should have meaningful writing experiences and be assigned authentic writing tasks that promote personal and collective expression, reflection, inquiry, discovery, and social change.
- Routines should permit students to become comfortable with the writing process and move through the process over a sustained period of time at their own rate.
- Lessons should be designed to help students master craft elements (e.g., text structure and character development), writing skills (e.g., spelling and punctuation), and process strategies (e.g., planning and revising tactics).
- A common language for shared expectations and feedback regarding writing quality might include the use of traits (e.g., organization, ideas, sentence fluency, word choice, voice, and conventions).
- Procedural supports should be available such as conferences, planning forms and charts, checklists for revision/editing, and computer tools for removing transcription barriers.
- A sense of community should be established where (a) risks are supported, (b) children and teachers are viewed as writers, (c) personal ownership is expected, and (d) collaboration is a cornerstone.
- Writing instruction should be integrated with reading instruction and content area instruction (e.g., use of touchstone texts to guide genre study, use of common themes across the curriculum, maintaining learning notebooks in math and science classes).
- A cadre of trained volunteers should be in place to respond to, encourage, coach, and celebrate children's writing which helps classroom teachers give more feedback and potentially individualize their instruction.
- Resident writers and guest authors should visit to share their expertise, struggles, and successes so that children and teachers have positive role models and develop a broader sense of writing as craft.
- Opportunities should exist for teachers to upgrade and expand their own conceptions of writing, the writing process, and how children learn to write, primarily through professional development activities, but also through being an active member of a writing community (e.g., National Writing Project).

See Atwell, 1998; Calkins, 1994; Culham, 2003; Elbow, 1998a, 1998b; Graves, 1994; Spandel, 2001; Troia & Graham, 2003