



PLANNING A DYNAMIC WRITING WORKSHOP

presented by



Jill & Cathy

The Curriculum Corner

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What is Writer's Workshop?

WRITING MINI-LESSON

A true writer's workshop begins with a 10 to 15 minute mini-lesson that teaches a specific writing concept or skill. The focus of the lesson should be based on standards and student needs. Many times the mini-lesson will include a read aloud from a mentor text to illustrate the specific skill or concept in writing. Keep in mind that you don't have to read an entire book for this. You may only read a portion or have a discussion about a page or two. These mentor texts might also be books your students are already familiar with because they have read them independently or you have read them aloud in your reader's workshop.

INDEPENDENT WRITING & TEACHER CONFERENCING

Following the mini-lesson, students move on to their work as writers. During this time students will be in all different stages of the writing process (once they have been taught this process). They should have easy access to paper/stapled books and supplies for their writing and illustrating. While students are busy working on their writing, you will conference with individuals to check in with them on their current pieces. You will want to reinforce a skill you have taught and/or informally assess the writing so that you know what skills need to be taught or revisited in your upcoming mini-lessons, small guided writing groups or even future conferences.

LESSON WRAP-UP & SHARING

At the conclusion of independent writing, the class will convene at a meeting spot to review the lesson and discuss what some students might have done to practice a new skill on their own. Many times, unless you have something specific that you want reviewed, you may want to showcase a few students you conferenced with who have illustrated the mini-lesson skill in some way in their writing.

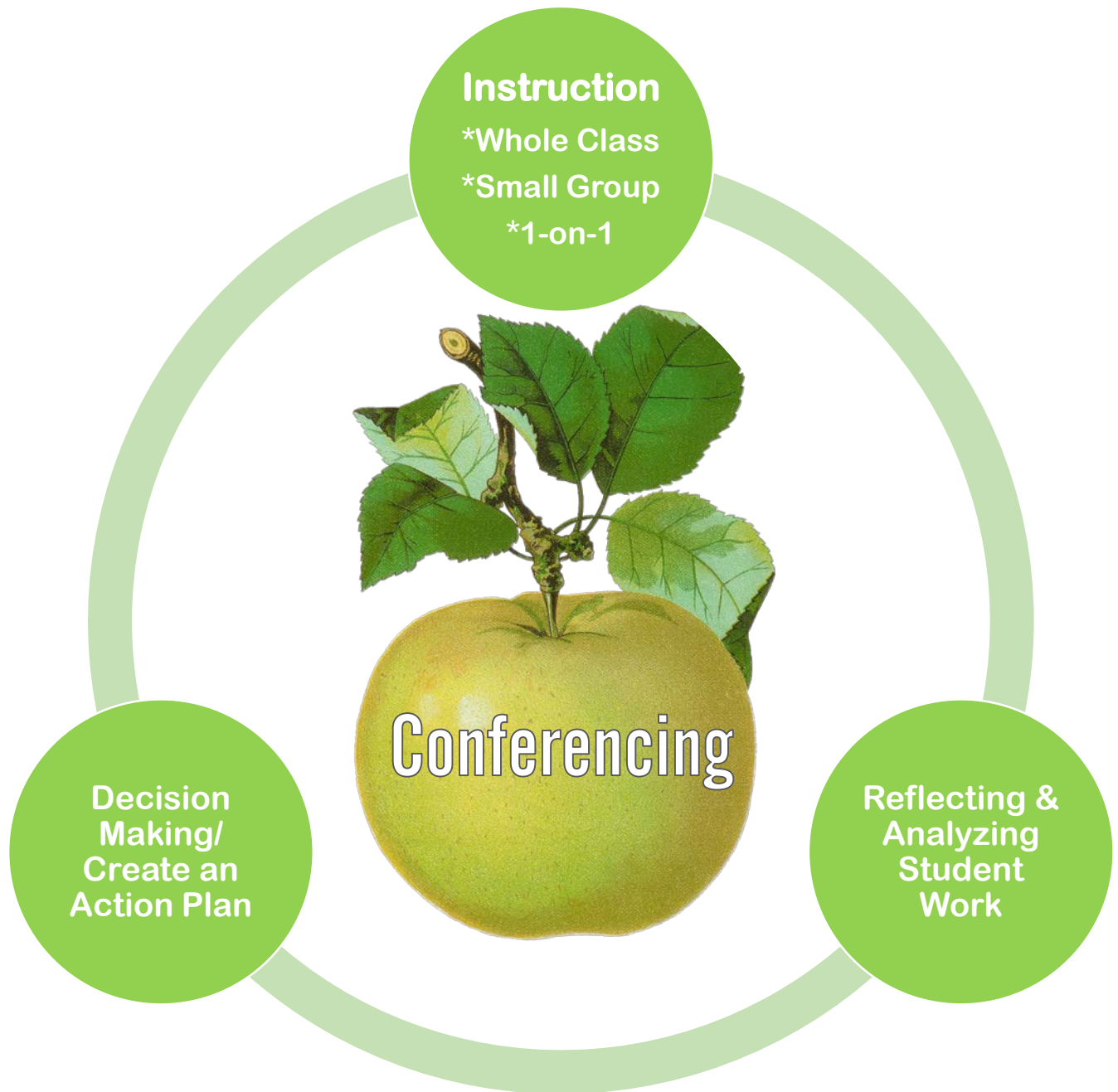
CENTERS (SUGGESTED)

Following the independent writing and conferencing time, you may choose to move directly into writing centers. These centers can provide specific practice for skills you feel students are struggling with, but can also be opportunities for focused writing prompts, seasonal or fun creative writing opportunities, shared student writing opportunities and small group work with the teacher. (If your schedule doesn't allow for writing centers during the writer's workshop time, you might choose to add some of these centers to other times of the day, such as morning welcome time or your reading/literacy center time.)

Some options for writer's workshop formats

Option A	Option B	Option C
Mini-Lesson (10-15 min)	Mini-Lesson (10-15 min)	Mini-Lesson (10-15 min)
Ind. Writing & Conferencing (20-25 min)	Ind. Writing & Conferencing (20-25 min)	Writing Center Rotations (3) (15-20 min each) *One rotation is independent writing & teacher conferencing *One rotation is skill based, creative writing or prompted writing *One rotation is teacher led small group instruction (if a teaching assistant is working in classroom)
Teacher Led Small Group Instruction (20-25 min) (other students still independently writing)	Writing Center Rotations (2) (15-20 min each) (Teacher led small group instruction occurs as one of the centers)	
Sharing & Wrap-Up (5-10 min)	Sharing & Wrap-Up (5-10 min)	Sharing & Wrap-Up (5-10 min)

Planning for a Dynamic Writing Workshop



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Mini-Lesson Architecture

10-15 minutes

CONNECT

Begin each lesson by clearly stating the lesson's teaching point. Emphasize the importance of this skill to writers. Explain how the day's objective relates to the current unit of study. (1-2 minutes, teacher talk)

TEACH

Think about your learners and the best way to teach the skill. This might be done using student samples, modeling or mentor texts. Could involve shared inquiry, thinking aloud, explaining. (3-6 minutes, teacher talk)

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

This occurs when you have students try out the new skill that has been taught in the mini-lesson. (We have provided some "Active Engagement" ideas for you to choose from as a means for practicing what has been taught. (3-5 minutes max, student practice/NOT a worksheet)

LINK

Review what was just taught. Remind students how this skill will be used in their writing. Invite students to find examples of or try this skill in their writing. Short and sweet! (1-2 minutes)

Active Engagement Ideas

- Turn and Talk
- Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down
- Agree, Disagree
- Let's Take a Vote
- Post-it Note Response - Students write their thoughts on a post-it and place on your board for discussion.
- Four Corners - Ask a question, students go to one of four labeled corners to show their response.
- Graffiti Wall - Students respond on a piece of chart paper.
- Guided Response - Use exit tickets or small pieces of paper with questions
- Fist to Five - Students hold up a fist if they don't have an understanding of the concept, up to five fingers for complete understanding.
- Mark It to Try It - Put a post-it note where you might try out what you have learned
- One Word Splash - Students share one word to sum up what was taught.
- Point it Out - Give kids a writing sample. As you review what was taught, students point out examples in the writing.
- Response Cards - Students hold up yes/no or true/false cards in response to a question or prompt
- Take a Minute - Ask students to close their eyes and think about a particular part of a story. Then ask them to visualize the actions and emotions that go with the part.
- Act it Out - Act out a scene from your writing.

Mini-Lesson Plan

Week of:

Unit of Study:

Monday APPROACH mentor text model student sample other	skill:	notes for follow-up:
	connect	
	teach	
	active engagement	
	link	
Tuesday APPROACH mentor text model student sample other	skill:	notes for follow-up:
	connect	
	teach	
	active engagement	
	link	
Wednesday APPROACH mentor text model student sample other	skill:	notes for follow-up:
	connect	
	teach	
	active engagement	
	link	
Thursday APPROACH mentor text model student sample other	skill:	notes for follow-up:
	connect	
	teach	
	active engagement	
	link	
Friday APPROACH mentor text model student sample other	skill:	notes for follow-up:
	connect	
	teach	
	active engagement	
	link	

Mini-Lesson Plan

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Mini-Lesson Plan

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	link	

Independent Writing Conference Form

Student:

Continuing Goal

Current Writing Focus

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ideas | <input type="checkbox"/> writing fluency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> organization | <input type="checkbox"/> conventions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> voice | <input type="checkbox"/> presentation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> word choice | <input type="checkbox"/> other |

date:
writing piece:

- ☐ engaged
- ☐ improving
- ☐ frequently off task

Strengths:

Today's Teaching Point:

date:
writing piece:

- ☐ engaged
- ☐ improving
- ☐ frequently off task

Strengths:

Today's Teaching Point:

date:
writing piece:

- ☐ engaged
- ☐ improving
- ☐ frequently off task

Strengths:

Today's Teaching Point:

Weekly Focus: _____

Snapshot of the Class

Date: _____

Other Notes/ Observations

Developing Stamina

[illegible]

Action Plan for Teaching

My plan is...

Week of:

Skills to address in whole group mini-lessons:

Skills to address in small groups:

Skill:	Students:

Skills to address I-on-I:

Skill:	Student:

Skill:	Student:

[illegible]



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References

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- *The Writing Strategies Book* Jennifer Serravallo
- *One to One* Lucy Calkins, Amanda Hartman Zoe White