

DOINGWHATWORKS



PRESENTATION

5:49 min

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Teaching Writing Strategies

Eagle View Elementary School, Virginia

April 2012

Topic TEACHING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS TO BE EFFECTIVE WRITERS

Practice WRITING PROCESS

- Highlights**
- » Teachers teach and model brainstorming strategies.
 - » Anchor charts, or large sticky notes posted in the classroom, help remind students of writing strategies.
 - » Students learn the whole writing process and learn strategies to use the process on their own.
 - » Students learn that the writing process is a fluid, nonlinear process.
 - » Teachers teach and model multiple planning, revision, and editing strategies to suit individual students' needs.

About the Site Eagle View Elementary School
Fairfax, Virginia

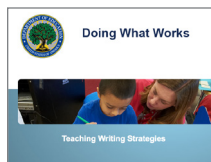
Demographics

- » 36% Asian
- » 27% White
- » 15% Hispanic
- » 14% Black
- » 6% Other
- » 21% Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

Eagle View Elementary School, in Fairfax, Virginia, integrates writing into the daily curriculum of all subject areas. The teachers emphasize writing's importance in communication and learning. Eagle View teachers:

- » Provide daily writing time through Writer's Workshop;
- » Teach the writing process and writing for a variety of purposes;
- » Develop students' foundational writing skills, such as spelling, handwriting, text structure, and sentence construction; and
- » Build an engaged community of writers.

Full Transcript



Slide 1: Welcome

Welcome to Teaching Writing Strategies.



Slide 2: Introducing Ms. El-Amin and Ms. Stawicki

I'm Kim El-Amin. I teach first grade at Eagle View Elementary in Fairfax, Virginia.

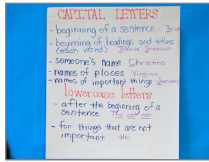


I'm Ginnie Stawicki. I teach fourth grade at Eagle View Elementary in Fairfax, Virginia.



Slide 3: Brainstorming strategies

El-Amin: When teaching brainstorming to first graders, the first thing we teach them is oral retelling of the story. They can retell stories that have happened to them out loud. Our end goal is for them to be able to brainstorm independently. That happens through modeling where we as the teacher, we model how to do this ourselves as an independent writer. Once the children feel comfortable with the idea of brainstorming and what that means, we create an anchor chart.



Slide 4: Anchor charts

El-Amin: An anchor chart is a way that children can visualize the strategies that we teach in writing. It's like a snapshot of what we expect the children to be able to do. It's something that stays in the classroom for the school year so that children at different levels can come to it and use it when they are ready and also something that we can use to remind ourselves of some particular part of writing that we may forget from time to time.

Once that anchor chart has been created, we reread it and revisit it and model some more, and then finally the children are able to do this independently. When they're able to brainstorm independently, that's where children are often able to use things like graphic organizers or their own way of getting ideas down before they write a story.

Stawicki: In addition, too, all the teachers at Eagle View, starting with an example—modeling—and then expecting the students to actually try the strategies, the anchor charts in every classroom help the students remember from day to day what the strategies are and how to use them.



Slide 5: The writing process as a circle

Stawicki: We teach the whole process, starting with drafting, and give them lots of strategies for how to pick their ideas, which ideas are the strongest, and take that into drafting their actual writing. In my class we have an anchor chart of the writing process, and it is not linear; it's in a circle. And I talk to the students about how at any time they can cross the circle and go back; so they might be drafting, but in the process go back and revise and then continue on with drafting. And so it's a very fluid process; at any time one or many of students may go back to revising or back to drafting, even if they've gotten close to publishing, just to make sure that their writing is exactly the way they want it in powerful words.



Slide 6: Planning strategies

Stawicki: In fourth grade we teach the children a few planning strategies. We teach the children how to use a box-and-bullet strategy, where they have a main topic as their title, and then they have some subtopics. And this is starting to get the children into a five-paragraph essay format, where they have their first support and then the details underneath—that would be the bullets—and then another box would be their support two, and the bullets would be the details that support that. If the strategy presented in class does not make sense or work for a student, then I tend to pull them in a small group with other students who are either confused or are not working well with the strategy. And I either re-explain it and try it again and maybe they'll get it in a small group, or I might try a different example. For example, if boxes and bullets doesn't work for one of my students, I can try a four-square or another graphic organizer that might make more sense to that particular child but not necessarily the rest of the classroom.



Slide 7: Strategies for revision

El-Amin: The power of revising for first graders lies in rereading. Children begin to see the power of revising when they start writing their own stories and they come to a part where they are reading it to the teacher, which is a large part of first-grade writing, and they realize it does not make sense. We ask the children to help us solve the problems that occur as we reread the story and the solution is to reread it and fix the parts that don't make sense.



Slide 8: Editing strategies

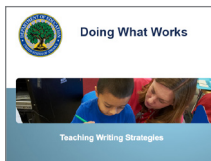
El-Amin: In my class we write with pen or pencil, but they are allowed to use crayons to edit. We use three colors with our first graders, the same colors that are in a traffic light; we use red and yellow and green. We introduced the red color; red is the universal sign for stop, so this is a great way for children to go back and identify places

where their punctuation may be missing, or some of our advanced first graders are able to notice that “Hey, I think I would like to use an exclamation point here.” Then they’re able to come to the understanding that the beginning of each sentence needs a capital letter. We use the green color crayon for this. In order to get them to understand the concept that lowercase letters are what they need to be using most of the time, we let them go back and edit for that using the yellow crayon. Yellow is seen as the middle of the traffic light, and we use it to represent the middle of words. When there are capital letters and either it’s in the middle of a sentence or the middle of a word, they can circle it with yellow and make the correction.



Slide 9: Using the writing process

Stawicki: They very much enjoy the independence piece of writing their own piece of writing while still working within the parameters of learning how to write and follow the writing process.



Slide 10: Learn more

To learn more about Teaching Writing Strategies, please explore the additional resources on the Doing What Works website.

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