

DOINGWHATWORKS



PRESENTATION

3:41 min

[Full Details and Transcript](#)



There Is a Larger Audience

Fall Creek Elementary School, North Carolina

April 2012

Topic TEACHING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS TO BE EFFECTIVE WRITERS

Practice ENGAGED COMMUNITY

- Highlights**
- » It's important for students to feel like they are part of a writing community so they are comfortable writing.
 - » Author's Chair is an activity in which students sit in a special chair to share their writing with the rest of the class.
 - » During a publishing party, students display their writing for others to read, and peers leave written comments on sticky notes.
 - » Such activities help create and extend an engaged community of writers by having students share their writing with a larger audience.

About the Site Fall Creek Elementary School
East Bend, North Carolina

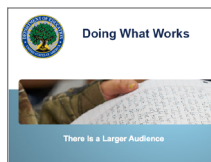
Demographics

- » 86% White
- » 11% Hispanic
- » 2% Black
- » 1% Other
- » 48% Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

Teachers at Fall Creek Elementary use a Writer's Workshop model to ensure students are fluent writers who are comfortable putting their ideas on paper. Every day, students write and celebrate their writing through the following practices:

- » Mentor texts used to illustrate the features of good writing;
- » Explicit instruction in writing strategies and independent use of the writing process;
- » Uninterrupted daily writing time;
- » Feedback received through peer sharing and teacher conferencing;
- » Self-selected topics and materials; and
- » Regular celebrations of published pieces.

Full Transcript



Slide 1: Welcome

Welcome to There Is a Larger Audience.



Slide 2: Introducing Ms. Walsh

My name is Melinda Walsh, and I teach fourth grade at Fall Creek Elementary in East Bend, North Carolina.



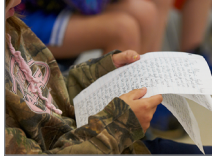
Slide 3: Introducing Mr. Sorrell

My name is Eric Sorrell. I teach fifth grade at Fall Creek School in East Bend, North Carolina.



Slide 4: Community of writers

Walsh: I think it's a must for children to be a community of writers and to be actively engaged in writing and to feel like they're part of a writing community because they can have a comfort factor with their writing.



Slide 5: Author's chair

Walsh: My students love to do Author's Chair. I would define Author's Chair as just an opportunity where we all come together and we sit in a circular format, and we have a defined Author's Chair labeled A, for example. Sometimes it's decorated; sometimes the students decorate it, sometimes I decorate it or just point it out: This is the Author's Chair. And the students get to come up and sit there, and they have selected from their portfolios of writing, writing that they feel very confident about, writing that they feel a good autonomy and ownership with. And then they get to share that with their classmates. I think that the Author's Chair really helps students because it gives them that opportunity to become the author. They own their writing. Not only is it written on paper but the teachers, the students are all listening to me and they think that it's really important what I have to share here.



Slide 6: A safe environment

Sorrell: I think it's important for them to feel safe. Keeping a safe environment where you are helped constructively is essential so that you will not feel burdened by putting something down on the paper and worrying what other people say about it.



Slide 7: Publishing parties

Sorrell: After getting to the end of the writing process, it's always important to have a little bit of a celebration with the children. We always have a publishing party at the end to celebrate their accomplishments. They put their published piece on their desk and leave it there. What happens then is they are armed with sticky notes, and what they do is they journey around the room with a snack and just look at other people's writing. A lot of times I might give them something to look for in specific, maybe onomatopoeia or where they have taken some sort of detail and really drawn it out.

The kids write down what they think about the writing, what is done well. And I kind of frame it as two stars and a wish: two things that they've done real well and one thing that you wish they would have worked on. What they do is they just mingle around the room quietly, there is no talking so it's only written communication. They write what they think on the sticky note, leave it right on the published piece of the kid that they're looking at. And when that's all done, everybody goes back to their seat, gathers up their sticky notes, I give them some time to reflect about what the audience has written, and we kind of share as to what could be done for the next draft.



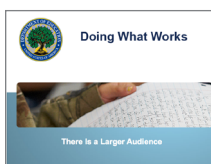
Slide 8: Audience

Sorrell: In inviting other people in, I think it always reiterates the fact that there is a larger audience than just yourself for this. Your writing is about you, but it's something to be shared with an audience. We always have an audience. Somebody is always going to pick up what you create and read it.



Slide 9: Sharing writing

Walsh: I think that when students have the opportunity to actively share their writing, in an engaged format, for example, having the publishing parties or Author's Chair, is the very essence of being able to share that with someone and having the opportunity to feel like they're involved in a community of writers.



Slide 10: Learn more

To learn more about engaged communities, please explore the additional resources on the Doing What Works website.

This project has been funded at least in part with Federal funds from the U.S. Department of Education under contract number ED-PEP-11-C-0068. The content of this publication does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Education nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.