



Newcomer
Newsletter

Welcome!

Philosophy

All children can write! As educators, it is our responsibility to ensure students have the necessary skills to communicate their ideas effectively. The path to creating confident and proficient writers is through direct instruction of concepts, allowing ample time to practice and refine skills, and providing consistent and worthwhile feedback. As students grow in their writing abilities, they will seamlessly apply those skills within other curriculum content areas.

Who We Are

Darlene McPherson

I currently serve as an English Language Arts coach in an elementary school. I work with K-5 teachers, helping them build their capacity in teaching their students how to be effective communicators in reading and writing. Before assuming my current position, I was a classroom teacher in grades K–5.

Terry Hoit

I am currently a fourth grade teacher at an IB Elementary School. I also serve as an Instructional Writing Coach one day a week in my building, working with teachers as they implement best practices in their classrooms. During my career, I have taught both primary and intermediate students.

Why Write Now-Right Now

As classroom teachers and writing coaches, we have first-hand knowledge on the difficulties teachers face when asked to teach writing. Countless educators have approached us confessing their fears when faced with this curricular area. While knowing **what** we have to teach, we struggle with **how** to help our students become better writers. It is typical for many to assign student writing without ever having taught the students the skills necessary to complete the task. This leads to students turning in sub-standard finished products. Our teacher prep courses prepared us to teach reading, math, science and social studies, but overlooked writing. We know our students must be able to communicate their thoughts in all curricular areas. For all of these reasons, we set out to create a teacher-friendly writing program that shows the **what** and **how** of quality writing instruction, regardless of what standards you are asked to use.



WRITE NOW

RIGHT NOW

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***"I hear and I forget;
I see and I remember;
I write and I understand."
Chinese Proverb***

Writing, the oft forgotten portion of the curriculum, is key to increasing students' understanding. Being able to create ideas, organize these thoughts into a coherent structure and then express those ideas clearly to a reader leads to deeper understanding. While as teachers we all desire our students to be able to clearly express their ideas, we often struggle in knowing how to best move them towards this goal.

When looking at the writing process, the first step is gathering ideas. "I don't have anything to write about" is frequently heard in elementary classrooms. The following activities aid students in gathering ideas prior to writing.

Primary Students

Play a game titled "1,2,3 What can it be?"

Bring in a basic object, such as a glass jar. Ask students, "What else could this be?" You are not looking for what could go in the jar, but what the jar could be. List student responses on the board. Examples include: an aquarium, a vase, a jewelry box, home for insects, etc. Encourage students to keep thinking!

After your list is complete, students will choose one response to illustrate and write a sentence explaining their picture. Example: *The jar is an aquarium and is home to my fish.* The pictures can be made into a class book. Repeat the procedure with other common items.

Intermediate Students

Put the name of a sport, such as golf, on the board. Tell students they have 3 minutes to write as many words as they can think of having to do with golf. At the end of 3 minutes, students will share the words they have written. Repeat the process with other sports or topics.

After completing this list, students can organize their ideas. Return to the list of golf words. Students will look for ways to group their ideas. Underline all the words belonging to one group in a single color. For example: *driver, putter, tee, irons* are all golf equipment. Underline these words in red. Repeat for other categories.

These ideas can be found in the *Write Now—Right Now Writing Program*.

Visit: www.writenow-rightnow.com for more information.