Setting the Stage for Student Writers  
(Ages 5+)

1. Give students opportunities to write about topics of their own choice  
   - Encourage children to draw from their own experiences  
   - If children need guidance, provide them with several topics and let them choose one

2. Meet with students individually to discuss their writing  
   - Work one-on-one with each student in private  
   - Begin by highlighting a student’s strength and then address a skill to build on  
   - Keep records of what you worked on with each student

3. Create strategy groups  
   - If you notice several students struggling with the same skill, meet together as a strategy group  
   - Name the skill you will work on, show the students an example in a mentor text, model doing the skill. Then, work as a group and allow each student to try out the skill in their own writing

4. Use mini lessons to teach writing topics  
   - As a rule of thumb, children should only be at the carpet for the number of minutes that matches their age (i.e. age 7 = 7 minutes)  
   - Keep group instruction short  
   - Make use of both whole group and small group instruction  
   - Use lessons to introduce a new skill and encourage children to use it in their own writing

4. Have students present their writing to the group  
   - Encourage children to find something good to say about each child’s work  
   - Model appropriate questioning technique  
   - Have children incorporate the groups’ suggestions into their writing

5. Set up a publishing center in the classroom  
   - Designate a permanent place in the classroom  
   - Provide writing instruments, paper, and printing tools  
   - Store student work in portfolios

6. Make use of computer technology to motivate students to write
• Pick software and Apps that helps children organize their thoughts
• Have word processing software available
• Get software that lets students publish books, make banners, flyers, brochures, and Web pages, like Microsoft Publisher

7. Publish children’s writing in the school
• Encourage children to write articles for the school newspaper
• Display published writing pieces in the hall
• Have children write scripts and plays to perform for other classes and families

8. Find community resources that will publish the children’s writing
• Encourage students to submit articles to the local newspaper
• Make a time capsule of students writing as a community project
• Submit students work to local contests

9. Help students to professionally publish their work
• Gather and make available a list of publications that accept student work
• Go online with students to help them locate sites that accept student work
• Help children to edit and proofread their works to make them publication ready

10. Encourage families to support their children’s efforts in becoming authors
• Encourage families to set up a writing center at home
• Work with families to support classroom publishing efforts at home

Source: Reading Is Fundamental
Last Modified: April 2019