

## **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