

Teaching with Mentor Texts

What is a mentor text?

A well-crafted text that you show students to help them see how they can better craft their writing and use conventions.

- * Creative people in all fields have mentors.
- * Students learn reading and writing are interconnected.
- * Mentor texts help you teach writing descriptively, instead of prescriptively.
- * Mentor texts help students teach themselves about writing.

The 'how' is the craft of writing.

What are you doing as a writer to make your writing better?

Teaching with Mentor Texts

Immersion Phase:

2–4 days at the beginning of the unit we will study our stack of mentor texts.

- * Students get to know the stack of texts (just enough)
- * Teachers can use the mentor texts in mini lessons without having to read them again (time saving!)
- * Students become better at reading like a writer over time.

Immersion allows students to get better at noticing what author's do and trying it out.

You may need to start with modelling noticing during immersion.

Teaching with Mentor Texts

Structure for Immersion Phase:

Having immersion days will make teaching much clearer and much easier.

- * First read through all the texts for enjoyment and sense of story.
- * Do 'noticing' as a whole group, then put them into partners to notice.
- * Model how you, the teacher, will add to your writing based on what you are noticing.

Taking the time at the beginning of each unit will save you time in the long run!

Inquiry approach to writing – what are we noticing about this text?

Writing About Our Lives - Small Moments

- think about some of the true stories that you could write about:

- a story about my life
- a story about school
- a story about my family
- a story about my vacation

- those are BIG STORIES – as big as a 

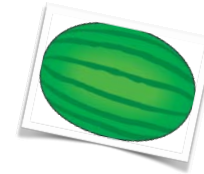
- when you pick a topic to write about – stop & think –

does it feel like I'm carrying a watermelon?

Adapted From – *Units of Study in Writing* – Calkins & The Reading and Writing Project

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Writing About Our Lives - Small Moments



- the good news is that inside a big watermelon topic, there are a TON of tiny seed stories that we can write about



- Here's an example of a personal seed story...

Adapted From – *Units of Study in Writing* – Calkins & The Reading and Writing Project

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A Small Moments Cat Story

The Pix and the Mouse

One morning I let my cat named Pix outside. He was waiting at the door to be let in. I didn't notice that he had a live mouse in his mouth when he came in. I screamed and Pix dropped the mouse. The mouse ran around the house. I finally got him outside.

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In Your Classroom

Big Idea... Writing workshop is a time every day when you make books

- * Compare to other time of the day children already know (centers, lunch, recess)
- * Show children a picture of someone who is an author and illustrator alongside a book that person has made (Eric Carle)
- * Show children books made by other children. Read one!



In Your Classroom

Big Idea... People make books by drawing the pictures and writing the words

- * Show and talk about the tools you have available for making books
- * Show children photographs of other children making books
- * Use share time to talk about how children put words and pictures in their books



In Your Classroom

Big Idea... Making books is a process that happens over time

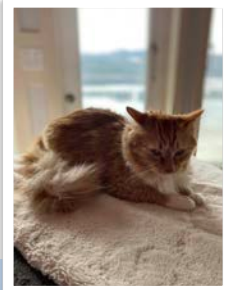
- * Ask children questions about what they plan to do **next** in their books
- * As a whole class or in pairs, invite children to think with each other about what else they might do in their books
- * As you observe children at work, look for those who are "going back in" to their books and invite them to share



Choice of Genre

Increasing engagement through choice of genre.

- * Ask students, "what is your favourite topic to write about?"
- * Modelling 'think aloud,' explain your favourite topic to write about and all the different genres you can choose to write.



- a small moment story about my cat
- A poem about cats
- A labeled diagram of a cat
- A 'how to' book about taking care of cats
- An information book about cats

Craft and Process Studies – Glover

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Craft and Process Writing Units

Craft Writing Teaching:

- ✓ Illustration Study
- ✓ Paragraph Decisions
- ✓ Punctuation
- ✓ Text Structures
- ✓ Author Study

Process Writing Teaching:

- ✓ Launching Writers Workshop
- ✓ Reading Like a Writer
- ✓ Using Strategies to Find Topics
- ✓ Planning
- ✓ Peer Conferences
- ✓ Revision



Craft and Process Studies – Glover

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Sources

Resource Books

Units of Study in Opinion, Information, and Narrative Writing – Calkins, The Reading and Writing Project

Engaging Children – Keene

How to Be a Better Writing Teacher workshop – Anderson & Glover

Craft and Process Studies – Glover

Nurturing Young Writers: Supporting Thinking in Children's Book Making and Oral Language Composition presentation – Glover workshop

A Teacher's Guide to Getting Started with Beginning Writers – Wood Ray & Cleaveland

Launching the Writing Workshop – Leograndis

Mindsets and Moves – Goldberg

The Daily Five – Boushey & Moser

Engaging Young Writers – Glover

Videos & Online Resources

[BC Ministry of Education's Writing Performance Standards](#)

[Heinemann Online Resources for A Teacher's Guide to Getting Started with Beginning Writers](#)

[YouTube – World Teacher Day](#)

POPEY Provincial Outreach Program for the Early Years



Provincial Outreach Program for the Early Years



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