



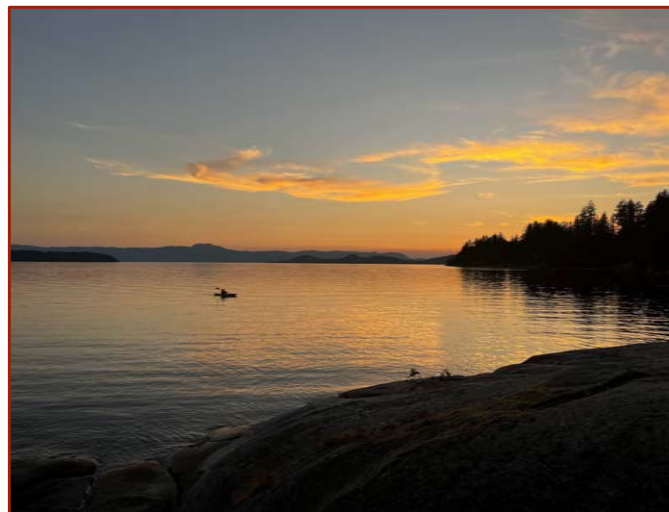
Provincial Outreach Program  
for the Early Years

## Engaging Young Writers

January 29, 2024

8:30-10:30

\*Handouts available at - [popey.ca/workshop-resources](http://popey.ca/workshop-resources)



### A bit about me...



Passionate about reading and  
writing with kids

Classroom teacher

Literacy Learner

Mom of two amazing boys + the  
best dog of all time




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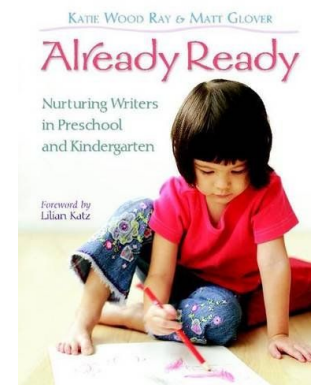
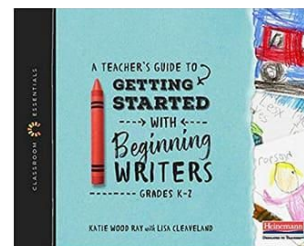
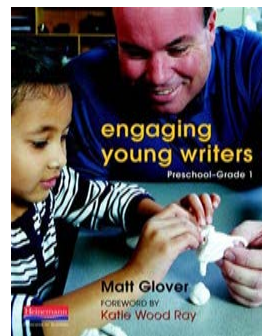


**Session Goals..**

- Clear understanding of workshop framework for writing in primary grades
- Why bookmaking is it an important approach for our youngest writers
- Get comfortable with (maybe) being a bit uncomfortable



**This work is inspired by..**



**The BIG Idea: Spelling/Word Making Development is not the same as Writing Development**

**Writing development**

As soon as they can talk and hold a pen they are ready to create and make

Composition Dimensions: Understanding About Books, Understanding About Process, Understanding About What it Means to Be a Writer



**Spelling/Word Making Development**

Develops along a continuum - squiggle, letter - sound recognition, beginning & end sounds, etc

By Grade level there are a set of words that we do hold them to, so this is not completely open ended

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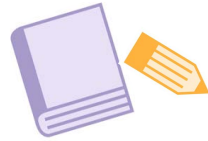
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## Core Beliefs

- Writing must be a predictable, **daily routine**
- The importance of **book making**
- Children need to see themselves as writers, each with a unique **identity**
- Teachers must act as if children are capable, competent writers. **Honour approximations**
- Writers need the **disposition of risk taking**
- **Recognize strengths** and teach from there



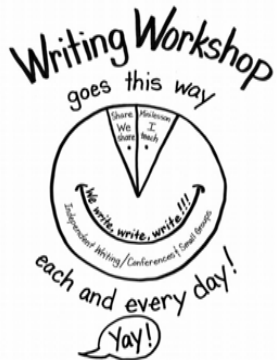
## Core Belief: writing must be a predictable, daily routine

" Writing workshop is a place where children's first writing will be celebrated in all its glorious approximation"

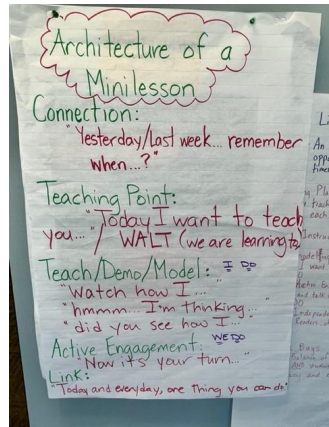


Lisa Cleaveland - Getting Started With Beginning Writers

## Core Belief: writing must be a predictable, daily routine



Columbia University Teachers College Reading & Writing Project



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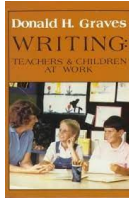
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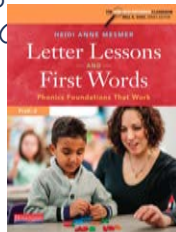
" Writing taught once or twice a week is just frequent enough to remind students that they can't write"

Donald Graves, 1983



" It is neither book reading and writing instruction nor phonics instruction, but both. You cannot have one without the other. If you teach phonics without reading and writing, children cannot and will not use their knowledge"

Heidi Anne Mesmer - Letter Lesson and First Words




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Within our mini lessons...

Word Making

- Phonological awareness
- Phonics skills
- Spelling
- Letter Formation
- Conventions

Composition & Thinking

- Thinking about writing
- Planning ideas
- Planning how the book will go
- Writing across multiple pages



Weave in talk about written language

- LETTER FORMATION - Watch me make this K
- SPACES BETWEEN WORDS - I've written 'Today is' and before I write 'Monday' I need to move over and leave some space
- SWEEPING BACK AT THE END OF LINES - Here I am at the end of my paper, but I'm not finished with my sentence! Let me sweep down and back
- PUNCTUATION - I will put a question mark here because we are asking a question
- CAPITALIZATION - I'm starting a new sentence here, so let me use a capital letter
- SPELLING STRATEGIES - I'm going to say the word 'snack' before I write it, then I'm going to write all the sounds I hear.

Making Books...

Is...

- Simple
- What children have the greatest vision for
- The type of writing they have seen the most

Is not...

- A "one off activity"




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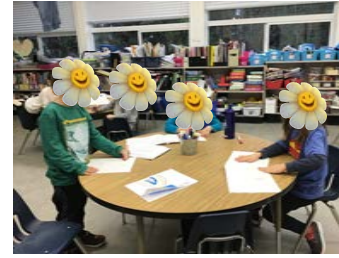
*Core Belief: The importance of book making*

Book making in action...

Lisa Cleaveland: Day 1



*Core Belief: Children need to see themselves as writers*



*Core Belief: Children need to see themselves as writers*

What do we see  
this student  
doing as a  
writer?

What do we see  
this student  
doing as a  
reader?



What about oral  
language  
development?

*Core Belief: Children need to see themselves as writers*

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Honoring Approximations...

Looks like:

- Taking a child's writing and seeing all they CAN do, not what they CANT

Looks like:

- Believing that young kids are writers and NOT doing their writing for them

Looks like:

- Adults feeling comfortable with children's approximations so that children also feel comfortable with "not knowing" and take a risk anyway

Is this student a Writer?

The key is that "regardless of whether there are words on the page or not, or how approximated the writing appears, the child is conveying a thought through symbols and pictures on a page and is therefore writing."

(Glover, 2009)



Why we don't need to write for students:

- Children can't read it
- We have no idea what kind of writing the child can do all on their own
- We run the risk of jumping the child ahead and outside of their zone of proximal development
- We are sending the message that children aren't really writers, that only adults can do the real work of writing.

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What to do instead...

How to spell a word:

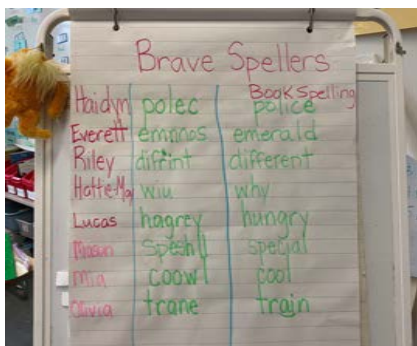
- 1 Say the word 
- 2 Listen for all the sounds 
- 3 Write all the sounds you hear 

Phonemic Awareness - authentic application

Erhi et al suggest that "phonemic awareness is not taught for its own sake but rather for its value in helping children understand and use the alphabetic system to read and write". Further, that it ought not to be taught "blindly in isolation ad nauseam without any connection to reading and writing" (2001).



Lisa Cleaveland: Fearless spelling



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### Notice & Name Strengths...

As we analyze these writing samples:

- What do we see these writers doing?
- What might be some next steps for these writers?

*Engaging Young Writers: Glover,*

*Already Ready: Glover,*

*Getting Started with Beginning Writers: Cleveland & Ray*

*Letter Lessons and First Words: Messmer*

### Resources

*Matt Glover: Author to Author*

*Shelly Moore: Presumed Competence*



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