

Mini-lesson

Hubbard Mastery School/ Columbus City Schools, Columbus, Ohio
First Grade—Amy Harrison

AMY: Boys and girls, what did I do on Tuesday that was kind of different than usual with the writing books? What did we do? What did I bring out for the very first time? Devin.

DEVIN: You gave us four-page books.

AMY: I gave you a four-page book. And do you remember what I talked about, what you really have to do, before you know you're ready to get a four-page book? What did we talk about? What do you really have to—what do you really have to do? Grayson?

GRAYSON: We have to write a lot in the middle page.

AMY: You have to write a lot in your middle page. And some of you are getting so good at that that I thought a four-page book would be a perfect thing for you to do. Do you have to pick a four-page book?

STUDENTS: No.

AMY: No, if you feel comfortable, and you feel like you want to stay with a three-page book for a while, you are allowed to do that, of course. But how do you know—let's say you're writing, and you have a three-page book, and you realize that you need to put more—another part to your story. What is something that—I actually did this with Kayan yesterday. He had another part that he wanted to put in his story. Did anybody notice what I did with his story yesterday?

STUDENT: No.

AMY: CJ, did you notice?

CJ: You stapled them.

AMY: Right. I put another page in his book, and we stapled it, and he had a four-page book even though he started with a three-pager. Allan, what did we do with your story yesterday?

ALLAN: You took one page out.

AMY: I took one page out. Because your story was a really good three-page story, that you didn't even need that last part. Right? OK? So, even if you pick a three-page book, that doesn't mean your story has to be that way. We can always put more parts in. Or, if you pick a four-page book and you realize, at the end, "Oh no, I don't have anything to write on this last page," it's OK if we take that part away. OK?

So it's up to you to decide that. OK? And you really know, when you are ready—when you talk about putting a lot of writing in your middle. And we've talked about that before.

We also talked about how we can really get our stories ready for writing, no matter what page book you pick, if you think about a story and you touch and tell the pages. That's like when you plan it, when you plan your story. Who thinks they are really good at touching and telling?

I hope all the hands are up, because I think you're good. I think you're really good at it. So don't touch your pencil until you touch and tell, OK? And then that way, you'll be able to figure out, oh, I need a three-page, or maybe I need a four-page book. OK? Does everybody think that they're ready to go back to do writing?

STUDENTS: Yes.

AMY: OK. When I call your table, head on back. Red and purple. Blue...