

Writing Workshop Overview

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

AMY: So, the structure in my classroom of writer's workshop starts the very first minute of the school day. The kids come in, they put their coats and things away, and they immediately start engaging in writer's workshop. You know, I have housekeeping things I have to do, so I decided that the best way to start the day would be to do something that each kid had experience with. And I moved that to the morning, because I didn't want to fill the morning with a paper on their desk that everybody did. Because I just felt that that doesn't meet the needs of all the kids, and so writer's workshop does.

So they come in, they immediately start writing, sharing with friends on the rug, using the resources around the room. And then once I have everybody here—you know, the housekeeping stuff is done—that's when I pull everybody together for a mini-lesson, which is usually only five or ten minutes and is based upon what I notice in their writing.

Once I've taught the mini-lesson, they go and do their independent writing, and during that time is when I conference with kids. And I have a preselected group of kids each day that conference, because I want to make sure that the kids that I conference with are also the ones that share that day, so that I can make sure that I know what they're going to share—you know, I can support them, they've practiced their story with me, they've read their story to me, so they're ready to share it to the other kids in the class.

And then at the end of each kid's sharing time, the kids who are listening can talk about things that they noticed, or things that they were wondering, from whoever's story they heard.