

Using the Writer's Notebook

Grade shown
on the DVD:
First

Time:
4 minutes

Materials

- * overhead transparency of the Writer's Notebook Pages reproducible (page 12)
- * photocopies of the Seed Idea Notebook Cover reproducible (page 13)
- * photocopies of the Writer's Notebook Pages. To create the notebooks, staple together the cover, the labeled pages, and two blank pages for each labeled page.
- * paper and pencils

Lesson Focus

First-grade students learn how their teacher, Cathy Hutter, uses a writer's notebook to think about and capture possible ideas for writing. She invites students to brainstorm possible topics for their own writer's notebooks and gives each student a Seed Idea Notebook to jot down and/or draw potential ideas.

Lesson Description

1. Show students a page of your writer's notebook. If you wish, you can use an overhead of the reproducible on page 12, filling in the four sections using words, phrases, questions, pictures, and lists to capture ideas for writing. Emphasize that taking the time to enter even the quickest notation can help us remember a good idea.

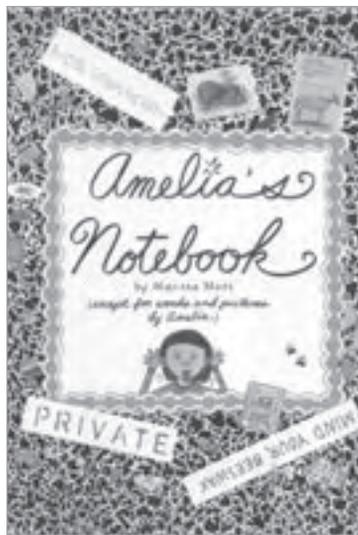
2. Hand out a copy of the Seed Idea Notebook to each student. Tell students that this is what they will use as their own writer's notebook. Discuss why it is called Seed Idea Notebook and that you hope they will use it to let writing ideas grow. Students can personalize the cover by coloring in the picture and adding their own words and art.
3. Ask students to capture three ideas in their notebooks, reminding them that they can use words, phrases, questions, pictures, and/or lists. They need to write down only enough to retain the idea for consideration later.
4. Ask students to choose one of the three ideas as the topic for a piece of writing. They may wish to discuss their choice with a neighbor. Give them paper and pencils, and let them start to work.

Lesson Extension

1. Stress that writer's notebooks are highly individual, so no two should look exactly alike.
2. After students have used their notebooks over a period of time, have them review the contents and talk with a partner about possible writing topics.
3. Ask members of the class to share their notebook entries and resulting pieces of writing. Stress how the seed idea in the notebook leads to a longer piece of writing.
4. Every two weeks, or as time allows, ask students to share why ideas in their notebooks are special. As one student shares, another may get a new idea to include in his or her notebook.

Additional Resource

Read *Amelia's Notebook* by Marissa Moss, a clever picture book that shows students the range of items and entries that might find their way into a writer's notebook. It provides a concrete example of how a notebook helps a writer find good ideas.



Writer's Notebook Pages

Things I notice:

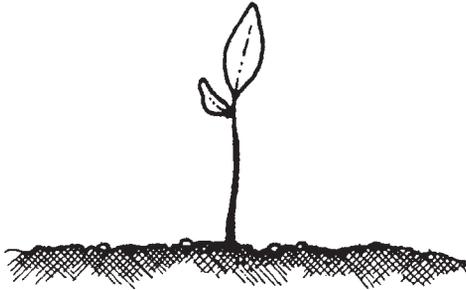
Things I wonder about:

Things that make me laugh:

Things that worry me:

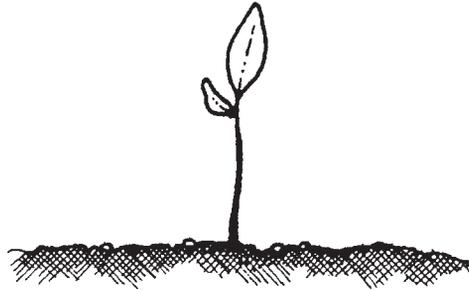
Seed Idea Notebook Cover

Seed Idea Notebook



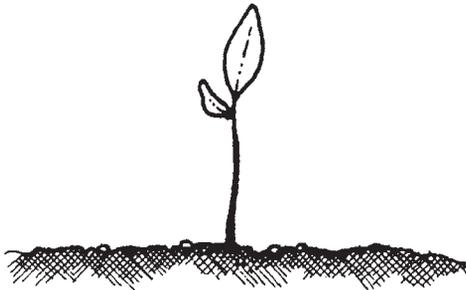
Writer's name

Seed Idea Notebook



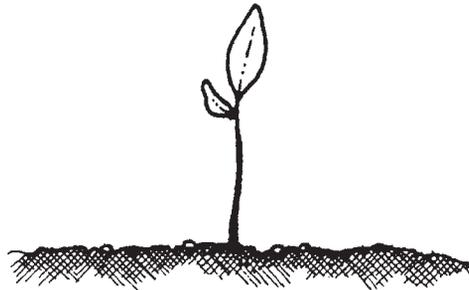
Writer's name

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