

# Making the Most of Conferring During Writing Workshop

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# Agenda

Why do we confer?

What is conferring?

Setting up a conferring culture

Starting small...

Conferring Tools

Books and Blogs/Websites of Note

Q & A

# Why do we confer with students?

- “Conferring is not the icing on the cake; it is the cake.” -Carl Anderson
- Hattie’s Research on Feedback
  - Feedback is one of the top 10 influences on students achievement
  - Conferring is essentially giving each student individualized feedback
- It builds a classroom culture of risk-taking and knowing it’s okay to make mistakes
- Conferring is the most essential aspect of the workshop model

# What is Conferencing?

A writing conference is...

- a conversation that follows a *predictable* structure
- a time when teachers and students have *predictable* roles
- a time to help students become better writers.
- one way to communicate to students that we care about them as people and as writers.

3 Types of Conferences

1. Roving
2. Small Group
3. 1-on-1

(Carl Anderson 2010)

# The Architecture of a Writing Conference

(and what to actually say to the kids)

## Research:

- Observe, Interview, Probe

## Decide

- Pick what you will teach & how

## Teach

- Lift the level of what the child is doing. *Teach the writer, not the writing*

## Link

- Remind to apply in other writings

# Setting Up a Conferring Culture

- How do we encourage students to take risks?
- How do we keep students who are writing on task when we are conferring?

## How to make the most of a Writing Conference:

- tell Mrs. R what you're doing as a writer at that moment
- be honest about what's working and what you're finding challenging.
- be willing to try something new... remember this is how we grow as writers!
- ask lots of questions
- think of yourself as the writer you are!

# I need a Conference with Mrs. Rubel...

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

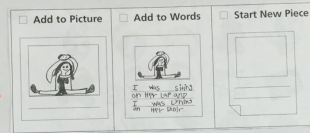
8. \_\_\_\_\_

## What I'll do while I wait...

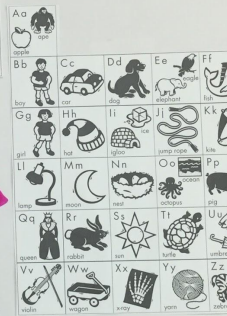
- ① Reread my piece with an eye for...
  - Spelling
  - grammar
  - Conventions
- ② Jot down exactly what's keeping me from moving forward.
- ③ Chat with your WW partner... See if he/she can offer a suggestion
- ④ Take a break from this piece and try a new one all together!

# I'm Stuck!

Done?



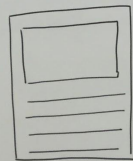
Can't Spell a word?



Need to talk?



still stuck... Start a new piece... Mrs. Rubel will meet with you soon!



## Starting Small...

- There are going to be **LOTS!!!** of mistakes in kids writing. Don't try to fix them all!
- Track your conferences how you feel most comfortable...but please track them!
- Kids won't know if you're not feeling confident in your conferring skills just yet!
- Be sure the rest of the kids know what they should be doing!

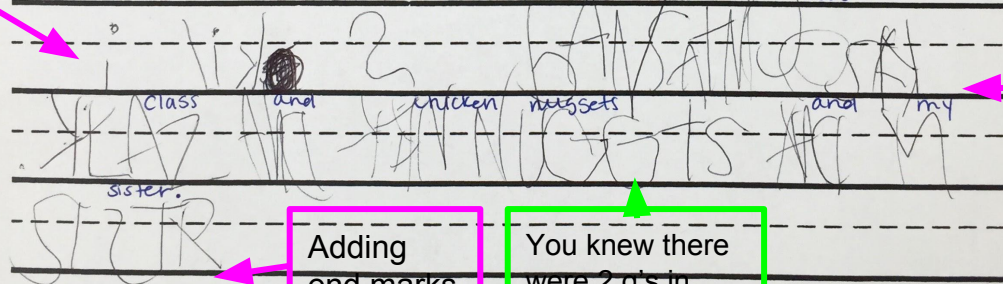
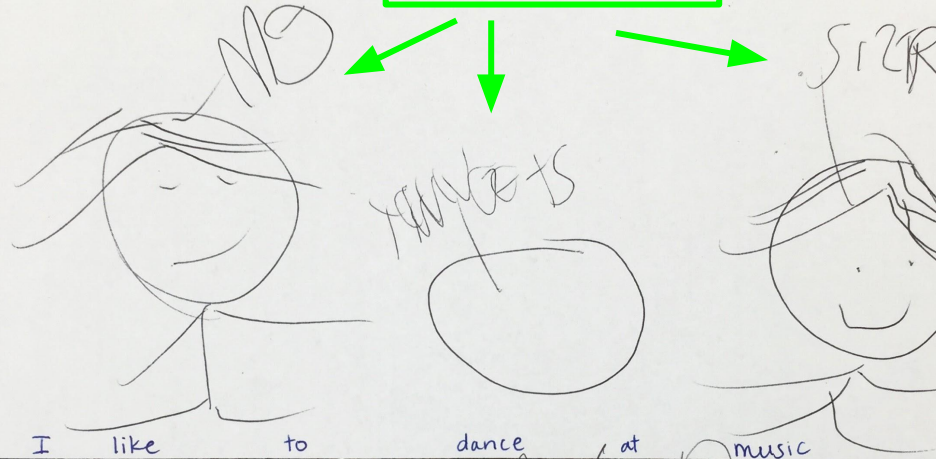


1st Grade  
October

Content - what  
is this story  
about?

Upper case to  
start a  
sentence

Good use of labeling!  
I can tell what  
everything is!



Spacing

Adding  
end marks

You knew there  
were 2 g's in  
nuggets!

4th Grade  
February

What a great  
small moment  
seed topic!

Good writers  
don't state who  
the characters  
are.

Holy spelling  
and  
conventions,  
Batman!

the day I cracked  
my head open.  
On Friday along time ago  
The characters are mom, me, brother  
I cracked my head open, we  
were getting caught up and we  
left of Florida. My mom didn't  
have a swim suite so we went  
to Target. She found some she  
liked so she went to try it on.  
But my brother and I were  
waiting outside the fitting room. My  
brother let me out of the  
cart as my mom was  
coming. And I started running  
until I hit the z thing  
with all the cloths. I was wearing  
a white shirt, I crashed big time  
my white shirt was red. We  
store immediately called the  
emergency room. Luckily I didn't  
have to get stitches, they put a  
special tape on it. We kept going  
after they finished. I was sad  
I couldn't go on my ride, but I was

If we start the story right  
when the exciting part is  
happening, let's organize  
the piece so that it makes  
sense

"My white shirt was red" -  
what a powerful way to show  
you were bleeding!

# Your Turn!

- Look at the two writing samples on purple paper.
- Pick one 'student' to 'confer' with
- Find a compliment and a TP
- Share with a friend nearby
- Thumbs up when done (and be ready to share)

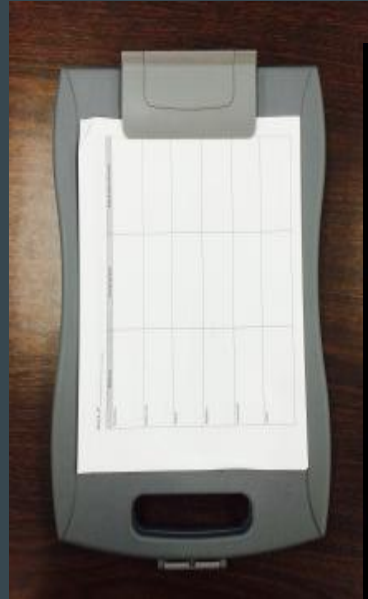
# Conferring Tools

## Conferring Toolkit Must Haves

- Post-It Notes
- Pen/Pencil
- Tracking System of your choice

## Some Nice Additions

- Mentor Texts
- Highlighter Tape
- Goal Sheets
- Your Own Writing Notebook



# Keeping Track of Writing Conferences

STUDENT: SALLY

What am I learning about this student as a writer?

What do I need to teach this student?

9/14/15 - No dialogue

TP: the story becomes more meaningful when the characters speak vs. the narrator speaking for them

9/27/15 - She is not using her word wall to spell sight words correctly

TP: writers use the resources they have to be sure their writing is of best quality

TP - TEACHING POINT

G - GOAL

## WRITING CONFERENCES

WEEK OF: JANUARY 18, 2016

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
STUDENT: ★ TP:	STUDENT: ★ TP:	STUDENT: ★ TP:	STUDENT: ★ TP:	STUDENT: ★ TP:
STUDENT: ★ TP:	STUDENT: ★ TP:	STUDENT: ★ TP:	STUDENT: ★ TP:	STUDENT: ★ TP:
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# Evernote...a conferring teacher's best friend

Writing Workshop  
Created by danielle.rubel@gmail.com

Share

6 notes Options

GC on Using Workshop Time Effecti...  
MOMENTS AGO  
2/16/16

Molly  
50 SECONDS AGO  
12/15/15 - Molly has been working hard on one piece over several days. Today Molly brought focus to the lesson - she asked if I would help

GC on Punctuating Dialogue  
3 MINUTES AGO  
Molly, Wendy, Colleen 1/26/16 - All three students were not punctuating dialogue correctly. Quick conference on proper use of

Amy L.  
YESTERDAY  
12/10/15 - page is blank. MWTP: writers write! (whole shebang about how in December 3rd grade students write long)

Writing Workshop Amy +

## Amy L.

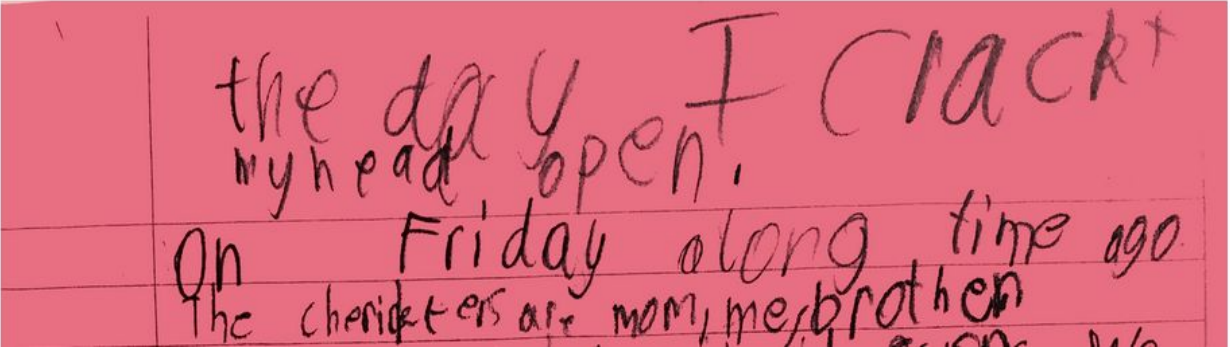
12/10/15 - page is blank. MWTP: writers write! (whole shebang about how in December 3rd grade students write long). Talked about generating some ideas. TP: GW use special moments in their life and write long about them. Looked at her notebook page on special moments, picked one, and talked about it. She came to write at small group table while I pulled a small group so that I could check in often. About 1/2 page completed by the end of IW.

12/11/15 - check in - she's writing but not super engaged. Had her sit by her writing partner for help, if needed.

12/12/15 - check in, let her know she would be sharing her work during sharing time. (after - she must have written a full page today! she had a bunch more to share than normal)

12/15/15 - Small group work (6 kids) - getting started right away, not wasting time. Not being careless.

2/1/16 - check in. Writing has really been growing, made sure to compliment her work. Working on a small moment story about a time when she cracked her head open at Target. Compliment: great seed idea. TP: when good writers open in the middle of a story, they have to organize the rest of the story so it all makes sense and that the beg. Mid. And end are all still there.



# Books and Blogs of Note

## Books

*How's It Going* by Carl  
Anderson

*Writing Workshop: The Essential  
Guide* by Ralph Fletcher &  
JoAnn Portalupi

*One to One : The Art of  
COnferring with Young Writers*  
by Lucy Calkins, Amanda  
Hartman, & Zoe White

## Blogs/Websites

[twowritingteachers.wordpress.com](http://twowritingteachers.wordpress.com)

[readingandwritingproject.org](http://readingandwritingproject.org)

[turnandtalkabout.wordpress.com](http://turnandtalkabout.wordpress.com)

[chartchums.wordpress.com](http://chartchums.wordpress.com)

[Evernote.com](http://Evernote.com)

“WITHOUT **change**  
THERE WOULD BE NO  
*butterflies*”

author unknown





Thank you!

Let's keep in touch!

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