Workshop 5 Teaching Writing as a Process

In this session, you will investigate and apply research-based principles on writing instruction in early literacy.

Learning Goals

At the end of this session, you will better understand:

- · characteristics of effective writing instruction
- components of the writing process
- formats for writing in K–2 classrooms
- writing as an integral part of all curriculum areas

Factors Related to This Session

- Background knowledge
- Phonic skills and vocabulary
- Revisions and editing skills
- Understanding writing conventions
- Understanding writing genres and purposes

Materials Needed for This Session

Participants: The Writing Instruction Chart you completed for homework (see Session Preparation) and your Handbook for Effective Literacy Practices.

Facilitator: Copies for each participant of Teaching Writing Lecture Posters (pages 125-127).

For very young writers ... the opportunity to plan, to rehearse, to share what they're going to write before they write it, can be a critical step in the writing process. —Jeanne R. Paratore

Video Summary

The video for this session examines how to teach writing as a process. Dr. Jeanne R. Paratore begins her lecture by distinguishing between the different forms of writing and the various purposes for writing. She reviews the stages of the writing process and outlines the classroom practices that develop students' writing. The workshop participants then watch and discuss two sets of classroom excerpts showing writing instruction in grades K–2. Following their discussion, they analyze their own instructional practices for teaching and managing their writing programs.

Session Preparation

To prepare for the workshop session, you will tap your prior knowledge, read two articles on writing instruction, and review important terms.

1. What do you already know?

Copy and complete the Writing Instruction Chart (page 124).

Assignment: Save your Writing Instruction Chart to update and revise throughout the session.

2. Read these articles:

Bromley, K. "Building a Sound Writing Program." In Gambrell, L., et al., eds., *Best Practices in Literacy Instruction*, 2d ed., 152–174. New York, N.Y.: Guilford Press, 1999.

Fletcher, R., and J. Portalupi. Writing Workshop: The Essential Guide, 1–33. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, 2001.

These readings are available as downloadable PDF files on the *Teaching Reading K–2 Workshop* Web site. Go to www.learner.org/channel/workshop/readingk2/.

FACILITATOR'S NOTE: Be sure that everyone has access to these readings. You may want to have a few copies available for those without Internet access.

3. Review these important terms:

Review the following definitions found in the Glossary in the Appendix: Author's Chair, composition, independent writing, interactive writing, invented spelling, journal writing, mini-lesson, scaffolded instruction, writing process, and Writers' Workshop.

4. Revise your chart:

Return to your Writing Instruction Chart. Add any new thoughts, ideas, or questions based on the readings and review of important terms.

FACILITATOR'S NOTE: When the workshop session begins, you may want to spend a few minutes reviewing the readings and the Writing Instruction Chart to prepare for watching the video.

FACILITATOR'S NOTE: Hand out the Teaching Writing Lecture Posters.

Lecture

Throughout the session, questions are posed to guide you through the topic. If you are working in a group, discuss your responses; if you are working alone, reflect on them in your journal.

In this section, you will watch Dr. Paratore's lecture on teaching writing as a process.

As you watch the lecture, use the Teaching Writing Lecture Posters to note important information.



Video Segment: Dr. Paratore's Lecture (approximate times: 2:55–11:15): Find this segment approximately 2 minutes and 55 seconds after the beginning of the video. Watch for about 8 1/2 minutes. Use the video image at left to locate where to begin viewing.

In this video segment, Dr. Paratore reviews the principles of effective writing instruction. The lecture focuses on writing as a process and Writing Workshop practices that support the process.

An accompanying lecture transcript is also available as a downloadable PDF file on the *Teaching Reading K–2 Workshop* Web site. Go to www.learner.org/channel/workshops/readingk2/.

At the end of the lecture, review your notes and consider these questions:

- When do students write without using the full writing process?
- What stages of the writing process do your students find most difficult: planning, drafting, revising, or editing?
- When do you assign topics for students to write about? When do you have students choose their topics?
- How do you support your students as they move through the writing process?



Video Segment: Questions and Concerns (approximate times: 11:15–13:53): Find this segment approximately 11 minutes and 15 seconds after the beginning of the video. Watch for about 2 1/2 minutes. Use the video image at left to locate where to begin viewing.

Following the lecture, the workshop participants discuss their questions and concerns about teaching writing.

Now return to your Writing Instruction Chart. Add any new questions or challenges that have come from watching the video segment.

Classroom Excerpts

In this section, you will relate Dr. Paratore's lecture and the readings to teaching practices in classroom excerpts.



Video Segment: Kindergarten Classroom Excerpts (approximate times: 13:55–25:11): Find this segment approximately 13 minutes and 55 seconds after the beginning of the video. Watch for about 11 1/2 minutes. Use the video image at left to locate where to begin viewing.

Observe two kindergarten classes during writing time. As you watch, pay close attention to how the teachers prepare students to write and support them as they draft and revise text.

After watching the classroom excerpts, consider these questions:

- How was the writing instruction of both teachers similar? How was it different?
- What was the purpose of asking children to label their pictures before writing?
- How did John Sinnett address individual needs within his whole-class setting?
- How did Cindy Wilson enable students in the class to support each other in their writing?

Discussion

In this section, you will watch the workshop participants discuss the classroom excerpts.



Video Segment: Discussion (approximate times: 25:15–35:35): Find this segment approximately 25 minutes and 15 seconds after the beginning of the video. Watch for about 10 1/2 minutes. Use the video image at left to locate where to begin viewing.

Following the kindergarten classroom excerpts, the workshop participants discuss the lessons. Compare your ideas with theirs.

After watching the workshop participants' discussion, consider these questions:

- Several workshop participants commented on John Sinnett's modeling of the writing process. Some believed he could have made his writing more visible to the students, while others believed he was modeling the process, not the product. What do you think? How did you perceive his purpose for this lesson?
- Participants discussed the various teaching strategies demonstrated for supporting students in their planning. What ways have you assisted children as they prepare to write? How do you decide how much support children will need?
- What might you do differently after watching these classroom excerpts?

More Classroom Excerpts

In this section, you will relate Dr. Paratore's lecture and the readings to teaching practices in classroom excerpts.



Video Segment: Grades 1 & 2 Classroom Excerpts (approximate times: 35:40–44:45): Find this segment approximately 35 minutes and 40 seconds after the beginning of the video. Watch for about 9 minutes. Use the video image at left to locate where to begin viewing.

Now you will observe a first-grade and a second-grade classroom during writing time. Each teacher focuses on the steps in the writing process, but uses different methods to teach and support their children.

After watching the classroom excerpts, consider these questions:

- How did each teacher address individual needs of students during writing instruction?
- How did the students in these classrooms support each other in their writing?
- What was accomplished in Becky Pursley's editing group?
- What was accomplished in Martha Duran-Contreras's teacher-student conference?
- How will you apply what you viewed in your own teaching?



Optional Viewing (approximate times: 44:50–49:48): Find this segment approximately 44 minutes and 50 seconds after the beginning of the video. Watch for about 5 minutes. Use the video image at left to locate where to begin viewing.

You may want to watch the workshop participants' discussion.

Extend Your Knowledge

In this section, you will expand your understanding of writing instruction by comparing the ideas from the workshop video with passages from various publications. Read and respond to the ideas presented as they relate to your own teaching practices.

Teachers in grades K–2 plan writing instruction by reflecting on the purposes for writing, the forms of writing, the needs of their students, and the assistance required to develop students' writing skills. While this session focuses on the process of writing and Writers' Workshop, other forms of writing occur throughout a typical day in grades K–2 to foster writing development. Young children write each day to reflect on their own experiences, in response to literature, to construct stories, and to communicate and document ideas.

Read the following passage and guidelines that promote both process writing and informal writing.

School offers many opportunities for both formal and informal writing. In recent years, a particular approach to teach writing—the process approach—has been widely explored, and recent evidence (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1996) indicates that students in classrooms that include more elements of the process approach indeed become better writers than those in less process-oriented classrooms. We think this evidence is convincing, and we strongly endorse the process approach as a method of teaching writing. However, a good deal of the writing students do in relation to their reading is less planned, less lengthy, less polished, and less formal than that for which the process approach is appropriate. As Gail Tompkins (1996) has pointed out, effective reading teachers give students plenty of opportunities to do both process writing and informal writing.

Guidelines for Creating a Positive Writing Environment

- Establish a predictable writing time.
- Provide opportunities to write throughout the day in all the subject areas for a variety of purposes and audiences.
- Create a writing center equipped with writing necessities—writing materials, dictionaries, a thesaurus, and books on the writer's craft.
- Stock the classroom library with texts in a variety of genres—magazines, picture books, biographies, informational books, novels, beginning chapter books—that reflect a wide range of interests and readability levels.
- Read aloud quality literature—fiction, nonfiction, and poetry.
- Guide students to write about topics that are important to them—writing that has a genuine purpose and a real audience.
- Model writing forms and techniques.
- Provide direct instruction on matters of mechanics—grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation—and the writer's craft—dialogue, characterization, voice, engaging beginnings, and so on—as the need arises.
- Provide students with guidance and constructive feedback.
- Become a writer yourself, and share with your students your writing and the struggles you experience in writing.

Passage and guidelines are from Graves, M. F., C. Juel, and B. B. Graves, *Teaching Reading in the Twenty-First Century*. Published by Allyn and Bacon, Boston, MA. Copyright © 2001 by Pearson Education. Adapted by permission of the publisher.

- Provide opportunities for students to share their writing with their peers and receive constructive feedback from them.
- Consider background knowledge (general store of information on a topic), prior experiences with writing, and models of literacy students have been exposed to at home. —Adapted from Graves, M. F., C. Juel, and B. B. Graves, *Teaching Reading in the Twenty-First Century*, 413–414. Boston, Mass.: Allyn and Bacon, 2001.

Apply Guidelines to a Classroom

In this section, you will explore an activity to better understand the Guidelines for Creating a Positive Writing Environment.

In all curriculum areas, teachers provide opportunities for students to learn and communicate their ideas by writing. Children improve their writing skills by recording their own experiences and responding to classroom activities.

The activity Apply Guidelines to a Classroom uses the guidelines to analyze classroom writing activities.

Try It Online! Apply Guidelines to a Classroom can be explored as an Interactive Activity. Go to the *Teaching Reading K–2 Workshop* Web site at www.learner.org/channel/workshop/readingk2/.



Apply Guidelines to a Classroom

In this activity you will read two sets of descriptions, one of a kindergarten classroom and the other, a second-grade classroom. Identify which of the following *Guidelines for Creating a Positive Writing Environment* are best represented in each classroom example.

Guidelines for Creating a Positive Writing Environment

Writing Routine

- Establish a predictable writing time.
- Plan for writing throughout the day, in all subject matters.

Writing Environment

- Create a well-stocked writing center.
- Stock the classroom library with varied texts.

Writing Opportunity

• Guide students to write about topics that are important to them.

Writing Instruction

- Read aloud quality literature.
- Model writing forms and techniques.
- Provide direct instruction on matters of mechanics and the writer's craft.
- Provide guidance and constructive feedback.

Sharing Writing

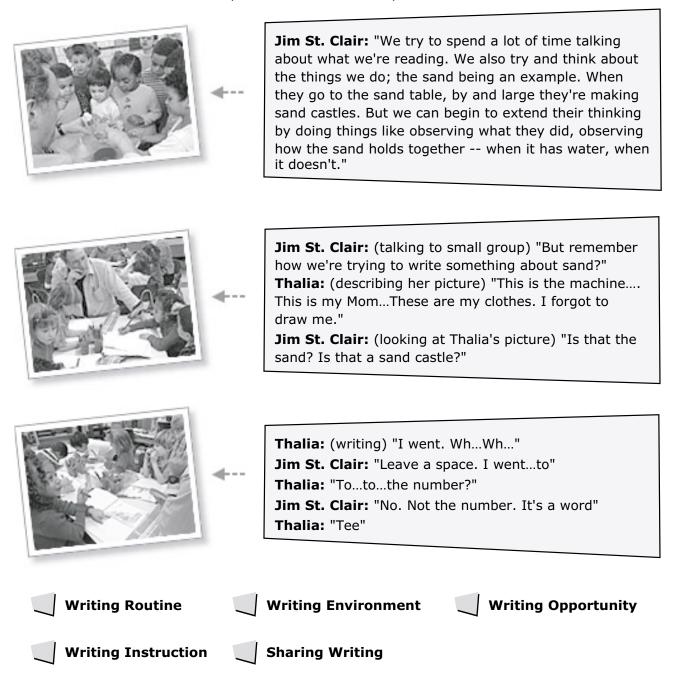
- Become a writer yourself and share your struggles with writing.
- Provide opportunities for students to share their writing.

Adapted from Graves, M. F., C. Juel, and B. B. Graves. *Teaching Reading in the Twenty-First Century*, 413-414. Published by Allyn and Bacon, Boston, MA. Copyright © 2001 by Pearson Education. Adapted by permission of the publisher.

Read the descriptions and check off which guidelines are best represented in the classroom example. Then compare your answers to the sample answers on page 4.

Kindergarten

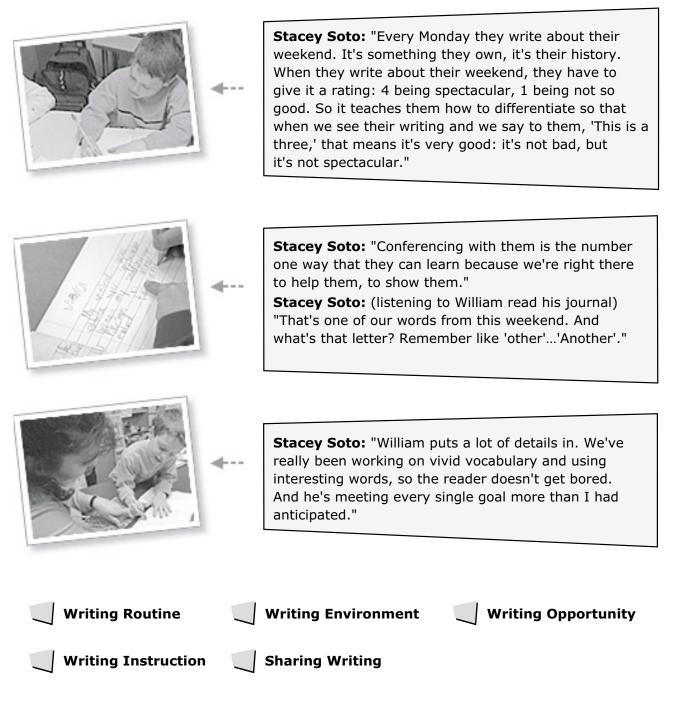
Jim St. Clair explores the properties of sand and water with his kindergarten class. Later he works with Thalia to help her write about the experiment.



Read the descriptions and check off which guidelines are best represented in the classroom example. Then compare your answers to the sample answers on page 4.

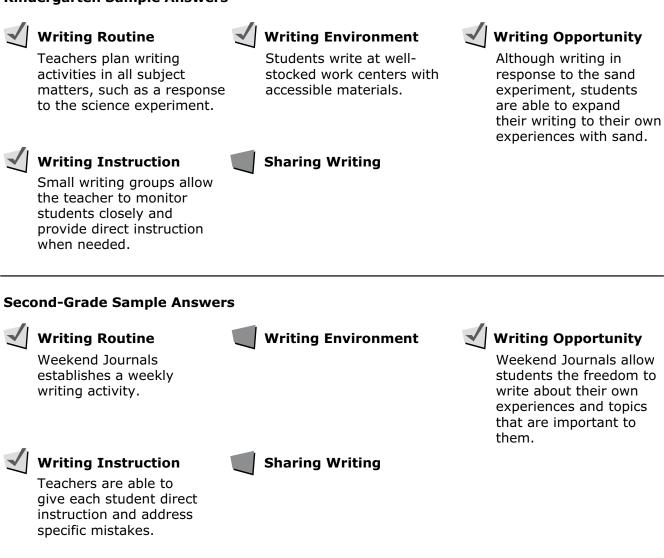
Second Grade

Every Monday Stacey Soto's second-grade class writes about their weekend. William reads his entry about a weekend party.



Here are sample answers for the guidelines best represented in the kindergarten and second-grade classroom examples.

Kindergarten Sample Answers



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After exploring the classrooms, consider these questions:

- What was the purpose of the writing activity?
- What else might you have done during this writing time? How might you encourage the students to take their writing through the writing process?

Analyze Your Teaching

In this section, you will analyze your own teaching practices and share your knowledge with teachers of other grade levels.

If you are working alone or with teachers from the same grade-level, join Channel-Talk, the email discussion group, to share your ideas with teachers from other grades.

Summarize a writing lesson you have taught. Include a description of the lesson, its purpose, writing format, and specific student outcomes. Then analyze this lesson by answering the following questions:

- How did this lesson support the curriculum?
- How did you confer with students to address their individual needs?
- How did instruction reflect the research principles presented in the lecture and the readings?

Use your notes on Dr. Paratore's lecture, your Writing Instruction Chart, and other activities to complete this assignment.

In order to understand the continuum of writing development across grades K–2, share your lesson analysis with teachers of other grade levels.

- What was similar about your lessons?
- What was different? Why?
- How does instruction differ from kindergarten through second grade?

Assignment: Submit your writing lesson summary.

Reflect on Your Learning

In this section, you will review and complete your notes on writing instruction.

Review the notes you have taken during this session. Return to the Writing Instruction Chart you completed in Session Preparation. Add any new ideas and insights about teaching writing on your chart. Use your revised chart and the following questions to reflect on the ideas presented in this session. In a paragraph, respond to the following questions:

- Has your view of writing instruction changed? How?
- What questions were answered during the session?
- What teaching practices did you observe or read about that you will implement in your classroom?
- What questions or issues do you still have?
- What will you continue to do in your instruction?

Assignment: Submit your written reflection.

Put It Into Practice

Choose Activities

In this section, you will apply what you have learned to your own teaching. The three activities are designed to assist you in developing resources for your writing instruction. Choose one or more of the activities from the list below.

Activity 1: Assess Your Writing Program

Review your current writing instruction, then implement new writing routines from ideas generated by the workshop participants.

Activity 2: Develop a Mini-Lesson

Identify topics for writing instruction and develop one into a mini-lesson.

Activity 3: Create a Handbook

Collect literacy resources for each workshop session in a Handbook for Effective Literacy Practices.

1. Assess Your Writing Program

In this activity, you will review your current writing instruction and develop new practices you would like to implement.

- Copy the Planning for Writing Workshop form (page 128).
- List your classroom routines and strategies that:
 - foster a love of writing time
 - encourage children to take risks in writing
 - help teachers manage the volume and review of children's writing

Think about their purposes. Next, watch the workshop participants discuss how they prepare for Writing Workshop.



Video Segment: Writing Workshop (approximate times: 49:55–56:52): Find this segment approximately 49 minutes and 55 seconds after the beginning of the video. Watch for about 7 minutes. Use the video image at left to locate where to begin viewing.

FACILITATOR'S NOTE: Show the clip before the end of the session, or loan out the tape for participants to watch.

After watching the discussion, revise your Planning for Writing Workshop form. Add any new routines and strategies you would like to incorporate into your writing program.

Consider the following questions:

- How will you incorporate these new ideas into your existing program?
- What support will you need to successfully implement these new practices?

Assignment: Submit your completed Planning for Writing Workshop form and a written response to the questions.

2. Develop a Mini-Lesson

In this activity, you will identify and develop specific topics for mini-lessons in writing.

In a mini-lesson, you teach students something important about writing and demonstrate an aspect of the writing process; however, mini-lessons are not all "telling." Effective mini-lessons are interactive, with students contributing ideas and examples (Fountas and Pinnell, *Guiding Readers and Writers Grades 3–6*, 66). Create a list of topics for mini-lessons that will address your students' writing needs either as a whole class or as small groups. You may want to categorize topics like:

- Writing process: e.g., how to effectively plan, draft, edit, and revise writing
- Writing conventions: e.g., spelling, punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, and paragraphs
- Writing time management: e.g., using writing resources and Writing Workshop procedures

Put It Into Practice, cont'd.

From your list, identify a topic to develop into a mini-lesson.

Copy the Lesson Plan Template (page 129) and use it to develop the mini-lesson. Make sure your mini-lesson addresses how you will:

- introduce and model the routine
- provide for students' guided practice
- plan for independent application

Assignment: Submit your mini-lesson.

3. Create a Handbook

In this ongoing activity, you will collect literacy resources in a Handbook for Effective Literacy Practices (see page 6) to use in your classroom.

Today, you will create a section focused on writing instruction. Include resources you already use and plan to use in the future. Place them in the section for **Teaching Writing as a Process.** You may want to include:

- the Planning for Writing Workshop form developed in Activity 1
- the list of writing mini-lesson topics created in Activity 2
- specific lessons in writing you have taught, or you planned in Activity 2
- graphic organizers for planning and drafting writing in response to reading
- a list of books for read-aloud to stimulate student writing
- management procedures for writing time
- · questions to use in teacher-student conferences
- editing and revision checklists for teachers and students

Assignment: Submit a copy of your completed Handbook at the end of the workshop series. **Idea:** Do this activity with your colleagues to create a comprehensive collection of resources and instructional plans.

Assignments

If you are taking this workshop for credit or professional development, submit the following assignments for session 5: Teaching Writing as a Process.

1. Session Preparation

Complete the Writing Instruction Chart.

2. Analyze Your Teaching

Summarize and analyze a writing lesson you've taught.

3. Reflect on Your Learning

Review and complete your notes. Write a final reflection on the session.

4. Assess Your Writing Program

Review your writing program and develop new practices to include in your writing instruction.

5. Develop a Mini-Lesson

Design a mini-lesson centered on a writing topic.

6. Create a Handbook

Submit a copy of your completed Handbook at the end of the workshop series.

For Next Session

Go to session 6: Before You Watch. Review the Video Summary and complete the Session Preparation activities.

Related Resources

Bottomly, D. M., W. A. Henk, and S. A. Melnick. "Assessing Children's Views About Themselves as Writers Using the Writer Self-Perception Scale." *The Reading Teacher* 51, no. 4 (January 1998): 286–297.

Brisk, M. E., and M. M. Harrington. *Literacy and Bilingualism: A Handbook for All Teachers*, 12–46. Mahwah, N.J.: Laurence Erlbaum Assoc., 2000.

Bromley, K. "Teaching Young Children To Be Writers." In Strickland, D. S., and L. M. Morrow, eds., *Beginning Reading and Writing*, 111–120. New York, N.Y.: Teachers College Press, 2000.

Calkins, L. M. The Art of Teaching Writing. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, 1994.

Fountas, I., and G. S. Pinnell. *Guided Reading: Good First Teaching for All Children*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, 1996.

Fountas, I., and G. S. Pinnell. *Guiding Readers and Writers Grades* 3–6. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, 2001.

Graves, D. H. A Fresh Look at Writing. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, 1994.

Hansen, J. "Young Writers: The People and Purposes That Influence Their Literacy." In Osborn, J., and F. Lehr, eds., *Literacy for All: Issues in Teaching and Learning*, 207–236. New York, N.Y.: Guilford Press, 1998.

Pressley, M., et al. *Learning To Read: Lessons From Exemplary First-Grade Classrooms*. New York, N.Y.: Guilford Press, 2001.

International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). "Learning To Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children." *The Reading Teacher* 52, no. 2 (October 1998): 193–216.

Rog, L. J. Early Literacy Instruction in Kindergarten. Newark, Del.: International Reading Association, 2001.

Snow, C. E., S. M. Burns, and P. Griffin. Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young

Children. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1998.

Teale, W. H., and E. Sulzby. "Emergent Literacy: New Perspectives." In Strickland, D. S., and L. M. Morrow, eds., *Emerging Literacy: Young Children Learn To Read and Write*, 1–15. Newark, Del.: International Reading Association, 1989.

Related Research

Graves, D. Writing: Teachers and Children at Work. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, 1983.

Classroom Excerpts Used in the Video

Classrooms shown in the video session are from *Teaching Reading K–2*: A Library of Classroom Practices.

Building Oral Language with Cindy Wilson

Staying on Topic with Martha Duran-Contreras

Students Making Choices with Becky Pursley

Writer's Journal with John Sinnett



Writing Instruction Chart

Instructions:

- Complete the chart by answering these questions: 1. What do you want your children to be able to do in writing?
 - 2. What needs do your students demonstrate in their writing development?
 - 3. How do you address those needs (contexts for instruction, activities, conferences, etc.)? 4. What questions or challenges do you have?

Questions/Challenges	
Instructional Practices	
Student Needs	
Writing Expectations/Goals	

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Instructions:

As you watch Dr. Paratore's lecture, use the posters to note important information.

Session 5: Teaching Writing Lecture Poster 1

Distinctions Between Forms Teaching Writing in Response to Teaching Writing as a Process	Distinctions Between Forms of Writing	Teaching Writing in Response to Reading	ting as a Process
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Instructions:

As you watch Dr. Paratore's lecture, use the posters to note important information.

Session 5: Teaching Writing Lecture Poster 2

Teaching Writing as a Process
Planning
Drafting
Revising
Editing

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Instructions:

As you watch Dr. Paratore's lecture, use the posters to note important information.

Session 5: Teaching Writing Lecture Poster 3

Structuring Writing Workshop
Mini-Lesson
Time To Write
Teacher-Student Conferences
Sharing

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Planning for Writing Workshop

Routines/Strategies That Help Teachers To Manage the Volume of Children's Writing	
Routines/Strategies That Encourage Children To Take Writing Risks	
Routines/Strategies That Foster a Love of Writing Time	

Chart titles are based on recommendations of Ralph Fletcher and Jo Ann Portalupi in Writing Workshop: The Essential Guide. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann.

Vorkshöp	Effective Instruction is: Strategic - Explains to Students • What to do • How to do it • When and why it is useful to them
Lesson Plan Template	Explicit Shows students what to do
Reading Selection:	 Helps them to do it Provides opportunity for independent practice
Focal Strategy:	
1. Introduction of the Strategy	
2. Modeling the Process	
3. Guiding Practice	
4. Independent Practice	
Grade:	

Notes