Inside Writing Communities, Grades 3-5

Workshop 6
Reading-Writing Connection

Narration written by
Mary Duncan, Ph.D.

FINAL DRAFT
**Program Duration:**

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Annenberg Media Logo | Annenberg Media Logo Music | 15:14 | 16:06
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KET Logo | | 7:05 | 23:11
Series Open/Title 6 | Inside Writing Communities, Grades 3-5 Theme | 24:13 | 47:24
Katie Ray | **KATIE:** One thing that’s really critical is that you understand the relationship between reading and writing. And when you do—the interesting thing is you can’t turn it on and off. When you teach children how to read like writers, you notice things about everything you read. | 18:20 | 01:06:16

Christine Sanchez, Tohaali Community School, New Mexico | **CHRISTINE:** I always try to incorporate literature and since the lesson is sort of focused on the topic of food, I remembered the book *Farmer Boy.* I loved that book and I thought that would be a great book because there’s lots of times in the book where he describes the food because he really likes to eat. | 26:13 | 01:33:03

Christine Sanchez, Tohaali Community School, New Mexico | **CHRISTINE:** Now what trait did I introduce to you yesterday?

**STUDENTS:** Word choice.

**CHRISTINE:** Word choice. Okay. So let me change over to word choice here. Now what were some. What do you remember about word choice when we use that in our writing. Alonzo?

**ALONZO:** The reader understands what my handwriting is.

**CHRISTINE:** The reader understands your handwriting. OK. Angel?

**ANGEL:** Choose the words I love.

**CHRISTINE:** Choosing the words you like. Choosing words to make our writing more clear. Tyra?
TYRA: Words make sense.

CHRISTINE: Making sure your words make sense. OK. Janelle?

JANELLE: Did I use enough information?

CHRISTINE: Did you use enough information? OK. Yeah. Using words to give information.

STUDENT: Using favorite words.

CHRISTINE: And using favorite words. Jolene?

JOLENE: Did I give enough words?

CHRISTINE: OK. Giving enough words. OK, one more. Osmond?

OSMOND: Put words in that add more detail stuff.

CHRISTINE: OK, more detail. Exactly. Last one for sure. Janeka?

JANEKA: Staying on your topic.

CHRISTINE: Staying on your topic. Right and using the right kind of words can help us stay on our topic. Now the one we are going to concentrate on in our activity is; Did I use a variety of words? In our leaf writing yesterday, you saw that you used a variety of words. Well we are going to do another activity that requires us to use a variety of words just to really bring it alive. But first I am going to read from this book called Farmer Boy. I used to really like reading this. And they live on a farm and in the section I am going to read, they are at the dinner table and its Christmastime and he has worked hard all day and this little boy whose name is Amonzo is really hungry and look what.
I’m going to read how he describes the food that he cannot wait to eat.

Amonzo bowed his head and shut his eyes tight while his father said the blessing. It was a long blessing. Father said because it was Christmas Day, but at last Amonzo could open his eyes. He sat silently looking at the table.

(Listen real carefully for this part.)

He looked at the crisp, crackling little pig lying on a blue platter with an apple in its mouth. He looked at the fat roast goose, the drumsticks sticking up and the edges of the dressing curling out. The sound of father’s knife sharpening on the way stone made him even hungrier. He looked at the big bowl of cranberry jelly and the fluffy mountain of mashed potatoes with melting butter trickling down it. He looked at the heap of mashed turnips and the golden baked squash and the pale parsnips. He swallowed hard and tried not to look anymore. He couldn’t help seeing the fried apples and onions and the candied carrots. He couldn’t help gazing at the triangles of pie waiting by his plate. The spicy pumpkin pie, the melting cream pie, and the rich dark mince oozing from between the mince pie’s flaky crust. He squeezed his hands together between his knees. He had to sit silent and wait but he felt aching and hollow inside. All the grown-ups at the head of the table must be served first. They were passing their plates and talking and heartlessly laughing. The tender pork fell away from slices under father’s carving knife. The white breast of goose went piece by piece from the bare bones. Spoons ate up the clear cranberry jelly. Amonzo had to wait very last. He was the youngest of all except for the babies. At last Amonzo’s plate was filled. The first
taste made a pleasant feeling inside him and it grew and grew while he ate and ate and ate.

Christine Sanchez, Tohaali Community School, New Mexico

**CHRISTINE:** I thought this would be a really nice introduction to what our lesson was going to be about and that is why I chose that book. I could use that and then use a piece of writing I created and they could see I went through the process of making a web and choosing food that I like to eat.

Cristina Tijerina, Sharp Elementary, Brownsville, Texas

**CRISTINA:** Literature shows—will show the children all the traits—writing traits—the ideas, the content, the organization, the word choice, the conventions of words.

You know, most of the books I use are geared for—at—geared for grades—or ages four through eight, grades pre-kinder through second. You know, this is good for the emergent and—as well as fluent readers. Your emergent readers will have the beautiful pictures; they'll be able to follow a story and your fluent readers will be able to create and expand. So it works at—with all levels of kids.

I thought this was a great book because the text was so simple, but the illustration gave all the details. So by covering the illustration, the kids noticed that, “Ah! We don’t know anything about the setting if there’s no picture.” So this way, you know, what—if they were writing the story, what else would they have to add—the details.

You know the story is simple enough where they’re not going to forget what the main idea is all about; but I have to stop and point out some of the traits that the book is showing that we can use in our writing. The book starts out with a
dialogue. You know, we’ve been working on introduction and I wanted to point out that this book started with dialogue. I think a lot of teachers are afraid to teach writing. I think there is a myth that writing is really hard to teach. And I felt that, many years ago, as well. I have found that using literature—authentic—literature, has been the best—my best method of teaching writing.

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<th>Sheryl Block, Simpsonville Elementary, Simpsonville, Kentucky</th>
<th><strong>SHERYL:</strong> I cannot go to Florida without a roadmap; kids can’t develop a poem, a personal narrative, a feature article, a persuasive letter without having their own roadmap, and those roadmaps are found in published magazines, pieces of student writing that has already been placed out to press. They have to see models.</th>
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<td><strong>SHERYL:</strong> Gift From the Storm. “Don’t take those toys”, I remembered Mama saying. “We won’t have room for them.” A sharp, sour pain hit my stomach as I carefully put away my dolls, dishes, and clothes. Would I ever see them again or would they blow out to sea? The night before Papa had run into our small tin house by the beach and shouted, “The typhoon will be here tomorrow. Condition two.” Condition two was bad. It meant that our island would be hit by the typhoon within twenty-four hours.</td>
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<td>Sheryl Block, Simpsonville Elementary, Simpsonville, Kentucky</td>
<td><strong>SHERYL:</strong> We teach reading, and we teach writing; however, those two processes should never be separated. We are currently writing personal stories. So what we’re reading are personal stories. With that type of reading, kids need to understand that it’s going to be told from the first person. So I present reading excerpts about a personal experience that a child has.</td>
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| Name: Sheryl Block, Simpsonville Elementary, Simpsonville, Kentucky | SHERYL: In all the excitement, I had completely forgotten about Maria. Mama had said not to pack any toys and I had disobeyed her. And mama was not happy with me when she found out. I walked to her slowly and said, "Mama I'm sorry I disobeyed you but now Maria can be a present for someone." I took my doll, cradled and cuddled her one last time and then ran to Casina. I pushed Maria into her arms, “For you. Her name is Maria and she needs you to take care of her.” I said it all in a rush before I could change my mind and Casina’s big smile was a great, kind reward. But when I turned back to see Mama, I saw for the first time in weeks that she was smiling her sweetest smile. That was my biggest reward for having to give up Maria.

I have goose pimples. I made a copy, boys and girls, and I read off the white copy because I want to keep this in a binder that says Personal Narrative forever. |
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<td>MICHELLE:</td>
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<td>Sheryl Block, Simpsonville Elementary, Simpsonville, Kentucky</td>
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<td>Nicole Outsen, North Hampton Elementary, North Hampton, New</td>
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someone wrote that, and that they can write that. And so we look at literature, a lot of times, from the perspective of writers. How did this person write this? What elements—what craft does it have in it that we could borrow and use in our own writing? So I want them to see that those two things—reading and writing—are so connected that they’re almost the same thing.

Mark Hansen, Clarendon Elementary, Portland, Oregon

**MARK:** We are going to start working on a new kind of writing.

**MARK HANSEN:** I often start lessons with either published text, like a picture book, samples of other peoples’ writing that I’ve collected over the years that illustrate either someone stylistic or maybe an idea that they might want to use.

**MARK HANSEN:** To get our brains really thinking about persuasive writing, I’m going to read you this book. Has anyone read it before? Its called The Wonderful Towers of Watts. I’m going to stop before the ending so don’t give the ending away. OK? It’s by Patricia Zelver. And the pictures are by, I believe her name is Frane Lesac.

A lot of people thought Old Sam was crazy. Old Sam’s real name was Semone Rodea. Semone Rodea had come from Italy as a young man and spoke with a thick accent. He bought a little bungalow in Watts, a poor neighborhood that was half town and half country outside the city limits of Los Angeles. On weekends Old Sam walked down to the vacant lot by the railroad tracks and collected things that people thought were better thrown away. He brought blue milk of magnesia bottles,
broken bits of colored pottery, and even pieces of broken mirrors. Sometimes he paid the neighborhood kids with pennies or cookies to bring him empty green soda pop bottles and sacks of seashells. What do Old Sam want with all that junk people wondered. One day to the neighbors amazement something strange and beautiful rose up over the fence of Sam’s backyard. It was a lacy web of steel covered with a skin of concrete in which Old Sam had stuck glittering bits of tile, glass, mirrors, pottery and seashells. Was Old Sam building a fairy castle, a church spire, a tower in which he could climb up to the sky? Everyone stared in wonder at Old Sam’s creation. Sometimes Old Sam invited the neighborhood children into his yard which was now surrounded by a decorated wall. Inside the children found a magical city with little streets, squares and fountains. The walks and walls were covered with starfish patterns, heart-shaped, seashells, colorful tiles decorated with peacocks and a golden bumblebee. Stuck into the cement were all sorts of objects which Old Sam had collected over the years. A teapot spout, a cowboy boot, faucet handles, horseshoes and even willow ware plates.

**MARK HANSEN:** Megan?

**MEGAN:** I really like. It gives you a really good description.

**MARK HANSEN:** Great descriptive writing. All those details.

**MEGAN:** Like a movie in your mind.

**MARK HANSEN:** Yeah. How do you think they feel?

**STUDENT:** They feel happy because he
did something for their children and them. So they can have fun instead of having to go down to the park they can go to Old Sam’s house to play on the stuff and look at all the patterns that he did over the years.

**MARK HANSEN:** I agree he is really giving something to his neighborhood. Now here is where I’m going to really need your help.

Los Angeles grew up around Watts. The city officials decided the towers must be dangerous. They could fall down in an earthquake or a windstorm. After all they said Old Sam was not an engineer.

I’m going to stop there. I’m not going to tell you what happens.

**STUDENT:** Is it true?

**MARK HANSEN:** Because the people had to do something. They had to talk to the people from the city. Now if you were one of the people who lived in the neighborhood I want you to think about what those people would feel like.

**STUDENT:** Mr. Hansen is this true?

**MARK HANSEN:** Yes. It is a true story. You can talk to a neighbor for one minute. What do you think those people would feel like?

**Students discussing.**

**MARK HANSEN:** Stop your conversation. I want to hear back from you. You can also share something your partner said if that is OK. What do you think? How will they feel? Sit up please. Coco what do you think?
<table>
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<th>COCO:</th>
<th>Sad and happy. Some people want it to come down and some people don’t.</th>
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<td><strong>MARK HANSEN:</strong></td>
<td>OK. So maybe there will be some disagreement in the neighborhood. Why would the people—you know I’m going to ask you to follow up on that is a second. Megan how else do you think they will feel?</td>
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<td><strong>MEGAN:</strong></td>
<td>I think they will kind of feel scared because it could fall down in an earthquake and I think they will feel sad about it coming down because some of the kids have grown up now and they grew up around the building and now it’s there and it’s done and they finally get to see it.</td>
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<td><strong>MARK HANSEN:</strong></td>
<td>Great. Great. I’m liking it that you are bringing up that some people are going to want it to come down. Who are those people who want it to come down?</td>
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<td><strong>STUDENT:</strong></td>
<td>The destruction people.</td>
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<td><strong>MARK HANSEN:</strong></td>
<td>The city officials decided the towers must be dangerous. When some people who loved the towers heard this, they volunteered to do something. Now this is where I want you to start thinking and you can talk to your neighbor again. If you were someone who wanted to save the towers, Armando, if you were someone who wanted to save the towers, what arguments could you make. What would you say to make the people change their minds. What good reasons would you give them to do something different? You can go ahead and talk to your partners about that.</td>
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**Students discussing.**
**MARK HANSEN:** Stop. Three, two, one. OK. Here is how we are going to organize this. I want to get some of these ideas up here. Some reasons to save the towers that people could say and some reasons to tear the towers down. What would people say? Cheryl?

**CHERYL:** Save the towers. Something to remind of Old Sam. Like his art.

**MARK HANSEN:** So one reason would be to remember Old Sam. OK. Great. That's a good reason. Leroy?

**LEROY:** Save the towers because they need some way where the kids can play and have fun. That is why Sam built it so everybody could have fun.

**MARK HANSEN:** Save the towers because it is a place

**LEROY:** Where people can have fun.

**MARK HANSEN:** I'm just going to abbreviate it a little bit. A place to have fun is a good reason. Christopher?

**CHRISTOPHER:** Tear it down.

**MARK HANSEN:** Tear it down. Why?

**CHRISTOPHER:** Because it might fall. Because people might get hurt.

**MARK HANSEN:** It might fall. Josue?

**JOSUE:** Tear down the towers.

**MARK HANSEN:** Tear down the towers. Why?

**JOSUE:** Because if the glass falls it might hurt people.
MARK HANSEN: Are you saying if the glass breaks off it might hurt people?

JOSUE: Yeah.

MARK HANSEN: Falling glass. That covers your reason. Carlos?

CARLOS: Yo no quiero que se cayó porque esta bonito.

MARK HANSEN: He’s saying they don’t want it to fall. No destruye. ¿No quieres que le caiga o le destruye?

CARLOS: No le destruye.

MARK HANSEN: Que lo deje. He wants it to be saved because it is beautiful. I think that is a very good reason. ¿Puedo escribir tu razon es porque bonito, no? OK, so his reason is because it is beautiful.

STUDENT: You should put wonderful.

MARK HANSEN: Wonderful like the title of the book. Lots of good reasons here. Isaiah?

ISAIAH: I have another reason why they should tear it down too. Because like if, like if the kids play on it, if they go like climb all the way, they could fall too and they would get hurt and then and that reason why they should tear down.

MARK HANSEN: OK. That is a great reason Isaiah to tear it down. Kids climbing on it could get hurt. So help me say that is a couple of words that will fit right here.

ISAIAH: If children climb on it they will get hurt.
### MARK HANSEN:
OK. Should I say climbing children

### ISAIAH:
Climbing children?

### MARK HANSEN:
Children who climb

### ISAIAH:
Children who climb the towers will get hurt.

### MARK HANSEN:
Could get hurt. Could fall and get hurt. Lots of good reasons on both sides here. Mandy?

### MANDY:
Save the towers. Because it is like a masterpiece of art and he built it for the kids to enjoy.

### MARK HANSEN:
There is two reasons here. It’s a masterpiece. It’s an art masterpiece. Something people should be able to see for years and years and also for the kids. I’m going to stop. I’m going to finish the story.

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Mark Hansen, Clarendon Elementary, Portland, Oregon

### MARK HANSEN:
I use writing models a few different ways in class. In this case, the book that I read was a model of how communities respond to problems, and that was to get kids thinking about making arguments, what would reasons be for pro or con.

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Mark Hansen, Clarendon Elementary, Portland, Oregon

### MARK HANSEN:
So I’ll just back up to that whole page so you can get back into the story.

Los Angeles grew up around Watts. The city officials decided the towers must be dangerous. They could fall down in an earthquake or a windstorm. After all they said Old Sam was not an engineer. When some people who loved the towers heard this, they volunteered to make a wind load test to prove the towers were safe. (That basically means they’ll test the building to
see if the wind. They will pull on it and push it to see how the wind will affect it and if it can stand up to the wind.) The towers passed the test and were saved.

Mark Hansen, Clarendon Elementary, Portland, Oregon

MARK HANSEN: I used the book to model a process where people would advocate for something in their community. And I really wanted this to be a way—it was a writing lesson, but it was also a way for them to think about their neighborhood and to think about where they live and who can help with what.

Katie Ray

KATIE: Teachers are always trying to figure out how to manage time, and there are teachers who are making some really good decisions about how to layer in the reading that needs to support a particular study and writing into another time of day.

Once you realize that the curriculum of writing—the—a product is in text; it's in how things are written—then the potential is endless because you're surrounded by text in schools. You just have to learn to look at them like a writer.

Credits

Inside Writing Communities, Grade 3-5 Close

1-800 Tag