

Provide frequent feedback

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Evaluate the typical teacher-writer conference.

- Describe the typical setup and routine.
- Consider the overall effectiveness of this routine.

Shift your instructional focus from grading *writing* to growing *writers*.

Host conferences for different purposes.

END OF THE UNIT

Execute occasional product conferences.

- Consumes approximately 15+ minutes.
- Occurs in preparation for final-draft publishing.
- Addresses numerous areas to improve.
- Requires a one-on-one between teacher & writer.
- Typically held at a separate/isolated place.
- Occurs infrequently.

WITHIN THE UNIT

Increase process conferences.

- Consumes approximately 2-5 minutes.
- Occurs during any stage in the writing process.
- Addresses a single area of improvement.
- Occurs within a small group (i.e., teacher and writers).
- Held at the students' desks.
- Occurs daily/regularly.

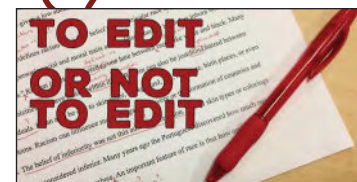


Conferring with writers is our most critical writing workshop role."

~ Carl Anderson, *How's It Going?*



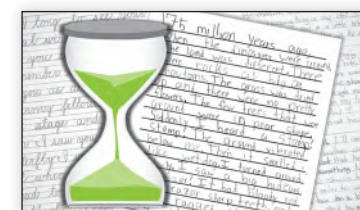
SECRET SITE RESOURCES



Stop editing all student errors.



Hold writer-process conferences daily.



Manage writer conferences.



...Feedback was among the most powerful influences on achievement. Most programs and methods that worked best were based on heavy dollops of feedback...
The more feedback during the process, the better students can achieve the goals."

~ John Hattie, *Visible Learning for Teachers: Maximizing Impact on Learning*

Facilitate feedback in four steps.

STEP 1: INVITE

Review what is to be assessed.

- *What facet(s)?*
- *What part(s)?*
- *What skills?*
- *What traits?*
- *What information?*
- *Tell me what you know should be included in this part.*
- *Describe what a “good” one would look/sound like?*

Invite students to share a portion.

- Listen to their drafts for the facets you previously identified as areas of assessment.



STEP 2: COMPLIMENT

Identify a trait-based skill the writer executed well. Explain the impact of this skill for the reader.

- *All of your sentences are about ____.*
Staying on topic is important for the reader to understand your message.
- *You have grouped similar information together. That organization helps the reader follow your thinking.*
- *This sentence/part right here is especially interesting because ____.*
- *This description (point to a passage) helps the reader visualize this part.*
- *These sentences (point to them) all start in different ways. This makes it more interesting for the reader.*
- *This paragraph indent comes at just the right place, telling the reader that you are switching ideas.*



If the piece of writing gets better but the writer has learned nothing that will help him or her another day on another piece, then the conference was a waste of everyone's time."

~ Lucy Calkins, *The Art of Teaching Writing*, p 228

► STEP 3: COMMENT

Identify one skill that will help the student become a better writer.

- A trait-specific writing skill
- A writer strategy or habit
- Something specific to the purpose, genre, or format

STEP 4: WRAP UP

Keep the “conversation” short.

- Inquire about the writer's next step.
- Make a note.

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SECRET SITE RESOURCES



Make notes during writer conferences.

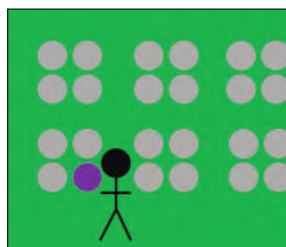
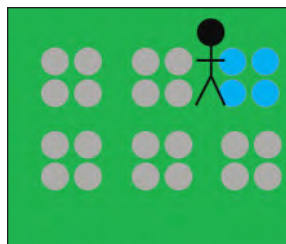
Hold efficient small-group conferences.

MECHANICS & PROCEDURES

- Transition out of mini-lesson mode.
- Assess what's happening.
- Focus on writer choices and habits in the first minutes.

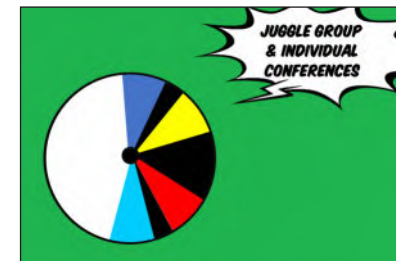
MOBILITY & PACE

- Introduce the 3-minute sand timer.
- Change the route.
- Go to the students, if possible.



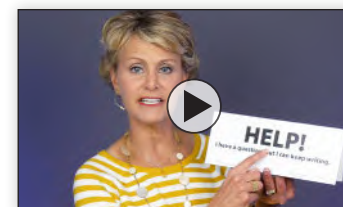
MANAGEMENT & SUPPORT

- Anticipate those who will need support more often.



- Troubleshoot those who need help when the teacher is busy.

Support writers when they need help.



MANAGEMENT | Session 1:
Lead a writer's workshop.

MANAGEMENT | Session 5:
Foster independent writers.