

Teach with mentor texts

Use reading to teach writing.

WHOLE-CLASS TEXTS

- Interactive read alouds (picture books, big books, nonfiction)
- Class chapter books, novels, short stories, biographies
- Science, social studies, and subject-area texts
- Supplementary texts (Newsela, CommonLit, ReadWorks, Scholastic News, Weekly Reader, etc.)

REAL-WORLD TEXTS

- Newspaper articles, magazine features
- Print advertisements, product packaging, menus
- Brochures, flyers
- Posters, signs

Lean on mentor text in 3 instructional situations.

FIRST DAY OF A UNIT

Use mentor text to kick off a new unit.

- Build a foundation for what this new genre includes.
- Study the whole text.
- Reveal several examples in order to see what is consistent in this type of writing.
- Identify the unique characteristics, structure, and qualities of the genre evident in the example.



SECRET SITE RESOURCE

Use mentor texts to kick off a new unit.



SPIN-OFF SESSION

UNIT ESSENTIALS Session 2:
Plan the year of writing units.

THE REST OF THE DAYS OF A UNIT

Use mentor text to teach each specific writing skill.

LAST DAY(S) OF A UNIT

Use mentor text to depict rubric levels.

- Outline the expectations of a final product.
- Study the whole text.
- Reveal several examples on the same topic—each representing a different level of the rubric.
- Describe the criteria and characteristics of each level.



SECRET SITE RESOURCE

Use a Six-Traits rubric for efficient assessment.



SPIN-OFF SESSIONS

ASSESSMENT | Session 2: Build rubrics with young writers.
ASSESSMENT | Session 3: Build rubrics with older writers.

Reveal *micro* mentor text within mini-lessons.

✓ Do's

- Reveal only the relevant excerpt(s).
- Project the passage so that the students can see it.
- Make the mentor text available for students to review after the lesson.
- Choose excerpts from a familiar text.
- Analyze the skill applied in the passage.
- Maximize mileage. Reuse the same "good ones" for different skill lessons.



SPIN-OFF SESSIONS

MINI-LESSONS

Session 1:
Master the mini-lesson.

Session 2:
Model a strong example.

MANAGEMENT Session 2:
Assign writing-time tasks.

⊘ Don'ts

- DO NOT show mentor text as a substitute for providing an *I-do* model.
- DO NOT read the entire mentor text *in* the mini-lesson.
- DO NOT reveal mentor text on about the same topic that the students will write.

STEP 1 INTRODUCTION: (Re)Introduce the skill.

STEP 2 INSTRUCTION: Explain & demonstrate the skill.

SAY WHAT | 5 MINUTES

SHOW HOW | 5 MINUTES

STEP 3 INTERACTION: Guide students through a focused experience.

STEP 4 CLOSURE: Crystallize the skill.

Identify 4 bits of info per excerpt.

- 1 Identify the **TRAIT**(s) this text/excerpt exemplifies.
- 2 Identify **WRITING SKILL**(s) used repeatedly within the text/excerpt.
- 3 Mark/List every **EXAMPLE** of that single writing skill.
- 4 Note the paragraph/**PAGE NUMBER** where these examples can be found.

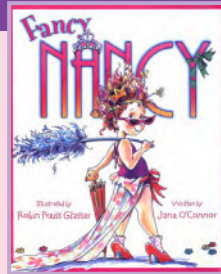
My favorite color is fuchsia.
That's a fancy way of saying purple.



I like to write my name with a pen that has a plume.
That's a fancy way of saying feather.
And I can't wait to learn French because everything
in French sounds fancy.



Fancy Nancy



Author: Jane O'Connor
Illustrator: Robin Preiss Glasser
Publisher: Harper Collins



Sentence length variety—
(words per sentence)

- My favorite color is fuchsia. 5 words, p2
- That's a fancy way of saying purple. 7 words, p2
- I like to write my name with a pen... 13 words, p2
- That's a fancy way of saying feather. 7 words, p2
- And I can't wait to learn French... 13 words, p2

APRIL 20

I snuck up on some kids in the park today. They didn't hear me coming.

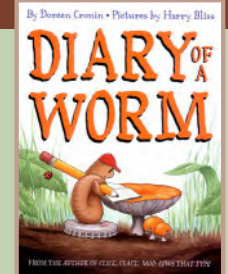


I wiggled up right between them and they SCREAMED.



I love when they do that.

Diary Of A Worm



Author: Doreen Cronin
Illustrator: Harry Bliss
Publisher: Cotler/Harper Collins



Topic sentence and supporting details

- I snuck up on some kids in the park today. pp11-12
- They didn't hear me coming.
 - I wiggled up right between them and they SCREAMED.
 - I love when they do that.

Organize mentor texts for quick retrieval.

Identify a mentor text shopping list.

Access free writing samples.

- Scour favorite websites for anchor papers.



SECRET SITE RESOURCE

Use anchor papers to define "good" writing.

- Search online using various terms.



anchor papers for writing

exemplar papers
benchmark papers
student writing samples

- Save strong and weak writing from your current students.

- Save and swap samples with other teachers.

Store mentor text.

- ACTUAL BOOKS | Don't store mentor texts within the classroom library.



- STUDENT WRITING | Scan writer's notebooks this year for next year's use.

- ONLINE WRITING | Download documents into organized digital files.



RELEVANT RESOURCE

