

## Introducing a Writer's Life

**MATERIALS:** Chart paper, markers, one daybook per child, pen or pencil per child, sample daybooks

**CONNECTION:** You've been writing MANY years now. You have experience with telling stories, writing stories, and reading stories. If you knew you had to earn money as an author --- to pay for your clothes, your house or apartment, your car --- how would your life change? How would you live your life differently? TAP and discuss. (TAP = Turn to a Partner)

Let's make a chart of all the things you can think of that would affect your life as a successful writer. You will need to live these strategies this year. It will be helpful to work together. That's actually probably a good place to start...

1. Find other writers for support and encouragement.
2. ?

### TEACHING POINT:

You mentioned writing, collecting, reading (etc. --- whatever they listed on the chart) --- and a very important tool in a writer's life for doing all of these things is keeping a writer's notebook or what I call a daybook. (Everything I write about during the *day* I collect in my *book*.)

### TEACHING:

- Share my daybook.

### ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT:

Ask each child to write on a topic of interest using the how-to-select-a-topic ideas you've shared: reading what other students write, reading books, thinking about their lives, brainstorming lists of funny things and things that bug them, keeping lists from watching television, retelling someone else's story, writing what happened, etc.

**SHARE:** Celebrate that they are creating writing notebooks for a busy year of writing. Explain that students are responsible for having daybooks in class every day and taking them home every night. They are to write every night for 10 minutes --- at the least! Ask them what they plan to write tonight.

**LINK:** Today we launched our lives as writers. The tool that will help us keep track of our stories and our thinking is the writer's notebook. The most important thing to remember about a writer's notebook is you have to write in it every day during school and at night.

**HOMEWORK:** Write for ten minutes at night. Either retell a story or write a new story. (Very informal at first)

## Introducing Partner Share

**MATERIALS:** Writer's life chart, handout of writer's life chart (you typed), handout of partner-share rules, glue sticks, timer (optional), class list of students' names

### CONNECTION:

Say something like, "Last week you learned that writers live a writer's life. They write a lot, read a lot (reread chart). You decorated your writer's notebook (WN) and you wrote in it."

**HANDOUT** Writer's Life List STUDENTS MADE and you typed, ready to glue in WNs. Say something like, "Turn to the next fresh page and GLUE this handout on it. Record the title of the handout, "LIVING A WRITER'S LIFE," in your TABLE OF CONTENTS. CHECK YOU DATED THE PAGE. (Keeping a Table of Contents may not be appropriate in your grade level or with your students.)

## TEACHING POINT – WORKING WITH A PARTNER IN A SPECIFIC WAY

We also mentioned having trusted writing buddies.

Teacher tells how a partner helped her with writing - how invaluable it is to work with a partner!

Tell students that today they will begin to work with writing buddies. HAND OUT "Sharing With Partners" to glue into WNs. You might want to remind them to, "Turn to the next fresh page and GLUE this handout on it. Record the title of the handout in your TABLE OF CONTENTS."

I tell the students that...

1. You will have the same buddy every day.
2. You will meet in the same place every day for about 5-6 minutes in a place where I can see you.
3. You will read what you wrote since the last time you met.
4. You will decide who goes first and what you will share: the whole writing, a favorite line, a new character you created, the funniest part, a part you had trouble with and need help with.
5. You will compliment your buddy or ask questions of your buddy. You will talk about the writing in a positive way.
6. If you should get done before the rest of the class, you will come back to your seat and work on your writing – writing or maintaining or rereading your daybook.

TEACHING: Ask a student who wrote last night to pretend to be your buddy. Set your timer for 6 minutes or ask someone to watch the clock for you so you don't use all of your workshop time.

Ask the other students to observe what happens in the role-play:

1. Arrange yourself so you are looking at your pretend buddy.
2. Talk about who wants to go first.
3. Listen to your buddy read. Compliment.
4. Tell what you're going to share (best part, funny part, whole story, etc.) Share what you wrote. Receive your compliments.
5. If there's time left, remind one another to work in WNs.

Ask students to help you make a list of what happened in partner share.

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT: Ask children to select a partner. Ask students who are having trouble finding a partner to come to you so you can assist. Ask the students to try partner share right away. Help students without partners to find one and also assign them a space in the room, too. (If students cannot agree to a partner, tell them to use this time to write instead. They can always change their minds later once they see it's okay.)

I walk around the room to listen in for examples for share time and also to check on who did writing homework. I keep a checklist of who is doing writing homework. I also want to make a map of where partners sit so we don't have to decide every day.

SHARE: I use my notes to compliment partners that worked well together. I ask students who solved problems to share what the problems were and how they solved them. I ask students to share problems that couldn't be solved or questions they have so together we can brainstorm solutions. I RECORD these ideas in your WN.

LINK: Every day you will begin writing workshop by sharing what you wrote the night before with your partner. Partners will help you become better writers by complimenting you and telling you what is working in your writing. You will meet in the same place every day so we don't have to waste time. If you finish before others or if your partner is not here, you will get extra time to write!

HOMEWORK – write for 10 minutes. Be ready to share what you wrote about and the genre!

**Sharing-With-Partners HANDOUTS.** Cut out one for each child.

SHARING with PARTNERS:

1. first line
2. best part
3. ending
4. a new character you created
5. funniest part
6. line with a new word
7. whole story
8. a place where you had trouble making the writing clear
9. new kind of writing for you
10. other ideas????

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## Partner Share Continued

MATERIALS: Homework handout – page 5, chart paper

CONNECTION: I say something like, yesterday you tried out SPECIFIC partner sharing with something you'd written in your daybook. You should have the guidelines glued in your daybook. (Check.) Today we're going to learn some other ideas for homework writing and use our buddies to help us get better with writing.

### TEACHING POINTS:

1. Every day you will begin writing time by sharing homework with partner. At that time, partners push us to do our best, encourage us when we're down, and help us when we need a shoulder to lean on.
2. Every writer has trouble thinking about what to write. That can be helped by writing daily, thinking about what you want to write about, and learning from other writers.

### TEACHING:

1. Ask students to share what they wrote last night. Ask them how they got their ideas.  
Example:  
Student: My cat jumped on my bed and I thought I wanted to write a story about my cat.  
Teacher: We can all use that idea. Look around the room at what's happening in our lives. (Record that idea on chart paper.) It doesn't have to be amazingly special like fireworks. Just the ordinary events of life make great story ideas. Who else came up with an idea?
2. Continue asking students to "remember" or "reflect" on how they decided what to write about. Amazingly, this will be hard so give them some time and prompt them with your questions. Add ideas to the chart.
3. Give students a handout with ideas for writing homework. (See next page or write one of your own.) Explain that they will add any ideas that you have recorded on the chart that's not on this list. Furthermore, you will add to this list during the year. Ask students to remind you to add to the list when they think of another great homework idea.

### ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT:

1. Ask students to pick one homework idea from the handout and try it in class.
2. (You might need to review the guidelines of partner share.) Can they remember who their partners are? Can they remember where in the room they sit? Can they remember what they're supposed to do?
3. Ask students to get together with their partners and partner share according to the guidelines.
4. Teacher walks around the room and takes notes on the good things students are doing!

### SHARE:

1. Teacher shares her notes. Highlight the way that students solved problems, took turns, transitioned to their spaces, had good writing to share. (If you took good notes, you should be able to NAME NAMES!)
2. Ask what questions or concerns students have with either partner share or doing homework every night – yes, every night for 10 minutes, minimum. Ideas can come from their heads or this list; they can't be wrong unless they don't write.

### LINK:

Every day you will begin writing workshop by sharing what you wrote the night before with your partner. Partners will help you become better writers by complimenting you and telling you what is working in your writing. You will meet in the same place every day. If you finish before others or if your partner is not here, you will get extra time to write.

## Daybook Homework Suggestions –

10 minutes of writing a day, minimum

### Find topics by...

- Retelling a story you heard or read.
- Telling stories.
- Reading a book or poem.
- Using the same structure of a story or poem.
- Freewriting Circle topics.
- Updating your Writing Territories.
- Keeping a topic page.
- Drawing a picture.
- Using a picture as a starting place.
- Asking others what they're writing about.

### Other ideas you can use over and over!

- Describe the weather. Watch a storm roll in. Watch the rain. Describe what it feels and smells like.
- Collect settings. Where might a story take place? Describe a house or apartment that you might use in a story. Describe any place --- in as much detail as you can!
- Collect people. Describe interesting people you see out your window or at the grocery store. Write down everything about them – what they're wearing, how tall, shoes, hair color, hairstyle, how they move and talk, what they say, what they carry in their pocket, anything you can remember or invent!
- Write down interesting things that happened to you during the day. Try to write it down in an entertaining way.
- Write down what you heard happened to other people or stories you heard people say.
- Wonder about things. Write down what you're wondering about.
- Think of the things you did during the day that had action. Try to explain the action completely. (How did you throw the football, ride a bike, get off a bus, step into the car, open the door, unpack your book bag, get a snack, OR trip on your brother's toy...???)
- Describe what a person looks like when they're in a mood? (What do you look like when you're mad, nervous, excited, happy, sad, embarrassed, overjoyed, OR scared?)

### Add ideas to this list...

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