

Defining Writer's Workshop

Materials: student journals, chart paper, pencils or crayons

Prep Step: Produce a copy or overhead of the "Writer's Workshop" graphic from Chapter Two

Procedure

Through a discussion with students, define "workshop" as a place where anything is built using raw materials and tools. You may use the example of a wood workshop. "A carpenter would use materials such as wood, glue, and nails to create a desk or chair. His tools may be a hammer, saw, or screwdriver." Continue the discussion by explaining that in "writer's workshop we will be building our writing skills using a specific process and a variety of materials and tools." Explain that the process has three steps.

"The first step is called the mini-lesson. During the mini-lesson we will be gathered together as a community of writers just as we are now. I will present a short lesson that I know will help you to grow as a writer. As a matter of fact, what we are doing now is part of today's mini-lesson." It is wise to remind them of what yesterday's mini-lesson was or what a future lesson might be.

"The second step involves practicing writing. We know that the only way to get better at writing is to write. That's why I will give you time to practice every day.

"The third and last step of writer's workshop is called sharing. After we practice, we will once again gather as a group to share our writing. I will show you how to share your writing and how to listen to others share their writing. You will learn how sharing will help you to grow as a writer even though you will not be the person sharing every day."

As you explain and discuss the three parts of writer's workshop, list them on chart paper so the steps can be displayed and referred to in the future. Before dismissing students to their desks, point out that they are now moving to the practice-writing step of the workshop cycle. Ask if anyone remembers what the class will do after they write.

GOAL
To introduce the three steps of writer's workshop

Follow Up

Until students have internalized the steps of writer's workshop, you will want to continue to refer to the graphic titled "Writer's Workshop" from Chapter Two. It will provide a visual image of the three steps. ■

Writer's Workshop 45 minutes

