

* Please note that the author of this book is Dona Herweck.

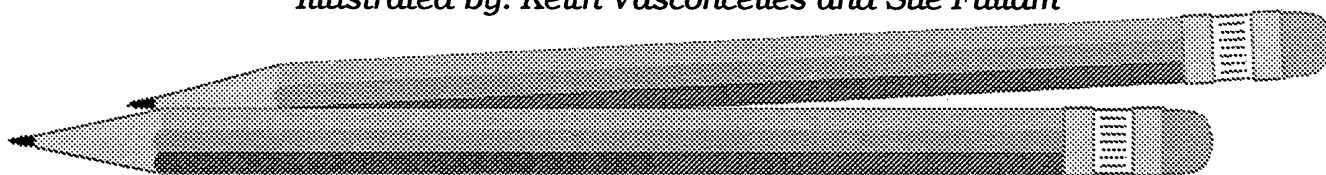
Write All About It

Activities for the Writing Process

Years 4-6

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Everyone can write! It's just a matter of finding your own voice. This book on writing and the writing process will show you how to help your students do just that. The activities were designed to teach, reinforce, and strengthen all writing skills. And they can be used across the curriculum! Brainstorming topics, sensory writing, mapping, and literature-based activities are some of the things you will find here, each demonstrating and implementing different aspects of the writing process, or the process as a whole.

Table of Contents

The Writing Process	2
Tips for the Writing Program	3
Pre-writing Activities	4
Writing Activities	17
Response Activities	34
Editing and Revision Activities	46
Publishing Activities	50
Through the Writing Process with Literature	57
Through the Writing Process with Social Studies	66
Grammar and Mechanics	69
Answer Key	76
Bibliography	78

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The Writing Process

Pre-writing

Activities that precede writing are vital to any successful writing program. A writer must activate his or her thought processes and creativity before actually forming a draft. Some writers require more preparation than others, and the requirements will vary according to the topics. However, all writers benefit by this sort of beginning search. The pre-writing activities given here can be used on their own to build preparatory skills, or they can be utilized as the initial stages of a specific writing project.

Writing

Through pre-writing, the author develops a bank of information to use. Now writing is ready to begin. It is the step of the process where form takes place as information is filtered and shaped to meet the author's intentions. The ideas are made to connect for another audience. Writing calls for focus and structure—the narrowing of pre-writing generalities to specifics. However, content above mechanics is the prime concern. Activities that foster this approach can be found in this book.

Response

It is sometimes difficult for a writer to know how another interprets what she or he has written. How helpful, then, to have an audience in the process of writing to assist the author in directing her or himself. This is done through reader response. The author can more readily get across what she or he intends by understanding the message the audience is receiving. Reader response can be managed in many ways. Peer response sheets, partner meetings, and writing circles are some of the best. Additionally, some activities simply lend themselves to response. Samples can be found in the response section included in this book.

Editing

Editing and revision go hand-in-hand, although to distinguish (if that's necessary), an analogy can be made. If the writing was a car, revision would be handled by the engineer and editing by the mechanic. One designs and shapes while the other repairs and maintains. An important thing for you, the teacher, to remember at this stage is that it is not your job to edit. Forget "correcting" student writing. Your job as teacher is to comment, give feedback, and eventually to evaluate, but the piece and all of the steps of the process *belong to the author*.

Revision

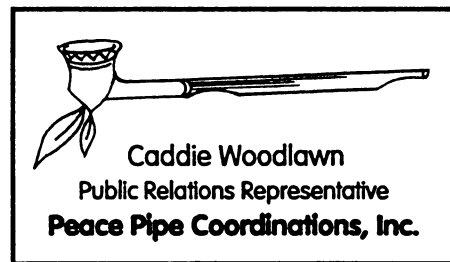
So often a child puts something on paper and is loathe to alter it in any way. She or he feels that if the word or mark is not there, it was a wasted effort. To that child, revising means fixing mistakes and recopying. Yet the child who has real ownership of the piece — awareness that her writing belongs to her and comes of her knowledge — will be as excited by the revision as by the writing. Revision is not slashing with red to see what's "wrong," but rather remoulding to say exactly what one wants to say.

Writing Activities

Business Cards

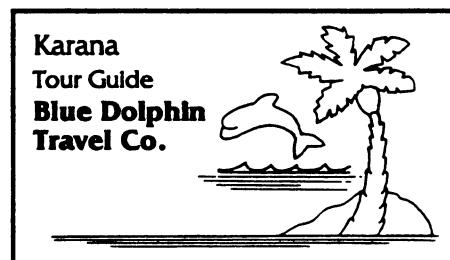
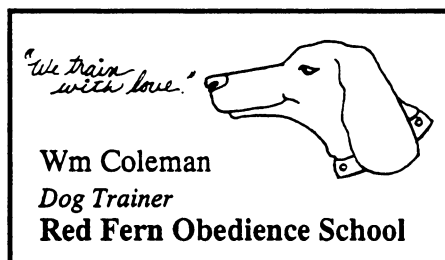
After reading a story or novel, brainstorm physical and internal characteristics of a main character (both what the character looks like and her or his personality). Based on those descriptions, decide on a profession that might suit the character, or if she or he already has one, use that. Next, create a business card for that individual, complete with job title and company logo. Use a full-sized sheet of paper to make it clear. Here are some examples to use as models.

*The
Secret
Garden*



*Caddie
Woodlawn*

*Where
the
Red Fern
Grows*



*Island
of the
Blue
Dolphins*

Personalized Stationery

This is the same idea as above, however stationery letterhead is created. It can then be used for the following activity.

Character Correspondence

Students can really demonstrate their understanding of a character, real or fictional, by writing a letter from that character, using the personalized stationery above. The letter can be:

- an invitation
- to a friend
- an enquiry
- to a pen friend
- to the editor
- of congratulations
- of sympathy
- a complaint or protest
- advice
- a request

As an extension let another student (or another class) respond to the letter with a return letter of her or his own.