



Writing Workshop “Mini ‘Tutes” K–2

November 20, 2014

Conferring & Small Groups

“As you continue to teach, you will spend less time on planning mini-lessons and more time planning small groups and conferences!” --Lucy Calkins



“How’s It Going?” Conferring with Your Kids

Research

- Study student work
 - “Show me some of your pieces...”
 - What do they have? What do they need?
 - What is the student’s knowledge of the process?
- Watch them write
 - Students should continue working when the teacher first sits down. It gives the teacher time to observe.
- Ask about things you cannot see
 - Ask questions to get two pieces of information from the student, before deciding on a teaching point.
 - What are you writing?
 - Why did you pick this topic?
 - Could you read me your story? Can I read it?
 - What are you planning to do next?
 - What chart have you been using?

Decide & Teach

- Compliment
 - Compliments encourage students to do good things more.
 - Say it as a skill and a strategy so it is replicable.
- Teach ONE THING
 - Coaching—“Tell another story...” “Tell one more thing...”

- Demonstration—(use examples) “What are things you do?”
- Take notes!

Link

- Leave an artifact (in a spot that students can easily reference)
 - Sticky notes, etc.

Things to Remember

- As always, teach the writer, not the piece!
- Respond to the writer with questions *and* conversation.
- Ask yourself if the student would be able to transfer teaching to other work.
- Listen and allow the silence.
- Conferences need follow ups!
 - Assess last skill (during research) at the next conference.
 - Can also lead to strategy grouping.



Conferring Toolkits...What to Include

“Make it practical, not pretty!” --Shanna Schwartz

√ Exemplars

- Samples of what you hope they will achieve
- Include 2—3 different levels
- Include all three genres (narrative, opinion, informational)

√ “Bare Bones” pieces (in plastic sleeves/multiple copies) to work on together

- Not the same quality (instead of 5 sentences, only 3 sentences)
- Just picture pieces

√ Mentor texts

- Whole books or photocopied parts of books

√ Student samples

✓ Blank booklets (or pieces of paper)

✓ Professional notes & handouts

✓ Curriculum Calendar (with indicators)

✓ Checklists

- Gives students a reminder of expectations

✓ Strategies that can be taught (for each genre)



What can I do besides Confering?

Table Confering

Strategy Lessons

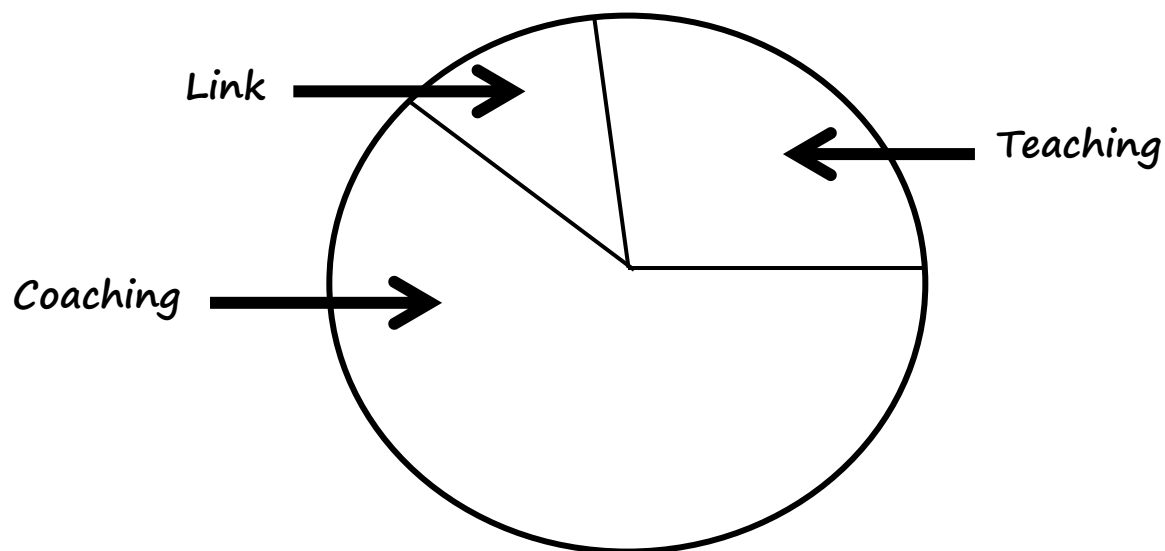
Small group Interactive Writing/Shared Writing

Small group Read Alouds



Small Groups

Structure of a Small Group



Teaching Methods

Heaviest Scaffold (no evidence)

Shared Writing
Interactive Writing
Demonstration
Explain & Example
Inquiry



Lightest Scaffold

Putting Together Small Groups

- Use information from conference notes
- Read on-demand pieces
- Read writing folders each week

Things to Remember

- All students are able to get the support from the teacher that is needed.
 - If students need help, model/demo several ideas.
- Teacher should scan the group to make sure all students are engaged.
- Teacher reminds students to continue checking practicing the skill across pages.
 - Gives the teacher a chance to decide what students are “staying longer.”
 - Perfect way to differentiate instruction!!