

# WRITING MINILESSON TIPS

## Minilesson: (10-15 minutes)

- Whole-class instruction: 80% will be right at their level; 20% high/low, will need differentiation later
- Make sure it stays short, otherwise students lose their necessary writing time
- Includes active engagement BEFORE sending kids off to write

## Inside the MINILESSON:

### CONNECTION:

- Engage the students - funny stories OR simply, "We've been working on.... Today I'm going to teach you...."
- Name the teaching point

### TEACH: Modes of Instruction

- Demonstration: Writing in "real time" as you think aloud about your process as a writer
- Explain an Example: Put up a piece of mentor text, study together, create vision
- Inquiry: Very powerful method, not used for everything (Ex. "What is a good way for an author to introduce stories?")
- Guided Practice/Coaching: Teacher does, student does; teacher/student together, then student does, teacher watches
- *If kids don't get it, ask yourself, "Have I demonstrated this?"*

### ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT:

- Important for students to try out the skill before they get off the rug - helps you plan for who might need additional support during work time
- 100% of kids are involved
- Ways to Do It: turn/talk, jot/write, think, role play, gesture, read, highlight
- Model hard things, practice easier things - Have them continue what you've started or start a part of their own writing

### LINK:

- Reiterate the teaching point, remind them of the strategies they could use, revisit/review anchor chart, and "Off you go!"

## Independent Work Time: (30 minutes)

- Students can have writing spots around the room or work at desks - what's important is LOTS of writing time
- Conferring 1:1 teaching (5-7 minutes each)
- Small-group instruction: Compliments, get kids started, teach common skill/strategy that is needed

## Mid-Workshop Teaching Points

- More frequent in beginning of year
- Lots of building stamina
- Reinforce good behaviors and give students more strategies to keep them going
- As stamina builds they can occur less frequently
- Can also be a continuation of the minilesson (another teaching point)

## SHARE (5 minutes)

- Use time to spotlight the good work students did during writing time
- Another opportunity to teach - NOTICE and NAME the work kids are doing with the ultimate goal that students will be able to articulate what they are doing as writers (metacognition)