

The Pen and Paper



Developed by:

Indiana WRITING PROJECT

A local site of the National Writing Project

Hello friends,

Ruth Ayres tell us in *Enticing Hard-To-Reach Writers*:

Writing workshop is not just about getting the instruction right. It's not about a canned program or a great app, or a lockstep process. It's about getting the heart right. Enticing writers is about touching hearts and taking leaps of faith to pull all students into the possibilities awaiting them when they learn to write well (40).

We agree wholeheartedly and discovered that sharing is the perfect vehicle to make this happen in the classroom. We found that students sharing their writing often and publicly encouraged risk taking in peers, built upon the successes of peers, and created an appreciation and tolerance of peers. Since we built a community of writers within our classroom, every student in the room understood the struggles and joys of creating a piece of writing--and the courage it takes to share the writing publicly. When celebrating the writing, Ruth Ayers tells us that the celebrations should occur often and during the writing process, not just at the end of the writing cycle. We have found the even college students appreciate each other's writing and become risk takers as a result of informal, yet intentional sharing.

But how do we teach students to be intentional while sharing? We figured out we needed to model and teach our students how to talk as writers and readers. We did this as we conferenced and taught our mini-lessons, intentionally using writing language until it become part of the students' way of speaking. Sharing informally at the end of a writing session--just 5-7 minutes--and allowing our students to react as one writer to another writer provided positive feedback for the author who shared. We discovered, as an added benefit sharing provided writing possibilities for the listening audience to try within their own writing. The more sharing that occurred, the more writing discussions occurred. The more student confidence in their writing grew, the more students requested to share. We found sharing became an integral part of our writing workshop, no matter what level the student.

According to Ruth Ayers, "It matters that students learn to use their voices to tell their stories, share their passions, and advocate for their beliefs...Writing workshop may be the only opportunity for their voices to be heard" (34). What better place for all student writers to be nourished and to write their stories in directions that make their voices matter and the world better than within the walls of writing workshop. Sharing allows students to demonstrate their voices, and we learned it is critical to student growth as writers.

Enjoy a well-deserved break! Until next month!

Shirley and Susan

Questions? Contact Susan Darling at susandarling@gmail.com

or

Shirley Thacker at sthacker128@gmail.com

5th Edition
December 2017

*Our goal is to promote
teachers helping
teachers.*

[Ruth Ayers on
Celebrating
Writers!](#)

[The Importance of
Sharing by Two
Writing Teachers](#)

What about having your students write a holiday or winter memory for their parents as a gift? A written memory is a priceless memento for parents to look back on in future years.



Time is running out! Sign up for terrific learning opportunities offered by IWP! Don't forget to tell your friends!

- ❖ [Nominate a colleague to attend IWP Invitational Leadership Institute!](#)
- ❖ [Sign up to mentor a new IWP fellow on implementing writer's workshop in the classroom.](#)
- ❖ [Attend the week long Open Institute to BEGIN an educational writing journey!](#)