

USING STORYTELLING AS A BRIDGE TO EMPOWERMENT

PENN STATE LEHIGH VALLEY WRITING PROJECT

BEST PRACTICES

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QUOTE

**"IF YOU WANT TO GIVE THE BEST
POSSIBLE GIFT TO A WRITER, GIVE
AN AUDIENCE."**

~ELBOW



WHO AM I?

- URBAN EDUCATOR, ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS, MIDDLE SCHOOL
- PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE INCLUDES INSTRUCTIONAL COACH & ELEMENTARY TEACHING
- READING SPECIALIST & ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAM SPECIALIST
- ADJUNCT INSTRUCTOR & CONSULTANT FOR [PENN STATE LEHIGH VALLEY](#)
- BURNOUT PREVENTION COACH FOR ADOLESCENTS & ADULTS
- NEVER WRITES IN ALL CAPS...THIS IS AWESOME!

GROUP NORMS FOR WRITING WITH AUDIENCE

- **HAND UP IS A REQUEST FOR ATTENTION.**
- **ALL OF OUR WRITING TODAY IS ELIGIBLE FOR AUDIENCE.**
- **ALL WRITING IS CONFIDENTIAL UNLESS “YOU” THREATEN TO HARM YOURSELF, HARM ME, OR ANOTHER PERSON.**
- **ALL WRITING MUST BE SCHOOL APPROPRIATE & MAY NOT VIOLATE THE SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY.**

QUICK WRITE

- **WHAT IS AUDIENCE?**
- **WHAT IS NOT AUDIENCE?**
- **WHAT ARE AUTHENTIC EXAMPLES OF AUDIENCE?**

- **WRITTEN DISCUSSION**

VOICE

- “VOICE IS THE DISTINCT PERSONALITY, STYLE, OR POINT OF VIEW OF A PIECE OF WRITING OR ANY OTHER CREATIVE WORK. VOICE IS WHAT SIMON COWELL IS TALKING ABOUT WHEN HE TELLS "AMERICAN IDOL" CONTESTANTS TO MAKE A SONG THEIR OWN AND NOT JUST DO A NOTE-FOR-NOTE KARAOKE VERSION.”
~GRAMMAR GIRL
- “VOICE IS YOUR OWN. IT’S A DEVELOPED WAY OF WRITING THAT SETS YOU APART FROM OTHER WRITERS (HOPEFULLY). IT’S YOUR PERSONALITY COMING THROUGH ON THE PAGE, BY YOUR LANGUAGE USE AND WORD CHOICE. WHEN YOU READ A DAVE BARRY COLUMN, YOU KNOW IT’S HIS. WHY? HE’S DEVELOPED A DISTINCT WRITING VOICE.” ~BRIAN KLEMS
- IN TERMS OF EMPOWERMENT “VOICE IS OFTEN UNDERSTOOD AS THE ABILITY OF CITIZENS TO EXPRESS THEIR PREFERENCES AND TO BE HEARD BY THE STATE, EITHER THROUGH FORMAL OR INFORMAL CHANNELS, IN WRITTEN OR ORAL FORM (ROCHA MENOCA & SHARMA, 2008). CITIZENS’ VOICES ARE NOT HOMOGENOUS, AND SOMETIMES MORE POWERFUL VOICES AND OPINIONS CAN CROWD OUT THOSE OF EXCLUDED OR MARGINAL GROUPS (DFID, 2011).”
~GSDRC

VOICE & CHOICE

- “I’M NOT LOOKING TO EVALUATE VOICE WITH A 4 POINT RUBRIC. I’M LOOKING TO PROVIDE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT TO ACCESS VOICE, FOSTER THE DEVELOPMENT OF IT, AND EMPOWER MY PEEPS TO USE IT.” ~SUZIE B-T
- “I HAVE A VOICE. I STEP FROM CHOICE.” ~SUZIE B-T
- “FIND YOUR INNER LEADER.” ~SUZIE B-T
- “AN ACT OF CHOOSING OR SELECTION. THE RIGHT, POWER, OR OPPORTUNITY TO CHOOSE. ~DICTIONARY.COM
- “DEMOCRACY CANNOT SUCCEED UNLESS THOSE WHO EXPRESS THEIR CHOICE ARE PREPARED TO CHOOSE WISELY. THE REAL SAFEGUARD OF DEMOCRACY, THEREFORE, IS EDUCATION.” ~FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

QUICK WRITE

- **WHAT IS CHOICE?**
- **WHAT IS NOT CHOICE?**
- **WHAT ARE MANAGEABLE WAYS TO PROVIDE CHOICE?**

- **HAND UP– NEED A PARTNER, HAND DOWN– HAVE A PARTNER**
- **NOT WRITING IS ALSO A CHOICE.**

COMPETENCE & CONFIDENCE

STORYTELLING AS A BRIDGE

- STORYTELLING (ACCESSING VOICE) IS DONE THROUGH POWER WRITING OR POWER WRITES, FREE CHOICE WRITING, AND REFLECTION OF “TRUTH” OR PROGRESS. IT PROVIDES CONFIDENCE AND STUDENTS FEEL COMPETENT. THIS LEADS THEM TO FEEL EMPOWERED TO ATTACK CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE ITEMS OR PROCESS WRITING FROM A PLACE OF CAN DO INSTEAD OF CAN'T DO.

POWER WRITING

- [JEFF ANDERSON](#)
- 3- 1 MINUTE WRITING ROUNDS
- EACH ROUND
 - SELECT ONE OF TWO WORDS PROVIDED
 - MUST USE THAT WORD ONCE IN YOUR WRITING

To What Degree Do You Like Power Writing?
(1 is low, 10 is high)

Rating of 10-8	65%
Rating of 5-7	25%
Rating of 0-4	11%

POWER WRITING FEEDBACK

- IT IS HELPING ME WRITE FASTER. IT'S HELPING ME TO THINK QUICKLY. "QUICK ON MY TOES."
- IT MAKES YOU THINK ON THE FLY.
- IT HELPS YOU THINK CLEARER IN A SMALL AMOUNT OF TIME.
- I LIKE THAT IT IS FAST AND EVERYONE DOES IT.
- POWER WRITING IS WAY BETTER THAN HAVING TO WRITE A PARAGRAPH.
- I LIKE THAT WE DON'T STOP. IT HELPS ME GET EVERYTHING OUT.
- WRITE WITHOUT BEING INTERRUPTED.
- IT HELPS ME WHEN I DO MY TDAS.
- IT SOMETIMES HELPS ME OVERCOME WRITER'S BLOCK.
- IT SHOWS ME HOW THE LITTLEST THINGS INSPIRE GREAT IDEAS FOR WRITING.
- I LIKE THAT IT HELPS ME WRITE MORE BECAUSE I DON'T WRITE AT HOME.
- I LIKE HOW WE HAVE OUR PENCILS AND EVERYONE IS POISED.
- I LIKE THE RUSH OF POWER RUNNING THROUGH MY VEINS. (HE WRITES LYRICS.)

WRITING WEDNESDAY

- APPROXIMATELY 15-MINUTES EACH WEDNESDAY AT THE START OF CLASS
- FREE CHOICE WRITING
- TRADE WITH PEER WHEN DONE (“GIVE AN AUDIENCE”)

To What Degree Do You Like Writing Wednesday?
(1 is low, 10 is high)

Rating of 10-8	65%
Rating of 5-7	29%
Rating of 0-4	6%

WRITING WEDNESDAY FEEDBACK

- HELPS TO SHOW OTHERS THE WRITING AND GET AN OPINION.
- IT'S A CHANCE TO EXPRESS OURSELVES. IT HELPS ME WHEN WE GIVE AUDIENCE.
- IT GIVES ME TIME TO WRITE ABOUT WHATEVER I CHOOSE TO WRITE.
- I LIKE WRITING WEDNESDAYS BECAUSE OF THE FREEDOM THAT WE CAN WRITE ANYTHING WE LIKE (AS LONG AS IT IS SCHOOL-APPROPRIATE, OF COURSE). ...MAKES ME FEEL "FREE" AS A WRITER.
- I LIKE HOW WE HAVE A CHOICE. I CAN EXPRESS ANYTHING.
- I WOULD RATHER READ A NICE BOOK. (IT'S MORE RELAXING.) 😊
- I KIND OF DON'T LIKE IT BECAUSE WRITING IS BORING. IT HELPS.
- IT IS HELPING ME BY OPENING MY MIND.
- IT IS HELPING ME WRITE A COMIC BOOK.
- IT HELPS MY IMAGINATION GROW.
- WE GET TO HAVE FUN. IT MAKES ME CONFIDENT.

WHAT IS YOUR TRUTH

- ADAPTED FROM [TRANSFORMATIONAL COACHING](#)
- WHAT IS YOUR TRUTH? WHAT IS THE STORY YOU WANT TOLD ABOUT YOU? WHAT IS GETTING IN YOUR WAY? WHAT WILL YOU DO?
- TRADE– CELEBRATE, CHAMPION, ACKNOWLEDGE, ADVISE

To What Degree Do You Like What Is Your Truth?
(1 is low, 10 is high)

Rating of 10–8	68%
Rating of 5–7	25%
Rating of 0–4	7%

WHAT IS YOUR TRUTH FEEDBACK

- TEACHERS GET TO KNOW HOW I TRULY FEEL ABOUT SCHOOL AND MY CLASSES.
- IT HELPS ME BECAUSE IT LETS ME BELIEVE WHAT'S ON THE PAPER.
- IT SHOWS HOW I THINK OF MYSELF.
- IT HELPS ME SEE WHERE I CAN IMPROVE.
- IT HELPS ME BELIEVE IN MYSELF.
- BECAUSE I CAN WRITE WHAT I WANT THE TEACHER TO TELL MY MOM.

FEEDBACK FROM PEER WRITERS

GLOW: WHAT FEEDBACK OR ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR THE AUTHOR THAT CELEBRATES HIS OR HER WORK?

- “I LIKE HOW YOU...”
- “I APPRECIATED...”
- “IT WAS CLEAR THAT...”

GROW: WHAT IS ONE THING THE AUTHOR CAN DO TO IMPROVE THIS PIECE OR TO REMEMBER AS AN AUTHOR FOR NEXT TIME?

- “I WAS CONFUSED BY...”
- “I WANTED TO KNOW...”
- “I NOTICED THAT...”

USE OF WRITING WEDNESDAY TIME*

Topic	Yes
Fiction	54
Nonfiction	29
Poetry	2
Letters	7
Plays	6
Songs	11
Comic	17
Complete Work I Owe	34
Extend Power Writing	8
Start Something New	40
Continuous Project	31

"I'm working on a novel."

"Dear Future Self..."

"I write about how my day is."

**Limited bathroom requests!*

IMPORTANT RESPONSES

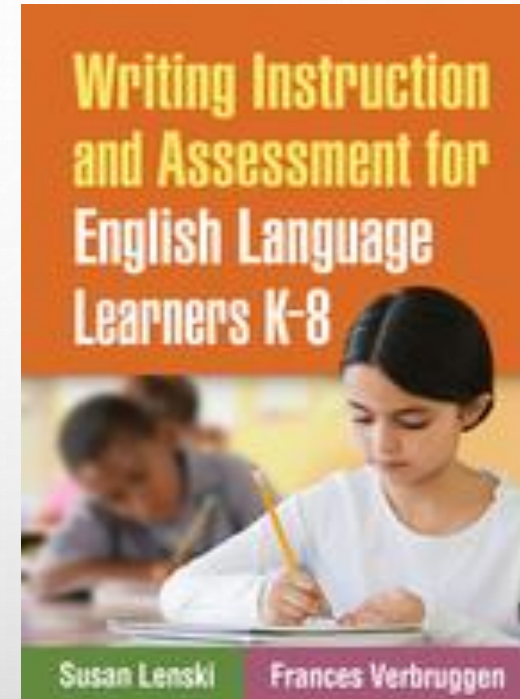
“I AM A GOOD WRITER!”

- **14% STRONGLY AGREE**
- **82% AGREE**
- **1% DISAGREE**
- **3% STRONGLY DISAGREE**

“PLEASE USE MY WRITING IN YOUR RESEARCH.”

- **54% YES**
- **46% NO**

RESOURCES



- *WRITING IN THE WILD: BEYOND THE 5-PARAGRAPH [ESSAY](#)* BY TRICIA EBARVIA



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