

Readers and Writers Workshop and Assessing Writing

Content: Reading and Writing Workshop

Writing and reading workshops are integral to the success of an MRA language arts/literacy program. In addition to supporting students in meeting the established benchmarks for reading and writing, the workshops honor the pace of growth and development that will best support individual students. Clarkia, Alders and Cedars do their best to run the reading and writing workshop in one block. Trillium and Huckleberry break the workshop up to fit the developmental needs of their students.

The guiding principles of Writing Workshop

- Writing workshop is not using a writing journal, writing to prompts, copying a poem or handwriting/penmanship practice.
- Writing workshop is a time for students to practice what good writers do, without editing and publishing every piece.
- Writing workshop is a time to involve students in authentic writing experiences that focus on the strengths and needs of each individual student.
- Writing workshop occurs as often as possible (daily being the ideal).
- Writing workshop will often include a well-planned 10 minute mini-lesson that could be taught through a modeled, shared, or interactive writing lesson or a reading experience. Mini-lessons address author craft, conventions (grammar and editing) and writing routines.
- Include time for teacher conferencing

Guiding Principles of Reading Workshop

- Mini-lessons on some aspect of literature or a reading strategy.
- Independent Reading Time, where students keep a journal and respond to the literature in terms of what they think or how they feel about what they are reading.
- Sharing Time where students share with another person their journal entries and the other person gives feedback
- Occurs as often as possible (daily being the ideal)
- Include time for teacher conferencing.

How to schedule – Total time 60 to 75 minutes

- Writing or reading mini-lesson 5 to 15 minutes and/or centers which include Orton Gillingham and or specific reading instruction
- Independent writing and individual conferences 20 to 30 minutes
- Book talks or read aloud from something related to the year's theme 10 minutes
- Independent reading and conferences 20 minutes
- Two days a week spelling/vocabulary 5 to 10 minutes

Ten conditions for engaged reading as rated by students:

1. Booktalks and mini-lessons
2. A big, diverse classroom library with regular new additions
3. Quite, daily, in-class time to read
4. Individual's free choice of books, authors, and genres
5. Recommendations of books from friends and the teacher and a special book shelf for kids' favorites
6. Comfort during in-class reading time
7. Students' letters to the teacher and friends about their reading
8. Individuals' conversations with the teacher about their reading
9. Individuals' lists of the books they want to read someday
10. Homework reading of a least a half hour every night

Setting up the Workshop Resources:

Notebook Know-How: Strategies for the Writer by Aimee Buckner and Ralph Fletcher, Grades 3 – 8

Writing Workshop, The Essential Guide K-8, by Ralph Fletcher and JoAnn Portalupi

Lessons that Change Writers, by Nancy Atwell, K-8

Mini Lesson resources:

Craft Lessons, Teaching Writing K-8 by Ralph Fletcher and Joann Portalupi

Fun-Size Academic Writing for Serious Learning: 101 Lessons and Mentor Texts, by Gretchen Bernabei, Grades 4-9

Grammar Resources:

Grammar Keepers, Grades 4 – 12, by Gretchen Bernabei

Grammar Matters: Lessons, Tips, and Conversations Using Mentor Texts, K-6th grades, by Lynne R. Dorfman

Mechanically Inclined: Building Grammar Usage, and Style into Writers Workshop, By Jeff Anderson, 5th – 8th

Spelling:

Orton Gillingham as appropriate

Writing Their Way

Refer to The Reading Zone by Nancie Atwell for more information about how to run a Reading and Writing Workshop.

Refer to your Writers Workshop Packet for running your Writer's Workshop

Attached:

September Reading Survey for older students. Adapt for younger students

Student Expectations for Reading for the Year. Adapt for younger students

Learning to Read at MRA

At MRA we use a modified version of a dyslexic program called The Power of Print, based on Orton Gillingham, to structure our reading program in Kindergarten through 2nd grade, and to enhance reading in grades 3 and 4. Brain research has shown us that reading is not a natural phenomenon, but needs to be taught systematically and phonetically. We have found that using the letter and sound order of Orton Gillingham, along with the multisensory approach of the program, not only works well with non-struggling readers but also helps alter the brain of struggling readers.

As expressed by The Orton Gillingham Academy:

"What imaging studies of dyslexics before and after remediation have shown is that good, intensive, early intervention changes the brain, creating a more "normal" brain signature and that this change is maintained over time. This concept of neuroplasticity is an important concept in learning and in teaching dyslexic individuals. The ability to rewire the brain and to create new pathways is key to the multisensory aspect of the Orton Gillingham Approach."

This program therefore provides non-struggling readers with appropriate skills and tools they need, and gives proactive remediation to students who, without it, could have ongoing difficulties in reading and in school overall.

In addition to the independent reading that can take place during Reading workshop, students also participate in whole class and/or small group novel studies, socratic circles, and other analytical discussions of reading material. All classes have theme oriented literature that is read with the teacher as facilitator.

Orton Gillingham Resources:

<https://www.dasacademy.edu.sg/teaching-resources/resource-packages/unlocking-power-of-print-kit-detail>

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/109212359693033167/>

Rest of this is still in progress...

