Sarah Proctor  
 Blogging

Blogging…a journal on the computer to be shared with the world while still being anonymous as wanted. I have been a fan of visiting blogs, using ideas and basically blog stalking as often as possible. While I’ve been stalking many teaching blogs, I’ve noticed that many teaching blogs are a general teaching blog or specific to a subject area but I haven’t come across a blog that not only shared ideas but that shared the growth in a teacher’s teaching, so I chose to write a blog that wraps around the thought of a teacher teaching writing…so many ways to teach writing, is there a right way? Is there a way to teach writing to impact the most students, to make the biggest difference n their ability to write? I learn by writing things down, it lets me put my thoughts down and see them in a different way before formulating the ideas that get firmly planted in my teaching repertoire. I’d like this blog to be shared among teachers, to share and accumulate ideas and experiences in teaching writing.

Blog writing is an art of quickly getting your idea across in a snapshot to draw readers in, maybe a picture of a project or a blurb about something thought provoking. Many bloggers say that there shouldn’t be more than one entry a day, but then many blogs end up with more posts than one day some days. When something occurs that needs to be shared, then the rules can be bent. Some blogs are group efforts with many writers or partners share posting space on a blog. Other blogs are personal to a specific teacher, classroom, or style. Blogs are great because they can be so individualized with no hard and fast requirements to what a blog should look like or be.

This blog will allow me to really think outside the box when it comes to writing and the teaching of writing. I can put thoughts down and get input and feedback from others and allow myself to grow as a teacher of writing. I do my best thinking when I write, so when I am writing and planning on how to teach writing I can refer to my blog and see what others think of my ideas, strategies, lessons, and thoughts. I’m hoping that teachers will take my blog seriously and use the resources and information to influence their own teaching or writing. I hope that the input I get from others and the thought process I will use will allow for my teaching of writing to become stronger, therefore my students will learn how to write and how to be a better writer.

I hope that I can use this blog as a professional resource and a professional learning opportunity. Will I start the blog and then forget to update and be one of the blogs that gets checked but is left empty of updates for weeks and months? Will that impact me and my students? I am encouraged to think that I’ll be able to keep up and post often, a couple times a week to allow me to really think and utilize the blog to impact my teaching positively.

My blog website is: <http://2ndgradewriters.blogspot.com/>

Intro:

I’m a second grade teacher who is trying to understand the way my students learn to write and learn from writing. Why is writing important for students as learners, what benefits will the see from learning to write? I don’t mean the physicl of writing, handwriting but the concept of writing. What is the best way to teach writing? There re so many styles and expectations, what is the BEST? Why has writing become a lost art? So many grade levels aren’t tested in writing…does that mean writing isn’t important anymore? Writing gets pushed to the back burner. What about content area writing? Is it important? Does it teach anything about writing? Or does it show what students know? What if students understand a concept but are unable to write about it? Does this really show what a student knows or doesn’t know? Second grade seems to be the forgotten grade. In writing, we need to find our own materials, mini-lessons, ideas, etc. No well written series dedicated to second grade students.

Entry 1

Writer’s workshop…I continue to try and use writer’s workshop in my classroom. I have the format down, my students love the time for writing BUT (and yes that’s a big BUT) it doesn’t seem to flow smoothly for me. I have a hard time planning where to go with mini-lessons, how to stay connected to all students with conferences and then there’s the publishing piece…YUCK! I quickly get overwhelmed with all the expectations and respsonsiblitlies that come with writer’s workshop and flounder while my students continue to love to write.

SO….HELP! how do I manage where to go next as teaching points?

HELP how do I keep up on publishing and conferring? So far….i’ve fallen apart in these areas and get frustrated easily which then seems to spoil the rest of the writing time for me.

Entry 2

What do you think about a writing project….for example, my students made fall tress (tear art) and then had to write sentences about their tree. I gave students a certain number of sentences to write about their tree and we edited their sentences before they rewrote them in their best handwriting and we hung them in the hallway. Now, that activity teaches part of the writing process but it isn’t really a narrative writing but is there still a benefit to doing these projects? It allows students to be creative, learn about editing, and continue to feel like writers. It allowed publishing in a controlled way that is easy to present and hang in the hallway for everyone to see…so what’s important about writing? Publishing? The process? Being creative? Here’s a picture or two what we’ve been working on.

Entry 3

Back to the writer’s workshop model. We went to another training session and this one was awful! Our teacher got stuck on everyone reporting back off of a sngle confrernce and we learned nothing new. If I am to learn a new way of teaching, explain it to me and teach me how to teach writing. Not just observe another teacher. Frustrating day but it brought up more questions than answers for me yet again…

How can we have a writing series that has the same lessons for all K-2 students? How they are appropriate for K’s and 2’s? So in other words we as second grade teachers have to supplement what we are doing so we can teach our students. What happens in two years when we get the K’s that have been taught this in K, In 1 and then they want me to repeat the same lessons again in 2? I don’t think so…so how do other second grade teachers teach writing with writer’s workshop or units of study? I wwas excited to be trained in units of study but am now struggling….any suggestions or ideas to help me get back on track?