

A stylized, light-colored illustration of a plant with several leaves and a cluster of small, round buds or flowers, positioned on the left side of the slide against a dark blue background.

NMES Writers Workshop Overview

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What is Writers Workshop?

- **Program**
 - Daily, structured writing time
 - Framework of Teaching Writing: Not a “Canned Program”
 - Completely differentiated
 - Student-owned, student-led, student-driven
- **Teacher**
 - Provides explicit instruction
 - Exposes students to models of good writing
 - Acts as a writing coach who guides students’ growth as a proficient writer
- **Students**
 - Select their own topics to write about
 - Are encouraged to be risk takers as they develop their own individual writing style

Major Components

- On-Demand Writing (Pre-Assessment)
- Introduction / Read Aloud
- Mini Lesson
- Independent Writing Time
- Conferring
- Guided Writing Groups
- End-of-Workshop Share
- Assessment

60-Minute Framework

Activity	Description
Whole Group (10 min)	Introduction: Read mentor texts connected to the mini lesson
Whole Group (10-15 min)	Mini Lesson <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connection• Teach• Active Engagement• Link
Independent Writing (20-45 min)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Independent Writing• Conferring• Guided Writing Groups• Mid-Workshop Share
Whole Group (5 min)	End of Workshop Share

Introduction

- Read aloud from mentor text or previously written stories
- Supports the mini-lesson
- Provides a model to study
- Helps students make writing decisions
- Shows how reading and writing are connected

Mini Lesson

- Connection
- Teaching
- Active Engagement
- Link

Mini Lesson - Connection

- Students learn importance of the daily lesson and how it relates to prior work.
- Teacher repeats previous day's teaching point.
- Teacher names the day's teaching point.

Mini Lesson - Teaching

- Students are taught new skill and/or strategy they will use when they write.
- The teacher...
 - States the teaching point
 - Explains when and why a writer might use it
 - Shows through modeling of personal writing or shared writing pieces the techniques the author used

Mini Lesson – Active Engagement

- Students briefly use strategy taught while teacher provides support.
- Teacher repeats the teaching point to get students ready for what they will practice.
- Students try what they just discussed by writing in notebook or discussion (turn and talk).

Mini Lesson - Link

- Launching of the lesson: get students excited to try what they learned
- Teacher restates the teaching point
- Teacher reminds students that this teaching point can be used in the future as well.

Selecting the Focus of the Lesson

- Mini Lesson could be based on:
 - Procedures during writers workshop
 - Genres
 - Writing Process
 - Traits of Good Writing
 - Things the teacher is noticing in student writings

Independent Writing

- “Focused writing time” – uninterrupted writing time
- Teachers...
 - Have procedures posted and rehearsed.
 - Have materials ready for students to use.
 - Have an “idea bank” for each student. Can use a home-school connection letter to involve parents in the writing program and generate ideas for the students.
- Students...
 - Write on own to practice skills and strategies previously taught.
 - Share their experiences through topic choice.
 - Develop understanding of multiple genres
 - Gain writing fluency and stamina – start with less time and increase

Conferring

- Research
- Compliment
- Decide and Teach
- Link



Conferring - Research

- Read the student's work.
- Determine what the student is beginning to do well in and what you want to teach them so they grow in that area.
- Ask open-ended questions
 - How is it going?
 - Can you tell me what you are working on as a writer today?
- Use conference notes to monitor growth and gather data for further instruction.

Conferring - Compliment

- React like a reader: “Wow! Your details really helped me picture what was happening!”
- Clearly state the skill and/or strategy used and show where they used it.
- Explain why it is important to continue using it.

Conferring - Link

- Repeat the teaching point.
- Name what the student has done.
- Remind the student that the skill or strategy can be used in the future.

Guided Writing

- Students write to practice skills and strategies previously taught.
- Teacher guides, responds and extends the student's thinking.
- Based upon data collected through observation, the teacher coaches small groups to practice a particular skill or strategy. (Conferring Notes)
- Groups can be either remedial or enriching in nature.

Mid-Workshop Teaching Point

- Needed by the majority of students
- Based upon conference and/or guided writing observations, the teacher stops writers to quickly share a teaching point.
- Can be an extension of the mini lesson, a revisit of a previously taught skill, a new concept, or something noted in a student's writing piece.

End-of-Workshop Share

- States the skill or strategy
- Explains when and why good writers use it
- Shows what it looks like to successfully use the strategy
- Uses student work as much as possible
- Builds student confidence as a writer
- Students learn to give and receive positive criticism
 - Collaborative, complimentary, use writing terminology
 - Teacher's opportunity to model dispositions we want to our students to use