



**The TEACHER CENTER of Broome County  
Teacher Study Group Grant Award  
Summer 2004**

**FINAL REPORT  
DOCUMENT PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES**

**STUDY GROUP TOPIC: Implementing a Writing Workshop**

**List of group members: \_JoAnn Hawley, Mary Ballard, Marylou Cordes, Janet Gormley, Pauline LeStrange**

**The final report must be word-processed and submitted both in print and on disk using this form.  
Include information under each of the following headings.**

**Describe the initial goal of the group noting any adjustments that had to be made as time passed.**

Our group was to explore the yearlong writing curriculum for primary writing and the implementation of the writing workshop. The year long curriculum is as follows:

September- Launching the Writing Workshop  
October- Small Moments: Personal Narrative Writing  
November- Writing for Readers: Teaching Skills and Strategies  
December- The Craft of Revision  
January- Authors as Mentors  
February and March: Nonfiction Writing: Procedures and Reports  
April- Poetry: Powerful Thoughts in Tiny Packages  
May- Fiction  
June- Writing for Many Purposes

Due to the limitation of 16 hours, our group concentrated on the first two books, which were The Nuts and Bolts of Writing and Launching the Writing Workshop. We chose to concentrate on setting up a classroom environment that would establish structure and process in a successful primary writing workshop.

**Describe the ACTION PLAN that the group followed.**

We read, discussed, and brainstormed the literature in order to adapt the material to our individual needs in our classrooms.

**Describe how the action plan was implemented.**

Over three days our group read Nuts and Bolts of Writing and Launching the Writing Workshop. We analyzed the following components:

- Mini-lessons
- Student conferences
  - Expectation conferences
  - Content conferences
  - Process and goals conferences
- Teaching methods
  - Demonstration
  - Explicitly tell and show examples
  - Inquiry
  - Guided practice
- Structures and Systems
  - Environment for Writing Instruction
  - Managing Each Component of the Writing Workshop
  - When There Are Management Troubles
  - Materials
  - Schedule

**Evaluation of the impact of the study group effort on teacher/student performance.**

- How has this study group changed you as a teacher? Do you anticipate that any of your teaching practices will have changed?

We have developed a better understanding that children's writing should be from their own personal experiences, "small moments" versus assigning a topic, which they may know nothing about or have experienced.

We have learned the value of daily writing and teaching through using mini-lessons. Instruction takes place in a whole group, in small groups, and in individual settings.

We teach writers to "fix up" their work and revise it so it says everything they mean it to say before it's sent out into the world.

Our teaching practices have changed in the following ways:

- Writing will take place every day
- Topics will be "small moments" from a child's life
- School wide monthly units will be developed to establish consistency and communication among grade levels
- Conferencing will be more frequent and student-oriented
- Celebrations will be held upon completion of a unit and will become more elaborate over time

- What evidence do you expect to see of student achievement is improving as a result of your participating in this study group?

Children will be learning to express their “small moments” through their drawings and writing across several “pages”. They will also be working in their proximal zone of learning, which is accommodated through their appropriate leveled writing paper.

Our school team will be working toward a unified learning approach to teaching writing. Our unified yearlong writing curriculum will be based on common monthly units followed by collaboration of teachers discussing student achievement.

- What evidence is there that the goals of the study group has/has not been met?

We have met our goal by developing an understanding of what a writing workshop should look like. Our classroom environments will allow us to establish the structure and process of successful primary writing workshops.

**Comment on the value of the study group process? Did it work for you?**

The study group was valuable because of the following:

- Multiple grade levels represented
- AIS specialist present
- Years of experience represented

These factors contributed to

- Exchange of ideas
- Understanding the Lucy Calkins books on the writing process
- A guideline for the upcoming year to begin the writing workshop
- Discussions of possible problems and solutions

**How can we make this study group program better?**

- More hours per grant to get a firm grasp of materials
- More financial help to get resources
- A laptop computer