The best writer in the room...is you!

Modeling Writing to Empower Everyone in Your Classroom
Jason Manley, Rockvale Middle School, Murfreesboro, TN
Write into the session

Consider the following questions to reflect on your writing instruction before we begin.

★ How comfortable am I writing in front of an audience of students?
★ Do I consider myself a strong writer?
★ Will I assign writing or teach writing?

Write a brief reflection before we begin.
Success Criteria

I will understand why students of all ages and skill levels need the writing process modeled for them.

I will participate in writing mini-lessons from a student perspective.

I will reflect on how I can model writing for my students.
Teachers must “make sure we provide our students with plenty of opportunities to stand next to worthy models of reading and writing… Amongst all the noise currently surrounding the new standards and testing, let’s not forget that building better readers and writers often begins with finding good models for our students to emulate.”

Kelly Gallagher (The Writing Guru)
*In The Best Interest of Students* (Stenhouse, 2015)
Why should I model student writing?

**Writing is difficult** at all ages and stages.

Students want to **succeed**.

If students can see what the teacher expects **before they begin** writing, they will be more likely to meet or exceed the teacher’s expectations.
What’s the difference between *assigning* writing and *teaching* writing?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assigning Writing</th>
<th>Teaching Writing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>★ Providing a prompt</td>
<td>★ Considering your learning goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>★ Providing a rubric</td>
<td>★ Writing a prompt that encompasses those goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>★ Providing a due date</td>
<td>★ Completing the assignment yourself</td>
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<tr>
<td>★ Providing time to write (in class or at home)</td>
<td>★ Planning lessons to ensure student success</td>
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<td>★ Grading the results</td>
<td>★ Discussing expectations of the assignment</td>
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<td>★ Repeating the process?</td>
<td>★ Modeling the writing process, from generating ideas to</td>
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<td>publication</td>
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*Which method is in the best interest of students? Which method helps students improve their writing skills?*
“Just remember, quality assignments are the hallmark of effective teaching; teaching made up mostly of testing does not improve student learning.”

Eleanor Dougherty
Assignments Matter (ASCD 2012)
My Most Recent Assignment:
8th Grade Writing

“A Moment That Changed Me”
Learning Goal

I can write to express and reflect real or imagined experiences so that I can develop my voice and tell meaningful stories.

Success Criteria

I'll know I succeeded when...

- I have analyzed 5 or more published examples
- I have imitated the style and structure of each
- I have chosen one of my written pieces to polish, focusing on the following elements:
  - Using my voice
  - Strengthening my vocab.
  - Using imagery, simile, and/or metaphor
  - Using dialog
  - Conveying a theme
  - Correcting my errors to improve readability

Success Criteria I Provided My Students
Modeling
Generating Ideas

★ Which moments in my life made me who I am?

★ Which moments made me learn, change, or grow?
Model Texts We Read

“The Funny Guy” - R.L. Stine

“Superman and Me” - Sherman Alexie
Pete and Ronnie gave me a hard push onto the front stoop. “Wh-what do you want?” I stammered. “Why did you bring me here?”

“Go inside,” Pete growled. “Go say hi to Mr. Hartman.”

“He’s waiting for you in there,” Ronnie added.

I felt my throat tighten. I started to choke. “No, please--” I started. They showed me to the door. “You really think the house is haunted?” McKay asked.

I nodded. For once, I didn’t make a joke. “Yes. Everyone knows Mr. Hartman’s ghost is in there.” - R.L. Stine, “The Funny Guy”
### Modeling Writing - Teacher Think-Alouds

As the teacher, I will write in front of my students, “thinking aloud” as I write. I'll talk about:

| Focus / Organization | Choices I make to organize my writing  
                       | Choices I make to begin, continue, or end |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Development          | Choices I make to convey meaning         |
| Language             | Choices I make with words, phrases, and sentences |
| Conventions          | Choices I make to revise my writing.     |
Now you try...

Pair up with a partner. “Think aloud” as you write a small piece of dialog, calling attention to the choices you make. Your partner will listen, and then take a turn!

| Focus / Organization | Choices I make to organize my writing  
|                       | Choices I make to begin, continue, or end |
| Development           | Choices I make to convey meaning        |
| Language              | Choices I make with words, phrases, and sentences |
| Conventions           | Choices I make to revise my writing.     |
Reflection

★ What were the challenges and successes in modeling writing for a peer?

★ How can you do this in your classroom?
YOU’RE THE BEST WRITER IN THE ROOM!