

Writer's Craft Practice Ideas

Using Examples

Choose 2-3 examples of great writing demonstrating the teaching point or technique you want to highlight. Compare/contrast them.

Give students writing assignments to hone their skills:

Small Moments

Write about a specific moment [opening a birthday present - one they were completely surprised by, 5 minutes waiting in line for a ride at a carnival]. We're looking for a narrative that takes place over a matter of minutes, rather than across an entire day or week.

Show Don't Tell

Use dialogue, facial expressions, gestures, and internal thinking to show what's happening in a story. A knight arrives at a dragon's cave, Maria's pet is lost in the house, Zack got good news about school [a friend, an exciting event]

Use a Wordless Book

Inspire your students to describe a setting, play with dialog, or develop characters.

Image Based Writing

Give your students an image [an old photograph, painting, magazine picture] to write about. Who are the people? What is the setting? What's happening? What happened right before this picture was taken? What happened in the background while the painter painted it?

Familiar Characters in a Previous Setting

Play with developing characters by writing a familiar character's back story.

Timelines

Give students a timeline of events for a character's week and have them write about the details of the last event while referring back to the previous events.

Write a 16-Word Story

Give students topic [a character is very disappointed, there's a party and something surprising happens...] and ask students to tell you as much as they can in 16 words.