Creating a love for writing

How can primary teachers motivate their reluctant writers through narrative writing?
“Writers who discover their own topics write with voice and commitment” - Vicki Spandel
Objectives

- Define struggling writers
- Identify struggling writers
- Why we need to motivate our students to write
- Using mentor texts to motivate students
Who is Mary Kornmann?

- 2nd grade teacher at Meadowbrook Elementary
- Teaching since 2011, and teaching in second grade since 2014.
- Recent Hamline graduate from the Masters of Literacy Education

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Rationale

As a student, I was not a strong writer.

As a teacher, I was not a strong writing teacher.

My goal is to feel confident in my writing and in my writing instruction.
"A struggling writer is defined as a child who scores at or below the 25th percentile on a norm-referenced test of writing performance that measured the inclusion of a specific thematic elements in a story and who was also identified as a poor writer by the classroom teacher" Harris, Graham and Mason (2006) p. 296

In other words, a struggling writer is unable, unwilling or a disengaged writer.
1 in 100 students achieves "advanced" writing skills

True or False
Choice in writing produces better results

True or False
Writing is harder when students understand the parts in a written text.

True or False
The common State Standards support the use of mentor texts.

True or False
Characteristics of a struggling writer
IDENTIFYING STRUGGLING WRITERS

- Student is stuck all the time
- Student frequently seen sitting for several minutes or the entire writing period, with nothing written in their notebook
- Student sharpens their pencil often
- Student uses the bathroom
- Student visits the nurses office
- Student makes jokes or talks back
- Student bursts into tears easily

Using private thinking time, think of a student who might identify with these descriptions.

Discuss with someone at your table about that student and what stuck out to you.
Now what? Let’s motivate!

The goal of motivating students to write is to have them find something they love about writing and be engaged in some part of it.

Create a collaborative classroom, where students can talk ideas out and help each other with their ideas.

Strategies to motivate...

- Word Walls
- Collaborative classroom
- Forming a strong relationship with the students
- Share student strengths
How can Motivation strategies be implemented into your classroom?

Talk to someone at your table.

Another way to motivate students is through the use of mentor texts...
Before we learn about mentor texts and writing, we are going to practice writing. Everyone write a legal document for adopting children from another country.

Wait! You can’t do it!?
Example with Mentor Text

Letter Writing

Dear Mr. Blueberry by Simon James

First Year Letters by Julie Danneberg

I Wanna Iguana by Karen Kaufman Orloff
Mentor texts

- Mentor Texts for Narrative Writing
- Mentor Texts for Persuasive Writing
- Mentor Texts for Informative Writing

- At each table, there are texts in each genre.
  - Look around the room through the genres
Was there a genre that you want to dive deeper into?

Discuss with your table group about the genre you picked.
MENTOR TEXTS!

- Now, pretend that you are the student, what do you notice in the texts that you see over and over?
- Look for patterns, words, or themes
- Share with the group about patterns for different genres
Conclusion

- Defined struggling writers
- Identified struggling writers
- Why we need to motivate our students to write
- Using mentor texts to motivate students
“If we stop growing, we will die, and, more importantly, our students will wither and die in our presence”

- Gloria Ladson-Billings
1. What information was new to you?
2. What would you like to have learned more about?
3. On a scale from 1-5, 1 being not useful, and 5 being very useful, how would you rate this professional development?
Thank you!

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Resources: Texts Used

Dear Mr. Blueberry (1996) by Simon James
First Year Letters (2003) by Julie Danneberg
Resources


