



ILA CHAPTER AFFILIATE

July 2018 - Literacy Strategy Spotlight

Writing Publications and Celebrations!

As you begin to plan your writer's workshop for the next school year, we want to encourage teachers to not only plan for assessments but also intentionally plan ways to celebrate and share student writing.

The fourth grade ELAR team at Decker Prairie Elementary School in Tomball ISD has found really great ways to celebrate student's writing beyond simply posting student work in the hallway. The celebrations that these teachers implemented this year were quick and easy to incorporate into their writer's workshop block.

At the beginning of the year, the 4th grade team took an idea from Katherine Bomer's text *Hidden Gems* (2010). They had students read through their finished piece and select their favorite sentence or sentences to showcase. At the end of another unit, they chose mentor sentences from students' pieces to highlight writing goals the students had been working toward and displayed these mentor sentences as if they were a quote from a famous author. Fourth graders at Decker Prairie have also posted published pieces in the hallway and been provided time to give feedback to one another using sticky notes. The students learned how to provide feedback beyond "I like it" for this type of activity. Another way these teachers have built share time and celebration into their writer's workshop is by modeling the experience off of a "poetry reading" type of activity. The students look for the strongest part of their piece (the lead, the heart of the story, the suspense, etc) and only share that part with their peers.

The students absolute favorite celebration came at the end of an expository writing unit after writing about someone they would like to meet. At the culmination of this unit, students voice recorded themselves reading their finished piece and the teachers turned their recorded pieces into QR codes which were hung in the hallway next to a picture of the person being written about. As a writing celebration, students got to use their chromebooks to scan each others' QR codes and listen to their friends' pieces, similar to how you would move through an art museum listening to recordings about each piece of artwork. The students loved this experience!

Steps for creating a gallery walk writing celebration:

1. After finishing a piece of writing, students use an electronic device such as a smartphone or laptop to record themselves reading their piece.
2. Students save their audio recording to Google Drive.
3. The teacher uses a website such as www.the-qr-code-generator.com to create a QR code for each individual piece of student writing from the Google Drive links.
4. The QR code is printed out and glued onto construction paper next to an image that represents the student's piece.

5. Hang the QR code posters in a hallway or around the room with enough space for students to stand comfortably at each one.
6. Students use an electronic device (smartphone, Chromebook, etc) to scan each other's QR code posters. Students listen through headphones to their peers share their pieces of writing.
7. Students move through QR code posters freely as time permits.

These fourth grade teachers know the effects of celebrating student writing on students' views of themselves as writers and have truly found ways to seamlessly incorporate these into their instruction.

“Never underestimate the value of encouragement. When you praise someone in an authentic way it is nourishment for their soul.”

-Daniel Steele

For more information on writing instruction, Alida Hudson recommends:

Bomer, K. (2010). *Hidden gems: Naming and teaching from the brilliance in every students writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Mcgee, P. (2017). *Feedback that moves writers forward - how to escape correcting mode to tran*. Sage Publications.

Mermelstein, L. (2007). *Dont forget to share: The crucial last step in the writing workshop*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

This literacy strategy has been brought to you by Alida Hudson. Alida K. Hudson is a reading specialist at Decker Prairie Elementary School in Tomball ISD, where she provides reading intervention to students in kindergarten through fourth grade, dyslexia intervention, and literacy coaching for classroom teachers. She has taught in the elementary school setting for eleven years, including three years as a reading specialist.. For more information and ideas, contact Alida at alida.hudson13@gmail.com.

If you would like to share a literacy strategy or highlight something your school is doing, please email Matthew Panozzo, the Community Involvement Committee Director, at talecommunityinvolvement@gmail.com

If your school is interested in applying for the International Literacy Association's Exemplary Reading Program Award, please visit their online [application](#) for more information.