

Rules for Helping Children Write

- Knowledge + Creative Performance + Tools = Quality Writing
 - Performance increases learning
- Writing increases with frequent, short practices
 - Short practice sessions are better than long assignments
- Use a "Checksheet" to document writing skill mastery, don't "RED-X" or "RED-CIRCLE" the students' writing
- Use motivation to...

Engage	Energize
Excite	Emphasize
Explore	Electrify
Explain	Elaborate
Envision	Evaluate
- And also help children understand that this is what their writing is to do
- Understand the "Magic Number" in learning tasks
 - "7 plus or minus 2"
 - We can hold 7 chunks of information in awareness at one time if we are familiar with the information
 - We can deal with 7 + 2 or 9 chunks of information if we are experts
 - We can handle only 5 chunks of information if the information, procedures, concepts are new to us
- Most "Process Writing Assignments" teach very little
 - Process writing is "Low Level", "Void of Creativity" writing
- Encourage real writing and use computers, the Internet, and other technology
- Don't Worry! Don't stress. Don't Push
- Have children tell you what they are writing as they write
- Have your students teach you.
- If students don't want to share their writing until they are finished, respect their wishes
 - Just tell the student that you are excited to read what they have written, then back off
- Hold editorial and writer's conferences with students
 - Prize second, third, fourth drafts
 - Teach proofreader marks and use them for editing
 - Note: Editing is different than grading
- Count team-written work as highly as individual work
 - This is what students must know how to do in the world of work
- Let students see the teacher writing

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Reports, compositions and essays should play a minor role in what students write. The list of what students can write is so extensive that there is no excuse for asking students to write the same, tired formula-based assignments.

- Proposals
- Letters
- Recommendations
- Web Pages
- Presentations
- Ads
- Scripts
- Stories
- Songs
- Exposés
- Glossaries
- Captions
- Tutorials
- Satire
- News
- Sports
- Anthologies
- Compositions
- E-Mail
- Research Findings
- Budgets
- Plans
- Multimedia Projects
- Op Ed Pieces
- Poems
- Articles
- Speeches
- Plays
- Appendices
- Tables
- Manuals
- Cartoons
- Weather
- Obituaries
- Reports
- Essays

This isn't a comprehensive list of all the formats that students can write.

Just keep the assignments short, exciting and fun. Even make a game of proofreading.

Obtain a student's permission, and use their writing for Daily Oral Language (DOL). Don't use their "mistakes" but insert mistakes of your own.

Explain that everything that a student writes is automatically copyrighted as soon as it is fixed in some form. Respect each student's ownership as you would respect that of Hemmingway, Faulkner, Steinbeck, Creighton, Fitzgerald, Poe, Hitchcock, Angelou, Hammerstein, Kipling, Clancy, Lucas, or any other professional.

Above all...believe in your students, and believe in their creative potential. Your students' abilities will amaze, inspire and amuse you...but, they will not let you down.