Title: Shared and Interactive Writing

The Basics

What? A method for modeling the writing process for students that involves cooperative writing between the teacher and the students; shared writing involves the teacher writing information provided orally by students, while interactive writing involves students recording the information he or she originally provides orally.

When? In response to reading a text or, in early grades, when engaging in writing about texts or experiences

Why? To build writing skill in students and demonstrate connections between reading and writing

Student Outcomes

This strategy helps students refine their understanding of texts to meet the standards for reading and prepare for writing about texts by refining their writing and language skills. In early elementary, the writing that is produced can also be read and studied to meet reading foundational skills.

How to Implement

In early grades, this is best implemented as an ongoing, procedural strategy to encourage students to become habitual readers and writers. In later grades, this is best implemented in a small-group setting as a strategy to support diverse learners, but it can also be used in a whole-class setting.

1. Develop a prompt or questions in response to a text. In early grades, the prompt might be about an experience.
2. Present the prompt to the group of students, either whole class or small group. Note: The group is working to write one collective response as a model.
3. Work with students to orally craft a response to the question, and then prompt them to direct you how to write the response.
4. Ask students questions to write the response. Use an answer frame as needed. An elementary question might be, "How do we start off a sentence?" while a secondary question might be, "What should our first sentence be?"
5. Record the written response on chart paper or whiteboard so the group can see. During shared writing, student orally dictate the sentences while the teacher writes, and/or the teacher "shares the pen" to allow students to write the portions they know. During interactive writing, students write the response.
6. During the shared writing experience, orally describe aspects of the writing and thinking process in which students need support.
    a. In elementary grades, this might look like describing how to hold a pen, how to write the letters, how to begin and end a sentence, why some answers are more accurate than others, why it is important to provide support for an opinion, etc.
    b. In secondary grades, this might look like describing how to develop a thesis/claim or make it more specific, gather relevant evidence or integrate quotations, organize an essay, revise a portion of writing together focused on a specific grammar or style skill, etc.

Resources for Additional Information

- Overview of this strategy that includes grade level modifications
- Guide for this strategy from ReadWriteThink.org
- Interactive, targeted editing and revision lessons for grades 3-8, and reading and writing mini-lessons