



Helpful Hits For Writing Time

Getting Ready:

- Listen to our mini-lesson before we go to our seats. We usually pick one thing to work on. This will help you know what to look for as you help students.
 - Have journals at seats so we are ready to be writers.
 - It's helpful to have sharpened pencils.

During Writing:

- Comment on student's work quietly. It's best if you can go to their table, rather than having students come to you. If there is too much movement in the room it can be distracting. We never want students standing and waiting on help. They should be busy working rather than waiting.
- Be a cheerleader for their writing attempts. Find something to compliment before helping them.
- Resist thinking for the writer. If you tell them what letter makes a sound then they will depend on adult help too much. (That's called Writer's Welfare) We tell them that we've already been to kindergarten to learn to write so we don't want to do it for them.
- Lead them but don't do for them. Do not spell words for them.
 - Let the student do most of the talking.
- Help them know where to look for help in our room. For example if they are having trouble with a sound, have them look for the Alpha Friend that makes that sound. Or if they need to know how to spell a popcorn word, refer them to the word wall. Our room is full of print...they may just need help on where to find what they need.
 - Keep the conference short...no more than 2 minutes.
- Never draw or write for them in their book. They will become dependent on us if we do that. We want their drawing/writing to belong to them. We will be using "help strips." These will be on each table. When a child is struggling with a drawing or letter or sound,

show them how to draw/write what they need and hand it to them and then they may transfer to their journal.

- Resist the urge to fix things. Focus on the process rather than the end result.
- During writing time only talk about their writing. Don't encourage them to tell you more than what is on their paper.

After Writing:

- Of course they are excited to show you what they did, but help them remember the procedure of closing their book when they hear the words, "Wrap it up." They should not bring their book to show you. They should close their book and place it in the tub.

Possible Conference Comments:

- I can really picture what you are telling in your writing.
 - I like the way your picture matches your words.
 - You used a lot of detail and color.
- I can really read that word. You used beginning and ending sounds.
 - You had a great idea.
- What will you draw/write next? I want to know more!
- Let me help you stretch that word out and you tell me what sounds you hear.
 - What's your favorite part of your picture/writing?
- What do you need at the end or beginning of your sentence?
 - Look how you added spaces between your words!
- I like the way you used capital letters to start your sentences.
 - You made your letters so the reader can read them.

