

Author Study in a Primary Classroom

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Author Study in a Primary Classroom

- This handout coordinates with the presentation which will include pictures, videos, and examples of lessons.
- Feel free to print the handout with additional lines for notes during the presentation.

**Author Study
in a Primary Classroom**

- Plan to interest your students in reading and writing by preparing an author study. Children will become an apprentice to a famous author looking closely as to how decisions are made in the writing process.

Finding Writing Mentors for Primary Writers

- Lucy Calkins says to find an author who...
 - Wrote at least 1 or 2 brief, chronological stories that resembled the focused personal narratives our children were writing
 - Used writing techniques that we suspected our children might want to emulate
 - Wrote in ways that could open our children’s eyes to new possibilities

Calkins, L. (2003). Authors as Mentors

Finding Writing Mentors for Primary Writers

- Katie Wood Ray & Lisa Cleveland say...
 - Look for writers who illustrate their own books because our students both write and illustrate their books
 - Look for writers who have published a variety of kinds of books on a variety of topics: non-fiction, personal narratives, poetry

Ray, K. W. & Cleveland, L. B. (2004). About the Authors

Possible Choices

Calkins and Ray recommend...

- Frank Asch
- Eric Carle
- Donald Crews
- Lois Ehlert
- Denise Fleming
- Mem Fox
- Cynthia Rylant
- Joanna Ryder
- Ezra Jack Keats

Kristi recommends...

- Nancy Carlson
- Lester Laminack
- Lynn Plourde
- David Shannon

Study the Author

- Through read alouds examine the decisions made by the author to...
 - Get ideas
 - Use print features
 - Give descriptions and details
 - Use the traits
 - Show research

Chart the information

- What do we see the author using?
- Why is the author doing this?
- We call it...
- Can we find it in other books?

Give it a go...

- Incorporate the author's books as mini-lessons for Writer's Workshop
- Allow students to try to use similar techniques in their own writing
- Study one text for many lessons

Author's Celebration

- Invite people to hear the books written by students in the style of your author
- Secure a visit from the actual author

Western Wayne's Author Visits

- Shelley Gill
- Jerry Polatta
- Keiko Kasza
- Nancy Carlson
- Lynn Plourde
- Lester Laminack



Assistant Principal, Mr. Philhower & Lynn Plourde

Western Wayne's Author Visits

- Research authors from your home state
 - Save on cost of travel/hotel
 - Keiko Kasza lives in Bloomington, IN
- Ask for funding from...
 - PTO
 - Reserves \$1,000-\$2,000 for literacy purposes
 - Student Activity Fund
 - Students contribute to this through buying school pictures, etc.
 - Money is to be used for whole school programs
 - Covers flight/hotel
 - Local organizations—sorority, Kiwanis, Rotary Club

Western Wayne's Author Visits

- Form a Literacy Team Committee to choose the author at least one year in advance
- Book the same author as other schools in area
 - Fayette County/Western Wayne share the same author during one week
 - Share cost of flight

Western Wayne's Author Visits

- Order books for teachers to read aloud a few months before visit
- Make order forms for students to preorder books that can be signed by the author on the day of the visit
- Put names on post-it notes for author to sign books during the day between performances

- Kristi McCullough, 13 years experience teaching 1st grade and Reading Recovery while serving 5 of those years as a Literacy Coordinator
- Currently a literacy consultant with Smekens Education Solutions
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