

Inside Writing Communities, Grades 3-5

Workshop 7 Teaching the Writing Craft

**Narration written by
Mary Duncan, Ph.D.**

FINAL DRAFT

RUNDOWN SHEET

Program Duration: 28:25

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Series Open/ Title 5	Inside Writing Communities, Grades 3-5 Theme	00:28	00:51
Jack Wilde	<p>JACK: I think whole-class instruction is an important component in writing workshop. What you're always trying to do is maximize your time, as a teacher. And so if there's a skill that somebody—that, really, most of the class or the whole class needs, it doesn't make sense to do it with four different groups—or, very often, it doesn't make sense to do it with four different groups; it makes sense to work on it with the whole class.</p> <p>And not only that, but you've got the added advantage, especially—I especially like to do whole-class work when we're coming to understand the way a new genre works, the way a new kind of writing works; because when you've got feedback from 20 or 25 kids, and they're listening to each other. And part of that—an important part of that listening is recognizing, "Hey, Joey can figure this out. And if he can figure it out, I can figure it out"; whereas, if you're asking them to do it individually, or you're asking them to do it in a small group, you don't have that same synergy, as well as energy.</p>	01:03	01:54
B-Roll	<p>NARRATOR: To be successful, a writing workshop needs to support individual students. But as Jack Wilde suggests, there's still a place for whole-class lessons that introduce new genres or address new writing skills.</p> <p>In many cases, teachers create these lessons in response to needs they observe in their students. Other times, the lessons are part of an established curriculum. They can be centered on a single subject or part of elaborate teaching units that stretch over days or even weeks.</p>		

	<p>Regardless of these choices, whole-class lessons require careful planning and consideration. What part of writing instruction lends itself to whole-class delivery? Which strategies or approaches should the teacher choose? And how should whole-class instruction be balanced with other learning activities?</p> <p>TEACHING THE WRITING CRAFT takes you to three intermediate classrooms to see how outstanding teachers integrate whole-class lessons into their writing workshops. The first stop is Mark Hansen's third-grade in Portland, Oregon, where the students are learning about persuasive writing. Today, Mark kicks off the genre study with a whole-class activity—analyzing a persuasive letter written by another third-grader.</p>	01:17	03:11
Mark Hansen, Clarendon Elementary, Portland, Oregon	<p>MARK: This student wrote this— Dear Portsmouth Neighborhood Association. I am a third grader at Clarendon Elementary School and I live in the Portsmouth neighborhood. I am writing to tell you about a problem I think our neighborhood should work on together. Everyday I walk to school like most of the kids at my school and there are some scary dogs that make me worried. Sometimes one of the dogs gets out of the yard and chases some kids. I want people to know that it is not okay for their dogs to get loose. I think the neighborhood association should help this problem by letting people know that they have to keep their dogs in their property.</p> <p>And I love that. He says it so nicely. And he says exactly what he wants I think the neighborhood association should help this problem by letting people know that they have to keep their dogs in their property. Is that clear what he wants?</p> <p>STUDENTS: Yeah.</p>		

	<p>MARK: Okay. So that's a great introduction to what he's talking about. Everyone with me?</p> <p>STUDENTS: Yes.</p> <p>MARK: Okay. Now let's read on. Second paragraph –</p> <p>There are a lot of good reasons to keep dogs in their yards.</p> <p>(Dissolve)</p> <p>MARK: I think you will agree with me about these reasons. If you would like to contact me, you can write back at the address on the envelope or you can call my teacher at the school. You can also use this letter in your newsletter so people will see what I'm saying. Thanks for your help.</p> <p>Okay, questions, comments, connections about this, this letter, what you noticed here? Austin?</p> <p>AUSTIN: At the end where it says you can write me back, it doesn't have like the address.</p> <p>MARK: Okay, well read that whole sentence, what did he say?</p> <p>STUDENT: On the envelope.</p> <p>AUSTIN: If you would like to contact me, you can write back at the address on the envelope or you can call me, my teacher.</p> <p>MARK: Okay, do you see where he says the address is on the envelope? So that the envelope you send a letter in, you put the address where it's going, but you also put the address where it's from. It could be like the return address,</p>		
B-Roll	NARRATOR: Mark is committed to an inquiry	02:15	05:76

	<p>approach in his teaching, so he begins with an open-ended question— “What did you notice in this letter?” But after the students talk for a few minutes, he focuses their attention on a single feature.</p>	00:15	05:41
<p>Mark Hansen, Clarendon Elementary, Portland, Oregon</p>	<p>MARK: I’d like you to take your copy of the letter, and I want you to circle the part of the letter where you think he says what he wants people to do.</p> <p>Dissolve</p> <p>MARK: And this is interesting, because it’s not always easy to find this kind of thing in a letter. But I’m going to start asking people what their opinion is of this. Okay? You circled a couple of things there. Great. And what was the part where he circled what he wanted to happen? What did he want them to do? Jesus?</p> <p>JESUS: Keep their dogs in property.</p> <p>MARK: Keep their dogs where?</p> <p>JESUS: In property, property</p> <p>MARK: In their property. Keep their dogs on their land, right? So Jesus you’re saying this part right here?</p> <p>JESUS: Yeah.</p> <p>MARK: Okay. All right, did anyone agree with Jesus? Anyone else agree with Jesus around that part? Did anyone else find somewhere different? Raise your hand if you found somewhere different. Ashley, what did you think?</p> <p>ASHLEY: If the dog is mean then it could attack a kid or someone else’s pet like a smaller dog or cat.</p> <p>MARK: Okay.</p>		

STUDENT: That's what I put.

MARK: You put that too? Now is that the part, is he letting them know what he wants to do there? Or is he giving them a reason?

STUDENTS: A reason.

MARK: A reason. So look again at the letter Ashley and see what else you might find. Megan?

MEGAN: I want people to know that it is not okay for their dogs to get loose. I think the neighborhood association should help this problem by letting people know that they have to keep their dogs on their property.

MARK: Okay, so you went all the way up here—I want people to know that it is not okay for their dogs to get loose. Does that tell people what he wants to happen?

MEGAN: Yes.

MARK: And then the next sentence goes on. I think the neighborhood association should, and there's a key word, key word right here which is should. You should help. You should do this. That's telling people what he wants.

Dissolve

MARK: Why did I have you circle this? Why is this an important part of the letter? Why am I drawing your attention to that part of the letter? What do you think? Isaiah?

ISAIAH: Because you want us to, um, know about what's, um, what's going on.

MARK: I do. I do. And there's something, this is, and, and let me hear from Megan. What do you think

MEGAN: I think that

	<p>MARK: Why did?</p> <p>MEGAN: I think it's the part where they, they are saying what they want done and why, what the, what the problem and why they think it or something.</p> <p>MARK: Exactly right, If you were trying to persuade someone, Celia, and you don't tell what you want, are they going to do it?</p> <p>STUDENTS: No</p> <p>MEGAN: They don't know what you're talking about.</p> <p>MARK: If you don't say your ideas clearly, are they going to understand you?</p> <p>STUDENTS: No.</p> <p>MARK: So when you write a letter, you have to figure out a way to say what you want to happen, very clearly. You have to let that person know, I want this! Does that make sense why this part is important of the letter? And for now, I'm just going to call this the big idea. This is the, and everyone in here is going to have a big idea of what they want to change. Is that clear? So when I say big idea are you going to know what I mean? What is your big idea? What do you want people to do?</p>	03:52	09:33
Mark Hansen, Clarendon Elementary, Portland, Oregon	<p>MARK: One thing that I had to learn a lot about in doing, which I think is really effective, that I learned from the Portland Writing Project, was analyzing text as a method of teaching what you can do with text. And so that's why, today, we marked up the letters to look for the specific aspects of a persuasive letter that they're going to need to include in their own. And so little—you know, going through and marking it, underlining—a lot of people use highlighters or different colored crayons, and that kind of thing—and then</p>		

	<p>being very explicit about naming what those things are, and we'll go back to that. But that's one element that I think is hugely instructive for kids, to be led through looking for it, marking it, and, you know, internalizing it that way.</p>	01:02	10:35
B-Roll	<p>NARRATOR: As Mark's lesson unfolds, the students continue to identify other features of persuasive letters. Once the analysis is complete, they'll apply what they've learned to their own writing.</p> <p>In another third-grade class—this time in Indianapolis—it's the second day of a poetry unit. On the first day, teacher Latosha Rowley led the students in discussing the elements of poetry. Today, she begins with a whole-class discussion that will help her students categorize poems.</p>	00:30	11:05
Latosha Rowley, Cold Spring Elementary, Indianapolis, Indiana	<p>LATOSHA: So, feeling poems—what do we think are some of the things that these poems would be like about? Or if you had a feeling poem what would you think about with that kind of poem? You can go get a tissue. What would you think, oh, okay, yes?</p> <p>STUDENT: Um, love poems.</p> <p>LATOSHA: Oh love—I think that's real key isn't it? Love. I like that. So it would be about love. That's important. Anything else? Donna?</p> <p>DONNA: Sad poems.</p> <p>LATOSHA: Oh yea, they could be sad couldn't they? Yeah. And those are tough to read aren't they? Because they might make us do what?</p> <p>STUDENTS: Cry. Water our eyes.</p> <p>LATOSHA: Yeah. Might water our eyes, make us cry. But yeah, we know in the feeling poems there probably will be</p>		

	<p>something sad. Jayla?</p> <p>JAYLA: Happy poems.</p> <p>LATOSHA: Could be happy poems. And if we're happy, we might do what?</p> <p>JAYLA: Laugh.</p> <p>LATOSHA: We might laugh. So there could be some humor. You've heard that before.</p> <p>JAYLA: Yes.</p> <p>LATOSHA: Humor, makes us laugh. Tyler?</p> <p>TYLER: Boring.</p> <p>LATOSHA: Could be boring, yeah.</p>	01:13	12:18
<p>Latosha Rowley, Cold Spring Elementary, Indianapolis, Indiana</p>	<p>LATOSHA: When we look at poetry, we just think about the feeling part of a poem. But I wanted the kids to also know that there's something you're going to see in a piece of poetry, as well; because the way you shape or the way you put it on the page, it kind of helps you see it or feel it different.</p> <p>But I wanted them to be able to distinguish, when they pick up a piece, and they say, "Oh, yeah, I—you know, I feel something from this piece," or "Wow this is a great visual. I mean, I'm really seeing something," whether it's in the words or the shape of it.</p>	00:30	12:48
<p>Latosha Rowley, Cold Spring Elementary, Indianapolis, Indiana</p>	<p>LATOSHA: What would be some poems we would put in the category of seeing? Seeing? And we're thinking of seeing as what it looks like on the page, as well as words that paint a picture. So think about that kind of thing and what would you come up with?</p> <p>STUDENT: Cats maybe?</p> <p>LATOSHA: Hmm?</p>		

	<p>STUDENT: Cats</p> <p>LATOSHA: What do you mean?</p> <p>STUDENT: Like, um, some people</p> <p>STUDENT: Write about cats</p> <p>STUDENTS: Yeah, some people write about cats because they like cats. They like to make poems with cats</p> <p>LATOSHA: So how would that be a seeing poem? How would you explain that to me that that's a seeing poem?</p> <p>STUDENT: Because you could see cats</p> <p>LATOSHA: You could see it? How do you see the cats in the poem?</p> <p>STUDENT: Because you might put a picture in it.</p> <p>LATOSHA: Okay, it could have a picture. What else? Got any more or not?</p> <p>STUDENT: Paintings.</p> <p>LATOSHA: Okay. So there's pictures, drawings</p> <p>STUDENT: Yeah, drawings,</p> <p>LATOSHA: Paintings—that can all go with the poem and make us see some things. So pictures, drawings, paintings—but, but let's see if we can get some more things. Joy?</p> <p>JOY: People.</p> <p>LATOSHA: What do you mean?</p> <p>JOY: Like, like daydreaming.</p> <p>LATOSHA: A little bit more because I'm; you</p>		
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	<p>got to help me understand that this would be a seeing poem. What about it?</p> <p>JOY: Like, like people, you can see it in your mind.</p> <p>LATOSHA: Oh, you can see it in your mind. So what's going to make you see it in your mind?</p> <p>Dissolve</p> <p>STUDENT: The weather.</p> <p>LATOSHA: What do you mean?</p> <p>STUDENT: Like if it's raining or you could see the sun.</p> <p>LATOSHA: How would I know that in a poem?</p> <p>STUDENT: Because you could feel, or see the weather you could write that about a poem.</p> <p>LATOSHA: So you're talking about these words we would use right? So it's the choice of words that help us see things</p> <p>Dissolve</p> <p>LATOSHA: So choice of words that describe something. We're going to stop there because those are key things that help you see things in the poems. So the words help you see. The pictures and drawings. Maybe the colors. Definitely the shape, we can see a lot with the shape. So</p> <p>STUDENT: Ms. Rowley can we see the act?</p> <p>LATOSHA: The act, what's going on in there?</p> <p>STUDENT: The action?</p>		
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	<p>LATOSHA: And what would probably help us see the action? Probably the choice of words that describe something. So whatever is going on in the poem—the words will help us see that. Now what you’re going to do, here’s your assignment, listen, here’s your assignment—you’re going to go through your basket of poems and today instead of looking at them and seeing what you notice, like we did yesterday, we’re going to particularly look at if it’s a feeling or a seeing kind of poem. So you can just put an “f” on a sticky note or a “s”. You don’t have to write it all out if you don’t want to and we’re going to see what kind of poems these are. Is it a feeling or a seeing poem? Because some poems are clearly feeling. You read it and you say, oh, that’s a lot of feeling. There’s a lot of emotion. I’m going to put that word on here, emotions. Because that, that’s real key, emotions. Emotions---that’s the feeling. And seeing is visual.</p>	03:50	16:38
<p>Latosha Rowley, Cold Spring Elementary, Indianapolis, Indiana</p>	<p>LATOSHA: That’s what I was trying to get to so that they can understand that the way you see things in a poem is not necessarily the picture, even though a lot of poems have a picture; but sometimes it’s just the descriptive words that are in the poem that helps you visualize something while you’re reading. And I think that that’s a real key piece in poetry, because sometimes there’s not very many words on the page; but those words that the poet selected are so important that it just paints a picture in your mind, and I want the kids to be able to see that, explore with that, understand that, and then try to do that.</p>	00:37	17:15
<p>B-Roll</p>	<p>NARRATOR: After the students brainstorm characteristics of feeling and seeing poems, they return to their tables, where they go through the baskets of poetry looking for examples of each category. Next, Latosha reinforces the lesson by having the children meet in small groups to categorize “Mother to Son,” one of the touchstone texts she</p>		

	introduced the day before.	00:24	17:39
Latosha Rowley, Cold Spring Elementary, Indianapolis, Indiana	<p>LATOSHA: By a show of hands how many put this poem in the category of seeing? Oh, so we have 100% saying that it's a feeling poem?</p> <p>STUDENTS: Yeah.</p> <p>LATOSHA: All right, no</p> <p>STUDENT: It's kind of in between because it has pictures around it and it's feeling.</p> <p>LATOSHA: Well, let's concentrate on what it says, since we all said feelings, why do we say it's a feeling poem? Why? Let's share out just a few reasons why we think it's a feeling poem. Joy?</p> <p>JOY: Because when it says life for me ain't been no crystal stair</p> <p>LATOSHA: Stair.</p> <p>JOY: Stair.</p> <p>LATOSHA: What does that mean?</p> <p>JOY: Ah</p> <p>LATOSHA: What does that mean?</p> <p>JOY: It means it hasn't been no good</p> <p>LATOSHA: Hasn't been good? Okay. Anybody want to add to that? Brooklin?</p> <p>BROOKLIN: It's like, it's not, this aint' been no crystal stair. It's had, it's had aches in it and splinters and boards torn and places with no carpet on the floor, bare, it's, it's feeling because it's really sad they didn't have the things we do now days.</p>	01:21	19:00
B-Roll	NARRATOR: Our final stop is Lindsay		

	<p>Dibert's fifth-grade class in Danville, New Hampshire, where students have been working on personal narratives. Today, Lindsay has planned a sequence of activities around a single skill: writing effective introductions. She begins by inviting the whole class to evaluate opening paragraphs from familiar children's books.</p>	00:22	19:22
<p>Lindsay Dibert, Danville Elementary, Danville, New Hampshire</p>	<p>LINDSAY: On a warm October night in Chicago, three deliveries were made in the same neighborhood. A plump tangerine moon had just risen over Lake Michigan. The doorbell had been rung at each place and an envelope left propped outside.</p> <p>Does that sound familiar to you? The last few of those? Anything different that these authors tried than the leads at the beginning that I shared? What did some of those authors do? Lori?</p> <p>LORI: Well I like when they did the questioning from <u>The Iron Man</u>, like did he, had he walked? Where had he come from and how was he made? I thought that was really cool. I like how they did the questions.</p> <p>LINDSAY: Okay, great. Shannon?</p> <p>SHANNON: I like how, um, some of them on the back started with like the setting, like on a Thursday afternoon or on a warm October night in Chicago.</p> <p>LINDSAY: It sets your reader up for what's going to happen. It kind of lets them start having a picture in their mind about where your story's going to take place. You have lots of sample leads here of leads that start with a question that's one type of lead. You have leads that speak to the reader; you need to know this if you started lying. Description—how to start of with the setting or describing the little bat that you had mentioned. And a question like Lori seemed to like quite a bit</p>		

	<p>from <u>The Iron Giant</u>. What I would like you to do in your groups is I'd like you to pick out your top 3 most effective leads out of this list. What makes it a good lead? Why do you like it so much? In a group you're going to need to come up with three leads that your group thinks are the best, so it's going to take a little bit of compromise. And you have to support your reason with what you know about a lead. Is it the most effective lead there? Would another lead be more, do you find another lead more effective? It's your opinion. You can't be wrong on this. You're going to discuss this in your groups for about five minutes, okay? When we're done, we're going to share what you found most effective. Which leads did you like the best, Josh?</p> <p>JOSH: Do we grade the top three in our journal?</p> <p>LINDSAY: You can mark it right on the page. Okay? Five minutes.</p>	02:30	21:52
Lindsay Dibert, Danville Elementary, Danville, New Hampshire	<p>LINDSAY: The strategies that I wanted the students to take from the lesson on leads, today, were: What makes an effective lead? How can they read like a writer to learn from other writers? And, also, how do they choose one for themselves that will work with their piece of writing?</p>	00:18	22:10
B-Roll	<p>NARRATOR: Lindsay's whole-class discussion has given the students a framework for evaluating leads in their small groups. After each group selects their favorites, the class reconvenes to talk about these choices.</p>	00:14	22:24
Lindsay Dibert, Danville Elementary, Danville, New Hampshire	<p>LINDSAY: And Cory, what about your group?</p> <p>CORY: We liked <u>Louis the Fish</u>, <u>The Iron Man</u> and <u>Chasing Vermeer</u>. We liked <u>Louis the Fish</u> because we were wondering why he got, why the butcher turned into a fish and like how did he. So. We liked <u>The Iron Man</u></p>		

	because the questions like Lori said and just the repetition. And we liked, we liked <u>Chasing Vermeer</u> because it has a lot of detail and it makes you wonder what the letter said.	00:51	23:15
B-Roll	NARRATOR: Lindsay completes this segment of her lesson by summarizing how the various student groups responded. Now she has a charge for her students: based on these or other opening paragraphs, come up with three alternative leads for your personal narrative.	00:17	23:32
Lindsay Dibert, Danville Elementary, Danville, New Hampshire	LINDSAY: What I'm going to ask you to do now, is you have your stories that you're working on, your narratives—what I would like you to do is to choose three types of leads that you can try for your story. That means three different ways of starting your story. You can use your sample leads as a basis to learn from and to practice, or you can use anything else in the classroom. If you have a book in your desk you want to look at, we have books up here that you can look at, but three different types of leads is what we're going to work on for about the next 20 minutes for your narrative.	00:35	24:07
B-Roll	NARRATOR: After writing on their own, Lindsay's students come together for one more whole-class activity. This time, they share their new leads and reflect on what they've learned.	00:12	24:19
Lindsay Dibert, Danville Elementary, Danville, New Hampshire	LINDSAY: So tell me, how did it go? How did trying the sample leads work? Did it work well for you? Did it not work well for you? Do you have anything you'd like to share? Gage? GAGE: I came up with like up with like six different leads and they're pretty good. I think it would be better than this lead that I have right here .I used to be scared of the basement when I was four to six years old. I think the ones that I wrote down here are a lot better.		

	<p>LINDSAY: You want to share one?</p> <p>GAGE: Okay. Um, the fear of the basement found me and haunted me for two years when I was four to six years old.</p> <p>LINDSAY: Wow, I like that lead. Very well done. Michael, what did, what worked for you?</p> <p>MICHAEL: I thought it was kind of fun because you got to make up like, your own like first page of a story practically.</p> <p>LINDSAY: And do you have a lead that you'd like to read?</p> <p>MICHAEL: Yes. One day on a hot August night all of us were sitting at the fire. And all of a sudden I heard a noise—crinkle—crinkle—out of nowhere—raah!</p> <p>LINDSAY: That'll grab your attention! Excellent.</p> <p>Dissolve</p> <p>LINDSAY: Did anyone decide to go with their original lead from their original story, their first lead? Anybody like that the best? Dale, kind of? So everybody, you would agree, yes or no, that this was a good lesson for you to start your stories with and to try things out? Excellent. Well I'm pleased to see that. Michael?</p> <p>MICHAEL: Can we do this like more often?</p> <p>LINDSAY: We can do it all the time. You want to try different ways of starting your leads? Okay. We can keep doing that. How about endings? Would you be willing to try this on endings? Different types of ways of ending your story? Great.</p>		
B-Roll	NARRATOR: As Mark, Latosha, and Lindsay	01:56	26:23

	<p>demonstrate, effective whole-class instruction has little in common with lecturing or filling out worksheets. Instead, these lessons are fluid structures that allow plenty of room for individual responses and learning. And by making the lessons part of a balanced mix of activities, teachers keep students attentive and accommodate diverse needs.</p> <p>Regardless of structure or focus, all these successful lessons share at least three characteristics. They require students to think about writing, to analyze what works, and to learn from the responses of their peers.</p>	00:41	27:04
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1-800 Tag			28:25