

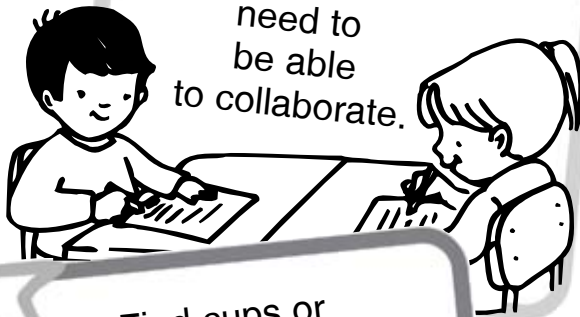


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How do I set up my classroom for writing?

Use tables or push desks together. Children will need to be able to collaborate.



Have a special space for the mini-lesson. This can be a carpeted area or quiet corner. The physical movement from one space to another can indicate the introduction of a new lesson.



Find cups or baskets to store writing supplies at each table (markers, pencils, colored pencils, highlighters, sticky notes and crayons).



Use crates or boxes to store children's writing materials.



Create a special author's chair for sharing writing. A beach chair, stool or any other unique chair makes a special place for your featured writers.



Make blank books in various shapes and sizes by stapling pieces of paper together. Have children write their own books. When children write books, they will automatically write more than when they write on one sheet of paper.



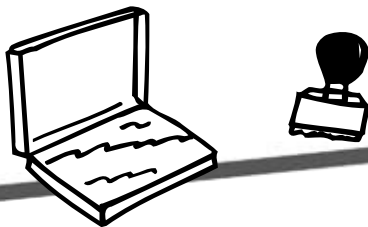
Ask parents to save cereal boxes for book covers. Children can title and illustrate the blank side.



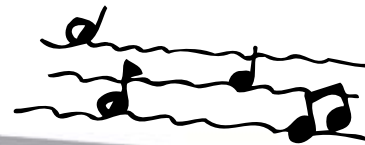
Provide clipboards for children to use in alternative locations (writing nook, couch, etc). Sometimes a new location helps generate ideas.



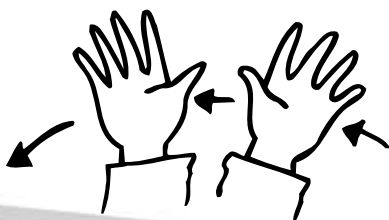
Use a date stamp and ink pad to archive children's writing.



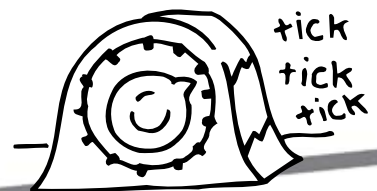
Soft music for writing time can help to reduce the noise level. Remind children that the talking should not be louder than the music.



Use a transitional event (song or movement) to indicate that writing time is done.



Use a large timer to help children manage time. Put the timer somewhere that everyone can see.



Name _____

How Did I Do?



| Date | I used my time well. | I did my best writing. | I know how to start tomorrow. | I was a helper to another writer. |
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How do I get started?

Begin the first days with procedures. Talk about how and where the materials are stored, how and where children sit for mini-lesson time, and how they should write quietly and independently during writing time.



Day 1

- Show children where their daily writing folders will be stored (the crate or box). Show them an example with the “About the Author” page (page 14) and interest list.
- Bring children to the mini-lesson area and explain that this is the place where you will come to talk about writing.
- Introduce your transition song or movements.
- Explain how the timer will be used and how much time children have during the writing time.
- Explain your rules for writing time (W.H.A.T.—page 10) and show children where they should sit to work.
- Show children a piece of writing that is “finished” (name, date stamp, writing and pictures together, shared with a friend).
- Model the end of writing time. Show children how they will tell you what they are working on so that you can record it in the class log.