

6, February 2008

Journal Entry #1
Chapter Two: Teaching the Reading and Writing Processes

Dear Heather,

Chapter Two explains that a balanced approach to literacy instruction contains both reading and writing. The chapter begins by talking about the reading process and its five stages, rereading, reading, responding, exploring, and applying. Students have to create meaning while they read through these five stages. Within these five stages there are different ways a student can read. They can use independent reading where they read by themselves, buddy reading where they read with a partner, guided reading where teachers guide the group of students in reading, shared reading where students follow along with the teacher as he/she reads, and reading aloud where the teacher reads to the students. Each of these approaches should be used within a balanced curriculum. The writing process is similar in its five stages; prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. Each stage is a step towards deeper understanding of the process. Both of these processes compliment one another. A student can learn about the ideas of writing through reading, and he/she can learn the process of reading through their own writing. Both processes allow the student to create the meaning behind the words.

While reading chapter two, I was able to make a personal connection to the reading and writing activities I have done throughout my school years. My eighth grade year we did literacy circles. I loved this. While reading a book in a group, the teacher guided us through it by writing activities. She taught mini lessons about the mechanics of reading and writing. Some of the activities included writing in journals of personal reflection, identifying the mechanics of a story, and writing a sequel to the story. I really enjoyed the literacy circles. I now look back and realize how much we learned through one unit. We did this twice through the year and gained new information both times.

I was also able to make a professional connection to this chapter. My senior year of high school I was a cadet teacher in the same classroom that I did the literacy circles in. I was able to see this done from a different perspective. While the teacher was not doing the literacy circles, every student was still reading a book. They would go to the library every week and look at different books. The students had to read so many chapters a week in the book and write in a journal to the teacher. In the journal they had to make connections with their own life, other books, and different mechanics of reading. While I was cadet teaching, I was in charge of the read aloud every day. We would start the class hour out with a ten minute read out of a book the teacher chooses. The students were exposed to a read aloud, independent reading, and buddy reading during her class. After reading chapter two, I was able to make the connection as to why she used all these different approaches.

Chapter two was interesting. While participating or observing in a reading/writing lesson you don't realize all the different stages of these two processes until you read

about them. I look forward to watching these processes in work during my placement this semester. In every classroom there will always be a student that does not like to read. Would you place them in a buddy reading situation or leave them to independent reading? In buddy reading they could gain from working with another student but they may not do their part. In an independent situation, they would be able to choose their own book and not affect another student, but they may not read. How can you encourage these types of students to read? Are there any activities that would help? I want my students to have the best experience that they can!!

Have a fabulous day!!

Your student,

Liz Myers