

Writer's Workshop – Creating a Community of Writers in Cambrian



The school year has only just begun, and we want to take this opportunity to tell you about the new writing program the Cambrian School District is endeavoring to provide for all of our students. As you know, writing is one of the basic and important subjects in school. Writing well has always been a great emphasis in our classrooms, but its importance continues to grow even more as standardized tests, colleges, and employers demand writing samples as evidence of one's ability to communicate effectively.

We are very excited to bring Writers' Workshop to Cambrian School District in all grades as one of Cambrian's best instructional practices. This year, all teachers in grades TK – 6th are participating in three full days of grade level specific professional development as well as collaboration time for instructional rounds with coaching support on site. Over the span of this school year, you will see the difference this method will make in the enthusiasm toward writing in our students.

Imagine a writing class where the most important focus is to turn your child into a writer. It happens in an environment where children do all the things authors really do...

- Write what matters to them
- Understand the strategies they need to draft, revise, edit, and publish
- Effectively put language to use
- Write to a specific audience, with purpose
- Apply correct conventions and form

What will Writers' Workshop give your child?

- Time to write, in an environment that encourages written expression
- Ownership of his/her "product"; children are encouraged to write about things they know and care about
- Response, with frequent individual student-teacher conferences
- The foundation for good writing
- A lasting framework for writing

All students will learn the stages of the writing process.

- Choosing a topic
- Drafting and illustrating
- Responding and revising
- Proofreading and editing
- Publishing



Each Writers' Workshop session consists of these elements:

- Mini-lesson about good writing
- Writing block time
- Individual student-teacher conference
- Sharing time

What would you see if you took a peek into the class?

- Students gathering together for a teaching demonstration, followed by a sustained writing time with individual feedback and guidance from the teacher. Lastly, there is a time to share, celebrate and reflect.

What can you expect to happen in Writers' Workshop?

- Your child will connect writing to reading by identifying what authors do, take personal responsibility for effective writing, and see the writing process as doable, manageable, and enjoyable
- You will notice enormous growth in your child's writing this year and the years to come as we move from one unit to the next during writing workshop. Throughout these first few months of school, your children will be writing personal narratives, which are true stories from their lives. This unit is meant not only to teach them qualities of good personal narrative writing, but it's also designed to help them develop stamina, focus, structure, detail, a sense of purpose, an appreciation for conventions, and an enthusiasm for writing.

You may wonder how you can help your child to prosper as a writer this year. As the year progresses, your child will learn to write in a variety of genre, including narrative, information/explanatory and opinion/argument writing.

We are partners in this incredibly important work of helping your student become a strong and confident writer. Our teachers' commitment is to monitor, teach and celebrate your students' progress as a writer. As such, we need your support to help your child realize that his/her *daily life* brims with stories that deserve to be told. Sharing stories around the dinner table is a great way to begin.

You play a critical role in making your child feel like a famous author. Every writer needs, above all, an interested and appreciative reader.