

Writing Workshop (one variation)

Key Components

- Involves choice of topic
- Peer editing / critiquing is vital
- A common guideline or rubric for discussing / scoring work

After students have done lots of writer's notebook writing, and have turned in a few polished pieces, they will take one polished piece to workshop. Every nine weeks is a good time for this.

All students turn in their best piece, or it might be a piece they like a lot and want to make better. TYPED. Do not put names on the pieces--important to remain anonymous.

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Workshop Rules and Hints

Workshop is about more than just writing. It is almost equally about careful reading and effective communication. Writing is personal, even if the content isn't, and people react differently to critiques of their work. Please remember that. This does not mean that we tread so lightly that we do not address the issues in the writing. Follow these basic guidelines and rules and this will be an exceptional learning opportunity for everyone. You will all grow as readers, writers, and communicators.

Rules

1. Come to class prepared. Read the piece once and write comments at the end as your first reaction. Read again and look for more specifics about strengths and weaknesses. Write comments on text. You will receive a grade based on your comments.
2. Participate. Come to workshop with a positive attitude and speak up as we discuss the papers. One student during each workshop will be called on to be facilitator, to keep the conversations going, to try to get comments from a majority of the class and not just a few. The teacher will be mostly an observer.
3. Do not say "I liked it," or "I didn't like it." You must ALWAYS be able to tell us what you liked about it or what didn't work for you, specifically.
4. Make appropriate suggestions for revisions using the questions and comments below to help formulate your comments.
5. Writer must remain anonymous. Even if you know who it is, and many will, do not make it obvious. The writer is not allowed to speak during the workshop but should take notes. At the end they are given the option to say who they are and ask questions or make comments.

Here are some questions to work through to help you critique the papers we read. You are certainly not expected to answer all these, but if you don't know what to say or where to start, these might help. Try to be able to answer at least 4-5 in class. Also, use the rubric provided by your teacher for more specific language/scoring if required.

1. What is the writer's message / point?
2. Does the writer stick to the message / point? If not, where do they stray?
3. Is this an idea that is fresh/new? Or said in a fresh / new way?
4. Does it start in the right place? Is there another place it could sta