

**Title of Session:** WriteTalk - Sharing Best Practices in Writing

**Moderator:** BJ Berquist

**Title of File:** 20051208writetalk

**Date:** December 8, 2005

Room: WriteTalk Group

**BJB2:** we're hoping Sandy will log in shortly. This is her group. [Ed Note: Sandra had technical problems and was unable to log in. She apologizes to the group. Bjb]

**BJB2:** while we wait, a reminder to go to the ACTIONS menu in the top right of this chat window and click on DETACH

**ErinHer:** thanks I did that

**BJB2** nods to Erin

**DavidWe:** So have people been here before (Tapped In, Sandra's WriteTalk session, etc.)?

**BJB2:** we usually start all discussions with introductions. Please tell us where you are located and what brings you to the discussion

**KendraH:** Not Write Talk, but I had my first session last week

**DavidWe:** I'm David Weksler. I'm one of the Tapped In HelpDesk volunteers. I lead a math and technology discussion in Tapped In. I'm in New Jersey, near New York City

**ErinHer:** my name is Erin and I am a graduate student at Pepperdine university...I live in Newport Beach, Ca.

**BJB2:** I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania and a helpdesk volunteer for Tapped In

**JoshLS:** this is my first time in tapped in I'm a grad student at Missouri living in sw Missouri

**DavidWe:** Welcome to Tapped In, Josh

**JoshLS:** thanks

**KendraH:** My name is Kendra and I am a student at Pepperdine University

**JeffC:** Jeff Cooper... Forest Grove Oregon... helpdesk here as well.

**BJB2:** is this your first Tapped In discussion?

**BJB2** . o O ( I know it is for Josh )

**DavidWe**: What are you guys studying?

**JoshLS**: masters of Ed (technology in schools)

**DavidWe**: Do you teach currently, Josh?

**ErinHer**: masters of ed

**MarianT** joined the room.

**KendraH**: Masters of Ed

**JoshLS**: Nope tech guy

**DavidWe** waves to Marian

**BJB2**: hi, Marian

**MarianT**: Hello BJ

**DavidWe** huddles with BJ and Jeff to figure out what we should do

**DavidWe**: The 3 of us have been using Tapped In for close to 8 years

**ErinHer**: are you serious...for class???

**DavidWe**: We're avid Tapped In users. We help other people get their bearings

**MarianT**: I'm new to this, so I'll be listening awhile before I partake in your discussion. Hope that's okay with you all.

**DavidWe**: We also lead different discussions in Tapped In - about math and science (Jeff and me) and art (Bj)

**BJB2** winks at Marian...it's hard to be a passive participant in Tapped In, Marian

**DavidWe**: Tell us a bit about yourself, Marian, just as an introduction

**MarianT**: Well bear with me BJ and I'll get the hang of it real quick here.

**JoshLS**: yeah BJ drilled me for at least 15 minutes earlier

**DavidWe** smiles

**BJB2** nods to Marian

**DavidWe:** She's a tough dentist

**BJB2** carefully puts away her drill sergeant uniform

**MarianT:** By the way, I did read up a little about the Write Talk, but still a bit confused. Do we talk about what we can do to better our own writing skills as well as the students we teach?

**BJB2:** Marian, to help you follow the scrolling text chat, go to the ACTIONS menu in the top right of this chat window and click on DETACH

**MarianT:** Thanks!

**BJB2:** both, Marian. Sandra Shattuck usually leads the discussion, but she's not logged in yet

**MarianT:** I'm eager to get info on writing tips for both myself as well as students

**KendraH:** Can we lead this without her if she does not show?

**KendraH:** I need this discussion for class credit

**BJB2:** Sandy usually shows everyone <http://www.writingproject.org/>

**DavidWe** smiles

**BJB2:** and gives a spiel on the project

**BJB2** . o O ( we'll let you look at the webpage )

**MarianT:** I'm with Kendra, I too need this discussion for class credit

**BJB2:** Sandy also has several resources posted to the welcome screen from which you are all detached

**KathrynGst13** joined the room.

**BJB2** wonders how Marian was going to 'listen' and still get credit for participating in a discussion?!

**BJB2:** Hi, Kathryn. Welcome

**KathrynGst13:** Thank you

**MarianT:** BJ, I did go to the Actions menu and didn't see DETACH.

**BJB2:** let's do a bit about Tapped In first...

**BJB2:** Marian, you may need to scroll down

**BJB2 . o O** ( on the actions menu )

**BJB2:** Tapped In is a community of practice for educators

**ErinHer:** that website is pretty cool

**MarianT:** I apologize, but I meant to say an active listener. I'm smiling at how receptive you are BJ

**BJB2:** as a community, we depend on the experience and expertise of each individual Tapped In member

**BJB2** smiles back at Marian. No disrespect meant, Marian...just teasing

**BJB2:** as members you are now among our pool of experience and I look forward to your contributions

**BJB2:** you also have David and Jeff here with their many years of Tapped In experience

**MarianT:** Do you think Sandy will be joining today? This is for anyone to respond back on

**KendraH:** she is really late

**KendraH:** I am not sure

**BJB2:** so, even though Sandy isn't here, we can still have a meaningful discussion which is guaranteed to get you the credit you seek from your instructors

**KendraH:** YES!

**BJB2 . o O** ( and if not, I'll write a personal note for you! )

**ErinHer:** sweet what do we want to discuss

**BJB2:** who said they are interested in writing?

**BJB2 . o O** ( Marian? )

**ErinHer:** I wouldn't mind talking about that too

**BJB2:** cool, Erin.

**BJB2:** tell us how you each use writing in your teaching or professional life

**MarianT:** I love to write short stories (children stories) and hope to get a little input on how I can become a better story teller.

**KendraH:** In teaching we use a writing program called Write From the Beginning

**BJB2:** . o O ( Josh, do you create webpages? )

**BJB2:** oh, cool, Marian.

**KendraH:** It is about organizational maps and then many drafts

**ErinHer:** I use that program too, and I really like it though it is very structured

**BJB2:** Kendra, revision is a tough thing to get students to accept

**JoshLS:** sometimes I do but not a lot

**KendraH:** It is a very strict program with lots of rubrics

**MarianT:** I'm currently substituting, and I don't get the opportunities to write with a set group of students.

**KendraH:** I know!

**BJB2:** what about using Inspiration for your graphic organizers?

**BJB2:** . o O ( or Kidspiration )

**KendraH:** I just learned about that last week

**ErinHer:** I prefer guided writing with small groups

**KendraH:** We have to use a specific set of writing maps for the district

**BJB2:** If you are interested in getting some more input from the writetalk group, let's get you signed up to the group.

**BJB2:** that will let you post to the discussion board

**BJB2:** and get posts to the discussion board

**BJB2** . o O ( in your email )

**BJB2**: to join the writetalk group...

**BJB2**: go to the top part of your screen and look at the write-talk your way on in...

**BJB2**: scroll down to the green i on that note next to WriteTalk

**BJB2**: and click on the green i

**MarianT**: Does anyone have any input/suggestions on how I can help children in passing. I had to do a draft with a group of 2nd graders yesterday and felt a bit overwhelmed. I didn't know the students, so that makes for a real challenge

**KendraH**: Erin, we should get together

**BJB2** . o O ( if you need to attach your chat, you can do that )

**ErinHer**: so Kendra what other types of writing strategies do you use in your room

**KendraH**: and talk about our writing

**ErinHer**: we should since we live in the same area

**KendraH**: What district?

**BJB2**: what about writing prompts?

**KendraH**: I teach second

**ErinHer**: I teach first in Tustin, but my class is very advanced

**BJB2**: do the students keep writing journals?

**BJB2**: have you tried a round robin type of story writing?

**KendraH**: Yes

**JeffC**: I'm helping my daughter's second grade class here Kendra... I've started collaborating with another class...

**ErinHer**: everyday, and I keep portfolios of uncorrected work and portfolios of monthly prompts

**KendraH**: Yes round robin

**JeffC:** I could show you her classroom here at some point if you like.

**KendraH:** Yes

**KendraH:** Can Erin join?

**BJB2:** coming in to Tapped in and posting to the discussion board is a great way to get students to write

**BJB2:** the only one who won't be able to go to the student campus is Kathryn

**BJB2:** . o O ( no guests are permitted as a safety feature )

**MarianT:** Is round robin writing easier to approach than other writing strategies?

**BJB2** waits for Jeff to tell us some more about what the class is doing

**KendraH:** No, it is just fun

**KendraH:** Creative stories

**BJB2:** I think it would be harder, Marian. But fun and collaborative

**KathrynGst13:** round robin sounds like a great writing idea

**KathrynGst13:** Do the students have any trouble adding on to the story?

**KendraH:** No

**KendraH:** Not yet at least

**KendraH:** we can also call on friends if we get stuck

**KathrynGst13:** Do all of the students seem excited to add their part?

**KendraH:** but usually the story is so fun that everyone wants to add

**ErinHer:** I am going to try that...I usually do more individual writing and shared writing for my low group

**KathrynGst13:** I am going to try this with my class. I think my students will really enjoy it.

**MarianT:** I tried to get the students to write one sentence each as I went around the room. The strategy here was to get them to work as a team and come up with a story.

Each had to input 1 sentence. It was like a hand toss off to the next player. Was that a good idea or to imposing on the students?

**BJB2:** if it worked, it was a great idea, Marian!

**ErinHer:** I think that it should be more on a volunteer basis so maybe lower students are not so scared and pressured

**BJB2:** good comment, Erin

**KathrynGst13:** The great thing about having them write one sentence at a time is that it will help them understand how to write complete sentences.

**BJB2:** another way for less assertive or slower processing students is to illustrate the story

**KendraH:** It also depends on what you are teaching

**MarianT:** I think my objective is to get the students to write. I tried to make it fun, so everyone could partake. I had a lot of silly sentences, but we all saw the end result of their input

**KendraH:** I was teaching dialogue and the students had to add what happened and then what the character said

**KendraH:** They watched as I wrote it with correct quotation marks

**BJB2:** here's a nice resource

[http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/curriculum/littlekids/archive/classwindow\\_roundrobin.htm](http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/curriculum/littlekids/archive/classwindow_roundrobin.htm)

**KendraH:** It was like the structured practice

**ErinHer:** you just have to watch out for you el students

**KendraH:** You also use a lot of pics in the story

**KendraH:** draw pictures for characters

**KendraH:** ask what color the hair, clothes, etc

**MarianT:** I'll try what Kendra did. have the students watch as I demonstrate, but of course it depends on what is being taught

**KendraH:** It turns out to be a very colorful story

**KendraH:** They give the sentences though

**KendraH:** you can facilitate

**MarianT:** Yes! Always good to facilitate.

**ErinHer:** I like to have my class role play their writing,

**MarianT:** How so.

**KendraH:** especially if they are using conversation in their writing

**KendraH:** that could work then

**BJB2:** . o O ( sounds like reader's theater )

**MarianT:** Oh I get it! get them to act out what they wrote. Is this what you mean?

**BJB2:** <http://www.aaronshep.com/rt/RTE.html>

**ErinHer:** another good thing to do is to read a story and give each group a sentence strip and then you can piece together a summary and go through the process together...it's not so hard cause its a group deal

**BJB2:** do a study of tall tales and then have the children round robin their own tall tale

**BJB2:** . o O ( or use any genre for a unit study )

**MarianT:** What might you suggest for lower level writers. I come across a lot of students who just can't put pen to paper. A bad case of writers block

**KendraH:** brainstorming

**KendraH:** writing maps

**BJB2:** computers

**KendraH:** use pictures

**ErinHer:** shared writing doing it together talking about it and you write it and they add here and there

**BJB2:** have the strong writer/speller do the writing for a team

**MarianT:** Yes, but even brainstorming is hard for some. Should I just ask them what interest them and begin writing for them

**BJB2** . o O ( one person be the recorder, one the illustrator, etc )

**MarianT**: Good suggestion BJ

**KendraH**: I like to cut pics out of magazines and ask the kids what is going on in the pic

**BJB2**: have each team "publish" their story

**KendraH**: talk about the character

**KendraH**: develop a story

**KendraH**: what happened before the pic was taken

**KendraH**: later on

**MarianT**: I'm learning so much from you all. I appreciate all the input and suggestions

**MarianT**: I hope try out your suggestions next time I get the opportunity to write with a group of students

**MarianT**: Kendra, I like the magazine suggestion. Good for descriptive writing

**BJB2**: also use good artwork, Marian...

**BJB2**: try [www.artsconnected.org](http://www.artsconnected.org)

**MarianT**: Thanks ! I'll do that.

**ErinHer**: what grade do you want to teache Marian

**BJB2**: or the National Gallery of Art

**BJB2** . o O ( [www.nga.gov](http://www.nga.gov) )

**MarianT**: I'm very comfortable with 4th and 5th graders. I did teach kinder for 1 year, but I now know that's not the grade I could teach for years. Smile

**MarianT**: BJ, I had the opportunity to teach in a community school and boy was that an eye opener. I have a lot of compassion for those children. they've made mistakes and have been expelled from a public school. It's hard to reach them in just one day's time.

**KendraH**: I will check out those websites

**JeffC**: Kendra... would you like to see the 2nd grade class now?

**KendraH:** sure

**JeffC:** 1) Click the Tapped In tab in the top frame

**JeffC:** 2) Click the link to the "K-12 Student Campus" (in the upper right corner of the top frame)

**JeffC:** 3) Click the Student Activity Center building

**JeffC:** I'll meet you there.

**BJB2:** I'm going to hand moderator duties over to Jeff and head out

**BJB2:** I hope you all enjoyed the discussion and found it useful

**BJB2:** . o O ( and will COME BACK for other discussions! )

**JeffC:** If you'd like to see some things that you can do with second graders (or really any class level)... follow me.

**BJB2:** I appreciate all your input and ideas.

**JeffC:** We're going to the K-12 Campus... then to the class.

**BJB2** waves goodnight

**JeffC:** Here are those directions again. Gnite Bj.

**ErinHer:** okay thanks for all the great ideas!

**MarianT:** I feel I've now found a source of information for teaching. thanks everyone!

**KendraH:** I actually have to get to dinner

**JeffC:** I have more ideas in the class.

**KendraH:** I just checked the time

**KendraH:** Sorry

**JeffC:** ok

**KendraH:** thanks for the thought though

**JeffC:** peer reviewing sites through the discussion board here.

**JeffC:** that's what I was going to show you.

**JeffC:** and... Possibly collaborating in the future...

**KendraH:** can you post them now?

**JeffC:** if you are interested... email me [jbcoops@gmail.com](mailto:jbcoops@gmail.com)

**JeffC:** you'll have to come to the second grade class to see them.

**JeffC:** I'm here a lot Kendra... we can do it another time.

**KendraH:** thanks

**BJB2:** when you get a chance, read this perspective from a TI member  
<http://tappedin.org/tappedin/web/perspectives/2005/bm.jsp>

**BJB2** waves goodnight