

**Title of Session:** WriteTalk  
**Moderator:** David Weksler  
**Title of File:** 20060309writetalk  
**Date:** March 9, 2006

Room: WriteTalk Group

**DavidWe:** We're doing intros, BJ, but no Sandy

**DavidWe:** Do you all want me to give you the National Writing Project web site again? Did you get it?

**FredK:** I am split between here and the Literacy Academy

**DavidWe** smiles

**KristalM:** ok tell me...can I go to this website without getting out of this room

**DavidWe:** Yes, Kristal. You should be able to click on the URL - I'll re-post it - and you'll get another web window opening up

**DavidWe** . o O ( hold down the Control key if you use Windows and click )

**DavidWe:** <http://www.writingproject.org/>

**KristalM:** ok thanks

**DavidWe:** One of the great things about the Internet and allowing for online collaboration between students is that students can pair up with other students from different parts of the world

**DavidWe:** They then are often asked to explain something (like snow) to their partners who may have never experienced things like snow

**KristalM:** do you have any websites for that??? My students and I have tried a few and no one has responded

**DavidWe:** It makes the writing VERY authentic

**HeatherES:** I bet

**KristalM:** TRUE.....or cultural differences

**DavidWe:** I don't have any off the top of my head, but I'm sure that among Jeff, BJ, myself and Sandra Shattuck we can direct you to some places

**DavidWe:** I would think there would be information on the NWP site

**DavidWe . o O ( NWP == National Writing Project )**

**KristalM:** please like I said I am new and responsible for a newspaper and a standardized test....so I really want to expose me students....plus being new is kinda hard also

**DavidWe:** We understand that being new is kinda hard, Kristal

**DavidWe . o O ( we are VERY understanding in Tapped In )**

**DavidWe** stops typing for a few moments

**KristalM:** sorry had to say it twice...it is so hard!!! does it ever get easier???

**DavidWe** types some more

**DavidWe:** Yes

**KristalM:** good

**DavidWe:** chime in anyone else

**DavidWe** nudges BJ

**DavidWe** nudges Jeff

**DavidWe:** You just started teaching this year, Kristal?

**DavidWe:** Anyone else want to say anything or should I start whistling

**DavidWe:** okay

**DavidWe** whistles

**AndiN:** are we going to discuss teaching journals?

**DavidWe:** We can, Andi

**DavidWe:** What would you like to discuss?

**KristalM:** yes....just graduated Dec 05...got a job right after that so this is my first full year...so I really want to do well....it is just hard....plus with our limited resources...

**DavidWe** isn't an English teacher and is totally unprepared for this discussion but will do his best

**DavidWe** wishes Kristal the best of luck

**BJB2:** I can give some information that Sandy usually shares

**DavidWe:** BJ, that's great. You are SO nice!

**KristalM:** hey!!! I need help in English...I have a title I school....lots of ESL....

**BJB2:** the 3 tenets of NWP are:

**BJB2:** 1) teachers are the best teachers of other teachers

**BJB2:** 2) teachers teach writing better when they improve their own writing

**DavidWe** . o O ( and 3 )

**BJB2:** 3) writing can be used in any subject area as a method of learning

**HeatherES:** agreed

**DavidWe** agrees with the 3 tenets

**KristalM:** I know...that was my worse subject in school...I am sooo glad that I got in this subject because I am learning as much as the students!

**DavidWe** smiles

**DavidWe:** You'll make a great teacher, Kristal, I'm guessing

**BJB2:** how do you all use writing in your classroom? Do you do journaling?

**KristalM:** hehe...well thanks...I'll tell you when the scores get back

**AndiN:** we have writing workshop weekly

**AndiN:** I also teach grammar in the context of writing

**AndiN:** I've seen so much improvement this year since I've changed my methods

**HeatherES:** really, that's awesome Andi

**HeatherES:** I need to drastically improve my grammar

**AndiN:** I also use response logs

**HeatherES:** I have bought books and have attended some random workshops, but I would really like to take a grammar course

**KristalM:** Well.....since I teach science also...(I hope you are talking to me)....we do a lot from our science books....but with the TAKS....we do not have much time....we try to do a comp. a week...but since the TAKS is over..we are doing projects like in publisher and powerpoint

**AndiN:** I went to a workshop when I went to NTCE and it helped greatly

**KristalM:** we have an English usage class...it was the MOST useful class ever!!! I learned so much!

**KristalM:** at our local college

**BJB2:** can you give us some examples of the work you did in the classes?

**BJB2 . o O** ( how were the assignments useful? )

**KristalM:** well....I know that I have a problem with the ever changing rules i.e. comma, apostrophes, etc. and the prof was VERY helpful

**BJB2:** Andi, can you tell us more about the weekly writing workshop?

**BJB2** nods to Kristal

**KristalM:** we had a book with rules and I know my bro used it for his SAT's and it really brought his scores up

**AndiN:** get this book: Minilessons through revision

**AndiN:** it has lots of helpful stuff

**HeatherES:** great, thanks Andi

**BJB2:** thanks, Andi

**KristalM:** I bought my kids Nitty Gritty English..... it also helps

**BJB2:** what do you like about Nitty Gritty English, Kristal?

**KristalM:** kind of explains things on a child's level

**BJB2 . o O** ( I like the title )

**KristalM:** I live the band too

**AndiN:** I learned about exit slips: mini assessments of what you taught that class period for instance, we discussed semicolons and colons today. Partners had to write on an index card about a safari trip they went on using the rules taught.

**AndiN:** they give this to me as a ticket out of the room

**AndiN:** instant assessment

**BJB2** smiles. Sounds like fun

**KristalM:** In my classes...we write newspapers for the school...I will print one out and the kids edit it....this has done wonders for their editing skills

**AndiN:** I also learned to keep wall charts of example sentences that students created

**DeyanneN:** I had the students create a recipe using commas and semi-colons correctly. A real recipe or a made-up one.

**KristalM:** Anything student made is soooo useful in my class

**HeatherES:** What grade do you teach Kristal?

**KristalM:** 4th

**DeyanneN:** Anyone teach high school.

**AndiN:** no, but you can use these methods with high school

**HeatherES:** I always thought a fun activity would be to get a song and then have the children rewrite the song, so it would be written in correct English

**DeyanneN:** Sounds like a good idea. High schoolers might like that. I'd make them clean up the language too.

**HeatherES:** There are so many pop songs, that are not grammatically correct. They sound great as songs, but if you were to read them, they would sound awful

**BJB2:** something you all might be interested in....

**KristalM:** I know that both my bro and I struggled in English....and my methods ...even though they are elem. ....they work at any level....he is a senior but it stills helps him

**BJB2:** for the Hurricane Central Mini Expo to be held in Tapped In from March 20-25...

**KristalM:** yes...and he is 5th in his class!

**BJB2:** there are folders in the student campus Hip Hop room where students can enter poems, comments on movies, songs, games...

**BJB2:** perhaps you can create student usernames for your classes and have them post to the discussions

**BJB2** . o O ( authentic assessment also )

**KristalM:** I agree..the kids love to edit songs...and write the words correctly...they are always saying....this is not standard English??!!

**DeyanneN:** Any ideas on journaling?

**KristalM:** I think it is easier when you teach another subject....bc they can always journal the other subject like science....I use science and we use the vocab words to make stories in their journals

**DeyanneN:** That's a good idea. I can have the students use 5 out of 10 of their vocab words in their journal entry.

**BJB2:** you can also use artwork as a journaling medium

**AndiN:** reading response logs are similar to journal, but they are reflecting on what they read and telling me what they think, how, and why they think the way they do.

**KristalM:** like I said I teach esl so what I do is teach a vocab word and then the students write the word and def. then they go home and teach to parents...then together they make a paragraph about the words

**BJB2:** nice, Krista

**KristalM:** thanks:)

**AndiN:** I have gotten a lot of neat ideas from Chris Tovani's book Do I really have to teach reading

**FredK:** Good family lit

**AndiN:** do any of you keep a teaching journal?

**DeyanneN:** No, what would go in it?

**KristalM:** I am having trouble with experiences...my student do not have any so they are having a hard time knowing or relating to the things we read

**BJB2:** some great ideas for using writing across the curriculum at <http://www.learner.org/>

**HeatherES:** yes, I do

**DeyanneN:** Thanks for the website.

**AndiN:** I've started logging info during my writing workshops

**BJB2** wants to hear more about the teacher journal

**AndiN:** Heather what to do write about

**HeatherES:** a reflection of what lessons work and what do not

**AndiN:** I do the same

**BJB2** . o O ( and you are modeling writing for your students )

**HeatherES:** and what I can do to change those lessons that did not run as smoothly as I had hoped

**AndiN:** I also write student successes along with my own

**HeatherES:** me too

**HeatherES:** you have too, it's what keeps you going

**AndiN:** I write poetry and share with my students

**KristalM:** well I think that is normal in teaching...but I just re-teach and model....that is all I can do to help the kiddos

**HeatherES:** That's wonderful Andi

**AndiN:** thanks

**AndiN:** after 5 years of teaching this year has been the best because of the NWP

**AndiN:** I attended WTWP summer institute this past summer

**AndiN:** wow-what a difference

**HeatherES:** WTWP?

**AndiN:** west Tennessee writing project - nwp

**HeatherES:** ah

**WilliamSi:** I also do journaling for each separate class so that I keep track of what computer procedures we have gone over to translate the written words into images...

**DeyanneN:** Here's a thought about punctuation, if you have a computer available. Have students write a paragraph with correct punctuation. Have them peer edit each others. Collect and correct. Return corrected. Have students put the paragraphs on the computer and save. Then have the students take out all the punctuation. Have their partner try to make sense out of the paragraph by adding appropriate punctuation. Print it out. Look at the original paragraph to see how close you came to putting in all the correct punctuation. This also shows the students how important punctuation is.

**HeatherES:** that's a great idea

**AndiN** smiles

**DeyanneN:** Thanks.

**HeatherES:** This activity would be best for which grades?

**AndiN:** any

**DeyanneN:** I teach 9th and 11th graders. But depending on what type of paragraph they have to write, I think it could be used for most grades.

**FredK:** Does anyone use the Virtual Field Trips on [www.tramline.com](http://www.tramline.com)? Has anyone created their own to provide experiences for those who lack them?

**AndiN:** you could make it more complex

**HeatherES:** I have seen some

**HeatherES:** would you consider a web quest a virtual field trip?

**FredK:** there is a slight difference according to tramline

**HeatherES:** what is the difference?

**BJB2:** there is a big difference according to Bernie Dodge, the father of webquests!

**FredK:** My grand daughter is visiting volcanos at homeschool.

**FredK:** I haven't gotten far with webquests.

**BJB2:** Bernie is scheduled to lead a webquest discussion on March 22 during the hurricane central mini expo

**BJB2** . o O ( good opportunity to learn more about webquests )

**HeatherES:** I have created webquest before and have seen virtual field trips, but I do not know what the main difference is between the two

**FredK:** I hope so

**HeatherES:** \*webquests

**BJB2:** webquests require more analysis and synthesis of information

**HeatherES:** true

**BJB2:** take a look at <http://www.webquest.org/>

**FredK:** thanks

**DeyanneN:** Thanks for all the great websites.

**DeyanneN:** Any ideas for teaching grammar?

**BJB2** . o O ( I'm a big fan of tramline, also, Fred...field trips and webquests are just two different critters )

**BJB2** listens for ideas on teaching grammar

**AndiN:** check out this book minilessons for revision

**AndiN:** it has helped me teach grammar

**BJB2** smiles...sounds like a great all-purpose book, Andi!

**DeyanneN:** Thanks! Have to go!

**FredK:** I was looking up a favorite, <http://www.webenglishteacher.com>

**AndiN:** thanks

**AndiN:** I think there is a site called. [www.internetintheclassroom](http://www.internetintheclassroom) [Ed Note: <http://www.internet4classrooms.com/k12links.htm> ]

**BJB2:** looks like we're out of time. For not having the discussion leader here you all did a great job helping each other!

**AndiN:** bye

**HeatherES:** thanks for all the great tips

**BJB2** waves goodnight.