

# Thinking about Writing



# Purpose

What is MY purpose for student's writing?

Do my students see the purpose of this writing?

What do the students need to learn to achieve this?

What is the purpose of this writing beyond the classroom?

## **From the teacher's perspective:**

Having a clear purpose for the task we are asking students to undertake is paramount in planning a worthwhile lesson. Teachers must understand what their students already know and can do and what they need to do next to achieve the purpose.

## **From the student's perspective:**

A clear and meaningful reason for writing increases student engagement and values the time and effort students put into their writing. Understanding what the text needs to do and who the reader will be allows students to carefully consider the style, language and word choices they make.



# Thinking

How do I lead my students through the process of writing?

How and when do we share our thinking about writing?

Who listens to student talk about writing?

What opportunities do my students have to rethink their writing choices?

**Teachers as Writers** - in leading students through the writing process, teachers taking on the role of writer alongside the students allows for authentic opportunities to think aloud and share the thinking that happens in order to write. Share with students:

- How we think through the topic
- Narrowing down the focus
- Selecting the details
- Working on the language
- Revisiting and revising text



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WByszvdMWm4>

## Crafting

How do I support students in crafting texts to suit the purpose?

How do my students articulate the way a text is constructed?

What do students need to learn to be able to craft a text to achieve the purpose?

Carefully selected quality texts used as mentor texts allow multiple opportunities to talk about the way author's craft text to achieve a purpose. What are the word choices or images the author makes that manipulate your feelings as a reader? How is this achieved?

"We prepare for writing through reading."

Joint construction of texts is different from modelling. In joint construction, students and teachers co-create texts allowing opportunities to share ideas and articulate and justify choices in words and language and their potential impact on the reader.



# Voice

Where do my students have choice in their writing?

What responsibility do my students have for their writing?

*"Voice is the writer coming through the words, the sense that a real person is speaking to us and cares about the message. IT is the heart and soul of writing, the magic, the wit, the feeling, the life and breath. When the writer is engaged personally with the topic, he/she imparts a personal tone and flavour to the piece that is unmistakably his/hers alone and it is that individual something - different from the mark of all other writers - that we call voice. " Education Northwest 2014*

For students to develop their own writer's voice, they need opportunity to write about things they know and topics of significance to them. While there is a place for assigned topics, perhaps in cross curriculum writing or close analysis of text structure, students will only develop their own voice as a writer if they have time to explore and write from their heart.