

Ideas for Publishing Writing

Publishing student writing is an important step of the writing process. When students write for real audiences, they are more motivated to write passionately and to pay closer attention to writing correctly. There are many ways to publish student writing. Here are some ideas!

Author's Chair

A student takes "center stage" in a chair that designated solely for reading. It's a great idea to glue gun the word "AUTHOR" to the front side of a cushioned chair. Some teachers reserve author's chair for the end of the week. You may want to have a sign-up sheet for author's chair. It is important to develop some "norms" with your students about behavioral expectations when someone is reading in the chair. When you introduce author's chair, it is useful to give students sentence stems to help them give positive comments and feedback to the authors. Some teachers give participation points to students who read in the author's chair. You want to try and get all students to read at some point in the month/year. You may choose to read for very shy students if they are unwilling to read themselves (with their permission of course.) Teachers should take a turn in the author's chair too!

Class Magazines, Newsletters, and Newspapers

Microsoft Publisher makes the job of publishing a professional looking newsletter or newspaper easy! The challenge is collecting all the student work digitally. The easiest approach is to have students email their documents to you. Some teachers are fond of jump drives too. Make sure you instruct students to name their documents with their own names and title of piece. This will save you time! If you have a tech savvy student, you can give him or her the task of compiling the newsletter. It's also a great group project. If you don't want to deal with publisher software, you can also just use Word and simply create columns and download images. As well, you can give students a style guide for writing their final drafts in columns and then simply compile all of the final drafts together (reproduced double-sided and stapled down the full side of the paper.) Reminder, as with all final draft work that will be published, students need to meticulously proof read

their own papers and receive some assistance editing their work. Make enough copies for every student and make sure to give copies to the principal and other teachers. You will be amazed at how much pride students take in their work!

Wall of Fame and/or Golden Lines

Reserve a wall of your classroom to post exemplary student work. If you post writing that is still in a draft stage and contains some errors, make sure to note this on the top of the writing (i.e. 2nd draft writing.) Make sure your comments are visible and clear and highlight the feature of the writing that is exemplary (i.e. Great details to support your claim! I love how you integrated this quotation.) A wall of "golden lines" is also a way to publish student work. This is especially true when you are working on descriptive and figurative language in writing or if you have been focusing on sentence-combining and you want to highlight complex sentences.

Student Books

Believe it or not, student produced books are easy to publish! Give students very clear formatting instructions and an example of what the final draft should look like. You may not want students to write the typical header information on a piece that will be published in a book. Be clear about where you want their names and titles, line spacing, font type and size, and margins. The more uniform the style, the more the book actually looks like a professional book! Create a title page and reproduce it on heavier weight color paper if available. After the entire book is compiled, number the pages and create a table of contents. The New Teacher Support Center has a book-binding machine and spiral spines that you can use. Many schools have these as well. If you have money to spend, any copy shop can do this for you and you will have a choice of binding. If it is too much or too expensive to make a book for every student, at least make a few copies to keep in your classroom. I found that student books were a very popular item during SSR so I always had several copies on the bookshelf. An alternative to binding a book is to create a student binder of final draft writing using plastic sleeves. This is especially nice when students have decorated their writing with borders or images.

Other Ideas

There are many other ways to publish student writing including zines, E-zines, portfolio parties, family writing nights, student websites, and more!