Rationale for Practice Portfolio

Title: My Understanding Mom
Grade: 4
Year released: 2007

Reflective Piece Title: Dear Reviewer

____2__ Content (2,2,2)

The writing attempts to establish and maintain a narrowed purpose, but lapses in analysis of how learning experiences has impacted him/her as a writer ("A lot of emotions come through my writing because…"). There is some awareness of audience's needs ("My memoir can show you that I really love my mom."). An attempt to communicate with the audience is evident ("You will see…, Now do you agree…"). The writing demonstrates some voice throughout the letter by including the writer's own thoughts and emotions. The details/support does not provide the reader with enough information on how he/she has grown as a writer through literacy.

__3___ Structure (3,3,3)

The writing demonstrates logical, coherent organization by using the letter format and by moving the reader through the piece by focusing on portfolio entries. Logical, effective transitional elements were evident throughout (transitional phrases, paragraphing). Utilizing simple, compound, and a variety of sentence types demonstrates control in sentence structure.

____3__ Conventions (3,3,3)

The writing demonstrates control of grammar and usage relative to length and complexity. Acceptable word choice appropriate for audience and purpose was evident (ability, memoir, pre-writing, vague). There is control of correctness relative to length and complexity (misuse of commas is noted).

Instructional Implications:

Instruction should focus on the purpose of the reflective piece-to reflect on how literary experiences have made an impact on the student's growth as a writer.

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Personal OR Literary Piece Title: My Understanding Mom

____3__ Content (3,3,3,)

The writing establishes and maintains an authentic focused purpose throughout (how writer's mom is such an understanding person). The memoir indicates an awareness of audience's needs through questions and comments when providing information about her "understanding mom." The depth of idea development is evident by providing specific details/support of the impact Mom had on the writer's life and the significance of their relationship.

__3___ Structure (3,3,3)

The writing demonstrates logical, coherent organization. Each paragraph contains an incident about when Mom is understanding, the interaction between Mom and the writer dealing with the incident, and then the lesson learned or the knowledge attained. Transitional elements (introductory phrases/clauses, paragraphs) move the reader easily through the memoir. There is control and variety in sentence structure.

__3___ Conventions (3,3,3)

The writing demonstrates control of grammar and usage relative to length and complexity by correctly applying grammar rules. Acceptable word choice appropriate for audience and purpose includes advice, wrong decisions, behavior, and privileges. There is control of correctness relative to length and complexity.

Instructional Implications:

Instructionally, a focus on insightful purpose (the impact of Mom's help on the writer's future) would lead to higher-level thinking.

Title: My Understanding Mom
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Transactive Piece Title: The Most Amazing Creatures

____1__ Content (1,1, 2)

An attempt to establish a general purpose is evident ("read on to find out some interesting facts about these amazing animals), but there is a lack in focus when writing about discussing threatened species. The writing indicates a limited awareness of the audience's needs due to the fact that the piece contains a lot of information, but does not connect the importance of the information to the reader. The reader does not know how to utilize all the information from this report. Some idea development is evident, but consists mostly of a listing of facts learned that has no value to the reader. Some characteristics of the genre are evident (title, subtitles, paragraphing).

____3__ Structure (3, 3, 3)

The information that is presented is logical and coherently organized. The transitional elements move the reader easily through the piece (subtitles, paragraphing). The writing demonstrates a control and variety in sentence structure (interrogative, declarative, exclamatory, short direct sentences, compound sentences).

____3__ Conventions (3, 3, 3)

Grammar and usage are controlled. Word choice is appropriate for the topic, but does not relate to purpose. The writing demonstrates control of correctness relative to length and complexity (Internet documentation is not concise).

Instructional Implications:

This category of writing is intended to "get things accomplished" or to help the audience understand something better. An article is written from the perspective of an informed writer to a less informed reader. The writer in this piece has obviously researched the topic and attained valuable information. Instruction should focus on an authentic reason to write and a targeted audience. Documenting sources is also another topic for instruction.

STUDENT SIGNATURE SHEET

(Required in Each Portfolio)

Please read the Note to Students and Teachers below before signing the following statements.

Required Verification Signature

The pieces in this portfolio are my own original work. I am the author of all the pieces in my portfolio. I may have talked about my work (conferenced) with my teacher, family, and friends, but I have made any changes and corrections myself. I did my own writing, typing, and/or word processing (unless otherwise indicated by a teacher's signature in the box below labeled "IEP/504 Plan/Program Services Plan Adaptations").

_____

Student Signature

IEP/504 Plan/Program Services Plan (LEP) Adaptations (requires teacher signature):

Teacher Signature: _____

Optional Permission

I agree to allow my portfolio to be photocopied for use by others outside my school as an example of student work. I understand that my name, the names of my school and town, and any other identifying information I may have used in my writing will be removed before my portfolio is copied.

_____

Student Signature (optional)

Required Verification Signature: It is required that the work contained in each portfolio is the original work of the student. Every portfolio must include the statement, signed by the student, that the work in the portfolio is his/her original work. This sheet must be placed in the portfolio. If the verification statement is not signed, the portfolio will receive a performance rating of Incomplete.

Optional Permission: The use of actual student portfolios is critical in teacher training and is essential for quality control checks during statewide re-scoring activities. Students are requested, but not required, to give permission for this purpose and should sign the optional student signature above if they agree.

Please note that portfolios are included in any statewide re-scoring activities even if neither statement is signed.

March 21, 2006

Dear Reviewer,

She scored! The referee blows the whistle and we won the championship. The crowd goes wild! The score was 4 to 0. That's exactly what I want my portfolio to be, a distinguished. When you read my portfolio you might see some of my weaknesses. You should also see my ability to write and to win! Read on to experience all of this excitement.

In my portfolio, emotions come through in my writing. A lot of emotions come through my writing because I think I am a very emotional person. For example when I was pre-writing, "My Understanding Mom" the third paragraph I talked about when I got in trouble at school and I cried. I also show emotions when I say I love my mom. My memoir can show you that I really do love her. Best of all when the audience reads my memoir they will know exactly how I felt.

Also in all of my pieces titles get my audience's attention in clever ways. I love to use catchy titles like "Watch out! It could be poisonous". As a result of this title, used as a sub-title, the reader knows that they are about to read something poisonous. I do try to use catchy titles in each paragraph for my feature article. Titles let the reader understand what the piece or paragraph would be about. I also enjoy getting my audience saying, "This should be good".

Another example that I used in all of my pieces was the pre-writing process. Pre-writing is the stage of the process that I find most helpful. For instance it always

seems to give me a good picture about what I will write about later. To understand it even better, I use the four square method. For example, I used this method a lot on On-Demand practice. I also think it's the best way to get started when brainstorming about my portfolio ideas. The pre-writing process also helps me organized my thoughts so the audience reads a writing piece that flows smoothly.

As a writer, writing helps me to communicate better whether I'm reading, listening or speaking. By learning daily vocabulary in writing I learned so many new words that when I read them in my books I was able to understand the advanced vocabulary. For instance in one of my books one word was vague. Good thing our class did a writing page on the word that morning or else I wouldn't have known what vague meant. Now that I write more, when I am speaking I can use bigger words than I used to. You can see by my writing that I can communicate better to impress the audience that I can use big words correctly.

So now do you agree that I did deserve to win the championship and I deserve a distinguished on my portfolio? I hope I can hear you cheering for my portfolio to win the championship, too.

Sincerely,

My Understanding Mom

Do you have a special person in your life who understood all of your problems? Well, I do and it is my mom. She always listens to my problems and understands the way I feel. Let me tell you how my mom is such an understanding person.

One time I missed some easy questions on a test. I was so upset! When I got home from school I told my mom about the test and she said, "That's ok, at least you tried." She also explained, "Don't rush and read all the answers carefully". Next time I took my mom's advice and I made a better grade! She usually has just the right advise to help me solve my problems!

Another example of how she understands me in when I make wrong decisions at school. One day in first grade I received a stick for talking. I deserved the stick because I love to talk. As my punishment, my mom took away my TV privileges for the day. Later we had a long talk about good behavior. My mom's talks always make me think about my actions and I feel sorry about what I have done. I try not to talk as much these days because of the way mom helped me face my problem.

Also, in my life, a few people have been rude to me. But I feel one person has been mean to me. Beginning in second grade she was very unpleasant to everyone, especially me. My mom requested for her not to be in my class in the third grade, but that didn't work. She continued to be unkind that year. My mom didn't give up, she discussed the problem with Mrs. She is not in my class this year because my mom requested that my old classmate be in a separate classroom. It worked! So my mom's hard work paid off for a more relaxing year.

Now, you can see that my mom does understand all of my problems, no matter how big or small. She forgives me for my mistakes. Why does she take the time to listen to my problems? She loves me very much and I love her very much, too!

The Most Amazing Creatures

Have you ever been to an aquarium? I have and I was fascinated with the sight of the huge sea turtle. If you are interested in sea turtles like I am, read on to find out some interesting facts about these amazing creatures.

I'm Lost!

Did you know that the hatchling Green Turtle spends a "lost" year at sea? I didn't. They also drift with large floating mats of seaweed, feeding on small invertebrates and plants, carried by the currents to no one knows where. A year later the 28-60 inch and maybe 1,000-pound sea turtles reappear in shallow waters where the turtles graze on turtle grass and other marine plants until reaching maturity. With pinpoint accuracy they then return to the beaches where they hatched, having traveled as far as 2,000 miles! Can you imagine traveling that far? I can't.

Watch out! It could be poisonous!

Did you know that the Hawksbill is the only sea turtle with a serrated edge around its shell? It also feeds on many invertebrates, including toxic sponges, so its flesh may be poisonous to humans. It bites without hesitation when captured, so I wouldn't try to capture it. Like many other sea turtles the Hawksbill's numbers have been greatly reduced because of people stealing the eggs and killing the females when they come ashore to nest. They are mainly a tropical species sometimes seen off the Atlantic Coast or off Southern California. The Hawksbill is 30-36" inches and could be 100lb. It gets its name from the hawk-like beak.

Be careful while fishing

Female Loggerheads come ashore at night in summer and dig their nests above the high-water mark in front of dunes. They may lay as many as five clutches, (clutches are also known as bunches) each with about 100 eggs, that's about 500 eggs during a season. Sadly this magnificent turtle is a threatened species. Its nesting habitats are being destroyed by coastal development. A large number of Loggerheads drown in fishing nets each year. Can you imagine the 31-48 inch Loggerhead drowning in fishing nets? If you can, be careful around coastal bays, salt marshes and river mouths when you fish.

Largest Turtle is the Leatherback

This turtle is a strong swimmer. It is so strong that it can dive down into 3,000 feet of water! That's a lot! No wonder it is the largest turtle in the world! At 4'6"-4'8" you'd think it would be! It travels long distances from tropical to temperate waters, following the drifting schools of jellyfish, its main food. The spines inside its mouth and throat help the turtle swallow its slippery meals. Leatherbacks are sometimes seen in large groups.

So now you see that sea turtles are very interesting. If you want to see all of these amazing creatures like I do then you can go to an aquarium and enjoy their wonderful beauty.

Resources: Internet websites