Grade 7

The Talk With Mrs. M

I never thought I would be a good writer. From second grade to third I wasn't writing very good pieces. I was struggling with my pieces, until the talk with my second grade teacher, Mrs. M And I learned, if I could write what I want; I would be a better writer.

That day, I saw Mrs. M . Mrs. M would always help me with any problem I came to her with, including my writing dilemma of not writing good pieces. I was walking in the halls of J Elementary School, when I saw her. We started to talk and I asked her about my writing problem. She paused for a moment to think. And she said, "Write a story about anything you want and turn it into me in a few days." This puzzled me but I agreed. I went home and went to work on the piece. I was astounded, my fingers glided over the keyboard. My ideas rushed out of my head and went onto the computer screen.

After I was finished writing for the day, the piece was about three pages long, and I knew that I had written what I wanted. I was very excited to show Mrs. M my progress. When I got back to school the next day, I saw her and approached her with confidence and told her about my progressing piece, but I wasn't finished yet.

I came home that night to some curious parents, and they were wondering why I had been on the computer the night before. I told them about the three page long piece and told me to print out a copy for them to read. So I trotted down the stairs and printed another copy. While I was walking back up the stairs, I became nervous. Would they like it? Would they hate it? Or would they think I am stupid? All were questions about to be answered, and I handed them the piece. There were a few moments of silence, and then my dad looked up. He said "Well, hmmmm." There was another pause, "It's good but it could use some improvement," he said.

Then my mom jumped in, "It's very good!" she exclaimed. But I wasn't sure of her real opinion, because she always says she likes things I do, but I know that she is my mom and she would say things like that.

"Well, it is not finished yet," I stated. So I knew my parents liked it (sort of) but what would Mrs. M think?

The next day, I was anxious but nervous at the same time to see her, and I knew she would like my piece that *I* wrote and what *I* wanted to write. I looked for her in her classroom, she wasn't there, and I checked the cafeteria, no Mrs. M . I wondered to myself, where was she, that whole day I didn't see her, "Well I guess I will see her tomorrow," I reassured myself. The next day was the same result, no Mrs. M any

were! I was going to get to the bottom of this. I asked a teacher about the whereabouts of Mrs. M . I approached him and asked "Do you know where Mrs. M is?"

"Oh, she is sick," the bulky man answered.

"Well, do you know when she will be back?" I questioned.

"I'm not sure, but I think she will be back on Monday." So I waited the long weekend out and it was back to school.

On Monday, I saw her and the man was right, she was back. At this point I was done with the piece and it turned out to be five pages long. I handed her the five page long piece, but she couldn't read it there and then because she had a class. She told me to come back to her on Friday.

"Friday!" I shrieked (in my mind), "I will never be able to wait that long!" But I had to, three days of complete torture. It was only Tuesday and it took so loooong for that bell to ring. It was the same way for Wednesday, Thursday, and Fri- Finally It is here!! It looked like I was running from a serial killer; I went so fast to meet Mrs. M . I saw her, and it looked like she was waiting for me.

I calmly walked up to her and she handed back my piece that I worked so hard on. I shut my eyes to increase the anticipation. My five long page story was in my hand, graded. I slowly opened my eyes, and I saw, THERE WAS NO GRADE ON IT!!! At that point, I was very shocked and surprised. But Mrs. M said "I thought it was one of the best pieces I have ever read. The reason I didn't put a grade on it is because there was no need to." I was totally dumbfounded! But she continued "This piece is great, but it doesn't matter what I think, it's all about what you think about it. Grades are just grades and it's better to like your piece than the grade." After that speech, I finally understood what she was trying to teach me.

I might have been a little hurt, but I really learned something. I realized that grades aren't everything; what's more important is that you like the piece you are writing. Sometimes, when the teacher tells me to change something on my piece that I like, I just keep it my way. Without this experience, I would have never been the writer I am today. What I have learned is that I am a better writer when I can write what I want.

Grade 7 - Annotated only for content

focus of writing

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literacy connection (writing)

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That day, I saw Mrs. M . Mrs. M would always help me with any problem I came to her with, including my writing dilemma of not writing good pieces. I was walking in the halls of J Elementary School, when I saw her. We started to talk and I asked her about my writing problem. She paused for a moment to think. And she said, "Write a story about anything you want and turn it into me in a few days." This puzzled me but I agreed. I went home and went to work on the piece. I was astounded, my fingers glided over the keyboard. My ideas rushed out of my head and went onto the computer screen.

idea development (narrative)

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narrative appears the subtle writing process used by the writer

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evidence of voice

"Well, it is not finished yet," I stated. So I knew my parents liked it (sort of) but what would Mrs. M think? – reference to purpose

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narrative provides details about the anticipated writing conference

background information (audience needs)

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subtle reference to growth as a writer

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insightful conclusion

claims what growth as a writer

focused purpose (theme) throughout the writing

Instructional Notes;

This writing establishes and maintains the purpose of evaluating growth in writing through the theme, "I am a better writer when I can write what I want." The focus of the writing is the strong influence of a teacher. The writing strand is the literacy connection.