

Writing Matters™

Writing Matters provides teachers with powerful new ways to improve student outcomes in writing, utilizing 21st century resources to prepare today's "digital natives" for success in school and beyond.

The program engages upper elementary and middle students in the writing process through a series of four to six week units, addressing specific genres. Original content and interactive technology are seamlessly integrated, helping students develop their writing skills as they generate ideas and topics, organize, compose, revise and publish their work online — from school or from home.

A comprehensive professional development program offers teachers the support they need to implement the curriculum and assess student performance. *Writing Matters'* assessment and curriculum are closely aligned to national and NYS Learning Standards. Its innovative tools were recommended by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills.¹

Achieving Writing Success for Digital Natives

Writing Matters is grounded in best practice in writing instruction, drawing from extensive research. Content was developed with nationally recognized author-educators, including Heather Lattimer and Georgia Heard, bringing best practice to life in the form of lessons and activities enhanced by 21st century tools.

Genre study units feature animations that clarify concepts and engage students, especially visual learners. Online, students share and discuss their work collaboratively, accessing their virtual writing room from school or home.

Using targeted, ongoing performance data, teachers offer just-in-time online feedback and track student progress. Parents review student learning materials. At the end of each unit, every student becomes an online published writer, ready to master another genre.

Lesson plans, available in digital and print formats, include differentiated strategies for beginning, intermediate and experienced writers. Digital materials and assessment resources can be customized by schools and are Moodle compliant, easily integrated into a school's Learning Management System.

Study Units/Genres:

- *Mastering the Essentials*
- *Writing Memoirs*
- *Response to Literature*
- *Writing Editorials*
- *Writing Feature Articles*
- *Writing Poetry*
- *Writing Short Fiction*

Writing Matters is presented as a model digital curriculum in Teaching Matters' Partnership for School Innovation and is also available as stand-alone program.

Professional Development

Teaching Matters provides a comprehensive professional development program for *Writing Matters*, incorporating off-site institutes and on-site coaching and mentoring.

In genre-specific institutes, teachers participate in writing workshops that hone their own writing skills while simulating their students' learning experience.

The institutes also address broader issues that carry across instructional units, including meeting NYS Learning Standards, the effective use of animations and web-based student resources, meaningful use of student and teacher online forums, differentiated instruction, assessment strategies and other relevant topics.

Introductory and advanced institutes may be attended by participating schools' entire Language Arts department. Institutes for school leaders are provided and address issues such as assessment and student data analysis, curriculum mapping, and recognizing and supporting effective teacher practice.

The Writing Matters Institutes:

- *Writing Matters Comprehensive Institute (3 days)*
- *Mastering the Essentials (1 day)*
- *Writing Memoir (1 day)*
- *Writing Response to Literature (1 day)*
- *Writing Editorials and Feature Articles (1 day)*
- *Writing Short Fiction (1 day)*
- *Writing Poetry (1 day)*
- *Introduction to Writing Assessment (1 day)*
- *Advanced Writing Assessment (1 day)*

On-Site Coaching & Mentoring

The implementation of *Writing Matters* is supported by on-site coaching and mentoring. The coaching cycle covers needs assessment and instructional planning, focusing on the skills and practices teachers need to achieve desired student outcomes. The in-class focus is on instructional strategy, using technology, classroom management and assessment strategies, including the assessment of student work relative to desired outcomes.



Learn More, Contact Us

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