

Examining Beliefs About Writing

Writing Process

Agree or Disagree?

Read, think about, and discuss the following statements with your colleagues. (There are no right or wrong answers.) Use these beliefs to get conversations going in your school and to begin to develop a common belief system about writing.

- Teachers need to read everything that kids are writing.
- Students should write only if they can publish their writing.
- In a writing conference, the student decides what kind of response he/she wants.
- Spelling doesn't matter in a first draft.
- Students should choose most of their own writing topics.
- Prewriting needs to be separate from other writing activities.
- Students can write fiction without much teacher guidance.
- Students need to see their teachers as writers.
- Revising and editing are really the same thing.
- Students can write well without writing models.
- Peer conferences are mostly a waste of time.
- A lot of writing never gets revised.
- If students write every day, their writing automatically improves.
- Revision takes place after the first draft is written.
- Direct teaching of skills is not part of writers workshop.
- Good sharing of writing is really a public conference.
- The teacher usually corrects students' spelling errors.
- The room needs to be quiet when students are writing.
- The teacher makes the final decision about what gets published.
- Once a piece is published, conventions and spelling must be perfect.
- Having kids talk about what they are going to write about makes the writing easier for students.
- Spelling and handwriting are part of writers workshop.
- Journal writing is separate from writers workshop.
- Invented spelling is always encouraged.
- It is okay for a student to write about the same topic for many weeks.
- If students write to a formula, their voices are constrained.
- For students to take writing seriously, they need to write every day for a sustained period.
- Students learn skills and grammar best when they are directly taught as isolated writing activities.
- Young children cannot be expected to edit their own work.
- Writing rubrics are a proven way to improve writing quality.
- Six Traits is an evaluation tool, not a writing program.
- More nonfiction writing needs to be taught and engaged in.
- Students who read more are better writers.

Adapted from a list originally created with Andrea Butler