

Use the Language of Helpful Response

When you start by celebrating the *whole* writing piece and noting what the writer has done well, other students will want to try what that writer has done. (Make sure your praise is not overfocused on particular aspects of the craft of writing.) Use the exact words of the writer whenever possible.

Start with What the Writing Does

- I love the way your first sentence. . . .*
- Your story reminded me of. . . .*
- I could picture exactly how. . . .*
- When you said [blank], I felt. . . .*
- Your dad is going to treasure this piece because. . . .*
- I noticed that. . . .*
- I really like the way you used conversation to let the reader know exactly how you felt. It seemed as if I were right there in the room with you.*

Then Move to What the Writing Has

- You tried out conversation.*
- You skipped lines so you could add in easily.*
- You spaced your words, which makes it easy for the reader to read your message.*
- I like the way you used the word [blank] instead of [blank].*

Encourage Your Youngest Writers and Your Developing Writers

- I like how you were stretching out your sounds as you wrote.*
- I saw you looking at the word wall to figure out a word. Good for you.*
- You're spacing better between words. That makes it easier for the reader.*
- You drew your picture first, and that got you going on your story.*
- I noticed you were using your reading finger to be sure your voice and your words matched.*
- I love the way your picture has lots of information in it.*
- You're continuing your story from yesterday. That's great.*
- Say your words slowly as you write them. That will help you hear more sounds.*

Use Language that Encourages and Clarifies

- I really like how you. . . .*
- So you're saying. . . .*
- Perhaps you could try. . . .*
- Can you say more about. . . ?*
- How about if you. . . ?*
- You might want to. . . .*
- Think about. . . .*
- Let's try this together. . . .*

What It Sounds Like to Focus on Content

- Think about how you can begin your writing so your reader knows exactly what you're writing about.*
- When you get stuck, read over what you've written so far. You might need to reread a few times to get ideas to get going again.*
- Sometimes it's easier to hear how your writing sounds if you quietly read it out loud to yourself.*
- Make sure your writing makes sense and is easy to understand.*
- Always keep your reader in mind as you are writing.*
- I noticed you tried . . . when you got stuck. That's what good writers do.*
- I saw you reading over what you wrote yesterday before you started writing today. That helps your thinking get going and helps you decide what you want to say next. Good for you.*
- Make sure your lead catches the reader's attention and makes it clear what you're writing about. You may want to try writing another lead or two and see which one works best.*
- Will the reader know your piece is finished? Do you have a satisfying and interesting ending that ties everything together?*