

The School District of Elmbrook Writing Philosophy

The framework of the Elmbrook writing workshop utilizes an instructional frame for whole-class inquiry that allows for the study of a wide variety of genres. In the workshop, the noticing and questioning that students engage in around the gathered mentor texts highlight the important disciplinary in the unit. Depth, rather than coverage, is the driving force in the development of this disciplinary.

Students are immersed in texts specific to the genre study. As students read and reread the gathered texts, they notice "how they were written," chart their observations and use talk to deepen their understanding of how the genre is crafted effectively. They learn to read like writers. The stacks of mentor texts form a vision towards which students begin to draft. Teachers model the process of how to move from the study of text to their own writing. Students follow the writing process; writing, revising, and editing finally producing a published piece. Short assessments are placed throughout the unit to assist students with pacing. Each unit concludes with a celebration of the learning and writing produced.

Adapted from Exploring Inquiry as a Teaching Stance in the Writing Workshop by Katie Wood Ray

