

Simply, Writing

A testimony of my success I experienced after using many of JoAnne Moore's writing techniques in my classroom.

**by,
Diane Massie**

Implementing JoAnne Moore's writing strategies into my everyday classroom setting has taken my student's writing from boring, basic rote sentence scribers to grabbing the reader's attention with action, sensory imagery, and onomatopoeia of published authors.

I will always be grateful for what I have learned from JoAnne's writing programs because I know for certain that I have broken the "writer's block" with my students by empowering them with endless amounts of skill and style to apply in all forms of their writing. After teaching JoAnne's program to the students, they now know how to write from their hearts creatively and effectively without running into word blocks or word barriers. They express their ideas freely.

The two key strategies to JoAnne's program that flipped my student's story writing around were building the students' vocabulary and the placement of the words throughout their writing.

First, we brainstorm words, filling the board, the walls, and their personal dictionaries with words. Students learn verbs, adjectives, adverbs, nouns, and pronouns, so that they have many resources to refer to while they write. Inviting the students to experience a personal connection to these words by acting them out is an effective method I use to reinforce the learning experience. I further clarify the definition of the vocabulary by providing them with opportunities to play with the words. Playing wherever possible begins to ensure the words hold true meaning for the students. For example, if the word is cold or freezing or shivering, I bring in ice or better yet, if opportunity presents itself, we go play in the snow. I provide pictures of the Arctic. We watch programs on snowstorms. We make the words real to the students.

After building the word bank, the second key strategy JoAnne's program teaches is the order of the words. The teacher role models where to place the words to grab and keep the reader's attention.

Great beginnings starting with action, onomatopoeia and speech all invite the reader into the writing and holds their attention until the very last line. Teaching the students these techniques alters their writing dramatically.

The, "How do I say?" or, "I don't know what to write" comments are rarely uttered in my classroom once the students have been taught JoAnne Moore's writing strategies. My marking has become a treat that I look forward to each time I read and assess my students' writing. I am graced to read an entire class's engaging, captivating stories. Each student's piece of writing has become a work of art for me to enjoy as great bedtime reading.

Applying Joanne Moore's program into my daily classroom Language Arts lessons has enhanced my students writing from basic sentence structure, grammatical rules and rote drills to the students producing exciting, funny, and scary stories. Poetry and letters have the parents and visitors stopping in their tracks to read the writing on the display board. I have received comments from the passer bys like, "A grade two student wrote this?" I hear people laughing and telling others they should read this. A smile lights up my face. The students immediately apply the lessons learned with ease and accuracy to all their daily writing. The strategies transfer across all areas of the curriculum. Science logs are clever and precise. Community Studies reports are interesting and specific, and personal journal entries come alive with well chosen words.

Teaching JoAnne Moore's writing strategies has helped me to help the students build a solid foundation of writing skills that they will use forever. Empowering my students to become the best writers that they can be has reassured me that I have prepared my students to be successful in all their writing endeavours.

Thank you for sharing all your wonderful ideas with us, JoAnne.

Sincerely,
Diane