**Everyone Has a Novel in Them: Novel Writing Over Three Years**

Blue Sky Paper on a Middle School 3 Year Novel Project

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It has been said that everyone has one good novel in them. It may be a surprise to learn that, even if you don’t complete a novel, or like what you’ve written, the attempt

is worth it. Using the ‘writing brain’ in different ways can help stretch it beyond its’ original shape.

At the Sterling Hall School in Toronto, Canada, the Business Manager, Dave Stevenson volunteered to teach a novel writing elective course for students in grades 5 through 8. Dave was also a writer of historical fiction novels. A group of 6 students took part in the course which was consisted of a prompt, a quiet time for writing, followed by a sharing of ideas at the end of the class. Each student completed the task of writing a first novel.

**The Role of the Teacher in Year 1**

In the first year the teacher will introduce a variety of mini-lessons to bring about awareness of all the tools authors can use to advance their writing. If the class is once a week for an hour, then the teacher can spend 5 to 10 minutes introducing an idea, using the rest of the time to encourage students to add more details to their planning outlines, and apply more deliberately the new ideas introduced in the mini-lesson of the day. The teacher will also observe the writing habits of students and provide formative feedback throughout the year to ensure that the outlines prepared will lead to an ample supply of words and ideas to mold into first draft sentences in the second year.

There are many ways to bring a novel writing experience into an academic program. Kindergarten students can dictate their first novels to a teacher or writing buddy scribe; junior students could make historical fiction accounts of research accumulated from a project, and middle and high school students might write a sustained fiction or non-fiction work. Depending on the school library, such works could be catalogued for others to read and enjoy.

In the real world, writers do not have artificial deadlines at the end of a term. When their work is ready for submission, it is ready. The idea of writing a novel that emulates the kinds of published novels in bookstores today, can take upwards of three years to complete, a time frame that doesn’t fit snuggly in a school’s ten-month time unit. Novel writing, as a practice, therefore, requires coordination between three or more grades of teachers.

An English class may feature novel writing time once a week, or additional courses may be designed specifically to provide concentrated time and support to complete outlines, drafts, and edits, leading up to a formally bound work. If working on a novel is an expectation, then ample time during school should be provided for such an experience. Assigning it for homework or as an extension exercise is not the same as having a teacher directly mentoring the process.

Imagine spending a full year on gathering information and creating an outline – without crafting a single sentence. Students rarely edit their outlines, but such a practice can support the sketching of a comprehensive foundation for the development of a compelling plot, conflict, characters, and historical and physical settings. While the process of writing the first draft and editing will further shape such elements along the way, building a rich base can yield in-depth thinking, but it can also remove the tension of making sentences happen right away.

Some writers do let the words flow into sentences right away, but the words from years of writing and years of reading, in many ways represent their tools and outlines. The idea of shaping a novel in advance with words and images, prior to sentence formation can help the young novelist prepare and organize their first extended writing experience. Imagine taking a full year to organize ideas without shaping a single sentence?

The following year, students can make sense of their outlines, and begin to build sentences and paragraphs around the different themes they want to weave into the first draft of a story. Some writers may write a 50 page novel, while others might write epic works exceeding 200 or more pages. Novel writing can invite differentiated writing as there are no word or page number limits that are common in essay assignments. The novelist determines the length of his or her book.

In a school that can coordinate long term projects, the final year of novel writing should be reserved for the editing and polishing of the first draft, although some revisions may begin in the second year, depending on the student. Getting to the final published product requires a full complement critical and creative thinking. The Habits of Mind Institute

(<https://www.habitsofmindinstitute.org/what-are-habits-of-mind/>) provides a rich lens for looking at a novel writing project.

If a student takes part in a novel writing experience at the elementary level, it would be recommended that the text not include dialogue. It might be less confusing for students to write novels without speech, once they have mastered basic punctuation and moved on to a focus on more precise use of quotations.

The following ideas for class activities have been written to students directly, to give educators an opportunity to view a sample portfolio and experience how students can be engaged in such an elective course offering. In the first students can explore a variety of prompts including:

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* Introducing published authors who can speak about the importance of outlining and research in the early stages of writing
  + <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AgkVNK6ViJk> (Ray Bradbury)
  + <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W1afbpM80b0> (Brandon Sanderson)
  + https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5LxqmHQFyR8 (Andrea Rains Waggener)
  + <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogPZ5CY9KoM> (Monty Python spoof on writing)

Students can be encouraged to write a fictional novel about something they know, and something they will learn more about.

In the outlining stage, each class can begin with a prompt, following by quiet design time for outlining, ending with an intervention for inspiration sharing time.

Students can develop and review a class respect agreement that can include some of the following recommendations:

* Students should be referred to as authors.
* Design time should be a silent time for thinking and acting on thoughts.
* For the first novel, students should work independently.
* During intervention and sharing times, students should not interrupt each other or the teacher.
* During Intervention time, student authors need to be prepared to show how their ideas have changed from week to week

The following series of prompts have been helpful in a variety of novel writing class settings:

* Students can be asked to reflect on novels they did not want to finish and make of list of what was ‘turn off’.
* Imagination can sometimes be limited in talking spaces, so a teac her may a visualization: prompt. Students can close their eyes and imagine they are alone on a deserted island when they write; they are pausing from paddling in a kayak to write; they are alone in a safe place…

Students can review how genres are distinct from one another and often mixed with each other. They can begin to consider which genre might work best for their novel. (Action, Adventure, Comedy, Drama, Crime, Detective, Horror, Mystery, Myth, Romance, Fantasy, Science Fiction, Western, Inspirational)

View details about the fantasy genre – ie. Twilight

* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&v=YVLYEohReic>

*Planning/Outlining*

The novel writing class can be shaped be many activities. In the beginning students can be prepare with writing folders, pencils and have their laptops ready for recording ideas and responding to prompts. They can continue to expand their outlines through the lens of a prompt, usually presented by a teacher. The outlines can consist of jot notes or labelled images. At the outlining stage, students will not include sentences – just ideas. The outline may be presented with images or point form that can expand into pages and pages of ‘plans’.

During the intervention time in class the teacher can ask pairs of students to engage in joint-conferencing for about 10 minutes, in a quieter spot in the room, to reduce interruption. They can discuss about how their points are evolving in terms of:

* their beginning, middle and end starter ideas
* the need to add certain details to enhance value of their story
* thinking about the points in the outline as the “beats” of the story.
* establishing he “beats” of the character:
* *“the characters, write very descriptive character sketches, get inside their heads, establish who they are psychologically, physically…”*
* *“get inside the minds of multiple character”*
* *“establish logical motivations for everything that they do within the story”*

**Creating the “beats” and “beasts” of the Characters**

* need to be sympathetic to readers. That is, readers need to be able to relate to characters…
* multi-dimensional characters can have more depth when they have they are not simple.
* Students can consider including pets as characters
* Students can think about the family members and their family history.
* The characters should be somewhat unpredictable (reader is not sure what your characters might do next)
* Students authors can be encouraged to have “conversation” with their characters. (may seem silly, but fiction writers will tell you that characters tend to take on a life of their own).
* Authors may compare characters to television or movie characters.

(Adapted from <http://www.finaldraftcommunications.com/novel-writing-tips/>)

View

* + <http://www.ehow.co.uk/video_4986911_writing-character-sketch-novel.html>
  + <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LgJ809QKmas>

Most people think that an intriguing plot is what makes a strong story, but the truth is that exciting plots are made up of original and well-developed characters.

**Flat Characters vs. Original Characters Flat character.**

“Steve - good kid - good grades - never late to class.” is an example of a flat character. A stronger original outline of an original, well-developed character would be

“Steve Goodhold

- good kid - good grades - never late for class

– no one knew he spent nights working as internet hacker - for modern Mafioso - he met through older cousin, Peter

- didn’t need much sleep, two hours/night, spent rest of time stealing identities, wiring funds, and making more money than his parents

- saving for college,

- thrill of secret life of crime eroding interest in Ivy League education.

Not only are characters with hidden depths and secrets more fun to read about, they're also more fun to write about. Though authors will end up writing about a bunch of different people in their novels, all of them will fall into one of three categories: The protagonist, the supporting characters, and the antagonist.

* The protagonist is the character with the starring role in your book. In most novels, the protagonist is on a journey to get what he or she wants more than anything else in the world, whether it's fame, revenge, reuniting with a long-lost brother, or something much more elusive, like overcoming poverty or cancer.
* The supporting characters are characters in a novel that have an important role in your protagonist’s life. Some may be around for the protagonist’s entire journey, some for only part. Supporting characters can be friends, close relatives, love interests, you name it. These characters also have dreams of their own, and their adventures will add even more excitement to your novel.
* The antagonist is the character in a novel who makes it difficult for the protagonist to do what they want to do. In many stories the antagonist is the villain that have an important role in your protagonist’s life.

All characters also have dreams of their own, and their adventures can add even more excitement to the emerging novel.

**Setting and Formatting Time**

The outline will need to include details of the settings and the time period, ideally using labelled sketches. The authors can ask themselves the questions:

* What type of environment will my story makes sense for the story?
* What time period makes the most sense (i.e. past, present, future…)?

Certain events in a story may take place during a historical era that can influence the plot. For instance, q story might take place in 1968 so it might include reference to the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. Researching the facts can help clarify details. Mentioning that this assassination took place in the morning, would be problematic, given the fact it took place in the evening.

In his book, [*Writing the Breakout Novel*](http://www.amazon.com/Writing-Breakout-Novel-Donald-Maass/dp/158297182X/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1270068690&sr=1-1), Donald Maass recommends treating the setting as a character. Like a character, it should have a physical presence, a personality, and moods. Place your novel in a particular time, and add details, like historical events or social trends that make it credible. Maass writes, “The breakout novelist does not merely set a scene…she builds a world.”

**Chapter Outlines**

Chapter outlines are very important things when planning the early phases of the story. They can summarize each chapter. Authors should create a solid road map for their novels before writing out each chapter in prose.

Most expert authors plan their writing using outlines; only a few literally sit down and begin to write and have no idea where their story is going to go. It can be easy to lose sight of certain details early on; novice writers can get lost that way. Student authors are expected to develop a detailed outline.

View:

* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NTBdey7nhrA&feature=related>, and
* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CKpXm3JJTCU&feature=related>
* <http://www.ehow.com/video_4989645_outline-writing-novel>.

**Conflict**

View:

* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wmvOA1KnxQU>

There are a variety of conflicts to consider:

* Human vs. Human
* Human vs. Nature/Environment
* Human vs Self
* Human vs Society

How do writers cause trouble for their characters?

* They can let the story unfold first to see what kinds of messes the characters get into.
* They may throw bombs in their characters paths.
* They can brainstorm “what if” scenarios before writing.
* They can test different conflicts and ideas as the story unfolds.
* They can use a peer reviewer to help see other options.
* They can think about how excited the readers may feel about the conflict(s)
* They can think about whether the conflict should be real or more exaggerated in a make believe scenario.

Adapted from http://sarahockler.com/2009/02/24/creating-conflict-in-fiction-only-trouble-is-interesting/

View:

* http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qEMxuZyxdCo&feature=related

Extension -<http://www.fictionfactor.com/guests/conflict.html> (conflict)

**Meet a Real Author**

View:

* http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLY\_uXod8FQ&feature=related

View Science Fiction author, Stephen King, talking about the writer of Twilight :

* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&v=zb72V_4N5ko>?

**Research Detailing**

View [*Researching Your Novel*](http://writinghood.com/online-writing/researching-your-novel/)*:*

Posted on August 15th, 2010 in [Online Writing](http://writinghood.com/category/online-writing/) by [shadowplay](http://www.triond.com/users/shadowplay).

* http://writinghood.com/online-writing/researching-your-novel/

A story is more credible with details and information.

Some novels may not require much research, especially if the author is writing about something they are familiar with. A police officer might be well equipped to write a crime novel. Stories that deal with police procedures, medical contexts or legal protocols, for instance, are all genres that require much research to make stories believable.

The internet can provide details to advance the plot and setting in a story. It may be important to describe the types of trees and foliage in a community. It may be important to know about special trails or whether all the streets are paved? It may be important to reference the local restaurants or stores? While the Internet can provide many details, it is important to verify findings from ideally three sources to be sure the research does not convey ‘fake news’.

Primary sources can be incredible sources of information. To learn more about crime investigation procedures, for instance, authors may contact the public affairs department of your local city office or police department. Crime reporters can also be great sources of information.

Family and friends can also be primary sources as they can share personal experiences. Key to conducting effective interviews requires the author to create a bank of interesting questions. The author must think through what information is needed prior to an interview. The author must then decide what material to use for the story, as there will be information that will not be used.

View

* <http://www.videojug.com/interview/doing-research-for-your-novel>

**Scene Cards**

Stories can be written like scripts using scene cards for each scene. While it is more commonly used by screenwriters, it can be adapted for use digitally or in hard index card formats. According to Andrea Allison

.…The entry goes into great detail about how you can do it from how many records you need to what to write on each. I recently sent my seventh assignment to my instructor for the writing course I’m taking. This assignment required a summary of a story to be finished for the final lesson. The course material suggested using scene cards. Below is the guideline I used for my outline:

* Setting: Where does your story take place?
* Characters: Who are your main and secondary characters? Who is your viewpoint character? Are you writing in first or third person?
* Development: Briefly describe what will happen in each scene.
* Opening Scene: Describe beginning in a few sentences.
* Middle Scenes: Describe body of story in a few sentences.
* Climactic Scene: Describe the peak of the escalating conflict in a few sentences.
* End Scene: Describe the resolution of the conflict and how your story ends in a few sentences.
* Theme: What is the underlying idea of the story?
* (September 2008)
* Students may use such an outline for their novel or develop their own.
* Students will need to keep the cards organized (numbering them can help).

View:

* http://writeanything.wordpress.com/2008/09/11/scene-cards/

Develop scene cards on index cards/PowerPoint slides to organize chapters

* <http://www.fictionfactor.com/guests/indexplot.html>
* <http://sylviajshipp.typepad.com/novel/2009/10/setting-up-the-scene-cards.html>

Extension - <http://www.fictionfactor.com/guests/pacing.html> (pacing)

Assessment of Novel Outline

During the first year of the writing process, there is a depth of understanding required of various writing tools in order to research and organize the outlines in preparation for writing prose in Year 2. By dedicating a year to planning and outlining, the writer has time to carefully think and reflect on his writing, time that often is not available in schools driven by the industrial models of education.

The sample outline would be used throughout the year to provide formative feedback, so that when their plans and outlines are complete, they have had ample opportunities for success.

There are 15 criteria listed in this assessment tool, but teachers can insert other criteria or adapt the wordings, as well. As a guide, teachers can use this tool as an indicator for when the writer is ready to move to the prose stage, which could happen before or after the Year 1 part of the course end. If a student has not implemented each of the criteria to a quality level of at least 48 points (if both teacher and student points are included), then they will encouraged to complete more helpful outlines and plans before being given the ‘green light’ to create the first draft in Ye3ar 2.

Table 1.1: Sample Assessment of outline at the end of Year 1

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Student Check | NOVEL OUTLINE  2 points (met expectations)  1 point (met part of expectation);  ? = no evidence off meeting expectation | Teacher Check |
|  | met the requirements of ample points for a novel |  |
|  | included good details about character(s) |  |
|  | included good details about setting |  |
|  | includes elements of conflict |  |
|  | chapter outlines were well organized |  |
|  | developed useful scene cards |  |
|  | included interesting ideas gathered from research outside imagination |  |
|  | included creative and imaginative ideas |  |
|  | did not repeat detail |  |
|  | explained progress from class to class |  |
|  | adding good details to original outline |  |
|  | focused web-based research add to ideas |  |
|  | worked independently and stayed on task throughout classes |  |
|  | reviewed and discussed links from various prompts |  |
|  | Evidence of reflection based on ongoing changes to outline |  |
| Self Score:  /30 |  | Teacher Score: /30 |

Comments

**Year 2: Producing and Polishing**

*Producing the First Draft*

When students have enough ideas on their outline they can begin to produce their first draft. As students begin to make sentences out the words and ideas shared in their outline, they can begin to think about how their initial ideas will split up into chapters.

**The Role of The Teacher in Year 2**

The teacher’s role after the outlines are completed changes to that of collaborator and critical reviewer. In a class of 10-14 students, a teachers will conference with approximately 4 in one time frame for 10-15 minutes each. This means that most students need to work independently to first move their words to prose, and then begin the process of polishing the work. During each conference the student authors should be explain how their writing had progressed since the previous conference.

**Locking Up the Safe Inner Beast**

As the author begins to write their first drafts, they may meet their *‘Safe Inner Beast’ (the SIB).*

The inner beast is the editor inside each writer who can take away from the free flow of creativity and putting words to prose. The beast often gets into the weeds of writing but being a stickler for spelling, and typos. Once the sentences have been carved out and the polishing of the written work has taken place, then the writer can focus on the cosmetic presentation of the writing which includes spelling, typos and punctuation.

The beast can also tug at one’s confidence with self-talk such as: “No one will want to read this.”, “It’s not good enough.” Or “I’m just a terrible writer.”

The author must take charge of the inner beast. Authors can lock up the “I can’t talk” and aim to increase the details in each chapter.

View:

* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6K_1Vh0GT_U> (How to..)

**Writer’s Habits**

Part way through the second year, it is important to assess the writing habits of novice novel writers.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Self | WRITER’s HABIT ASSESSMENT | Teacher |
|  | Explained progress to peer reviewers/teacher from previous class |  |
|  | Used good detail form outline to craft sentences. |  |
|  | Reflected on plans and revised them as needed |  |
|  | Completed first draft of novel in prose format |  |
|  | Persevered and worked independently (Not interrupting others) |  |

*Polishing*

Once the draft is completed on every other line in digital or paper form, students can begin the process of editing and polishing their draft novels. In a school year, this would ideally happen at the mid-way point in the school year, or before if students complete their first drafts earlier.

How to take away material that can confuse a reader or detract from a story takes time.

Polishing a piece of writing can be enhanced when writers pay particular attention to word choices, deliberate revision and heeding the advice of reviewers. The polishing stage of writing requires time, consultation and hard work. This is when the writers need to roll up their sleeves and emulate how real writers behave! (Smith & Blecher, Write to Be Read)

Novel writers need to SEE the changes made to each draft. To demonstrate the capacity to make changes to improve writing, it can be easy for a teacher to review some work on a hard copy***. It is important to provide evidence of edits; this can be easier at first with paper and pen/pencil***. Authors may want to shift the order of sentences so adding arrows connecting texts can be helpful. Asking students to double-space their work gives plenty of room to make revisions. ***Without a reference to the original work and various changes in drafts, it is almost impossible to compare and determine the extent of editing***. According to Smith & Blecher:

The use of ‘track changes’, (recommended for middle or high school students) when saved as separate files on a computer, can also provide a visual record...Technology can make it easy for students to write and revise their work, however, it can be a challenge to keep track of the writing transformation as students can write a draft one day, save it in a folder, and then return to it the next day – making changes that are not tracked. In this way, it is difficult for students and teachers to see the value and evidence of editing without marking up hard copies of their work.

There are 4 corners that students can polish to enhance their writing:

**Enhancing Language Use**

Students can visit various Vocabulary Booster books to work on adding rich vocabulary to their outlines - words that can beef up their offer.

View :

* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q9IgTDLvRfY&feature=related>

Using an *Enhancing Language Chart* can help the author and reviewer take stock of a word inventory, a lens on the depth of language used throughout the book. Including the identification of grammatical words or word combination, as well the inclusion of specific literary devices can also add much to the polishing process.

By viewing the writing through a distinct word and word usage lens can help the writer make revisions, especially if the language choice seems void of detail or flat in its use.

A sample chart to gauge the degree of word use enhancements might look something like this:

Table 1.2:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Enhanced Language Chart | |
| 3 Powerful Verbs: | 3 Powerful Nouns |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| 3 Powerful Adjectives: | 3 Powerful Adverbs: |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| 3 examples of Phases | 3 Examples of Onomatopoeia |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| Total /15 | 2 examples of Assonance |
|  |
|  |

Comment

Apart from identifying and including more enriched language, writers can remove simple words and slang (i.e. got) as well as make use of a thesaurus to edit in ‘rich’ vocabulary. Teachers can provide mini lessons about vocabulary, grammar, slang (i.e. removing ‘anyways’) and clichés, for instance, to help students examine their own writing with a critical lens for word revision.

**Removing Common Mistakes**

When teachers and students use student writing to identify common errors, it helps to customize the instruction. Some common mistakes to avoid include:

* Repeating words
* Using fragments
* Using proper past tense words
* Use of too many simple words
* Missing a subject before a verb
* Use of excess or extraneous words
* Use or misuse of contractions and apostrophes
* Not aligning for first or third person agreement
* Use of absolutes (i.e. “best”, “always”, “every”, “never”, “ only”, “safe”…)
* Careless about word endings (i.e. “ed”, “ing”, “s”…)
* Lack of accurate use of “this” or “that” (i.e. when “that” is used as a subject)
* Commas used instead of periods (No commas between complete sentences.)
* Use of run on sentences.

Students can self-assess their writing by looking at it through each mistake lens. Asking novice writers to make at least one change to each sentence can also help built editing habits. It’s easy for more expert teachers to find such mistakes; the challenge, however, is how to help young novelists view their own writing with the purpose of findings errors. Mini lessons and conferencing can help, but the clarity of a feedback rubric is also necessary. Many schools use ‘writing buddies’, where older students who emulate teachers, can talk and teach their younger buddies about why certain words and sentences need some more work.

**Advise and Revise**

At the ‘Advise and Revise’ phase of polishing writing, students focus on word use and sentence construction. To fine tune writing, the writer works with others to make changes to most sentences in the first draft using both a read aloud process in concert with a dialogue about the criteria in the rubric. According to Smith & Blecher:

Reading aloud requires the draft to be read out loud at least twice – once by the writer – and once by the reviewer. Hearing the written words can help the writer begin to make revisions. Students need to ask their writing partner (student sitting next to them, not across from them) to read aloud their drafts. The writer may ask the reader to stop at any time to make revisions, but the partner must read the full draft out loud.

Outside advice can help reduce the critical mass of mechanical and word choice errors that are quite common in weaker writing. At this stage, students often discover how easy it is to leave out words when their minds are racing. When they hear their words spoken aloud, they can easily detect what might be missing. Sometimes it can be more difficult for students to find errors in their own writing. Peers can help each other in this clean up phase of polishing. ***Reading aloud and listening to someone read aloud a piece of written work is a powerful approach for stimulating revisions to writing.***

**Self -Assessment and Conferencing Feedback**

Assessment tools should make writing skills and technique explicit. They can also serve as teaching tools. The authors can self-assess their drafts after reading and listening to the text and viewing the text through a language use lens. At this stage, student writers can use an interactive rubric (Sample Table 1.3) to check to ensure that the writing addresses each criteria. Authors should read over their novels many times to make changes that address the features of quality writing. They should ask: “What criteria is present in this manuscript?” and, “What criteria might be missing?”

Table. 1.3: Interactive Rubric Sample for Novel Draft

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Interactive Rubric Sample for Novel Draft** | | |
| Student Self Score | Quality of Writing. 2 = strong skill;  1 = developing skill (still learning); ? = missing | Teacher Score |
| **Substance – This draft novel…** | | |
|  | shared at least one conflict that added tension/excitement to the story |  |
|  | Included well developed characters |  |
|  | Took place in a variety of interesting settings |  |
|  | has at least 20 details in each chapter |  |
|  | has at least 10 details about each distinct setting |  |
|  | Included evidence to back up the claims made throughout the novel |  |
|  | has an important message and story to share |  |
|  | does not use stereotypes |  |
| **Word & Language Use – This draft novel…** | | |
|  | uses compelling and descriptive words and phrases that add value to the story |  |
|  | Used literary devices well throughout the novel |  |
|  | did not overuse or repeat words |  |
|  | uses words properly (do not use slang: “ain’t”, “guys”, “thing”). |  |
| **Organization – This draft novel…** | | |
|  | did not use run-on sentences, contractions or hyphens |  |
|  | demonstrates sequential flow of sentences |  |
|  | uses a variety of sentence types |  |
|  | has clear and captivating introductory sentences in each paragraph |  |
|  | has a clear and captivating concluding sentences in each paragraph. |  |
|  | was read aloud to a partner in order to make changes to the draft. |  |
|  | was edited when writing was read aloud. |  |
|  | Is double spaced and shows changes made to most sentences. |  |
| /40 |  | /40 |

Comment

Following peer review, and self-reflection, the authors can make changes to their draft and complete the self-assess portion of the rubric. Then they can use this to conference with a teacher who can provide more formal feedback. Students can also learn how to generate their own interactive rubrics, Reviewers can make it their goal to streamline sentences. They can examine a piece of writing while asking the questions:

* “Can words be removed to make the message smoother?”
* “Can sentence orders be changed for added impact?”

**Year 3 – Presenting the Novel**

*Presenting*

The presentation of the published novel requires attention to many fine-tuning details.

When the writers have completed all aspects of review, ideally in Year 2, they can then focus on making sure the criteria in the interactive rubric in Table 1.4 has been included in the publication.

Table 1.4: Interactive Rubric for the Final Published Novel

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Self | *This published novel has:*  *ample (A) evidence;*  *(S) some evidence; (NY) has no evidence yet of/that…* | Teacher |
|  | a creative title |  |
|  | a captivating starter sentence |  |
|  | Includes acknowledgements that thanks the reviewers, teachers and all involved in publishing the novel. |  |
|  | a strong concluding sentence |  |
|  | an effective font that supports the writing style and message |  |
|  | an attractive and compelling book cover |  |
|  | Includes at least three carefully crafted endorsements for the back cover |  |
|  | accurate spelling or use of inaccurate spelling or inventive words for emphasis |  |
|  | accurate grammar |  |
|  | accurate punctuation |  |
|  | accurate capitalization |  |
|  | punctuation that complements the text. |  |
|  | a consistent font choice that contributes to supporting message of novel |  |
|  | been published 2 copies in soft or hard copy format. |  |
|  | been catalogued in the school library |  |
| /30 | Total | /30 |

Comment

There should be plenty of time in Year 3 to tackle each of the expectations as listed in Table 1.4. Ideally publishing is not of the coil-binding kind; rather, when novels can be glue-bound as hard or hard cover books. The credibility of the experience is heightened. Furthermore, having novels catalogued in the school library adds to the authenticity of the three-year writing project. Such practices help to build a culture of writing, one where students can also read each others’ work in a published form. English teachers may choose to use a student’s novel and book clubs can feast on the work from student authors, as well.

For students, who finish their novel before the end of the school year, can read other relics and provide support for all members of the class to complete the task of becoming novel writers.