



Craft Lessons

Ralph Fletcher , Joann Portalupi

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Craft is the cauldron in which the writing gets forged.

Ralph Fletcher and JoAnn Portalupi argue that too often we concentrate on the beginning and ending of the writing process - conceiving and correcting - while leaving students on their own to make a thousand critical decisions in their writing about crafting leads, voice, structure, supporting detail, setting, mood, and character.

What elements of craft can we teach student writers, and at what age are they ready to learn them? This book answers both questions. *Craft Lessons* is the practical text for the over-scheduled writing teacher who wants to give students fresh challenges for their writing but doesn't have time to pore over dozens of trade books to do so.

There are three main sections in the book: one geared for teachers of primary students, one for teachers of grades 3-4, and one for teachers of middle school writers. This developmental structure allows teachers to go directly to those craft lessons most applicable and adaptable to their own students. Each of the 78 lessons is presented on a single page in an easy-to-read format. And every lesson features three teaching guidelines:

Discussion - A brief look at the reasons for teaching the particular element of craft.

How to Teach It - Concrete language showing exactly how a teacher might bring this craft element to students in individual writing conferences or a small-group setting.

Resource Material - A listing of the book or text referred to in the craft lesson plus additional texts you can use and references to a passage, a poem, or a piece of student writing in the Appendixes.

Craft Lessons also explores the context - the crucial classroom conditions - for successfully bringing rich ideas to young writers. It will appeal to both experienced writing teachers seeking new horizons for their writers and teachers who are relatively new to teaching writing.

Craft Lessons Details

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Author : Ralph Fletcher , Joann Portalupi

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From Reader Review Craft Lessons for online ebook

Nobies57 says

Thank you Ralph, thank you, thank you.

Jennie Smith says

If you are looking for great mini lessons for all grade levels... this is just what you need. Some of the ones for younger grades are also adaptable for the upper grades. Ralph Fletcher never lets us down!!

Kayla says

Craft Lessons is not an 'Everything you need' book, but it's close. Craft Lessons is written by the members of the Teacher's College Writing Project who are the experts on Writing lessons and helping students become the best writers they can be. This text focuses on the craft of writing. It does not include pre-writing activities or brainstorming prompts. It doesn't have lessons on editing and there are no sections on grammar. This text is a starting point for writing workshop mini lessons. It is a text full of suggestions on how to talk to students about the content of their writing. It can be used to help teachers conference with students about revising their writing, fixing elements of their writing instead of simply editing.

One of the highlights of this text is the understanding that student writing does not always correlate with their grade level. This text includes ways to approach lessons for multiple grade levels and helps explain why certain lessons or elements of writing should be used in certain grades or skill levels rather than others. Craft Lessons includes mini lesson ideas for grades K-8th. It includes suggested mentor text and examples of writing to use with each lesson.

Craft lessons doesn't just give lesson ideas, each lesson includes a suggested mentor text, a reason to use the lesson and how the lesson will make a difference, these lessons also contain explicit language to use when teaching the lessons and the best ways to convey the fundamentals of the lesson.

This book of mini lessons hits most elements of writing, although it does not touch on general writing, it is a great handbook for improving fiction writing.

The text also contains a question and answer section which includes many of the fundamental concepts of teaching writing. Fletcher and Portalupi stress the need for frequent writing time, student ownership of writing, revisiting writing lessons, and displaying writing elements for students to use at a later date. The authors are able to express the most important elements of teaching writing in a simple 150 page text.

This text has inspired and excited me about writing workshop and I will keep this text close at hand.

As for why my peers should also pick up this book, the text includes lessons on Finding a focus, pacing a story, nudging students to move beyond lists and love stories, cutting what you don't need, using stronger verbs. All areas that my own writing group asked for notes and help with. I personally struggled to include stronger verbs in my poems and found a lesson that I could use in my classroom, but also that I could use for my own writing. Teachers of writing should be writers themselves after all.

Lynn says

I have the second edition published in 2007. Geared to the classroom writing teacher, includes many mini-lesson ideas and how to help students focus and polish their writing pieces. Includes books to use as resources, but most are older titles. There are many more recently published that would be better mentor texts.

Koko Nata says

i used this book for creative writing class

Marianne says

Great craft lessons for the person who is just starting craft lessons.

Julie Suzanne says

Wow--appropriate, easy-to-follow ideas for minilessons on actually good writing (not at all formulaic). Encourages and inspires a writing workshop environment in your classroom. I'm personally using these lessons during a Personal Narrative writing unit. Having such a unit is indeed contrary to what the authors propose, but it works anyway until I have more of a "writer's workshop" classroom.

Monica says

A yearly reread for me!

Jean says

Another practical and useful book for my writing class. The author of *Breathing In, Breathing Out* teams up with his wife to provide examples of writing lessons for students. Very simple, straightforward and MOST usable... even for adults.

Jen says

A great resource for writing teachers. This is not a grammar/editing book. It gives lessons on teaching the craft of writing to students. It is broken up into grade levels. Lessons vary from teaching voice to building the story or creating the setting or building characters.

Blake says

Christina Davis recommended this book and it looks to be a great resource for teaching writing.

Tara says

I decided to use a sticky note to mark the lessons I'd like to try, only to determine along the way that I sticky noted almost every lesson in the book. At that point I had to come up with a better color-coded system as not to be completely ineffective, hahaha. ;)

The book is segmented into lessons for primary grades and middle grades. Although I'm an 8th grade ELA teacher, I read all of the lessons, (as the introduction suggests), and found that many of the primary grade lessons could be easily adapted to suit older students.

Some of the lessons are great for entire class mini-lessons, while others might be better suited for small group lessons or individual conferences. All of the lessons focus on writing craft conventions rather than grammar, mechanics, punctuation, etc.

I definitely recommend this book to both new teachers and any teacher that is implementing a regular writer's workshop into their plans.

As a new teacher, it brings up writing craft topics I didn't realize really do need to be explicitly demonstrated, (title, focus, pacing), and more seasoned teachers than me who want to use a writer's workshop format will find this book to be a straightforward resource as well.

Amber Gregg -Judging More Than Just the Cover says

"Teach your students to read like writers."

Genre: Education and Teaching.

Number of Pages: 177.

This book is meant to teach information writing in elementary and middle school, but I think that it can also be useful for high school and college English courses. I think that the instructor would just have to take some of the ideas and alter it to fit the age of the student. However, there are many older students that still struggle with the foundations of writing nonfiction, so these lessons are very helpful. They do not feel intimidating.

This book is amazing for detailed writing lessons. They break it down by each specific writing skill, and include a discussion of the lesson, how to teach it, and a list of resources to use in the lesson. It contains ways to set up your classroom's framework to be prepared for fiction writing to be seen positively. Then it splits into sections of lessons (K-2, 3-4, and 5-8). But, like I said before, a lot of these lessons can still be made applicable to older learners who struggle with the basics. The best part of this book is that it offers many examples of texts to use with lessons. I think that can be the hardest part about making lessons since it

can be very time-consuming to search for a book that matches the lesson.

I think it is helpful to give this book a full read through, and then bookmark each lesson that can be used for your particular course. Then you can go back to specific sections as you need it. In the appendix, there are coordinating organizers, booklets, and short texts for some of the lessons.

To read the rest of my review, go here: <http://judgingmorethanjustthecover.bl...>

Karen says

I use this book religiously still... I always find a new way to introduce something non fiction is also as well

Paula says

Practical ideas that are great mini-lessons even in my 8th grade classroom.
