



Writing Grows from Kindergarten Through Fifth Grade

Forest Avenue Academic
Magnet Elementary School
Montgomery, Alabama



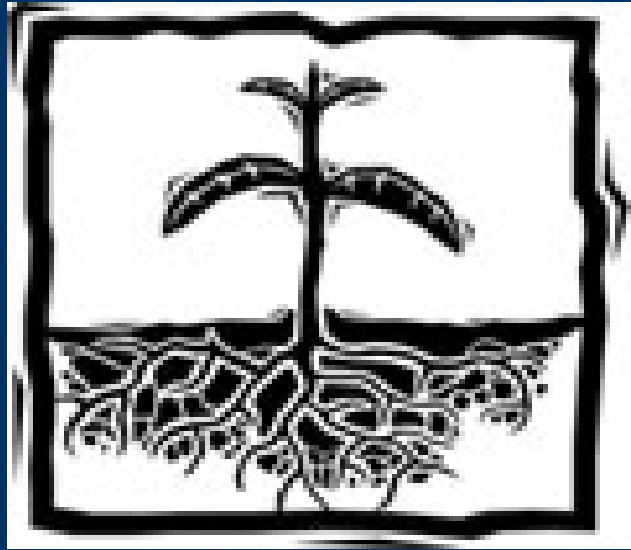
Jan Hill, Principal

Jennifer Rodopoulos, Teacher

Forest Avenue Facts

- Elementary School
- 660 students: Kindergarten – 5th grade
- Housed in a building half of which is 1920's era, half-state of the art 2001, located near downtown Montgomery, Alabama
- 43 certified teachers, 17 classified staff members
- SAT-10, Alabama Reading and Math Test, Alabama Direct Assessment of Writing, Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills
- Academic Magnet Accelerated Curriculum

Roots of Writing



In All Grade Levels:

- *Baseline sample—1st week
- *Field trip writing
- *Writing across the curriculum
- *Journals, portfolios, folders
- *Revising and editing
- *Rubrics

In Kindergarten...



Sowing the Seeds of Writing

- Copy sentences from board and illustrate
- Word family sentences and illustrate (The cat sat on a mat.)
- Field trip sentences and illustrate
- Progress from looking at pictures and writing words to writing sentences
- Finishing stories read aloud

In First Grade...



Adding Water

- Compare and contrast a story read in class to a play seen on a field trip
- Participate in a regional holiday writing contest
- Recreate stories such as “If You Give a Mouse a Cookie” by substituting new characters and events
- Write stories about Native American culture—the importance of bravery in the tribe
- Field trip writing using various genres learned during the year

In 2nd Grade...



Adding Sunshine

- Paragraph formatting— indenting; five sentences with topic sentence and conclusion
- Descriptive writing using adjectives
- Transition words (first, next, then, finally)
- “About Me” narratives

In Third Grade...

- Expose students to 3 modes of writing
- Writing prompts based on subject matter and current events
- Teach figurative language—similes, metaphors, adj/adv
- Book reports, poetry, imaginative writing

Weeding Words



*Family Ties project, Pet Rock report, moon and sky journal, math journal

In Fourth Grade...



Adding the Fertilizer

- Alabama portfolios-year long project
- Chapter summaries for novel chapters
- Narrative—Beginnings & endings, purpose, audience, characters, dialogue, transitions, vivid verbs
- Expository—Main idea, supplying details, sequencing
- Writing a report from outline

In Fifth Grade...

- Alabama Direct Assessment of Writing—
narrative, descriptive,
expository
- 4th quarter-persuasive
- Math and science journals
- Poetry unit
- Lab and research reports



Pray for a bumper
crop!

If at first you don't succeed...



Try, try again...
and again!

- REDO is a four letter word
- Sometimes a rough draft and final copy are not enough
- Redo means...re-grade ☹️
- Reward better "redos" with better grades
- Student conferencing

Principal Gardener

- ADAW day—whole school writes
- “Graded” by principal
- Prompts developed by principal

- Contests—Holiday essay, Reflections, local and state, publications



Jan Hill tends her garden of writers with care.

Summary Points

- Teaching writing is a learning process for students AND teachers.
- The “perfect” method of teaching writing does not exist.
- The more fun and interesting writing is for the teacher—the more fun and interesting it is for the student.

Challenges:

1. To make children enjoy writing
2. To keep teachers enthusiastic about writing
3. Keep test scores high

