

# WORKSHOP HELP DESK

A QUICK GUIDE TO  
**Teaching Informational  
Writing**  
**Grade 2**

MARIKA PÁEZ WIESEN

**Workshop Help Desk Series**

Edited by Lucy Calkins

*with the Reading and Writing Project*



DEDICATED TO TEACHERS™

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*For the ever-supportive,  
very missed Ann . . .  
“Hooray!”*





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## I N T R O D U C T I O N

“Miss Marika! Miss Marika! Did you know . . . ?”  
Day after day in my second-grade classroom, the air was filled with these outbursts—students tugging my arm, waving their hands wildly in the air, dying to share the new and strange discoveries that were rocking their world on a daily basis.

“Did you know that the sun is a *star*?”

“My aunt had a baby, and she let me hold it, and after you feed it you have to burp it like this . . . but sometimes it throws up on you.”

“Did you know that a tomato is really a *fruit*?”

“My dad bought me a new game and it has fifteen levels. I finally figured out how to beat the guy on level eight and now I’m on level nine.”

Informational writing is a genre that takes many forms. In many classrooms, it is known as report writing. The Common Core State Standards refer to it as informational or explanatory writing. By whichever name one uses, it is a perfect genre for second graders, for at its very heart is an insatiable desire to know more and to teach everyone around you everything you know. And nobody is more curious about the workings of the world, or more eager to tell you a zillion facts about the topic on hand, than a second grader. They seem to be hardwired to explore and wonder about all of the nooks

and crannies in their own worlds and beyond, and then eagerly cram what they've found into back pockets and jelly jars to show off to everyone who'll listen.

While it's true that most second graders are dying to share and teach about their passions, as teachers we know it is also true that in a single classroom our writers' attitudes toward and experience with informational writing can vary a great deal. In my own classroom, one student's early obsession with dinosaurs led to reading stacks and stacks of dinosaur books, watching innumerable dinosaur documentaries, visiting several museum exhibits, and being encouraged to share and teach what he knew with every visiting relative. Meanwhile, on the other side of the spectrum were students whose previous exposure to informational texts had been mostly limited to a few school-based experiences.

Not only did my students vary in their experience with informational texts but they also varied in their confidence and fluency as writers. One student, Renee, struggled long and hard to write one or two sentences, while another, Evan, wrote pages and pages (and pages!). And many classrooms have more than one student like Arshdeep, who had arrived in the country just a few months ago and hadn't yet learned English.

In my work as a staff developer at the Reading and Writing Project, I had the opportunity to collaborate with many other RWP colleagues and with teachers, coaches, and principals as they sought to plan and implement informational writing units of study for classrooms filled with a wide range of learners. Many of the ideas in this book came out of those hours of professional collaboration.



The ideas in this book stand fundamentally on the shoulders of the thinking of all of my colleagues at the Reading and Writing Project, and especially build on the work described by Lucy Calkins and co-author Laurie Pessah in their book, *Nonfiction Writing: Procedures and Reports*, a part of the series *Units of Study for Primary Writing*. The ideas in that book have transformed primary writing workshops in New York City and across the country, and watching those ideas come to life in hundreds of classrooms has inspired me to imagine these next horizons.

My hope is that the ideas in this book will help teachers in yet other schools to plan instruction in informational writing in ways that make it closely attuned to second grade students' individual strengths and needs. This book aims to support teachers who work with a full spectrum of students, including those who come to school as avid researchers and writers as well as those for whom informational texts will feel like new terrain.

Ultimately, my hope is that this book will serve as a helpful road map, guiding our journey through the rich and wonderful terrain of informational writing. My hope is that teachers as well as students make the journey with a spirit of delight and wonder, returning with back pockets and jelly jars full.



## CHAPTER ONE

# *Getting Ready*

## *Planning and Preparing for Informational Writing Units That Fit Young Writers' Passions, Interests, and Abilities*

When I was beginning my own foray into informational writing, my wonderfully nice teacher, Mrs. Dalpaghetto, made the awfully unwelcome announcement that the class would be writing reports. As you can guess, I did *not* like writing reports. Writing reports meant work—boring work. Namely, reading old, frayed books from the library that smelled like mildew, and then “putting it in your own words,” as my teachers had reminded me over and over (which felt like a lot of silly work, since the author had chosen perfectly nice ones in the first place!).

This report, as it turned out, was a little different. We were asked to write a report about our families. As usual, I left the majority of my writing until the very last day before it was

due, only to find that I was actually quite unhappy about not having even more time to work on it. As I pored over family pictures and considered everything I wanted to share, I got more and more excited about report writing. “Here is my chance,” I thought to myself, “to interview my mom and finally get to the bottom of the mystery of what she really does all day while I’m stuck at school!” (Of course, interviewing and accurately synthesizing information are two different things! I ended up writing, “She likes to drive around all day and listen to country music,” a gross distortion of fact if ever there was one!)

Writing that report about my family also gave me another opportunity—the opportunity to share myself. It was through writing that report that I first began trying to put into words how my family was different from other families I knew—my parents had separated that year, and my dad had moved to Southern California, hundreds of miles away.

I wouldn’t say that the writing in that report was particularly good, but I do know that I worked harder and with more enthusiasm on that report than on any other I can remember. It’s also one of the few pieces of “school-writing” that I’ve held onto, ensuring that it survived multiple cross-country moves.

Reflecting on my own writing experiences helps me remember that it’s important to walk in our students’ shoes a little when we begin planning for a unit of study. We know that our classrooms contain some students who feel reluctant to write at all, let alone write in an informational genre. We must carefully plan how we’ll begin our unit to rally as much of our students’ energy and enthusiasm as possible. We want

them racing to the page (as I did that night), thinking, “Here’s my chance to teach what I know and to find out more! I can’t wait to get started!”

Once we’ve sparked that enthusiasm, we’ll want to build on it while helping students develop the key writing skills and strategies they’ll need to get stronger in writing any informational text. The Common Core State Standards have reminded us once again of the importance of this genre and the many forms this kind of writing can take. We know that in just one or two short years many of our students will sit in fourth- and fifth-grade classrooms where they’ll be asked to read difficult nonfiction texts, “take notes,” and then write a report “in their own words.” Perhaps even more challenging, fourth and fifth graders are often asked to write essays in which they are ambitiously required to articulate ideas about a topic and then be able to develop and defend those ideas!

This chapter will help our second graders get off to a strong start toward meeting these ambitious goals. I’ll outline a possible plan for the unit and then suggest a step-by-step support for getting started with the fundamental work that read-alouds and shared writing will play.

## A Possible Plan for This Unit

---

My colleagues at the Reading and Writing Project have long suggested that students need many opportunities across the year to write informational texts. In most classrooms, teachers will want to plan *at least* two units of study in informational writing—along with the great deal of informational writing

students are doing in science, social studies, math, and the arts, of course! Second-grade teachers will also want to plan a unit or two on opinion writing, a genre that not only incorporates loads of information but also has a structure similar to informational writing.

The first of these informational writing units might be called something like “All-About Books.” In this first informational writing unit, students will most likely be writing about topics on which they have personal expertise, drawing on their experiences and knowledge. Later in the year, children will presumably undertake a second unit of study in informational writing, this time writing about a topic they’ve learned about through research. Many teachers provide yet a third informational writing unit, perhaps one that circles a whole-class shared topic. Readers may wonder why I’m suggesting a sequence that begins with children writing on topics of personal expertise and only later progresses to topics requiring research. The Reading and Writing Project recommends this sequence of units because, in our experience working with a huge range of student writers, we’ve observed that the process of research—reading about a topic, developing questions and looking for answers, synthesizing information, and paraphrasing what’s been learned in one’s own words—requires a complex set of skills, many of which are *only tangentially related to writing*. Most second graders first need the opportunity to grow their informational writing muscles—learning to organize information into categories and use a variety of elaboration strategies to teach—before undertaking the complexity of research. This way, we can first



help them focus on lifting the quality of their nonfiction writing without having to teach research skills extensively.

There are, of course, many ways to journey through an initial informational writing unit of study in which children are writing about topics of personal expertise. One possible path might be as follows:

- ▶ Children are immersed in the *purpose, structure, features,* and *sound* of informational writing through reading aloud many nonfiction books and through writing informational texts together during shared writing.
- ▶ Children choose topics they know a lot about from their daily lives and imagine the audiences for their writing.
- ▶ Children rehearse, or plan, what they'll teach by making tables of contents.
- ▶ Children begin drafting chapters for a first informational book, learning strategies for saying more, or elaborating on information.
- ▶ Children begin drafting chapters for a second informational book, this time focusing on *making their teaching even clearer*, perhaps by carefully considering paper choice or by beginning to use paragraphs.
- ▶ Children select the book they like the best and revise it.
- ▶ Children edit their book for their readers, using editing checklists to check for punctuation, capitalization, and word wall words.

- ▶ Children “fancy up” their writing by adding color to their pictures, making a front cover, and perhaps making an About the Author page.

## Using Read-Aloud to Promote Essential Understandings About Informational Texts

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It makes sense to start our planning of any new unit of study in writing by studying existing examples of that genre. I strongly recommend to teachers that before beginning a unit of study on informational writing, they pore over nonfiction books asking two main questions: first, “What seems to be essential to teach in this genre?” and second, “What might I need to teach this particular group of writers that will help them make big strides toward proficiency in this genre?” The answer to the second question, of course, will be slightly different from year to year, and even unit to unit, based on the group of children and their prior experiences with informational writing. In studying the Common Core State Standards, and in working with my RWP colleagues and many teachers and in many classrooms far and wide, I gathered what feel to be some essentials in the teaching of informational writing.

1. Nonfiction writers write to teach their readers a lot of information as well as to make readers interested in their information.
2. Nonfiction writers use both text and additional features to teach information.

3. Nonfiction has a predictable structure of topic and subtopics.
4. Nonfiction texts have specific vocabulary that gives them an “expert” voice. The Common Core State Standards refer to this as “domain-specific” vocabulary.

As experienced nonfiction readers and writers, we can easily see these qualities inside of the nonfiction books we read. The goal of this work, then, is to get students to see these things, too. For instance, how might we get them to identify subtopics with ease? Or to identify an author’s purpose for an index or text boxes? Or to begin to recognize and possibly internalize the vocabulary they need to develop a strong informational writing voice?

One way we can begin to support students in this work is with carefully planned, focused conversations and experiences we provide during read-aloud. The goal is to dig into texts in focused ways that help students to internalize some of the qualities of good informational writing.

### *Choosing mentor texts to read aloud and study closely*

At the beginning of a unit, it is important to choose a few texts that will be read aloud and studied repeatedly throughout the study and that will serve as co-teachers, helping students imagine possibilities for their writing. It helps to make sure that the texts we choose look fairly similar to what our students will be trying to write themselves and that present a model that is within reach for our students. The following



questions can be used as a guide to help choose appropriate mentor texts:

- ▶ Does the topic of at least one of my mentor texts show how a writer can teach about a topic of personal expertise? (e.g., *A Day at Gymnastics*, or *Baseball*)
- ▶ Does the book use an “I” teaching voice rather than an authoritative, third-person teaching voice?
- ▶ Is the text organized in a straightforward way, as in topics and subtopics?
- ▶ Is the syntax of the text simple enough that a child might listen to the text and think, “I could write a text like that”?

*Think-alouds and turn-and-talks: opportunities to model and practice the strategies of proficient and thoughtful readers and writers*

For a few days or so leading up to a writing unit of study, the teachers with whom I work carefully plan not only which books they will read during interactive read-aloud time but also *where* they will pause and think aloud. Many teachers mark these places with sticky notes. The think-aloud serves as a model to demonstrate what a proficient reader might think and do as she reads. It also provides an opportunity to model the ways that a writer attends to craft and structure as she reads. After reading a section of a nonfiction text, we might stop and think aloud about a writer’s craft by saying some-

thing like, “Hmmm . . . I’m noticing that the writer here is talking to us as readers. Here, where she writes, ‘Did you think that polar bears are snowy white?’ it’s almost like she’s having a conversation with us!”

Just as it’s important to provide modeling of the thinking of proficient readers through think-alouds, we’ll want to provide opportunities for students to turn and talk with a partner on the rug, so that they have a chance to practice strategies we’re teaching. If we’ve just done a think-aloud in which we paused to notice a writer’s craft, we might then read on, pausing to give them time to talk with each other in ways that mirror the work we’ve just modeled. In this instance, after reading on we might prompt students, saying, “Wow, the author is still really trying to make us interested in this information, isn’t she? Turn and tell your partner which places the author seems to be trying to make us interested in this information. What words is she using?” Listening in on partnerships as they turn and talk gives us invaluable insight into what they know, what they wonder, and what they need to learn.

### *Noticing and naming: time for students to attend to characteristics of informational texts*

During read-aloud, we’ll want to point out and discuss the functions of various features of nonfiction—tables of contents, headings, indexes, glossaries, and so on—especially if we haven’t done this previously in the year. Second graders are often fascinated by the variety of layouts in nonfiction texts—eager to examine how one insect book is structured through

question and answer, for example, while another is written like a diary.

With our support, students can also consider the rationale behind these features. We can help students consider purpose by asking questions like, “Why might the author have used bold letters for this word?” or, “How does this diagram help readers learn a lot about this topic?” Many teachers create a chart during read-aloud to which they can add throughout the unit to highlight the text features, their purposes, and examples.

## Using Read-Aloud to Focus on the Structure and Language of Informational Texts

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In the next two sections, we’ll explore two other important read-aloud experiences that can support a wide range of students as informational writers before they even pick up a pencil. First, we’ll plan read-aloud experiences that help students to discover and develop an understanding of a typical expository structure of topic and subtopics. Next, we will plan read-aloud experiences that explore and develop deeper understanding of the language typically used in nonfiction texts.

### *Read-aloud experiences that help students understand the structures of informational writing*

When we, as proficient readers, pick up a book called *Planets Around the Sun*, we have definite expectations. First, we expect that the book will have subtopics, or various “chunks” of infor-

mation. Second, we expect predictable kinds of subtopics—we will most likely be able to accurately predict what many of those subtopics will be (perhaps one chunk about the Sun, one chunk about the Earth, Mars, Venus, and so on). Even without a table of contents, which not all informational texts have, proficient readers will be able to find where one subtopic ends and the next begins.

What my colleagues and I have come to realize at the Reading and Writing Project is that many of our students, however, will *not* have such expectations. They will open a nonfiction book without anticipating such chunks of information and, even *with* a table of contents, may not notice or use these chunks of information to support their understanding of the text! Before students write informational texts, they need to understand that these texts are organized by topic and subtopics.

Because understanding and internalizing this structure is so critical to writing informational texts, students need plenty of opportunities to practice noticing and discussing structure in nonfiction books. This means that whenever I read a nonfiction book (starting in September), before opening the book and reading, I pause and think aloud, “How will this book go?” I could also word this question differently, saying, “What ‘chunks’ of information, or subtopics, do I anticipate?” My think-aloud for the book *Bees* in the second-grade class mentioned above sounded like this:

I held up the book and said, “Hmm . . . the title of this book is *Bees*. I wonder how this book will go? Maybe it will go like this: some pages teaching me about bee bodies, then some

pages about what bees eat, then pages about where bees live. . . .”

If this book had a table of contents, I might then study that page with students, asking, “Was I right? Are some of these chapters the same as what I predicted?” Many books, like this one, don’t have a table of contents, so after reading a page, I stopped to think aloud. “So, was I right? Is this page about bee bodies? I wonder what the next page will teach us about?”

After modeling this kind of thinking every time I read an informational book aloud, I soon ask students to try it with me, to predict the chapters or “parts” we think the book might contain. We might quickly jot our thoughts on a chart with our predictions and add new “parts” or chapters we discover the book actually has as we read. I then highlight for students the way these subtopics are organized logically—perhaps by thinking aloud about how the chapter titles seem to have the same structure or how these titles match the titles of other books on the same topic.

In developing this understanding of the structure of informational texts, repetition is key. It is not enough to spend one day modeling how a reader anticipates that a nonfiction book will have “parts” or “chapters.” We must model and practice this kind of thinking from September on!

### *Read-aloud experiences that help students internalize the language of informational writing*

Every genre has not only its own structure and conventions but also its own language, its own *sound*. We know that, as

writers, we write with our ears. We write sentences and then reread them thinking, “Does that sound right?” We pay attention to rhythm and fluency as well as meaning. Reading aloud lots and lots of nonfiction texts can help our writers internalize the sound of nonfiction and develop an ear for informational writing.

Reading aloud to develop an “ear” for expository structure will go differently than reading to understand information. When I read aloud to gather information, I’ll likely prompt students to turn and talk about what they’re learning. I might say, “Hmm . . . let’s take a few seconds to think about this. The author just gave lots of information about bee bodies. Turn and tell your partner what information you just learned about bee bodies from this section.” These turn-and-talks are important to make meaning of the texts. However, if my goal is to call students’ attention to the *sound* and *language* of informational text, I might plan a few different kinds of experiences.

First, we might study our nonfiction read-aloud book looking for phrases that are particular to nonfiction texts. Here we’re looking less for content words (like *scales* or *antenna*) and more for general words found in many nonfiction texts that make the texts sound like nonfiction (like, *one example is* and *sometimes*). One analogy that I find useful when analyzing texts is to point out that some words are the “bricks” in a text while others are the “mortar” holding it together to make a structure. Kylene Beers points out that teaching students to attend to these “mortar” words can make a big difference in their reading comprehension and writing fluency

(Beers 2003). A search through *Bees!* turned up the following list:

... is called ...  
When ...  
Also  
There are  
... can be used for ...  
Some  
Sometimes  
Almost  
As many as  
About as many  
Other  
Up to

While some of these words are simply useful transitions, adverbs, and conjunctions that all nonfiction writers use, others can be used to signal specific nonfiction writing structures. When a writer is comparing things, for example, he or she might use words or phrases like: *on the other hand*, *similarly*, or *but*, whereas a writer who is teaching about a cause and its effects may use words such as *since*, *because*, and *this led to*. This unit is a good opportunity to expose second graders to these structures and transition words, even though most students will develop real fluency with these concepts down the road.

Of course, second graders won't internalize the language of nonfiction simply by making and reading lists of words! Children develop language and literary syntax by hearing it and using it in authentic contexts, through active engagement in learning and with repeated experiences.

The text *Navigating Nonfiction*, part of Lucy Calkins and Kathleen Tolan's *Units of Study for Teaching Reading, Grades 3–5* (2010), outlines one way to help writers engage actively and authentically with the language of expository writing. Teachers can pause in the midst of reading a text and ask children to envision and act out what they've just read. When I read aloud the book *Bees!* to the class of second graders, I stopped after reading this page:

Leafcutter bees are big bees.  
They can be up to  
one and one-half inches long.  
But some bees are very small.  
You can hardly see them!

I wrote the words *up to*, *some*, and *hardly* on a chart. We discussed the meaning of each of these phrases and words briefly. "I'm going to read that again," I said. "Listen carefully to each sentence, trying to imagine what it's saying. Then you'll have a chance to act out the sentence with your partner."

After rereading the page, I asked students to turn and teach a partner what they'd learned. "Hold up your finger, like this! This is going to be your explaining finger. As you teach your partner, act out what you're teaching, so that your partner learns a lot."

I crouched next to Maria on the carpet as she turned to teach her partner. "I'm going to teach you about leafcutter bees," she began, holding her finger up to show she was going into her explaining and teaching mode. "They are big, but not that big, like one and a half inches long." She showed her partner with her fingers her approximation for one and a



half inches. Then, she whipped up her finger again to teach her next point, “But some bees are so teeny tiny that you can’t even see them except for with a microscope.” Here, she made her hand into an improvised microscope and peered down into it.

The students and I became fully engrossed in that single page that day—reading, talking, and acting out with our hands and our partners. This helped them not only to understand the text better but also to incorporate these new phrases into their working vocabulary!

## **Shared Writing: A Time to Model and Practice Strategies for Writing Informational Texts**

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For some writers, reading a few examples of nonfiction will be enough for them to feel confident enough to dive in and begin writing their own. Others may benefit from watching their peers in action and by practicing thinking like a nonfiction writer. Shared writing can provide critical support for writers who need more scaffolds. These ten- to fifteen-minute writing sessions can happen either a few days prior to launching the informational text unit or in small groups once your unit has begun. Whether shared writing sessions happen during or outside of workshop time, it’s critical to remember that shared writing does not replace or substitute for independent writing time. Instead, it takes place in addition to that time, and its purpose is to foreshadow and support the work your students will soon be doing independently.

In a shared writing session, the teacher alone holds the pen. This is in contrast to interactive writing, where the teacher shares the pen with student volunteers who take turns at writing the message (Fountas, McCarrier, and Pinnell 1999). In shared writing, the “shared” part involves composition, and the teacher and students think and talk together about what to write next and how to write it.

At P.S. 1, in Brooklyn, a second-grade teacher, Miss Liz, and I planned the following sequence of shared writing sessions as a way of preparing students for the challenge of getting started on an informational book:

Day 1: Choose a topic and begin a table of contents.

Day 2: Finish the table of contents and start writing one of the chapters.

Day 3: Finish one of the chapters.

For this shared writing experience, we chose a topic Miss Liz was confident that all of her students knew well from life experience—the school cafeteria! Shared writing goes smoothest when teachers choose topics that their students know well from their daily lives: All About School, All About the Playground, All About Winter, and so on.

### *Choose a topic and begin a table of contents*

During each shared writing session, the teacher models the strategies she plans to introduce later in her minilessons and then has students try them together on the shared text. Throughout, she can provide important coaching for students.

Here's how I got Miss Liz's class kicked off on Day One of shared writing—composing a table of contents:

I sat by a piece of chart paper that said “Table of Contents” on the top. “Okay, so we’ve decided that we’re going to be teaching our parents in this book we’re writing called *All About the Cafeteria*. One way writers start thinking about what they’ll teach is they make a table of contents—a list of the parts, or chapters, that the book will teach about. One way writers think of possible chapters for their table of contents is by imagining their topic and then thinking, ‘What do I really want people to know about this topic? What could I teach?’ Let’s see . . . our topic is ‘All About the Cafeteria.’ I want to picture what I could teach about this topic, so I’m going to make a kind of camera. (I make a “camera” with my hands over my eyes.) I’ll imagine the cafeteria in my mind and look around with this pretend camera seeing what would make good parts for our book. Let’s zoom in with our cameras and think, ‘What do I see that I really want people to know? What can I teach?’ I modeled looking around with my camera. “Hmm . . . what do I see? What can I teach? Oh! I see kids on the lunch line getting their food! So maybe one chapter can be ‘The Lunch Lines.’”

In addition to choosing a topic the students know well, I made several other teaching moves, developed by the Reading and Writing Project, to make my demonstration especially clear. First, I explicitly *named a strategy* that students can use to generate chapters, or subtopics, for their topics. Then, I *used a gesture*—making a camera—to make the demonstration memorable and help ELLs activate language. I also used *repetition*. I asked the same questions over and over—What do I see? What can I teach?—to provide easy replication when I coach the students to try the strategies.

Next, I coached all the students to make a camera, cupping their hands together and closing their eyes to picture the topic—in this case, the cafeteria. I said, “Zoom your camera all around the cafeteria! Ask yourself, ‘What do I see? What can I teach?’” Then, as students turned to a partner to talk about what they could teach, I crawled over to Lissette, a struggling writer, to coach her with this strategy.

M: What do you see? What could one of our chapters be?

L: (shrugs)

M: Close your eyes. Picture the cafeteria. Move your camera. . . . Now, stop! Do you see something? Do you see something you could teach?

L: The garbage cans. Throwing stuff away.

M: Great! (I point to the blank table of contents.) So one chapter could be . . .

L: “Garbage Cans.”

M: Right! Or, “Throwing Away Lunch Trash.” Now get your camera back up and look for something else!

Shared writing in second grade should be full of turn-and-talks. Allowing students to talk with a partner before sharing with the whole class gives the teacher an opportunity to provide coaching to individual students or partnerships that need more support with a strategy. Here, I not only coached Lissette step-by-step through the strategy, I also reinforced the strategy immediately by saying, “Now get your camera back up . . .” This repetition in our coaching enables students to develop more automaticity and independence with the strategies we teach.

At the end of the first day's shared writing, the table of contents looks like this:

### **All About the Cafeteria**

#### Table of Contents

1. Lunch Lines
2. Throwing Away Lunch Trash
3. School Aides
4. Helping Friends at Lunch

The class certainly discussed many more possibilities for chapter titles than the final product shows. This is because shared writing focuses on the *thinking* work of writing—thinking what we could write, and then thinking of different ways we could write that. In other words, a class might spend ten minutes talking about different possibilities and in the end have only two sentences written down on the page! After hearing many students' ideas for possible chapter titles, I ultimately wrote down just three more ideas for titles, noting with a smile, "If I wrote down everyone's good ideas, I'd be writing all the way down to the floor!"

The time and care we take immersing our students in the structure and sound of nonfiction through read-aloud and shared writing will be critical to their ability to write informational texts. By carefully selecting mentor texts, planning focused read-aloud experiences, and providing modeling and practice through shared writing, we can be sure that we have provided a strong foundation for the wide variety of writers in our classes, putting them on a sure path to success in informational writing.



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