

## **Abstract**

Format: Workshop

Time: 90 minutes

Title: “Community and Process: Building Engaging Writing Lessons”

Target Students: Beginner to advanced, any age group

We are all writing teachers, but we sometimes forget. A writing lesson can be dynamic, energetic and creative. In fact, it should be. As teachers, we want our students to work together and share ideas. We want them to be daring and inventive. We also want them to build fluency and confidence.

Traditionally, students are given only formal writing assignments and are told to complete them on their own outside of class. But if we apply the needs of spoken English to those of written English, then we see that students need help exploring and discovering the process of creating a piece of text, whether it be formal or informal, a single draft journal entry or a 3-draft research paper. This means giving students scaffolding on the skills of generating ideas, drafting, revising and editing, and much of this can be done as a community with their classmates.

Indeed, often it is their neighbor who can help our students best, not us. Helping our students to foster a community of writers will generate richer classroom discussion, allow for more authentic use of English and give our students ideas they never would have considered otherwise.

In this sample writing lesson, teachers will explore ways in which this can be done in their classes. We will look at writing not as a segregated skill of academic pursuits, but as an integral part of everyone’s language development that builds on related discussion and reading.