

ABSTRACT

RESEARCH PAPER: Understanding and Promoting Authorship in the Middle school Classroom

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The current political state of education sends students, teachers, administrators and curriculum directors looking for a new fix to an old problem. This teacher inquiry poses a challenge to those who can implement and influence classroom instruction to rely on historically proven writing basics that ultimately will prepare students for the fury of testing and for the real world. The triangulated data from this research suggests that by practicing three writing basics of quantity, quality, and technology, students grew in their identity and understanding of authorship and its place on the paper and digital space, as authors and co-authors. This study confirms what other research has demonstrated that writing, and lots of it, is not only a key to better writing, but is the key to learning. Epistemologically, this stance purports that students learn through writing – that we grow in our understanding of ourselves and the world around us by using language. The second basic element of writing is genre study. Genre studies equip students to engage their writing voice to reach a particular situation or audience beyond the 5-paragraph essay to the myriad of writing genres life requires. Through the variety that genre studies opportune, students gain not only from a quantity of writing, but a quality of writing. Finally, technology is essential in the writing classroom. It is the responsibility of the writing instructor to teach students the value and importance of writing for the web, but also the different techniques and challenges it entails with co-authoring and editing, and the collaborative environment the digital space provides.