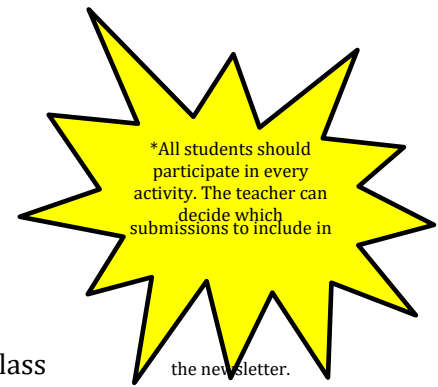


Classroom Newsletter



Overview:

Fun topics + a real audience= students who are eager writers! Creating a class newsletter will accomplish this. Interests and skills such as creative writing, reporting, photography, and drawing can be showcased for friends and family.

Procedure:

- 1) Plan your newsletter by creating a template that includes features such as class news, featured students, artwork, and student submissions. Decide if your newsletter will be weekly, monthly, or quarterly, and prepare your template accordingly.
- 2) Share samples of newsletters with your students. Point out any features that are similar to your template.
Helpful Hint: *Don't feel that you need to create a lot of assignments specifically for your newsletter. Use the newsletter as a showcase for previously completed student work such as poems, stories, and art work.*
- 3) Make sure that all of your newsletter's features are covered. Assign any additional tasks to students. Ensure that all students are represented in the final product.
- 4) Now it is time to publish your classroom newsletter. Work with students to compile a list of recipients (family, friends, peers, school staff, etc.).

ASOLs Covered in this Activity:

There is the potential to teach all writing ASOLs through this newsletter activity. Plan assignments based on individual instructional needs of students.

Here are some ideas for newsletter features:

Featured Student

5E--WP 1b: The student will select an event or personal experience and use drawing, writing, or dictating to compose a message about it.

8E--WP 5b: The student will write to convey ideas and information clearly including facts, details, and other information.

HSE--WP 1b: The student will write to convey ideas and information using clear organization and including facts, details, and other information as well as graphics and multimedia as needed.

Extension Idea: An important feature of a class newsletter is celebrating individual student success!! Students may be featured for earning Student of the Week/Month honors, reaching a specific milestone, demonstrating appropriate behavior, or any number of other achievements. Invite students to write about themselves and/or their accomplishments. For a more interactive experience, have students interview each other and write a paragraph highlighting a classmate.

Student Submissions

5E--WE 4b: The student will write routinely for a variety of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

8E--WP 3c: The student will write routinely for a variety of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

HSE--WP 3a: The student will write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Extension Idea: The newsletter is a wonderful forum to include student submissions such as poetry, stories, articles, and art work. Students should have regular opportunities to write for a variety of tasks and purposes. Publishing their writing in your newsletter will offer their work to a variety of audiences.

What We Learned

5E--WP 5b: The student will recall information from literary and informational text to support writing. (eg. “Use details from text to describe a character in a story.” “Use details from the text to retell what the text says.”)

8E--WP 6b: The student will select quotes from multiple print or digital sources that provide important information about a topic.

HSE--WP 6c: The student will cite evidence from literary or informational texts.

Extension Idea: The “What We Learned” section of a classroom newsletter provides students the opportunity to highlight or apply new knowledge. Examples include writing about interesting scientific facts, retelling historical events, or discussing stories read in class.

Class News/Special Reports

5E--WP 9b: The student will write to persuade by stating an opinion and provide reasons to support it.

8E--WP 5a: The student will write an argument to support a claim with one clear reason or piece of evidence.

HSE--WP 5a: The student will write to express opinion with supporting information about a topic or text and a concluding statement.

Extension Idea: There are countless possibilities for this section. A few ideas include a report of a community outing, movie review, an expose’ on school cafeteria food, editorials/opinion pieces, etc. These assignments should be of high interest to many students as they allow for the expression of ideas and opinions.

Being published in the newsletter can boost the confidence of your early writers. Be sure to give equal representation to your students who scribble, draw, or use alternative pencils to write.

Here are some other skills to teach during the process of creating a newsletter:

Editing Your Newsletter

All newspapers and magazines have editors. Take this opportunity to teach your students about the job of an editor. Consider arranging for the editor of your local newspaper, or even your school newspaper, to speak with students about the job. This is a great time to introduce the editing part of the writing process to students. Some students might be ready to edit entire selections of their peers’ work. Other students might only be ready to check their own work for capitalization or ending punctuation. Consider the following ASOLs when teaching about editing.

5E--WE 3a: The student will demonstrate capitalization by capitalizing the first word of a sentence when writing.

5E--WE 3b: The student will use end punctuation, and correct spelling when writing.

8E--WE 3a: The student will use standard English rules when writing by using ending punctuation and capitalization when writing a sentence or question.

HSE--WE 2a: The student will peer edit writing for correct grammar, capitalization, punctuation, spelling, sentence structure, and paraphrasing. *(*It is recommended that emergent writers only be held accountable for one of these conventions at a time.)*

HSE--WE 4a: The student will edit writing for grammatically correct use of language, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and sentence/paragraph structure. *(*It is recommended that emergent writers only be held accountable for one of these conventions at a time.)*

Publishing Your Newsletter

Once your students have created an amazing newsletter, it is time to make it available to the audience. Will you print hard copies and mail or deliver them? Will your newsletter appear on your class's web page? Maybe you will create a blog. The following ASOLs may be taught through the publishing process.

5E--WP 6a: The student will use technology to produce and share writing.

5E--WP 7e: The student will use technology, including the Internet, to produce writing.

8E--WP 4a: The student will use technology, including the Internet, to produce written work or research report.

HSE--WP 6a: The student will use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish and update an individual writing project.

Materials Needed:

- Writing surface such as chart paper, whiteboard, interactive whiteboard, etc.
- Computer with internet accesses (optional)

Instructional Setting:

Classroom

Community Connections and/or Peer Interaction:

- Invite employees from a local newspaper or magazine to speak with your students.
- Make your newsletter available to friends and family in the community.

Functional Activity/Routine:

- The process of printing and delivering/ mailing hard copies of your newsletter provides opportunities to teach several vocational skills.

Strategies to Collect Evidence:

- Submit individual student submissions as evidence.
- Anecdotal evidence can be used to document individual student performance.

Specific Options for Differentiating this Activity:

- Allow students to use their preferred "pencil" to complete this activity. This may include a writing utensil, keyboard, alternative pencil, or dictating to a scribe.

-A student in any of the developmental stages of writing can complete this activity.

*If your student is a scribbler, be sure to reinforce his/her product as authentic writing, and if necessary, help assign meaning.