

# Resource – Full

*Sharing Ideas, Strategies and Tools*

## #TCRWP and A Teacher's Toolkit for Teaching Writing

By franmcveigh on June 28, 2014

How many notebooks can a person have? Readers notebook . . . writers notebook . . . conferring notebook . . . toolkit? The name is not the most important thing . . . but in the interest of full disclosure, this blog is about the “toolkit” that the teacher would consider using during writing conferences with students OR in small group instruction.

If you want to learn more about toolkits, check out Anna's post this week – [“A Writing Teacher's Summer Project Building a Teaching Toolkit”](http://twowritingteachers.wordpress.com/2014/06/25/a-writing-teachers-summer-project-building-a-teaching-toolkit/)

(<http://twowritingteachers.wordpress.com/2014/06/25/a-writing-teachers-summer-project-building-a-teaching-toolkit/>) or Stacey's [“A Master's Writing Notebook in Evernote”](https://twowritingteachers.wordpress.com/2014/01/15/masterwnevernote/)

(<https://twowritingteachers.wordpress.com/2014/01/15/masterwnevernote/>) for some great ideas about “Why?” and “Should I plan to use tech?”

I began a teacher's toolkit last year and have many of my favorite charts from #tcrwp and #chartchums drawn on the pages. It has four sections: the writing process, argument/opinion, informational/explanatory, and narrative. The toolkit garnered some “oohs and aahs” from teachers and was a great first draft but it is now ready for an upgrade. I'm mulling over my process (paper as in artist sketchbook or 3-ring binder or to bravely and boldly go electronic) as well as purpose (demonstrations for teachers in PD as well as classrooms) and I am at a crossroads.

And then I attended Katie Clements' (@clemenkat) session at #tcrwp entitled, “Don't Teach Empty Handed: Toolkits that Can Help You Teach Explicitly, to Scaffold, and To Keep Track” and I knew that I would have even more questions before I could begin to assemble my toolkit.

Katie said . . . “we can create a writing toolkit to take into our classrooms that has one replicable process that will LIVE in our writing.” She quoted Brian Cambourne and how we need to make sure that learning from our demonstrations sticks. That means that we need to check for high levels of engagement. We often demonstrate writing as well as revision. But sometimes the demonstrations seem to live only in the mini-lesson of our workshop. Many writers would benefit from demonstrations on their own level so the purpose of a toolkit is to help students and provide additional demonstrations at their level. (Clements, 06.24.14, Teachers College Writing Institute)

So how do we do this? Here was the process that Katie demonstrated.

## Four Steps to Creating a Writing Toolkit

Step 1: Study Student Writing and Determine Predictable Needs

Step 2: Create a Demonstration Text by Mirroring Student Writing

Step 3: Name the strategy that will move the writer and design the page

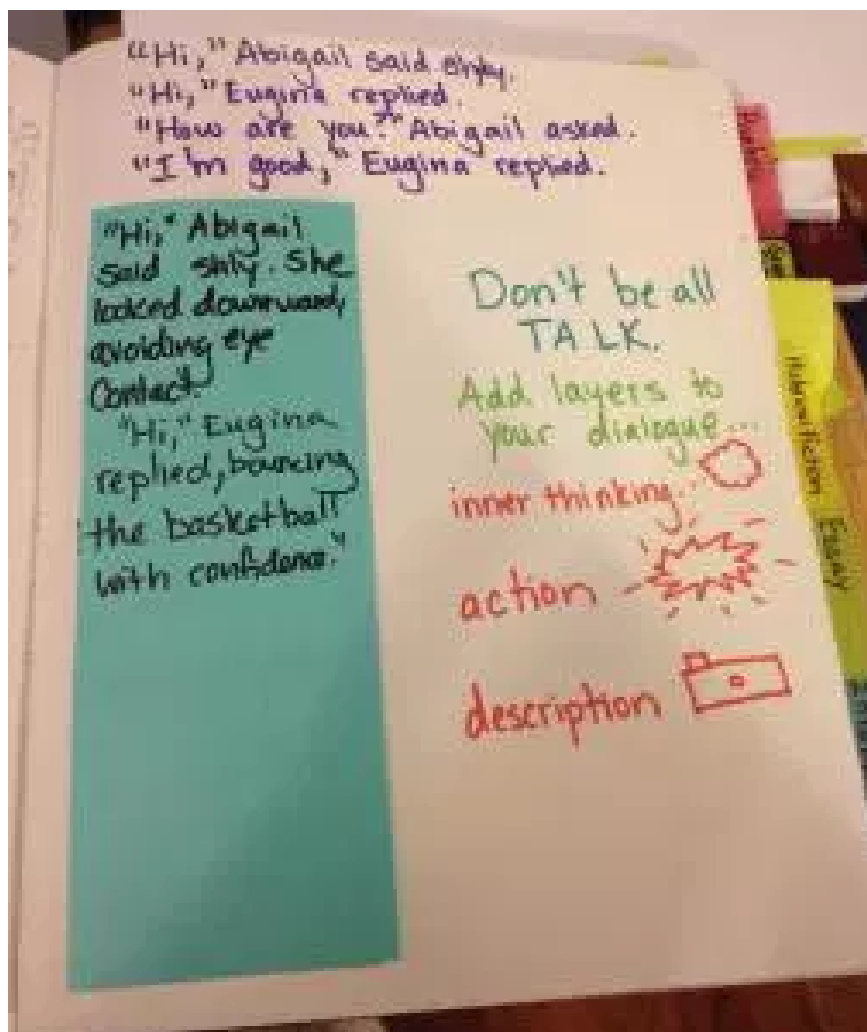
Step 4: Use the toolkit to teach

Three predictable needs for narrative writing are:

- Draft is swamped with dialogue
- No tension (nothing changes between events)
- Telling instead of showing (reporting)

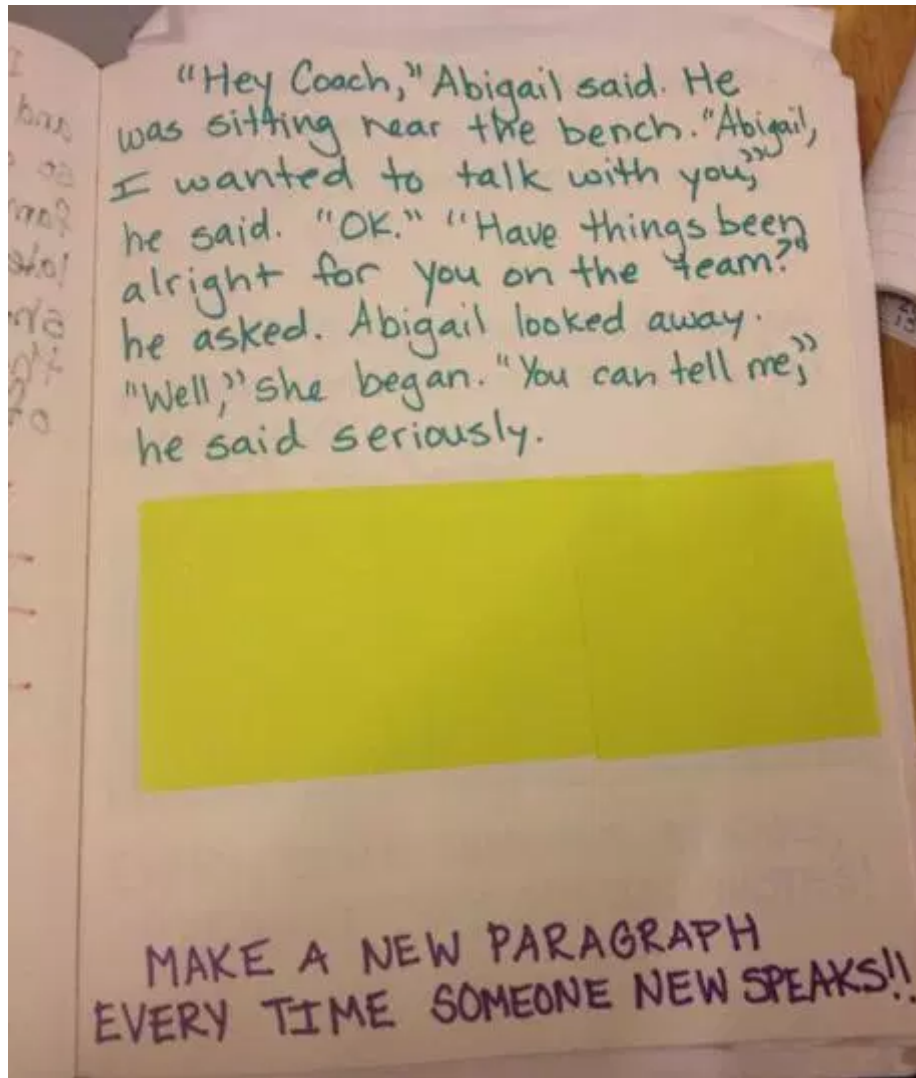
Where would this list of predictable needs come from? Conversation with your teaching peers, reviewing your conferencing data, and considering the needs of your students in previous years. And then the key is to develop the resources in your toolkit for these predictable needs. Consider setting up multiple demonstrations at different levels so that you have the just right example to move the student forward with the appropriate amount of scaffolding!

So what do you do with those predictable problems? Here are examples of Katie's toolkit pages.



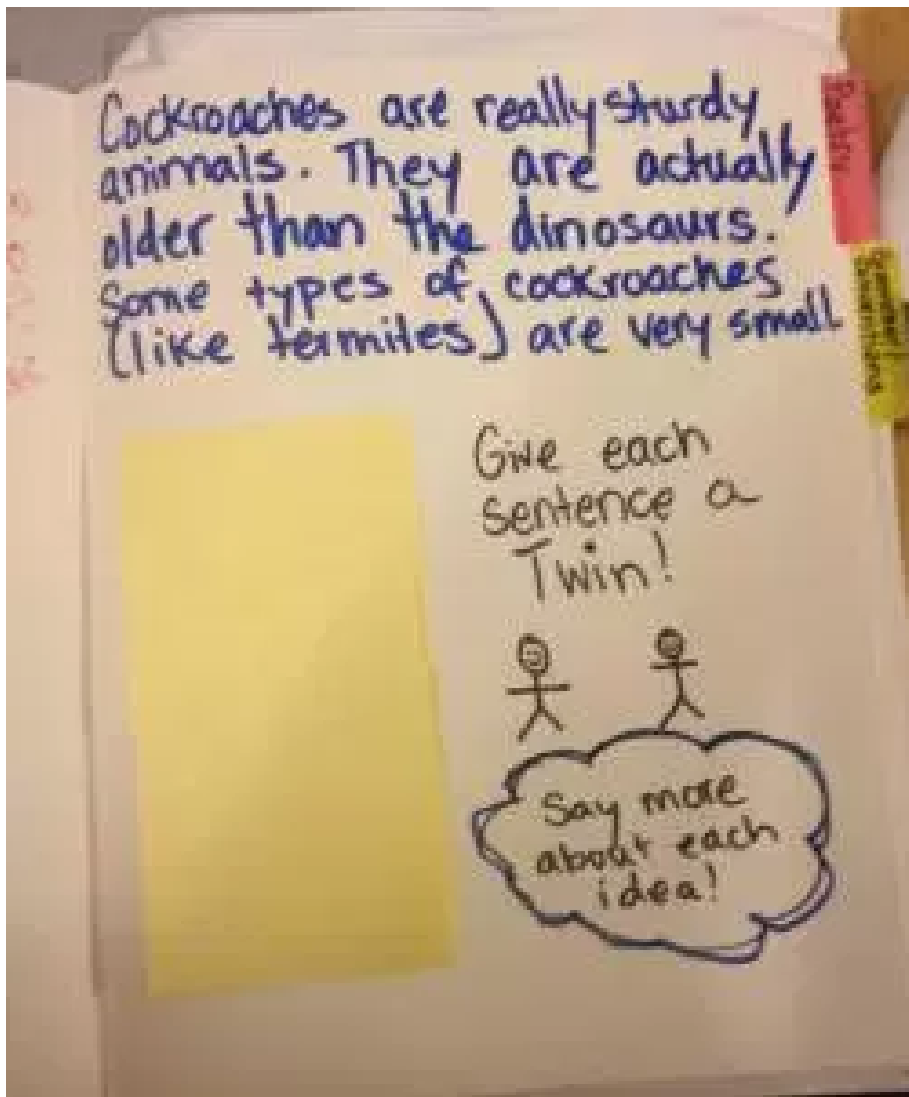
(<https://franmcveigh.files.wordpress.com/2014/06/dialogue-katie-tcrwp.jpg>)

This page includes demonstration text, chart, and place to practice strategies to move from repetitious ping – pong dialogue!



(<https://franmcveigh.files.wordpress.com/2014/06/new-paragraph-for-speaking-katie-tcrwp1.jpg>)

Paragraphing – always someone who needs a bit more practice.



(<https://franmcveigh.files.wordpress.com/2014/06/write-longer-demo-practice-chart-katie-tcrwp.jpg>)

Again, demonstration text, chart, and paper for immediate repeated practice,

Are you considering a toolkit for teaching writing? How are you planning to use it?

(PS. Information writing predictable patterns were included in [Monday's post here](#).

(<https://franmcveigh.wordpress.com/2014/06/23/june-24-day-1-of-tcrwp-writing-institute/>) )

August 8, 2014 – A great new blog about teacher toolkits by Ericka Perry is available [here](#) (<http://toolkitteacher.wordpress.com/>). Check it out!

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Posted in: Writing | Tagged: Ericka Perry, Katie Clements, narratives, predictable writing problems, teaching writing, writing toolkit

## 8 responses

**elsie** June 28, 2014 at 8:29 pm | **Reply**

Thank you so much for this information! This is something that I need to learn more about. Your links will help immensely!

**francmcveigh** June 28, 2014 at 8:39 pm | **Reply**

Elsie,

You are welcome! There are many, many options! The key would be getting started! Do not wait until you have the toolkit put together perfectly!!! (Katie's words – but I agree!)

**Megan K. McCrindle (@ReadwithMEg)** November 13, 2014 at 7:57 am | **Reply**

We have been working on toolkits as a school and are now working on information tool kits. I wish I would have thought of them ten years ago – they are so helpful and really help me stay on topic during conferences and strategy groups.

**#SOL15: Wrapping up 2014 and Studying my Writing Process | Resource - Full** February 3, 2015 at 5:23 am | **Reply**

[...] #TCRWP and a Teacher's Toolkit for Teaching Writing [...]

**A Conferring Toolkit for Writing - Blog - Mr. Nelson - Literacy Support - Issaquah Connect**

March 9, 2015 at 11:21 am | **Reply**

[...] This blog post has some nice examples of pages that can be in a conferring toolkit. I especially like the "predicable problems" pictures. [...]

**#SOL15 Finale: Top 10 Posts from 2015 | Resource - Full** December 29, 2015 at 7:35 am | **Reply**

[...] 2. #TCRWP and a Teacher's Toolkit for Teaching Writing [...]

**#TCRWP FUN | Resource - Full** June 26, 2016 at 2:55 am | **Reply**

[...] 2014 #TCRWP Writing here, here, here, here, and here. [...]

**#SOL17: Retrospect | Resource - Full** December 26, 2017 at 5:46 am | **Reply**

[...] 1. #TCRWP and a Teacher's Toolkit for Writing (2014) [...]

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