

The Most Important Subject

WRITING

Why?

- Writing is THE means by which we demonstrate our knowledge and skills to others.
- Writing is THE means by which we pass our knowledge onto the next generation.
- A student who cannot write well is deemed less intelligent.

Our ability to write reveals

- our knowledge base

- the quality and depth of our thinking

- our ability to understand and analyze

Why?

Writing skills are needed to survive and prosper in a competitive world.

You may be good at math and science, but if you cannot convince others about this by use of words in writing, you are not likely to go far.

Good Writing Instruction

- **takes place in an intellectual atmosphere in which the students are reading heavily**
- **Discussing regularly**
- **spending time in contemplative solitude**

Good Writing Instruction

- **Students receive immediate feedback from their teachers**
- **Students act on that feedback to produce good prose.**

Good Writing Instruction

- **Students read and imitate the great stylists who use the language beautifully—Shakespeare, Dickens, Thoreau, George Orwell, Ernest Hemingway**
- **Students incorporate their powers of observation and propriety of style into their work.**

Good Writing Instruction

- presupposes teachers who
 - read a lot
 - know good writing from bad
 - are not afraid to assign lots of reading
 - want to inspire young writers with good examples
 - try to write and publish their own work.

How do you start?

1. Assign excellent reading assignments
2. Discuss with students.
3. Have students journal reflectively about what they read (time for contemplation)
4. Start writing instruction with analysis and imitation

Classical Writing