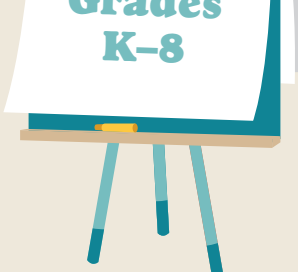


A Teacher's Guide to

Writing
Workshop
Minilessons



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Online Resources

To access the Online Resources for *A Teacher's Guide to Writing Workshop Minilessons*:

1. Go to <http://hein.pub/Minilessons-login>.
2. Log in with your username and password. If you do not already have an account with Heinemann, you will need to create an account.
3. On the Welcome page, choose “[Click here to register an Online Resource.](#)”
4. Register your product by entering the code **XXXXXX** (be sure to read and check the acknowledgment box under the keycode).
5. Once you have registered your product, it will appear alphabetically in your account list of **My Online Resources.**

Note: When returning to Heinemann.com to access your previously registered products, simply log into your Heinemann account and click on “[View my registered Online Resources.](#)”





The online resources for *A Teacher's Guide to Writing Workshop Minilessons* include helpful charts and templates to use as you plan and deliver minilessons.

Online Resource 2.1	Write and Reflect Chart
Online Resource 2.2	Notice, Name, Note Chart
Online Resource 3.1	Minilesson Planning Template
Online Resource 8.1	Kidwatching Chart
Online Resource 8.2	Whole-Group Assessment Chart



You'll also find an introductory video, twelve video clips of Lisa and Patty teaching the different parts of a minilesson, and three examples of full minilessons.

Video 1.1	Welcome Reader
Video 3.1	Recap Type of Connection
Video 3.2	Tell a Story Type of Connection
Video 3.3	Metaphor Type of Connection
Video 4.1	Teacher Model
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Video 6.1	Example of the Link as a Reminder and Invitation
Video 6.2	Example of Link Where Teacher Asks Students to Make a Plan
Video 6.3	Example of Students Staying on the Carpet and Working with the Teacher
Video 7.1	Sample Minilesson 1
Video 7.2	Sample Minilesson 2
Video 7.3	Sample Minilesson—Asynchronous

A Minilesson Is a Part of the Writing Workshop

A minilesson is one part of writing time, commonly known as a writing workshop, which consists of three parts: minilesson, independent writing time, and share time.

The minilesson is the time when you teach the whole class about one particular aspect of writing: process, habit, genre, craft, or convention. Tracy and Kristin were teaching students the craft of how to capture voice in their letters. We learned about minilessons many years ago from Lucy Calkins, the educator who used the term to describe whole-class gatherings. In *The Art of Teaching Writing* (1994), Calkins explains:

Just as the art instructor sometimes pulls students who are working at their separate places in the studio together in order to demonstrate a new technique, so too, writing teachers often gather their students for brief whole-class meetings. I call these gatherings mini-lessons. The mini-lesson can serve as a forum for planning the day's work, as a time to call writers together (like the huddle at the start of a football game), or as a time for demonstrating a new method. (193)



MINILESSON

Students receive direct instruction from the teacher, a guest writer, or a student in some aspect of the writing process, kinds of writing, composition techniques, language skills, or materials and tools.



INDEPENDENT WRITING TIME

Students focus on their writing work and the teacher confers with individuals, partners, or small groups.



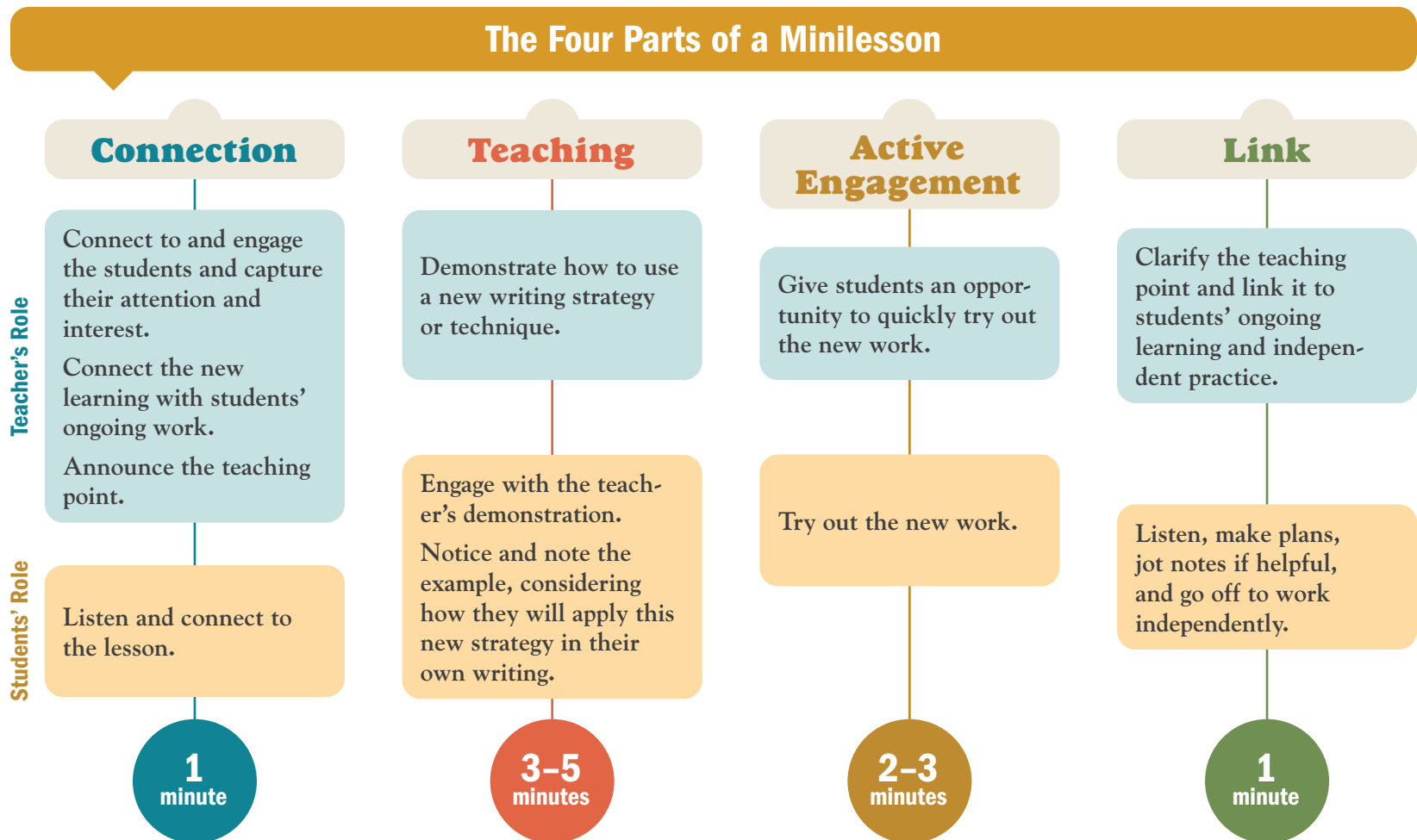
SHARE TIME

Students teach each other as they share something about their writing or their process with a partner, a small group, or the whole class.

From Bomer and Arens (2020)

Minilessons Have a Four-Part Structure

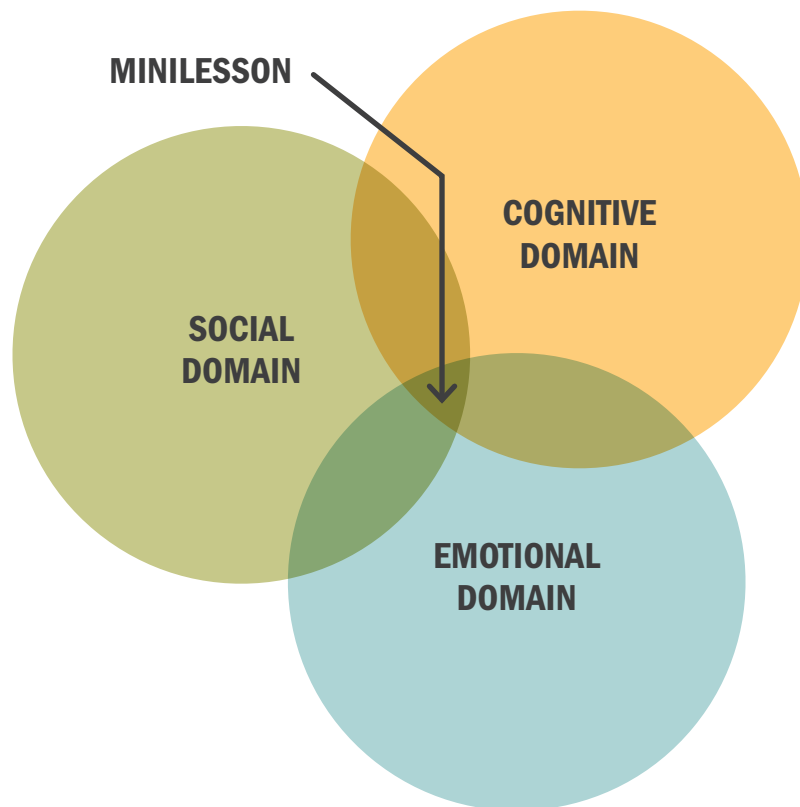
Minilessons have a frame, an organization, a way that they go. Many teachers are familiar with the four-part structure that includes connection, teaching, active engagement, and link (Anderson 2000; Calkins 1994). Embracing this predictable structure allows your teaching to be efficient, focused, engaging, and student-centered.



A Minilesson Is a Culturally Responsive Teaching Move

In the opening anecdotes, we shared two examples of third-grade teachers responding to the academic and social-emotional needs of their students. A minilesson framework allows teachers to connect a lesson—often one that is mandated by a set of standards, a district curriculum, or a grade-level unit plan—to the cultural knowledge and experiences of the students.

During a minilesson, we can draw on what we know about our students and our shared experiences. The most effective minilessons will triangulate academic learning, cultural responsiveness, and the social-emotional needs of our students.



“

I define culturally responsive teaching simply as . . .

An educator’s ability to recognize students’ cultural displays of learning and meaning making and respond positively and constructively with teaching moves that use cultural knowledge as a scaffold to connect what the student knows to new concepts and content in order to promote effective information processing.

Zaretta Hammond (2014)

Inclusive Practices to Support Every Writer



Charts and visuals are popular tools in classrooms. Although visuals are a useful tool, they can actually detract from learning. Oftentimes visuals are overly busy with words, colors, and pictures. So, think less is more, clean rather than busy. As a general rule of thumb:

- 1** Use visuals that represent the array of learners in our classrooms and our world. This means including people who serve as windows and mirrors for our students.
- 2** When creating charts, consider adding no more than four ideas to the chart.
- 3** Use only phrases with carefully chosen words to depict each idea.
- 4** Use color to show both differences and similarities with a concept.
- 5** Consider, but don't feel the pressure to add, a picture/illustration.

Here's an example of a chart that lists ways students can make their story come alive:

Making Our Story Come Alive

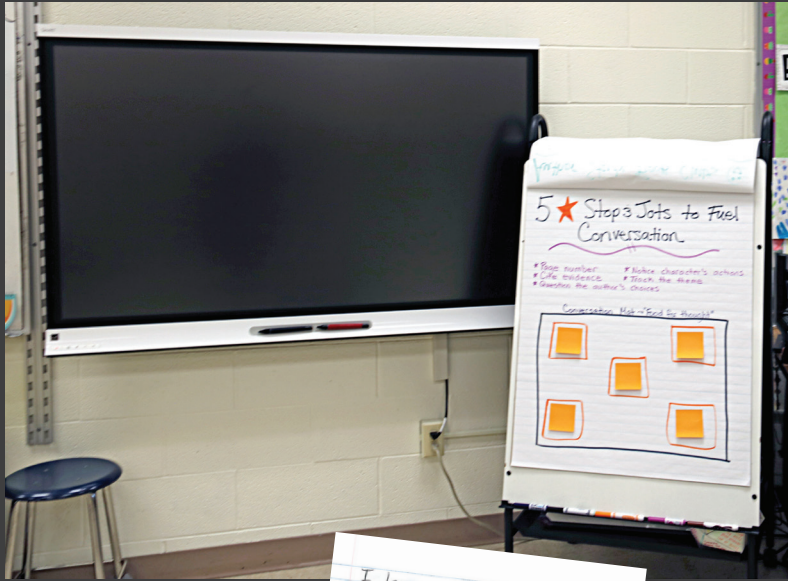
- Describe the action
- Include dialogue
- Tell the inner thinking of the character

Where Do Minilessons Take Place and What Tools Do I Need?

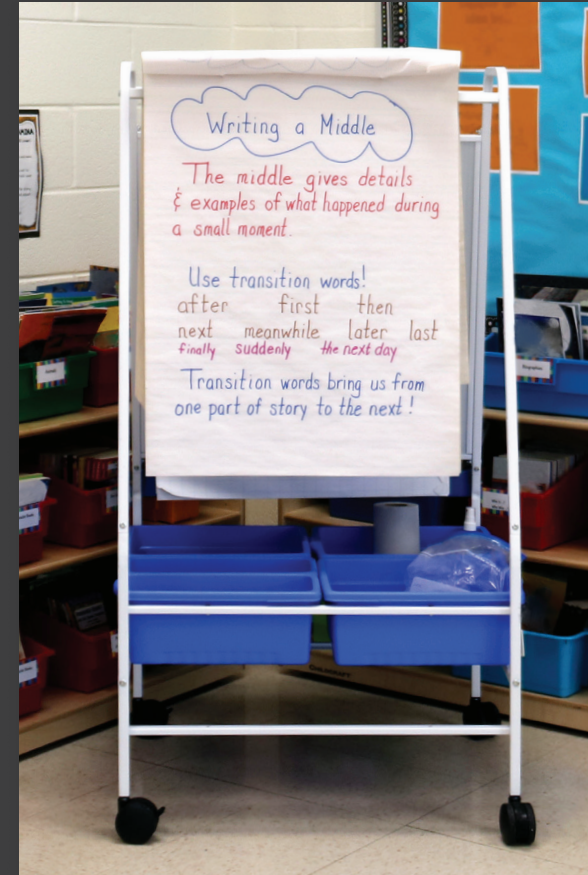


Every classroom needs a designated meeting area to conduct daily minilessons. An easel makes creating charts and demonstrating writing easier. Carpet squares allow students to create smart spots to sit and listen during the lesson.

Using bookshelves and lighting, this meeting area offers students a relaxed and "homey" feel.



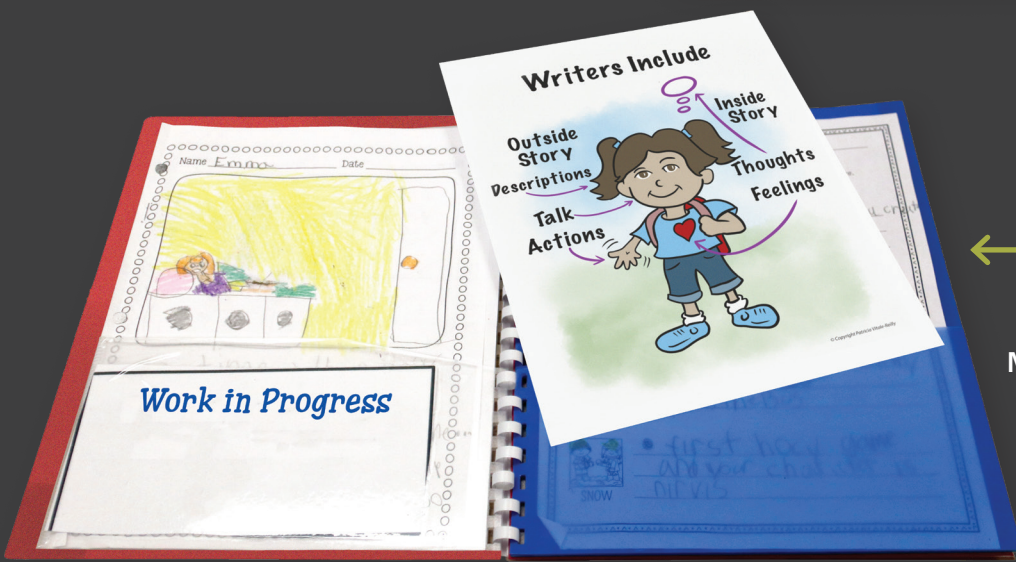
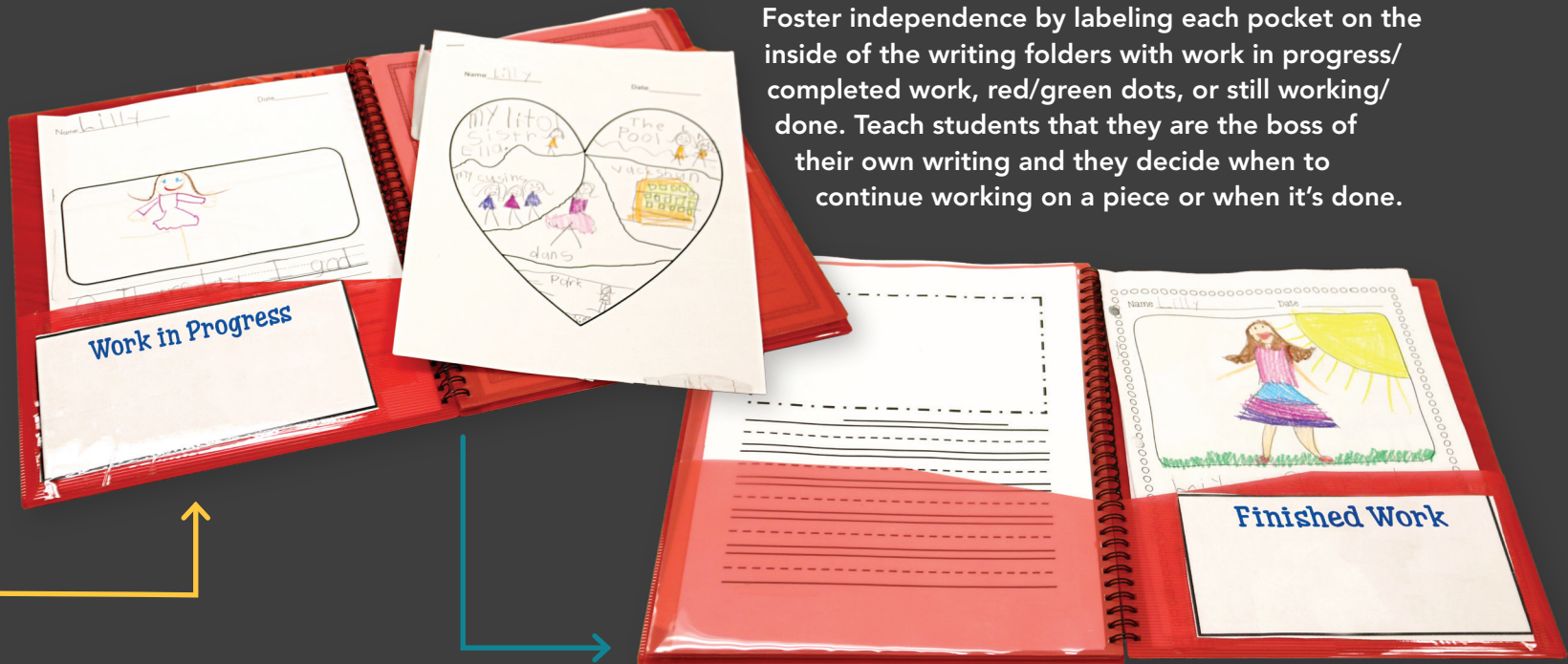
In this meeting area, the teacher has full access to an LCD screen allowing her to easily display writing as she teaches her lesson.



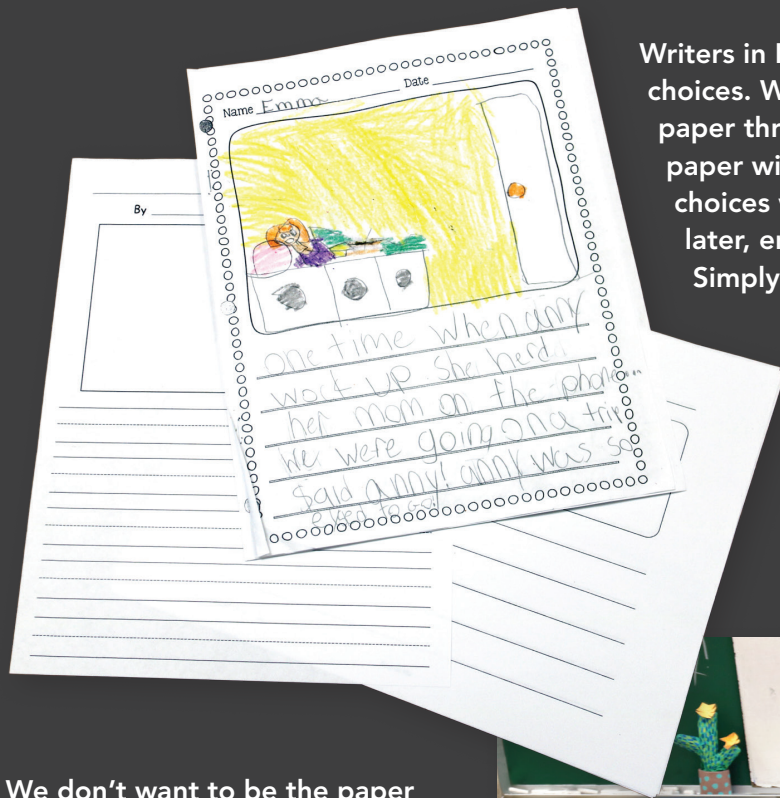
Anchor charts allow teachers to jot down key teaching points from minilessons throughout a unit of study. These charts are kept on display so children can refer back to them as they work.

Writer's notebooks are an important tool for writers in grades 3–8. Writer's notebooks are used daily during writing workshop, but are also often used during the active engagement portion of the minilesson. In addition to entries, charts and other tools can be kept in a writer's notebook, or can be kept in a two-pocket folder.

Foster independence by labeling each pocket on the inside of the writing folders with work in progress/completed work, red/green dots, or still working/done. Teach students that they are the boss of their own writing and they decide when to continue working on a piece or when it's done.



Many teachers use the brads inside folders to add support materials for students. Placing small alphabet charts, mini word walls, or mini charts inside a plastic sleeve places important information at a student's fingertips.



Writers in K–2 need a wide variety of paper choices. We believe in using a gradient of paper throughout the year. Introducing paper with fewer lines early, and adding choices with more and more writing lines later, encourages students to write more. Simply put: the paper is the plan.

We don't want to be the paper passer outers during workshop. To allow us to step back from this tedious role, we provide students with access to all they need to write in our classroom writing center. The materials in these centers vary with the age of our students but common materials include paper, pens, staplers, tape, sticky notes, colored pencils, markers, tape, strips of paper to add on writing, and access to our favorite mentor texts.

