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Letter Box Delivers

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Generating Ideas in Writing

Have you ever sat in front of a class with children looking **unexcited** when writing time arrives? Or, have you been in a classroom where the students are buzzing with IDEAS?

For some children finding something to write about is a harrowing problem. Some children, well most children, need to be taught how to come create an IDEA. **We can all go through stages of paralysis.**

Making old IDEAS new is a favourite of mine. Even such mundane topics as sitting down for tea can be turned into a creative piece of writing. I once had a class write about vegetables. It was awesome. One boy even went so far as to decorate carrots with felt pens so that he could exactly describe the physical traits of his characters.

As a class we had been outside looking for a background for a story and most of the children decided that it would be a great IDEA to pretend to sit in a massive, old, weeping tree that was in the school yard and imagine vegetables living in a garden patch below. From the treetop, the children imagined that they could see the exciting happenings in the garden patch.

While outside, we **shared lots of stories** and the children helped each other make their oral stories exciting. I was thrilled. We went back inside and I **modelled a story** for them on the board. They all became engrossed and couldn't wait for their turn.

I told them that once a writer begins writing there has to be dead silence so that the magic can flow. There wasn't a peep from any of them, and **MY!!!!** Didn't we have some exciting stories, all from the mundane topic of vegetables.

Narrow the Topic

Recently, on Facebook, I wrote a comment about a child's story that had been written during class. The story was about a Welcoming Dance that was being held at school. The student took us step by **boring** step through getting dressed, to getting in the car, to arriving, to eating and THEN..... low and behold, the **GEM** was identified..... SHE DANCED with her MOTHER. This is a common problem with children. They think that they have to tell us everything that happened... they **DON'T!!!!** We, as readers, all know that we have to get dressed before leaving the house; we know that we eventually arrive; we know we need to go in some sort of vehicle and we know that at an event we normally eat. Readers do **NOT** want to read about these things; they want to read about what is really exciting, relaxing and enjoyable.

Writing about the **IDEA** in a Topic is like sifting for gold. When sifting, all of the non -precious material is thrown away and only the **GOLD** itself is kept. This is the same with writing. Children need to dig for the gems. The student above had nearly thrown her gem away, she was lucky that the class noticed it sitting between the boring events. She resurrected the gem and wrote a great story !



Learning the IDEA trait of writing has four areas of learning, namely;

- ☐ generating a topic
- ☐ narrowing the idea
- ☐ developing the idea
- ☐ using the best details to convey the idea

In the above example the student had generated a topic but hadn't explored that topic enough to come up with a narrow idea that could be developed successfully . In writing, a narrowed idea is important so that the development of that idea can be explored by adding details. It is only in this way that all of the points above can be created.

There will be more information about writing with great IDEAS during the week with some examples to support the love of writing.

If you would like to see your child develop in writing email: info@letterboxlearntoread.com

And request a **FREE** writing analysis **NOW!!!!**



Ann Foster

Ann Foster is an experienced teacher who is an expert in the areas of reading, writing and spelling.

Her products and one on one tutoring programs deliver results quickly. She has a track record for her 'bringing it into action' processes that children find easy to implement with quick improvement. She has been working in a variety of schools for the last 30 years, holding Special Education and class teaching roles. She has implemented and trained teachers in reading, writing and spelling programs that work. Ann's studies have been completed in three universities. She has the following degrees; Bachelor of Educational Studies, Master of Education (Special Education), Master of Education (Guidance & Counselling) and a Diploma of Teaching. Her ability to help children move forward to achieve more than they ever considered possible is her defining feature. ©2012