



Workshop Guide

Two Workshops



1st Grade Workshop: Questions for Discussion and Readings



Here are discussion questions linked to each chapter in the 1st Grade Workshop Program featuring Katie DiCesare. You can use these questions to guide your viewing and self-reflection, or focus conversation during study group meetings.

Writing: Guided Writing Group

- How does a guided writing group fit provide extra support for students in writing workshop?
- Why do you think Katie connects the writing back to a book read earlier in the week?
- How does Katie keep students engaged in this group?
- What strategies does she use to meet the individual needs of each student within the group? How does that impact the other students?
- Self-reflection is important for students and teachers. Several times during the tape, Katie asks the students to recognize things in their own work. Discuss those places.

- How does Katie balance time in the group so that students had time to practice and work independently?
- Think about the top part of the notebook as a tool for practice. How might that support your students?
- Katie names things that students do often. Why is this important? How does it support these writers?
- How might skill groups like this transfer to student work during their independent writing time?

First Grade Read Aloud: Rereading

- Katie uses a book they've already read to teach the skill of rhyming. Which books have you read aloud to your students that could be used as a reread for a skills minilesson in writing workshop?
- Katie makes several connections in the conversation about conversations she has had with other students about writing strategies. Why do you think this is an important part of her teaching?
- Katie is teaching a lesson for writing but much of the conversation is about the reading of the book (things they notice and understand). How does Katie work to focus on the skill she is teaching without taking away from the things the kids are naturally doing in their reading?
- The students can't necessarily see the word "Angela" and other "an" words as Katie writes them. But they are part of the process of writing. When do you think it is important that text be large enough for students to see? When is it okay for the print not to be seen by all students?
- How does Katie meet the needs of many students in the minilesson, even though they are not all at the same place in their reading?
- Katie fits in many little tips in her conversation without taking away from the focus of her lesson. How do you balance the focus of your lesson with the teachable moments you might also address during the lesson?
- At the end of the lesson, a child adds the postit note to a wall of others to support this skill. What makes this wall one that is most likely used in the classroom? Why do you think Katie spends so much time adding the words with the children?

First Grade Writing: Envisioning Minilesson

- Katie connects the book she is writing with the students' writing and the things she has noticed. The students seem accustomed to this practice. How do you use children's literature along with your students' writing to teach the necessary skills and strategies?
- The very open-ended question "What did you notice about the writing?" invite a variety of comments from students. How do questions like this meet all students' needs?
- Katie gives students a job to when they go off to write. But she does an oral practice first using an experience that was common to all of them. How does this engage all students and support them as they go off to write on their own?

First-Grade Writing: Conferring

- At the beginning of independent writing time, Katie makes time for students who need a bit of support to get started. It is important that she doesn't jump into a planned conference and makes time for this. How do you make time for the conferences your children need with the ones that you have planned?
- Katie travels around the room while she confers. She goes to the spot where the child is writing. Do you have a specific spot for conferences or do you move to where each student is? Why do you do what you do? What is the benefit for students?
- Katie confers with other students listening in. How do you feel about that? What benefit does that have?
- Katie starts most of her conferences asking students to share their writing. How do you start conferences?
- During conferencing, the other students are clearly very engaged in writing independently. How do you set up routines so that students are using time well when you are conferring?
- How does Katie use similar word work strategies in independent reading that she used in minilessons and small group work on words?
- Discuss your thinking on the way Katie integrates craft, word work, and handwriting into the writing workshop.

- How does the language that Katie uses with her students support them and help them feel comfortable taking risks?

First Grade Writing: Whole Class Share

- Compare your share sessions with Katie's. How is your style different?
- Katie chooses the students to share based on what she sees during the day's workshop. What are the benefits of this strategy? How does it support writers?
- What do you see as your role during share time?
- Katie is honest about her students about how she looks at their writing and notices things. Discuss your thoughts on that?
- How do you make sure that students at various levels of writing share? What do you do to find good qualities in all students' writing?
- Katie has students share who are bringing in skills from earlier in the year minilessons. What message does this give to students? Why is it important?
- How do you support the use of good words in writing? What are your thoughts on "wow" words?

First Grade Reading: Picture Reading Lesson

- How can picture reading support readers at various levels?
- How do you connect lessons so that they make sense to students?
- How does it help that Katie reminds students things that they did earlier in the week?
- Katie marks things with postit notes to highlight students' thoughts. What are some other tools that help you do that during minilessons?
- Much of the conversation is initiated by students, but is connected to Katie's introduction. Katie's questioning strategies seem to support this kind of talk. What do you do to make sure students can have authentic conversations about text.
- How can a lesson like this support all students as they move to independent reading?
- Katie says that picture reading is an "option" for kids in the morning. How do you teach "picture reading" as a strategy for your students?

- How does Katie lead her students through problem solving throughout the book instead of answering their questions? Why is that important as students develop as readers?
- Katie sends students off with a job, saying, "If this happens to you . . ." how do you connect minilessons to independent work and encourage students to use it only when necessary?

5th Grade Workshop: Questions for Discussion and Additional Readings



Here are discussion questions linked to each chapter in the 5th Grade Workshop Program featuring Karen Terlecky. You can use these questions to guide your viewing and self-reflection, or focus conversation during study group meetings.

Reading: Conferring

- Students are very engaged during independent reading time. The classroom is far from quiet as students read and discuss text. How does the fact that

Karen does not require students to be quiet during this time affect her conferences and student interactions?

- Students have a variety of books in their boxes. How can this support students in their independent work?
- Karen travels around the room to work with students. Do you think this is an effective strategy for checking in with students?

Reading: Read Aloud

- Karen starts the read aloud with the question, "What happened yesterday?" How does this question support all readers?
- Karen mentions that she starts with read aloud to build community. What is the purpose of your read aloud time?
- The classroom has a large space for students to gather in one area on the floor. Why is this important in 5th grade?

Reading: Main Ideas Minilesson

- Karen starts the lesson with "Let's talk about what we know when we read nonfiction," to bring her kids back to the ongoing conversation about nonfiction. How do you connect lessons across one big theme or idea?
- How many main ideas might be on this page? How does a question like this get kids ready for the main idea work?
- Karen asks the same question, "How many main ideas?" about several articles. How does this repetition support all readers? How would it support readers at all levels?
- Karen gives time to work on this independently and then comes back to chat. What role does that play in the minilesson?
- This lesson feels like a conversation. What is the tone in your minilesson discussions?

Reading: Status of the Class

- Karen asks students what they are reading. As she records, what are all the things that she learns about her students?
- How does doing this aloud support learning of all students in the classroom?
- Do you think it is important for all students to overhear what each student is reading? How might that benefit them later?
- Karen does not call all names each day. How often do you think it is necessary to monitor in this way?

Reading: Conferring

- Karen starts one conference with the prompt, "What do you notice you have to pay attention to in order to understand?" How does the student's reflection of strategies play a role in your conferring?
- The classroom is silent, but Karen's conferring does not disrupt others' reading. How do you set up conferring so that it is part of the routine of the workshop?
- How often do you ask your students to read aloud to you? What is your purpose?
- How do you balance the things you want to cover in a conference with deciding which things to teach because they come up in the conversation?
- Karen starts all conferences with student thinking. Then she jumps in with some teaching. What is the balance in your conferences between you teaching and students sharing their thinking or learning?

Reading: Small Group Inferring

- How do you pull groups together?
- Karen has an equation for inferring and is explicit in telling the students what the problem is and why are they in this group. How do you let your students know of the goal of a group lesson and what you saw in their work that helped you know what they needed?
- Karen holds this strategy group at a table that is only inches from the floor. What kind of tone does this set that might help support students?
- Karen uses much of the time for students to practice a skill they are struggling with. But she supports them more than she needs to infer other students by sharing her own strategy. How do you use your own strategies as a reader in small group work?
- Why is recording thinking important to this lesson? How do you decide when to have students record their thinking?
- What language does she use to support each student in the group?

Reading: Small Group Summarizing

- This group is much smaller than the other group. Karen is not concerned that groups are equal in size. How do you determine how many students in each group?

- Karen reminds students of a strategy they need based on their work. Again, she is explicit in letting them know the goal of the group. Do you think that this is important?
- This group uses rereading to build comprehension. How do you use pieces students have already read to support them in another skill?
- Discuss Karen's questioning strategies.
- These students needed more support than they received in the whole class minilesson. What are the additional supports that she gives them to support their growth?

Reading: More Conferring

- Karen fits several small groups and conferences into her workshop time. How do you make sure to schedule small groups and conferences to meet the needs of students?
- In this conference, Karen asks for a retelling . When do you want to have a retelling? How do you decide what to focus on in a conference?
- Karen is very interested in the reader's thinking about the book. How do you make time for these types of authentic conversations to find out what a child is thinking?
- How does Karen incorporate self-reflection into each conference?
- Karen shares information she knows about the author of the book that a reader is reading. Why do you think she does that? Is it important?

Word Study: Homework

- How might this lesson change the spelling/word study homework that you give?
- How do you connect word study homework with lessons?
- How might lessons like this support students in their reading and writing?
- How do you use charts to support student learning?

Reading: Sentence Observation

- Do you see this routine as one that could replace others in your classroom? What routines or activities might it replace?
- How might a routine like this build as the year goes on?
- Karen chose these sentences from her read-aloud book. Why do you think she does that?
- How does this routine meet the needs of students at all levels?

- What are the implications for independent writing with a routine like this?
- Do you see this as a better alternative to a routine you have in place to teach these same skills?

Writing: Persuasive Writing Review

- How does defining the words specific to the writing unit support students?
- Why do you think Karen brainstorms topics as a whole class? Students are listing ideas in their notebooks at the same time. Why is this important?
- Karen uses the specific words within the conversation. How do you include content-specific words into lessons?
- Why do you think Karen gives students individual time at the end?
- Karen is teaching important things about persuasive writing and she is also supporting them in getting ready to write. Which part of the lesson do you think is the most important?
- Karen goes back to the vocabulary that was discussed early in the lesson -- why does she do this?
- How do you support your students in minilessons so that they are ready to write?
- Students have options that she reminds them of before independent writing time. What options do your students have during writing time?
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Writing: Conferring

- Karen is using much of this time to collect information. How do you record notes during conferences?
- How does she use conferring time to support students in getting started?
- How does Karen make sure that she teaches while still making sure the student "owns" the piece?
- Karen changes direction when she notices something new in a conference with a student. How do you decide when to go with your original plan and when to change plans based on student comments?
- How do you use conferences to support students in different ways?
- What are the different kinds of supports that different students in your classroom need?
- How are you honest with the weaknesses in students' writing/ideas by still giving them ownership of their writing?