

INSTRUCTIONS FOR A WRITE AROUND

(Suggestion: turn these steps into overhead transparencies)

Form a group of four.

Each person have a large blank piece of paper ready to use.

Each member put their initials in the upper left-hand margin.

EXPLAIN the TWO RULES:

1. Use all the time for writing.

2. Don't talk when passing.

WRITE FOR ONE MINUTE: Write your thoughts, reactions, questions, or feelings about the article. (You may expand this with topic-specific suggestions if needed.

Keep time not by exact minutes and seconds, but by walking and watching kids write. When most students have filled 1/4 of a page, it is time to pass) .

PASS the paper when asked to do so. Here teacher reiterates instructions by saying:

READ all the entries on the page, then WRITE for one minute. You can offer a comment on any or all of the above entries, ask questions, or raise a new topic.

Keep the conversation going! (You need to allow a little more time with each entry because kids will have more to read with each successive exchange).

PASS at the signal.

RINSE And REPEAT.

(4 times, total)

READ OVER: The paper you started and ended up with.

DISCUSS IN WRITE-AROUND GROUPS: Continue the conversation out loud for about 2 minutes.

SHARE HIGHLIGHTS OR KEY IDEAS WITH WHOLE CLASS: Now use kids' write-around ideas to extend and deepen their thinking about the subject. Possible prompts: What was one highlight of your written conversation? A topic that sparked lively discussion? Something people disagreed about?

DEBRIEF: discuss the process. How could we make it work better next time?

(www.walloon.com/conference_handouts/IRA2006/writearound2006.rtf)