



Thank you

FOR YOUR
INTEREST IN
CORWIN

Please enjoy this complimentary excerpt from *Fun-Size Academic Writing for Serious Learning* by Gretchen Bernabei and Judi Reimer. Inside, you'll find 25 ways to use the essays your students write to further the writing process.

LEARN MORE about this title, including Features, Table of Contents, and Reviews.

Appendix A: 25 Ways to Use Great Student Essays

So you've collected a great group of papers from *your* students.

In the old days, we used to just read them and say "Ahh." Those days are gone. Now they're incredible teaching tools, far better than anything we could buy.

So what can you do with them with your class?

1. Read one aloud and see what kids notice.
2. Chunk one into parts, summarize the parts, and draw boxes to show the text structure of that piece.
3. Find one with great linking (structure) and convert it to a template for imitation. For more information, see the “Timothy Toad” lesson (Lesson 37).
4. Devolve one. For more information, see “Devolving an Essay” at www.trailofbreadcrumbs.net.
5. Read openings and listen to the variety.
6. List genres of samples you find.
7. Make a chart of strong verbs.
8. Make posters of your school’s best papers and line up that great work in a “hall of fame” display. (You’ll need permission from the authors and their parents to post the students’ names.)
9. Get a “How I did it” commentary from writers and post annotations with the essay.
10. Look at interesting punctuation across several papers.
11. Find essays with very different voices, and read several aloud. Ask students to describe the differences in voices.
12. Type up one without any punctuation, and try to read it aloud. Compare it to its original.
13. Look at dialogue across several papers.
14. Do a highlighter hunt for brushstrokes (for more information on brushstrokes, see Harry Noden’s *Image Grammar*.)
15. Have students draw what they hear.
16. Underline every other sentence, and read with two voices. Listen for variety in sentence lengths.
17. Do a vocal color-coding: Listen to the first four words in every sentence, in alternating voices.
18. Make a labyrinth on the floor, with corners holding examples of whatever you find in the gorgeous essays, like extraordinary vocabulary, striking verbs, or rhetorical devices. Then use it as a “walk” for students writing their own essays.
19. Devolve one sentence from specific to general.
20. Read one aloud, and write letters to the author.
21. Do a highlighter hunt for truisms or life lessons.
22. Do a highlighter hunt for ba-da-bing sentences (see Gretchen’s book *Reviving the Essay: How to Teach Structure Without Formula* for more on ba-da-bing sentences).
23. Use opening lines as starters for student essays.
24. Draw or map out the text structure.
25. Search for words from the prompt to see where or if they appear in the piece.