



A Jumpstart to Literacy: Using Written Conversation to Help Developing Readers and Writers

Pat Gallagher, Gloria Norton

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All children, given the right tools and encouragement to do so, will write. This inviting little book will help you provide both. It describes a largely unknown and underutilized strategy that has achieved amazing results. Now, for the first time, Pat Gallagher and Gloria Norton make the secrets of this technique available to other educators.

Not shared writing or interactive writing, "written conversation" is a unique technique, in which two partners write back and forth to each other. This coproduced text serves as both a means for communication and expression and as a source of data about the child's knowledge of the sound-symbol system. It's a multifaceted teaching tool that will enable you to focus on what students can do in your assessment of their development and jumpstart students who have encountered early difficulties. Just as important, it is a potent form for giving voice to learners at any age and at any stage of the literacy journey.

Gallagher and Norton describe easy ways to get started with written conversations, pitfalls to avoid, and all the information you can obtain from observing students. You will also learn how and when to respond in ways that will nudge your students into the next steps of conventional spelling. Lots of children's writing samples and teachers' and students' comments show written conversation in action.

A Jumpstart to Literacy is a uniquely valuable resource for anyone attempting to unravel the mysteries of reading and print. Its techniques can be easily adapted to any classroom with any child, and anyone can learn to do it - all that's needed are paper, pencil, and very little training. What you'll learn about your students, their writing, and even yourself will amaze you.

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