



## GCCISD Teachers Take Writing Strategies Back to their Students

Let's face it, not everyone enjoys writing!

"Writing should be a joyous act, not drudgery, and frankly so should the teaching of it," said Jeff Anderson, state and national staff development presenter and writer, in his book, "10 Things Every Writer Needs to Know." After three days of working with Anderson, two days for elementary level and one for secondary, more than 130 Goose Creek CISD teachers and administrators were ready to take some new strategies back to their students to help them experience the joy of writing.

In his staff development sessions, Anderson, a former teacher from San Antonio who also worked with some GCCISD teachers last year, focuses on developing the concepts and application of ten essential aspects of good writing: motion, models, focus, detail, form, frames, cohesion, energy, words and clutter. His book provides dozens of model texts, both fiction and nonfiction, that bring alive the ten things every writer needs to know.

"Learning from Jeff Anderson is always a joy. He has a great way of making the abstract concrete, which is critical for quality writing instruction," said Sarah Flusche, district language arts instructional specialist.

The participants had the opportunity to write, share and give feedback to each other. By going through several activities, they experienced the process as their students will in the classroom. Julie Bartrip, writing teacher from Highlands Junior School, liked that the activities encouraged them to use the five senses.

"We have some great ideas for helping our kids become better writers, especially our students who might struggle with expressing themselves through writing," said Kayla Logan, language arts teacher at Robert E. Lee High School.

According to Anderson, the 10 things every writer needs to know makes writing accessible to students.



(from left, sitting) Rebecca Gonzalez, Kayla Logan and Amy Hightower, ELA teachers from Robert E. Lee High School, share their writing with Jeff Anderson.

"There are truths about writing that are everlasting and don't change," said Anderson.

Tracey Woodson, ELA department chair at Highlands Junior School, is pleased that the writing strategies will work well with the way she teaches.

"We will be able to incorporate iPad technology with the activities," said Woodson.

Elementary teachers went through six of the 10 ideas that were applicable to their students' writing, learning to help students make the connections between reading and writing. One idea from the workshop stood out to Christi Lackey, primary literacy specialist.

"Students should be writing every day about things they know about and care about using mentor texts," she said.

With support from district administrators, teachers will use the 10 things every writer needs to know to inspire students to write and to help them gain confidence in their writing. Anderson is already on the calendar to present sessions for Goose Creek teachers next year.

"Jeff Anderson offers teachers a seamless connection between writing theory and classroom practice. He lives and breathes the classroom and therefore models for us how to transform that classroom into a workshop where students collaborate with peers, conference with teachers, think about words, and write, write, write," said Dr. Nancy Fitzgerald, area executive director of the Ross S. Sterling feeder pattern.



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