

A Passion for Writing: Differentiating for gifted writers



Sarah Kirby

RECLAIMING WRITING

- "It's very peaceful." Selene
- I really like the way it flows-
it's like I'm in a dream." Malia
- "It makes me happy." Kate
- "It's a good time for me to
relax and be cool." Imogen

...YOU TOO

FREE WRITING

WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY?

Gifted children's relationship with their writing.

(Olthouse, 2014)

(8-12 years of age)

- ☐ for the intrinsic pleasures e.g. mastery & fun
- ☐ students value a sense of personal responsibility towards their writing
- ☐ adult modelling, direction and praise were very important
- ☐ the complexity of reading models and writing prompts are the key

“It makes me actually think how creative
I really am!”

IMOGEN,9



Young gifted writers' perspectives on the factors that 'matter' in developing expertise.

(Garrett & Moltzen, 2011)

(15-17 years of age)

- ☐ their primary motivation to write comes from within
- ☐ they require an environment that recognises this inner desire 'to be'
- ☐ freedom and space are critical to their gifts being realised as talents
- ☐ as they got older...constraints increased

Qualitatively different... CONTENT

- ABSTRACT-
- IN-DEPTH...WITH BREADTH-
- CULTURALLY INCLUSIVE-
- ADVANCED IN COMPLEXITY AND
SOPHISTICATION-
- ENRICHED WITH VARIETY, NOVELTY AND
DIVERSITY-
- HAS MORAL, ETHICAL & PERSONAL
DIMENSIONS-

TEACH THE CRAFT

- Let them in on the lives of gifted writers
- Embedding the work of disciplinarians
- Pay attention to gender identity

REALITY

- "There's too much noise around me."
- "People talk a lot."
- "It sometimes gets really hard!"
- " We can make ourselves famous writers when we grow up."
- "It can be sometimes hard to think of an idea."

SPEAK TO THEIR CULTURE..

WHAT IS BEAUTY?

ANALOGY

“Writing is to me, as a sexuality flag
is to the LGBTQ community.

Without it, there isn't much
colourful expression around.”

Keegan, 14

CHALLENGE THEM...USE AUTHENTIC THEMES

Criteria for an Op Ed:

- ✦ Link to a current event
- ✦ Make a point about the current event
- ✦ Write concisely (giving a lot of information clearly & in a few words)
- ✦ Create an effective opening and closing
- ✦ Edit & proofread properly
- ✦ Include an effective title
- ✦ Write 300-500 words

Qualitatively different... PROCESS

- INCLUSIVE OF A SERVICE COMPONENT-
- HIGHER LEVEL THINKING-
- OPEN-ENDED-
- 'REAL' -
- METACOGNITIVE-
- ACCELERATED IN PACE & EXPOSURE-

NOVELTY, DIVERSITY, AUTHENTICITY

TAKE THEM OUTSIDE
THE CLASSROOM

THIS TRULY MAKES A DIFFERENCE...

TAKE WRITING&THINKING OUTSIDE

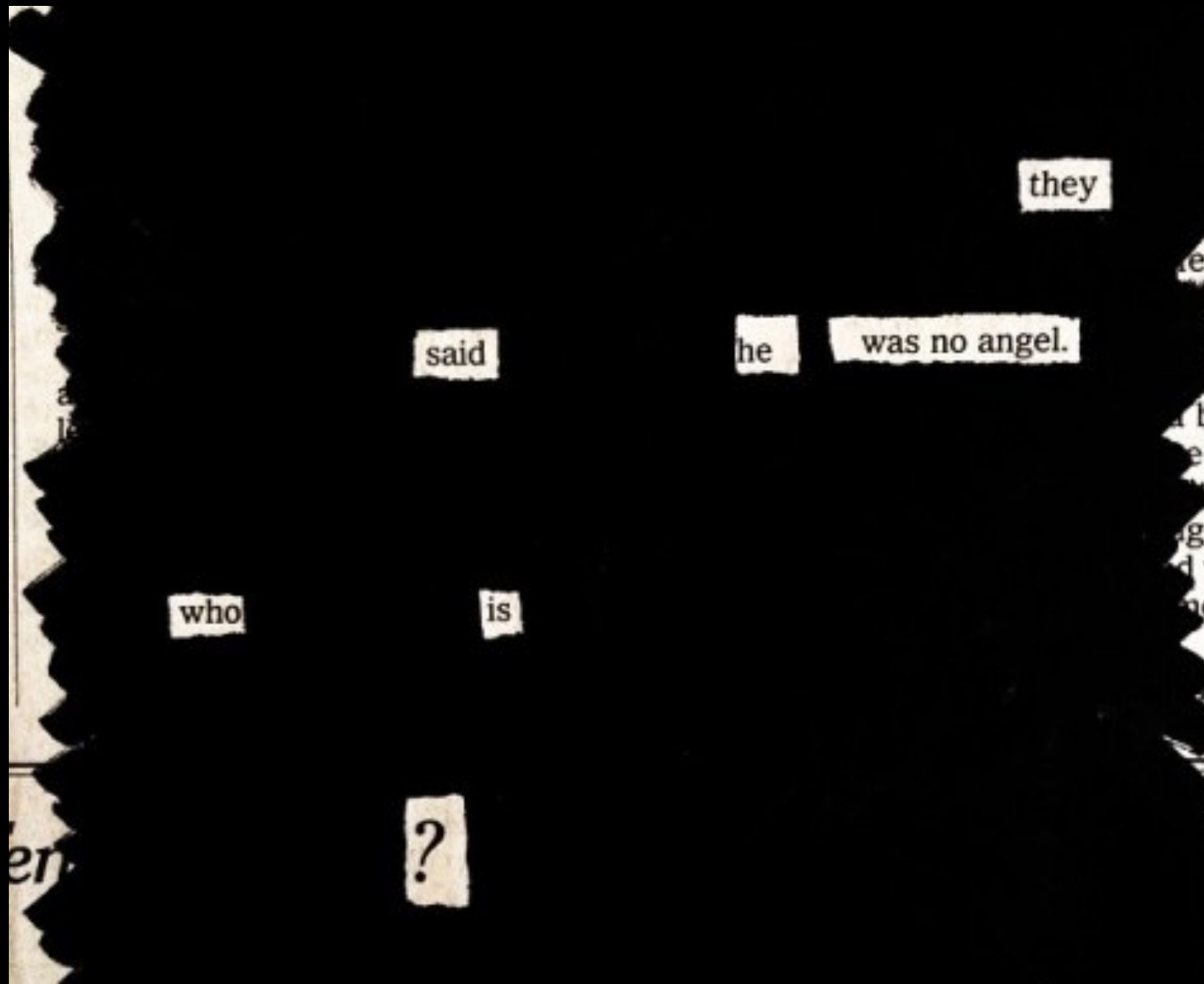
BRING FLORA TO THE CONCRETE JUNGLE

Take your students outside to publish their work on
playgrounds and footpaths.

- Take the students to your school or local library for some Book Spine Poetry

SHORT...ESSENCE...COMPLEXITY

BLACK OUT POETRY



LIKE MINDS...

BRING THEM TOGETHER

“I got my ideas out.” **Jacob.**

“Hearing each others’ work helps me improve because I adapt to better ways of writing.” **Jasmine**

“I have grown confident to share my work.” **Sarah**

“The topics we’ve been forced to write about, bring me into a different world that isn’t zombies and gore.” **Seabrook**

Give plenty of formative feedback...

peers and teacher

WHERE TO NEXT?

MY MASTERS INQUIRY: IS DIALOGIC PEER FEEDBACK VALUABLE FOR GIFTED WRITERS?

- 30/34 said YES
- "Yes, because it helps me expand my ideas and to figure out what to do next."
- "She always gave me good feedback and it was never mean or too nice. Everything she told me was helpful and I always understood her."
- "It gives you a confidence boost and they're at your stage of writing so they can use that feedback too."
- " Getting feedback from other people my age helps me make my writing more relevant to my peers."

Qualitatively different... PRODUCT

- 'NEW' AND 'REAL' TECHNIQUES, MATERIALS
& IDEAS -
 - SELF-SELECTED -
 - WIDE IN VARIETY -
- SHIFT FROM 'CONSUMER' TO 'PRODUCER' -
 - TRANSFORMATION OF IDEAS -

Andrew Fitzgerald: Adventures in twitter fiction

DO YOU REALLY UNDERSTAND...

WHY THEY NEED YOUR
HELP?

KEEP IN MIND

YOU ASK A LOT..

V IS FOR VULNERABLE

Websites I visit regularly...

The Literacy Shed: literacyshed.com

Ian Byrd's website: byrdseed.com

Big Think: bigthink.com/themes World changing ideas-

Animated: thersa.org

Austin Kleon: austinkleon.com

Brain Pickings: brainpickings.org

Books I love about writing...

Why We Write Meredith Maran

Writers on Writing: Collected Essays

Release the Bats: Writing your way out of it DBC Pierre

My teeming brain: Understanding creative writers J Piirto

Provisions for Creative, Gifted and Talented Children Elwyn S Richardson

The Exercise Book Victoria University's Institute of Modern Letters