

Q&A with Ms. Lenore Look

Q: Does my child need Writer's Workshop if she's already enrolled in InspirED Reader and Writer? Won't she already be doing enough writing there?

A: Need can be determined by their level of interest in writing. If your child would rather dance or play the oboe, go with that. They're telling you what they need to do.

Writers' Workshop is designed to complement the program, not be redundant. Young writers will be exposed to mentor texts and exercises that are not in the InspirED curriculum.

Q: Will Writers' Workshop help my child write better essays for college admissions?

A: The skills they learn as writers will definitely have many useful applications. Since we specifically focus on making books, a young writer in the program may choose to make a collection of essays. The personal essay is a very powerful and direct form of writing that requires finding and developing one's voice. Voice is what distinguishes merely good writing from the truly sublime.

Q: My child fears writing. It gives her great anxiety. She writes only the bare minimum for her assignments. Will you be able to help her?

A: I don't want to help her, and I don't want her to view me as someone who will solve problems for her. My goal is to nurture her in a way that makes her independent first, and interdependent second. She'll get a lot of practice generating ideas and writing, hopefully in a way that is joyful and meaningful to her. And the more you practice something, the more it becomes your friend and teacher. From the very beginning she'll learn to help herself.

Q: Hi, I'm a kid. I really don't want to take your class because I already know how to write super well. I always get the top grade, I'm brilliant, and I don't want any feedback on my writing because I know other people's opinions can ruin it. How can I convince my mom not to waste her money?

A: Well, Sweet Egg Tart, you don't know this yet, but there will be many things in life that you must do, but don't want to. And since you're a girl after my very own Chinese heart about saving money, I'll also let you in on a secret. The sooner you learn to say to these situations, "Hello, you are my friend and teacher," the more money you will have in your pocket because you won't be paying for psychotherapy.