



Writing to Live: How to Teach Writing for Today's World

Lorraine Wilson

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- *I recommend this book to all teachers who teach writing . . . the way you teach writing will change forever.*
- Brian Cambourne, Wollongong University

If a school reflects the beliefs of its community, then its curriculum mirrors how children are valued and what kinds of learning matter most. In some schools well-intentioned writing curriculum disengages students from their world by artificially limiting their natural zest for self-expression. That's why, argues Lorraine Wilson, it's crucial that writing be structured to open students' eyes and excite them with the many possibilities that literate behaviors offer. *Writing to Live* specifically addresses ways to make writing curriculum relevant to students' lives while helping them develop the skills to become active, critically aware citizens. Wilson introduces a variety of contemporary, research-based strategies that bring writing instruction into the moment and engage students—strategies such as:

- welcoming children to think and write about "hot topics" of their choice
- encouraging them to bring their out-of-school literacies into the classroom
- inviting them to explore a broad range of genres
- asking students to write with purpose and answer challenging questions
- promoting critical literacy techniques such as considering author purpose and values, identifying stereotypes, and responding to and rewriting texts.

Wilson's strategies develop children's self-confidence as writers and readers while giving them an opportunity to voice concerns, express opinions, and seek answers to questions of social justice. And to help you understand how her ideas work in practice, she provides a detailed account of two upper-elementary classrooms where the curriculum is relevant to students' lives, and activities such as writing, reading, role playing, and drawing cultivate active, critically aware citizens.

Every community loves its children, but in some places, the writing curriculum doesn't nurture students in ways that help them develop into responsible decision makers. Let *Writing to Live* be your guide, and make a change for the better.

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