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A Teacher's Guide to Getting Started with Beginning Writers: Grades K-2

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A Teacher's Guide to Getting Started with Beginning Writers: Grades K-2

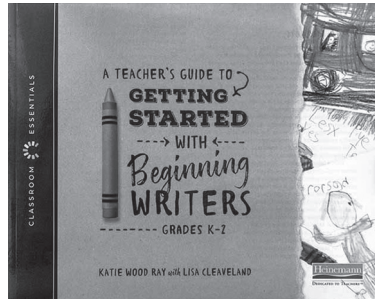
by Meghan K. Block, Ph.D.

Ray, K. W. &
Cleaveland L. (2018)

*A teacher's guide to
getting started with
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Grades K-2.*

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**Meghan K.
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Many teachers identify writing instruction as an area they want to know more about—especially in the early elementary grades. In my experience, many teachers simply want to know where to begin and report feeling underprepared to establish a classroom culture of writing. Katie Wood Ray and Lisa Cleaveland address this concern in their book, *A Teacher's Guide to Getting Started with Beginning Writers: K-2*. They use the book to recount the process they used to establish an effective writers' workshop in which young children were working to compose books while learning about language and writing. Through their explanations, they offer readers useful strategies to organize instruction and thereby to inspire young writers.

The authors begin their book by addressing the importance of children learning through language and children learning about language in the early elementary years. They suggest that the writing workshop allows children to learn through language, and to be successful, teachers must also thoughtfully provide opportunities for children to learn about language throughout their day. As such, though the book focuses on the writers' workshop, the authors also include recommendations for infusing language-learning throughout the day and for supporting important literacy skills (e.g., letter-sound knowledge, print concepts, etc.) throughout the writing workshop.



The book is organized into chapters thoroughly explaining five days of setting up the workshop at the very beginning of the school year. Though they describe five days, the authors also acknowledge that readers should use this book and their suggestions as a guide to the process—a process that could take any number of days. Throughout the book, there are useful examples and sample language to use with children to support their writing development. In fact, one of the most useful aspects of the book is that the authors provide sample language to use with children and then annotate the ways in which that language supports writing development. For example, the book suggests that telling a child they will get their book back the next day to continue writing helps the child understand that writing is an extended process that evolves over time. In addition to the helpful tips throughout the book, Ray and Cleaveland have also included video clips to

support teachers. Finally, the authors also provide space in the book to write notes and brainstorm ideas. In general, the book would be very useful for new teachers and teachers who are looking to facilitate more writing in their K-2 classroom.

Overall, this book serves as a useful resource for teachers who are looking to add more writing into their literacy instruction. Teachers will appreciate the accessible language and the reader-friendly layout. Upon reading this book, teachers will likely feel supported and inspired to establish meaningful writing experiences into their early elementary classrooms.

Author Biography

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