



April is National Poetry Month



Celebrate poets and their craft while preparing for the NJ ASK! Students in grade 5 are required to first read a poem and then write an informative/explanatory essay on the topic (CCSS: W.3.2, W.4.2, W.5.2).

Engage your students by connecting poetry to Reader's Theater.

The website <http://www.poetryteacher.com> provides fun activities that are sure to please!

Teach Good Writing Using Writing Samples

Looking to improve the writers in your class?
Turn your writers into critics!

Show your students what good writers do by examining actual district, school and grade specific NJ ASK writing samples. Using the Writing rubric, ask students to score the essays, noting areas of strength and weakness. Then have students practice scoring their own work! They will be amazed at what they discover. If you have not seen the samples already, please ask your principal or reading specialist for a copy.

Another great resource to highlight good writing is the CD, *Write Smart Houghton Mifflin Harcourt*.

Increasing Vocabulary:

Be a Writing Risk-Taker!

The CCSS in English Language Arts focuses on academic vocabulary. A strong vocabulary is necessary for success on the NJ ASK when tackling both reading passages and writing tasks. Therefore, the students should be taught specific vocabulary needed to understand a passage and related questions. Encourage students to use more sophisticated, higher-level vocabulary words when writing a story or responding to text. Remind students it's great to be risk-takers with their writing!

The Art of Summarizing

Students often have difficulty using precise language when they write and may include too many extraneous details. At the beginning of each day, share a short piece of interesting writing (newspaper article, on-line blurb, or excerpt from a favorite book). Have students date and record a one sentence summary in their notebook. It's harder than you think!

For more information go to: <http://www.stenhouse.com/assets/pdfs/0356ho.pdf>



NJ ASK Updates: What's New in 2014?

- The 2014 NJ ASK will measure the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) within the current NJ ASK blueprint.
- Writing prompts will become more text dependent.
- At least 50% of reading passages will be informational.
- All reading items will ask questions that address the Common Core State Standards strands:
 - Key Ideas and Details
 - Craft and Structure
- Reading and writing field-test items are included, but do not count in students' scores.

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/assessment/es/njask/NJASKPres.pdf>

Mark Your Calendars...

NJ ASK5 Dates



Monday, May 5, 2014

- Language Arts Literacy Day 1

Tuesday, May 6, 2014

- Language Arts Literacy Day 2

Wednesday, May 7, 2014

- Mathematics Day 1

Thursday, May 8, 2014

- Mathematics Day 2