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Crystal Ball O'Connor, PhD

Common Core Reading and Writing Program

Dr. O'Connor's Common Core Reading and Writing Program improves students' literacy skills through carefully crafted author visits, writing residencies, and professional development. Inspiring for teachers and students alike, the author helps students feel a genuine connection to what they read and what they write. Students learn to observe their lives and the world around them while drafting, revising, editing, and publishing well crafted narratives and expository texts.



"Dr. O'Connor has visited our schools for the past five years and we intend to continue well into the future. Our writing scores have improved tremendously, one grade level by 25 points! Each year students greet her with hugs and cheers" Violet Salisbury, Reading Interventionist, Hampton, SC

CCRWP is centered on Dr. O'Connor's highly acclaimed children's books. She believes that excellent writing is inspired by reading, observing, and telling stories that really matter to the writer. Students and their teachers make authentic, personal connections to the author, her texts, and their own experiences relating to family ties and a sense of belonging. Writing practice relies on a close reading and understanding of her texts, a focus on making personal writing more informative and evidence based, engaging in academic discussions about the author's work and their own work, and giving students ample time for thoughtful practice.



"Dr. O'Connor takes the mystery out of learning to write well. With her guidance, students amaze themselves with the writing they produce. Our highest poverty school went from 13.2% Exemplary to 25% Exemplary on the fifth grade state writing exam in one year. Another Title I school went from 33% to 54% Exemplary. She also inspires teachers and conveys valuable insight into the writing process." Sharon Duffy, Coordinator of Federal Programs, Pickens County

Using The Six Traits of Writing, the CCRWP is tailored to the grade level from grades K – 8. There is a natural grade level and skill progression in Dr. O'Connor's approach to balanced literacy instruction, providing optimal student writing development. This specific, focused progression is mirrored in the ongoing professional development, providing development to teachers that promotes the writing growth in their students. This approach will be especially beneficial as South Carolina adopts Common Core State Standards and returns to a standardized writing assessment for grades three through eight.



"Year after year, we invite Dr. O'Connor back to our schools to share her outstanding program with students and teachers. Hers is one of the best programs I have ever seen connecting literature, the arts, and writing across the curriculum. Invite her to your schools this year!" Dr. Randy Dozier, Superintendent of Georgetown County Schools



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