Find Your Voice Through Talking

1. Focus

Explain Finding Your Voice Through Talking

Say: When I’m going to draft a memoir, I often talk out loud about the event in my life I’m going to write about before I start to draft. I use my planning chart to prompt me as I talk. By talking about my memoir ideas, I get into a flow and the ideas just come to me. Then when I start drafting, I just tell the story again on paper. Today I’m going to show you how to “talk to write” when drafting your memoir.

Model Talking About Your Memoir

Display the planning chart on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources.

Objectives

In this mini-lesson, students will:

• Learn how a writer finds a voice by verbalizing before drafting a memoir.
• Practice talking about memoir ideas.
• Discuss how to apply this strategy to their independent writing.

Preparation

Materials Needed

• Chart paper and markers
• Memoir Planning Chart (BLM 4)
• Interactive whiteboard resources

Advanced Preparation

Have available the Memoir Planning chart you developed on chart paper in the lesson “Organize Ideas for a Memoir” or use the interactive whiteboard resources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circumstances:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My first job</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Span:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beginning when: summer when I turned 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ending when: end of summer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Related Events:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. being excited and having high expectations about earning money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. finding out how difficult the job was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. getting my first paycheck and being disappointed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. thinking about options and deciding that learning a profession might not be a bad idea</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Reflection on the Events:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My experiences changed my mind about wanting to go to college.</td>
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</table>

Say: This is the planning chart I developed around my memoir topic. I can use the events I listed to prompt me as I talk about my ideas for my memoir. I’ll begin with the first event on the chart.

About the first event. Say: I was excited when I found out I had been hired at a local restaurant. This was an opportunity for me to earn my own money. I pictured saving my money and having it add up. I pictured how independent I would feel. It started me thinking about not going away to college, but instead, starting to earn money as soon as I graduated. I could hardly wait for my first day at work! Talking about the first event really helps me get an idea for how I want to start my memoir. I find that I fill in details naturally as the memories come back to me. I can continue talking about the next event.

Continue to model talking about the events on your planning chart.
2. Rehearse

Practice Talking About Your Memoir

Ask students to work with partners. Students will use the planning charts they have developed for their memoir topic. Students will take turns talking about the first event on their charts.

Share and Discuss Talking About a Memoir

Bring students together and invite them to share what they talked about. Discuss how talking about ideas before beginning their draft can help them when they write.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We just learned that we can talk about our memoir ideas, using our planning chart as a prompt. Talking about the events helps us remember details. Remember that if you talk about your ideas before writing, you’ll have a first draft that captures your personal voice, emotions, and details.

Encourage students to use their peer conversations to help them as they draft their memoirs. During student conferences, invite students to talk through additional ideas with you if they are having difficulty moving forward in their drafting.

4. Share

Bring the class together. Invite two or three students to share how the experience of talking about their ideas with a peer helped them as they wrote.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning

During the practice activity, encourage students to talk about a part of their memoir using whatever language they have. Help them put down some words on the BLM that they remember from their verbalizing.

Intermediate and Advanced

Pair ELs with fluent English speakers for the practice activity.

All Levels

If you have ELs whose first language is Spanish, share these English/Spanish cognates: memoirs/las memorias; flow/el flujo; details/los detalles.