

# Sample Structure for Kid-Centered Library Writing Time

*Focus on creating confidence, creativity, and joy through low-pressure, kid-centered writing experiences.*

## Welcome & Check In (10 min)

Everyone introduces themselves and answers a fun, low-stakes question. This activity is centered on talking, not writing. Some examples:

*If you were a pizza topping, what would you be and why?*

*If you were an animal, what would you be and why?*

*You've invented a dance move. What does it look like and what is it called?*

Keep it playful.

## Warmup (10 minutes)

Use a prompt to get kids thinking and writing.

*Provide markers/crayons to create art kids will write about later.*

*Cut words out of magazines to use in guided writing time stories.*

*Do a pass-the-story activity.*

*Role play writing: Pretend you are a \_\_\_\_\_; write about your day.*

*Make mini books to use during guided writing time.*

*Share a picture book and talk about what makes the story great: rhyme, repetition, humor, character development, plot.*

## Optional Sharing (5 minutes)

## Guided Writing Time (15 minutes)

Give participants time and space to create. Provide ideas but also room for kids to decide what they want to do. They may:

*Build on the prompts they used in warmup today or another day.*

*Continue working on longer-term projects.*

*Try a writing activity with a visiting author.*

## Sharing and Feedback (10 minutes)

Focus on giving each other positive feedback with starters such as:

*I liked ...*

*I wondered ...*

*I noticed ...*

*My favorite part was ...*

Model giving positive feedback. The goal is to build confidence and community.

## Wrap Up (10 minutes)

Give each participant an opportunity to reflect:

*What did you try today that you hadn't done before?*

*What are you proud of?*

*What was the easiest/hardest part of writing today?*

*If you had 10 more minutes, what would you add to your story?*

*What do you hope we do next time?*

## **REMEMBER:**

- This isn't school. Celebrate effort over quality.
- It's OK to abandon a piece and start something new.
- No required sharing.
- No correcting spelling or grammar unless a child asks.
- Because not all participants will attend all sessions, plan stand-alone activities rather than projects that build week to week.
- Remember that all storytelling counts: lists, poems, comics, graphic novels, oral.
- When kid creators get stuck, don't solve their problem. Instead, ask: What happens next? Or encourage them to draw instead of writing. Or suggest adding a problem or surprise.
- Gently redirect dominant participants
- Support shy kids with partner or small-group sharing
- Over time, you will get to know the personalities, skills, and interests of those who regularly attend. Tailor sessions to fit their needs.

### **Mindset Matters**

- ✓ You do not have to be a writer to lead a writing program.
- ✓ Your primary roles are to facilitate and encourage.
- ✓ Curiosity and support matter more than expertise.
- ✓ If participants leave feeling proud, heard, and excited to create again, the session was a success.