**TEACHER MODELS INFORMATIONAL WRITING: The Star-Spangled Banner**

In order to build background knowledge, a few days can be spent on the following activities (any reasonable order is appropriate):

1. The classroom bulletin board may be decorated with flag and SSB, vocabulary words: patriotism, Star Spangled Banner, Civil War, Mary Pickersgill, Walt Whitman, carpenter, ploughboy, etc. Add words as they come up during the lesson and refer to the bulletin board frequently during teaching.

1. Learn or review about Francis Scott Key and the Battle of 1812 incident at Fort McHenry in which he wrote the Star Spangled Banner.
2. Discuss “patriotism” and learn more about it.
3. Choose one or two appropriate children’s books related to Francis Scott Key or the SSB or read parts of the books or review as appropriate on an ongoing basis in order to review and inspire feelings during the writing process.
4. Read together the SSB song lyrics.
5. Read about Mary Pickersgill; read The Flag Maker together.
6. Play the song “Anacreon in Heaven” so that students see that Key was setting the words to a tune he already know.
7. Listen to the song being delivered in a manner of 1816 by Hildebrand.
8. Chant the song with teacher’s assistance to help memorize the words. Perhaps chant while actively dancing or while standing in a circle alternately saying the words. This procedure can be practiced daily or as often as appropriate.
9. Sing the song together at appropriate times, using written words as necessary, standing and with hand over heart if desired.
10. Work in pairs or similar to discuss what we have learned about the people of the period. Groups should draw a picture that demonstrates the main ideas on poster paper.

12. Have students work in groups to add ideas to the Pre-write templet. They write facts they have learned or ideas deduced from the historical information.

1. The following day, some of these ideas and facts on the board on the board and discuss the reasoning behind them.
2. With the assistance of students, teacher chooses three of the important facts of the time period and prewrites details about these ideas. Teacher might demonstrate drawing a picture for and writing a detailed description of the facts, and then allow students to choose another and write their own individual descriptions for practice.
3. Continue to read and review the children’s books, review the lyrics, chant, dance, sing often during the writing process in order to allow students to re-evaluate and re-determine their opinion positions.
4. . Teacher demonstrates introduction, main body (probably 3 paragraphs with the 3 main ideas, well-reasoned), and conclusion. Teacher may make errors and use less than adequate description or reasoning, so that these corrections may be made during the demonstration of editing. Teacher may demonstrate drawing an illustration to accompany writing as well, or discuss illustrating a story and have each student draw their own illustration with caption and add to bulletin board.
5. Continue to sing, discuss, refer to bulletin board, read parts of stories before each day’s writing so that students will have renewed vigor and ideas to contribute.
6. Teacher demonstrates editing the writing with the assistance of students. Teacher asks questions like, does this introduction really and in an orderly manner tell the reader what to expect in our essay?, could the structure of this sentence be improved?, can we add details here to help the reader understand our feelings better?, could we add an adjective here to improve the detail in our writing?, are the paragraphs appropriately placed and is each one on topic?, does each paragraph have a clearly written topic sentence?, are there any spelling, punctuation, capitalization errors?, does the conclusion concisely restate or draw conclusions about the opinions stated?. Teacher makes lots of corrections, probably in different colored marker, so that students clearly see that even the teacher’s work needs lots of editing.
7. When students are not present, teacher may rewrite the essay with corrections. Teacher shows the work to student, but during the writing process, the messy edited version should remain in front of the room so that students are constantly aware of the need to rethink, revise and make corrections.
8. Throughout the school year, students may continue to sing, chant, do simple dance movements with this song and others that we have learned.