

Beginning of the Year Mini-lessons for K-2

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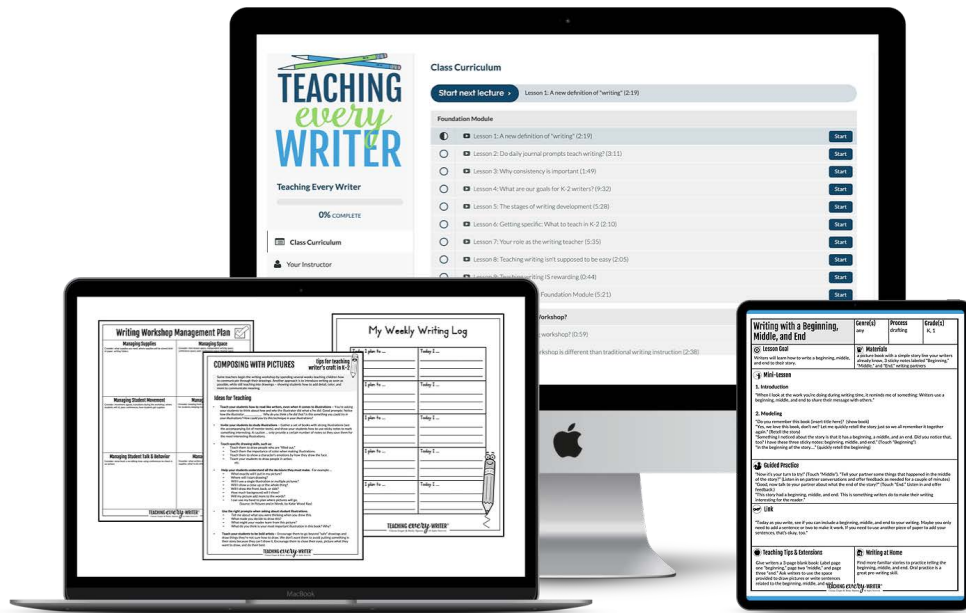
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Possible Beginning of the Year Mini-Lesson Topics for K-2*

*There's quite a difference between what a beginning of the year kindergartner and beginning of the year second grader can do. Choose mini-lessons that best fit your learners.

General

- Writers think of something they know and use pictures and words to put their ideas on paper.
- I can get ideas for writing by thinking about people or places that are important to me.
- I can plan what I'm going to write before I write it.
- I can talk to someone else about my writing before I write.
- I can write about a time I felt happy/sad/excited/disappointed, etc.
- I can zoom in on a small moment and just write about that.
- A book is about one idea.
- My book is finished when it has pictures and words on every page. (Remember that "words" may mean random letters or letter-like forms for some students.)
- We put titles on our books.
- I can read my book like a story. (This is for children who are not yet writing words they can read back. When they "read" their writing, it should sound more like, "I went fishing with my dad. I caught a small fish." and less like "This is my dad. This is me.")
- I can make my characters move and talk.
- I can learn from published authors to try new things in my writing.

Drawing

- Illustrators use colors that make sense.
- If something is hard to draw, I can think about the shapes I need to draw it.
- Even if something is hard to draw, I do my best and keep going.
- I draw clothes, faces, and hair on the people in my writing.

Possible Beginning of the Year Mini-Lesson Topics for K-2, cont'd.

Management

- Each day we make sure our writing has our name on it and gets a date stamp.
- This is how we come to the mini-lesson area. This is how we return to our seats.
- This is how we put our papers in our writing folders. This is where we put our writing folders at the end of the workshop.
- This is how we get more writing supplies if we need them.
- This is how we get help from a friend.
- This is what we do if we need help, but the teacher is busy with someone else.

Spelling / Conventions

- An alphabet chart can help us decide what letters to write.
- We use strategies to spell words... stretch it out, find it in the room, close your eyes and picture it, then write it, etc. (The strategies you teach will depend on the level of your learners.)
- Even if a word is hard to spell, I do my best and keep going.
- I add punctuation marks to help readers read my stories.

Revising

- Each day when we begin writing workshop, we begin by rereading what we wrote the day before. We decide if we want to make changes before we add to our writing.
- Writers fix up pieces that they especially love.
- Writers look at their writing to decide if they can add more to the pictures or words.
- When I want to add more to my story, I can add more pages to my book.