2 Minutes of Hate/10 Minutes of Joy

My plan is to do this for a professional development session so this will work either for that purpose or it could be adapted for classroom use.

2 Minutes of Hate

* Each participant writes down in detail one thing that they are struggling with in writing. If peer editing then it should be based on the assignment at hand. If PD it could be something the students struggle with that the teacher isn’t sure how to fix.
* Selecting one idea at a time, the whole group brainstorms solutions to that problem. With kids you could do small group work or if you see a trend, it could be done whole group.

10 Minutes of Joy

* For PD each participant writes down in detail one lesson, writing assignment, etc. that he/she is especially proud of.
* Selecting one idea at a time, the whole group discusses the idea and offers adaptations that could be used in other grade levels, classes, etc.
* For classroom use, I’d switch the two elements and do the “joy” first. I would ask each student to look at his text and write about in detail, one thing that was well done. You could also ask a peer to determine the well done element. I think this will give students some much needed confidence in their writing. As an extension, you could keep a list of students who are “experts” in an area and have them serve as leaders for peer editing. For example, if Billy is really great at transitions, you would have Billy assist students with transitions. The logistics would have to be determined by you so that every kid gets an opportunity to get and give help. I think I might divide the skills – critical thinking and structure. Maybe one day we could have the people who are really good with critical thinking and artistic voice choices sit at different tables to “lead” brainstorming and discussion sessions. I often give different options for essay topics. For example, students might have to pick a theme to write about and not all of them would chose the same theme so each “expert” could run a different theme table. This could be done in the early stages of the writing. This would help all students present. Students would all discuss ideas they have about the paper and attempt a mini Socratic Seminar to really deepen their thinking and understanding. I think I would require each student to write notes during the discussion to use later. After the drafts are done, I’d redo this process but with structure “experts” so that students could work with each other to correct errors in their writing. I might do something silly like have a “prescription” that each kid needs to fill.

Even though it is incredibly time consuming to slow down the writing process as I have been this year, it is resulting in better essays on the part of students.

2 Minutes of Hate/10 Minutes of Joy PD Take Away

