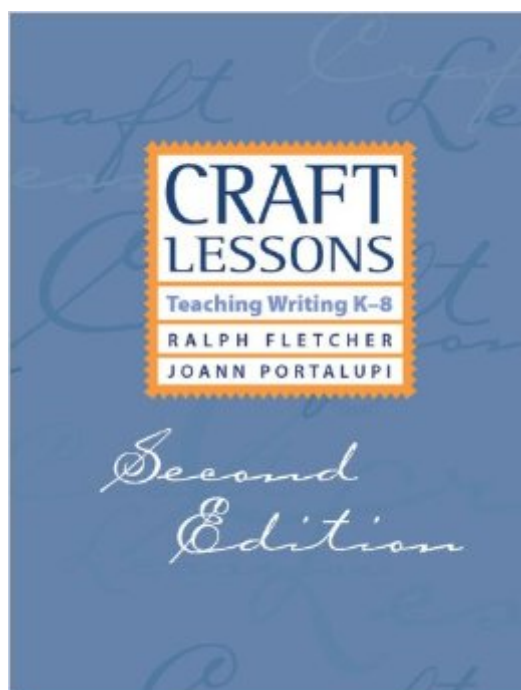


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# Craft Lessons Second Edition: Teaching Writing K-8



## Synopsis

Since its publication in 1998 *Craft Lessons* has become a mainstay of writing teachers, both new and experienced. Readers value the pithy, practical lessons—each printed on one page—and appreciate the instructional language geared to three grade-level groupings: K–2, 3–4, and 5–8. In the decade since *Craft Lessons*' publication the world has changed in many ways, yet one thing has remained constant: teachers continue to feel starved for time. With new curriculum mandates, daily specials, “pull-outs,” and precious time devoted to test preparation, the situation has never been worse, and the need for a succinct resource like *Craft Lessons* has never been greater. The features that made *Craft Lessons* so valuable have been augmented. This edition includes: Seventeen brand new craft lessons; many based on veteran teachers' observations about typical student writing. Revisions to other craft lessons: model texts that have gone out of print have been replaced with current titles, and the resource materials sections have been expanded. New thinking about teaching elements of craft and the reading-writing connection. Two new indexes: a handy subject index to make it easier to find specific craft lessons, and an index that shows how these craft lessons can be integrated into Ralph and JoAnn's curriculum resource on the “qualities of writing”—Ideas, Design, Language, and Presentation. The 95 lessons in this book provide a wealth of information for teaching leads, character, endings, stronger verbs, and much more. This new edition reestablishes *Craft Lessons* as the crucial “desert island” book for harried writing teachers everywhere.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is one of the best books I've seen for helping teach students to be better writers. It gives short minilessons that can give ideas and teach writing techniques with examples. I love it. I wouldn't teach writing without it

Ralph Fletcher is incredible!! This book is a must for anyone who teaches writing. It helps teachers understand writing isn't about some formula to get kids to pass a test, but about craft!! Many teachers who teach writing in the elementary grades don't even understand many pieces of craft...me included, until I got my hands on this book. This is actual application into classroom situations. I highly recommend that you also have "What A Writer Needs", as a companion to this book because it takes each piece of the craft into more depth. Worth every penny and more!!

I'm a relatively new teacher, and have switched grade levels every year. Teaching writing has been one of the biggest challenges for me. I believe in a writing workshop model, and use a lot of 6 Traits ideas. I knew that both relied on the idea of the writing "mini-lesson" but I really didn't know what those should look like or what kinds of topics they should cover. This book has been a godsend. I disagree with those who say that this book is too rigid. Yes, each lesson identifies particular literature resources which can be used. If you have that book, that's awesome. If not, just adapt the lesson for use with a different book that illustrates the same concept. The point is, these are concise 15 minute mini-lessons that really help your students recognize writing craft, and give them accessible ideas which they can use to improve their own writing. And, incidentally, if you're building up your classroom library, your school library, or your bookroom, the literature selections that ARE mentioned in this book are uniformly fabulous. I carry a copy of the list of books used in these lessons each time I go to a used book store.

This book is chock full of practical lessons WITH great literature suggestions. The first book on writing that I have read that gives me the resources instead of telling me more boring philosophy on the workshop approach---I already buy into it, please help me manage it and plan for it!

Although I don't believe writing, or the teaching of writing should be formula this book has proven to be a great resources for new teachers. I do a lot of staff development in writing and the teaching of writing and found this books to be honest in it's goals while using literature as a base for modeled writing. If you are wondering where to start or trying to find another way to teach the same old thing I

am sure there will be a grade level appropriate idea here.

The idea behind this book is fantastic--to divide different aspects of writing based on grade level and specific writing skills, and provide helpful (and they are helpful to some degree) tips on how to teach students about these skills. A plus to the book is the logical progression from one lesson to the next. For me, the downside of this book is its rigidity. Unless you want to incorporate their suggested readings into your classroom as well, I suggest you buy a book describing different writing skills in general. As a Spanish teacher, I read this book with the hope of incorporating their ideas into my own classroom, but I found that the lessons were so closely tied to their own recommended story or poem that there was no way of adapting them.

Upon receiving my first teaching job, I was given this book by my vice-principal. He said it had come highly recommended. Although I found a few ideas that I could make into lessons for my students, by and large the lessons were very difficult to use for me. Mainly, this was because they are based on very specific books or short stories. Because I did not have access to these stories, it made it very difficult for me to use the book. If you are looking for mini-lessons for writing, there are much better books out there. Try, for example some of Barry Lane's books; they are marvelously helpful.

Ralph Fletcher and Joann Portalupi have teamed up to create a book that is easy to understand and apply in the classroom setting. The lessons can be adapted for all elementary grades and everything is spelled out for you as the teacher - including the titles of books to use. Those familiar with the 6 Traits will find concrete examples to help develop each skill.

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