

THE LITERACY DEN

THE LITERACY NEWSLETTER OF MINOR HIGH SCHOOL



TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

Meet **Mr. DeShawn Aaron!** Mr. Aaron teaches AP Chemistry, General Chemistry, and Earth & Space Science at Minor High. During a recent classroom visit, he demonstrated proficient use of a writing strategy that not only engaged students, but it made them think critically. He utilized the CER (claim, evidence, reasoning) strategy. Students used this in a discussion post. Both traditional and remote students shared their ideas with a rubric to guide their completion of the writing. When asked about his thoughts on the importance of writing in the blended (remote and traditional) environment, he mentioned the following: "Students don't know what they know until they write it. By having them write to express their ideas or to show their learning, I can truly gauge their thinking and understanding."

KEY ARTICLE

Writing is important for all students in all grade levels and content areas. Writing is one of the most complex academic activities students can engage in. Here is an article that provides ideas on engaging students in writing remotely entitled [Promoting Strong Writing Skills With Digital Instruction](#) (click title).



POWER STRATEGIES

There are a plethora of strategies that teachers can use to allow students to practice and strengthen their writing skills while encouraging critical thinking. Here are two (click links):

1. [R.A.C.E Strategy \(Song\)](#)
2. [RAFT Strategy](#)

DR. NELSON'S ADVICE

When I was a classroom teacher, everyday I included some type of writing for my students. It was routine. They knew that both the intro and closure activities would include writing most days. The intro writing piece might have been to activate their prior knowledge or to spark engagement and interest. The closure activity was for them to show their learning, ask questions, or to make connections to the text. I believe that having a writing rich classroom allows students to express feelings, show deeper learning, show creativity, and think critically. There is power in writing! Allow students to do it more often than not...even in this current blended learning environment.

DR. S. NELSON,
INSTRUCTIONAL COACH
SNELSON@JEFCOED.COM
KALVIN EATON, PRINCIPAL