**Writing**

When you begin reading your writer on writing book, you should also start your writer's notebook. This is a place for you play with ideas, draft pieces, and write your responses to each day's opening moment.

You will compose at least eight finished pieces of writing throughout the summer institute, including:

* Personal piece
* Professional piece
* Reflection on writing
* Collection of daily reflections
* Learning autobiography
* Reflection on learning autobiography
* Reflection on teaching demonstration
* Final reflection/letter to coach

**Writer's Notebook**

**TASK:** Develop the habit of engaging in daily writing and document how your writing evolves throughout the fellowship year.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the writer's notebook is to create a space for you to experiment with your writing. If the author of your writer on writing book offers any exercises or suggestions, this is the perfect place to try them out.

**AUDIENCE:** You are the only one who will read your writer's notebook, unless, of course, you choose to share excerpts with others.

**Personal and Professional Writing**

**TASK:** Over the course of the ISI experience, we’d like for you to pursue your own writing. That is, we want you to write for you and your own goals. By the end of the ISI, your task is to work toward completing at least

* one personal piece
* one professional piece

You can pick your own genre of writing or even your own range of genres, including prose, poetry, story, essay, journal, professional article, letter to the editor, op-ed piece, digital story, podcast, website, etc.   
  
**PURPOSE**: The purpose is for you to better understand your own writing process and to participate in a writing community. For the professional writing, the purpose is also to circulate your professional ideas / expertise about subject matter, teaching, learning/learners, your teaching context to a broader audience in a public venue.  
  
**AUDIENCE**: You choose your primary audience. Possibilities could include family members, your students, a particular journal or website, your community, colleagues, parents, legislators, etc. Your choice!  
  
**Criteria for personal writing:** Personal writing can be of any genre. We want you to pursue your own interests as a writer at whatever level you feel comfortable.  
  
**Criteria for professional writing:**

* Ties to your professional interests, passions, concerns, expertise
* Speaks to an audience wider than you and your students
* You take a stance within the public or professional conversation about your topic
* Helps you to articulate principles that guide your work as a professional educator.

**Reflection on Writing**  
We are interested in your reflections about your writing process. In reflecting on your writing, please address the following questions using evidence from your pieces:

* How long did you spend on the different parts of the process?
* What obstacles did you face when writing the piece and how did you approach those obstacles?
* What resources (people, texts, conversations, heuristics) helped you and how?
* What did you feel you did really well with this piece? What in the piece are you happy/satisfied/proud of as a writer?
* If you had more time or another shot at working on a piece similar to this, what would you do differently process-wise? What would you do differently in this particular piece?
* What do you wish or hope readers will respond to in the piece?

**Daily Reflections**

**TASK:** The schedule for the ISI is packed with daily writing, reading, discussion, and presentations. Although it is important to experience these activities, it is also essential to take time to process and reflect.   
  
**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the daily reflections is to capture your thoughts and learning soon after experiencing each activity.  
  
**AUDIENCE:** The only person reading these daily reflections will be your coach at the end of the ISI. However, when writing your reflections you should write them for yourself. What are the takeaways from the day? What have you learned that is applicable to your teaching practices? What new insights did you experience? A strong reflection will answer these questions.  
  
**CRITERIA:** You could include any of the following in your reflections

* Anecdotes from the day—particular conversations or moments you want to remember
* Connections in daily activities to personal beliefs from belief map and/or personal practices
* Insight into metacognition – what’s the thinking behind your thinking?
* Ideas for personal application
* Takeaways from the day and why they are valuable for you

**Learning Autobiography**

**TASK:** Create an autobiography of yourself as a learner, teacher, or as a writer that you will present to your ISI colleagues. You are encouraged to take some risks and to explore alternate forms of composition as you do this and see how it feels and what you find out from the risk taking. The approach you take is up to you and the experiences you focus on could be positive, ambiguous, or negative. You could

* Develop a theme that runs across your learning
* Explore a few incidents in depth
* Highlight just one intensely memorable experience in detail or one person who has been important to your learning, your teaching, or your writing.
* Include experiences in school, out of school, or both.

**PURPOSE**: The autobiographies have a variety of purposes. A large component of the ISI is to help teachers reflect on their beliefs about teaching and learning. The autobiographies introduce participants to these processes through an area they know very well—themselves. Another purpose for the autobiographies is to have teachers reflect on themselves as learners, setting up their position as a learner within the ISI framework. The most significant purpose is to introduce who you are as a learner and what has shaped you to become that learner to the other participants. By doing so, we will create a safe learning environment.  
  
**AUDIENCE:** You will present this in front of the other ISI participants, but this is also a time for you to reflect on yourself as a learner and think about how you want to present yourself.  
  
**CRITERIA:** A strong, memorable autobiography will require some risk taking and introduce the other ISI participants to you as an individual, a learner, an educator, a writer and/or any other roles you want them to know about you. The autobiography should be at least five minutes and **no more than ten**.   
  
**FORMAT**: Anything you would like! Take some risks! Try something new! Here are some ideas:

* poetry cycle
* epistolary story
* radio show
* short story
* memoir
* graphic novel
* video
* museum exhibit
* digital story
* drama
* scrapbook
* slide show
* musical collage
* interpretive dance
* cartoon

**Reflections on Learning Autobiography and Teaching Demonstration**

**TASK:** Write a 1-2 page reflection during the afternoon/evening following your learning autobiography and another reflection during the afternoon/evening following your teaching demonstration.   
  
**PURPOSE:** The purpose of these pieces is to reflect on your presentations. What went well? What was challenging? Were there any surprises? What did you learn? How might you revise these presentations? How might you modify them for a different audience?   
  
**AUDIENCE:** You and your coach are the audience for these pieces of writing. However, you should write them primarily for yourself.

**Final Reflection/Letter to Coach**

**TASK:** Write a reflective statement about your ISI experience and include excerpts from your work, from our readings, and from your experiences that tell your story and that synthesize your learning. Keep in mind the principles and objectives that we have focused on and our inquiry question of **“What makes for a significant teaching and learning experience?”** Show your coach, and others who might read your portfolio, what you have learned.  
  
**PURPOSE**: The purpose of the final reflection is for you to tell the story of your ISI experience and to synthesize how all you have experienced contributes to your learning as a writer, as a teacher, and as a teacher leader. Sometimes these are stories of a particular topic or issue that you pursued (e.g., teaching grammar, writing in content areas, working with ELL students, digital composing, etc.); sometimes these are stories of a belief or value that guides your life as a teacher (e.g., I believe in collaborative composing; I value student understanding of key concepts; I believe in the pedagogy of creativity; I value a writer’s workshop, etc.); sometimes these are stories that are about developing a stance toward teaching (e.g., I thought this way at the beginning of the summer, and now I think a different way; I see myself now as a teacher who works with students in a particular way, etc.); and sometimes these are stories of change or of refining or of extending.  
  
**AUDIENCE:** The primary audience for your reflective statement is your coach, though like any reflection the point is for you to look backward on your experiences and consider what it might mean for you as you move forward as a teacher, writer, and teacher leader.  
  
**CRITERIA:**

* Addresses and describes experiences as a writer, as a teacher, and as a teacher consultant from the ISI
* Cites experiences from the ISI and excerpts from course texts (e.g., daily reflections, teaching demonstration response letters, your writing, your reading, etc)
* Speculates about how the ISI experience will contribute to your future work as a teacher / teacher leader and/or as a writer
* Outlines a few action steps that you can take in the next semester to work toward those goals