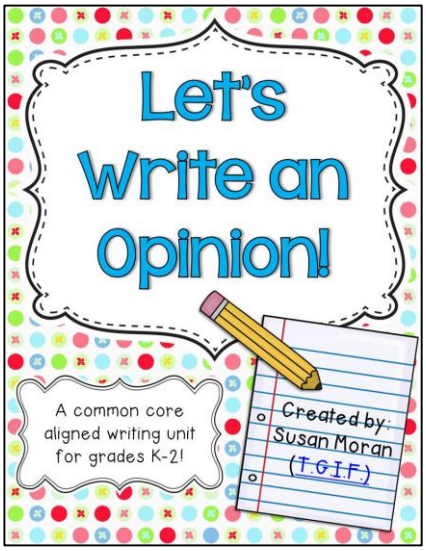
Writing Reviews

A fun, opinion writing unit for primary grades!

Created By: Susan Jones (http://thankgoditsfirstgrade.blogspot.com)

In this unit:

After teaching my students all about writing their own opinions through this unit:



We move onto the next phase of opinion writing, which my students tend to love the most. We start writing reviews!

- Getting Started
- What is a review?
- The parts of a review
- Brainstorming things we can review
- Activities for students to practice reviewing
- Student samples
- Graphic organizers to map out our thinking
- Writing templates
- Class book ideas

Getting Started:

This is a general outline of how I teach this u

Day 1	Intro: What is a review? - Talk about what a review is - Bring in examples from magazines or n aper - Brainstorm examples of what we can re - Let students know they will get t ritte en the next couple weeks and introduce the Stra tem
Days 2-5	Let's Review Activities! Go over what a review is a e 5 rating system before each activity. - Toy review - Food Tastings - Review Cards I always focus on t ability to e ress their opinions and reviews ORALLY, bef e put them on paper. I walk around during ea es and listen for clear reasons to supp t their opinions.
Day 6	S nts k something they would like to review. the "What can we review?" list and let students know b ting their very own review today. Stude share with the class what they chose to review, the star rating they are giving it, and a reason why. uce a "catchy lead" using the mini posters and leave up for reference. tudents begin writing a catchy lead for their review.
	- Introduce the "your opinion" reference poster and share a student example with the class. - Identify the catchy lead and opinion in the student example. - Students state their opinion explicitly after their catchy lead.

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Day 8	- Introduce the "reasons" reference poster and keep up for reference. - Share the 2nd student example with the class and ha[illegible] students identify the reasons provided. - Students begin to add their reasons to their re[illegible].
Day 9	- Introduce the "persuasive ending" refere[illegible] poste[illegible] keep up for reference. - Review the 2 student examples and t[illegible] endings. - Discuss how the persuasive en[illegible] will be [illegible]sed upon the star rating. - Students add a persuasive [illegible] their own review.
Days 10-11	Add, edit, revise. - Students can use chec[illegible] make s[illegible] their paper has all 4 parts of a revie[illegible]s well a[illegible]priate mechanics. - Students add to t[illegible] pictures[illegible] during these two days to make their review [illegible] detailed. - Student[illegible] the[illegible]view is complete may put it in the "finished" side of [illegible]er's workshop folder during this time a[illegible]egin a new review on something else!
Day 12	- [illegible], share! - [illegible] stud[illegible] have completed (does NOT have to be perfect) a revie[illegible] my students share them with the class as we [illegible]ompliment and praise one another! [illegible]trive for perfection during this little celebration. This is [illegible] for students to share their hard work and an opportunity [illegible]e to assess how students have done during their first "go" at writing reviews. - I make notes and pull small, skill-focused groups over the next few days. **I do this throughout the whole unit, but this is an easy check-in for me to sit back and listen to each and every student.**

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Days 13+	- After we have our celebration the next few days look different each year. - Depending on student interest, students spend time [illegible] each writing block starting, finishing, and adding to [illegible] their own pace. (This past year, my students spent about 3-4 days just doing this!) - We create class review books: our favorite [illegible] worst restaurants in the area, this year's [illegible] - Depending on if I want to have students [illegible] work (for a bulletin board or portfolio sample), students [illegible] on publishing one of their reviews [illegible] days. - We write book reviews and [illegible] lessons on summarizing a book without spoiling the ending.

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A few last [illegible]

- My students keep their reviews in a writing workshop folder. One side of the folder says "Still Working" and the other side says "Finished!"
- Students work at different paces, so by the end of our unit some students will have 8 reviews published while others may have only completed 1.
- I care much more about the quality of the work than I do the amount of reviews students has written by the end of this unit.
- At the beginning of the year, I have my students start with their illustrations then move to writing. At this point in the year (Spring is when I introduce this), my students generally begin writing first and then add illustrations to add detail to what is on the page. Of course, not all students are the same, so my struggling writers are always encouraged to draw first and add writing later. I will also give my struggling writers all pages with an illustration box, while my higher writers may only have 1 page with a picture box.

The 5-star rating system

THE BEST!

Everyone should try this... NOW!

Great!

You should try this when you get a chance!

Good

Not my favorite, but it's alright.

So-so

Not bad, but it's not good either.

No good

Don't bother.

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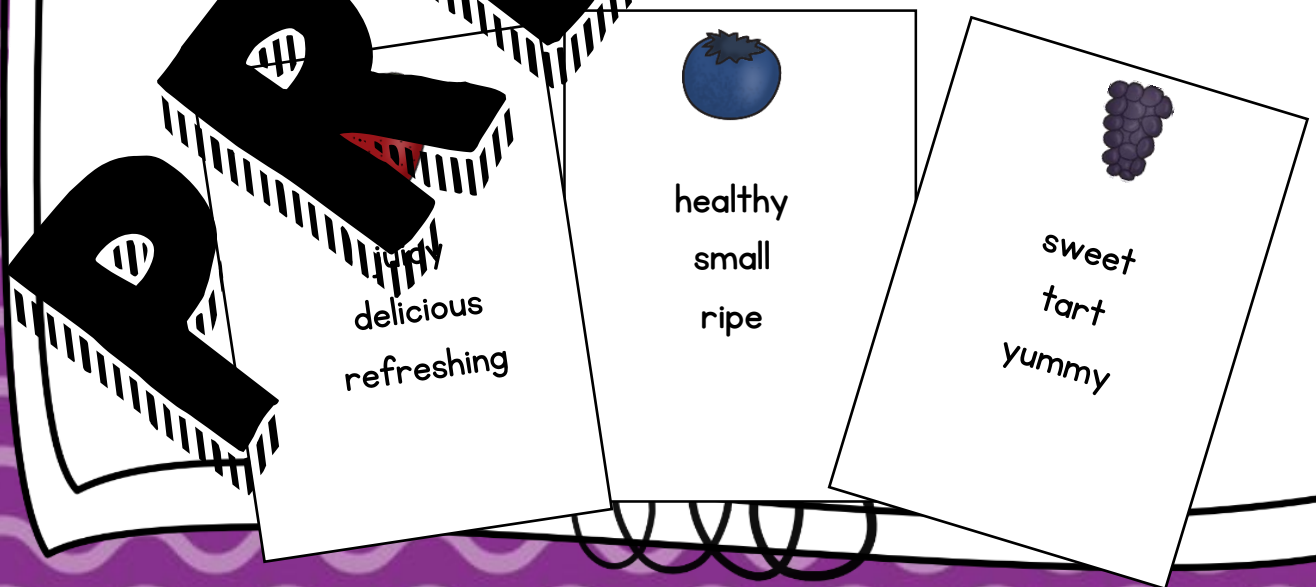
Food Tasting:

Tips & Ideas:

- The snacks I usually bring in will al[illegible] same category. Exam[illegible]s:
  Cheezits, Goldfish, [illegible]e Nips
  Strawberries, Blackber[illegible] Blu[illegible]ries
  Almonds, Waln[illegible] Pis[illegible]
  Pita chips, to[illegible]a chi[illegible]tato chips
- Each food tasting ite[illegible] will just be a small, bite-sized [illegible]ce.
- I usually h[illegible] stu[illegible] close their eyes and chew in silenc[illegible] then we share our food descriptions with a partner. [illegible] we organize our thoughts all together [illegible] osters like below:



PREVIEW

Best of the best!

Name a restaurant that you would give 5 stars. Provide reasons for your rating.

Best of the best!

Name a book th[illegible]ou would give 5 stars. [illegible]easons for your rating.

Best of the best!

Name a snack that you would give 5 stars. Provide reasons for your rating.

[illegible] of the best!

Name a toy that you would give 5 stars. Provide reasons for your rating.

Best [illegible] the best!

Name a store that you would give 5 stars. Provide reasons for your rating.

Best of the best!

Name a movie that you would give 5 stars. Provide reasons for your rating.

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It's the Worst!

Name a restaurant that you would give 1 star. Provide reasons for your rating.

It's the Worst!

Name a book th[illegible] you would give 1 star. [illegible] reasons for your rating.

It's the Worst!

Name a snack that you would give 1 star. [illegible] reasons for [illegible] rating.

It's the Worst!

Name a toy that you would give 1 star. Provide reasons for your rating.

It's the Worst!

Name a store that you would give 1 star. Provide reasons for your rating.

It's the Worst!

Name a movie that you would give 1 star. Provide reasons for your rating.

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The 4 parts of a written rev

I use the following mini posters to introduce each part of a written review.

Once we begin writing our reviews, I will introduce one part with the whole class, brainstorm more examples with class suggestions, and then we practice writing that part in our own reviews. Usually one part per day. Some days we practice with a particular part.

Catchy Lead:

Get your readers hooked! If [illegible]chy lead, everyone will want to read

Example:

"Are you looking for a great [illegible]ead?!"

Opinion:

[illegible]here you give your rating. What is your opinion?

Example:

"I think the story, Frank's Wish, deserves 4 stars!"

Reasons:

Back up your opinion! Give your reasons for the star rating you chose.

Example:

"Frank's Wish should get 4 stars because..."
"I would have given it 5 stars, except..."

Persuasive Ending:

It's time to convince your reader one last time!

Example:

"The next time you want to laugh, run to your local library and grab Frank's Wish! You will surely be entertained with Frank's funny adventure."

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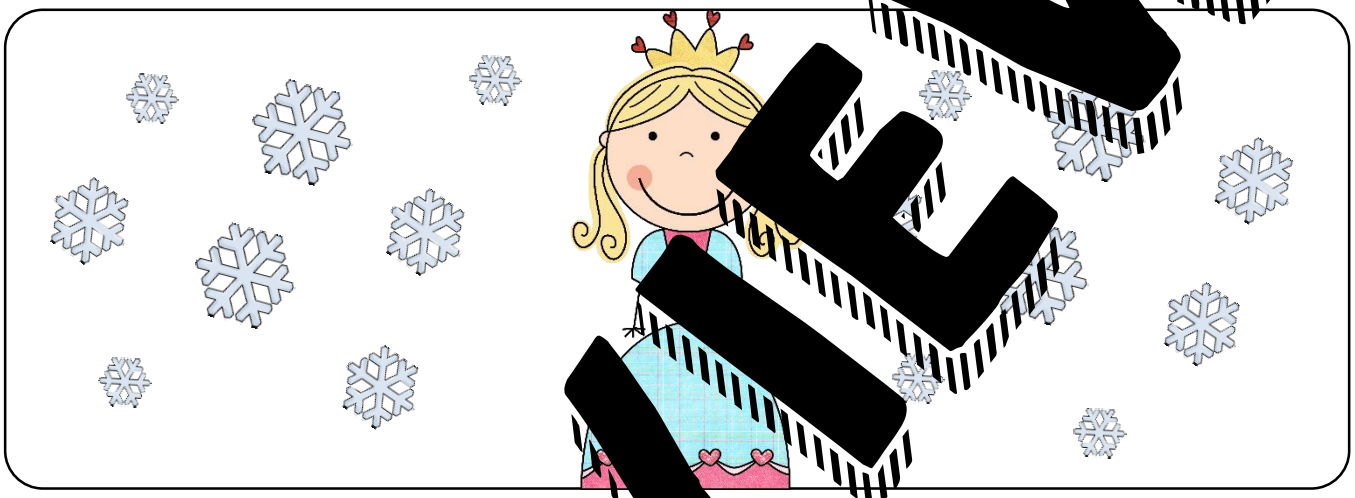
My Review of

Frozen

By: Student A



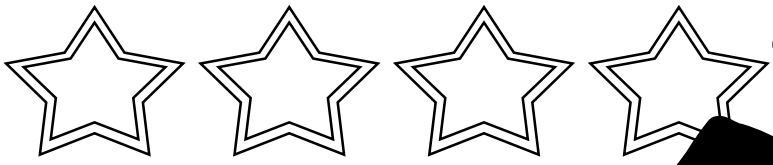
Are you looking for a movie to see? Have you seen the movie Frozen? If you haven't, you should see it. It will make you laugh and cry and sing along with all the awesome tunes. It is about a princess named Elsa who has magical powers and runs away because she accidentally made it winter in her town. Her sister, Anna, tries to find her and bring her

PREVIEW

My Review of

_____

By: _____



PREVIEW!