Laura Robb’s new middle school writing curriculum helps you:

- tap into adolescents’ social and developmental needs
- align your writing instruction with the Common Core State Standards
- enhance your professional development
Laura Robb

- 4 decades of teaching experience

- acclaimed author of such titles as
  - *Teaching Middle School Writers* (2010)
  - *Teaching Reading in Middle School* (2nd ed. 2010)
  - *Teaching Nonfiction Writing* (2010)

- teacher trainer and coach

- one of nation’s top 20 educators by *Instructor* magazine
Teaching Guide

- the *research* and *professional understandings* behind the series
- tips for using *mentor texts*
- guidelines for supporting students during the *entire writing process*
- strategies for addressing *developmental needs*
- plans for integrating the units into *your curriculum*
Resources CD-ROM

- a wealth of teaching tools support you throughout the year

- teacher tools include
  - at-a-glance lesson planners
  - teaching charts
  - samples of genre criteria

- student handouts include
  - mentor texts
  - writing guidelines
  - peer and self-evaluation forms
The lessons & tools needed to teach the writing genres middle school students need most

**Getting Started**

**UNIT 1: Establishing Foundations**

students describe their writing life and learn foundational practices

**Narrative Writing**

**UNIT 2: Writing a Short Memoir**

students use details, dialogue, and strong verbs as they describe an event

**UNIT 3: Writing a Short, Short Story**

students fictionalize a true experience by showing, not telling
Argument
UNIT 4: Writing a Persuasive Essay
students craft compelling arguments
UNIT 5: Writing an Analytical Essay
students develop a thesis about a text and support their position with details

Informational/Explanatory Writing
UNIT 6: Writing an Informative Essay
students focus on a topic and present supporting information
UNIT 7: Writing a Compare/Contrast Essay
students compare real events to historical fiction
Free Choice Writing
UNIT 8: Writing in Any Genre
students move through the writing process relying on their knowledge, interests, and past lessons

Each unit
• teaches the full writing process from planning and drafting to revising and presenting
• builds on instructional mentor texts
• describes in details Laura Robb’s teaching moves and language
• includes artifacts and management tips
Instruction is assessment driven

- **writer surveys** help you learn about your students’ writing lives
- Laura models how to use **negotiated criteria** to guide and monitor students writing
- assessment strategies include **peer & self-evaluations**
- units conclude with tips for **assessing students’ understanding** and strategies for **differentiating instruction**
- **professional study suggestions** help you evaluate and enhance your own teaching practice
We kids did everything together. We sat at the same table, eating the same food, breathing the same air. We shared the same toys. We loved to set up a line of blocks so that when you toppled one it would start a chain reaction and knock them down all the way from the living room to the dining room. We shared the same germs too. First one of us would catch a cold or cough or flu, then another kid would get it a day or so later, followed by another and another... until there were so many sick kids lying around the house, it felt like we were living in a hospital.

During the day, I loved that. The saddest part for me was when the other kids got sick and I got evicted from the big bed. Usually Mom forbade us to turn on the TV during the day, but when we were sick she made an exception and let us watch for an hour or so.

I loved being sick, because that's when I got extra-special care from Mom. She would fix me soup or an egg on toast for lunch. When my nose got plugged up or I had a bad cough, she would rub Vicks on my chest. But I never got a really big slice of Mom's time because there were always babies and toddlers at home, and she had her hands full with them.

The winter I was nine we all got chicken pox at the same time. Mom about wore herself out trying to take care of us. It got so bad that Dad had to stay home from work to help out.

She gave us baths with baking soda, which left a strange, gritty residue at the bottom of the tub. For the first few days we were perfectly content lying around the house in our pajamas, doing puzzles, reading comics, watching daytime TV. But being cooped up inside soon made us restless. We needed an outlet for all that pent-up energy.

Mom took the baby to the store to buy some food. The instant she drove away, we started racing through the house, yelling at the top of our lungs, having wild pillow fights, completely forgetting that we were sick. When Mom came home she scolded us for messing up the house. The next day our muscles hurt, and Mom said we had used them too quickly after being sick for so long.

"A Pox Upon Us All" from the book Middle School Writers by Laura Robb (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann).
Smart Writing Handbook

- compact, easy-to-carry writing guide for students
- offers strategic support through the entire writing process
- reviews minilessons that students may have missed or forgotten
- helps students address expected writing conventions
- available in affordable class packs of 10 and 30
Smart Writing Staff Development DVD

- **live-from-the-classroom video** lets you eavesdrop on Laura as she:
  - **taps into adolescents’** social and developmental needs
  - **analyzes mentor texts** with a writer’s eye
  - **negotiates assessment criteria** that guide the entire writing process
  - fosters students’ independence through **self-evaluation** and **peer feedback**
  - aligns your lessons with the **Common Core State Standards**
Teaching Middle School Writers

- **lessons** and **routines** that tap into adolescents’ personal writing lives
- **strategies** for crafting leads that entice and endings that satisfy
- **grammar lessons** that address writing conventions
- guidelines for **grading** and **responding to student work**
- affordable bundles for **professional book study**
SMART WRITING: PRACTICAL UNITS FOR TEACHING MIDDLE SCHOOL WRITERS

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