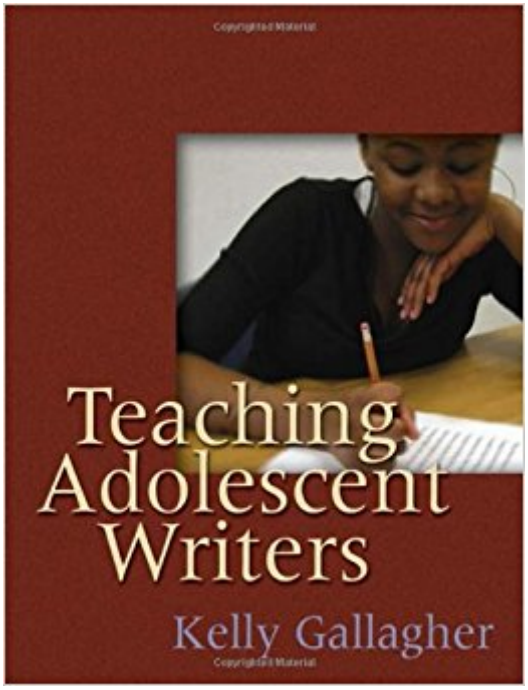
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Teaching Adolescent Writers



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Synopsis

In an increasingly demanding world of literacy, it has become critical that students know how to write effectively. From the requirements of standardized tests to those of the wired workplace, the ability to write well, once a luxury, has become a necessity. Many students are leaving school without the necessary writing practice and skills needed to compete in a complex and fast-moving Information Age. Unless we teach them how to run with it, they are in danger of being run over by a stampede—a literacy stampede.In Teaching Adolescent Writers, Kelly Gallagher, author of Reading Reasons and Deeper Reading, shows how students can be taught to write effectively. Kelly shares a number of classroom-tested strategies that enable teachers to:understand the importance of teaching writing;motivate young writers;see the importance modeling plays in building young writers (modeling from both the teacher and from real-world text);understand how providing choice elevates adolescent writing (and how to allow for choice within a rigorous curriculum);help students recognize the importance of purpose and audience;assess essays in ways that drive better writing performance. Infused with humor and illuminating anecdotes, Kelly draws on his classroom experiences and work as co-director of a regional writing project to offer teachers both practical ways to incorporate writing instruction into their day and compelling reasons to do so.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

’Grounded in the philosophy of teaching writing as a process, Gallagher’s book offers a wealth of ideas for middle and high school writing teachers. This book will take its place alongside other

well-thumbed titles on the writing teacher s bookshelf.’ --Education Review’Infused with humor and enhanced with illustrative anecdotes, Teaching Adolescent Writers is an ideal addition to college and university curriculums for aspiring English teachers.’ --Midwest Book Review

Kelly, a "baseballoholic" and a self-described expert at negotiating airports, is in his 33rdÃ Â year of teaching at the high school level.He currently teaches at Magnolia High School in Anaheim, California.He believes that "there is no greater pleasure than teaching someone something." Teaching is "artistic, it matters a great deal, and I can never get the job down perfectly."Kelly thinks that professional development should treat teachers as such - professionals. "I know in the classroom that good things happen when my students have meaningful discussions. I know as a teacher myself that my craft sharpens when I am given the opportunity to have meaningful discussions with my peers. And let's have a laugh or two while we are at it."Writing his six books for Stenhouse was a solitary experience. "Though I have written outlines prior to each of my books, I have yet to follow any of them step-by-step. That is why I find writing rewarding - because the act of writing itself generates new thinking, and new thinking is always exciting."

As an 8th grade language arts teacher, I have found _Deeper Reading_ and _Reading Reasons_, Gallagher’s other teaching titles, to be positively indispensible, so I expected nothing less from his latest work. Once again, Gallagher delivers! This is a straightforward, practical, and yes, funny, book for effective writing instruction in secondary classrooms. Gallagher’s fresh, ready-to-use strategies are based upon what he calls the "six pillars of writing success," which are:-students need a lot more writing practice;-students need teachers who model good writing;-students need the opportunity to read and study other writers;-students need choice when it comes to writing topics;-students need to write for authentic purposes and to authentic audiences, and;-students need meaningful feedback from both the teacher and their peers.Gallagher offers ideas for daily in-class writing opportunities, activities to help generate high-interest topics, strategies for "attacking" on-demand writing, mini-lessons to guide students through deeper revision, alternatives to peer editing (which he says doesn’t work), and suggestions for more effective grading. His lessons are geared to teach students the real-world writing skills they will need not just for success in the English classroom but for the long haul.This is a must-have for veteran and novice teachers alike. I, too, have had the opportunity to attend one of Gallagher’s workshops, and in my view, the man is simply genius. Through it all, Gallagher reminds us that we are not superhuman. In view of the mounting pressure so many of us feel to raise the all-mighty test scores, I found the following

quote most reassuring: "With the wide range of ability and overwhelming class sizes, it is unrealistic to think I am going to make every one of my 165 students a strong writer. It *is* realistic, however, to begin each year with the goal that every student of mine, regardless of ability, is going to get better." Armed with Gallagher's book, I feel a renewed sense of confidence that my teaching is going to get better, too. Two thumbs way up!

This excellent teaching guide easily earns five stars from me for clarity of composition; reproducible, customizable, ready-to-use forms; ease of implementing ideas in classrooms; thoroughness of methodology; and reasons for doing certain things. What more could a teacher need?I was pleased to see the VERY helpful quote from Ron Strahl, director of South Basin Writing Project, which pinpoints a foundational problem with students' inability to write. "The Strahl factors," as I call them, are alone worth the price of this book: Implementing his wise and practical input--along with Gallagher's methodology--all but guarantees a successful writing program.Replacing the "one rubric fits all students" idea with customizable rubrics that the class and teacher create together for each writing project is a wonderful idea! Let's face it: Not all students have the same strengths and weaknesses in the world of composition; the customizable rubric addresses each student's issue(s). Gallagher thoroughly explains how to do this--including the grading aspect. Gotta love it!The appendix contains the reproducible forms necessary to implement the ideas in this book: customizable rubric, independent correction form, customizable spelling "demon" form, etc.So, if you're looking for something feasible to inject into your writing program that will actually help your students become better writers, this is it. I'm not saying all your students will become highly respected published authors; but I am saying that their writing will improve--regardless of their present level.BOTTOM LINE: BUY THIS BOOK!

I am currently a student in a teacher education program, and this textbook was required reading--I am so glad I had to read this book! Gallagher shares specific principles, activities, and methods that he's developed (and gathered from other successful teachers) during the course of his 20+ year career. He addresses how to help struggling writers, and how teachers can help young writers feel safe as they write--strengthening students' confidence simultaneously with their skills. Making a great thing even better, Gallagher includes his graphic organizers and writing prompts in his appendix. I'm sure that I'll be re-reading this book frequently as I begin my career as a teacher. The tips and tricks he's shared have helped make the daunting prospect of teaching secondary writers feel not only possible, but fun. Thank you, Mr. Gallagher!

If you are looking at finding a book to aid you in teaching high school students, buy this book.If you are looking for a book that will refresh your love for teaching, buy this book.If you are looking for a book that will help you become a better educator, buy this book.I first encountered this book in my Teaching Writing and Language in Secondary Schools class that I took the final semester of my Teacher Education Program. I was required to buy this book, and so I purchased it. I will admit that I had little excitement when I purchased Gallagher's book. In fact, I thought that I needed another book that I would not read like a hole in the head. But as the semester went on, not only did I read Gallagher's text but I devoured it. Gallagher's "Grecian Urn Approach" and modeling strategies are excellent. Instead of only discussing impractical theory, Gallaher presents practical strategies for the teacher to use in his or her classroom.Please give this book a second look.* A Future Educator

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