

# Teaching Writing Skills All Year Long

*With resources for Grades 3-12*

## PLAN YOUR YEARLONG WRITING CURRICULUM

### Course Overview

After you've devised a plan to launch your writer's workshop during the first weeks of school, the next step is to look ahead toward the rest of the year. This course is designed to guide K-12 teachers through the planning of a yearlong writing curriculum. This includes determining mini-lesson instruction, identifying frequent assignments, and communicating assessment feedback all within the three major types of writing—opinion/persuasive/argument, informative/expository, and narrative.

### Training Topics:

- Define a "writing unit": its length, its focuses, and its final product(s).
- Discover how often to "publish" a final draft and how frequently students should produce first drafts.
- Identify procedures for selecting priority writing standards to target within each writing unit.
- Learn strategies for teaching a writing skill over multiple days to deepen student understanding and gradually release responsibility to the students.
- Learn effective ways to integrate convention/grammar skills throughout the year.
- Learn how to incorporate mentor text examples and kid-friendly rubrics within a unit.
- Receive suggestions for grading student writing and assessing students' understanding of a genre.

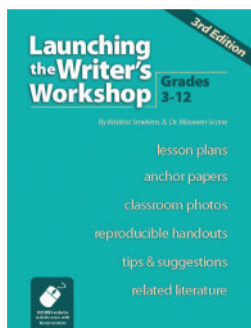


"I have a plan & a path! Loved the organization, energy, & humor! Terrific!" ~ **S. Moorman**

"I can't wait to organize my units & utilize the yearlong calendar. What a terrific resource." ~ **L. Florek**

### The book is included!

Receive a FREE digital copy of *Launching the Writer's Workshop: Grades 3-12* to use as a resource during the course. (A retail value of \$20!)



**Grades 3-12**

by Kristina Smekens & Dr. Maureen Scane

### COURSE OUTLINE

#### Develop a yearlong vision

- See the big picture
- Plan with intention
- Massage the "mother lode"

#### Plan for multiple exposures

- Provide varied experiences
- Vary genres and stages
- Scaffold writing experiences

#### Scaffold instruction across units

- Focus on the trump traits
- Identify the essential writing skills
- Weave in conventions

#### Follow a systematic approach

- Plan one mode at a time
- Organize mini-lesson materials
- Access digital planning tools

#### Create assessment resources

- Understand rubric basics
- Build & grow a single rubric all year long
- Convert rubric scores to grades

#### Total time to complete course:

5-6 hours  
(Allotted time to complete course: 30 days)

### Instructor:

Kristina Smekens  
President & Lead Consultant  
for Smekens Education Solutions, Inc.

## When you complete the course, you'll be able to:

- ✓ Organize grade-level writing standards and grammar skills to be taught within any writing unit.
- ✓ Embed the 6 Traits of Writing throughout the school year as you spiral through specific skills that are unique to each trait.
- ✓ Speed up or slow down a unit to meet the needs of your writers.
- ✓ Target isolated skills within intermittent "maintenance" mini-lessons throughout the year.
- ✓ Assess mastery of writing skills via grades or standards-based reporting.
- ✓ Teach writing with confidence and intentionality.

## Top questions teachers ask about launching writing

- ▶ How do I find time in my daily schedule for writing?
- ▶ How does a MS/HS teacher fit reading, writing, and grammar all into one class period?
- ▶ How do I integrate my writing standards within my writing units?
- ▶ How do I decide which skills I need to teach for each unit?
- ▶ How many times should students write in the same genre?
- ▶ How does grammar instruction fit into the writer's workshop?
- ▶ How often should I offer free choice versus prompted writing?
- ▶ How can I grade/assess their writing more efficiently?

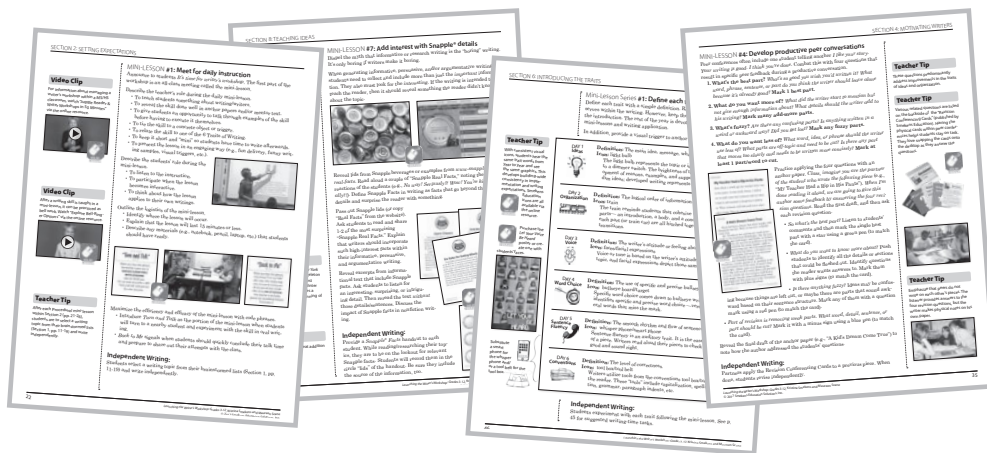
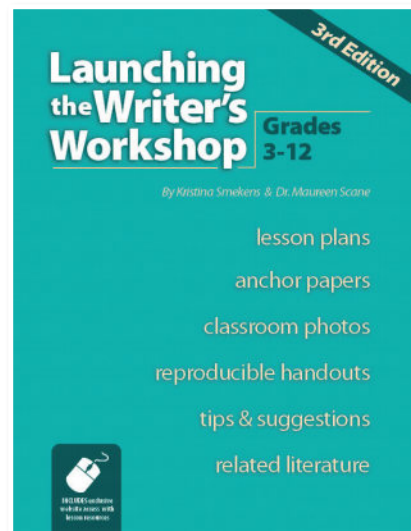
*Kristina Smekens provides the answers to these questions and many more!*

## FREE DIGITAL BOOK

# Your handbook for teaching writing

The first seven sections of this resource will help you start (launch) your writer's workshop. They include procedural lessons and strategies essential for establishing classroom management and building writer independence. Depending on your grade level, this "launch" lasts three to six weeks.

Once you've launched your writing instruction, use sections 8-13 to help you plan the rest of your year. There are more than 50 detailed writing lessons organized by the 6 Traits of Writing. Each section identifies the lessons appropriate for the three modes of writing: persuasive/argumentative, informative, narrative.



## What others have to say about Smekens PD:

"I finally feel like I have a handle on how to approach writing. As a middle school history teacher who has to also do a period of writing, this has been invaluable. Loved it!" ~ **H. Mathias**

"I have a totally different view of what writer's workshop can look like! I feel it will make more sense, meet the standards, and show more growth." ~ **D. Grimes**

"Everything you presented for my grade level is both validating and supportive of organization in this new school year." ~ **M. Olsen**

## Who would benefit from this course?

- Grades K-12 Teachers
- Literacy Coaches & Coordinators
- Title I Teachers / Directors
- ELL Teachers
- High-Ability Teachers
- Administrators

## ABOUT THE PRESENTER

# Kristina Smekens

Kristina Smekens is a full-time literacy consultant who has built a reputation for using enthusiasm, humor, and common sense to equip K-12 educators with practical, demystifying strategies for teaching reading and writing.

As president and lead consultant for Smekens Education, Kristina is constantly developing new strategies for helping teachers to meet the demands of today's College and Career-Ready Standards. She and her two full-time associates share those strategies with teachers across the United States and beyond through on-site school trainings, regional seminars, and an always-growing pool of print, digital, and video resources.

### A PRESENTER

Kristina has a gift for making the complex seem simple—for showing teachers how to meet the needs of readers and writers by bridging the gap between education research and practical, classroom-tested strategies that work. When she presents at state and national conferences, teachers flock to her sessions because they know Kristina will share strategies they can use in their own classrooms the very next day.

But beyond providing teachers with practical classroom techniques, Kristina is also a master at giving educators an injection of motivation and encouragement to help them return to their classrooms with the confidence and excitement they need to execute change. In fact, more than 17,000 educators rely on a monthly “shot in the arm” from Kristina as subscribers to her monthly email newsletter, “Big Ideas.”

### AN AUTHOR

Well known for offering innovative ideas, Kristina has created more than 50 “Smekens Originals,” a compilation of books, guides, and classroom tools designed to help teachers implement best-practice literacy strategies. Among the most popular of these resources are her best-selling books, *Launching the Writer's Workshop: Grades K-2* and *Grades 3-12*. Other popular publications include *The Trait Mate: 6-Traits Starter Lessons*, *Connecting Comprehension & Composition*, *Sing & Comprehend*, *Close Reading Questions for Literature*, *Close Reading Questions for Informational Text*, *Trait Trackers*, and *Serving Up Synthesis*. Additionally, Kristina is the author of *Trait-Based Writing: Lessons and Activities* (Scholastic, 2009).



### A CRAFTER

Beyond books and physical teacher tools, Kristina has also created a library of more than 50 on-demand training videos that are utilized by teachers around the world. With topics ranging from “Building Kid-Friendly Writing Rubrics” to “Achieving a Close Reading,” each of Kristina’s “webPD” videos uses a seminar-style format to capture her energy and enthusiasm while conveying her teacher-friendly ideas.

### BACKGROUND

Kristina earned her BA in English and education at Michigan State University. Prior to her full-time consulting career, she was an accomplished high school English and journalism teacher in Michigan and Indiana. A leader in state and national scholastic journalism endeavors, Kristina authored a journalism textbook and teachers’ guide for Walsworth Publishing in 2002.

Over the past 12 years, she has been blessed to work and learn with hundreds of schools and thousands of teachers throughout the Midwest. She was awarded the Excellence in Reading Award by the Indiana State Reading Association in 2013 for her contributions to literacy in Indiana.

Kristina lives in Warren, Indiana with her husband and business partner Brady, their three teenage children, and a rambunctious family dog named Buddy.

“Kristina was fantastic! She was very intentional in her approach to teaching the 6 Traits and making it interesting for all learners! I learned new and exciting strategies to improve student writing.”

~ J. McKnight

“Love your energy, enthusiasm, & honesty!”

~ K. Dernulc

“Thank you so much! Kristina is so upbeat and knows how to engage her audience! I learned a lot.” ~ L. Clark

“The organization was fantastic! Kristina made the most of every moment. I have new strategies and mini-lessons to use in my classroom next week!”

~ N. Fessler

“Kristina is amazing! I laughed out loud! A conference I actually enjoyed.” ~ B. Smith

“Kristina’s energy was captivating! She inspired me to be a better teacher and gave me the tools to succeed in the classroom.”

~ M. Fischl

“After 33 years of teaching, I still am drawn back into Kristina’s workshops because they are research-based, standards-focused, and very interactive.”

~ K. Cadle

# Teaching Writing Skills All Year Long: Grades 3-12

## TWO WAYS TO REGISTER:

### 1. Online - with a credit card *(Perfect for individuals!)*

**Visit:** <http://smekens-education.teachable.com/>

### 2. FAX THIS FORM - with a school purchase order to **888-376-0489**

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

School name: \_\_\_\_\_

School address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

School phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**COURSE FEE:** Course sharing not allowed. Submit separate registrations for each person.

☐ One person

**\$140**

☐ Team of 3+

**\$134**  
per person

☐ Team of 10+

**\$126**  
per person

☐ Team of 15+

**\$119**  
per person

#### PAYMENT:

☐ Purchase Order attached (# \_\_\_\_\_ )

TOTAL NUMBER OF REGISTRANTS: \_\_\_\_\_

COURSE ACTIVATION DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL PURCHASE AMOUNT:**

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## Group Registration Process

To register a group of teachers, complete the form on this page and fax it with a purchase order to webAcademy at 888-376-0489. After a purchase order is received, a professional development specialist will email each registrant with instructions for accessing the course.

## Continuing Education Credit

With prior approval from the registrant's school district, participants may receive credit for 5 hours of professional development for this webAcademy course. At the conclusion of the course, registrants may request a Certificate of Completion which can be used to verify participation.

## Graduate Credit

Thanks to a partnership with the Midwest Teachers Institute, registrants may elect to pursue three university-level graduate credits after completing this course and the Launching the Writer's Workshop course. These are non-degree credits designed for professional certification renewals and salary step increases. (Check with your district or employers to determine their policies for pay increases.) The cost of graduate credit is \$300 and is separate from the cost of each web course.

**webAcademy**  
BY SMEKENS EDUCATION

If you're not able to attend a live, full-day Smekens workshop, the next best thing is to enroll in the corresponding webAcademy online course. Each webAcademy course features engaging online professional development led by Smekens Education President and Lead Consultant, Kristina Smekens. Designed for individual or group use, every self-paced course consists of video footage from one of Kristina's full-day workshops.

In addition to delivering 5+ hours of professional development, webAcademy courses also include opportunities for educators to reflect and comment on what they are learning. Registrants are granted 30 days to complete the course but receive lifetime access to a password-protected web page that contains a treasure trove of lessons, videos, and other resources for implementation.