

At every level children develop a sense of ownership and responsibility for their learning; ownership for personal choices - academic, social/emotional, and moral - is encouraged; community, supports a culture of learning and provides authentic audience and shared engagement in projects, activities, and events. Attic writers of all ages have the opportunity to draft, revise, edit, and publish their work and have multiple opportunities throughout the year to showcase and share their work with an authentic audience.

Reading Workshop – Quail

The Art of Teaching Reading, by Lucy Calkins

And With A Light Touch, by Carol Avery

Reading Essentials, by Regie Routman

Our highest priority is that children **see themselves as readers**.

Children take **ownership of their personal reading choices**, choosing from a wide variety of reading materials.

Children and teachers work as a **community of readers**, all reading and sharing in a *Reader's Workshop* format (see Calkins).

An integral element of the Reader's Workshop is choice, with an emphasis on helping each child find books at their own “just right” reading level with an emphasis on enjoying reading and reading for meaning.

Reading Workshop surrounds children with opportunities to develop a joy and passion for reading. **Teachers share their love and enthusiasm for stories, reading, and various genres.**

Children are supported by one-on-one questioning and dialogue with a teacher to develop meaning-based reading strategies (re-reading, using picture clues, using context clues, substituting a word to maintain meaning in the story) and decoding (breaking words into parts, recognizing common word patterns, and phonics).

Children read alone, in pairs, and in small groups. Partner-reading reinforces social connections and provides authentic examples of proximate stages of development.

At this level, each child has their own “Book Box”, filled with books they have self-selected. Teachers guide children to explore a variety of genres and subjects so they can find “just right” books that support their interests and reading level.

We recognize the power and value of complex and engaging language. The Attic encourages all students to harness the richness of our multi-age community by mentoring, asking for help, and collaborating with peers to make sense of challenging texts.

Some favorite read-alouds at this level have been:

- *Ada Twist, Scientist*, by Andrea Beaty
- *Would You Rather*, by John Birmingham
- *The Quiltmaker's Gift*, by Jeff Brumbeau
- *The Little House*; *Katy* and *The Big Snow*, both by Virginia Lee Burton
- *Last stop on Market Street*, by Matt De La Pena
- *Grace for President*, by Kelly DiPucchio
- *Red: A Crayon's Story*, by Michael Hall
- *Chrysanthemum*, by Kevin Henkes
- *Whistle for Willie*, by Ezra Jack Keats
- *Make Way For Ducklings*, by Robert McCloskey
- *Roxaboxen*, by Alice McLerran
- *It's okay to be Different*, by Todd Parr
- *Little Humans*, by Brandon Stanton
- *Joseph Had A Little Overcoat*, by Simms Taback
- *The McDuff Stories*, by Rosemary Wells
- *Owl Moon*, by Jane Yolen

Writing Workshop- Quail

The Art of Teaching Writing, by Lucy Calkins
And With A Light Touch, by Carol Avery
Writing Essentials, by Regie Routman

Our highest priority is that children **see themselves as writers**, and so we seek to nurture the writer within each child.

Through a Writer's Workshop approach, our classroom becomes a **community of writers**, all writing and sharing together; purposeful and authentic communication between authors and readers is our focus. Children have opportunities daily to share and get feedback from an audience of their peers.

Choice of topic is fundamental to the development of a young child's writing.

During Writer's Workshop, **teachers model the writing process** and children are given time to work independently on their writing.

The continuum of writing development is explicitly shared and awareness of growth along that continuum is cultivated. Children are able to identify their "just right" and "stretchy" writing levels (squiggle writing, drawing, using letters, words, sentences, and paragraphs).

A child's story and message are of utmost importance and our teaching focuses on giving the child the tools needed for writing independently with meaning. Revising and editing skills, such as punctuation, spelling, word choice, and sentence structure are taught according to individual readiness.

Mini-lessons are responsive to the needs of individual writers and small groups.

Individual child-teacher writing conferences occur routinely.

Readiness is assessed, and skills are then taught in the context of the child's own writing.

Winter Writers' Night and our End-of-Year All-Attic Writers' Publication invite children to take a single piece of writing through the writing process and share it with an authentic audience.

Interest Projects introduce children to the process of research writing: choosing a topic, practicing pre-writing strategies, researching at their developmental level, reading, being read to, identifying the "big ideas", and finally sharing their learning and research with an authentic audience of their parents and peers.

Reading Workshop – Snow Goose

Children and teachers work as a **community of readers**, all reading and sharing in a *Reader's Workshop* format (see Calkins).

Our highest priority is that children continue to **see themselves as readers** and develop the ability to **read independently for pleasure and information**.

Children own their **personal reading choices** choosing from a wide variety of reading materials, with opportunities to develop a joy and passion for reading. **Teachers share their love and enthusiasm for reading**, story, and books of all genres.

At this level, readers are moving from learning to read, to reading to learn.

Readers explore a variety of genres and experience shared reading, individual quiet reading, research, book talks and reviews, small group reading activities (e.g. Readers' Theater, historical re-enactments, and child-led drama productions), and individual student/teacher reading conferences.

Reading conferences include discussion of content and genre, as well as specific questions to expand comprehension (meaning-based reading strategies and decoding), and to provide ongoing assessment.

Daily read-aloud supports comprehension skills and vocabulary development, as well as developing an "ear" for the rhythm of text.

Students' reading skills are challenged and developed through mini-lessons, individual student/teacher conferences, small group work, and periodic one-on-one reading conferences with a reading specialist.

We recognize the power and value of complex and engaging language. The Attic encourages all students to harness the richness of our multi-age community by mentoring, asking for help, and collaborating with peers to make sense of challenging texts.

Some favorite read-alouds at this level have been:

- *Wonder Struck*, by Brian Selnick
- *A Dog's Life*, by Ann M Martin
- *Witches*, by Roald Dahl
- *The Chronicles of Narnia*, by C.S. Lewis (first three books)
- *Peter Pan*, by J.M. Barrie
- *Poppy*, by Avi
- *The Whipping Boy*, by Sid Fleischman
- *Tales of Despereaux*, by Kate DiCamillo
- *Love that Dog*, by Sharon Creech
- selections from *Mrs. Piggle Wiggle*, by Betty MacDonald
- *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon and Starry River of the Sky*, companion books by Grace Lin
- *The Books of Elsewhere, Volume 1, The Shadows*, by Jacqueline West
- Various folktales, poetry, and short stories interspersed throughout the year

Writing Workshop – Snow Goose

Reading into Writing by Katie Johnson

Children practice writing skills and continue to **develop their sense of self-as-author**.

Student authors have the opportunity and expectation to draft, revise, edit, and publish their work, and they have multiple opportunities throughout the year to showcase and share their work with an authentic audience.

Writers explore writing in different genres, including narrative writing of imaginative stories, recounts of real-life events, graphically depicted stories, expository writing, poetry, science journaling, and non-fiction writing for spring Interest Projects.

Writers decide their own topics, materials, and what structure their writing will take. Time is set aside each day for individual quiet writing, followed by an opportunity for children to share their writing with the group. This sharing time allows for much peer mentoring and inspiration of ideas from fellow authors.

Mini-lessons focus on the writing process: idea, pre-writing, draft, revision and editing; parts of speech, using inference, drawing pictures to aid revision, developing character through dialogue, use of adverbs and adjectives to expand description, and word choice. Teachers model pre-writing tools, including web-style graphic organizers, lists, brainstorming and discussion. Revising and editing skills, such as punctuation, spelling, word choice, and sentence structure are taught according to individual readiness.

Writing skills are challenged and developed through mini-lessons and individual student/teacher conferences. Children are in charge of their own writing; the teacher may give suggestions, but ultimately the child decides what they will write about, what materials they will use and what structure their writing will take. Writing opportunities occur naturally throughout the day in student-led projects. Teachers communicate a level of expectation matching each child's next growth step.

Teachers introduce and support project planning, calendars, and time management around Interest Projects, Writer's Night, and other sharing experiences.

Providing an authentic audience and opportunities for publication is an important part of encouraging our Attic writers. For our annual Winter Writers' Night Celebration, every child publishes a favorite piece of writing. All children are encouraged to read their piece aloud, and take questions and comments from an audience of their parents and peers.

Interest projects offer an opportunity for research. Mini-lessons related to Interest Projects include brainstorming topics, note taking from various sources, writing information in their own words, and organizing research for presentation. Students present their findings to an audience of their peers and parents at our annual spring Interest Project event.

At the end of the year, children publish a favorite piece of writing in the All-Attic Writers' Publication. Kids enjoy reading their own pieces, and those of their peers, over our long summer break.

Literacy - Merganser *(at this level reading and writing instruction are combined in an extended literacy block)*
In the Middle by Lucy Calkins

At this level, reading and writing instruction merge in an extended literacy block using a Writers' Workshop and Readers' Workshop approach. Students have the opportunity to practice writing strategies and share stories and books, and continue to **develop their sense of self as reader and author**. Most readers at this level are reading for pleasure and information.

Mini-lessons for both reading and writing are planned to expose kids to new literacy skills and to support their growth as independent readers and writers. Lessons are crafted in response to observations of important growth areas and to provide appropriate scaffolding.

Students continue to develop their author's voice and identity through free writing, where they decide topics, materials, content, and structure. Author's Sharing is an important part of our writing process. Writers build confidence and work through the revising process by responding to questions and comments from an audience.

Each writer has unique interests and strengths; therefore, the bulk of our instruction takes place during one-to-one conferences. Teachers respond, to what they hear and see in student writing, by engaging in a dialogue designed to encourage the writer to their learning edge.

At this level, our focus on the writing process includes: pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing, with emphasis on kids' growing awareness of spelling and grammar conventions. Additionally, they explore character development, dialogue, setting, theme, and genres.

Providing an authentic audience and opportunities for publication is an important part of encouraging our Attic Writers. For our annual Winter Writers' Night Celebration, every child publishes a favorite piece of writing. All children are encouraged to read their piece aloud and take questions and comments from an audience of their parents and peers.

Each student chooses a topic and conducts long-term research in preparation for our spring Interest Project Event where students present their findings to an audience of their peers and parents. At this level, mini-lessons related to interest projects include brainstorming topics, project planning, strategies for reading non-fiction, note taking, synthesizing information from various sources, writing information in one's own words, and organizing research for presentation.

Teachers introduce and support project planning, calendars, and time management around Interest Projects, Writers' Night, and other sharing experiences. At this level, there is more focus on planning ahead, recognizing a timeline, organizing your materials, and practicing forethought around project completion.

Reading conferences, to expand comprehension and provide ongoing assessment, are held through group discussion, student/teacher conferences, and written responses.

Read-aloud models fluency and helps build vocabulary. Books contain sophisticated vocabulary and elements of story that are often not present in every-day spoken language.

Similar to the goals of read-aloud, our book groups (reading the same book as a class or small group), create an interpretive community of readers while simultaneously building fluency and vocabulary, and exposing readers to new ideas and perspectives.

Readers share ideas as they analyze narratives, make predictions, take on different points of view, and try out newly encountered vocabulary. Our discussions often serve as jumping off points for conversations around difficult subjects and emotions embedded in quality literature and readers discover there is more than one interpretation of a book or story.

At the end of the year, children publish a favorite piece of writing in the All-Attic Writers' Publication. Kids enjoy reading their own pieces, and those of their peers, over our long summer break.

Some favorite read-alouds and book-group books at this level have been:

- *Peter and the Starcatchers*, by Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson, a “prequel series” to *Peter Pan*
- *Wonder*, by R.J. Palacio
- *Number the Stars*, by Lois Lowry
- *Hatchet*, by Gary Paulsen
- *The Ghost Canoe*, by Will Hobbs
- *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate*, by Jacqueline Kelly
- *The Inquisitor’s Tale*, by Adam Gidwitz Illustrated by Hatem Aly
- *Counting by 7’s*, by Holly Goldberg Sloan

Literacy – Raven

Classes emphasize the importance of community, be that peer, family, cultural, or global. Classes also provide a safe and productive space for learners to grow in their reading and writing.

Writing time includes warm-ups, mini-lessons, silent work time, and peer and teacher conferencing. There are many opportunities for students to practice revising and editing their work in preparation for publication. Writing mini-lessons focus on forms of writing, the writing process, and traits of quality writing.

We focus on a variety of writing genres, fiction and non-fiction alike. Non-fiction writing takes the form of reading responses, essay writing, journaling, letter writing, and research papers. We practice reading non-fiction, taking notes, organizing information, making outlines, and writing research.

Interest projects are the quintessential Attic experience. Students choose a topic, conduct long-term research, and present their findings to an audience of their peers and parents. At this level, our classes continue work on the important skills of time management, organization of materials, and reading non-fiction texts for understanding. Students present their research findings through both written and visual media and are encouraged to think creatively about engaging presentation formats.

Teachers introduce and support project planning, calendars, and time management around Interest Projects, Writers’ Night, and other sharing experiences. At this level, we continue to focus on planning ahead, recognizing a timeline, organizing your materials, and practicing forethought around project completion.

Essays, stories, poems, research, plays, movie scripts, podcasts, fables, fairy tales, and novels in a variety of genres serve as a basis for work on vocabulary, writing, analysis, discussion, and publishing written or visual projects. We dissect short stories, looking at various literary techniques including but not limited to, symbolism, foreshadowing, irony, and conflict.

Through mini-lessons and writing mechanic exercises, students continue to develop their skills in close reading and critical thinking as well as exploring more in depth writing development, organization, and style. We explore what components are necessary in order to make our work captivating and engaging.

Students actively seek to understand the perspectives of other individuals through shared reading and class-wide discussions. Through the lens of a social scientist our learners navigate novels, mini-lessons, research, and group dialogue to further their skills and interests in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Constant and consistent observation provides ongoing assessment through group discussion, student/teacher conferences, and written responses.

We share our voices and opinions on what makes interesting and compelling literature. Students use the writing process to create works modeled on their self-selected reading. Emphasis on reading, taking notes, observing specifics of the writer’s craft, exploring character and motivation, and reflecting on literature as a mirror of real life as well as a tool for seeing more deeply into one’s own and others’ experiences as characters in a living story.

Texts:

- *The Outsiders*, by SE Hinton
- *The Dreamer*, by Pam Munoz Ryan and Peter Sis
- *In the Footsteps of Crazy Horse*, by Joseph Marshall III
- *Rain Reign*, by Ann M Martin
- *Stella by Starlight*, by Sharon Draper
- *Esperanza Rising*, by Pam Muñoz Ryan
- *Awkward*, by Svetlana Chmakova
- *Shadow on the Mountain*, by Margi Preus
- *Lions of Little Rock*, by Kristin Levine
- *Short*, by Holly Goldberg Sloan

Literacy – High School

In high school literacy classes, learners synthesize the work they’ve done as readers and writers throughout their lives. They are capable of complex critical analysis in both conversation and writing, they polish their abilities as writers and editors of their own and others’ original work, they know and hone their own voices, they can reflect on and talk about their own writing with clarity, and they begin to professionalize their writing to share beyond their peer-group and Attic classes.

As readers, high school learners participate in the reading and structured discussion of texts in seminar-style literature classes. They competently engage in rhetorical analysis, examining a text’s structure, context, cultural influences, and contemporary relevance. They are also able to abstract a text from its social context and ask big questions about what defines literature, what is literature’s cultural reach, and who determines what “matters” in literature. High school readers develop a deep understanding of the elements of fiction, including plot and character development, setting, point of view, and voice. They learn to identify and articulately discuss (in both conversation and writing) themes, motifs, and philosophical implications of a text. They can draw connections between various texts and are able to see literature as part of a larger conversation about society and the human experience.

As writers, high school learners participate in workshop-based writing classes. They enter their high school years already aware of what components make a text captivating and engaging; they sharpen their existing sensibilities, knowledge, and individual voice during their high school experience. They are able to ask and determine what makes “good” writing “good.” They understand the elements of poetry, fiction, and nonfiction writing, and can put those elements to use with intention in their own writing. They also explore the varieties of form, function, and structure across the genres, and can articulate the thought behind their own choices as writers within those genres. High school writers gain practice writing expository, descriptive, narrative/personal, persuasive, lyric, and research essays. In their creative writing classes, they learn about and have the opportunity to practice crafting original poetry, fiction, and literary nonfiction. They engage in peer workshops, learning to edit and comment productively on the work of other high school writers, as well as to receive workshop feedback on their own writing. They become adept at the revision process, understand and master English conventions and grammar, and produce final drafts and portfolios of original writing that demonstrate a high level of competency.

Expectations for out-of-class work at the high school level include a great deal of independent reading, reflection, and writing. High school learners are expected to be responsible managers of their own work and to reliably complete reading and writing assignments outside of class hours.

Whenever possible, we support high schoolers to have opportunities to seek authentic outcomes and audiences for their written work, including participation in The Attic’s annual Interest Projects, Writers’ Night, Model United Nations, and submission of creative work to journals or presentation/performance of work.

We see high school learners (and empower high school learners to see themselves) as self-directed, self-motivated, and intrinsically curious readers and writers, ready to take on the challenges of reading and writing at a college-level.

Texts include

- *To Kill a Mockingbird*, by Harper Lee
- *The Book Thief*, by Markus Zusak
- *The Norton Sampler: Short Essays for Composition*, 8th Edition
- *The Great Gatsby*, by F. Scott Fitzgerald

- *The Sun Also Rises*, by Ernest Hemingway
- *Daisy Miller*, by Henry James
- *The Odyssey*, by Homer (trans. Emily Wilson)
- *My Antonia*, by Willa Cather
- *The Good Thief*, by Hannah Tinti
- *The House on Mango Street*, by Sandra Cisneros
- *Catcher in the Rye*, by J.D. Salinger
- *Siddhartha*, by Hermann Hesse
- *The Republic*, by Plato
- *Candide*, by Voltaire
- *1984*, by George Orwell
- *The Handmaid's Tale*, by Margaret Atwood
- *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, by J.K. Rowling
- *Housekeeping*, by Marilynne Robinson
- *Arcadia*, by Lauren Groff
- *Another Brooklyn*, by Jacqueline Woodson
- *Memory Wall*, by Anthony Doerr
- *The Namesake*, by Jhumpa Lahiri
- *Shadowshaper*, by Daniel José Older
- *All American Boys*, by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely
- *A Time to Dance*, by Padma Venkatraman
- *Every Falling Star: The True Story of How I Survived and Escaped North Korea*, by Sungju Lee
- *The Hate U Give*, by Angie Thomas

Sample Course Descriptions

Writing Non-Fiction/Independent Study

Focused on the writing of non-fiction essays and political draft resolutions, this independent study course offered a survey of non-fiction writing styles. Significant time was appropriated for the student to thoughtfully craft written works in this genre. The primary themes explored in the students' written assignments for this class dealt with political science, history, geography, and international relations. Additional assignments for this class included analyzing non-fiction texts and reading numerous political and historical essays. All written work completed for this course was on advanced high school writing level. Essays were evaluated by the supervising instructor and work shopped with other teachers and students.

English: Shakespeare and World Literature

This college preparatory composition and literature course focused on the many-faceted, thematic question: What does it mean to be human? Through discussion, lecture, writing, and viewing live Shakespeare at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, students investigated literary themes in works that included: *Things Fall Apart*, by Chinua Achebe; *Macbeth*, by William Shakespeare; *Haroun and The Sea of Stories*, by Salman Rushdie; *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, by Alexander Solzhenitsyn; *The Taming of the Shrew*, by William Shakespeare; *King Lear*, by William Shakespeare; classic children's stories, and numerous poems from Shakespeare and contemporary world poets. Required writing for the course included class notes, reflections, weekly reading responses and at least eight multi-draft formal pieces of literary analysis.

Essay Writing

This rigorous high school writing course focused on the essay. Through readings and intensive group discussions, students became familiar with the modes of discourse—description, narration, exposition, and argument. Readings included a variety of essays, a novel, and a short story collection. Emphasis was placed on understanding and mastering English conventions, grammar, and essay construction, and a major component of the class was the peer workshop. Revision was stressed as an essential step of the writing process. Spring Interest Projects required students to present research papers to a large audience from the community. The course culminated in the successful completion and presentation of a portfolio of written and revised writing from the year, including: two descriptive essays, two literary analysis essays, one research paper (including an outline, annotated bibliography, and MLA formatted works cited page), one persuasive essay, and three impromptu essays.

English Literature: The Hero's Journey

The hero's journey (often also called "the monomyth," a term coined by writer-scholar Joseph Campbell) is a classic literary form, found in texts both ancient and contemporary. At its most basic, the hero's journey seeks to explain the human experience and to locate a sense of meaning and purpose underlying that experience. The hero's journey is a quest story, during which the hero (or protagonist) encounters challenges, learns lessons about self and world, and eventually returns home transformed by the knowledge he has gained in his seeking. In this seminar-style class we studied the hero's journey as it is represented in classical and contemporary literature. The questions driving our discussions included the following:

- What is the classic form of the hero's journey?
- Why have storytellers and readers been drawn to this form for centuries?
- In what way does this form serve as a journey for the reader as well as the character?
- In what ways has the hero's journey story structure shaped our notions of identity and culture?
- How is this story differently represented in other cultures?
- Must a hero be morally "good"?
- Classically, the protagonist of the hero's journey story is male. In what ways might the story structure change if the hero were instead a heroine? Why are there so few examples of this story structure with female protagonists?
- Contemporary literature (which we'll characterize as including anything written during or after the dawn of modernism in the late 19th c.) often subverts the traditional "hero" archetype, and is focused on an "anti-hero" protagonist. What is an "anti-hero"? What cultural changes led to this shift in the archetype?

As well as reading and discussing the course literature, students wrote and revised three literary analysis essays, a critical review of a peer's work, and an original fairy tale. The course also included a creative component, and to satisfy this students created original visual/written/musical compositions elaborating the hero's journey, and collaborated on a group film project exploring the contemporary literary hero as a close to the school year.

Creative Writing

In this intensive, intermediate level high school creative writing course, students built on their existing foundational knowledge of the forms and elements of fiction (character, dialogue, setting, plot) and poetry (sonic devices, meter, line and stanza structure, syntax, tone, form). They also continued their practice as writers and editors. The class read and analyzed in discussion and writing a number of short stories and poems by established and emerging writers, as well as Karen Russell's novel *Swamplandia!* and Anthony Doerr's short story collection *Memory Wall*. The final project was the presentation of an individual writing portfolio, consisting of at least five flash fictions, two full short stories (of 5-25 pages in length), and a collection of poems.

Literary Analysis: Utopian/Dystopian Literature

This year-long course examined visions of utopian and dystopian societies as represented in literature, as well as exploring utopian/dystopian literary form through creative writing. The focus of the course was the analysis and production of literature. A great emphasis was put on learning to analyze both verbally (through in class discussions) and in writing (through formal analytical essays and through the construction of original creative pieces). Students produced four formal analytical essays on the course literature and at least three short stories (for a total of 30-60 pages of writing), as well as multiple short in-class writing assignments and two creative projects.

Literacy-Based Electives

Book Group & Writer's Circle

(Led by a High School Student Instructor)

Book Club was centered on forming a community through reading literature, sharing experiences and negotiating the various details of a collaborative class. Students were encouraged to take on ownership of their learning and membership in the class. They did this by selecting the reading materials, determining an appropriate homework load, and creating in-class activities. We read *The View from Saturday* and *Where the Red Fern Grows*. With each book we had in-depth discussions on a variety of topics related to the reading. We also spent considerable time discussing the literary tools used by the author to make the books engaging for the reader. Finally, this class offered participants the chance to bring in original work for a writer's workshop. This workshop approach proved to be helpful and engaging for all members of the class.

Everything Shakespeare

(Led by a High School Student Instructor)

This rigorous course, based on William Shakespeare's works, was both interesting and academically challenging. The students had full control over the content they studied and the pace at which they worked. With five acts in each play, the class covered roughly an act a week. They read the content at home, and continued to talk about the play in class. Throughout the course, the students read three Shakespeare plays: King Lear, The Tempest, and Hamlet. With each play, the students participated in a Jeopardy game focused on a range of topics, from information of a play discussed to direct quotes from the previously read play. To expand their knowledge of Shakespeare, the class saw live performances of King Lear, The Tempest, and The Comedy of Errors. In addition to the work they completed, the students acted out several scenes from plays, focused on content from over ten other Shakespeare plays, and continuously improved their ability to confidently read and comprehend Elizabethan English.

Shakespeare's Influence on Disney

(Led by a High School Student Instructor)

This course was student driven and focused entirely on the Shakespeare plays with the biggest influence on Disney movies. Though we only had five classes, the goal was clear: Read and comprehend a Shakespeare play of the students choosing, find as many comparisons between Shakespeare's works and the favorite books and movies of the class, and have a basic understanding of several other Shakespeare plays. In the first class, they learned about the major influences on popular literature and movies and chose to read Macbeth and see what other connections they could make themselves. After three weeks, the class finished Macbeth, moving at an astounding pace for students who hadn't been previously exposed to Shakespeare's works. In the last two classes, the students decided to watch The Lion King; it was a favorite of the class, and is heavily influenced by Hamlet and Macbeth. Overall, the class was exposed to roughly three Shakespeare plays, learned more about the writing process behind their favorite movies and books, and gained confidence in reading Elizabethan English aloud.