



*Dear Abby*

DEAR ABBY,  
Here's where the moment of overwhelming despair threatens to take me down into the deep dark and endless caverns and leave me there. I am overwhelmed with rewrites I still haven't written, the letters in response to my finished pieces, the creative project memo, etc. I'm not sure how it will all be done with an element of quality attached to it.  
IN DESPAIR

DEAR IN DESPAIR,  
I believe you need a quick organizational conference with Karen during reading time today; I think you probably have more done than you think you do. She will be able to help you set a schedule and reassure you that all will be okay! Remember, you do have an extra week to complete your portfolio. Relax, take a deep breathe, and then talk to Karen. Bring your writing along with you. You can do this!  
ABBY



### A Testimony to Workshopping

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When I was in high school and college, I didn't know how to talk to my classmates about their writing. It wasn't until CWP that workshop groups began to make sense. My group and I have finally grown into our audience. We've really done a good job of helping each other grow. Gone is the fear of "hurting" someone's feelings. We know each other better so we can trust what we say and what we are told. Another strange happening has occurred—a miracle—I'm feeling invested in the writing of my workshop peers. Workshopping has definitely helped me grow as a writer.

### The Top 10 Things I Learned on Monday



- 1) Today I realized I've written a narrative rather than a memoir. Now I have an idea of what to do next.
- 2) Today I realized that I have too many ideas: I keep starting projects/pieces of writing and then something comes up, and I start a new piece.
- 3) Today I'm unhappy with my writing, but not unhappy that I am unhappy. It just means it's time to go back to the drawing board.
- 4) Rhyming is totally satisfying. I'm finding that it feels really good to take an angry emotion and give it a rhyming, rhythmic home.
- 5) The lessons today were great in helping me finish a piece I have been having a hard time with since the beginning.
- 6) My life as a writer has transformed me so much that I sat and typed until I had to pee so badly I was going to wet my pants. I am extremely engaged in what I've been doing—it makes it hard to leave.
- 7) My writing was messy today, but I am okay with it. I feel like I am driving on square wheels.
- 8) I thought I was too tired to be productive, but I was told to go write—and I did! Surprise!
- 9) Poetry is a profusion pouring from my person.
- 10) I'm really excited about the creative project, even though I haven't a clue about what I'll have ready by then.

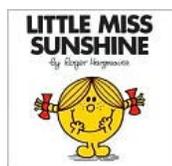
# Gaining Confidence

## CHARACTERS:

Little Miss Questioning  
Little Miss Informed  
Little Miss A-ha  
Little Miss Explorer  
Little Miss Empowered  
Little Miss Visualize  
Little Miss Hopeful

**SCENE:** (A cramped classroom littered with chart paper, pictures, quotes, sticky notes, markers, pens, Writer's Notebooks, mentor texts, and books by Fletcher, Kittle, and Wood Ray.)

**INSPIRED BY:**



### **Little Miss Questioning** (*entering frantically*)

Help, I couldn't write today but my brain still hurts from thinking! I learned about genres and memos and creative projects, oh my! I'm going to write tonight-I know I will-and be ready to fill me head tomorrow. What will this look like in my classroom? Off-task? Lazy? Slow learner?

### **Little Miss Informed** (*with authority*)

Students will be engaged, eager to learn, excited about their writing because it is authentic and meaningful to them. I'm learning how important our quick writes are to the writing process. I've noticed that the topic selections for the quick writes are intentional and that there are topics (broad enough for everyone to have a connection). Without them, I'd be like some of my students saying (*helplessly and with expression*), "I don't know what to write about."

### **Little Miss Questioning** (*calming down*)

I guess I am beginning to regain my confidence and plan to realign my classroom and my teaching to match what I believe about learning.

### **Little Miss A-ha** (*abruptly interrupting*)

I guess instead of plying them to fake understanding of my subject to please me and earn a grade, I need to work on critical thinking and problem solving using writing and my content as vehicles.

### **Little Miss Explorer** (*enthusiastically*)

I really like the idea of Kittle and Romano's multi-genre project. This will help students apply critical thinking skills to their writing in the content areas.

### **Little Miss Empowered** (*eagerly*)

Actually using a mentor text and trying on a voice/technique was liberating. I think this will be an extremely powerful teaching tool.

### **Little Miss Visualize** (*in wonderment and awe*)

This is beginning to make more sense, and I am excited to see it work in my classroom. I now have many ideas for writing buzzing around in my head and I wonder when I'll write them. (This is amazing since I've never written for pleasure before.)

### **Little Miss Hopeful** (*arrogantly*)

Penny Kittle's chapter encouraged me and continues to make me question what direction to take my classroom and lead my department. I am searching for the balance and desiring a shift that won't make heads' spin.

### **Little Miss Questioning** (*as if discovering the New World*)

I am beginning to regain my confidence and plan to realign my classroom and my teaching to match what I believe about learning. I know the type of teacher of writing I want to be!

### **All** (*As they exit and curtains close*)

We can do it!

THE END

## PRODUCTION NOTES:

**CHARACTERS:** 7 teachers who are willing to embrace change for the sake of student learning.

**PLAYING TIME:** 4 minutes.

**COSTUMES:** Casual summer attire. E.g., Tank tops, flip flops, khaki pants.

**SETTING:** The "Model Classroom" located on the 4th floor of the Ed Center. A small storage unit adjoining the classroom is filled with laptop carts. A small table of treats is set up in the corner of the room, containing sweet and salty snacks. Regular and decaf coffee pots are freshly brewed, ready to be sipped during the morning lesson.

**LIGHTING:** Halogen bulbs.

**SOUND:** No special effects.

