

# The Architecture of the Mini-Lesson

## **Connection:**

- The teacher places the lesson into the context of what has been learned. This might mean reminding students of previous learning, or explaining a certain problem readers or writers experience.
- The connection helps the student understand both what they are going to learn about, and why it is important.
- At the end of the connection, the teacher explicitly states what the teaching point for that day will be.
- The connection is usually about 1-2 minutes, and is usually just the teacher talking.

## **Teach:**

- The teacher teaches the students what they will be learning. This is most often done through demonstrations in which the teacher acts like a reader or writer in front of the students.
- For a clear and explicit demonstration, the teacher should prelude it by telling the class what it is they should notice in the demonstration, and recap what they should have noticed after the demonstration is over.
- Instead of demonstrating, the teacher can also choose to show a good example of what is being taught and explain to the students how this can be done.
- This part of the mini-lesson is predominantly the teacher talking for about 3-6 minutes, depending on what is being taught.

## **Active Involvement:**

- The teacher asks the students to replicate what was taught in the teach part of the mini-lesson. Students try out the very same skill that was taught in the demonstration.
- The active involvement can be done individually, or with partner.
- It can be done orally or in writing.
- It is not done on students' actual ongoing work, as not all students are necessarily doing the same work at the same time during the workshop.
- Having a common example for this part of the mini-lesson also makes assessing their ability much easier.
- While the students are practicing the skill, the teacher circulates to listen or read over their shoulders to assess how they are doing.
- After the activity, the teacher recaps by sharing good examples of student work.
- This part typically lasts between 1 and 3 minutes.

## **Link:**

- The teacher reminds students of what was just taught, and explains to them how it will apply to their ongoing work as readers and writers.
- In most cases, the link should not sound like an assignment, but be more of a "forever invitation."
- The link is usually the teacher talking for about a minute.