11 June 2012 Classroom Practice: Informative/Explanatory

 I feel more confident about using technology after today’s writing workshop. Narrowing my weekly goals really helped me focus my attention where it mattered most. My “Letter to Me” is coming to be a living, breathing organism—or at least an animated one—as I attempt to plug it into MovieMaker. My ultimate goal, I think, is to play the McKamey’s song “I Will Trust You Lord” in the background quietly as the text and photographs play. I may decide it works better as a traditional piece, but I would like to see it both ways before I make up my mind.

 I have also decided to allow my students to create their own “Model Texts” Notebook so that they will have pieces to draw from as they structure their own writing. In this way, students will *own* the model texts, and each notebook will be individualized—students will include examples which “speak” to them or highlight writing techniques which they feel fit their own writing.

 I am beginning to see writing as more than just pen on flat paper. Writing encompasses so much more when coupled with technology. To our students, writing is no longer a silent, two-dimensional activity to be completed for a grade in English class. Writing is communication, through social constructs such as Facebook, Twitter, blogs, websites, and even texting. As writing teachers, it becomes our responsibility to teach students writing in the contexts they are familiar with and are constantly utilizing for communication.

 In addition, students need authentic assignments which have meaning outside the classroom setting. New technology makes student publishing available to all students in a way that was not possible ten years ago. Websites such as Figment, KidPub, Glogster, and Weebly allow students to upload their work on the Internet, receive feedback from others, create their own projects, and have freedom of choice for assignments.