



## The Writing Thief: Using Mentor Texts to Teach the Craft of Writing

By Ruth Culham

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It's been said that good writers borrow while great writers steal. Writing thieves read widely, dive deeply into texts, and steal bits and pieces from great texts as models for their own writing. Ruth Culham admits to being a writing thief-and she wants you and your students to become writing thieves, too!

A major part of becoming a writing thief is finding the right mentor texts to share with students. Within this book, discover more than 90 excellent mentor texts, along with straight-forward activities that incorporate the traits of writing across informational, narrative, and argument modes.

Chapters also include brief essays from beloved writing thieves such as Lester Laminack, David L. Harrison, Lisa Yee, Nicola Davies, Ralph Fletcher, Toni Buzzeo, Lola Schaefer, and Kate Messner, detailing the reading that has influenced their own writing.

Ruth's beloved easy-going style and friendly tone make this a book you'll turn to again and again as you guide your students to reach their full potential as deep, thoughtful readers and great writers. There's a writing thief in each of us when we learn how to read with a writer's eye!

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### Editorial Review

About the Author

**Ruth Culham**, Ed.D., is the president of the Culham Writing Company and former Unit Manager of the Assessment Program at Education Northwest in Portland, Oregon, USA. Ruth was English Teacher of the Year in Montana, the highlight of her 19-year teaching career. She holds specialty degrees in Library Science and Elementary, Middle, and Secondary English Education.

As a pioneering researcher in writing assessment and instruction, Ruth creates and conducts teacher workshops to provide professional development at local, district, and state levels. At state and national conferences she's a featured speaker on using traits of writing, designing effective writing instruction, and reading to teach writing, and other related topics.

Ruth is the recognized expert in the traits of writing field and author of over 40 teaching resources published by Scholastic, including *6+1 Traits of Writing: The Complete Guide, Grades 3 and Up*; *6+1 Traits of Writing: The Complete Guide for the Primary Grades*; and *Traits of Writing: The Complete Guide for Middle School*, winner of the 2011 Teacher's Choice award. (Not surprising, however, since middle school is her true love.) As the author of *Traits Writing: The Complete Writing Program for Grades K-8* (2012), she has launched a writing revolution. *Traits Writing* is the culmination of 40 years of educational experience, research, practice, and passion.

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