

## Settling-In Time Sets the Emotional Tone for the Day: Developing Friendship, Community, and Social-Emotional Skills

"Settling-in" time is that transition from home to school when children are saying good-bye to their Mom or Dad, returning their School-to-Home book bags, and taking care of important community life. They are greeting their teacher with important news, fingerspelling and doing name writing practice, watering their vegetable sprouts, checking on the turtle, making birthday cards, greeting their friends, responding to name graph questions, and feeling a part of a unique community of learners and friends. This is a disciplined and structured time for social learning and building life skills: speaking, listening, friendship, and collaboration.

**For Katie Nelson, settling-in time is for warm greetings, sharing important news, and finishing morning work jobs**



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- **There is a personal welcome for each child**, a time to "get a hug if you need one," share important family news, and gently ease into kindergarten life. The prolific writer on the right shares: ***"I wrote two more books last night!"***

*Once you get the community right, the levels of learning soar. -Ralph Peterson*

## Just 25 minutes sets the tone for a productive day



- There is time to share important news: ***"Look! I lost a tooth!"***
- *Pick up your Name Ticket model, and do your best name writing.*
- At 9:00 the buzzer sounds. It's time to stop and listen to announcements and then finish up the morning work, clean up, and gather at the carpet by about 9:10 for the traditional opening-the-day songs.

*We can choose to spoon-feed our children...  
or teach them to be self-regulated, motivated learners*



- Children are responsible to do their very best ***"Name Ticket"*** writing every morning. Teachers provide extra coaching as needed.



## **Good time management means more time for choosing activities**



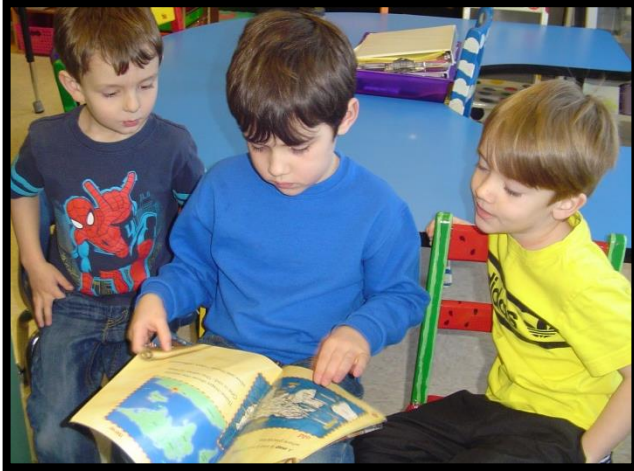
- **Once children have finished their morning settling-in "responsibilities"** they are free to choose from activities on the tables or easel painting.
- **Children help each other in kindergarten.** Teacher always says, "Ask a friend..." Children learn to give high-fives and say, "Good game! Let's play again..."
- **Kindergartners can always read with a buddy or continue working on a writing project.**

**Consistent settling-in routines and friendship rituals build the learning community so all children thrive.**



- Open-ended math manipulatives and art supplies **nurture creative, social and higher-level thinking skills.**
- We teach children to work hard, persevere, and be kind.

**Kindergartners learn how to be book lovers:** The class library is always open!



- **These boys know they can always choose a favorite book** from the class library and help each other read the pictures and words. They have learned how to put books away.
- **Having just one iPad creates challenges and opportunities.** Children are responsible for checking off their names and sharing this learning tool!

**Children develop responsibility and discover new passions.**



*I am really good at easel painting!*



*I really love the dramatic play center!*

- **Children learn responsibility:** They sign up for the dramatic play area and cross off their names when they are finished.

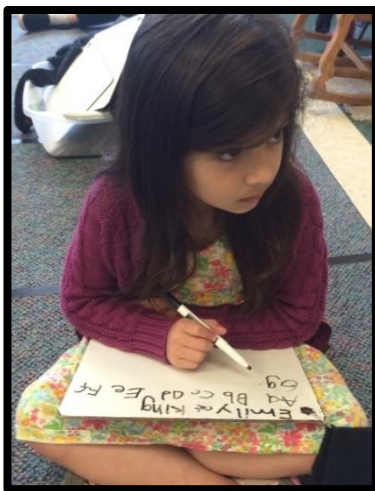


As the year progresses, students become even more independent and self-directed in taking care of meaningful community life.



- One girl brings back her Nellie Edge Read & Sing Book from the Reading-at-Home Book Club envelope. She reads each book to two different adults and gets their initials before selecting another book.
- These boys are watering sprouts for the McKinley community/school vegetable garden.

*Quick writing recall of letters builds the reading and writing brain.*



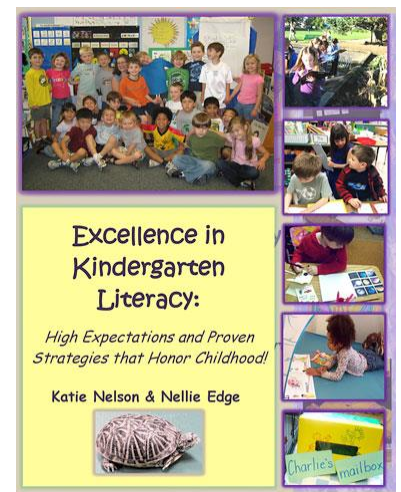
- Notice, by January many students have moved from name writing work at the table to using dry erase boards on the floor.
- First and last name writing and "a to z brain exercises" for fluency are completed every morning.

- Children build speed and quick visual recall of the ABCs, supporting the reading and writing process.

*Settling-In time (thoughtfully structured) develops a positive mindset for success in school—and in life. Kindergarten friends love to learn and hang out together.*



Katie Nelson is the coauthor of the book ***Excellence in Kindergarten Literacy: High Expectations and Proven Strategies that Honor Childhood!*** (currently out of print) Her work is often featured in Nellie Edge Live and Online Seminars. Katie is no longer teaching full-time in kindergarten. She tutors and serves as a guest and mentor teacher. She is also available for consulting in schools. Her special focus is *The Comprehensive Kindergarten Writing Workshop Model*, and *Celebrate Language and Accelerate Literacy*. Contact Katie at [nelsonkatieallstar@gmail.com](mailto:nelsonkatieallstar@gmail.com).



To learn more about kindergarten-friendly handwriting peruse the Kindergarten Handwriting pages at [NellieEdge.com](http://NellieEdge.com). Entire K-1 Handwriting Bundle available on [Nellie Edge TPT](http://NellieEdge.com)

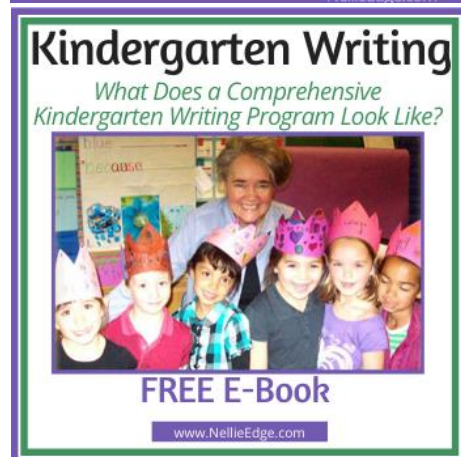
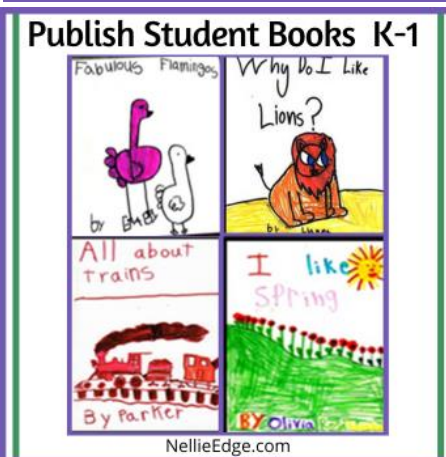
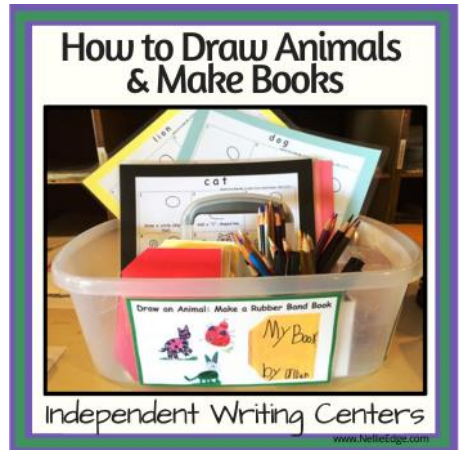
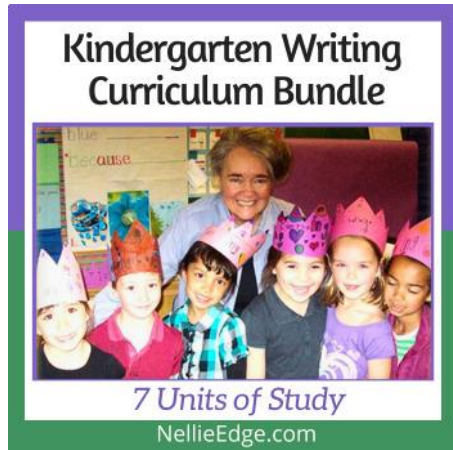
To learn more about this Authentic Kindergarten Writing Curriculum, peruse the Writing Pages of [NellieEdge.com](http://NellieEdge.com). Entire K-1 Writing Bundle available on [Nellie Edge TPT](http://NellieEdge.com).



# Grow Your Kindergarten Writers with Authentic, Proven Units of Study: Also Great for First Grade-Begin the Year!

*All students love to write lists, messages, news stories, science journals, and real books—all year long.*

**Bundle and SAVE Big!**



“This bundle gave my kinders the scaffolding and confidence to truly become writers. The ideas are simple yet profound; this product should be required in every kinder classroom.”

M.R. on TPT