MINI-LESSON FILE BOX

The Crate:

A plastic file box works great as a storage system for your Trait Crate.

The light-weight box and handle makes it easily portable. You can take the whole thing from home-to-school, or you can just grab a single hanging file.

Because it is fully enclosed, unlike a "milk crate" container, the contents won't be damaged by rain and snow when you cart it around.

The Traits:

Expandable pocket folders hold **MINI-LES-SONS,** anchor papers, handouts, overheads, and other mini-lesson teaching materials. There are six oversized folders— one for each trait: *Ideas, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, Conventions*.

TIP: Build your mini-lesson files as the school year progresses. File "good" lessons as you execute them. Don't spend a weekend trying to cram every lesson you've come across or printed from a website into this single box! Put the "best of the best" mini-lessons in here— the ones that really work.

Writing Genres and Units:

Having your strongest mini-lessons sorted at the front of the file box will be great; they'll be right at your fingertips. However, most teachers continue to feel like they don't have a plan for teaching writing. They feel like they are just hopping around from one trait to the next, not really grounded in a curriculum plan. That's where a second set of hanging files can help.

These hold your **UNIT PLANS**. This is where you jot down notes for how many days you'll work on a particular writing theme, writing project or writing genre. This is where you plan out which of the mini-lessons within the expandable files you are going to teach when. (See backside template).

These files might include: *Descriptive, Narrative, Poetry, Essay, Reports, Compare-Contrast, Letter Writing, Literary Response, etc.*

Primary teachers might have files labeled differently. Since often you start a new piece of writing every day, maybe some of your files are organized by topic or theme: *Fall, Winter, Spring, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, Frogs, Plants.* Others organize by type of writing: *Drawing, Labeling, Listing, Sentence Writing, Letter Writing, etc.*

Consider also including a file to hold your plans for *The Launch* (your first 20 days of school), and a file that outlines how to prepare for prompted-writing— *Test-Writing Genre.*

Since good teachers are always on the lookout for new ideas, and thus, they tend NOT to do the exact same writing assignments and projects every year, this set of files offers some flexibility. It could hold teaching plans from several different years. For example:

Letter Writing file might include plans for:
• Writing letters to special guests on Grandparent's Day.
• Writing letters to Turkey Tom telling why they will/won't eat him on Thanksgiving.
• Writing letters to pen pals for your students.

Within the single hanging file titled *Letter Writing*, you might have multiple teaching plans to pull from. You'll never forget what you did the previous year!