

The Spark Before the Sentence: Using Philosophy to Ignite Writing

Session Type: Interactive Workshop (one hour)

Audience: F-10 Educators, Pre-Service Teachers, Literacy Leaders

Facilitators:

Lisa Keskinen – Lisa K Connections, Independent Education Consultant

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Abstract

What happens when students explore questions that have no easy answers?

They engage. They think more deeply, listen more attentively, and speak with more clarity and confidence. Aligned with the conference theme, *Lighting the Way for Literacy*, this workshop reveals how philosophy sparks the critical and creative thinking that strengthens oracy; and how that deeper talk becomes the fuel for confident writing. When philosophical dialogue is at the heart of a classroom, student voice becomes substantive and reasoned, speaking and listening deepen, and writing ignites from conviction rather than compliance. Every learner becomes a thinker first, and a writer because of it.

Passionate about sharing our work with students, you can expect a session that is practical, inspiring, and immediately useful in any classroom. Participants will receive two resources: *80 Questions to Ignite Philosophical Discussion*, organised into year levels F-10, and an editable planning template.

Session Structure

We begin by doing philosophy together. We then pull the process apart: examining how critical dialogue develops the analytical depth, precision and clarity that transfer directly into writing. Authentic student work samples show the creative progression in action. Small group tasks, discussions, and time for questions, provide an interactive session format.

Educators will leave able to:

- Facilitate high-engagement philosophical discussions
- Build classroom cultures where every voice matters
- Use philosophical discussion as a bridge to purposeful writing
- Support reluctant writers through idea-rich entry points