



# **The Best-Kept Teaching Secret: How Written Conversations Engage Kids, Activate Learning, Grow Fluent Writers . . . K-12 (Corwin Literacy)**

*Harvey "Smokey" A. Daniels, Elaine Daniels*

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*"Written in a light conversational style, The Best-Kept Teaching Secret brims with jottings written by children and with an armful of ways you can use letter writing to revitalize your teaching. Readers who have come to trust Smokey's grounding in classrooms will find that once again, he draws upon a rich repertoire of stories and methods drawn from the hurly burl of classrooms."*

-Lucy Calkins, Author of *Units of Study for Teaching Writing* and Coauthor of *Pathways to the Common Core*

## ***Your fast-track to student engagement***

Everywhere Smokey Daniels speaks, there's one teaching strategy that teachers embrace above all others. That single method for transforming students from passive spectators into active learners . . . for evoking curiosity, inspiring critical thinking, and *building powerful writers along the way*. Now, that best-kept teaching secret is revealed: Written Conversations. Smokey and coauthor Elaine Daniels describe how to leverage these "silent writing-to-learn discussions" structure by structure

- Mini-memos
- Dialogue journals
- Write-arounds
- Digital discussions

. . . with detailed descriptions, lessons, and annotated student samples—making this the most practical teaching book in recent memory.

The author or coauthor of 18 books for teachers, **Harvey Daniels**, also known as "Smokey," has been a professor, researcher, consultant, and teacher coach over his 43-year career. These days, he serves as a conference speaker, school district consultant, and demonstration teacher in schools around the U.S. and Canada. In 2012, Smokey was presented with the NCTE Exemplary Leader Award.

**Elaine Daniels** began as a high school English teacher at Lake Forest High School, where it was rumored that her former teacher advisor and fellow staff member, Smokey Daniels, gave her a positive recommendation. After 14 years at National-Louis University, Elaine now teaches at Santa Fe Community College. This is her first professional collaboration, with Smokey, already a pretty great partner.

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