**Making a NaNoWriMo (based on National Novel Writing Month) Classroom Anthologies**

Supports Common Core Standards for English Language Arts:

* **Grade 6**: Writing: 6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and interact with others about writing, including linking to and citing online sources.
* **Grade 7**: Writing: 6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and interact with others about writing, including linking to and citing online sources.
* **Grade 8**: Writing: 6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and interact with others about writing, including presenting and citing information in a digital format.

Your class has put in a month of hard work. Why not give them something they can show off? Consider creating a NaNoWriMo (**National Novel Writing Month)** anthology with your class, featuring excerpts from each student, author pictures, student reflections about their NaNoWriMo experience, and much more. Below you will find all the elements that make up a great anthology!

**Materials Needed**

* Book-making supplies: These materials can be as simple or as elaborate as you like. Your school district may have access to software that can be used to make something more professional-looking. If you do not have access to computers, you can also use scissors, a stapler, and a copy machine just as well. You may also approach local copiers to see if they would be willing to donate printing services or offer you a discount.
* You can also use an online service such as [CreateSpace](http://www.createspace.com/nanowrimo) to design and self-publish the anthology. This year, CreateSpace is offering free paperback copies of student novels to all 6–12 NaNo classrooms. Check the [special offers](http://ywp.nanowrimo.org/specialoffers) page for details.
* A digital or film camera to take author photos.

**The Elements of a Great NaNoWriMo (National Novel Writing Month ) Classroom Anthology**

**Title and Cover**

A title is an important thing for any anthology because it sets the tone for the work inside. Sure, you could go with *Mrs. Smith’s Seventh Grade Class NaNoWriMo Anthology*, but wouldn’t something like *Raging Writers* be more fun? You could look for cool lines from the kids’ excerpts and pick one, or you could let them come up with titles in class and vote.

If you take the time to make a book cover, the book will appear that much more “real.” You can design it yourself (by hand or with a graphics program) or host a “Book Cover Contest” in your classroom. If you are using CreateSpace to publish your anthology, you can use their super easy-to-use book cover creator.

**Tables of Contents and Mastheads**

Don’t forget the little things that make your book look professional. A table of contents and page numbering system will allow proud parents to find their child’s story easily.

Also, if the kids are helping produce the anthology by doing things such as editing, providing illustrations, etc., take a bit of space to recognize this. In professional magazines, there is a box called a “masthead” near the front of each issue that lists staff and contributors.

**The Content**

There are a couple ways you can do this. One is by making this a “First Chapter Anthology,” meaning every student could revise and turn in their first chapters, or the first 3–10 pages, depending on grade level, classroom size, and the size of your printing budget.

Another way to do it is to have each student use the excerpt he or she chose for submission to a literary journal. If the length of these is not appropriate for your anthology project, each student can adapt that excerpt or choose an entirely new one; again, the page limit is up to you.

No matter which pages students select for their excerpts, however, one thing is essential: each excerpt must include a title and the author’s name, and have been proofread very, very carefully. Remind students how to do this by correcting for subject-verb agreement, verb tense, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation and by combining sentences whenever possible

The simplest way to arrange the stories in your anthology is alphabetically, by author’s last name. That way, everything is as fair and equal as possible. However, if the kids are editing, you might have them pick a number of stories that exemplify certain qualities (best female protagonist, best use of imagery, etc.), and recognize these at the front of the book.

You could also look for a “flow” from one story to the next. It’s hard to explain, but once you start reading the stories and arranging them, there may be an order that just feels right, possibly even one that creates a feeling of something bigger than the sum of its parts.

**Extra Cool Things That Will Make Your Students Feel Like Real Authors**

You can enhance the authorial feel by giving each student the full-feature treatment:

1. Have each student write an author bio. This could be a real bio, or a fictional one. If they want this NaNo-novel to be recognized as their fifth best-seller, that’s great!
2. Include an author photo, preferably with the student looking very serious and authorial. You may want to bring in some props, like large quills, busts of Shakespeare, typewriters, etc.
3. Write a bit of praise for each student’s novel. Something like, "A must read. James is a genius when it comes to metaphors."

**General Notes**

Encourage your students to peer-edit each others' excerpts in groups of three or four. Help the groups polish each excerpt before it goes into the anthology.

You can also offer your students the opportunity to design the cover, create the masthead, write the table of contents, etc. Give them as much responsibility as you possibly can in order to make this anthology their own!

In any case, remember that the anthology is a celebration of your students’ work in November. It deserves to look wonderful and to find an honored place in your classroom!

*Adapted from http://ywp.nanowrimo.org/ms\_anthologies*