Writing Timeline

1. Take about four minutes. Think back over your life about who you have been as a writer. Think of all the writing you have done from childhood to adulthood. Brainstorm as many events as you can where writing played a role—push yourself—see if you can come up with 8 to 10 or more events. Let your mind drift to writing you did as a small child, the writing you did in school or out of school, assignments that you did that helped you or derailed you as a writer, any sharing that you did of your writing, people who influenced you or got in your way, anything that profoundly affected you as a writer. The events can be positive or negative.

2. Take about 3 minutes and select out at least five of these events (but you can have more) that were most important in forming you as the writer you are today. You can check them off or circle them or list them on a separate page of your daybook.

3. Take about 20 minutes and portray the five or more events creatively as a time-line. You can draw, cut out pictures from magazines, use construction paper or just a daybook page. Use symbols and words. You can even think 3-dimensionally. Whatever you decide, you should graphically represent the events.

4. Reflection in Daybook (two minutes for each—30 minutes)
   a. What did you discover about yourself as a writer?
   b. Who, if anyone, affected you as a writer in childhood? What does this mean for who you are as a writer now?
   c. Who most influenced who you are as a writer now? How did this person (these persons) affect you?
   d. What made your best writing experience your best or your worst your worst?
   e. Look over your timeline and determine your favorite environment for writing. What materials do you need? When do you write? What conditions help you do your writing?
   f. What genres do you like to write?
   g. How do you get started writing?
   h. How do you know when you are finished writing?
   i. Who are your audiences?
   j. Do you revise? How? When?
   k. Do you edit your work? How? When?
   l. Read back over your reflections and look back at your timeline. What generalizations or discoveries can you make that might apply to other writers?

Share your timeline and what struck you in your reflections with 1 or 2 partners.