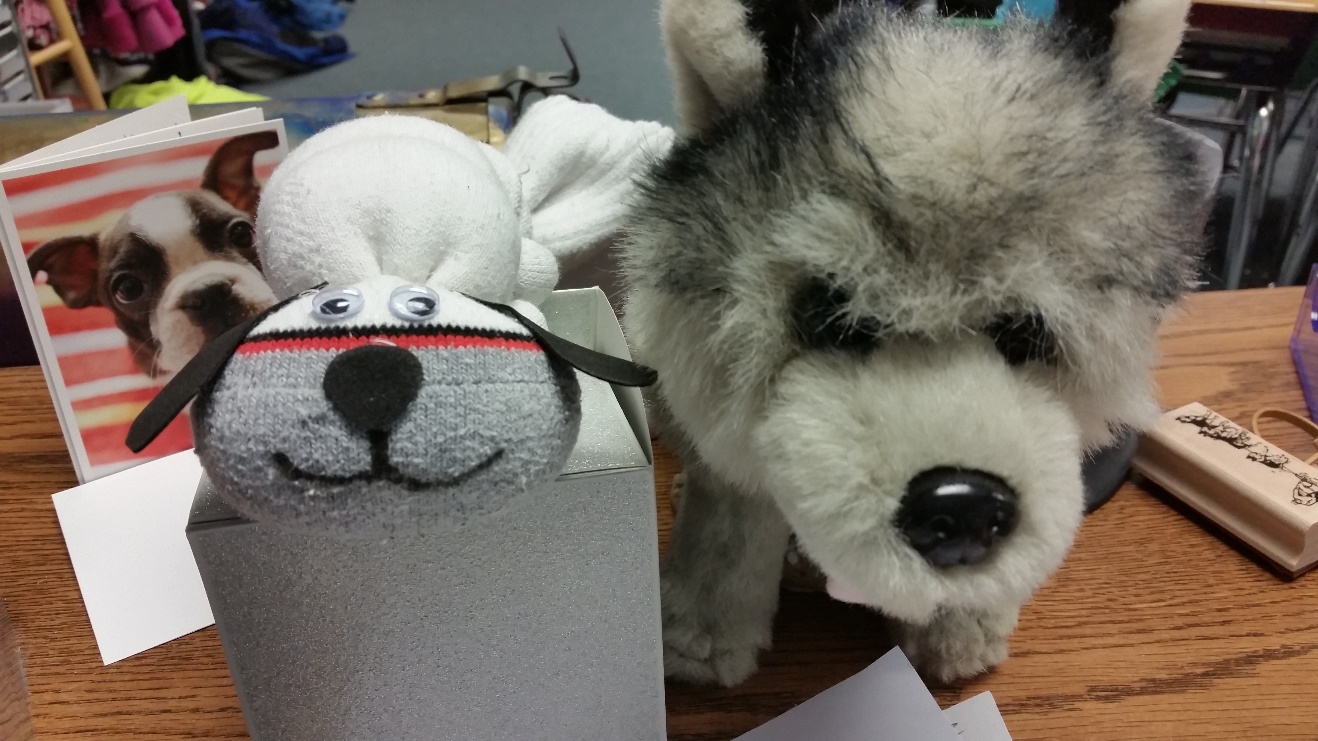
**WRITING AND READING INSPIRATION WITH SOCK PUPPIES!**

**After teaching about sled dog breeds and emphasizing how different they can look, students make their own husky sock puppy. Students choose which ears (pointed, folded, grey/brown/black) to put on their pups and create a unique Alaskan Husky. They may even choose to color their pups with markers and add a muzzle. The inspiration for these pups comes from** [**Kim Slade, Iditarod Teacher 2007**](http://itcteacheronthetrail.com/teachers/kim-slade-2007-teacher-on-the-trail/)**.**

**Students keep the puppies at their desks during the sled dog unit for reading and writing inspiration. I teach quotation marks/dialogue, story-telling, and “point of view” writing skills with these cuties. Students read to their pups during silent read. Even the most reluctant reader cannot resist sharing a story with their puppy friend.**

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**Here’s what to do:**

**First gather your materials:**

* **1 adult white tube sock per student**
* **12-16 oz. rice per student**
* **rubber bands**
* **googly eyes**
* **felt for nose and ears glue gun**
* **markers**

**First, have students use a scale to measure about a pound of rice. This activity can be used to teach estimation and measurement skills. After filling the sock with 12-16 oz of rice, tie a knot at the end.  Using rubber bands, make a head, and 4 small ball feet.  Use a glue gun to adhere googly eyes, nose and ears to head.  Kids can decorate with markers as needed.**

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**Next, kids choose a puppy from the "litter" to decorate and create their own unique faces. Some choose the runt, others the fattest puppy found. It's fun to see the individual choices.**

**Next, the students name their pups and start a lesson.**

**Here are a few writing ideas:**

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**Mushers tend to name their litters thematically. You may choose a theme for your classroom, and have students come up with names that fit. For example, our class is the Wildflower litter. Pups names include Daisy, Thistle, Dandy (Dandelion), etc.**

* **What is the theme of this litter and what is the name of your pup? What could other names be for the pups?**
* **Why did you choose the pup you did?**
* **From your pup's point of view, what is life like?**
* **What do dogs need to grow and thrive?**
* **Write a point of view piece: A day in the life of \_\_\_\_.**
* **Set some goals for your pup to run the ESSSDR one day. What do they need to achieve their goals?**
* **Have two or more pups talk to each other using dialogue (Quotation marks) embedded in their writing.**