

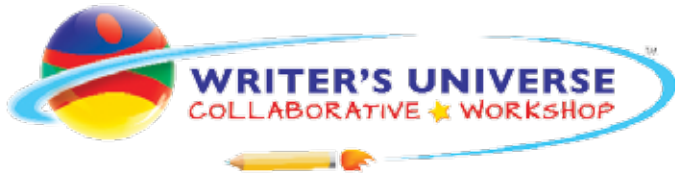
How to Get Started Using

Benchmark Writer's Universe

Writer's Universe offers unlimited independent process writing practice for today's writer, in a collaborative, safe digital environment.

Available in English and Spanish!





Welcome to **Benchmark Writer's Universe!**

Writer's Universe provides self-selected process writing practice in an all-digital environment.

- Guides students through each step of the writing process
- Enhances students' understanding of key genres
- Provides safe, real-time collaboration tools for peers and teachers
- Includes rubrics and self-assessment

Use it in a variety of instructional settings.

- Partner/Small-Group Activities
- Digital Workstations
- Whole-Group Guided Practice
- Independent Work

Use it to enhance your current writing instruction.

- Practice in multiple genres
- Reinforcement of genre features
- Digital publishing

Use it today! Let this Quick Start Guide help you navigate the ins and outs of Benchmark Writer's Universe!



Independent Process Writing Practice for Today's Writer

Enhance your existing writing units with digital, collaborative practice.

Writer's Universe genres fit easily into your existing writing instruction.

| GENRE | GRADES 2-3 | GRADES 4-5 | GRADES 6-8 |
|---|------------|------------|------------|
| Opinion/Argument | | | |
| Opinion/Argument About a Text | • | • | • |
| Opinion/Argument About a Topic | • | • | • |
| Informational | | | |
| Informative/Explanatory Science Text | • | • | • |
| Informative/Explanatory Social Studies Text | • | • | • |
| Narrative | | | |
| Personal Narrative | • | • | |
| Memoir | | | • |
| Fable | • | | |
| Realistic Fiction | | • | |
| Historical Fiction | | | • |



School-Home Connection



Monitor progress with customizable reports

Teacher Experience

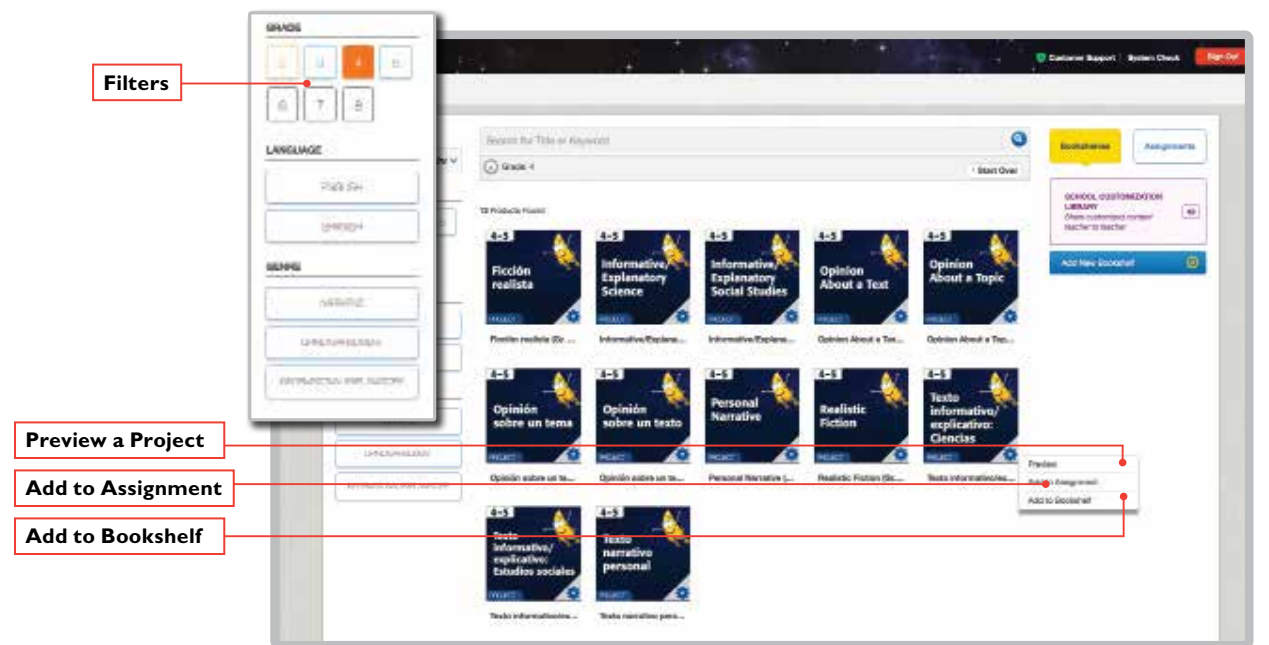
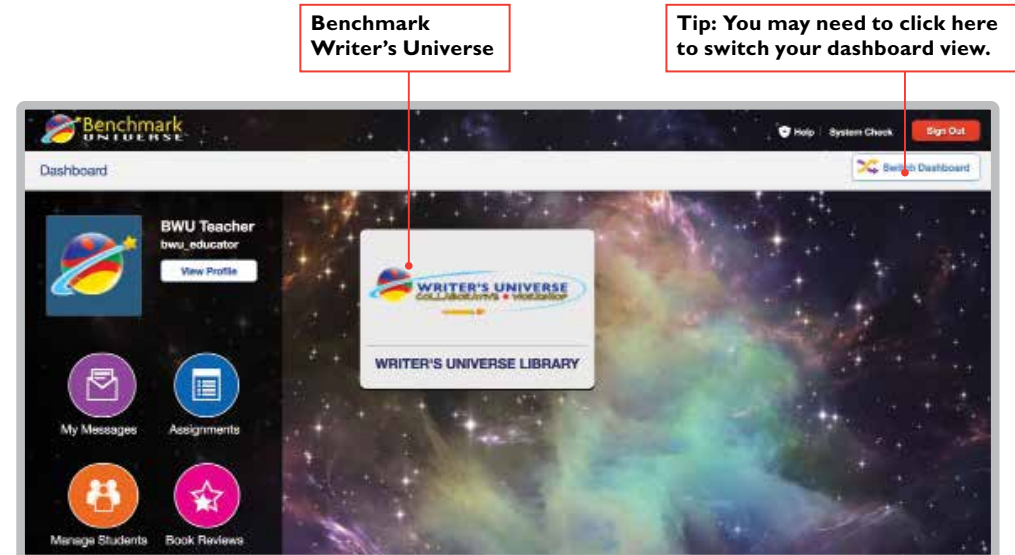
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I. Find Your Genre Projects

To find your genre projects, first sign in to Benchmark Universe. Your Writer's Universe projects are in the Library. Click on the Benchmark Writer's Universe tile to get started.

To filter by grade, language, and genre topic, use the buttons on the left.

To preview a genre project as if you were a student, click on the gear icon in the bottom right corner of the project tile. The project will open in a new window.



2. Assign a Project

To create an assignment, select the **Assignments** button in the right pane of the Library. In the form that appears:

1. Name your assignment.
2. Drag and drop a writing project from the Library.
3. Select the students who will receive the assignment. Select your whole class, an individual student, or one of the groups you created in Manage Students.
4. Click **Done** once you've chosen your students, and then choose start and due dates. Click **Save**.

Your students will receive a notification with the assignment in their Assignments area.

You'll receive a notification in your Benchmark Universe Message Center when students have submitted their work for review. You can use the hyperlink included in the message or you can go through Writer's Universe and choose the student from the Project Manager.

The screenshot shows the 'Assignments Pane' on the left and the assignment creation form on the right. The pane contains a search bar and a grid of writing projects. The form includes a dropdown for the assignment name, a text field for the name, a 'Materials Assigned' section, an 'Audio' section, an 'Instructions' section, a 'Students' list, and 'Start Date' and 'Due Date' fields. A 'Save' button is at the bottom.

1. Name Your Assignment: A red box highlights the 'Name' field in the form.

2. Drag and Drop Your Project: A red box highlights the 'Opinion About a Text' project in the grid and the 'Opinion About a Text' project in the 'Materials Assigned' section.

3. Select Students: A red box highlights the 'Select students' button in the 'Students' section.

4. Complete Your Assignment: A red box highlights the 'Save' button at the bottom of the form.

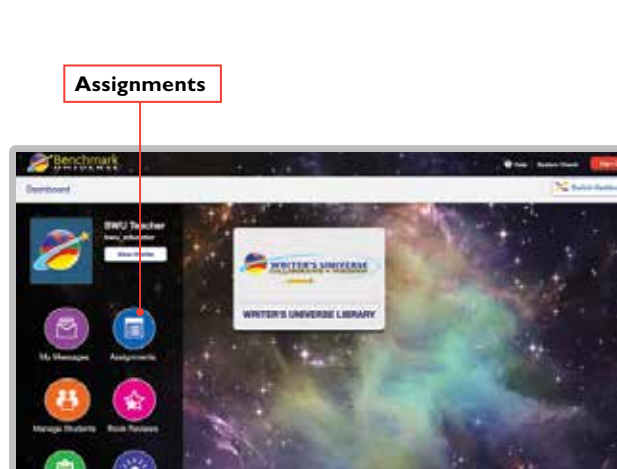
3. Find Your Project Manager

To use the Project Manager, go to the Assignments area on Benchmark Universe—you can find all your assignments here. Sort your assignments by due date, class, assignment, or search by keyword. You can also add, delete, or close assignments from this area.

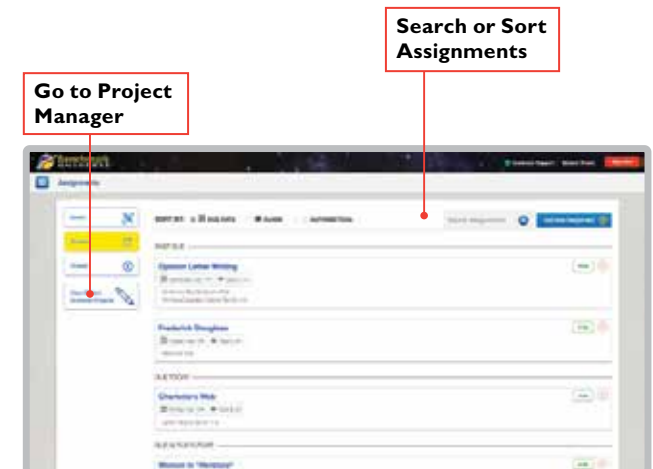
Click on the **Writer's Universe** button on the left. The Project Manager will open in a new tab.

Your project notifications are displayed, with active and past assignments, and due dates. You can also access your student or peer chats from the Project Manager.

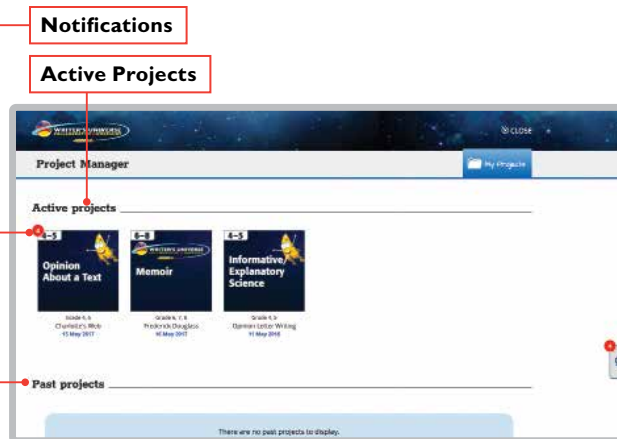
Click on a project to see your students' progress. For your convenience, the top area shows your students waiting to be unlocked, students waiting for final evaluation, and students who have completed the project.



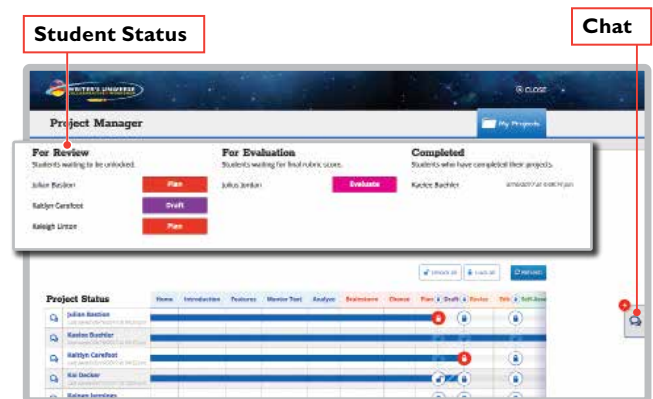
Benchmark Universe Dashboard



Assignments



Project Manager



Project Manager: Student Progress

4. Lock and Unlock Student Projects

In addition to monitoring your students' progress, you can lock and unlock their projects each step of the way.

Note that certain steps are locked by default; however, you can change these per project in this interface.

You can lock or unlock steps in the writing process for:

- Individual students
- All students at one step, or
- All students at all steps

Click **Unlock All** to unlock all steps for all students, or **Lock All** to lock all students at all steps.

Use the lock icons in the top area to lock or unlock all students at one step.

The lock icons in the students' row allow you to lock or unlock each student at each step.

The screenshot displays the 'Project Manager' interface. At the top, there are three main sections: 'For Review' (Students waiting to be unlocked), 'For Evaluation' (Students waiting for final rubric score), and 'Completed' (Students who have completed their projects). Below these are buttons for 'Plan', 'Draft', and 'Plan' for individual students. A 'Project Status' table shows progress bars for various students across different steps. A legend at the bottom indicates: Red circle = Ready for Review, Blue padlock = Locked Content, Blue bar = Work in Progress, Green bar = Work Completed. On the right side, there are three callout boxes with arrows pointing to specific controls: 'Unlock all students at all steps' (pointing to the 'Unlock All' button), 'Lock all students at all steps' (pointing to the 'Lock All' button), and 'Lock/Unlock all students at one step' (pointing to the 'Lock' and 'Unlock' buttons in the top area). Another callout box points to the lock icons in the student rows, labeled 'Lock/Unlock each student at each step'.

5. Monitor and Review Student Progress

From the Project Manager, click on a student's name or on a specific section to review the student's work.

Scroll down to review and unlock the student's work.

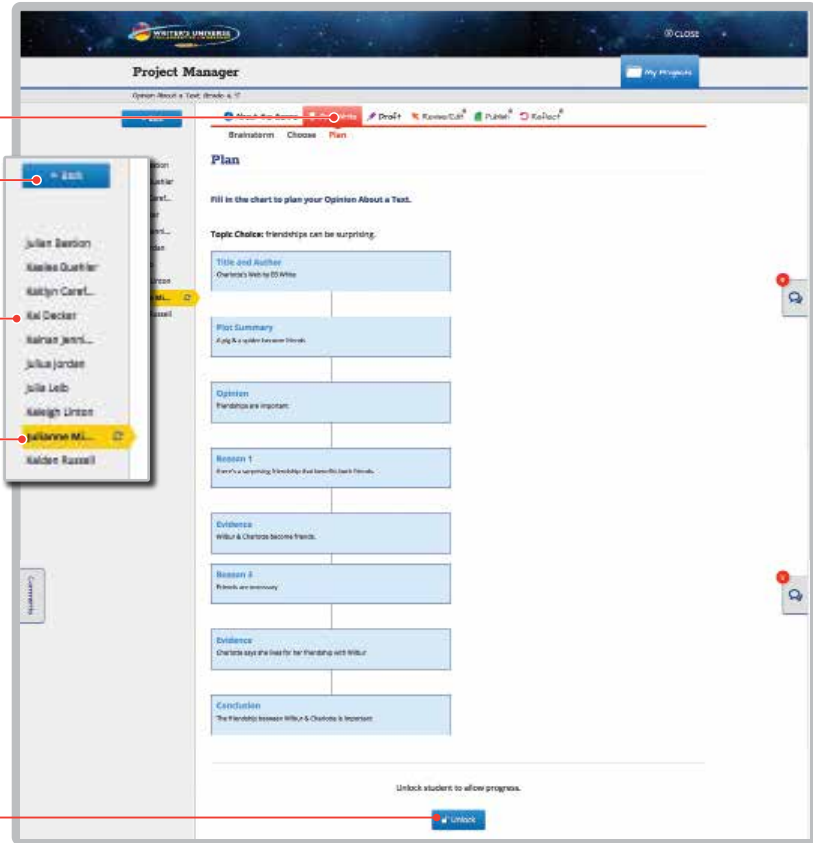
Click student names on the left to view other students' projects.



Click any section to review student's work

Click to unlock student's work

Click student name to review project



Review student's project steps

Back to Project Status

View other students' projects

Current student being reviewed

Unlock student's work

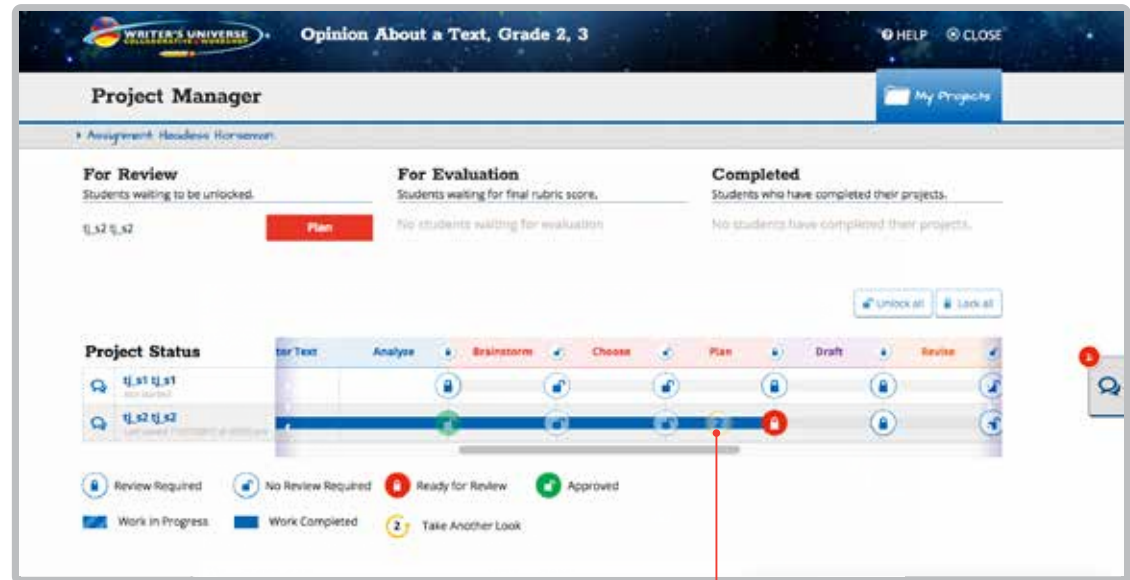
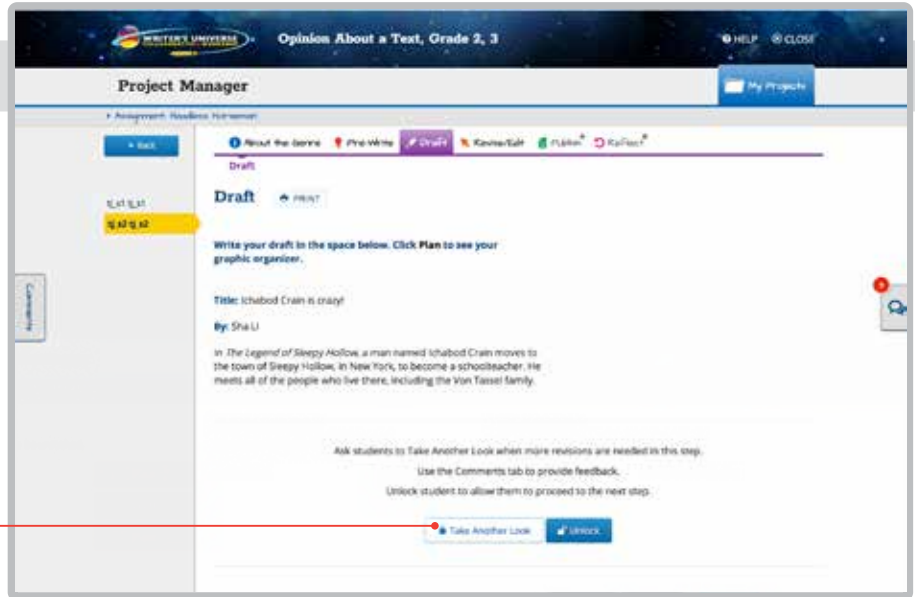
6. Ask a Student to Take Another Look

At any point in the review process, you may wish to send a student back to review their work before continuing on to the next step.

Click **Take Another Look** to ask the student to re-review their project. This selection will lock the student's work at that step, and the student will receive a notification that they should take another look at their work to ensure it meets the rubric criteria before they can continue.

You will receive a notification in the Project Manager when the student has made updates to their work and submitted it to you for review.

The number of times the student has reviewed their work at each step will appear on the student's progress in your Project Manager dashboard.



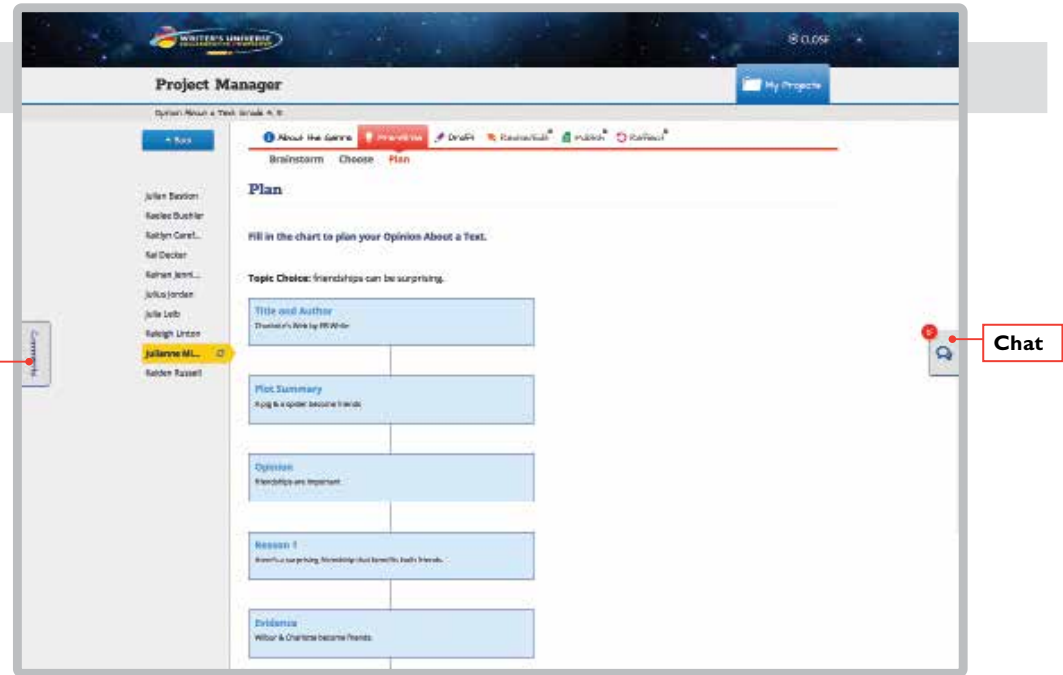
7. Comment on Student Work

When you're reviewing your students' work, you may wish to leave a comment.

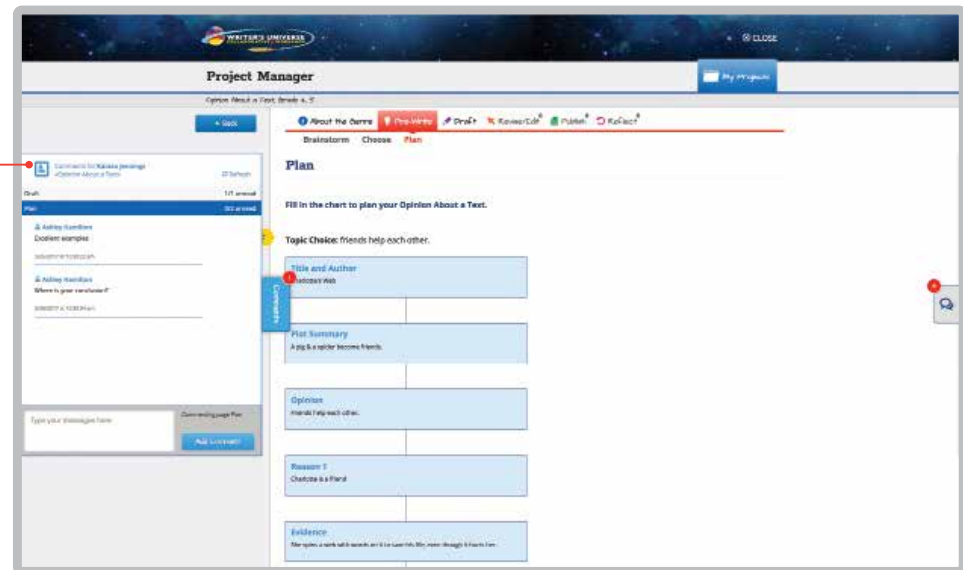
Click on the **Comments** tab to leave a comment and it will be saved to that step. If there are additional comments, you can see them here.

You will receive a notification in your Benchmark Universe Message Center when students have added comments to their work.

Comments and chats are both useful to communicate with students. Comments are saved to the particular step in the writing process, whereas chats are ongoing.



Comments are saved to a specific step in the writing process.



8. Chat with Students

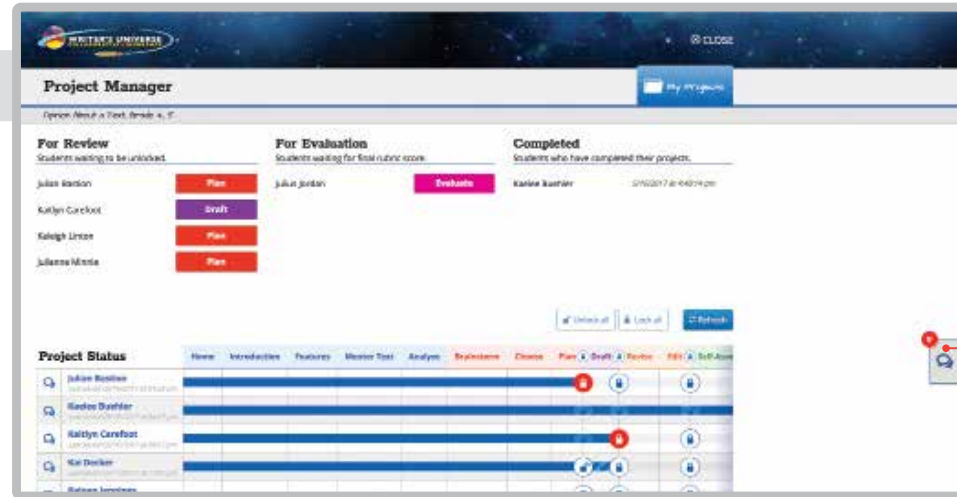
It's easy to conference with students and review their drafts using the Chat feature on Writer's Universe.

Click the **Chat** icon from any Writer's Universe area and the Chat box will slide in from the right.

If you haven't started a chat, click **Start New** to begin.

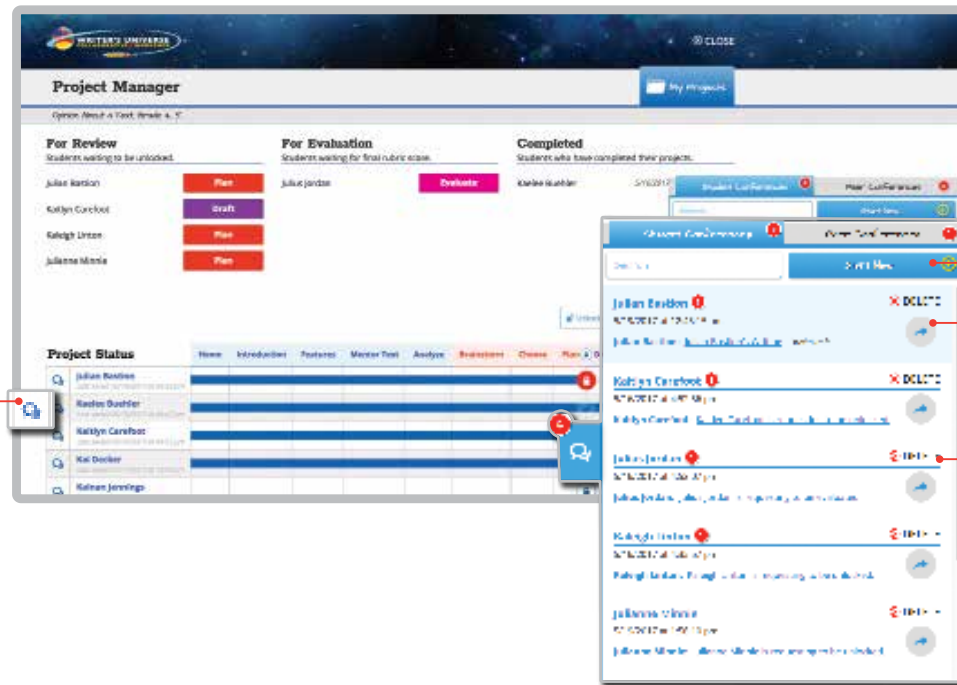
Click the arrow on the right side to view the details of a chat. You can also use the chat bubble next to each student's name on the Project Status list to instantly chat with a student.

When students are unlocked during the writing process, they will automatically receive a message in the Chat.



Chat

Initiate a chat with a student



Start New Chat

View This Chat

Delete Chat

Chat List

9. Set Up Peer Conferences

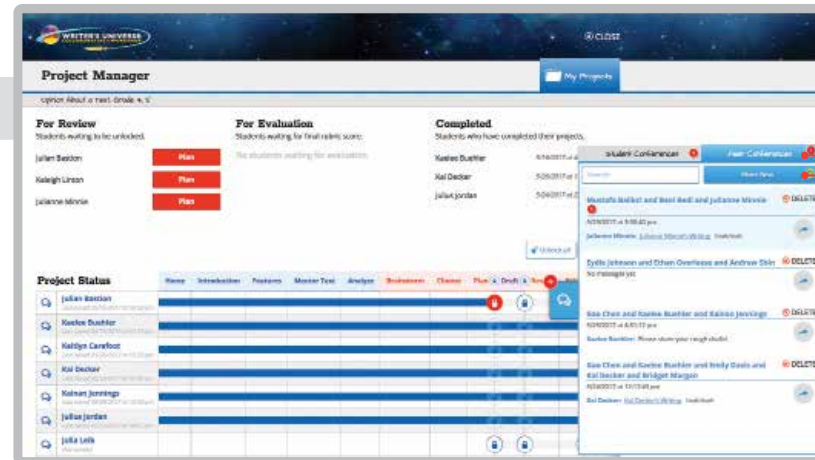
You can set up peer conferences for your students.

Note that students cannot conference with each other until you've set one up; however, students can begin a conference with you anytime.

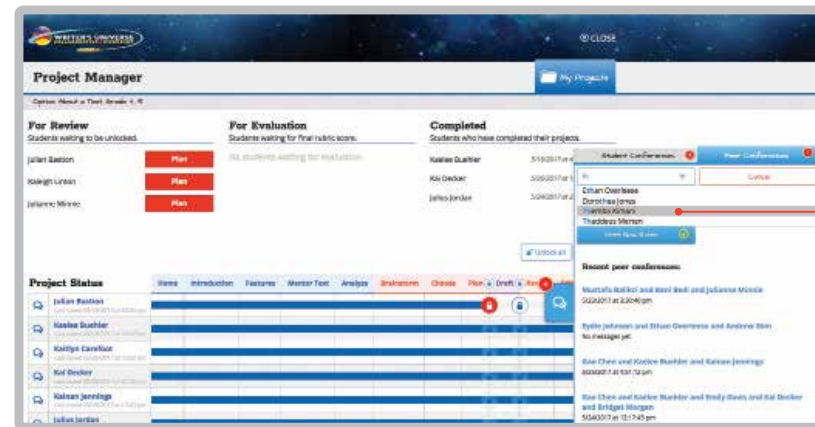
To set up a conference, open the Chat.

1. Select the **Peer Conference** tab on the top of the chat to set up a supervised conference between your students. Select **Start New**.
2. Type the names of the students you'd like to include in the search box. You can choose as many students as you like.
3. Once you've chosen students for the conference, select **Start New Room**.

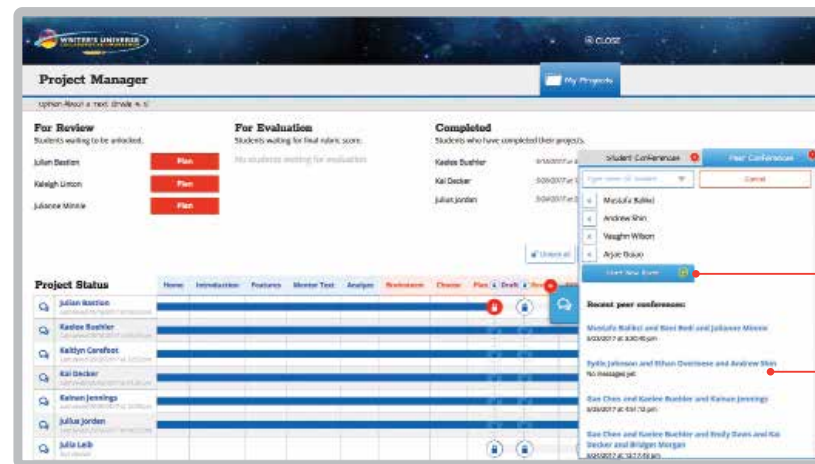
Students will receive a notification of your conference on Benchmark Universe. They can share their writing and respond to others' feedback.



1. Select Peer Conference and Start New



2. Choose Students



3. Start New Room

Students included in each peer conference



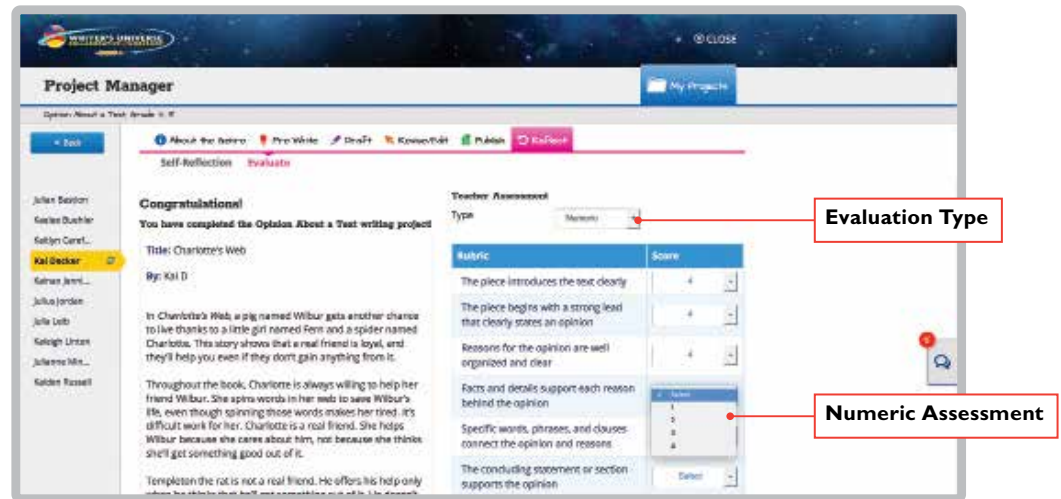
10. Provide a Final Rubric Score

Students can publish their writing as a PDF. The PDF can be used for printing and sharing. You can also consider uploading it to an existing class portfolio, Google Drive, or another online platform that you use.

When your students have finished their project and submitted it for your review, it will appear in the For Evaluation column in your Project Manager. To view a student's work, click **Evaluate** and their project will open.

You'll be able to view every step of the student's writing process, from pre-writing to self-evaluating and reflection, using the tabs at the top.

Benchmark Writer's Universe software offers three options for providing assessment feedback. A numeric rubric is provided by default; additionally, you can leave comments on each section of the rubric, or you can choose not to use the rubric and only provide comments.



More Great Instructional Writing Resources from Benchmark Education



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Thank you for joining us!

For questions or assistance:

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Peer Online Collaboration



School-Home Connection



Independent Writing



Monitor Progress