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TEACHING, LEADERSHIP,
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STRUGGLING WRITERS, OR WRITERS STRUGGLING? A CASE STUDY OF
FOUR FIRST GRADE WRITERS (276 pp.).

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This study, informed by constructivist sociocultural theory, examined writing from the perspective of four first grade struggling writers and their teachers over the course of their first grade school year. The main research questions were: (1) What is it like to be a struggling first grade writer? (2) What do the children do during writing workshop? (3) What do the children say about their actions during writing workshop? (4) How do the teachers support these students throughout the year and what are their perceptions about the students? Data were gathered using structured and unstructured interviews, observation, video/audio taping, and writing samples. Qualitative data analysis revealed each student approached the writing process differently, and their actions and perceptions changed throughout the year. Some similarities that existed among the students included ways of defining writing and changes in affect and productivity throughout the year. Major themes included the ways time affected the students during writing workshop, implications of writing curricular choices/implementation, and socialization. The author also challenges the use of the term “struggling writer” with first grade students and suggested an alternative viewpoint.