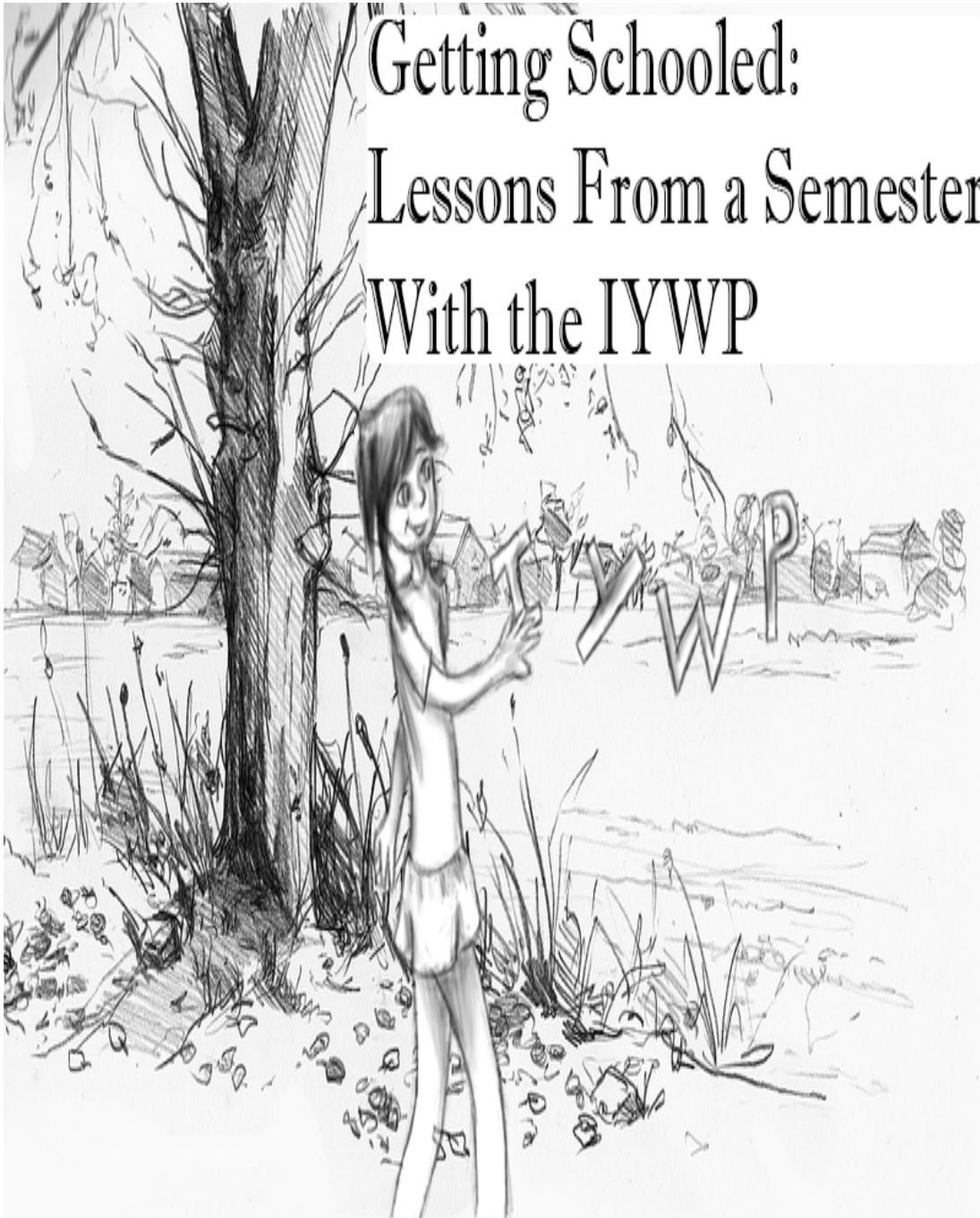


Getting Schooled: Lessons From a Semester With the IYWP



Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this book is to help guide not only students volunteering their time with kids, but also people that are passionate about teaching kids to write creatively. The following are lesson plans that have been used in real-world volunteer opportunities. We worked really hard on this book and it's all for you!

-Writing With Purpose, Class of 2013

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This lesson, while simple in context, is designed to help students and instructors feel more comfortable in the classroom setting. Both teacher and all the students take part in making lists of things they find weird or that they are afraid of and turning it into satire. This exercise also helps students realize that poetry can be taken in a non-serious tone. Best for grades 3-6. Pg 88

Bringing Characters to Life! By Shane Evans

Students learn to get past the hardest part of writing by creating believable characters with unique traits. Best for grades 3-6. Pg 90

Power of a Pebble By Sam Gentry

Students learn the power of personification with an inanimate object. How do you describe how something makes you feel or how it looks from the perspective of an object without human qualities? Best for grades 4-7. Pg 92

Dear Sam By Allison Ufen

Students have an opportunity to develop their social skills through writing. It promotes a healthy environment in and out of the classroom. This exercise teaches the students how to write properly in a letter format. Best for grades 4-8. Pg 95

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Students practice seeing from another perspective. In typical fairy tales, we see the same story only from the hero's perspective. In this exercise, we can practice trying to think in another person's shoes. Best for grades 4-8. Pg 97

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This activity is an easy introduction to erasure poetry. Using other works to create their own pieces, students gain a foundation of artists that came before them. Best for grades 6-8. Pg 107

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Students explore the world of nonfiction through strings of memories, then stringing those strings to sing a song. Best of grades 7+ Pg 114

Fan Fiction Exercise: Plot Helpers! By Shane Evans

Students learn to build a successful plot using characters from other mediums. Best for grades 6-12. Pg 116

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This is a short activity that focuses on visual narrative and emphasizes comics as an art form. It can be modified for either older or younger students. Best for grades 9-12. Pg 120

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First Day Tips

So it's your first day teaching as an IYWP volunteer, and maybe even your first time teaching anything to anyone. Regardless of your prior experience – **have no fear!** We are here to help and sooth your first day nerves with some advice from our own experiences as volunteers. From ice breakers to discipline, we're here for you.

First thing's first in the classroom, **introduce yourself**. You can't establish any sort of relationship with your students without them knowing your name and you knowing theirs. It's easy and a good idea to incorporate a fun game to help you and your students to get to know each other. This can be done aloud or through a worksheet. A clear, solid, fun introduction will set a great foundation for your upcoming classes and make it easier for your students to work with you and their classmates. **Be able to tell your students your *purpose***. Why are you there? What are you there to do?

The beginning of classes is also the best time to **establish classroom rules**. By telling your students what you expect of them, they will mold their behavior to meet those expectations. After your fun introduction, it is important to form your authority in the classroom. You are in charge and you want the class to know that. An imperative rule to institute right away is that no one talks while you are talking. By establishing your role as an instructor, your students will treat you with respect and you will always be able to get your lesson plans across. Don't forget to continue to enforce these rules as classes continue.

A crucial part of teaching is the understanding that you'll need to **be flexible**. Kids are unpredictable; there's no denying that, and that means that classrooms are often unpredictable too. Come prepared with back up activities like worksheets, games, and warm-ups. If your lesson plan doesn't go as you expected or if the students simply aren't interested, be prepared to make a 180 and turn things around!

Be comfortable. Students can sense fear. If you come into the classroom with reservations, nerves, or hesitations, the Students will play on that and end up with the control. There is nothing to be nervous about! As long as you come to class prepared and armed with back up, there is no way you can fail. You are the adult in the room.

Expect mistakes. Although you now hold a role of a "big and bad teacher," you are still human. If your words jumble and you end up saying "grool" instead of good or cool, laugh at yourself. Your students are going to appreciate your ability to let your teacher guard down. It is nice for a student to have a relatable teacher-figure.

Above all else, **keep calm**. Teaching can be frustrating and sometimes has the power to leave you fuming; the most vital trait to show your students is that you can keep your calm. Instilling

fear in your students will only hurt your relationship and leave a classroom that is unable to communicate. It's also important for you to remain calm through the most stressful of situations.

You are going to get through this. After day one, you'll look back on your first day nerves and laugh. Your students are fun, engaging, and want to know more about you just as you do about them. **This will be an experience** you will remember for the rest of your lives – don't let your first day nerves keep you from soaking up every bit of fun these next couple weeks have in store for you.

Ice Breakers

Having an ice breaker at the beginning of the year is an important activity for you to get to know your students and what their dislikes and likes are. Also, it helps students get to know each other. Some of them may have already had classes together, but some may be new to the school or never had a class with each other. It is a great way to help the students feel more comfortable with each other and yourself.

Interviewing: Have one student sit in front of the classroom and be “interviewed” by the other students in the class. The remaining students will pass around a play microphone and ask the student in the front of classroom anything they want to know about them. Example: What’s your favorite animal? How many siblings do you have? What’s your favorite color? After a few minutes of questioning, swap a student from the audience and the student up front until everyone has had a turn.

Interior Decorator: This is a way to get the students sharing ideas that will be commonly used in creative writing. Have one student name any room in a house. Next, the students will go around and say their name, and what object in the room they would pick to be or to represent themselves and why. This is intended to get the students to open up about themselves as well as introduce them to symbols.

- Contributed by Adam Jaschen

Human Chain: In this icebreaker the kids will stand in a fairly tight circle and grab the hands of two separate classmates across from them. They should not be holding both hands of the same person, or the one right next to them. This creates a web of arms and hands, and they have to work together to untangle themselves. The resulting end goal is a complete circle. This works best with around 8 kids, and would be better for older kids.

- Contributed by Christine Cooper

Ships across the ocean: After all the furniture has been moved out of the way have all of the kids line up on one side of the room and the teacher stand in the middle. Then say something like, "Ships across the ocean that are wearing jeans." Then all the kids who are wearing jeans have to run past you to the other side of the room. Whoever is in the middle must try to tag the kids. If they're tagged have them hold hands and play again and this time everyone in

the middle is trying to tag other kids. Repeat until there is one kid left to make it to the other side.

- Contributed by Emily Kaysinger

A Walk in My Shoe: Each student needs to take off one of his shoes and put it in a pile. Once all of the shoes are compiled together, direct each student to pick up one of the shoes that isn't their own. Then the students have to find who is missing the shoe they are holding in their hand. Once the students meet up they have to share three fun facts about themselves and then choose one of those facts to share with the rest of the class. It's a fun and easy way to learn people's names and facts about themselves and it is also a kid friendly way to find/pick a partner.

- Contributed by Sam Gentry

Color Coded: Bring some kind of colored candy, such as M&Ms or Skittles. Have each student pick out 1-5 pieces in whatever color they want. Then, once they have their candy, write on the board an icebreaker question that corresponds to each color (for example: Orange=favorite hobby, blue=favorite school subject, etc). The students then take turns answering the questions corresponding to the colors of the candy they chose.

- Contributed by Chelsea Wing

Tangled Stories: Bring a ball of yarn with you and have the group sit in a circle. Start with the ball of yarn and begin to tell a story about yourself. When someone in the group hears a part of the story that they can relate to, they begin to tell their story. Before they start, keep ahold of the end of the ball of yarn and pass it to them. Then, when someone else hears a part they can share a story about, that person passes the yarn to them, etc. Eventually, everyone will have told some part of a story that creates a larger story, and the circle is filled with yarn, creating a web. Go until the yarn runs out.

- Contributed by Mollie Martin

Who is Who?: Have everyone write one fun fact about themselves on a sheet of paper. Then go around and collect these sheets of paper without looking at them, and combine them into a bowl or hat. Then read each interesting fact aloud and guess whose fact it is!

- Contributed by Allison Ufen

Rhythm Machine: As a group you stand in a circle. Then the first person makes a random sound and keeps repeating it. They are the ones to set the tempo. Every person after them makes a

different sound in the tempo, and they will continue making that sound. The sound could be clapping, or snapping, or a vocal noise. Just make any noise that can be repetitive. Then, you just have this little, collective, repetitive symphony.

- Contributed by Lauren Audetat

The Cold Wind Blows: It resembles musical chairs. A set of chairs are arranged in a circle with one less than the number of players. One person volunteers to be "it." He/she stands in the middle of the circle while everyone else sits in the chairs. "It" calls out a sentence which begins with, "A cold wind blows" that refers to one or more players sitting. An example would be, "A cold wind blows for anyone who likes cats." Anyone who likes cats would then have to leave their chair and try to find an open seat. At the same time, "it" is also trying to find an open seat. The person left without a seat becomes "it" for the next round. It's a fun game that gets people moving and a chance for students to get to know one another.

- Contributed by Ann Christenson

Beginning With The End: This ice breaker is inspired by Mary Ruefle's short piece called "On Beginnings," where she states that "children very often denote the end because it is indeed a great achievement for them to have written anything." In the spirit of achievement and new beginnings, the ice breaker is a short activity that begins at "The End." To start, the kids gather and sit in a circle with the necessary writing tools. We start by brainstorming how their favorite stories begin and end. Is it with "and that's the way the cookie crumbles," or "it was the best of times, it was the worst of times"? We also brainstorm key transition words and phrases that bring each part of a story together (i.e.: "all of a sudden," "then," "just when they thought the worst was over"....). After this group brainstorming session, give the kids about five minutes to write the ending of a story. After five minutes, they will pass their "ending" to the person sitting next to them, who writes the middle of the story. In the final pass-off, the last child writes the beginning of the story. The children then introduce themselves and share the stories they have written collaboratively, starting with "The End."

- Contributed by Marisa Way

Section One: Grades K-4:

Origins

Teacher Tips

Make your students forget they're learning: experience and then write.

Let your students answer their own questions.

Remember, you learn from them as much as they learn from you.

What's Your Letter?

Contributed by Elle Wignall

Grade Level: K-1

Targeted Skill/Purpose: Part I aims at getting students to associate letters with bigger words and Part II aims to expand the use of description and storytelling.

Materials Needed: Construction paper letters A-Z (attached for cut out); Colorful paper; Glue; Drawing utensils

Instructions:

PART I

1. Every student will draw a different letter of the alphabet from a pile of colorful letters.
2. Once everyone has picked a letter, have them sit at their tables and glue their letter to a piece of colorful paper.
3. With the help of a volunteer, the students will brainstorm all the things they can think of that begin with the letter they picked. These words can be anything—nouns, verbs, and adjectives all work!
4. If the student knows how to write, have them write the letter's words all around the letter. If the student doesn't know how to write, draw your words or have a volunteer make dotted letters to trace. Or do both!

INTERMISSION

1. To get the kids up and moving and save them from sitting for too long, have everyone stand up and circle up for a silly activity.
2. Have everyone think in their head of the first letter of their name, then on the count of three let them all shout it out at the same time.
3. Tell the students they have to draw their name in the air with their hips; demonstrate by writing your own name. Once everyone has had a little break, return to tables.

PART II

5. On a new sheet of paper, have the students pick their favorite word they thought of and tell us all about it. If it is a noun, what is it? How does it smell or feel or taste? If it is a verb, how is it done? How does it feel to do? If it is an adjective, how else can you describe it? What do you know about your word? Are there any stories you have about your word?

Time allotted for writing: 10-15 minutes for each part

Wrap-up/sharing: When the activity is over, students will be encouraged to share their word and what it's all about in front of the class.

Farm Animal Report

Contributed by Sam Gentry

Grade Level: Elementary (K-2)

Targeted Skill/Purpose: Describing traits and characteristics of farm animals to learn the skills to create descriptive characters in future stories.

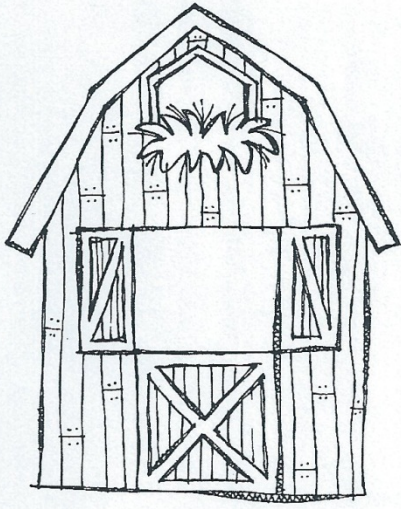
Materials needed: Farm Animal Report worksheet (attached), pictures (printed in color) of farm animals (chicken, pig, cow, horse, etc.) Providing the students with the picture will allow them to come up with great description rather than wasting time thinking of a specific animal.

Instructions:

1. Bring all the students together in a circle and ask them to raise their hands if they know an animal that lives on a farm.
2. Then, call on volunteers (about five) to come up to the front of the class and secretly ask them what animal they thought of so the rest of the class can't hear.
3. The students then have to act out that animal and see if the rest of the class can guess what they are. If the class guesses correctly then the entire class has to act out that animal for one minute.
4. Ask the class if they know what that particular animal eats, what it likes to do, what kind of noise it makes, etc. to prepare them for the worksheet.
5. Once all five animals have been guessed, ask the students if they know any fun facts about farm animals, then share some of your own with them (see attached fact worksheet).
6. Next, send the students to their tables and hand them each a different picture of a farm animal.
7. Then, have the students look at the picture of the animal they received and answer the questions on the worksheet.

Time allotted for writing: 10-15 minutes of group time/charades. 15-20 minutes of answering the questions on the worksheet.

Wrap-up/sharing: Once the time allotted for writing is over, ask the students if anyone is willing to share the sentences about their specific animal. They could keep the type of farm animal a secret and have the students guess which animal they are describing.



Farm Animal Report



By _____

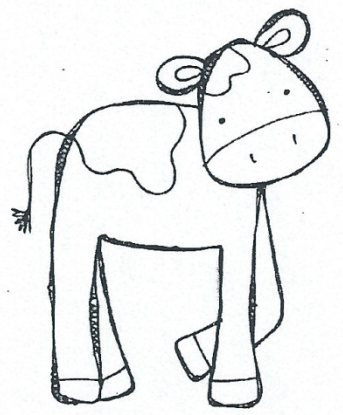
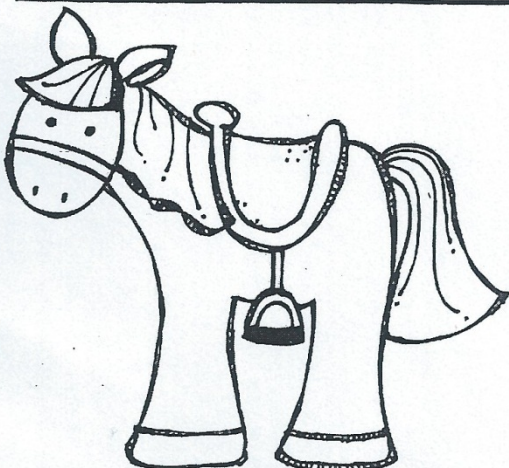
Type of farm animal: _____

What color is your animal? _____

What does your farm animal like to do? _____

What does your farm animal like to eat? _____

What noise does your farm animal make? _____



Farm Animal Fun Facts

1. Did you know the chicken is the closest living relative to the T-Rex?
2. Did you know some breeds of chickens can lay colored eggs?
3. Did you know chickens have over 200 distinct noises they make?
4. Did you know pigs are considered the 4th most intelligent animal?
5. Did you know cows have a memory of about three years?
6. Did you know goats are great swimmers?
7. Did you know sheep have two toes on each foot?
8. Did you know duck feathers are waterproof?
9. Did you know pigs can run 11 miles per hour?
10. Did you know pigs can get sunburned?
11. Did you know the tongue of a pig has six thousand more taste buds than a human's?
12. Did you know the average horse eats seven times its own weight in food each year?
13. Did you know that cows are color blind?
14. Did you know cows can produce more milk when they are listening to music?
15. Did you know cows can walk upstairs but not downstairs?
16. Did you know pigs roll around in the mud to cool off?
17. Did you know pigs communicate with each other by using 20 different noises?
18. Did you know that right before a storm cows lay down?
19. Did you know female goats have beards?
20. Did you know goats can climb trees?

Model Magic!

Contributed by Sam Gentry

Grade Level: K-2

Targeted Skill/Purpose: To use imagination to physically create an object and then have the students present (verbal storytelling) what they sculpted.

Materials needed: Multiple colors of Model Magic – available at any art supply store (similar to clay), paper, and a writing utensil.

Instructions:

1. Establish rules of using model magic with the class (can't eat it, throw it, stick it in unnecessary places, have to be willing to share, etc.)
2. Put the students in several table groups and put each color of the model magic in the center of the table.
3. Then have each student take a little bit of each color, or whatever color they need to create their object of choice.
4. Let their imaginations go wild and just have them sculpt! Some ideas are a flower, train, snake, snowman, etc.
5. Once the students have finished sculpting their object, have them write an artist's statement about their object. This can include the title of the piece, the emotion behind the work, where their inspiration came from, etc.
 - Example: Title: Flower with Power
 - Inspiration: My inspiration came for the budding flowers along the sidewalk anxiously awaiting the sun.
 - Emotion: As I sculpted I felt free and as if I too were blossoming just like the flower.
6. Then, have the students participate in verbal storytelling (present to the class) their object and the class is allowed to ask them questions like what has influenced your work? Why did you create the piece? Describe your style? Why did you decide to become an artist?

Time allotted for writing: 20-30 minutes to sculpt, 10-15 minutes to write, 10-15 minutes to share.

Wrap-up/sharing: Circle up the students and have them present their object to the class (instruction 6).

Real Life Tip: If you are interested in sticking with the artist theme behind this lesson plan it would be really fun to bring in a beret (French hat) for the student to put on when they present and you can also draw finger mustaches on each student. Encourage foreign accents too!

Picture This

Contributed by Elle Wignall

Grade Level: K-2

Targeted Skill/Purpose: Learning to associate photos with stories/create stories out of photos; stretching the imagination!

Materials needed: Child-appropriate magazines, Construction paper, Glue; Crayons or markers, Lined paper, Pencils

Instructions:

1. To start this lesson, pull a picture out of a magazine and present it to the class. Ask them what they think is going on in the picture.
2. Then the teacher will explain the activity which is as follows:
3. Choose any magazine you please and find a picture that you like or are really curious about.
4. Cut that picture out and paste it to your favorite color of construction paper.
5. While you're gluing, think about all the things this picture reminds you of or makes you think about—you're going to make a story!
6. The one rule is that once you've glued the picture to the construction paper, you have to add one thing to it that doesn't make sense. Maybe you have a picture of a flower and it can talk, maybe you have a picture of a toothbrush and you draw a girl who always brushes her teeth while standing on her head (which her mother finds very dangerous).
7. Write a story to go with your new illustration.
8. When everyone has a story, we will share.

Time allotted for activity: 20-35 minutes to find picture, paste picture, color, and write about it

Wrap-up/sharing: The students will have the opportunity to share their stories after the activity is over. The teacher can ask follow-up questions like: Was it hard to think of a story about the picture you chose? Did you make up a story or did your picture remind you of something that happened in real life?

Love Comics

Contributed by Mollie Martin

Grade Level: K-2; but if using the questionnaire, it could be 3-5

Targeted Skill/Purpose: To allow kids to develop a character, basing it off of the person they love the most. They are able to see that they can make a character out of real life, and able to know details about this character (because this may be the person they know the most about.) Using someone they're super familiar with combined with the interesting form of a comic will help make character development more exciting.

Materials Needed: Comic book strip (attached), drawing utensils, questionnaire (attached)

Instructions:

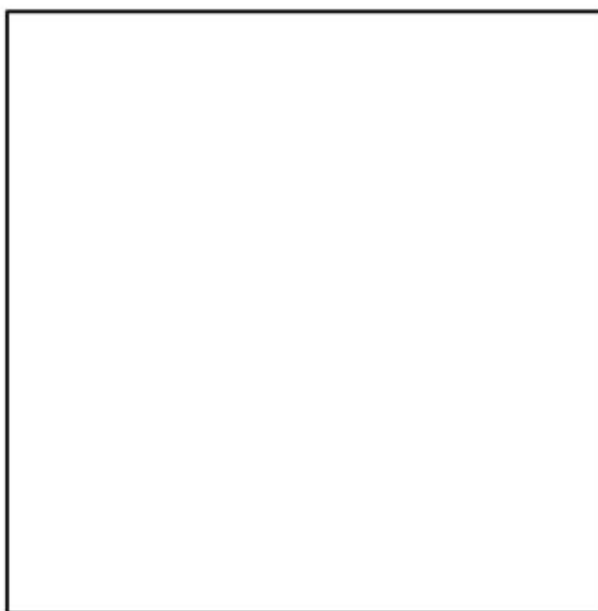
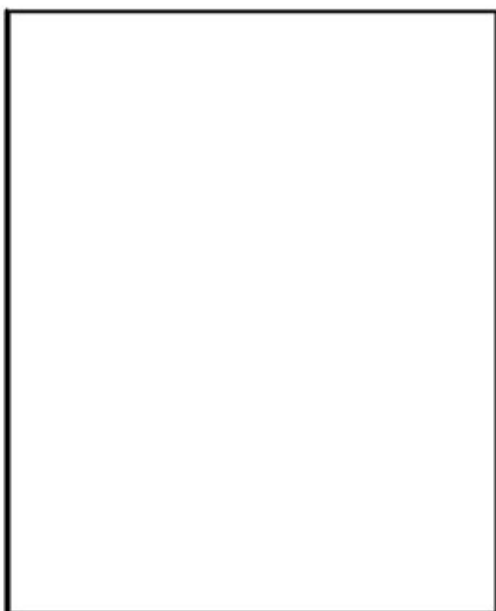
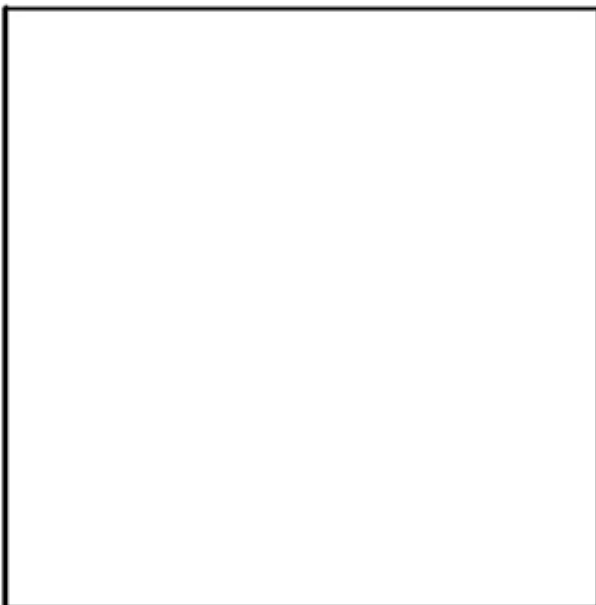
1. Begin in the front of the class, and ask what love means to them. This could be for a pet, a parent, or a best friend. Outline some key words on a chalkboard or paper big enough for them to see. This should take 5-10 minutes.

2. Have them partner up and talk to each other about the person (or animal) they love the most. They can ask each other questions about the person, like what do they look like? How do they talk? What makes them happy? What's the funniest thing they've ever done? Give them a total of 10 minutes, 5 each, to do this.

*For older kids, have them record answers on the questionnaire (not all of these questions need to be used, especially if there is a time allotment).

3. Once back in the group, have them then pretend to be the person they have on their minds. What's a really cool day this person would have? Give them a comic strip (provided) and have them draw out a really awesome day in the life of the person they love the most. This comic can describe something out of the ordinary, or stick to every day life, but should concern the character of the person. Have them write a word or two describing what is happening in each box. This should take 20 minutes or so.

Wrap-up / Sharing: Before each student shares, have him or her describe the person they love most before they explain their comic strip. End by telling them now that they have a character they can use for any story they want in the future.



What Does a Color Feel Like?

Contributed by Mollie Martin

Grade Level: K-2

Targeted Skill/Purpose: To get kids thinking about synesthesia, how colors are related to senses and other objects they might not have thought of before.

Materials Needed: My Favorite Color worksheet (attached), drawing utensils, extra paper

Instructions:

1. Ask the group of students what their favorite colors are. Why do they like this particular color? Is there something special about the color? Do they like to wear the color? What if they woke up one day and their skin was purple? Use one of these questions, or your own, to get them thinking if they're having a hard time. Take about 5-10 minutes to discuss.
2. Now ask what their colors feel like, smell like, taste like, if they could eat their color. Give them each a worksheet, which has them list their favorite color at the top and each sense in a box, where they will write what the color feels like, tastes like, smells like, looks like, and sounds like. They can draw pictures to illustrate their senses. This should take 15-20 minutes.
3. Have them flip over the worksheet and draw themselves if they were that color; if they were blue, would they be a blueberry? Have them write a sentence or a poem about why this color is their favorite. Take another 15-20 minutes to do this.

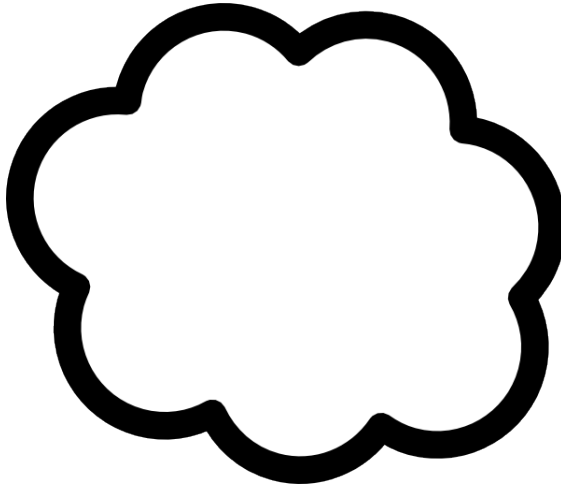
***Super teacher tip:** If you're feeling especially awesome, tell them before they start that they could each write a line about their favorite color, and then at the end of class, they can recite a rainbow poem together.

Wrap-up / Sharing: Take the last 10 minutes to share. Have the students tell a little bit about why they chose this color. And if you used the super teacher tip, have them line up for their rainbow!

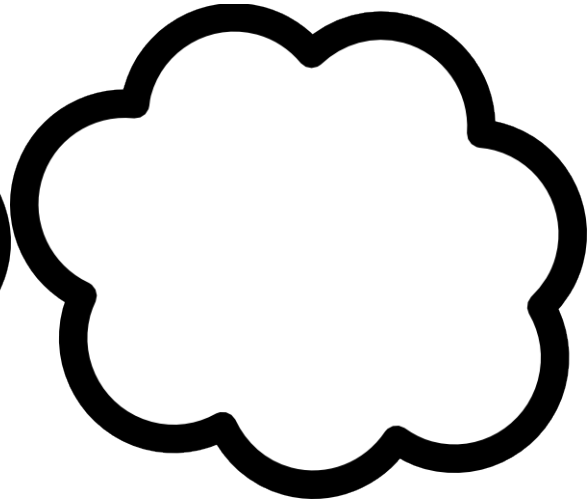
Real Life Tip: At some point, the kids might not want to continue drawing pictures in the clouds on the worksheet, so really try to emphasize the writing portion of the exercise, which is the more difficult part because the kids are so young. If they're being particularly stubborn about it, verbal storytelling is always good too. But I think this part will really show them how colors and words can come together in a really beautiful way.

My Favorite Color is...

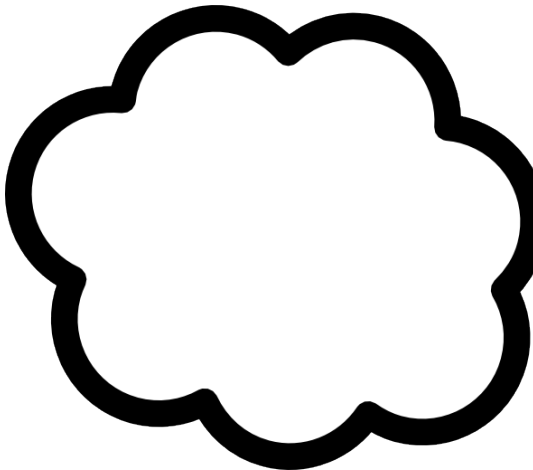
It feels like...



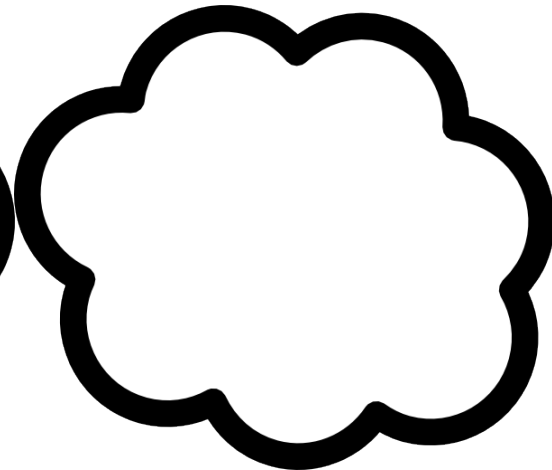
It tastes like...



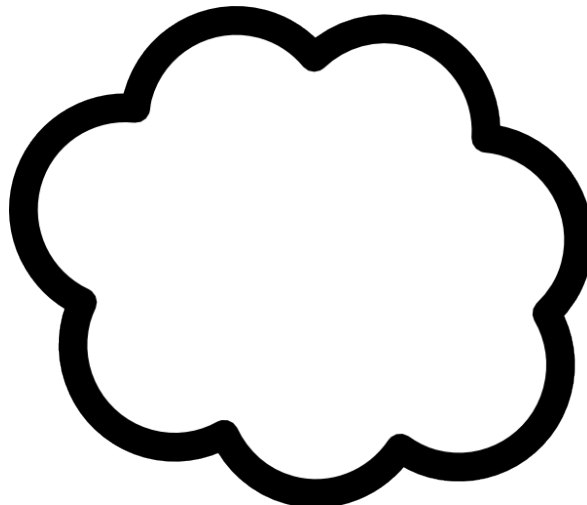
It smells like...



It sounds like...



It looks like...



Rearranging Words

Contributed by Mollie Martin

Grade Level: K-2, for older groups, 3-6

Targeted Skill/Purpose: This will teach the kids a little bit of poetry, and also show them that a word in a sentence can completely change the meaning of the sentence depending on where it is. It will also allow them to physically interact with words instead of simply seeing them or writing them.

Materials Needed: Cut-out words (attached, or use your own list of words)

Instructions:

1. Group the kids and write on a chalkboard or large piece of paper a short poem, section of a poem, or maybe a haiku (I used a section of Anne Carson's translation of Sappho, "If Not, Winter," "all / but different / hair"). Ask the kids what they think this means, and discuss how poetry is very reliant on form (if you're using a haiku, this is a good example). For the younger kids, have them fill in the blanks of Sappho's words; it'll get them working with the words physically very early in the lesson. Take about 10-15 minutes to do this.
2. Show them the cut-out words they will be working with. (I put mine in plastic baggies). These will all be fairly simple (see attached), ones they can read and work with – for older kids these words might be longer and different. Have them break off into groups and create their own story or own poem using these words. They can write down their stories or poems, and then mess up the words and start over as much as they want, starting the creating process over again. Take 15-20 minutes to do this.

Wrap-up / Sharing: Have each student share his or her best poem. This should take up the last few minutes.

all hair pull push to

be ball she he boy

girl but want as like

me you than flower sun

moon run jump are not

sock splash hat goes of

gold into bird where

every even grass see

box like to dog cat blue

dig sleep make much

talk sweet for them open

close are be love as I
am soft stars the purple
the no yes her him tell
stop

Sidewalk Planetarium

Contributed by Tamsen Haddock

Grade Level: K-3

Targeted Skill/Purpose: Using descriptive details, learning the basics of world building

Materials Needed: Sidewalk Chalk, enough sidewalk space for all participants

Instructions:

1. Have the kids brainstorm what some of their favorite things are. Suggest categories such as colors, foods, or animals. Have them make a list of what they come up with.
2. Take everyone outside and pass out sidewalk chalk. Have kids draw their own planets, made up of either things from their favorites list, or anything else they can come up with.
3. Have the kids present their planets and describe what they would do if they lived on their planet. Then, depending on age, have them describe what their planet's relation to the other kids' planets is.

Time allotted for writing: 5-10 minutes for brainstorming, 25-30 minutes for drawing planets, 5 minutes for discussion

Real Life Tip: Older students will need something more involved, and you might want to split the brainstorming/drawing and sharing parts into two separate lessons.

Inside/Outside

Contributed by Tamsen Haddock

Grade Level: K-12

Targeted Skill/Purpose: Characterization

Materials Needed: Paper and writing/drawing utensils

Instructions:

1. Hold brief discussions on what makes up a character, focusing on two big things: appearance and inner dialogue. Ask them about their favorite characters: What thoughts go through their heads? Etc.
2. Hand out paper and pencils/markers/etc. Have everyone draw a circle on the front and another circle on the back.
3. In the front circle, have everyone draw the face of their own character. Include as many details as possible.
4. In the back circle, have them write what the character is thinking. Would a vampire think about blood and bats, or flowers and rainbows? Emphasize that it's ok (and even really interesting!) to make characters think things that don't match their appearance—as long as there's a reason for why they don't match expectations.
5. Have everyone present the characters they made.

Time allotted for writing: 5 minutes for initial discussion, 30-35 minutes for writing and drawing, 10 minutes for sharing

Real Life Tip: As a bonus, have the students take on the personas of their characters when they present their work, and speak in their character's voice and act as they would. Yay, monologue!

Bon Appétit

Contributed by Elle Wignall

Grade Level: 1-4

Targeted Skill/Purpose: To create something out of things that may not go together; Creating something new out of the old.

Materials Needed: Slips of paper with various foods (attached, print and cut); recipe worksheet (attached); a pot; writing utensils

Instructions:

1. This lesson can be introduced nicely with a reading of Ann McGovern's children's book *Stone Soup*.
2. After a dramatic reading of the book, have the students draw one ingredient they'd like to add to the class's own stone soup. As they finish writing, let them "stir in" their ingredient in the pot until they have a crazy concoction of mismatched edibles.
3. Use the silliness of what they created as a transition to tell the students that they now get to create their very own recipe out of some ingredients that they have to pick out of a hat.
4. Have the students draw three to five ingredients from the food slips and write them under "Ingredients" on their worksheet. Feel free as the instructor to additionally create other crazy ingredients or allow the students to choose a couple of their own ingredients.
5. Let the students get creative! Help them figure out what they want to make out of the ingredients they have available and make something entirely new.
6. Have the students write down the recipe on the worksheet and add a drawing of what this new meal would look like.
7. In the space provided, encourage the students to write about how this meal tastes, who they would share it with, what time of day they'd typically eat this meal, etc.
8. Share!

Time Allotted: 20 minutes to read and create class's stone soup; 20 minutes to make recipes; 10 minutes to share

Wrap up/sharing: Encourage the students to share their wacky creations with the class.

Real Life Tip: The kids might want to draw recipes that they know they like, like mac ‘n’ cheese or quesadillas, which is fine of course, but give them suggestions of wacky ingredients they could add that would change the whole flavor.

Bread	Coconut	Spinach
Spaghetti noodles	Apples	Lettuce
Pasta	Bananas	Cucumbers
Cereal	Oranges	Tomatoes
Turkey	Cherries	Red peppers
Chicken	Peaches	Green peppers
Beef	Grapes	Carrots
Bacon	Strawberries	Olives
Swiss cheese	Blueberries	Sprinkles
Mozzarella Cheese	Pineapples	Maple syrup
Pepper jack cheese	Mangoes	Chocolate
Colby jack cheese	Yogurt	Chocolate syrup
Cheese	Milk	Whipped cream
Almonds	Chocolate Milk	Potatoes
Peanuts	Strawberry Milk	Onions
Peanut Butter	Ice cream	Butter
Cashews	Green beans	Fish
Pecans	Broccoli	Oatmeal
	Peas	Corn

Witch's hair	Holiday wrapping	Leather-bound
Unicorn tail	paper	book
Puddle water	Eye of newt	Candy cane
Diamonds	Toasted	Mud
Pop rocks	marshmallow	Fairy dust
	Rose petals	

Chef's Name _____

Recipe Name _____

Ingredients:

1.

2.

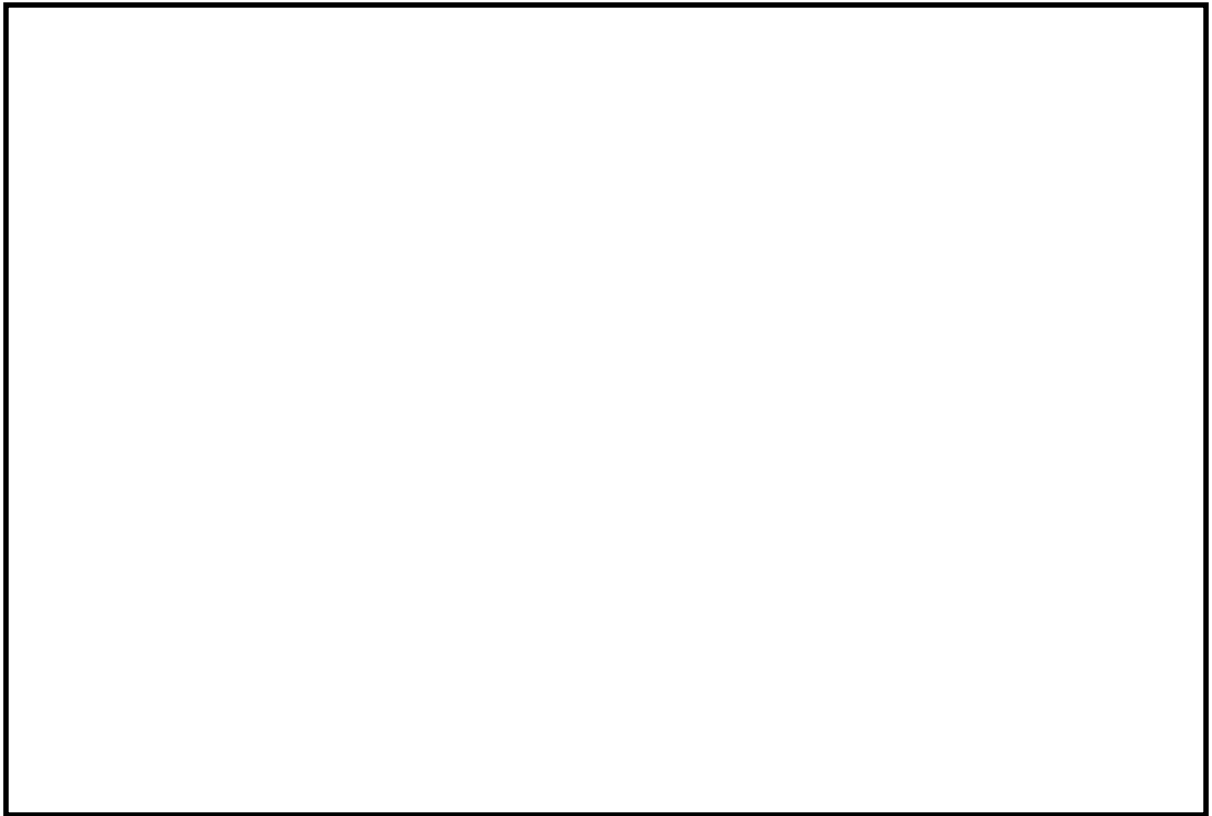
3.

4.

5.

Directions:





This is what my creation looks like!

This is what my creation tastes like:



Raining Anything

Contributed by: Lauren Audetat

Grade Level: 1-4

Purpose: This will help kids understand how to craft plots and understand the cause and effect of events that they write into their works.

Instructions:

1. Show class example of piece, possibly *Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs* by Judi Barrett
2. Give them this writing prompt, “One day you wake up, and you can hear rain on your roof. Except when you walk outside it’s not raining water, but instead, is raining a different object, one which would not normally fall out of the sky. What is it raining? Why is this happening? How do people react? What happens next?”

Time allotted for writing: 30 minutes

Wrap-up: After everyone has finished writing, students will be given an opportunity to read their work to the class.

Final Thoughts: I think it would be very interesting to see what the students came up with. They might have a little trouble getting started, but I think the example should help them. I think the prompt will be best for younger students because it already sets up a conflict for their character to go through.

Real Life Tip: If you think your students will have trouble coming up with ideas, you could fill one hat with little slips of paper that have adjectives written on them and fill another with slips of paper with nouns written on them. Then, have the students choose one of each and go from there.

Teacher Example:

The Day it Rained Pillows: The Second Coming of Naps

Some took it as an invitation from God
to nap. To sleep blissfully anywhere.
To pop a squat next to your neighbor
and take those power naps you're always
talking about needing.

Coffee sales plummeted.
Cable news sensationalized.
My mother called in a panic,
as my father was retrieving
the sky from the roof.

You and I?
We spooned under the willow
and watched the fluff unfold.

Soaring Sentences

Contributed by Katey Johnson

Grade Level: 1-5

Targeted Skill/Purpose: Sentence writing and grammatical skills.

Materials Needed: Any writing utensil, paper, tape, a white board and marker.

Instructions:

1. Give the students four sheets of blank paper and instruct them to write a sentence on each sheet.
 - a. For example: the first prompt is to write a sentence containing a verb (I love to run); on another, use a noun for a place, the next is an adjective, and the fourth sentence is anything you want it to be.
2. After all sentences have been written, have them fold them into airplanes and place them in the center of the table.
3. Then have each student grab a plane at random
4. Have them stand behind a line (marked with tape) and have them throw their plane as far as they can.
5. Whoever's plane goes the farthest will get to lead the game of hang man using the sentence on the plane.

Time allotted for writing: 10 minutes for the sentences, 15 for making the planes, and 15-20 minutes for the game.

Real Life Tip: Have an example plane made to show them and have multiple instructions on how to make the plane ready. Encouraging the students to write creative sentences made the hang man game very interesting. Also, make sure all the planes are made the same way so no student thinks another student has an advantage.

Partnered Story Telling

Contributed by Allison Ufen and Katey Johnson

Grade Level: 2-5

Targeted Skills: Working on story-telling and creative writing with a partner.

Materials Needed: Paper, pencils, crayons/markers/colored pencils, and a partner.

Instructions:

1. Have the kids pair up in groups of two (can be bigger if there is an odd number).
Each will draw a picture of their favorite memory, using no words and not telling their partner(s) what they are drawing.
2. Then they will swap drawings and write a story about what they think the picture is describing.
3. After they have had time to write a story about what they think their partner's picture was they will share what their favorite memory actually was and compare.

Time allotted for writing: 10 Minutes for the drawing, 15 for the story, and 10 minutes to share their stories

Wrap-up/sharing: Have the kids talk about similar items between the story and what actually happened and have them share what in the picture made them think of what they wrote in their story.

Real Life Tip: Make sure the partners are not best friends so they do not already know most of their memories.

Writing the Ridiculous

Contributed by Marisa Way

Grade Level: 2-5

Targeted Skill/Purpose:

This exercise is intended to remove the intimidation factor from writing. It also encourages students to think outside the box and is a great opportunity to emphasize the nonexistence of rules – or laws – in writing.

Materials Needed:

List of ridiculous laws (attached), paper for drawing and writing, pencils and drawing tools

Instructions:

To begin this activity, create a discussion around the list of ridiculous laws – “Did you know that you must pay to park your pet elephant in Florida?” Share the list with your kids and enjoy the funniest, silliest, and craziest laws that have been written! Once you’ve shared the list, ask the kids to draw a picture or their favorite ridiculous law and to include a few sentences “explaining” how this law came to exist – of course we don’t know the *real* story behind the illegally parked elephant, so encourage them to make it up! Go around and share drawings and explanations. Once you’ve shared and discussed everyone’s favorite laws, the second portion of this activity involves creating our own laws – or *un-laws*! Does using your inside voice *always* count as illegal activity? Is it illegal to *not* eat ice cream for breakfast? Have the kids draw a picture and write down their law, with an explanation or story for why they believe this law was necessary.

Time for Writing:

20-30 minutes to discuss the ridiculous laws list and draw/create explanations for these laws;
20-30 minutes to create, draw, and write our own ridiculous laws.

Wrap-Up/Sharing:

At the end of the lesson provide up to 20 minutes for kids to share their laws. Wrap-up the lesson by discussing how there are not really any “laws” in writing, i.e.: poems don’t have to rhyme, you don’t have to begin a story on the left side of the page, and you don’t have to choose between writing a realistic or fantastical story!

Extra Extra!

You can take this lesson as far as you’d like. Depending on how long your session is, or how into the lesson your kids are, you could combine all the laws your group wrote and illustrated and create a sort of “Crazy Town” – what sort of place would all these ridiculous laws make?!

List of Ridiculous Laws!

Sources: *50 States, 50 Ridiculous Laws!* (voices.yahoo.com), *25 Ridiculous State Laws* (list25.com),
Dumb Laws (dumblaws.com)

- In Idaho, it is illegal for a man to give a woman a box of candy, which weighs under 50lbs.
- In Maryland, it is illegal to take a lion to the movies.
- In Alaska, it is illegal to push a moose out of an airplane.
- In Oklahoma, it is illegal to make an ugly face at a dog.
- In Cedar Rapids, Iowa, it is illegal to be a palm reader or to read people's palms.
- In Kentucky, it is illegal to remarry the same man four times.
- In Nevada, it is illegal to ride a camel on the highway.
- In the small town of Fountain Inn, South Carolina, a horse must be wearing pants at all times.
- In New Jersey, it is illegal to frown at a cop.
- In Milwaukee, Wisconsin, it is illegal to make a squirrel nervous.
- In Hawaii, it is illegal to *not* own a boat.
- In Wyoming, it is illegal to take pictures of bunnies between the months of January-April.
- In Texas, it is illegal to sell your own eye.
- In the tiny town of Tamarack, Idaho, it is illegal to buy onions at nighttime without a permit.
- In North Carolina, it is illegal to sing out of tune.
- In Alabama, it is illegal to wear a funny fake mustache in church.
- In Utah, it is illegal to not give birds "the right of way" on highways.
- In North Dakota, it is illegal to wear shoes to bed.
- In Minnesota, it is illegal to paint a sparrow to look like a parakeet, if you are going to try and sell it.
- In Indianola, Iowa, it is illegal to drive an ice cream truck.
- In Vermont, it is illegal to tie a giraffe to a telephone pole.

Doodlebob's

Contributed by Allison Ufen

Grade Level: 2-7

Targeted Skill: The targeted skill in this lesson plan is to challenge the students to incorporate their creativity and turn it into writing. This exercise also allows the students to shake out their wiggles before settling down to write.

Materials needed: Paper, markers/crayons, writing utensil.

Instructions:

1. Hand out a blank computer sheet to each student. Have a couple sheets with pre-drawn pictures on them, and suggest that the students fill in around it just in case the students are having trouble thinking what to draw.
2. Send them off into their own 'zones' – tell them to draw what they are thinking, feeling, or what their favorite things are. A broad prompt is best, but a prompt nonetheless is important to get their gears grinding. The only catch is that somewhere on their doodle sheet they must have a person, a place, and a thing. Other than that, the sheet is their oyster and they should not have boundaries on what they draw. Their doodles do not have to connect or make sense together.
3. Once the students have finished coloring their doodles, collect them.
4. Pass out a sheet of doodles to each student making sure they do not receive back their own.
5. Instruct the students to attempt to write a song based off of one, some, or all of the doodles. Their only requirement is that they must incorporate FIVE traits about the doodles in the lyrics. Suggest textures, colors, smells, or sounds. The students will use their classmate's artwork as their prompts.

Time Allotted: 25 minutes for doodling. 25 minutes to write.

Wrap-Up: Share! Make sure the student shows the class his or her doodle page that their song was based on and give credit to the artist! Remind the students that they won't have to sing their song aloud, but it is welcome!

Final Thoughts: This exercise allows the students to incorporate fun into writing. By showing them visuals beforehand, it helps to spark creativity and new ideas.

Real Life Tip: The students may get carried away with the freedom of doodling. Don't lose control! Mention before they start that they have a strict time limit of 25 minutes for drawing.

Found Poetry

Contributed by Emily Kaysinger

Grade Level: 2-6

Targeted Skill/Purpose: Teaches poetry and how to put it together.

Materials Needed: Sticky notes with words or lines of poetry on them (the more the merrier, but at least a dozen, and they can be filled with words or lines you make up or from other poems), tape (just in case the notes aren't sticky enough).

Instructions:

Instructors should go around before class and hide the sticky notes somewhere. If it is nice outside, hiding them on the playground would be ideal. If it is not nice outside, indoors works too. Give each student a number before they go “poetry hunting” – Jimmy is one, Susan is two, and so on. Then set them loose on the playground (or wherever the notes are hidden). After a few minutes or once all the words are found, call the kids back inside. Put the poems together: kid number 1 chooses one of the notes he/she found to start the poem, then kid number 2 puts down the next note, and so on. The end result will likely be a jumble of words and phrases. Have a group discussion on how to put in line breaks so that the poem makes sense. In the end, you will have a class “found” poem.

Time allotted for writing: 10 minutes for hiding the notes, 10 minutes for finding them, 15 minutes to put the poems together (Optional: give the kids a recess break for 5-10 minutes to play while/before hunting for the notes).

Wrap-up/sharing: After hunting and putting it all together, the instructor can read the poem aloud to the group.

Real Life Tip: The more notes of poetry you make and hide, the better. That way hopefully every kid can find at least one. And if you have some slower/shyer kids who're hanging back, help them find a note. From experience, for young kids it can be demoralizing to be

the only one who didn't find anything. Maybe keep a few in your pocket just in case you have to whip one out and let such a kid "find" it.

Teacher Example:

1. The leaves
2. spoke
3. purple
4. sighs of the wind
5. incandescent
6. The brain is wider than the sky
7. Fancy
8. Yesternight the sun went hence
9. pigment in our eyes
10. Rome
11. saturated
12. dripping lights

Poem:

The leaves spoke purple sighs of the wind

Incandescent

The brain is wider than the sky fancy

Yesternight the sun went

Hence pigment in our eyes

Rome, saturated, dripping lights.

Comic Mash-Up

Contributed by Emily Kaysinger

Grade Level: 3-5 (adjustable)

Targeted Skill/Purpose: Story structure. This lesson is basically guided storytelling. It's intended for younger kids who maybe have trouble coming up with coherent plotlines or story ideas.

Materials Needed: Pencils, three cups labeled "Character," "Action," and "Setting," small scraps of paper – some blank and some with characters (any characters – from Superman to a puppy) and actions on them (keep separate as per category: characters, actions, blank ones [which will later become settings]) and put these in the cups, sheets of paper divided into fourths (folded in half both ways) to function as a comic strip, markers/coloring utensils.

Instructions:

1. After introductions/settling the kids down for writing, give the kids a few scraps of paper and ask them to write down an interesting/favorite/cool/scary place on each one. Give examples to start them off: the bottom of the ocean, outer space, Dairy Queen, etc.
2. When they're done, collect the scraps and put them in one of the cups (the empty one). Hand out the divided papers.
3. Have the kids draw out a scrap from each cup: one character, one setting, and one action.
4. Have them draw and tell the story combining all three elements. The first fourth/box in the paper should be the title box. Next is the beginning, then the middle, and then the end. If students get really into this lesson, they could fold their papers more to get more boxes for writing, with 8 boxes per page being the max (gets cramped after that).

Time allotted for writing: 15-20 minutes, a few minutes for sharing. Students who finish early can start another one if they want to.

Wrap-up/sharing: Let each kid share their story. If time permits, you could ask them questions: “What happens next?” “What if XYZ happened?” and so on. Also, if time allows, have a talk about story structure: beginnings and introducing the main character to the conflict, middle and the big challenge of the conflict, and ending and the resolution of the conflict.

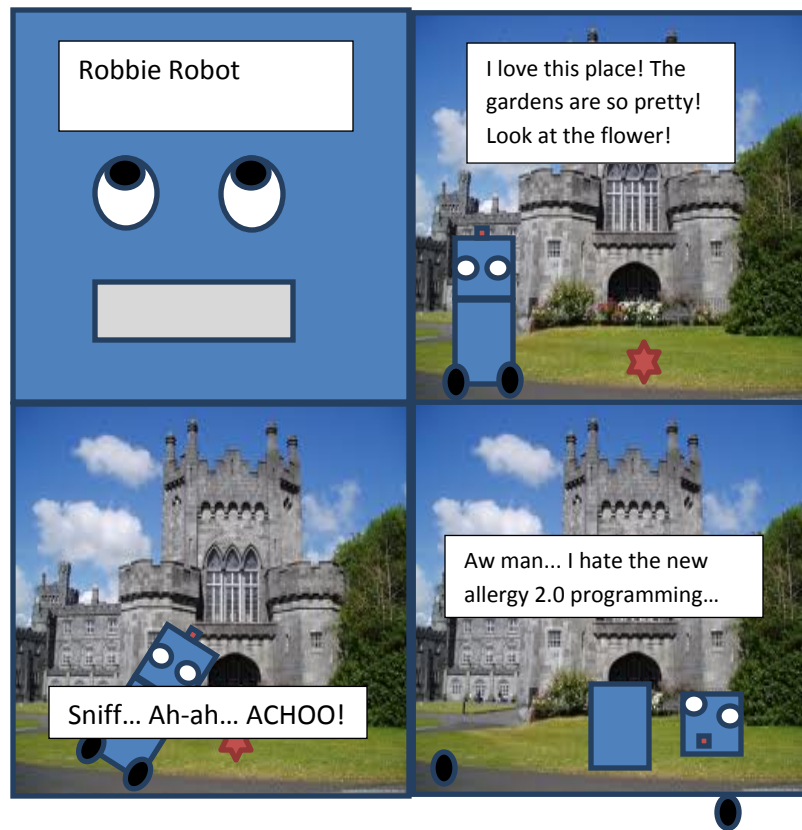
Real Life Tip: This should help kids learn about plot/story structure a little bit – stories need beginnings, middles, and ends. I know my kids are a bit squirrely and like to tell stories more than write them, so this is (hopefully) a good exercise to get them thinking about stories and how they work without losing their interest.

Teacher Example:

robot,

is allergic to,

castle



Greetings From...

Contributed by Marisa Way

Grade Level: 3-6

Targeted Skill/Purpose:

Encouraging imagination and comfort within our writing group and with the process of writing. This activity also focuses on scenery and how it can affect our writing.

Materials Needed:

Pencil, postcard paper for each student (attached), postcard photo for each student (attached), fact sheet, world map

Instructions:

Students will begin by receiving both a “postcard photo” and a postcard worksheet. We will brainstorm as a group what can be included on a postcard, such as who is receiving the postcard (Mom, teacher, beloved pet?), what food we are eating at our destination (fiery-hot chili peppers, beetles, whole coconuts?), the places we are visiting (huge markets, the insides of volcanoes, the top of Mt. Everest?), etc. After this brainstorming session, the kids will write a postcard based on the pictures they have been given. They can use the ideas we brainstormed together or come up with something totally different! The fact sheet can be used to inform kids on the country their picture is from, and act as a starting-off point for what they may want to write about in their postcard. The world map will be provided as a reference tool.

Time Allotted for Writing:

15-20 minutes

Wrap-up/Sharing:

When writing time is up, volunteers can share their pictures and their postcards from the places they’ve visited.

Extra Extra! At the end of the lesson, surprise the kids by telling them that you will actually mail their postcards to them! Make sure they have written their address on the postcard.
Who doesn't like getting mail?!

Postcard Pictures



Tanzania



Australia

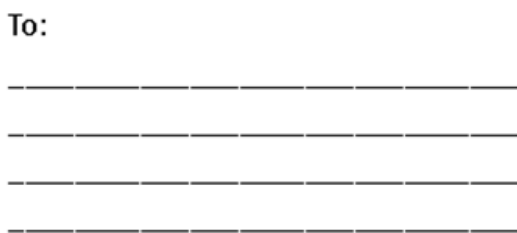


Antarctica



Hong Kong, China

This image shows a full page of handwriting practice paper. It features multiple sets of horizontal dashed lines spaced evenly down the page, providing a guide for letter height and placement. The lines are light gray and extend across the entire width of the page. There is no text or other markings on the paper.



Postcards Fact Sheet

Tanzania:

More than 120 languages are spoken in Tanzania

Tanzania has the highest concentration of wildlife animals than any other country

Mount Kilimanjaro, the tallest mountain in Africa, is in Tanzania

The oldest human skull was found in Tanzania

Australia:

Australia is the only “nation-continent” – both a country and its own continent!

Over 200 languages are spoken here

Over 80% of the population lives by the coast

Most of the animal and plant species in Australia *only* exist there

Antarctica:

The South Pole is found in Antarctica

The world record for the coldest temperature was recorded in Antarctica in 1983 at -128.6°F!

The continent is home to both penguins and seals

90% of all the world’s ice is found in Antarctica

Hong Kong:

In English, Hong Kong means “fragrant harbor”

Hong Kong is the most densely populated city in the world

Though Hong Kong is found in China, it was actually ruled by Britain until 1997 and is considered a separate country!

Hong Kong has more skyscrapers (around 8,000) than any other city in the world.

Deserted Island

Contributed by Chelsea Wing

Grade Level: 3-6

Targeted Skill/Purpose: Encourage collaboration and thinking outside of the box. Also incorporates drawing and art.

Materials Needed: Markers, paper, scissors, a hat or bowl to collect paper scraps.

Instructions:

Give each student one piece of paper and spread the markers throughout. Instruct the students to fold their paper into quarters, then unfold. Each student should then draw an object, any object they want, in each of the sections of the paper. For example, a student could draw a car, a baseball bat, a radio, and a notebook on their paper. Encourage students to think outside the box—can they draw food? Mythical creatures? When everyone is wrapping up their drawings, distribute scissors for students to cut their paper along the fold lines. Each student will end up with four squares of paper, each with one object, which the instructor should then collect and place into a hat. Students will then be divided into groups of three or four, and each student will draw one piece of paper randomly from the hat. The instructor will then set up the scenario: each group is stranded on a desert island, and they must discuss how they will use their three or four objects to live on the island or escape from it. The group must work together, and, once they have decided on a solution, they should write down what they decided.

Time allotted for writing: 10 minutes for drawing and cutting, 15 minutes to discuss within groups, 5 minutes to write (Approximately 30 min total).

Wrap-up/sharing: After writing, groups will then share what their objects were and read what they wrote about how to use those objects.

Final Thoughts: This lesson has the intent of encouraging students to work together to solve a problem and think outside of the box in solving that problem. Hopefully this lesson will make them think, while also providing a fun role-playing scenario that could be useful in their own story building.

Real Life Tip: If things are going slow, grab one more random item for each group and drop it in—ask them how they can incorporate it. Also, make sure the students label their items in case the drawing doesn't clearly convey what the object is.

We've Got a Mission

Contributed by Annie Christenson and Lauren Audetat

Grade Level: 3-6

Targeted Skill/Purpose: To develop teamwork and communication skills by writing creative pieces with another person.

Materials Needed: Pens or pencils, and copies of the attached sheet for each student

Instructions:

1. Students will work in teams of two.
2. In their small groups, the students will come up with a mission. It can be like a James Bond rescue mission or an Indiana Jones adventure story. The mission can take place in space or in the jungle or in the desert. Tell them the mission can be whatever they want it to be. They'll decide together what's the purpose of the mission. Are they saving someone? Are they stealing something? Then they'll decide where it will take place and the characters that will be involved in the mission (the hero, the sidekick, the villain, the damsel in distress, etc.)
3. Once the mission has been decided upon, a volunteer will pass out the attached sheet to each student. On this paper is a code that each student has to decipher based on the mission he/she created with his/her partner. Remind them the code could be between the hero and his/her trusty sidekick or it could be between the villain and his/her accomplice or it could be between the hero and the villain. Remind them that they are playing out the mission they created through this code.
4. When they finishing deciphering the code before them, transition them into sharing time.

Time Allotted for Writing: 30 minutes.

Wrap-up/Sharing: First students will share their deciphered code with their partner. Though they started out with the same mission, they'll both see how the other made it his/her own creation. Then if any students want to share their code with the entire class they can do so.

Teacher Example:

The Case of Mr. Buttugly

Back story: Somewhere in London (because the people there have cool accents). Mr. Buttugly, the ugliest cat in the world, was stolen from his owner's luxurious home late last night. All that was left was a ransom letter that appears to be indecipherable. The owner, Jacques, filed a missing person report to the local detective agency. Doc Z, the best detective in town, is on the case. Will he be able to decipher the ransom letter? Will he be able to find Mr. Buttugly? We will have to wait to find out.

First line of code from the catnapper: ♣ ∞ ΠβΛ #□π \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$ X

Doc Z translation: The catnapper wishes us luck. We'll need an infinite amount of it as we look for Mr. Buttugly. He says we are inferior to him. He is asking for apple pie and money. Lots of money. If we do not cooperate, the fate of Mr. Buttugly is uncertain.

Second line of code from the catnapper: ⇔↑⇒↑⇐⇓⇓⊗ \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$ X

Doc Z translation: The catnapper gave us directions for the drop off location. X will mark the spot where we place the money. If we do not, once again the fate of Mr. Buttugly is uncertain.

,

CODE SHEET

1. ♣ ∞ ΠβΛ #□π \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$ X
2. ^T R F G * * 2 1 8 ! @ O L M = (R + R)
3. ⇔ ↑ ⇒ ↑ ⇐ ↓ ↓ ⊗
4. © β 9 □ ————— ∫ Σ ⊕ ∩ ! +
5. + M P 5 # ∞ Ω ⊥ ∴
6. H Π Σ Σ 0 0 0 0 : ∅ ℵ ≡
7. ↑ ⇒ ⇒ ⇒ ⇒ ↓ ↓ ∠ ↑ ⇔ ⊗

*Feel free to add more lines of code if you want to make the exercise longer.

Page One Headline

Contributed by Katey Johnson

Grade Level: 3-6 (it can be applied to higher grade levels if you altered the headlines)

Targeted Skill/Purpose: Get students to think creatively with a short prompt and to get them moving.

Materials: A pretend microphone and cut out headlines for Newspapers.

Instructions:

1. Have the students pair up and pick out a headline that they find interesting.
2. From that headline they will make up the background story of anyone involved, where it happened, when it happened, etc.
3. Then after they come up with their story have them sit in front of the class and give a news cast. If they are too shy or don't want to that is fine.

Time allotted for writing: 20 minutes for pair writing. 5-10 for their news cast for each pair

Wrap-up/sharing: The lesson would end with a discussion of how they liked creating their own story/event and then sharing it with others. The teacher could tell them what the actual story was at the end if time allows.

Real Life Tip: Have a wide variety of headlines for the students to choose from. Also, give the students the real stories after they have shared theirs.

Teacher Example:

From KWWL News Online: Longfellow Elementary to School Carnival

Today the Longfellow Elementary in California had a carnival. There were elephants and lions and all sorts of animals for the kids to see and some to play with. There was a clown to entertain the kids and he made them balloon animals and taught them tricks. There were also all sorts of candy and carnival foods to eat like: corndogs, cotton candy, and fried snickers. The kids had a long fun day at the carnival. The carnival will be back every year once a year for students and the community to come and attend.

Whose story? Now.

Contributed by Emily Kaysinger

Grade Level: 3-6

Targeted Skill/Purpose: Grammar and punctuation.

Materials Needed: Worksheets with an unedited/unpunctuated short story on them (see example). All of the papers can have the same story on them (recommended) or different ones.

Instructions: This lesson was inspired by *Eats, Shoots & Leaves*. Basically, it's a lesson plan centered on copyediting and the creativity that exists even within just interpreting a story, not necessarily writing it.

1. Hand the kids the stories. Explain that these are someone else's story, and their task is to edit it (leave this vague so the kids can interpret it however they want).
2. Allow 5 minutes or so to edit. Tailor the time to the story length/complexity and your kids' abilities.
3. When time is up, have each kid share what they've come up with, reading the story aloud with inflection and such to emphasize the differences. Although there will be some similarities, there will be differences in interpretation. (Some kids will think these differences are "wrong" – explain to them that there is no "right" way to create a story.)
4. Discuss editing with the group. See below for tips.

Time allotted for writing: 5-10 minutes. 15+ minutes for sharing.

Wrap-up/sharing: Discuss the similarities and differences of their edits with your kids. Why did they come up? Talk about editing, the process, why it's important, and why it's not (for the most part) as horrible as some people make it out to be, and also talk about editing's role in the creative process. Is editing merely a rules-based, rigid process, or is it more creative?

Teacher Example:

Once upon a time there was a donkey the donkeys name was fred who lived on a farm fred loved apples but on the farm it was hard to get apples the horses who were cool and also jerks also loved apples what they didnt love was sharing and especially not with the uncool animals fred was uncool so the horses would always stand in front of the apple trees and not let fred near the apples please said fred I just want an apple just one the horses said no you are uncool we will not share the apples but a little bird who lived in the apple tree heard them and felt bad for fred so she pecked at an apple until it fell look fred she said what when fred looked up the apple fell right in his mouth and he was so happy

Interpretation:

Once upon a time there was a donkey. The donkey's name was Fred Who Lived. On a farm, Fred loved apples. But on the farm it was hard to get apples. The horses who were cool, and also jerks, also loved apples. What they didn't love was sharing and especially not with the uncool animals. Fred was uncool. So, the horses would always stand in front of the apple trees and not let Fred near.

"The apples, please," said Fred. "I just want an apple."

"Just one," the horses said.

"No. You are uncool."

"We will not share the apples."

But a little bird who lived in the apple tree heard them and felt bad for Fred, so she pecked at an apple until it fell. "Look Fred," she said.

"What-" When Fred looked up, the apple fell right in his mouth! And he was so happy.

Let's Punch Things

Contributed by Adam Jaschen

Grade Level: 3-7

Targeted Skill/Purpose: A punch is defined as pushing forward forcefully, usually with a fist. Where stories may often have a sudden action, this lesson aims to fully show the literal and literary power of a punch. So they are going to write stories, and then punch them.

Materials Needed: Large roll of paper, scissors, and markers.

Instructions:

1. Before the students come to class cut large sheets of paper. Very large, like as tall as a 4th grader, average 4th grader, none of that growth spurt what-not. This paper is the life-blood of the activity.
2. Have the students write the beginning of a story on the top half of the page. Encourage them to show the character, or hero, or animal, doing something ordinary, even boring, like waking up or eating or whatever. Give them 10 -20 minutes, depending on the age group, productivity, and then stop them. Stopping mid-sentence is okay.
3. Have a talk about action in literature, and the words that often are associated with it: suddenly, out of nowhere, without warning, etc.
4. Cut two perpendicular lines in the middle of the page below where the story ends. This is to prevent the following step from tearing the paper in half.
5. Have the students punch through the paper. It should be awesome; they can make sound effects or anything they want.

6. Now have them continue their story, but with something sudden happening, changing the direction and mood of the story. 15 – 25 minutes to finish the story.
7. Have the students share their stories, read them dramatically, with lots of anticipation to the punch.

Time allotted for writing: 30 – 40 Minutes.

Wrap-up/sharing: Contrast is what makes the mind run with excitement. It is the beginning idea of a story, and it is the focal point of all art. Through this lesson, hopefully student will see how action and contrast play important parts in both their writing and their storytelling.

Real Life Tip: Practice how long you need to make the incisions on the paper to prevent tearing. It may take a few tries to figure it out.

Build-a-Character

Contributed by Chelsea Wing

Grade Level: 3-9

Targeted Skill/Purpose: Getting students to think about the importance of characters in stories. This exercise will help students think about character building on a basic level and will use the skill of simple description and storytelling.

Materials Needed: Pencil, paper, and character questionnaire (attached).

Instructions:

Students will begin by writing a character name at the top of their sheet of paper. The name can be anything of their choosing, but preferably should be a full name (first and last name) that they think up. Once they all have a name written, everyone passes their papers to the right. The next student writes a simple description for the name that they read, using a character questionnaire (attached). After the descriptions are written, papers are passed to the right one more time. This student takes the character name and description and writes a short scene using that character. If students are stuck in writing a scene, instructor can give examples of places that character could be, and ask why they would be there.

Time allotted for writing: Approximately 2 min for thinking of names, 5 min for writing descriptions, 10 min for writing scenes (15-20 min total).

Wrap-up/sharing: After writing, students can choose to share the scenes they wrote, first giving the character name and a summary of the description given. If there is time afterward, the instructor can talk about the exercise and how we perceive characters in fiction—how just a name can shape a character. Optionally, the instructor can start the lesson with this, giving names from popular fiction to see how we think about characters (Severus Snape seems like a much more menacing name than Ron Weasley, for example). In this discussion,

the instructor could also help the kids brainstorm character traits and write them on the board for reference when they start writing descriptions.

Final Thoughts: This exercise is meant to make students think about characters and the process of creating a human being from scratch. Characters are an essential part of fiction, and hopefully this will get students more interested in the process of creating characters. Some challenges might be keeping the students focused on the writing and helping them think up creative names—instructors should encourage students to think outside the box to come up with unique names. Help them out by telling them to combine the name of their street with their middle name, for example.

Real Life Tip: Inform students beforehand that they will not be holding on to their original name—some may get upset that they have to “give up” their character!

Teacher Example:

NAME: Templeton Ardien II

DESCRIPTION: Templeton Ardien II is a stuck-up prince with wavy light brown hair and dark blue, stormy eyes. He is tall and skinny and walks like he knows he is better than everyone. He’s not very nice to anyone but the young ladies in the castle he lives in. His smile is infectious, and he is quite the charmer.

SCENE: It was a bright morning, one of the first days of summer. The air was warm and spread through the castle invitingly. Templeton was looking forward to the day ahead—the freedom of the summer air called his name.

“Templeton!”

Templeton rolled his eyes as his mother, the queen, approached from behind him.

“Yes, mother?” he said irritably, turning around to face her.

“You need to get dressed,” she scolded.

“I *am* dressed.”

His mother looked him up and down disapprovingly. “You need to look better than that for the visit of the king from the eastern realms.”

“Whatever,” Templeton scoffed. “It’s not like I care about some other king.”

“Templeton.”

“Fine, I’ll get dressed,” he said, throwing up his hands.

His mother gave him one more disapproving glance before nodding and turning back. He watched her leave until she had rounded the corner, and then snuck off to go on a well-deserved ride in the beautiful air outside. Fancy clothes could wait.

Character Questionnaire Worksheet

1. Name:
2. Age:
3. Height:
4. Eye color:
5. Physical appearance:
6. Strange or unique physical appearance:
7. Hobbies/interests:
8. Where does he or she live? What is it like there?
9. Special skills/abilities:
10. Family (describe):
11. Description of his or her house:
12. Description of his or her bedroom:
13. Favorite bands/songs/type of music:
14. Favorite movies:
15. Favorite TV shows:
816. Favorite books:
17. Favorite foods:

18. Favorite sports/sports teams:

19. Political views:

20. Any interesting philosophies on life?

Changing Your Perspective

Contributed by Chelsea Wing

Grade Level: 3-9

Targeted Skill/Purpose: Getting students to think about points of view and how this can change a story.

Materials Needed: Pencil, paper.

Instructions:

Instructor can start by reviewing the term “point of view” and explaining that point of view can change the tone of a story. Instructor will then begin the activity by helping the students brainstorm famous fairy tales and then writing them up on the board. Examples could be *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Snow White*, or *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. Once there are a few examples up, students should choose one of these stories and write the story from the perspective of the main character (write *Little Red Riding Hood* from Little Red’s perspective, for example). Then, after those five minutes, students will be instructed to choose a different character from that story and re-write the tale from the perspective of that character.

Time allotted for writing: Approximately 5 minutes for brainstorming, 5 minutes for initial writing, 10 minutes for re-writing, 5-10 min for sharing. (Total of approx.. 25-30 min)

Wrap-up/sharing: Once everyone is done writing, students will have the option to share their original stories and then their re-written versions. The instructor can then wrap up by again re-iterating how point of view can change a story. If time allows, instructor can ask students where the characters in the stories are now—what did the Wolf do after the run-in with the Huntsman? Does he lead a criminal life?

Final Thoughts: Point of view can be extremely influential in a story, and the whole story can change based on who is telling it. Hopefully this exercise will give students more perspective into styles of writing and characters and how that shapes their writing. If

students are having trouble thinking of how to re-write their stories, instructors can help by suggesting characters and identifying villains of the story to maybe think about developing.

Teacher Example:

Little Red Riding Hood

In the history of bad days, I think this one takes the cake. I was minding my own business, just trying to take some cookies to my grandmother. “She’ll love these,” my mother told me. “Just stay on the path in the forest and don’t talk to strangers!”

Well, it’s natural to be a little curious, right? I mean, it probably wasn’t the best idea to go pick those flowers off of the path and then talk to that wolf (who seemed perfectly harmless, by the way).

However, I knew I had made a mistake when I reached my grandmother’s house. That’s when my day went downhill.

Luckily that huntsman was there to save me. We did find grandmother in the closet, but my! The fright I had when I thought that wolf had eaten her! I’m not sure what I would have done if the huntsman hadn’t been to save the day!

The Wolf

People always think I’m the guilty one.

Why is that? Is it because wolves have this bad connotation in fairy tales? Do we just look inherently evil? Is it just that people are freaked out we can talk?

All I was doing was minding my own business that fateful day I ran into Little Red. I knew her grandmother well, so I didn’t think anything of it when I stopped to talk to her. She seemed like a nice girl, if a little stupid. When she walked away, I got the brilliant idea to pull a prank on her.

I arranged it all with her grandmother when I reached the cottage—what, you think I actually ate old Grannie? No, she was hiding out in a closet, in on the plan the whole time. All I had to do was dress up in some of her old clothes, lie in bed, and then scare Little Red when she came through the door. I never expected it to take so long for Little Red to guess my true identity. I also never expected her to scream so loud that a giant lumbering huntsman would come barging through the door with an axe.

Mad for Mad-Libs

Contributed by Marisa Way

Grade Level: 4-6

Targeted Skill/Purpose:

This activity will help students either learn parts of speech or review this important information, depending on their grade level. Writing their own mad-libs also allows for creativity and practice with short story writing.

Materials Needed:

Mad-libs examples (to be filled out and shared as a group), two sheets of paper per child, pencils

Instructions:

First as a group we will complete a few mad-libs together, reviewing the parts of speech as we go. Then, we are going to make our own mad-libs! The kids can write news articles, advertisements for a hot new invention, a diary entry documenting their trip into space, or why they are excited for the summer. Volunteers will help brainstorm stories with students who are having trouble deciding what to write. After everyone has written a short story, we will go through and circle nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc. and remove them from the stories. For this step, it is important that students use pencils for the activity so they can easily erase words. As they erase, they can write in the part of speech they will need to ask for later. Then, everyone will get into pairs and ask their partners to help complete their mad-libs. At the end of the hour those who are willing will get the chance to share!

Time for Writing:

10-15 minutes for examples as a group, 15-20 minutes for individual mad-libs, 10 minutes for sharing

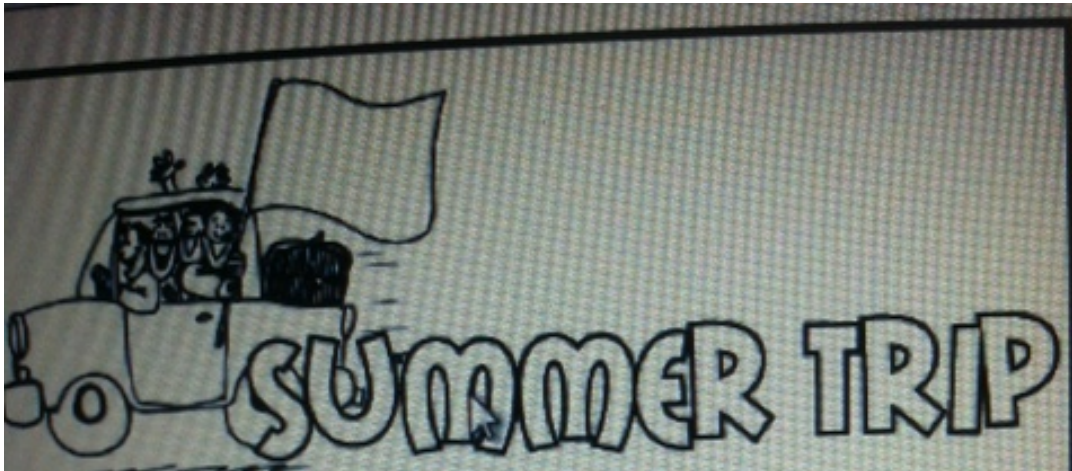
Wrap-up/Sharing:

At the end of the hour, interested groups or individual kids can share their own mad-libs.

Real-Life Tips:

One goal of this activity is to help us get to know each other better as a group. In addition, mad-libs are a fun and funny way to familiarize oneself with grammar and parts of speech. The kids will hopefully remember that they can always make their own mad-libs fun!

After completing this lesson with the Horace Mann kids, I think that it would have been okay to go into more depth on the actual “teaching” portion of this lesson. I noticed at least one of the kids struggling with adverbs. Also, I think our kids did okay with this, but depending on the group, it might be necessary to have a talk about what is “appropriate” to share—I could see this exercise going from funny to gross very quickly!



SUMMER TRIP

Last summer, my mom and dad took me and _____
(person)

on a trip to _____. The weather there is very
(place)

_____! Northern _____ has many
(adjective) (same place)

_____ and they make _____ there.
(plural noun) (adjective) (plural noun)

Many people also go to _____ to _____ or
(place) (action verb)

see the _____. The people that live there love to
(plural noun)


eat _____ and are very proud of their big
(plural noun)

_____. They also like to _____ in
(noun) (action verb)

the sun and swim in the _____! It was a really
(action verb)

_____ trip!
(adjective)

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Lunch Room!

Make sure your lunch _____ is
 (container)

filled with nutritious _____ food. Do
 (adjective)

not go to the _____ food stand across
 (adjective)


the street from school. The hamburgers they
 serve are fried in _____ and are made
 (noun)

of _____ meat. So take a sandwich made
 (animal)

of _____ or _____ it's much
 (vegetable) (vegetable)

healthier! Drink _____ milk instead of
 (color)

_____ colas.
 (adjective)



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Mystery Author Shoebox

Contributed by Donald E. Wyrick Jr.

Grade Level: 4-6

Targeted Skill/Purpose: This activity will allow the students to use their imagination to create a short story based off of the constraint of a first sentence they did not write—to explore the idea of “prompts” in a different way. The ultimate goal of this activity is to get the students to accept that sometimes there will be barriers that they may struggle with in starting a piece of writing, and to explore ways of getting past these blocks with their imaginations to reach an ending. Also, it is to teach them to just have fun re-writing history!

Materials Needed: A shoebox filled with famous first sentences supplied by the leader, pencils, and 2 sheets of paper per student.

Instructions:

1. Prior to coming to class the instructor will have filled a shoebox with pieces of paper (enough for every student), on each is a famous first sentence. Also on the pieces of paper should be the author’s name, and the title of the work the sentence came from.
2. Then the box will be passed around and each student will randomly select a famous first line and write a story beginning with the first sentence they chose.
3. Lastly, allow the students who would like to share with the class to do so. This will take up approximately 20-25 minutes.

Time allotted for writing: 35-40 minutes for writing.

Wrap-up/sharing: The students who would like to share their stories may do so. Then, have an open conversation about the challenges the students might have had writing a story that they did not start. At the end of the time, all of the stories should be handed back to the leader to keep for a future lesson on revision.

Real Life Tip: Plenty of time should be given to this writing exercise so the students do not feel limited by the clock when they are writing. They should feel like they actually have time to create something great.

Teacher Example:

Say I chose a piece of paper with the first sentence to *Swann's Way* by Marcel Proust. A simple and short example could be something like this:

For a long time, I went to bed early. It wasn't because I was particularly tired. No, it was more because of the way the sun works in winter. When the last rays of sun dipped below the horizon, I found myself immediately yawning; my knees weakened, and could barely stand up. So I thought it best to get into bed before I collapsed and hurt myself. But then spring came. Ahh, and how glorious spring is! And summer too. It stays light out much longer in spring and summer. I no longer find myself yawning and nearly collapsing at 5pm. Now—at least for the remainder of these two marvelous seasons—I go to bed late.

Some Famous First Sentences (for instructor use):

1. Through the fence, between the curling flower spaces, I could see them hitting. - William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury* (1929)
2. For a long time, I went to bed early. - Marcel Proust, *Swann's Way* (1913)
3. Call me Ishmael. - Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick* (1851)
4. Many years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendía was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice. - Gabriel García Márquez, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967)
5. I am an invisible man. - Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man* (1952)
6. It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen. - George Orwell, *1984* (1949)
7. Someone must have slandered Josef K., for one morning, without having done anything truly wrong, he was arrested. —Franz Kafka, *The Trial* (1925)
8. Somewhere in la Mancha, in a place whose name I do not care to remember, a gentleman lived not long ago, one of those who has a lance and ancient shield on a shelf and keeps a skinny nag and a greyhound for racing. - Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quixote* (1605)
9. All this happened, more or less. - Kurt Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1969)
10. He was an old man who fished alone in a skiff in the Gulf Stream and he had gone eighty-four days now without taking a fish. - Ernest Hemingway, *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952)
11. Once upon a time and a very good time it was there was a moocow coming down along the road and this moocow that was coming down along the road met a nicens little boy named baby tuckoo. - James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916)
12. It was the day my grandmother exploded. - Iain M. Banks, *The Crow Road* (1992)
13. In my younger and more vulnerable years my father gave me some advice that I've been turning over in my mind ever since. - F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* (1925)
14. Once upon a time, there was a woman who discovered she had turned into the wrong person. - Anne Tyler, *Back When We Were Grownups* (2001)

15. If I am out of my mind, it's all right with me, thought Moses Herzog. - Saul Bellow, *Herzog* (1964)
16. I write this sitting in the kitchen sink. - Dodie Smith, *I Capture the Castle* (1948)
17. He was born with a gift of laughter and a sense that the world was mad. - Raphael Sabatini, *Scaramouche* (1921)
18. He was an inch, perhaps two, under six feet, powerfully built, and he advanced straight at you with a slight stoop of the shoulders, head forward, and a fixed from-under stare which made you think of a charging bull. - Joseph Conrad, *Lord Jim* (1900)
19. Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself. - Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925)
20. The village of Holcomb stands on the high wheat plains of western Kansas, a lonesome area that other Kansans call "out there." – Truman Capote, *In Cold Blood* (1966)

Nonsense!

Contributed by Donald E. Wyrick Jr.

Grade Level: 4-6

Targeted Skill/Purpose: This activity will allow the students to use their imaginations to create unique words and structure them into a basic poetic form, with a set number of stanzas and lines. It will also—since this is a nonsense poem—allow the students to explore sound rather than meaning.

Materials Needed: Jabberwocky (attached), pencils, and 1 sheet of paper per student.

Instructions:

1. Introduce the group of students to the concept of creating nonsense words, basing them purely on sound (emphasizing just how important sound is), and putting them into a simple poetic format (explaining stanzas). Take about 10 minutes to discuss and field questions.
2. Next, introduce and read to the students the famous nonsense poem “Jabberwocky” by Lewis Carroll. This should take less than 5 minutes.
3. Then explain to the students their task: Write a poem with no more than twelve lines, divided into three stanzas of four lines each. All of the words used in the piece should be of the students’ own creation, and ordered in any way they choose.
4. Finally, allow the students who would like to share with the class do so. This will take up the remainder of the class.

Time allotted for writing: About 20 minutes to complete the exercise.

Wrap-up/sharing: The students who would like to share their poems may do so. Afterward, have an open conversation about the challenges and any surprises the students may have had while writing a nonsense poem. This should take up the remaining 15 minutes.

Real Life Tip: Writing a nonsense poem can be incredibly difficult. There will undoubtedly be times when the students begin to struggle. To keep the exercise fun, and not have it seem

burdensome, find ways of reminding the students of the endless possibilities of being able to create new words nobody has ever thought of before. One example would be to ask the student to make a random noise and try to spell it!

“Jabberwocky”

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

"Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!"

He took his vorpal sword in hand:
Long time the manxome foe he sought—
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,
And stood awhile in thought.

And as in uffish thought he stood,
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,
And burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! and through and through
The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead, and with its head
He went galumphing back.

“And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!”
He chortled in his joy.

’Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

Tricky Situation

Contributed by Donald E. Wyrick Jr.

Grade Level: 4-6

Targeted Skill/Purpose: This activity will allow the students to see how dramatically a story can change simply by replacing one piece of the puzzle—in this case, the character. The goal of this activity is to get the students to see how different each story turns out, although two out of three of the prompts are the same for everyone.

Materials Needed: Three containers containing strips of paper for character, place, and time period supplied by the leader, pencils, and 1-2 sheets of paper per student.

Instructions:

1. Prior to coming to class, the instructor will have filled three containers (example: empty Kleenex boxes) with pieces of paper (enough for every student to draw a strip from all three). The first container will contain strips of paper with a character, the second container will contain strips of paper with a place, and the third container will contain strips of paper with a time period. All of the strips of paper in the ‘place’ and ‘time period’ containers will be exactly the same. Only the container of characters will have randomized outcomes.
2. The students will draw a piece of paper from each of the three containers and should be told not to share what is on their strips of paper, because unbeknownst to them, two of the strips they have chosen “at random” (place and time period) are the exact same for everybody.
3. The students will then use all three strips of paper (character, place, and time period) to write a story.
3. At the end, allow the students who would like to share their stories with the class to do so. This will take up approximately 20-25 minutes.

Time allotted for writing: 35-40 minutes for writing.

Wrap-up/sharing: The students who would like to share their stories may do so. This is when they will realize that they have all be writing stories in the same place and time period, and will be able to see how wildly different their stories are simply because the characters were different!

Real Life Tip: To help with keeping the students from sharing what they drew from the containers play it up as a being super-secretive!

Teacher Example (of drawings):

Student A draws:

Maurice the butcher/At a carnival on a far-off planet called Brooptusk/Year 3176

Student B draws:

Alice the elephant/At a carnival on a far-off planet called Brooptusk/Year 3176

Student C draws:

Quentin the turtle/At a carnival on a far-off planet called Brooptusk/Year 3176

Section 2: Grades 4-8:

Coming-of-Age

Teacher Tips

Help your students feel confident in their own ideas.

Are they having trouble coming up with something? Give them a push, a seedling of an idea.

Don't be afraid to get a little silly!

Descriptive Name Poem

Contributed by Shane Evans

Age Level: 9-12

Targeted Skill/Purpose: To get students to make creative poetry out of names.

Materials Needed: Pens or pencils, and paper.

Instructions:

1. [*The first line of the poem should include the name or nickname of a person*] Have the students come up with the name of a person they know. This person's name will be the topic of the poem! The name can be either the student, a friend, a famous person, or even a fictional character. The point of this exercise is to get their imaginations going.

2. [*"The name represents... [Insert first adjective] and [second adjective]"*] The second line of the poem must include two adjectives that describe the person's personality or nature. The instructor can then even add a third adjective if they wish. The second line should resemble something like the guideline above.

3. [*"They are the color of [emotion] and the sound of [emotion]."*]

In the third line, we use two emotions that the person feels or displays often in their life. By describing the emotion as a color and a sound, this helps the students correlate connections of colors with other senses and to give them practice writing metaphors and simple similes. One optional addition is to describe the emotions in detail if the student wants to. Or the instructor can replace the word "color" or "sound" for the word "smell." There are many different approaches to changing this line to fit whatever the instructor wants to specify on. An additional idea is changing the third line into [*"It is the color of [emotion], the sound of [emotion], and the smell of [emotion]."*] In this case, use only one word in each blank spot or break the line up into more than one if the sentences end up being too long.

4. [*"It is a(n) [adj] [noun] that [action or characteristic]."*]

In the fourth line, use a noun that reminds the writer of the person, such as an

animal, a flower or anything else. The action is something that the noun does or is one of its characteristics. The action or characteristic should relate to the person in some way as well as the noun chosen. Also, if the student gets stuck on the adjective, try to use a color. Feel free to use more than one adjective if you want.

5. *"His/Her name is [full name]"*

The fifth line lists the person's complete name including first, middle, last, etc. If you used a nickname as the first line, be sure that it is included somehow in the person's full name.

6. *"And it means he/she believes/accepts/understands/knows/wants/needs... etc...."* The final line must have a verb in it and also shows either morals of the person or what they try to do for others.

Time allotted for writing: 30 minutes to get the students to figure out which words to use that can help them and 15 minutes to get them to share their pieces with the class.

Final Thoughts: I tried out this lesson myself and I thought it turned out well. It really gets the creative juices flowing just thinking about what a name can actually mean to other people and comparing that to what one gets out of the name themselves. This is also a helpful icebreaker exercise if the student uses his/her own name as the subject.

Teacher Example:

Shane Evans

His name represents determination, kindness, and stability.

It is the color of madness and the sound of perseverance.

It is a piece of cold, twisted steel in the baking sun.

His name is Shane Tristan Deverell Evans

and it means he believes in protecting friends and family from harm.

Erasure Poetry
Contributed by Shane Evans

Age Level: 9-12

Targeted Skill/Purpose: Grammar can be hard for kids to learn, but by using a technique called Erasure Poetry, kids can have fun by finding interesting words and using them with correct grammar tips.

Materials Needed: Old books (provided by instructor), white out or black sharpies, black board, paper, and pencils.

Instructions:

The instructor will provide old books that are beat up, or as I call "near the end of their lives." he/she then demonstrates an example of an erasure poem, usually written by another poet or written by the instructor. The kids will be able to rip out every page from the book and stack them in piles according to the cover pages of the original books. (A stack of pages from Stephen King's *IT*, a stack of pages from *The Pendragon Chronicles*, etc). Make sure the texts are of appropriate age level for the students. This will prevent students from finding inappropriate words in the texts and to also keep students from becoming confused over some of the words. The instructor then shows the kids that by marking out words with white out or with markers (depending on ages of the students) that are boring or used too often and leaving only the words they find interesting and unique, they can create a poem using the remaining words.

Time allotted for writing: Thirty to forty minutes for searching words, fifteen minutes for sharing.

Wrap-up/sharing: Kids will be able to share what they found, what they thought was most interesting about the assignment, what types of words they either knew or didn't know, and whether they liked the assignment.

Final Thoughts: I have recently learned about this type of poetry, and I have fallen in love with it. I think it is very interesting that you can use texts that normally are boring to read and find some real gems in words and wordplay. Some of the most interesting poetic words I found were from tutorials, especially ones about writing poems themselves!

Example: (From Strive for Success April 2013)

Quentin's Erasure Poem

(Source Material: *Perpetual Pest* by Neal Shusterman & Terry Black)

Compiled by: Quentin

Thornhill silhouette teeth howling fury
Seemed echo miles leaped graves.
Silver bullets removed, ruined rapid life.
Shrouded shred sniffing air swiveled.
Nothing dead escapes ordinary full moons.
Animal human fenced edges of cemeteries.
Clear the surviving wolves.
Outrunning basketball drives, opposes blitzing hoops.
Savage predators toward him, barbed and wet tongued.
Razor iron exploded pain.
Monsters shrieked, devouring frozen ground and
clenched silver clutched cavities in
perpetual memories.

Poetry Can Be Funny!

Contributed by Shane Evans

Age Level: 9-12

Targeted Skill/Purpose: The quickest way to help break the ice between instructor and student is to find a common interest with each other. This lesson, while simple in context, is designed to help students and instructors feel more comfortable in the classroom setting. In this example, both teacher and all the students will take part in making lists of things they find weird or that they are afraid of and turn it into satire. This exercise also helps students realize that poetry can be written in a non-serious tone.

Materials Needed: Paper, pencils, blackboard/whiteboard, and markers.

Instructions:

The instructor will write three columns on the blackboard containing one action, one food, and one object. To help break the ice, the instructor will need to give one example of each and then after the students make their lists, the students should read off what they came up with to make a class-wide poem that takes one of each of the gross things and makes it funny. The students will then use the class example to help them make their own poems and then read them to the class.

Time allotted for writing: Ten-fifteen minutes of solo writing. Ten minutes for the original example by the instructor and class wide example, and ten-twenty minutes to share with comfortable students.

Wrap-up/sharing: This activity is supposed to help with the uneasiness of sharing creative work, and therefore everyone should be able to share their poem, with the intention to make the kids laugh. After thorough examination of poems to make sure they are appropriate, there should be no one that isn't able to share their poem to the class.

Final Thoughts: I believe this lesson will help children (and even teenagers) help get to know each other by finding common interests in objects or foods that are gross or funny. This lesson should also help with the uneasiness that some students find with poetry and this should show them that not all poetry has to be serious. It can even help further to have the instructor share poems from other poets that are not serious, or that follow in this same pattern. By reading them poems written by actual poets, the students will see that poems don't need to always be about serious issues.

Teacher Example:

Disgusting food	Funny/Yucky Action	Gross object
Brussel Sprouts Broccoli	Dog fart gangnam dance	Spider cow pie

Sample poem:

Yuck.

Brussel sprouts smell like dog farts,
 While Broccoli's not much better.
 Instead of eating them,
 I'd rather dance Gangnam style
 while throwing cow pies at spiders.

Bringing Characters to Life!
Contributed by Shane Evans

Age Level: 9-12

Targeted Skill/Purpose: In order to create great fiction, one must first create shining characters. The best way I have found to create characters is to give them unique quirks that make the characters in short stories memorable. By following simple biography questions about the students themselves, they will learn that one can create characters entirely from imagination, and that they can also create character personalities or unique traits based on themselves, or people they know. This plan is to help young adults get past the hardest part of writing: creating believable characters with unique traits.

Materials Needed: Paper, pencils, blackboard, and interview and personality trait questions (Both provided by instructor).

Instructions:

The instructor will begin by making a list of "Top 10 unique quirks that I have" written out in front of the class. This will show the students that if the instructor can write in front of them, then they can too! By filling out the list, the instructor will then explain to the students that by using the character biographies, they can create a character from either real life or from their imagination using traits that belong to them or that they find interesting.

Time allotted for writing: The instructor's example should only take roughly five minutes to make the list, and the students should only need five to ten minutes for their own lists, unless they have trouble coming up with quirks, then allow for more time. There should be around ten to twenty minutes to fill out the interview questions.

Wrap-up/Sharing: This lesson can be easily shared with the class, and the instructor can also share with the class what types of character traits they either came up with, or their own traits they used in their character biographies. It would help to even include some characters

that they created previously, if the instructor is a writer. They can explain to the class that creating characters from the ground up is no easy task and can be the hardest part about writing. This would show the students that writing is indeed challenging, but it is a fun and interesting experience. The students may also share their ideas with each other, or they can keep them to themselves. Make sure they keep their biographies so that later they can use them when they begin writing their stories.

Final Thoughts: With my lesson plan, I have personally developed a more strategic and deeper character for a short story. This exercise also can be used as a great icebreaker activity. Showing a unique quirk with the class, the students will become more familiar with one another, especially if they share similar quirks or interests.

Teacher Example:

Top five unusual traits that I have:

- 1.) I cannot walk up or down stairs without counting every step.
- 2.) I am afraid of heights. Even stepladders scare me.
- 3.) I cannot cross streets unless I am at a crosswalk.
- 4.) Sometimes I think my characters are real and they run through my mind every day.
- 5.) I am so superstitious that I cannot walk on cracks on sidewalks, nor can I walk under a ladder.

Sample character biography questions:

- 1.) What type of music does your character like? Dislike?
- 2.) Does he/she like movies? What kinds?
- 3.) What does your character fear most? Why?
- 4.) Are they superstitious?
- 5.) Do they have dreams or aspirations they want to achieve? What are they?

Power of a Pebble

Contributed by Sam Gentry

Grade Level: 4 – 7

Targeted Skill/Purpose: Learning the power of personification with an inanimate object. How do you describe how something makes you feel or how something looks from the perspective of an object (a pebble for example) that doesn't have human qualities?

Materials needed: Pen, Paper, Vasko poems (attached).

Instructions:

1. Read to the class a few of the poems by Vasko Popa.
2. Give a brief lesson on Personification: the act of attributing human qualities to an animal, object, or abstraction.
Some examples of personification are: The stars *danced* playfully in the moonlit sky. The run down house *appeared depressed*. My computer *throws a fit* every time I try to use it.
3. Then, ask the students to think of an object they use every day. It could be something like a toothbrush, fork, hairbrush, basketball, etc.
4. Now, have them come up with at least three scenarios to put their object in. They can stick with the examples of Popa like "Dream of the [object]", "Adventure of the [object]", or they can come up with their own like "Bedtime for the Fork," "Dinner with my Toothbrush," "Dancing with a Bar of Soap." They should be as creative as possible.
5. Once the students have come up with their three scenarios, they then need to write a poem for each of the scenarios.
6. Encourage them to use descriptive language and to make the object as life like as possible.

Time allotted for writing: 5 minutes to read two of the Popa poems, 5-10 minutes on the personification lesson, 10 minutes brainstorming objects and scenarios, 20-30 minutes to write.

Wrap-up/sharing: Once the time allotted for writing is over, ask the students if anyone is willing to share at least one of the scenarios they came up with for their object.

Real Life Tip: Put some creative scenarios in a bag and have students draw from it and use that for their object to avoid similarity to Popa's poems. For example you can have one bag filled with verbs

(dance, run, jump, swim), one filled with different places (kitchen, bathroom, basketball court, grocery store), and then have the students pick their own noun.

Teacher Example:

Bedtime for the Fork

I lay down perfectly still
Among my friends who weren't used today.
The spoon snores in agony
For no soup or ice cream was eaten.

Comfort is lost
For the others who envy the spaghetti
I was in the presence of tonight.

Many wished a soapy scrub
Had been in their future,
But I was the only lucky one.

Tomorrow will be a new day
As we anxiously wait to be held
By the soft caress of a hand.

In the morning,
I may not be the lucky one.
But tonight I drift off to sleep
Feeling like a king.

Adventure of the Pebble

By Vasko Popa

Fed up with the circle
The perfect circle around itself
It came to a stop

Its burden is heavy
The burden within
It dropped it

The stone is hard
The stone it's made of
It left it

So confining where it lives
In its own body
It stepped out of it

Hid itself from itself
In its own shadow

Dream of the Pebble

By Vasko Popa

A hand springs out of the earth
It throws a pebble in the air

Where is the pebble
It didn't return to earth
Nor did it climb to heaven

What happened to the pebble
Did the heights devour it
Did it change into a bird

Here is the pebble
It remained stubborn in itself
Neither on earth nor in heaven

It listens to itself
Among the worlds a world

Dear Sam

Contributed by Allison Ufen

Grade Level: 4-8

Targeted skill: The purpose of this lesson plan is to give the students an opportunity to develop their social skills through writing. Incorporating their abilities to be supportive and kind will promote a healthy environment in and out of the classroom. This exercise will also promote and teach how to write properly in a letter format.

Materials needed: Paper, Pencil, letters for column.

Instructions:

1. Explain to the students the concept of an advice column. Ask aloud to see if any student already knows, and have them try to explain it. In the case that the students aren't familiar, bring in an age appropriate copy of one.
2. Come prepared with pre-written letters to a pretend newspaper columnist seeking advice. Each letter will be structured the same, with it addressed to a particular person such as "Dear Sam". Explain to your students that they will be taking on the anonymous character of Sam. Outline a letter format on the board to be clear.
3. Start with a pre-made example and include the children by asking what they think is the best way to solve this person's problem. How should we make the sender feel when we write him/her back? Will this solve the problem completely? What are some examples of words of encouragement?
4. Pass out a sealed envelope to each child and allow them to open it and a couple minutes to read over the letter a few times. Let the students think before they respond. Remind them of some good ways to show support to the sender and how they would feel if they were in the same position.
5. Allow the children 15 minutes to write a response to the sender.

6. Suggest the students to write their own letters to Sam, and for a bonus, collect them and redistribute the following week to let their classmates help them out.

Time Allotted for Writing: 15-20 minutes.

Final Thoughts: It is important to promote support of others in the classroom so that if and when a child is going through a hard time, a student knows how to help and cheer them up, and try to imagine themselves in their classmate's place. It will promote appropriate problem solving.

Teacher Example:

Dear Sam,

I just moved to Iowa City and I don't know anyone at my new school. I am very shy and afraid I won't make friends here. What should I do?

From,

The One and Lonely

Dear The One and Lonely,

Don't feel scared. It is very easy to make new friends and it can be really fun. If you eat lunch at school, you could try and sit at a new table every day so you can meet all sorts of new classmates. You could also join a sport at school to meet even more people! I know it might be scary, but if you smile and introduce yourself, you'll do great!

Sincerely,

Sam

What really happened?

Contributed by Allison Ufen

Grade Level: 4-8

Targeted Skill: The skill here is to practice seeing from another perspective. In ordinary fairy tales, we only see the same story repeated where there is one character made out to be a villain. In this exercise, we can practice trying to think in another person's shoes.

Materials needed: Paper, coloring utensils, and a writing utensil. (Stories will be provided by the instructor).

Instructions: The instructor will hand out a fairytale story; some may be repeated. The students will then individually be asked aloud what their story is about and who they think the villain might be. If the villain isn't obvious, the student may read their story aloud and the other students may assist. Once each villain is identified, ask the students to draw a picture of what the villain might look like. The students will then be asked to brainstorm what they think may be going on in the villain's head during the story. What were they thinking? What were they REALLY trying to accomplish? Was it an accident? Was it all a misunderstanding? After the students brainstorm, they will then be asked to rewrite the fairytale, but relive it in the villain's eyes.

Time Allotted: 10 minutes for reading the story to themselves, 10 minutes for brainstorming, 20 minutes for writing

Wrap-Up: The students will then be able to choose whether or not they'd like to share their story aloud to the class.

Final Thoughts: This exercise practices imagining all of the characters, not just the narrator's thoughts and feelings while reading a story. It can expand all stories and make a story have many layers. Thinking of all of the characters will help when writing their own stories in the future.

Teacher Example:

The Three Little Pigs

Once upon a time there were three little pigs. One pig built a house of straw while the second pig built his house with sticks. They built their houses very quickly and then sang and danced all day because they were lazy. The third little pig worked hard all day and built his house with bricks.

A big bad wolf saw the two little pigs while they danced and played and thought, "What juicy tender meals they will make!" He chased the two pigs and they ran and hid in their houses. The big bad wolf went to the first house and huffed and puffed and blew the house down in minutes. The frightened little pig ran to the second pig's house that was made of sticks. The big bad wolf now came to this house and huffed and puffed and blew the house down in hardly any time. Now, the two little pigs were terrified and ran to the third pig's house that was made of bricks.

The big bad wolf tried to huff and puff and blow the house down, but he could not. He kept trying for hours but the house was very strong and the little pigs were safe inside. He tried to enter through the chimney but the third little pig boiled a big pot of water and kept it below the chimney. The wolf fell into it and died.

The two little pigs now felt sorry for having been so lazy. They too built their houses with bricks and lived happily ever after.

What REALLY Happened:

It was my grandma's birthday and I was baking her a big delicious cake. When I was mixing the ingredients, I realized I did not have any sugar! I then thought that I could just ask my sweet little neighbor pigs if I could borrow one cup of sugar from them. I put on my boots and left to go to the pig's house. Once I got there, I didn't want to just walk into someone else's house. So I called, "Little Pig, Little Pig, are you in?" No answer. I was just about to go home without the cup of sugar for my dear old granny's birthday cake. Right then, the straw that the pig's house was made out of started to make my nose itch! So I let out a giant sneeze

and his house fell down. I was so scared that I ran away to the next house. When I got to the second pig's house, I called out "Mr. Pig, Mr. Pig, are you in?" He yelled back, "Go away wolf. You can't come in. I'm shaving the hairs on my chinny chin chin." Just then a gust of wind hit and some of those little hairs came through the window and itched my own nose! I huffed and puffed and let out a great big sneeze. The house fell to pieces. I felt so awful, and was still without sugar, so I ran to the third pig's house to let him know about his poor brothers. I knocked on the door and asked if he was in. He shouted back at me to leave and never bother him again! I couldn't believe how rude the brothers were to me, what did their mother teach them?! The third pig probably had so much sugar he'd make himself sick, and he wouldn't give me ANY for my granny's birthday cake! Anyway, that's when the cops showed up. I explained my story but once the newspaper guys showed up, they decided to jazz it up with all of that Big Bad Wolf and huff and puff and blow your house down stuff. My granny's cake ended up looking beautiful... just tasting not so sweet...

Why!? A Non-Rhetorical Question

Contributed by Adam Jaschen

Grade Level: 5-10

Targeted Skill/Purpose: To get kids to understand how simple observations comes from complex ideas.

Materials Needed: Strange or simple food, with a singular flavor: marshmallow, wheat grass, chocolate, etc.

Instructions:

1. Hand out the food object to each student; be sure to ask students if they have any allergies. The food can be a treat, like a marshmallow, or something that will probably taste bad but is still safe to eat, like wheat grass.
2. Once they have all smelled, tasted, and ingested their item, prompt them to write a single sentence that describes how they feel about their experience.
3. Ask a few students to share what they have written.
4. Walk slowly to the board (dramatically if possible), and write the word “why” as big as you can.
5. Give the students 2 minutes to answer the question.
6. Share a few more sentences.
7. Ask again.
8. Ask again.
9. Ask again.
10. Ask again as many times as you see fit. Each group can handle different amounts.
11. Now give them 8 minutes to write a 1 to 3 sentence explanation of their feelings about that food object. The sentence should be long, as the explanations should not be simple.
12. Finally, have students share their final statements.

Time allotted for writing: 25-35 minutes

Wrap-up/sharing: Even simple sentences have complex meanings behind them. Though the writer may recognize the connections and explanations, readers may not. General statements may be easy to write, but in fields like journalism and any writing where the reader does not know the author personally, they can leave the reader confused.

Real life Tip: This activity can also be used to introduce writers to critical thought and the abstract ideas that support so many of the concrete claims we use to describe the world.

Teacher Example:

Initial Statement: I like Dr. Pepper.

Why?

I think Dr. Pepper tastes good because it is sweet and slightly spicy while also being crisp and refreshing.

Why?

Sweet and spicy and crisp are not a flavor I can find naturally in a drink and to my mouth they are exciting and different than something like water.

Why?

Sweet and spicy and crisp are exciting and different because as a human I have the ability to readily adapt and when the world is stagnant, Dr. Pepper is fizzing and popping constantly in my mouth, and that is awesome.

Why?

Dr. Pepper fizzes and tastes crisp because carbonation is added to the drink by shoving carbon di-oxide gas into liquid at low temperature.

Why?

Dr. Pepper is carbonated because their customers find that to be exciting and interesting.

Final Statement: I like Dr. Pepper because the flavors, sweet and slightly spicy, combined with the crispness caused by the carbon di-oxide gas in the soda, is exciting and different, which breaks up the stagnant experience of nature that I and many others are so accustomed to and dissatisfied with.

The [your name here] Experience

Contributed by Adam Jaschen

Grade Level: 5-12

Targeted Skill/Purpose: Students will work on writing about their senses and observations while connecting their findings back to memories and ideas of their own.

Materials Needed: Paper and Pen

Instructions:

1. This activity requires a certain degree of seriousness and focus so it is best to begin the class with a silly activity. Give them a few minutes to try and make a single hand clap. Try to demonstrate yourself. If you don't know how then just lock your wrist and forearm while leaving your fingers relaxed and shake your limb with great fervor. This should get all the sillies out.
2. Begin by giving a brief introduction to individuality and how every person is unique and different. This individuality comes out in writing very clearly. A good analogy is that if the police were to ask multiple people what happened, everyone's answer would be different, even though they saw the same thing.
3. Ask the classes what senses are. Create a list on the board. A fun fact is that humans have many senses, more than just 5. Such as time, location (of the body and body parts), balance, pain, and temperature and inner sense (things going on in the body like hunger and what have you.)
4. Have the students close their eyes and listen for 2 minutes. Make sure the class is quiet, silent, like hear the clocks ticking silent. Then give them 5 minutes to write down their observations and memories that popped up during the time.
5. Do the previous instruction for smell and sight, followed by a "wild card" where the student gets to pick a sense from the list made in step 3.
6. Have the students compose a final paragraph or two about their experience of the current room. Encourage them to use all their new sensory details to paint a picture for their reader.
7. Compare the final papers and remind them all how special they are!

Wrap-up/ Sharing: This is work that the students should be proud of, and don't be afraid to ask the students to post it somewhere.

Real Life Tip: This lesson can work really well outside! Nature is cool and subtle and full of surprises.

The Adam Jaschen Experience

Current Location: My dorm room

Time: 12:34 – 1:13 a.m.

Hearing: It is a sound scape, an exploration in music where drones are dotted with poignancies. The fridge and the cooling fan of my laptop create a steady chord. The fridge is quieter than normal; usually I have to smack it a few times before I try to sleep. An occasional noise pierces from above. Breath sucked in. Cough. Adjustment of sheets. Laughter is heard from next door. A whirl begins as water travel through a pipe in the ceiling, adding another harmony to the chord. The heaters around the building are cracking and complaining about working so hard. Wind howls in the spaces between the window unit and indoors. A door shuts. A sound escapes some piece of piping. The fridge continues without regard.

Smell: A single nostril takes in smell of old pizza continuously. The air is tired and moves only when it has to. Without candle or air freshener or any sort of kitchen the room smells of now. Whatever that may be. Pizza most recently. I can't smell much, a cold is sliding through my friend group. What nose function remains is spent on breathing. It smells like home.

Sight: The first thing I see is the reflector. The tiny red warning on the back of a bike that was made for someone much taller than me. It sits in the room next to its friend lamp, never moving or faltering. A comfortable mess is strewn about: clothes, mugs, and various study materials. This is the culmination of storage and use, living and preserving. What do I call a room that has everything? Kitchen stacked on top of a dresser. Posters line the walls. Some are of importance and some are there for laughter. A bookshelf full of serious books sits above the posters. Looking up from the bottom bunk is weird. Holes dot the bottom of the top bed. 12 in total, in even rows of three. It looks like a domino, but the white is wood and the black is mattress.

Wild (temperature): My window has a leak. Not the kind that drips and pools but the kind that blows. Cold wind falls onto my bed. The rest of the room is tepid, only gaining heat from the few and sometimes many bodies that reside there. Without a/c the air movement is minimal.

The Adam Experience: First you sense nothing; everything is too subtle and hidden. All it takes is a second to focus for the peace to shatter. Quiet rumblings of a mini-fridge stuffed too-full of old pizza begins take the stage. Everything one could need is either stocked on shelves or haphazardly on the floor. Two distinct sets of clothes dot the room. Two desks, two computers, two chairs. Two people. A sudden breath from above denotes a presence. Perhaps it is the other inhabitant, the one that own the second desk and chair. The cracks and gurgles of piping give the observer that this room is small compared to the building. Neighbors must be either sleeping or away, for their existence is questionable at best. The room is telling me to sleep. The air is immobilized by the darkness that cuddles it. I am the only thing creating change now. Everything I do is accented, presented on stage with loud speakers. I want to join the audience. I want to sleep and become angry when things disturb our subtle routine. I want to be at home here. I want to be a part of the home.

Intro to Erasure

Contributed by Lauren Audetat

Grade Level: 6-8

Purpose: The purpose of this lesson is to show kids that you can take little bits and pieces of other writers/artists works and make it a completely new piece, and to show them that they “stand on the shoulders of giants,” so to speak.

Materials needed:

- Pre-printed poems from the internet or copied from books
- OR, a stack of thrift store books
- White-out
- Sharpie markers
- Scissors
- Optional: tag board and glue

Instructions:

1. Show the kids examples of erasure, such as Mary Ruefle’s erasure of *A Little White Shadow: for the Benefit of a Summer Home for Working Girls*, called just *A Little White Shadow*
2. Have the kids pick a poem from the website or a book from the stack. Tell them to pick one that has words that speak to them specifically, something they can work with
3. Tell them to cut out or print the page and start erasing!

Time allotted for writing: 30 minutes

Wrap-up: Have all the kids read their pieces in front of the class and have a mini workshop, in which everyone talks constructively about each other’s pieces, if they choose. If you’re feeling ambitious, you could have all the kids mount their pieces on a tag board and display them on the wall.

Final thoughts: This may be a hard concept for younger children to grasp. But, for older children, this is a great way for them to learn about poetry/writing as a visual art, as well as a sonic one. Not only this, but it could also expose the students to more influential writers, whom they can call upon for inspiration in other projects.

untitled
(an erasure of "On Beginnings", by: Ruefle)

~~venes, the first and last lines of a poem would not speak to each other.~~

~~Would not speak to each other Because the lines of a poem are speaking to each other, not you to them or they to you~~

~~I will tell you what I miss. I miss watching a movie and at the end, huge scrolled words come on the screen and say: The End. I miss finishing a novel and there on the last page, at a discrete distance from the last words of the last sentence, are the dark letters spelling The End.~~

~~It was its own thrill I didn't ignore them, I read them, even if only silently, with a deep sense of feeling: both the feeling of being replete, a feeling of satisfaction, and the feeling of loss, the sadness of having finished the book.~~

~~I have never, in my life, read a poem that ended with the words The End. Why is that, I wonder. I think perhaps the brevity of poems compared to novels makes one feel that there has been no great sustention of energy, no marathon worthy of pulling tape across the finish line. And then I found a poem of mine that I had carefully written by hand in the sixth grade, and at the bottom of the page, in India ink, beautifully apart from the rest of the text, were the words The End. And I realized chil~~

⁵ Lauren
Audet tat

What If You Were...?

Contributed by Annie Christenson

Grade Level: 6-8

Targeted Skill/Purpose: To translate student's imaginations into creative dramatic monologues. The exercise will also strengthen student's use of descriptions, scene setting, and character development.

Materials Needed: Paper and pens/pencils. One hat. Face-painting materials. Small hand mirrors.

Instructions:

1. Students will pick a piece of paper out of a hat. On that piece of paper, an animal's name will be written.
2. Each student will write a dramatic monologue about what it would be like to be the animal they chose from the hat. Read the students a few examples of dramatic monologues. See attached sheet for a definition of dramatic monologues and examples. Some questions to help them get started are what do they see as that animal? What do they hear? What do they look like? What does their world look like? Ask students if they were this animal, how would they think? What would they be afraid of? What would make them happy?
3. When writing time is over, pass out the face painting supplies and hand mirrors. The students, if they want, can draw features of their animal on their face, like whiskers if they are a cat. Volunteers should assist in this process (since it might get messy!). This will make it more fun for students to perform their pieces during sharing time.

Time allotted for writing: 25 minutes for writing, 10 minutes for face painting, 15 minutes for sharing.

Wrap-up/sharing: When writing and drawing time is over, each student will be given the opportunity to perform their monologues in front of the class if they would like.

Dramatic Monologue Examples:

Definition of Dramatic Monologue:

n.

A literary, usually verse composition in which a speaker reveals his or her character, often in relation to a critical situation or event, in a monologue addressed to the reader or to a presumed listener.

Example One:

You, Lioness, atop the pride perch as Queen and stalk those beneath you. Your savannah steams of bubbling red and ragged bones. The hooves below your claws rumble even before your paws lurch forward. Your presence, your roar, shows a glimpse of their future when you reach them. Their striped skin prefers to be unscathed instead of slashed. But those eyes of yours are a seduction, the golden color detours the prey from those ivory razors teemed with crimson. Those eyes stare; stare long enough to forget the graves you've torn for other hooves. And those claws rip beef into gashes; not leaving scraps for the vulture looming above. You sneak your limbs closer and closer to the creature beneath your pride. Then when the wind becomes halted, you pounce. But not towards a wildebeest galloping across the dust of the savannah. No. Towards the mouse scurrying across the dry grass of the front yard. For you are no Lioness, you are but a housecat, Lucille.

Example Two:

From Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare

ROMEO: But soft! What light through yonder window breaks?
It is the East, and Juliet is the sun!
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief
That thou her maid art far more fair than she.
Be not her maid, since she is envious.
Her vestal livery is but sick and green,
And none but fools do wear it. Cast it off.
It is my lady; O, it is my love!
O that she knew she were!
She speaks, yet she says nothing. What of that?
Her eye discourses; I will answer it.
I am too bold; 'tis not to me she speaks.
Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
Having some business, do entreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.
What if her eyes were there, they in her head?
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars
As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven
Would through the airy region stream so bright
That birds would sing and think it were not night.
See how she leans her cheek upon her hand!
O that I were a glove upon that hand,
That I might touch that cheek!

Section 3: Grades 8-12: Legends

Teacher Tips

Make sure you care about what you teach.

Be real and honest with them. They can tell when you're
being genuine.

Praise your students, let them know what they can
accomplish.

Memories as a Narrative:

Using Joe Brainard's *I Remember* to create a Narrative

Contributed by Adam Jaschen

Grade Level: 7 - 12

Targeted Skill/Purpose: Introduce students to the wonderful world of non-fiction and how to spin their memories into interesting takes on experience. The emphasis on small details and how they can change the direction of writing is an important part of Brainard's work. This genuine feel is hopefully one that students can pick up on and experiment with as they pick their brains for simple and complex memories.

Materials Needed: Paper, pencil, and excerpts of *I Remember* by Joe Brainard (provided by instructor).

Instructions:

1. Give the students an excerpt of *I Remember* to read. One to three pages should be enough, though try to find parts that exclude the mention of sex, drugs, drinking, and smoking for obvious reasons. If the students are older and are mature enough to handle their power, let them. Pages 166-167 are clean and relatable.
2. Have a brief discussion about the style of the piece. How was it to read?? Did you get annoyed by the repetition? Why do you think he wrote it like this?
3. Have the students write their own "I Remember" for 10 minutes. Encourage them not to dwell on anything too long and to let their mind naturally flow to each memory.
4. Spend 10 minutes sharing a few memories. Funny and absurd ones can be great here.
5. Tell the students to write a few more memoirs, this time having a clear connection between them. If they want to they can look back and expand on some of the memories they wrote during the first writing period. Give them 5 minutes.

6. Now give them 20 minutes or more to string the memories into a narrative. The small memories will help with attention to detail and to help them work on transitions and making a story flow well. Remind them that they can add their own reflections to their stories of the past.
7. Finally, let them share some of these narratives with the class.

Time Allotted for Writing: 1 Hour

Wrap Up/sharing: Talk for a few minutes with the students about the genre of non-fiction and how many writers will use their memories and reflections on those memories to create an interesting essay. There is a worth to people's unique memories, and it is the job of the writer to make them interesting to people other than themselves.

Fan Fiction Exercise: Plot helpers!

Contributed by Shane Evans

Grade Level: 8-12

Targeted Skill/Purpose: Building Successful Plots using characters from other mediums.

Materials Needed: Paper, pencils, a blackboard or whiteboard, and a large hat filled with non-original characters for the students to use (Provided by instructor).

Instructions:

The instructor will draw a sample Plot Diagram on the board AND explain to the students what a plot is made of. To demonstrate how easy it is to write a story, the instructor will explain that the students may use characters from other sources such as movies, comic books, other books, etc. or they can pick a character out of a hat. The students will then watch as the instructor writes a sample: simplified beginning, a rising action, a climax, a falling action, and an ending. The instructor will then put their scenes on the appropriate parts of the diagram to show the students where they belong in a story. The students can then after writing, put their scenes where they think they should go on the diagram

Time allotted for writing: Ten minutes for the instructor to explain and show the students how to write specific plots. Students will have twenty minutes to create parts of a simple story using non-original characters in their own settings. When the students are finished, they will also have twenty minutes to share with the class what they wrote, and to put their parts of the story on the diagram

Final Thoughts: I think Fan Fiction is a wonderful way for new writers to begin their craft without having to worry about creating an entire story written by them. By using characters that the writer likes from their favorite television shows or books, they have the ability to put these characters into worlds that the writer creates, and it is interesting to see how the characters change or fare in these new worlds. Fan fiction was how I began writing fiction when I was younger, and by using this type of writing I was also able to write my first short

stories mainly based on characters from Smallville, a television show that was once on the CW.

Teacher Example:

(Excerpt from a short story I am writing based on World of Warcraft)

Beginning:

Fue-shone was trained by his father since he was a child to follow in his mother's footsteps. She was the final sect of warriors that were once revered in the land of Pandaria. They were known as Blademasters, and they were used as the last weapon the Shado-Pan had to defend the great Serpent's Spine from the ever-swarming Mantid Empire. Fue's Mother was revered in the dissecration of thousands of Mantid, earning her the title known as "Kaeli Swarmstopper." She died while giving birth to Fue-Shone. It was believed in that time that the Mantid only swarmed every two hundred years out of fear of the Blademasters. But with her death, the Blademasters were no more. His father tells a story about his mother, and how revered the Blademasters were.

Rising Conflict:

He learned all he could from his father in the arts of fighting, but he had other interests as well. He was intrigued by the sect of Pandarens called "Lorewalkers," keepers of sacred texts and knowledge about the history of Pandaria. He had many questions about the history, and his father sent him to learn from the Lorewalkers, and also to train with the master that taught his mother; Jiang-Su. His questions about history leave the Lorewalkers in disarray, and he decides after finishing his training, he would return home. After returning home, the farm is attacked by Mantid, which they steal a pendant that had once belonged to Kaeli. They burn the house, and Father gives Fue his mother's swords. They fight off the mantid, but his father is stabbed. Father dies and after setting him to rest, he takes his swords and sets out to get back his mother's amulet, and also to find the answers he has sought his whole life.

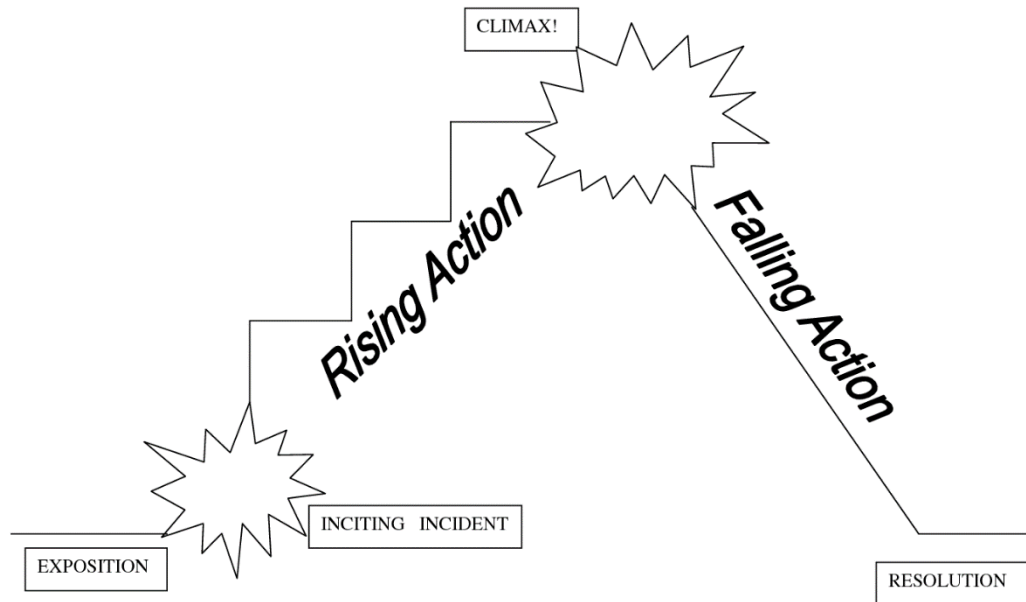
Climax:

Fue-Shone has been hunting the Mantid for weeks behind the Serpent's Spine wall in the land known as the Dread Wastes. He has slaughtered Mantid left and right, finding out the one responsible for killing his father and burning down his home is also a lieutenant that is second-in-command to Queen Sek'zheer herself. He attacks the Mantid and is able to get back the amulet, but is questioned by the lieutenant for why he wanted amulet that once belonged to the Mogu, an ancient and terrible race that had once enslaved every other race in Pandaria. He cuts off the insectoid's head, and returns to the Lorewalkers to ask about his mother. They are unwilling to provide him any help, but suggest that he interrogates Mogu throughout the isle to find out what they know. All the while, Fue-Shone has been thinking about his parents, and where they are now.

Falling Action and Ending:

Fue-Shone ends up interrogating more and more Mogu, and it seems that they have no answers for him. He is attacked by several elemental beings known as "Sha," physical manifestations of negative emotions. He believes they are from his grieving of his father, and he decides that in order to find out the future of his life, he must find the answers of the past. He defeats the Sha, and sets out to explore and uncover the secrets of the "Lost Dynasty," and what the secret the first Mogu emperor Lei-Shen had that made him so powerful.

Short Story Plot Diagram



Caption Contest

Contributed by Lauren Audetat

Grade Level: 9-12

Purpose: This lesson will help students establish a connection between image and narrative, and introduce comics as literature.

Materials Needed:

- Examples of comics
- Sample comics (to use for captioning)
- Glue
- Paper
- Overhead machine

Instructions:

1. Have the students read “Comics as a Medium,” from Graphic Storytelling, by Will Eisner before class.
2. In class, show the students examples of comics. This could include comic books, comic strips, and graphic novels. (Ex: “Peanuts”, by: Charles Schulz, V for Vendetta, by: Alan Moore, or Hey, Wait..., by: Jason)
3. Give the class the various sample comics, with the captions whited out
4. Tell the students to write fitting captions for the comic they received

Time allotted for writing: 15 minutes

Wrap-up: After everyone has finished writing, the students should share their captions with the class on an overhead and explain the theory behind it.

Final thoughts: This lesson emphasizes the validity of comics as a literary medium. This is important for the next generation of readers and writers to know, as sometimes our definitions of art and literature become too narrow. I also think high school students will be

really interested and enthusiastic about this lesson. It's also not a very long exercise, so it could fill extra time nicely or be a break between more tedious lessons.

Cranes for Love

Contributed by Annie Christenson

Grade Level: 9-12

Targeted Skill/Purpose: To develop poetry skills that show students writing can go beyond the page.

Materials Needed: Origami paper, (though regular paper cut into squares should work too), string, and pens

Instructions:

Begin the lesson by explaining to students what paper cranes represent. Cranes, in Japanese folklore, are believed to live for 1,000 years. They symbolize happiness, good luck, and peace. Then a volunteer will show the students how to fold paper cranes using origami paper. Go step by step because if they have not made them before they might have difficulty with it. Then after the volunteer shows them how to make one, they will all fold one together as a group. After this step, students will make at least five paper cranes, though they are welcome to make more if they have time. Once each has made at least five they will string the cranes all together. The students will then write one word on each crane to create a short poem. It can be a message about love or peace or happiness or luck or it could even be a wish they have for the world. If they would like to write a longer poem, they can write more than one word on each crane.

Time Allotted for Writing: 45 minutes for paper folding. 15 minutes for writing.

Wrap-up/Sharing: Students are able to share their poem when the teacher hangs them around the room if they would like.

Teacher Example:

You

Were

Blue

When

,

I

Met

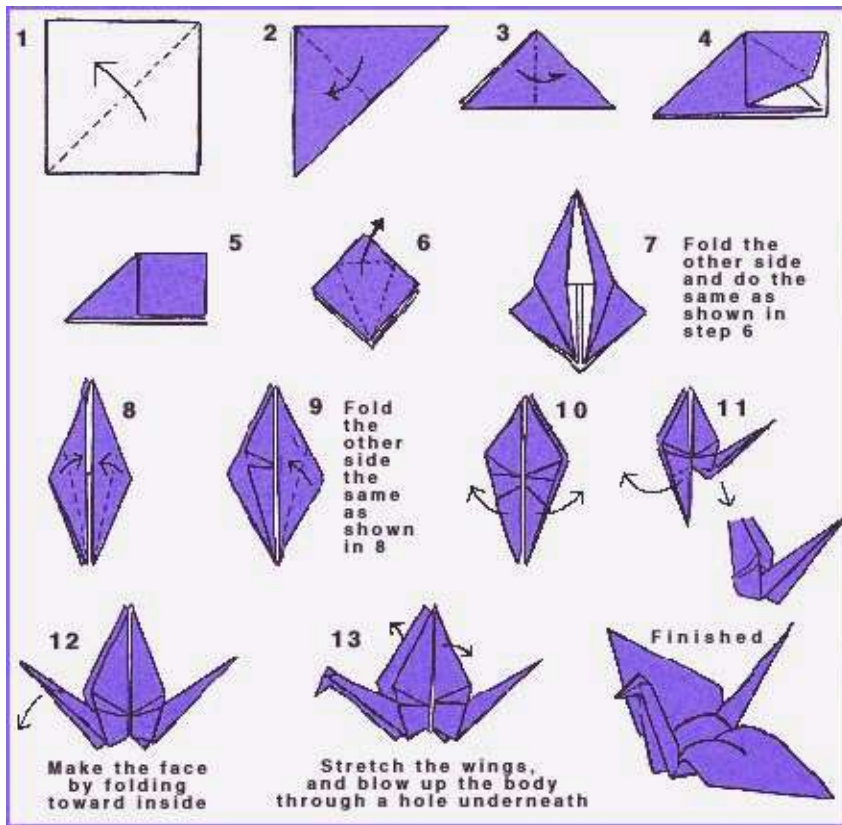
You

Now

You're

White

How to make a paper crane (with pictures!)



Just In Case: What To Do If The Lesson Plan Isn't Working Out

Story Ball

Have students sit around in a circle. One person will start with the ball. He/she will begin the first line of the story then he/she will pass the ball to someone else in the circle. That person will come up with the next line of the story. Repeat this process until everyone has had a chance to create a line. Have a volunteer record the story and read it aloud to the students at the end.

Telephone

Everyone loves a game of Telephone. Afterwards, have the first person share the original saying and then have the last person share how it ended up.

Freeze Dance

Play a song for the students to dance to. When the music stops the students freeze in place. While frozen, a volunteer will walk around and ask students who they are supposed to be based on whatever position they decided to be frozen in. Are they astronauts? Are they pop-stars? Then play the song again and repeat the process. It might be helpful to do an example first.

Poetry Tag

Students are given a word. When they are tagged, the word that student was given will be recorded by a volunteer. The objective is to create a fun poem by the end of the game.

Fortunes

Have each student write a fortune on a piece of paper. When they are done writing, they'll put the fortune in a bowl. Once all fortunes are submitted, each student will draw a fortune out of the bowl.

End Letter Word Game

Have one student start with a word. The next student then has to say a word that begins with the last letter of the word that was previously said. For example, if the student says bat the next student could say toe and the student after that one could say elephant.

Counting Game

Group counts. If two people say the number you have to start over again.

Charades

Charades are always a fun alternative if your lesson plan isn't working out. This works well with a group that has a lot of energy.

Write Your Name With Your Hips

This is a fun way for students to shake out their sillies. And a way for them to laugh! Have them write their names with their hips.

Take An Ordinary Object & Change It

Have students pick out an ordinary object. Now have them change the use for that object. For example, a spatula could be used as a back-scratcher.

If You Were Something Else

Have the students describe what they would be like if they were something else. For example, if they were Popsicles, would they melt quickly or would they forever be frozen?

Idioms

Give students the first, middle, or end part of an idiom and have them fill in the blanks. For example, "One man's trash is...." and they could answer, "...another man's luggage."

Exquisite Corpse Haiku

Have one person write the first line of the haiku on a piece of paper. Then have him/her fold it over and pass it to the next person. He/she will write the second line, fold it over, and pass it to the third person. He/she will write the third line of the haiku. Once all three lines are written, have them unfold the paper and see what haiku they created.

Monster Exquisite Corpse

Follow similar structure as the Exquisite Corpse Haiku except this time build a monster!

Song Title Poetry

Have students write down the name of their favorite song on different slips of paper then arrange the slips into a poem.

Close Your Eyes & Draw

Have students close their eyes and draw something. Once they're done drawing, have them name whatever they drew and define it.

Reading List

Our Contributor's Favorite Books

If you ever need anything to read in class, then look no further! What follows is a list of our favorite children's books, for your perusal.

Title	Grade Level
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<i>Where the Wild Things Are</i>	K-2
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By Maurice Sendak

<i>Charlotte's Web</i>	3-6
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By E.B. White

<i>Curious George</i>	K-1
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By Margret Ray

<i>How the Cat Swallowed Thunder</i>	K-1
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By Lloyd Alexander

<i>The Magician's Nephew</i>	3-6
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By C.S. Lewis

<i>The Borrowers</i>	3-7
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By Mary Norton

<i>The Warriors</i>	3-6
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By Erin Hunter

<i>The Hobbit</i>	3-12
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By J.R.R. Tolkien

<i>The Guardians of Ga'boole</i>	3-7
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Kathryn Lasky

<i>Wacky Wednesday</i>	K-2
By Dr. Seuss	
<i>Bamboozled</i>	K-4
By David Legge	
<i>The Giving Tree</i>	K-3
By Shel Silverstein	
<i>If You Give a Moose a Muffin</i>	K-2
By Laura Numeroff	
<i>Encyclopedia Brown</i>	3-6
By Donald J. Sobol	
<i>Boxcar Children</i>	3-6
By Gertrude Chandler Warner	
<i>Which Witch?</i>	4-6
By Eva Ibbotson	
<i>A Wrinkle in Time</i>	4-9
By Madeline L'Engle	
<i>The Guardians Of Childhood</i>	3-5
By William Joyce	

Going Out on a Bang:

Ways to End a Class

So, your students have all wrote lovely pieces, and have shared them if they wished to. What now? Do you just send them on their merry way? All this writing might be too much like schoolwork for them as is, give them something fun to look forward to at the end!

- 1- Have your students get in a circle with you and make a wish for the coming week. If they're a little fidgety, do some sort of group stretch, i.e.: have everyone jump to the middle of the circle then back, or some other small exercise.
- 2- Play literary hangman! Have them find book titles or character names.
- 3- If the students seem to attach to a particular volunteer, play a game where they guess what that volunteer is thinking about.
- 4- Pick a poem and read it to the class. Ask the students to read if they want!
- 5- At the beginning of class give everyone a riddle. Answer it at the end.
- 6- Alternately, have the students decode a message. Give them different letters at the end of each class and have them put everything together at the very end. You can make the message something purely silly, or relate it to what you've been learning. Maybe make the phrase a health tip, or part of a poem you've read.
- 7- Last but not least, everyone loves food right? Candy even more so! Bring small treats to class and give them out at the end of the day. Gum, suckers, starbursts, any small candy you'd like.

Having a routine special ending to class gives the students a sense of closure, and brings the group together. You want them to remember this as being something fun, not a chore.

Closing Statement

Well, here we are. Our semester, which felt in January as though it would be a never-ending story, turned out to feel as brief as any haiku. We have certainly traveled far this semester. Not necessary measured by miles – though every week we racked those up, too, as a means to reach our kids at Horace Mann, Four Oaks, Strive for Success, Pheasant Ridge, or PSZ. We also traveled as writers, teachers, and students ourselves, as we moved from our first day in the classroom with the kids, clutching our lesson plans and frantically trying to remember everyone's name, to the last: wrapping up and feeling as though we could continue on, just like reading our favorite short story for the first time. We come from different geographic and academic places, but we all chose to work with the IYWP this semester because we love to write, and we believe that **good writing can do good work**. Through learning how to write exciting lesson plans and negate the intimidation factor of writing for kids, we learned that the beauty and frustration of teaching is that, just as in writing, there are no rules. We taught by experimenting, by articulating our interests through our lesson plans. Our workshop peers were the children we were trying to teach – easily moved, hard to impress, and wildly creative themselves. We sometimes failed. Some days we exceeded our expectations. We were often truly schooled as we tried to incite the passion and need to write in our kids. But, like our favorite verse, novel, essay, or comic, our experience will stick with us. We hope that what we learned can help you.

-Writing with Purpose class, Spring 2013

Contributors

Lauren Audetat is a freshman English major at the University of Iowa. She is a poet with hopes of one day working in small press publishing. You can read her poetry in the third and fourth issues of *Ink Lit Mag*. She also has a Slaughterhouse-Five tattoo.

Annie Christenson is a junior at the University of Iowa, studying English and Writing. She is originally from Minneapolis, Minnesota, and if she could be reincarnated as any animal it would be as a Spirit Bear. They're magical.

Shane Evans is a senior at the University of Iowa. He is an English major and is currently studying creative writing and is working on his Writing Certificate. He just got accepted into the Undergraduate Creative Writing Track. He loves to write fiction, non-fiction and poetry. He is from Washington, Iowa and he loves volunteering with kids and helping them write amazing stories and poems. He loves playing videogames and quite often believes he was a ninja in a previous life.

Sam Gentry is a junior at the University of Iowa majoring in Journalism and Mass Communications with a concentration in Creative Writing and a minor in Spanish. She is from Schaumburg, Illinois and is currently living in Iowa City. She found her passion for working with kids when interning her senior year of high school for a freshmen English class. She is a hopeless romantic and believes there is nothing better than a chick flick paired with some Ben & Jerry's ice cream.

Tamsen Haddock is a first-year student at the University of Iowa studying English and Art from Missouri. She thinks it would be really, really neat if aliens actually do exist out there.

Adam Jaschen is a freshmen at the University of Iowa, studying Creative Writing and English. He hopes to one day be a nonfiction writer specializing in capturing the fine art of falconry in words.

Katey Johnson is a sophomore at the University of Iowa studying to become a high school English teacher. She has a twin brother who also attends the University of Iowa. She is originally from Hudson, Iowa which is a small town about an hour and a half north of Iowa City. She chose education because she wanted to work with kids and help them understand and have an interest in literature. Also, she would love to encourage students to just write and not feel any pressure to create a story, song, poem, etc.

Emily Kaysinger is a freshman Psychology major at the University of Iowa. She is from Hopkins, Minnesota. Cats have always and will always outnumber the people in her house. Her tip to new teachers: Relax!

Mollie Martin is a senior at the University of Iowa studying English and Religious Studies. She is originally from Des Moines, Iowa. And sometimes she's just not sure

Allison Ufen is a sophomore at the University of Iowa. She comes from the city of Chicago and currently resides in Iowa City. Her focus in school is on International Studies, with certificates in Development Studies and Writing. Her interest to help the world was struck while volunteering abroad in East Africa. She also has yet to find anything better than a good sundress.

Marisa Way is a senior from Marion, Iowa. She is majoring in International Studies and Interdepartmental Studies, with a certificate in Global Health Studies and a French minor. She became interested in working with children in a community setting after spending last summer in South Dakota working on the Cheyenne River Reservation. This is also where she discovered the joys of hot sauce.

Elle Wignall is a junior at the University of Iowa studying English and Creative Writing. She is originally from Iowa and is pretty sure it is the best of the Midwest (first computer, marriage equality, corn on the cob, et al.). She likes hanging out with children because she isn't interested in growing up.

Chelsea Wing is a freshman at the University of Iowa as an English major and French minor. She has enjoyed this semester working with kids the same age she was when she started writing. She is originally from Bothell, Washington (a suburb of Seattle), where there are plenty of pale people but a severe shortage of hot vampires.

Donald E. Wyrick Jr. is a senior at the University of Iowa majoring in English (Creative Writing). He is from Austin, Texas and likes to abruptly cut off his sentences in strange pla .

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