

Ideas for Writing Lessons

Informational Writing

- Paragraph structure
 - Have students use the “Hamburger Writing” organizer for prewriting
- Compare/Contrast
 - Have students use a Venn diagram as a prewriting organizer
 - Teach the use of comparison key words, such as *similarly*, *like*, and *both*
 - Teach the use of contrast key words, such as *but*, *in contrast*, and *unlike*
- Expository/How-to
 - Teach the use of chronological order
 - Teach the use of transition words, such as *next*, *then*, and *after*
 - Have students write a how-to and then have someone else follow the instructions
- Personal narrative
 - Have students choose a significant life event for their topic
 - Have students use either a cluster or a beginning-middle-end organizer to plan their writing
- Biography
 - Have students write about a historical or Biblical character or someone they know well
- Research
 - Teach how to find information and how to take notes

Narrative Writing

- Have students write a story modeled after a short children’s story or book excerpt
- Have students write a sequel to a book or story
- Have students rewrite a story from the perspective of a different story character than the original story uses
- Have students write their own story and plan it using a beginning-middle-end organizer
- Teach different ways to begin a story

Persuasive Writing

- Teach students to give reasons to support their stance
- Have students list reasons and organize them in order of importance
- Have students write an advertisement
- Divide students into two groups and have each group support a different side of the same issue

Poetry

- Teach students different poetry forms
 - Cinquain
 - Haiku
 - Diamante
 - Concrete Poem
 - Limerick
- Have students use a rhymed poem as model to write a new poem
- Have students add a new stanza to a rhymed poem

A Few Journal Prompt Suggestions

- Imagine you witnessed a historical event (choose one the class is studying). Write a journal entry describing the event and how you felt about it.
- Write a riddle or tongue twister.
- Describe your favorite pet or animal. Be sure to include sensory details.
- Write advice for younger students.
- Write a journal entry from the perspective of a historical or literary character.

Literature Connection Ideas

Story Models

- Numeroff, Laura. *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*, HarperCollins, 2015.
- Viorst, Judith. *Alexander, and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*, Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1987.
Both these stories could serve as patterns for students' own stories.
- Ada, Alma Flor. *Dear Peter Rabbit*, Aladdin Paperbacks, 1997.
This book could serve as a model for friendly letters. Students could write their own friendly letters from one book character to another.
- Scieszka, Jon. *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs! by A. Wolf*, Puffin Books, 1996.
This book could be a model for telling a story from a different story character's perspective. For older students, it could serve as a lesson on writing with slant.

Poetry Models

- Janeczko, Paul B. (Compiler). *A Kick in the Head*, Candlewick Press, 2009.
This poetry anthology includes examples and explanations of various types of poetry.
- Ferris, Helen (Editor). *Favorite Poems Old and New*, Doubleday & Company Inc, 1957.
This book contains a large collection of poetry that children enjoy.

Recommended Resources for Writing Lessons

Books

- Crider, Jennifer. *On Teaching Writing: A Handbook*, Christian Light Publications, 2000.
This easy-to-use handbook has information about the writing process and ideas for creative writing lessons.
- Lipson, Greta B. *Poetry Writing Handbook: Definitions, Examples, Lessons (Gr. 4-6)*, Teaching and Learning Company, 1998.
This teacher-friendly book has ready-made poetry lessons.
- Calkins, Lucy McCormick. *The Art of Teaching Writing*, Heinemann, 1994.
This book takes an in-depth look at teaching writing and is an excellent resource.
- *Take It to Your Seat Writing Centers, Grades 5-6*, Evan Moor Educational Publishers, 2005.
This book has ready-made writing assignments that students can complete independently. I use the lessons for spare time writing projects.

Web Resources

- Because of Winn-Dixie: See This Story Grow
(http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/flashlightreaders/pdfs/WinnDixie_story.pdf)
This document contains various drafts of the first page of Kate DiCamillo's *Because of Winn-Dixie*.
- ReadWriteThink (www.readwritethink.org)
This website contains many well-written lessons on various writing skills for all grade levels. The lessons often have a literature connection, and some have helpful printables.
- Two Writing Teachers: How to Plan a Minilesson from Scratch (<https://twowritingteachers.org/2014/08/14/how-to-plan-a-minilesson-from-scratch/>)
This website has a detailed post on planning a mini-lesson.
- Education Place (www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/)
This site offers an array of graphic organizers.