

Writing Prompts

1. Write a short poem that includes the following words:

Fly

Salamander

Conform

Sagacious

Intended outcome: Students will display understanding of new vocabulary words, their various meanings, and how to use them creatively.

Constraints:

Must include the listed words

Use alliteration in at least one line.

20 minutes to complete

Grade: 7/8

Example:

The flowery wallpaper, purple and grey
A fly fondles the fake fronds.

The sagacious salamander waits
Enraptured by the fine finicky flutters.

He conforms to his perch
Patient and prepared to pounce.

2. Write a paragraph about an animal you know, from the animal's perspective

Intended outcome: Students will display ability to think creatively from a different perspective.

Constraints:

Must include prepositions and/or prepositional phrases

20 minutes to complete

Grade: 8/9

Example:

From above I hear the human awaken; muffled through the blanket that covers my plastic prison. Six steps up the stairs and along the narrow hall, I can hear her approach. Upon my fluffy bed, I appear disinterested when she pulls off the cover and greets me. She walks along the cupboards and opens one in particular. I try not to look eager with a glance between the bars and despite myself, I stir. Into the bowl, she places a strawberry.

3. Write a poem using the first letters of your name. Use a noun, a verb, and an adverb

Intended outcome: Students will display ability to use grammar effectively and creatively

Constraints:

Must only use a noun, a verb, and an adverb. Bonus points for use of alliteration.

Students may use a dictionary

20 minutes to complete

Grade: 8/9

Example:

Merrily moving monkeys
Elephants easily eating
Antelopes accidentally annoy
Grizzlies greedily graze
Anteaters angrily advise
Noisily nibbling newts

Lions lazily laugh
Ocelots obediently observe
Eagles eventually entertain
Walrus wriggles wetly
Enthusiastically escaping elks
Neatly nodding narwhals

4. Rewrite a text message/email/Facebook status/Twitter post, etc. using a high register

Intended outcome: Students will use new vocabulary to practice using register

Constraints:

Must use high register

30 minutes to complete

Students may use a dictionary/ thesaurus

Grade: 10/11

Example:

On the plus side: I walked like 12564 steps today

On the negative: I got lost. A lot.

“On this day, I exceeded my required daily strides by exactly two thousand, five-hundred and sixty-four. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, I lost my navigational bearing quite frequently.”

5. Create your own poem from Robert Frost’s “The Road Not Taken” by crossing out words you don’t wish to use.

Intended outcome: Students will be able to create something new and express their own thoughts without pressure of invention.

Constraints:

Must use words in order

30 minutes to complete

Grade: 10/11

Example:

~~Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;
Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,
And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.
I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I-~~

I took the one less **traveled** by,
And that has made all the difference.

6. Write a 3x3x3 poem influenced by a photograph



Intended outcome: Students will interpret what they see and express a narrative using their own ideas

Constraints:

Must be 27 words total, 3 words per line, 3 lines per stanza

Students may use dictionary/thesaurus

30 minutes to complete

Grade: 10/11

Example:

Murder of crows
Patient, vicious, brooding.
Aloft and silent

Waiting for night
Time to hunt
Restless little vermin
Night now approaches
Moonless, velvet dark
Death on wings.

7. Take students outside and seat them in a row. Have them write a descriptive poem on what they see, smell, hear, and feel using as many adjectives and adverbs as they can without repeating.

Intended outcome: Following lessons introducing new grammar, students will learn to write descriptively using adverbs and adjectives but no determiners

Constraints:

Must use adverbs to describe what they see, smell, hear, feel, Must not use determiners.

30 minutes to complete

Grade: 8/9

Example:

Leaves and branches angrily sway
Fierce whipping winds
Coarse green stems
Delicate scented blossoms

8. Write a short story using only dialogue.

Intended outcome: Students will learn to convey meaning without the benefit of a narrative

Constraints:

Must only use dialogue.

30 minutes to complete

Grade: 10/11

Example:

“I told you we shouldn’t have come in here, it’s so dark!”

“Quit whining! Stay near the windows where it’s lighter.”

“This is totally illegal; there was police tape on the fence outside. If we get caught, we are so dead. What even happened in here?”

“Probably nothing, you know how the news exaggerates everything. Watch your step here, there’s something slippery.”

“Yuck! Oh God, please can we leave? This is awful...Jerry? Where are you?”

“...Jerry?”

9. Rewrite a scene from a fairy-tale in your own words. Make it modern, give it a new twist.

Intended outcome: Students will display their knowledge of various tales and stretch their creative writing capabilities

Constraints:

30 minutes to complete

Grade: 9/10

Example:

King Triton did not agree that his daughter should interact with those *creatures*, why they could carry diseases and *everyone* knew they were dangerous. And Ariel was so young! Too young to go off swimming by herself, she was sure to get into all kinds of horrible trouble. Her obsession with pretending to be a mermaid had to come to an end; how could he possibly marry off his daughter to the respectable King of France if she continued this aquatic farce?

10. Write a Haiku on your favorite food

Intended outcome: Students will display their understanding of Haiku structure

Constraints:

3 lines and 17 syllables,

Line 1 – 5 syllables

Line 2- 7 syllables

Line 3 – 5 syllables

30 minutes to complete

Grade: 9/10

Example:

Tomato sandwich
Juicy, salty and so fine
Bold red perfection