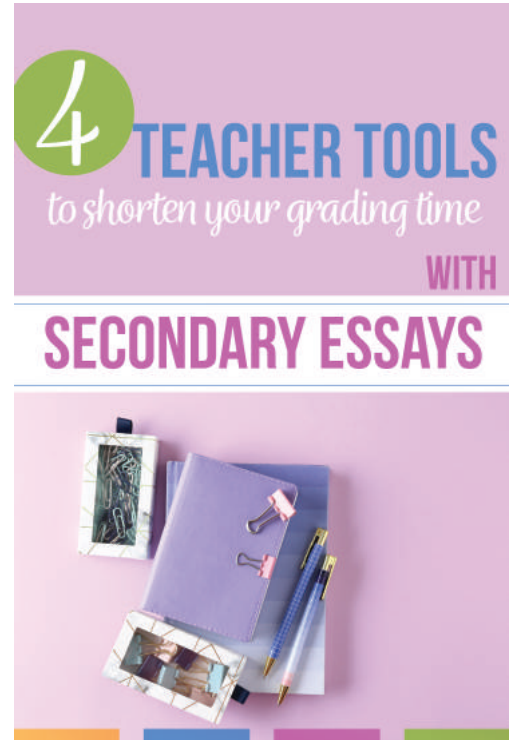
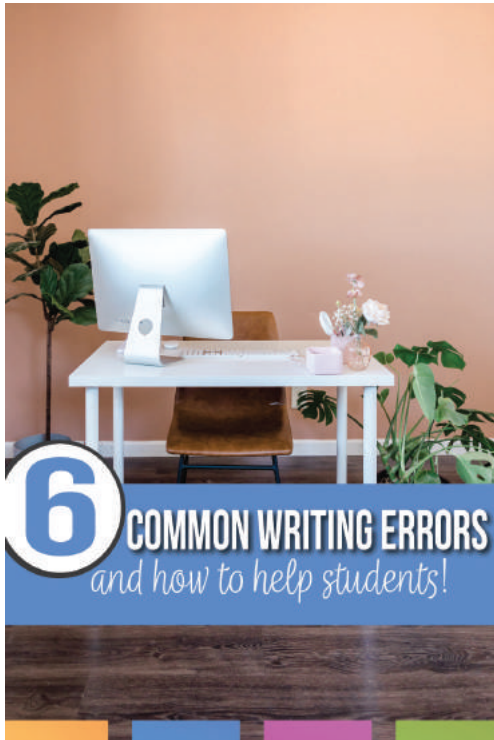
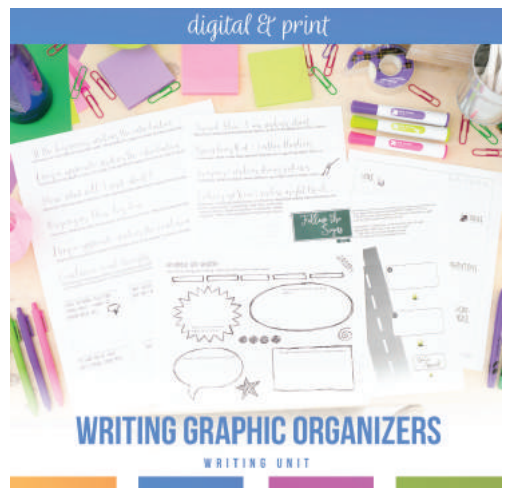
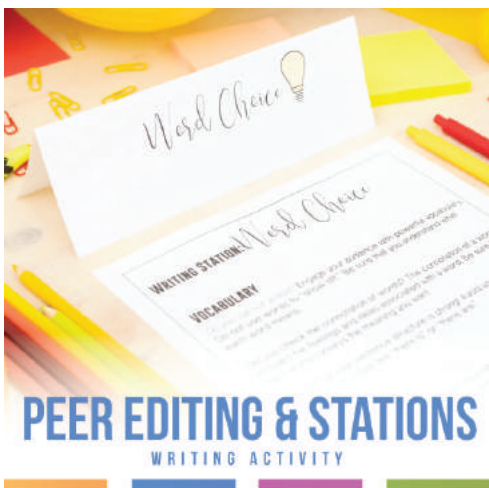
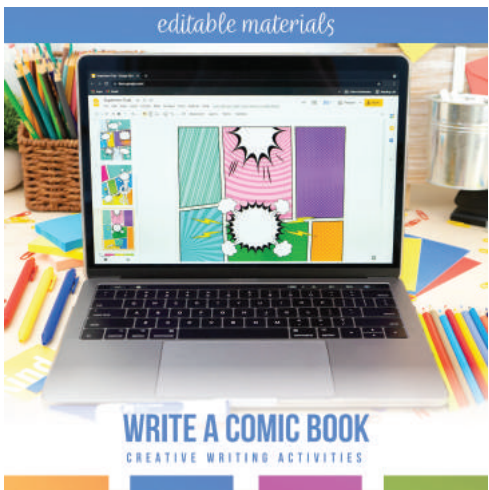
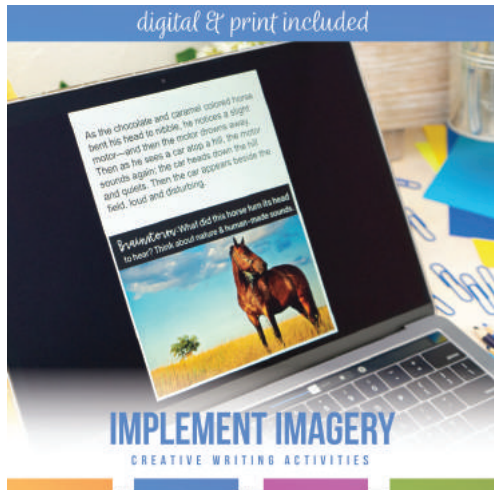


Thanks for the download!

Check out these blog posts that highlight writing lesson ideas:



These are other writing activities:



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Thanks again,

Lauralee, Language Arts Classroom

10 Creative Writing Activities:

thank you!

1. **How-to Paper**
Students read tips from experts for basic life experiences. They have knowledge too! Shopping for a prom dress? Lifting weights for football? Interviewing for a job for the first time? Applying for college? Students have a unique perspective to help others. This paper is not a “normal” step-by-step directions. Students will share their experiences and build confidence as writers.
2. **Alternative Point of View**
More commonly known as “googly eyes.” Students will adhere googly eyes to an inanimate object and tell the lesson that the object has learned.
2. **Product Review**
Reviewing products has become a genre on its own! Students will find a goofy product, write reviews for it, and write questions and answers for the product.
4. **Character Creation**
I have used this activity at various times for fleshing out characters in a narrative. However, I often use this sheet as a one or two day writing assignment for students to create a character. As we close, students read their character sketch, and their peers draw and explain the character. The writer receives immediate feedback concerning the accuracy of the portrayal.
5. **Food Poetry**
Two ways to use this activity! Students can write a poem about food, or you can randomly assign food for students to examine and then write about. Bringing in the food helps and makes for a fun class period. This activity is perfect for focusing on figurative language, describing texture and taste, and thinking.
6. **Object Essay**
A pencil? A phone? Simple?—Nope! Students will examine an object and write about that object as they explain the object to an audience unfamiliar with the object.
7. **Query Letter**
Real authors query their work with a letter. This assignment will work with any other activity as students will explain why the work should be published. The query letter is the perfect reflection piece.
8. **Flash Fiction**
A super short story is not easy to create even though students might think that it is. Flash fiction is short, but students must ensure that all components of a story are present. This activity is perfect for working on editing and revising because every word must count in flash fiction.
9. **Children’s Book**
The children’s book is incredibly flexible because you can determine the length and the requirements (pictures, format). Students also understand the depth of children’s books by analyzing one.
10. **Profile**
Students will practice interviewing and research skills while learning about a person. A profile requires that writers take an “approach” in telling their subject’s story. Students enjoy this creative nonfiction activity!

The project, _____, written by _____ :

points out of _____ comments

project	writing makes sense: clear and effective
creative	interesting read, creative, employs techniques, and/or figurative language
topic on task	completes assignment and follows guidelines
grammatically correct	no grammar or syntax errors in project
organization	purposeful introduction; structure contributes to the overall effect
TOTAL	



The objective of this how-to paper is to write a “shareable” and insightful paper. This paper will not be a basic paper. Students should explain how to accomplish or complete a task in a creative and original manner. Students should show “behind the scenes” ideas of their concept.

Sample how-to papers. How to:

- √ prepare for your driver’s license
- √ maintain long hair
- √ prep for a sports’ tryout
- √ earn a high score on an AP exam
- √ change a tire

As an extension activity, students can create a video to accompany their how-to paper. Typically, I do not let students write about how to make a peanut butter and jelly or how to brush your teeth unless they have a creative spin for such a paper—how to brush your teeth after dental surgery.

Students should write the paper in second person. The prewriting PDF encourages students to discover tips and potential places to flesh out their paper. On the back of the prewriting form, I ask students to write out their steps.

Possible guidelines:

Lead and Conclusion

The lead is effective and draws in the reader. The paper maintains focus for its intended audience.

Support

Descriptive and concrete, easy to implement, specific. The paper is interesting.

Overarching Theme

The paper has a “theme” that will encourage the readers.

Tone

Light and helpful. Honest—not judgmental.

Transitions

The order makes sense and parts flow together.

How-to Paper

Directions: Below, brainstorm and plan for your how-to paper. On the left side, read prompts that inspire you to consider your topic. On the right side, add ideas that will prompt you in your writing.

topic	potential concepts
interesting part for hook	
common misunderstanding about process	
helpful reminders	
possible problems	
list of materials	
overall theme/ messaging	
possible ending	



This alternative point of view assignment (aka, googly eyes) is a favorite of students. You will need some stick-on googly eyes. I typically buy them at a dollar store around Halloween, but you can also buy them year-round online. You might set ground rules with students before you begin this assignment. Students should remove the googly eyes after taking a picture. They should show respect by putting the eyes only in appropriate and necessary places.

Before you distribute the googly eyes, decide if you would like students to take a picture of the inanimate object in the school or if they can take the pictures at home. Students should then place eyes on an object and take its picture. Then, they should provide an "alternative point of view" of the object learning a lesson.

For example, I have had students put eyes on a skeleton in the science room. It learned the lesson of holding still while teaching students about anatomy. Other students have put eyes on a basketball in the PE room. The basketball learned that it must roll with whatever life throws it.

I use the rubric to grade this activity, but I do not complete a brainstorming page with this activity.

This creative writing activity works with standard W.11-12.3: Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome.

A circular logo with two concentric lines. Inside the inner circle, the words "Product" and "Review" are written in a cursive font, one above the other.

Product Review

teacher note

Product reviews are on numerous websites. Sometimes, the reviews are funny and begin to take on their own writing form. You can find them and share them with students. Some common product reviews that have taken their own form are on Amazon. Search for the banana slicer, the book *How To Avoid Huge Ships*, and the giant army knife. As a warning, be sure to provide guidelines for what students can and can not share with the class. There are inappropriate products that do have humorous reviews.

I ask students to look at the product review as a new genre, a new form of creative nonfiction. Students should follow the check list and then make a finished review to share with the class. You can use Google Slides or Canva to make finished product reviews.

You can also compile students' product reviews into a PDF and "publish" them with your coworkers or students' parents.



Product Review

Directions: Follow the steps below to create your own product review. Brainstorm ideas to write below, and then use them to create a polished review.

√ Find a product, often a goofy or ridiculous one. Take a screenshot.

√ Write a description of your own. Introduce the product, provide useful details, and conclude with reasons to buy the product.

√ Write three customers questions and answers.

√ Write two reviews. What do customers consider positive or negative about this product?



Students often struggle to develop well-rounded characters with realistic attributes. Additionally, young writers don't connect character conflicts and development to a story's theme. Small pieces of a character can contribute to that character's interactions with other minor characters. Basically, the smallest part of a character can add largely to the overall story.

When students have started writing, I give them this character brainstorming sheet. I have started their character development with this brainstorming sheet, but sometimes, students rely too heavily on what they decided and are reluctant to change their development of a character. You may use this sheet where you find most appropriate, but I use this with student after they have started to write a character.

One of the largest mistakes students make is thinking that they need to include every piece of brainstorming on paper. I remind them that they do not! Instead, these attributes for their characters can slowly develop a character. For example when the writer understands that a character is an extrovert rather than an introvert, the character's interactions will be developed differently. The writer may never need to tell the reader that the character is an extrovert.

Finally, I use this brainstorming sheet to start students on the path of conflicts and story development. After they finish the sheet, I ask them to turn it over and write potential story ideas, again reminding students that they may not all make it into the story. For instance, a character who is a messy eater might have a small interaction with a grandparent or relative who complains about their manners.

Then what will happen in the story? What is revealed about the character from his or her response?

I work in questions from students' brainstorming sheets that will encourage them to develop their stories.

Character Creation

Author:
Character's (complete) Name:

Audience:
Physical Description:

Directions: Brainstorm details about your character. Make sure to be specific and descriptive in your explanations of your characters traits and characteristics.

Closest relationship:

Mannerisms while eating:

Common expression:

Overall attitude:

Positive trait:

Negative trait:

Relationship status:

Occupation and work habits:

Intelligence:

Introvert or extrovert?

Spiritual beliefs:



This poetry activity will probably take one–two class periods depending upon your requirements and degree of “publishing.” I often complete food poetry a couple of days before a break. As a final activity, students can bring in food and maybe share their recipes as they display their poems.

Students need to practice imagery and figurative language, and food encourages creativity with poetry. Since students can identify a food’s texture, color, taste, and flavor, descriptive words often are easy for them to develop. As a next step, they can consider figurative language.

Decide in advance what you would like as requirements for the finished poems. The graphic organizer can start students in brainstorming their poem.

This creative writing activity works with standard W.11–12.3: Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.

Food Poetry

Directions: Think of your favorite type of food. Can you write a poem that descriptively explains why you love this food?

Walk through the following prompts to brainstorm what you know about your food. Then, use figurative language, imagery, and language to write a poem about your favorite food.

Food & Ingredients:

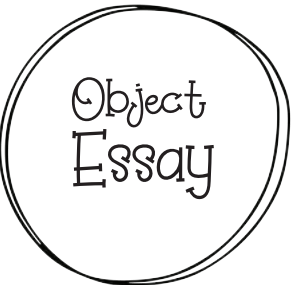
Texture

Flavor

Appearance

Figurative Language

Imagery

The logo consists of two concentric circles. Inside the inner circle, the words "Object" and "Essay" are stacked vertically in a cursive font.

Object
Essay

An object essay allows students to look deeply into an inanimate object and think critically. I encourage students to use an object in which they are familiar, perhaps a water bottle or phone. Students sometimes choose an object in the classroom, like a pencil or their desk.

As students brainstorm specific nuances of their object, they should also decide the point of view to approach the explanation. For instance, students can explain their object to an alien or to a young child.

This creative writing activity works with standard W.11-12.3: Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.

Object Essay

Directions: Before you write an essay about your object, you should brainstorm about the object.

After you complete the following pieces, draw conclusions about your object. The conclusion can become your overarching theme of your essay.

Color

Texture

material


History

Function

Possible analogy

Objective definition

Amazing qualities

The logo consists of the words "Query Letter" written in a cursive font, enclosed within two concentric circles.

Query Letter

This query letter activity will probably take one class period. Students will need to read the web page and write a letter. I allow students to choose their favorite piece of writing. It can be done anytime in the school year, but I use it after they have written a few pieces.

Typically, I use this as a sub plan. It is easy for students to read and then write. The substitute teacher will not have many questions to answer, and the letters do not take long to grade.

Additionally, I use this query letter writing activity when students need to “step up” their writing. If students must improve their writing, I ask them to prove to me why I or someone else should consider publishing one of their pieces. If students struggle to come with a reason, I make improving one of their previous activities part of this assignment.

Finally, this activity serves as a wonderful reflective piece for any writing assignment. Students must explain why their paper is ready for publication. In the “guidelines” section, feel free to add more details or ideas.

This activity addresses this standards: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.10

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Based on your grading (a sample rubric is included), other standards can be met.

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If you need to share the basic lesson plan with students, please make a copy of this link:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/u/1/d/1UHblhbmjWlZvY6scGvCesQKCXoIMKJjz0zim-IXe3D8/copy>



Query Letter

A query letter is a single page letter. It introduces you and your writing.

The query letter is very important. Publishers and agents cannot read every manuscript. Your query letter must sell your story so that they ask to read it.

This clearly explains what you should include in your query letter.
https://www.agentquery.com/writer_hq.aspx

Your assignment is to read the above web page and then write a query letter that sells a piece of your writing.

With this letter, you should focus on succinctly explaining your story. You must sell it to your audience (me). You will need to be succinct in your writing; do not write more than one page.

Every word must count in this letter! Eliminate fillers and fluff.

The words "Flash Fiction" are written in a cursive font and are enclosed within two concentric circles.

The dictionary defines “flash fiction” as a very short story. A quick Internet search will show a common misconception about flash fiction—that American author Ernest Hemingway invented the six-word flash fiction with the “baby shoes” story. Students have often heard of that story, and they find it interesting that Hemingway has been mis-attributed to creating it.

Components of flash fiction (you might need to define “fiction”) for students are the same components in any short story or novel. Students might think they will have an easy time as they have less to write, but flash fiction requires tight sentences and dialogue. Such constraints usually require more effort.

Terms you might need to review:

- √ Plot structure
- √ Dialogue
- √ Direct and indirect characterization
- √ Theme
- √ Conflict

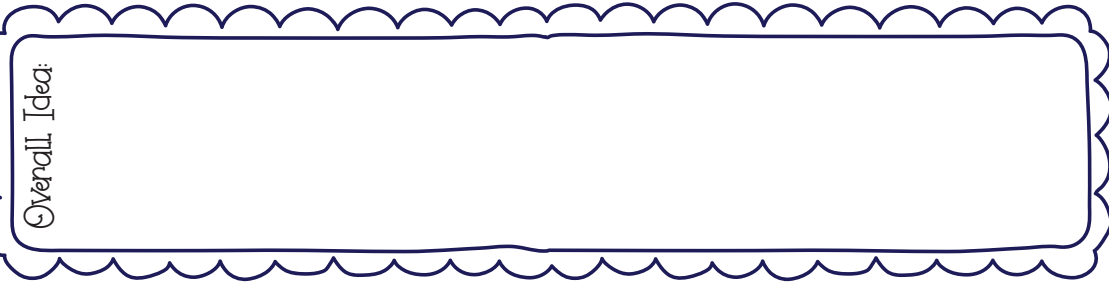
After students recall the terms, ask them to think of a topic, and then introduce the graphic organizer. You should also decide how long you’d like the final flash fiction to be. One option is for the first rough draft to be 500 words, the next 350, and the final 200 (or so). Flash fiction works well to hone editing and revising skills. To meet the word requirements, students must cut and tighten sentences.

Flash Fiction

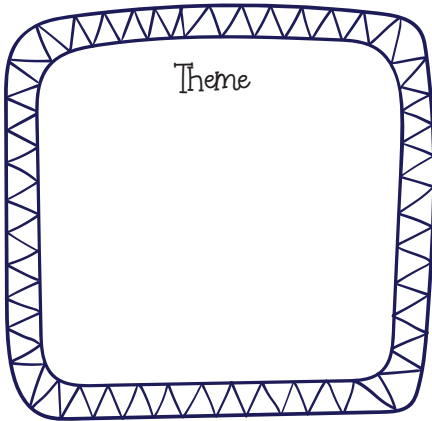
Directions: Below, outline your flash fiction components. Remember, flash fiction requires that your concept be tight.

Walk through the following prompts to brainstorm how you can develop your flash fiction.

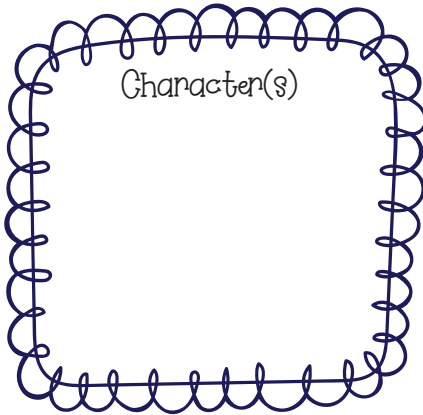
Overall Idea:



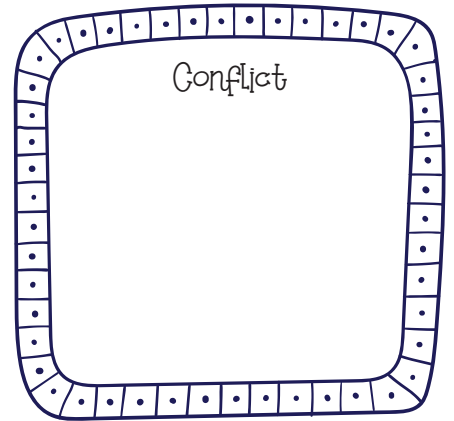
Theme



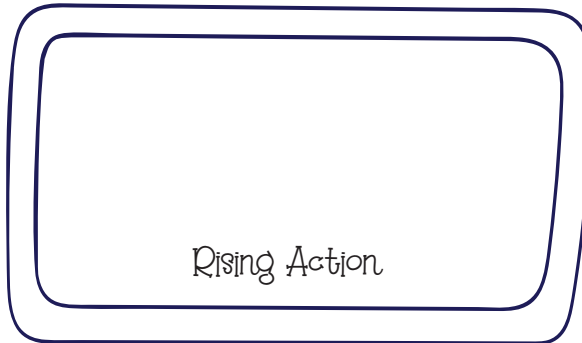
Character(s)



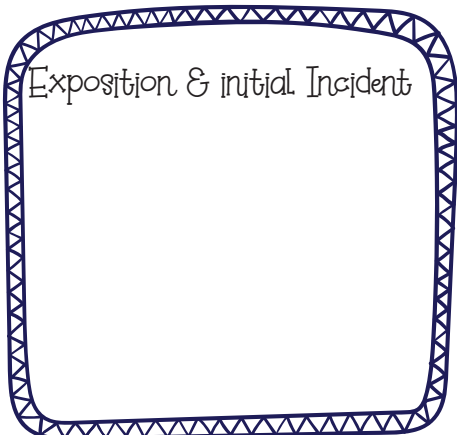
Conflict



Rising Action



Exposition & initial Incident



Climax & Resolution





The children's book activity has lots of flexibility. I start with students looking at children's books from our library. I've found that this activity helps students to understand the simplicity of children's books as well as the beauty and deepness of them.

After students analyze a book, they outline their book. Typically, students make these books on Canva or Google Slides. Sometimes, I purchase blank books and students draw on them.

You will also need to decide how long you'd like the books to be. Typically, our books are 14-20 pages.

More considerations:

- √ The frequency of pictures
- √ The use of figurative language
- √ Cover page, author page, possible dedication
- √ Limitations on number of characters
- √ Animal vs Human characters (will you allow both?)
- √ Pictures: online, hand-drawn, digitally drawn? How will students cite the pictures?

Again, you have flexibility with the length of time you and your students work on this project. My students typically take about two weeks. We have also coordinated with a child care class and read the books to young children.



Directions: Write your book title that you will analyze. Answer questions about your book. Keep in mind that these questions will help you understand how you develop your children's story.

Book:

Characters

How do the readers learn about the characters?

How many characters are in the story?

What makes the characters memorable?

Conflict

What is the problem in the story?

How is the problem introduced?

Solving the Problems

What attempts are made to solve the problem?

Is the character successful right away?

Does anyone help or offer guidance?

Transitions

Write at least one transition from the book. Explain its effectiveness.

Theme

What is the lesson learned?

Is the lesson directly stated? If so, how? If not, how did you derive it?

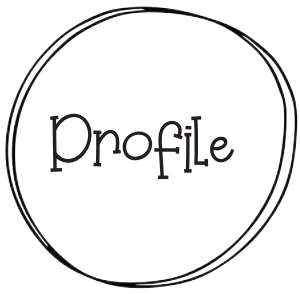
Other Components

How did you learn the story's setting?

How did you understand emotions?

Name one instance of suspense.

How are colors used in the illustrations?



Lots of profiles exist online, and I choose a new one each semester. “13, Right Now” and “Alana Thompson” are both good ones.

A profile paints a mental picture of a person. The profile article does not read as a biography—it takes a stance or has an approach about a person.

Students should interview a person. They should also notice small gestures and ideas about the person they will write about. Discovering aspects of the person’s life history will also flesh out a profile.

A profile is a piece of creative nonfiction. The information will be true, but writers can take an approach and implement pieces of fictions (theme, conflict).

A “theme” for a profile might be:

- √ Overcoming obstacles
- √ Working and dedicating time to become a better ____
- √ Volunteering time for others

Basically, the theme will structure the profile together. A theme can be “he is a good person,” but generally, the more specific the theme, the stronger and more focused the essay.

For editing and revising, I often ask questions such as these:

1. Have you included a variety of clips that illustrate your person?
2. Are the clips integrated well, used easily with transitions?
3. The paper should not read like a biography. Look over the integration of facts.
4. What overarching theme is present? Are you pleased with this theme?
5. Did you include authentic dialogue?

As another activity, I will have students trade profile drafts. The reader will then tell the writer about the person profiled. This action shows writers where they can fill in areas in the profile or areas where there might be a misunderstanding.



Profile

Directions: After you think of a person you find interesting and whom you can write about, begin planning your approach. Answer the following questions about your person and your overarching theme.

√ Write five in-depth questions you will ask your interviewee.

√ Observe five mannerisms, habits, actions, etc. of your interviewee. The more specific you are now, the easier writer your profile will be later.

√ Make three notes about your interviewee's backstory.