



LitART

Teacher Guide

# WERD

---

WRITING PROGRAM





## LitART WERD Writing Program

Published by Global Learning Inc.  
2715 SE 19th Ave  
Portland, OR 97202

For more information or to order please call  
855-READ500 (855-732-3500) or visit [www.litart.com](http://www.litart.com)



# LitART

Copyright © 2016 by Global Learning Inc.

All Rights Reserved.

No part of this text may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying or recording, or by any information retrieval system without permission in writing from the publisher, except by a reviewer who may quote brief passages in a review to be printed in a magazine or newspaper.

Printed in the United States of America.

Although the author and publisher have made every effort to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the information contained in this book, we assume no responsibility for errors, inaccuracies, omissions, or other inconsistencies contained herein.

Write

Explore

Read

Discuss

# WERD Overview

---

Welcome to WERD! WERD is short for Write, Explore, Read, Discuss. WERD offers writers a supportive, organized, and consistent community to explore their writing. WERD sessions combine free writing and feedback to build writing skills, unlock creative potential, and enhance the classroom community.

Whether you plan to facilitate a WERD Workshop or want to provide a full year writing program, this book includes everything you need:

- » WERD Getting Started Guide
- » WERD 10-Session Workshop
- » 20 WERDSkill Writing Lessons, used to explore features of effective writing
- » 30 WERDPlay Writing Activities used to develop creativity in writing
- » 15 WERDLists that serve as additional prompts for writing activities
- » 8 WERDTools designed to support writing
- » 7 WERDWords to provide additional vocabulary resources.

**WERD:**

WORKSHOP

SKILLS

PLAY

LISTS

TOOLS

WORDS

**WERD GETTING STARTED GUIDE (P. 9)**

Provides an overview of the WERD model, role of the facilitator, summary of key terms, step by step guide, what to do the first day, and planning considerations.

**WERD 10-SESSION WORKSHOP (P. 20)**

Once you understand the model, you can use this pre-planned workshop to guide writers through ten WERD Sessions. The workshop culminates in a published collection of pieces selected from writing completed during the sessions.

**WERDSKILL WRITING LESSONS (P. 26)**

The WERDSkill Writing Lessons are brief, focused writing exercises that explore one feature of effective writing. We suggest completing one WERDSkill lesson each week to supplement the WERD Sessions.

**WERDPLAY WRITING ACTIVITIES (P. 34)**

The WERDPlay Writing Activities are designed to foster creative explorations of writing. We suggest completing one WERDPlay Activity each week to supplement the WERD Sessions.

**WERDLISTS (P. 46)**

WERDLists provide 250 additional prompts that can be used during WERD Sessions. We suggest customizing WERD Sessions as needed to maximize participant engagement. Feel free to substitute these prompts as desired.

**WERDTOOLS (P. 54)**

WERDTools are resources that writers may find useful. For example, we have included a writing rubric, a summary of the writing process, frames for writing dialogue and creating comic strips, mini dictionaries, and other language resources. Encourage students to use these tools whenever they wish.

**WERDWORDS (P. 60)**

The WERDWords section provides facilitators and students with additional vocabulary resources to assist them in their writing. Lists of synonym suggestions and commonly used words, along with space to record favorite words, give participants extra word help and support their writing.

# WERD TERMS

WRITE

AUTHOR

PIECE

PROMPTS

SHARING

FEEDBACK



# WERD Getting Started Guide

---

## ARE YOU A WRITER? YES.

Here's the deal. The most important thing a writer can do is... write. The more students write, the better they become at writing and the more fun writing becomes. It really does work that way! Writing is like riding a skateboard, dancing, or playing video games. Every time you do it, you develop new skills and discover fresh details.

## WHAT IS FREE WRITING?

Free writing in journals offers students a great way to explore writing. There are no rules in free writing - they just write. They can try all kinds of things and not worry about getting corrected or graded. To help them free write, WERD uses prompts. Prompts are short phrases, ideas, objects, pictures, songs, or other tools designed to inspire writing. WERD combines free writing, sharing, feedback, and fun. Let's get started!

## WHAT DO YOU NEED?

Very little. The basic idea is to get a group of writers together once a week for an hour. To get started, you will need:

- » Journals
- » Writing tools
- » Prompts
- » A desire to write, read, and discuss writing.

## WERD TERMS

We use the following terms:

***write*** - a designated amount of time to write

***author*** - the person doing the writing

***piece*** - the writing being discussed

***prompts*** - things used to get the writing started

***sharing*** - the author reading the piece aloud

***feedback*** - the comments made to the author about the piece

The more students hear these terms, the more they will get used to them. For example, when you say, "We are going to do a 5-minute write," it means everyone will have five minutes to write in response to one of the two given prompts.

# WERD Writing Model

---

The WERD writing model is straightforward: The facilitator provides prompts, everyone writes, everyone shares, and everyone gives and receives feedback on writing.

## WRITE

The main feature of WERD is free writing in response to prompts. Before each write, provide two prompts to get everyone writing.

- » A MiniWrite is a 2-3 minute session followed by sharing/feedback.
- » A Write is a 4-12 minute session followed by sharing/feedback.

## EXPLORE

Encourage students to choose the prompt they like, write in a form that interests them, try out a new technique or do whatever they want as long as it includes writing in their journal. Give students the following directions:

- » During the free write, keep the pen moving and ideas flowing.
- » Rather than editing (e.g., erasing or crossing out), spend your energy adding more to the piece.
- » Remember, there is no “I’m done” during free writing. Keep writing until I say to finish up the last sentence.

## READ

Now students have a piece of writing to share. When it is their turn, ask each student to read their work aloud as they have written it. Remind them to take their time and read loudly and clearly.

## DISCUSS

During the sharing, students will give and receive feedback on writing.

### » *Getting Feedback*

- › Listen to what people liked about your writing
- › Learn why your writing appeals to them.

### » *Giving Feedback*

- › The key to giving good feedback is to focus on the writing.
- › This is not a time to make suggestions, offer critique, or provide ideas for improvement. Instead, offer positive specific feedback about the piece.
- › Tell the author what stood out to you and why it stood out.  
*What do you remember about the piece?*  
*What did you like?*  
*What was unique or memorable?*  
*Did a particular character, event, word, phrase, image, or bit of dialogue stay in your mind?*  
*If you thought the piece was good or funny, tell the author what you found good or funny about it.*

EXAMPLE FRAMES FOR GIVING POSITIVE SPECIFIC FEEDBACK:

I liked \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

My favorite part was \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

The word/phrase \_\_\_\_\_ stuck in my mind.

I remember the part where \_\_\_\_\_.

The \_\_\_\_\_ part made me feel \_\_\_\_\_.

I liked how the piece \_\_\_\_\_.

You did a great job using \_\_\_\_\_.

The \_\_\_\_\_ part made me want to keep reading.

# Literary Terms

---

## ADDITIONAL IDEAS FOR FEEDBACK

Writers develop their writing through the feedback they receive from others. After the “norms” for giving feedback are established, you may want to introduce literary terms and concepts as part of your feedback to writers. Here is a partial list of literary terms. You may want to post the next page in the room as a reminder.

- » **Opening/Closing:** The first or last line of a piece.
- » **Imagery:** A specific word or phrase that creates a picture for the reader.
- » **Symbol:** An important object that represents something in the story.
- » **Repetition:** Repeating the same word or phrase.
- » **Words or word choice:** The use of a particular word or phrase.
- » **Dialogue:** Character’s speaking.
- » **Humor:** Writing that makes the reader laugh.
- » **Characterization:** Details about a character.
- » **Organization:** The way the piece is put together. The flow.
- » **Setting:** Details about where and when the story takes place.
- » **Alliteration:** Repetition of the same sound.
- » **Figurative Language:** Use of similes or metaphors.
- » **Juxtaposition:** Placing two ideas side by side to create new meaning.
- » **Point of View:** The perspective from which the story is told.
- » **Onomatopoeia:** Words that spell the sound such as buzz or clang.

# LITERARY TERMS

OPENING/CLOSING

IMAGERY

SYMBOL

REPETITION

WORDS OR WORD CHOICE

DIALOGUE

HUMOR

CHARACTERIZATION

ORGANIZATION

SETTING

ALLITERATION

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

JUXTAPOSITION

POINT OF VIEW

ONOMATOPOEIA

# Role of the WERD Facilitator

---

The facilitator acts as a member of the writing community and makes sure that things run smoothly. The aim of the facilitator is to provide a safe place for students to write and share. The checklist below can serve as a guide for WERD facilitators.

- » Create a safe, accepting, positive atmosphere for writing.
- » Prepare prompts in advance.
- » Have a clock or timer available.
- » Make sure each author has a journal.
- » Refer to yourself and others as authors.
- » Refer to all writing as pieces.
- » Write along with the group.
- » Model giving and receiving feedback as a respectful participant, not as an expert.
- » Facilitate sharing around the circle.
- » Avoid sharing first or last to avoid being seen as the expert.
- » Avoid giving feedback first or last to avoid being seen as the expert.

# WERD Logistics

---

There are three primary considerations for creating the proper WERD atmosphere for building a writing community:

- » Room Arrangement
- » Group Size, Sharing and Feedback
- » Length and Number of Sessions

## ROOM ARRANGEMENT

To create a writing community, participants need to be able to see each other. The group should be assembled around a table. Participants need enough space to place their journals on the table for writing. A quiet room free from distractions works best.

## GROUP SIZE

Aim for a group size of 7-12 participants. Larger groups can take too long during the sharing and feedback portions; smaller groups may have too few participants to generate good feedback. If you have more than 12 writers, you may want to create subgroups for sharing and feedback after the free write. Alternatively, you may need to skip feedback (but do not skip sharing) for one of the free writes.

As the facilitator, join in the writing and sharing. Remember, you are not the expert - you are a participant and fellow writer. If another adult is available, he or she can join the group or facilitate a second writing group.

There are two ways to order the sharing process. The first way is to go in order around the circle; the second way is to let writers share in any order as they feel ready. Successful facilitators vary these two sharing options during each session. At first, going around the circle seems to work best.

*Note: If you are the only facilitator available, consider having the non-facilitated group share their writing without giving feedback. Over time students learn how to do the feedback portion without a facilitator or by using a student facilitator. After students have learned the sharing process and how to give effective feedback, all groups can give writing feedback regardless of whether the adult facilitator is present.*

## LENGTH AND NUMBER OF SESSIONS

WERD Workshops typically include ten 60-minute sessions. A session can be longer than 60 minutes, but it is difficult to conduct a session in less than 60 minutes. A WERD workshop can run 8 or 12 sessions. We suggest that an 8-session version include sessions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 10. We recommend a 12-session workshop repeat sessions 2 and 3 after session 9.

# WERD Free Write

---

## SUMMARY OF STEPS

The facilitator acts as a member of the writing community and makes sure that things run smoothly. The aim of the facilitator is to provide a safe place for students to write and share. The checklist below can serve as a guide for WERD facilitators.

- » Give two prompts.
- » State the length of the free write in minutes.
- » Tell whether feedback will be given during sharing. (Authors will always share pieces by reading them aloud but feedback will only be given sometimes.)
- » Start the timer or check the time on the clock.
- » Start writing.
- » Give a “one-minute” warning when one minute of writing time is left.
- » Give a “last line” warning when 10 seconds are left.
- » Facilitate sharing by saying:
  - › “Who would like to share first?” or
  - › “This time we are going to go around the circle.”
- » After the first author has read his or her piece, start the feedback rolling by saying:
  - › “Okay, feedback for \_\_\_\_\_’s piece?” or
  - › “Comments about \_\_\_\_\_’s piece.”
- » Wait calmly and quietly for feedback.
- » Extend comments like “That was good” or “That was funny” by asking the person giving feedback to tell the author what specifically about the piece was good or funny.
- » Help the writers give feedback directly to one another. If students talk to you when giving feedback, try redirecting their attention by looking at the author of the piece.
- » Not everyone needs to comment on every piece of writing. After two or three comments, move on to the next piece.
- » Repeat the sharing/feedback process until everyone has had a chance to share their writing.



# WERD: The First Day

---

The idea of free writing, sharing, giving feedback, and receiving feedback may be new to you and the other participants. During the first WERD session, create a safe and positive atmosphere for writing by:

- » Provide a very brief summary of WERD.
- » Invite students to brainstorm a set of agreements for the group. It helps to write down each contribution as it is given.
- » Afterwards, present the PEARLS guidelines on the next page. It can be adapted as needed to reflect the specific agreements that fit your group. We suggest posting the PEARLS Agreements in the room for easy reference.
- » After reviewing the agreements and the PEARLS, provide the two prompts for the first mini-write and start writing.
- » Facilitate sharing.
- » Provide the next pair of prompts.
- » Facilitate sharing and feedback.
- » Before the next write, share the WERDGuide Big 5. Review the five ideas. We suggest posting this in the room.
- » Give the next two prompts.
- » Facilitate sharing and feedback.
- » Give the prompts to the final mini-write.
- » Facilitate sharing.

# WERD PEARLS

---

## PROMPTS

Prompts are short phrases or ideas used to get writing flowing.

## EXPLORATION

We won't worry about spelling, grammar, punctuation or handwriting.

## AUTHENTIC

We agree to be respectful, honest and supportive.

## RESPOND

We agree to provide positive, specific feedback to other writers.

## LISTEN

We will listen to each other and only one person will talk at a time.

## SHARE

We agree to share our writing and will assume all writing is fiction.

# WERD Big5

---

## **KEEP WRITING**

During each free write, keep writing. If you get stuck, just write the last word over and over. Or start writing about why you are stuck. Or look around and describe what you see.

## **NO EDITS**

During free writes, forget about spelling and grammar. Do not cross out, erase, or change words. Instead of perfection, go for “good enough to keep writing.” Can’t think of a word? Make a blank and keep going. Just wrote a sentence that doesn’t make sense? Laugh at yourself and keep going. Spelled a word completely wrong? Keep going! Free writes are about ideas not perfection.

## **BE YOU**

Give yourself permission to write anything you want to write. Don’t worry about how it turns out. Allow yourself to explore. No rules, no limits, just have fun with your words and ideas.

## **BE SPECIFIC**

Share the details. Use your senses. What do you see, hear, smell, touch, taste? Not “dog” but, “fuzzy black dog with bad breath that looked like a football.” Be specific. The details will help readers “be there with you.”

## **CELEBRATE**

Be proud of what you have accomplished. Celebrate your success in completing the free writes. It is not about whether your writing was “good.” Take pride in your effort and recognize the time you spent writing helped you develop as a writer and person.



# WERD Ten Session Workshop

---

The following ten-session model offers a strong basic foundation for WERD. Each session uses the same format but has a slightly different focus and can be modified to fit the unique needs of your group.

## **WEEK 1: HERE WE COME**

Prompts that evoke personal experiences, beliefs, and interests.

## **WEEK 2: SETTING & ATMOSPHERE**

Prompts that emphasize places and moods.

## **WEEK 3: CHARACTERS & POINT OF VIEW**

Writers describe people and write from different perspectives.

## **WEEK 4: DIALOGUE & VOICE**

The session focuses on dialogue and capturing the voice of characters.

## **WEEK 5: IMAGERY & DESCRIPTION**

Prompts that emphasize descriptive and figurative language.

## **WEEK 6: POETRY**

The session explores different forms of poetry.

## **WEEK 7: THIS IS HOW WE DO IT**

Prompts that focus on nonfiction writing.

## **WEEK 8: IF I WERE YOU**

This session explores persuasive writing techniques.

## **WEEK 9: LOOKING BACK/LOOKING AHEAD**

Prompts that emphasize visions of the future and memories.

## **WEEK 10: CELEBRATION CEREMONY**

The final session emphasizes reviewing earlier pieces.

## 1 HERE WE COME

Done?	Action	Minutes	Prompt Options
	MiniWrite	2	Top Five _____ On my way here...
	Share	5	
	Write #1	6	I come from... My family is...
	Respond	15	
	Write #2	8	My favorite time of day is... I remember...
	Respond	20	
	MiniWrite	1	In my mind... I feel...
	Share	3	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	

## 2 SETTING & ATMOSPHERE

Done?	Action	Minutes	Prompt Options
	MiniWrite	2	Today I saw... This morning...
	Share	5	
	Write #1	6	In the garden... A flash of light...
	Respond	15	
	Write #2	8	Up in the sky... After the storm...
	Respond	20	
	MiniWrite	1	Out the window... Across the room...
	Share	3	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	

### 3 CHARACTERS & POINT OF VIEW

Done?	Action	Minutes	Prompt Options
	MiniWrite	2	When I get home... Today I ate...
	Share	5	
	Write #1	6	If I could change one thing... I'm the kind of person...
	Respond	15	
	Write #2	8	I laugh when... My secret talent...
	Respond	20	
	MiniWrite	1	Today I'm wearing... In my desk...
	Share	3	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	

### 4 DIALOGUE & VOICE

Done?	Action	Minutes	Prompt Options
	MiniWrite	2	Where have you been? Can you fix it?
	Share	5	
	Write #1	6	Did you drop this? Come on in.
	Respond	15	
	Write #2	8	Come with me, please. What do you think?
	Respond	20	
	MiniWrite	1	Did you hear that? When will we go?
	Share	3	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	

## 5 IMAGERY & DESCRIPTION

Done?	Action	Minutes	Prompt Options
	MiniWrite	2	It sounded like... The color ____ tastes like ____...
	Share	5	
	Write #1	6	The night smelled like... In the hot summer sun...
	Respond	15	
	Write #2	8	The snow fell... On the kitchen table...
	Respond	20	
	MiniWrite	1	I can hear... I remember the smell of...
	Share	3	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	

## 6 POETRY

Done?	Action	Minutes	Prompt Options
	MiniWrite	2	The dirt road... Under the stars...
	Share	5	
	Write #1	6	I am... I am not...
	Respond	15	
	Write #2	8	Things I've lost or found Things my mom/dad taught me
	Respond	20	
	MiniWrite	1	Sadness is... Happiness is...
	Share	3	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	

## 7 THIS IS HOW WE DO IT

Done?	Action	Minutes	Prompt Options
	MiniWrite	2	I like to... (list) People should avoid... (list)
	Share	5	
	Write #1	6	A good friend... When choosing a game or toy...
	Respond	15	
	Write #2	8	If you are hungry... To get to my school...
	Respond	20	
	MiniWrite	1	To have fun... If you need to hide something...
	Share	3	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	

## 8 IF I WERE YOU

Done?	Action	Minutes	Prompt Options
	MiniWrite	2	I think most people... Someone once told me...
	Share	5	
	Write #1	6	I wish everyone... Nobody ever told me...
	Respond	15	
	Write #2	8	If I were you... More people should...
	Respond	20	
	MiniWrite	1	The best tv show is... The best sport is...
	Share	3	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	

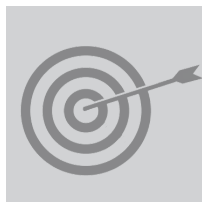


## 9 LOOKING BACK/LOOKING AHEAD

Done?	Action	Minutes	Prompt Options
	MiniWrite	2	My first memory... Someone once told me...
	Share	5	
	Write #1	6	I will always remember... When I was ____ years old...
	Respond	15	
	Write #2	8	When I am older... I can't wait until...
	Respond	20	
	MiniWrite	1	The day I was born... When I get a job...
	Share	3	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	

## 10 CELEBRATION CEREMONY

Done?	Action	Minutes	Prompt Options
	MiniWrite	2	In this circle... From my pen/pencil...
	Share	5	
	Write #1	6	Writing taught me... My favorite part...
	Respond	15	
	Write #2	8	Reread/review your pieces. Find a piece to share.
	Respond	20	
	MiniWrite	1	Through my writing I can... I will miss...
	Share	3	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	



# WERD Skills

Activity	Focus	Page
<b>1</b> Not the Same Name	Character	27
<b>2</b> Scanning the Scene	Description	27
<b>3</b> Use Your Video Camera	Description	27
<b>4</b> Written Conversation	Dialogue	28
<b>5</b> Get a Clue	Organization	28
<b>6</b> Use a Question	Organization	28
<b>7</b> 5W - 1H	Organization	29
<b>8</b> First Line	Organization	29
<b>9</b> Start With Meaning	Sentences	29
<b>10</b> Start and End Strong	Sentences	30
<b>11</b> Vary Sentence Lengths	Sentences	30
<b>12</b> 1 or 2 or 3?	Sentences	30
<b>13</b> Juxtapositions	Sentences	31
<b>14</b> Synonym Substitutions	Words	31
<b>15</b> Rock Active Verbs!	Words	31
<b>16</b> Adverbs Can Add to Verbs	Words	32
<b>17</b> Nice and Fun Cliches	Words	32
<b>18</b> Bedazzle With Words	Words	32
<b>19</b> Riff Riff	Words	33
<b>20</b> Hidden Homonyms	Words	33

## 1 NOT THE SAME NAME

### FOCUS: CHARACTER

Memorable names entice readers. Names can evoke feelings about characters. Find a writing sample that includes many names, such as a Harry Potter book and make a list of the names you find. Next to each name, write one word that you connect to that the name. Or rewrite the piece and change all the names. Finally, draft a list of names to use in stories. Write a piece and give extra energy to crafting good names.

#### SKILL PROMPTS:

- » Rewrite a piece giving the characters new names.
- » Draft a list of names to use in stories. Write a piece and give extra energy to crafting good names.

## 2 SCANNING THE SCENE

### FOCUS: DESCRIPTION

Details enliven writing. Imagine a camera scanning a scene at a park. At first you see grass. Next, you see a boy on a swing, a squirrel, and a newly planted tree. As the boy swings, his bright blue jacket flutters. Find a writing sample that includes a detailed description and look for details. Write a new piece. Scan the scene and include as many details as possible.

#### SKILL PROMPTS:

- » Find a writing sample and underline the details.
- » Write a new piece. Scan the scene and include as many details as possible.

## 3 USE YOUR VIDEO CAMERA

### FOCUS: DESCRIPTION

In movie making, the camera is moved to shoot the most important thing from selected distances and angles. Try writing like you are holding a video camera and use different distances and angles to write. Aerial means from above, an establishing shot captures the whole scene, middle distance sees the people and hears the dialogue, close up shows facial expressions or feelings, and extreme close-up focuses on a detail that would be unknown from a distance. Find a writing sample and look for different distances and angles being used.

#### SKILL PROMPTS:

- » Find a writing sample and look for distances/angles being used.
- » Write a piece using different distances and angles.

## 4 WRITTEN CONVERSATION

### FOCUS: DIALOGUE

Dialogue, when characters talk, is set apart from the narrative using quotation marks. Find a sample of dialogue in a book. Read it aloud. Get a single piece of paper and find a partner. Have a written conversation. The first person writes a message and gives the paper to the other person. That person reads and responds in writing. Take at least five turns each. Afterwards, read your dialogues aloud.

#### SKILL PROMPTS:

- » Find dialogue in a book and read it aloud.
- » Have a written conversation with a partner.

## 5 GET A CLUE

### FOCUS: ORGANIZATION

Foreshadowing means to give clues about what might happen later in a story. For example, a package early in a story may foreshadow a later event that involves what is inside the package. If someone receives a watch as a gift in the first scene, the watch may figure into the story later. Find a writing sample (newspaper, magazine article, or book) and see if it includes foreshadowing. Write a new piece that uses the foreshadowing technique.

#### SKILL PROMPTS:

- » Look for examples of foreshadowing.
- » Write a new piece that uses the foreshadowing technique.

## 6 USE A QUESTION

### FOCUS: ORGANIZATION

You can use a question as a source of energy for a story. Who will win the game? Will they fall in love? Will earth be saved or destroyed? A good question will propel the reader through the story and help you write the story. Find a writing sample and determine whether it uses a question to drive the story. Brainstorm a list of questions that can be used as the engine for a story. Write the story.

#### SKILL PROMPTS:

- » Determine whether a question is used to guide a story.
- » Brainstorm questions and write a story using one of the questions.

## 7 5W-1H

### FOCUS: ORGANIZATION

Who, what, where, when, why and how are the questions answered in newspaper articles and other nonfiction writing. They can also be used to organize stories: character, action, setting, order of events, motive, and details. Review a newspaper article and mark where each question is answered. Write an article or story that uses the questions as a structure.

#### SKILL PROMPTS:

- » Review an article and mark where each question is answered.
- » Write an article or story that uses the questions as a structure.

## 8 FIRST LINE

### FOCUS: ORGANIZATION

The first line of a story establishes the expectations for the reader. Review the first lines of at least five books. Determine whether the first line includes information about the setting, characters, the conflict or any other elements of the story. Did the author use a short or long sentence? Is the first line dialogue? Did the line make you want to keep reading?

#### SKILL PROMPTS:

- » Review five first lines.
- » Write three first lines for three different stories.  
Choose your favorite of the three. Now write three different first lines for that story.

## 9 START WITH MEANING

### FOCUS: SENTENCES

The basic elements of every sentence are a subject and an action. Start with the subject and action and let the rest of the details follow. Find a writing sample (newspaper, magazine article, book) and a pencil. Circle the subject and action in each sentence. Write a piece. Start each sentence with meaning - with the subject and action.

#### SKILL PROMPTS:

- » Find the subject and action in sentences.
- » Write a piece. Start each sentence with the subject and action.

## 10 START & END STRONG

### FOCUS: SENTENCES

The order of words can be used to magnify words in the mind of the reader. The first word and last word of sentences, paragraphs, and chapters are the ones that stick with the reader, so be sure to put the important words at the beginning or end. Find a writing sample and circle the important words in each sentence. Write a piece. Place the important words carefully - at the starts and ends of sentences.

#### SKILL PROMPTS:

- » Find the important words in sentences.
- » Write a piece. Place the most important words at the starts and ends.

## 11 VARY SENTENCE LENGTHS

### FOCUS: SENTENCES

Keep writing fresh by varying the length of your sentences. A short sentence adds punch to a paragraph. A paragraph with many short sentences can feel choppy; a longer sentence smooths it out. Find a writing sample and code each sentence as short, medium, or long. Find the longest and shortest sentences in the piece. Write a new piece. Vary the lengths of your sentences throughout the piece.

#### SKILL PROMPTS:

- » Code each sentence as short, medium, or long. Find the longest and shortest sentence in the piece.
- » Write a new piece. Vary the lengths of your sentences throughout.

## 12 1 OR 2 OR 3?

### FOCUS: SENTENCES

The number of elements in a sentence matters. Use one element for strength. *The boy is small. The King.* Use two for balance or to compare/contrast. *The boy is small yet strong. The King and Queen.* Use three for roundness, completeness or a triangle. *The boy is small, strong, and crafty. The King, Queen, and the Jester.* Find a writing sample and look for examples of sentences using 1-3 elements. Write a new piece. Include sentences with different numbers of elements.

#### SKILL PROMPTS:

- » Look for sentences with one, two, and three elements.
- » Write a new piece. Include sentences with different elements.

## 13 JUXTAPOSITIONS

### FOCUS: SENTENCES

Juxtaposition means to put things side by side. In writing, juxtaposing words or events can create memorable results. For example, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* takes the bubbly girl's name "Buffy " and juxtaposes it with the phrase "vampire slayer." Find examples of juxtapositions in writing samples or photographs. Try to find strong contrasts. Create a list of situations or phrases that feature cool juxtapositions.

#### SKILL PROMPTS:

- » Find examples of juxtapositions in writing samples or photographs.
- » Write a piece that features strong juxtapositions.

## 14 SYNONYM SUBSTITUTIONS

### FOCUS: WORDS

Synonyms are words that have similar meanings. Find a piece of writing and read it aloud. Replace five to ten of the words with synonyms. Repeat the process with a piece of your own writing. Try to take your writing in a specific direction by choosing synonyms that shade meaning in the same direction.

#### SKILL PROMPTS:

- » Find a piece and replace five to ten of the words with synonyms.
- » Choose one of your own pieces. Replace five to ten of the words with synonyms.

## 15 ROCK ACTIVE VERBS!

### FOCUS: WORDS

Verbs create action - so make them active. When the subject performs the verb, we call the verb active. When the subject receives the action of the verb we call the verb passive. When a verb is not active or passive we call it a linking verb - a form of "to be." Find a writing sample (newspaper, magazine article, book) and a pencil. Circle the verbs in each sentence. Determine whether the verbs are active, passive, or linking. Write a piece. Use the active verb tense.

#### SKILL PROMPTS:

- » Find the verbs in sentences and categorize the verbs as active, passive, or linking.
- » Write a piece. Use active verbs.

## 16 ADVERBS CAN ADD TO VERBS

### FOCUS: WORDS

Adverbs change or modify the meaning of verbs. Many adverbs end in -ly. When used effectively, adverbs spice up writing. Used poorly, adverbs can repeat meanings already contained in the sentence. Find a writing sample and circle the adverbs you find. Write a new piece. Use at least three adverbs in your writing.

### SKILL PROMPTS:

- » Find the adverbs in sentences.
- » Write a piece. Use adverbs.

## 17 NICE AND FUN CLICHES

### FOCUS: WORDS

A cliché is an overused expression. Think outside of the box is a cliché. Using nice or fun to describe an experience suffers from the same weakness. Best to avoid clichés and routine words. Invent fresh forms of expression. Rather than leaning on a tired saying, invent a new phrase or give an unexpected detail. Find a writing sample (newspaper, magazine article, or book). Underline anything that sounds cliché or routine and circle anything that sounds fresh and alive. Write a piece without relying on clichés or routine words.

### SKILL PROMPTS:

- » Underline anything that sounds cliché or routine and circle anything that sounds fresh and alive.
- » Write a piece without relying on clichés or routine words.

## 18 BEDAZZLE WITH WORDS

### FOCUS: WORDS

Collect great words and use them in your writing. Sometimes just one well-chosen word elevates a piece to a new level. Find a writing sample (newspaper, magazine article, or book). Underline the best words in the piece. Write a new piece. Use at least three bedazzling words.

### SKILL PROMPTS:

- » Find the verbs in sentences and categorize the verbs as active, passive, or linking.
- » Write a piece. Use active verbs.



## 19 RIFF RIFF

### FOCUS: WORDS

In writing, a riff is an amusing remark or comment. Look for ways to spin-off on other ideas. Find ways to play with words. Try free-associating by making any connection you can no matter how nonsensical. Find a writing sample (newspaper, magazine article, or book). Choose a few phrases or words and free associate a list of other phrases or words. Write a new piece that riffs on the first piece.

### SKILL PROMPTS:

- » Free associate with phrases from a piece.
- » Write a new piece that riffs on the first piece.

## 20 HIDDEN HOMONYMS

### FOCUS: WORDS

Homonyms are words that sound the same, have different meanings, and are spelled differently. For example, “peak” and “peek” are homonyms. “Peak” refers to the top of a mountain, while “peek” means to sneak a look. There are many homonyms such as bear/bare, one/won, to/two/too and there/their/they’re. Write a piece with at least three homonyms. Insert homonyms for the correct words.

### SKILL PROMPTS:

- » Create a list of homonyms.
- » Write a piece with at least three homonyms.  
Insert homonyms for the correct words.



# WERD Play

Activity	Focus	Page
1 Characters in a Crowd	Character	35
2 Police Sketch	Character	35
3 Inside a Character	Character	35
4 Metamorphosis	Character	36
5 Pentasenses	Description	36
6 Coloring Book	Description	36
7 See What I'm Saying?	Dialogue	37
8 Hear a Pin Drop	Dialogue	37
9 Crazy Little Thing Called Love	Organization	37
10 RSVP	Organization	38
11 Know It All	Organization	38
12 You Can Count On It	Organization	38
13 Beware of the Libreg!	Organization	39
14 I Do	Organization	39
15 Shape Poems	Poetry	39
16 Diamante Poem	Poetry	40
17 Haiku	Poetry	40
18 Acrostic Poems	Poetry	40
19 Sentence Steps	Sentences	41
20 Interrogative Expression	Sentences	41
21 Sounds Like Writing	Sentences	41
22 Seven Settings	Settings	42
23 Setting Senses	Settings	42
24 Palindromes Wow!	Words	42
25 Name Headlines	Words	43
26 All Alliteration	Words	43
27 Faux Definitions	Words	43
28 26 Words	Words	44
29 Ouch!	Words	44
30 ZZZZ... Clang!	Words	44

## 1 CHARACTERS IN A CROWD

### FOCUS: CHARACTER

Your brother is at a party and you are home sick. A friend that your brother has never met is also at the party. You want them to meet so you send a text to your brother. What details would you provide about your friend? What sort of clothing does your friend wear? What style? Shoes? Jewelry? Hair? Would your friend be moving around talking to everyone or sitting alone quietly? What does your friend's voice sound like? Provide other details. Would your friend be carrying anything?

### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Describe your character and how to find him/her in a crowd.
- » Describe a second character.

## 2 POLICE SKETCH

### FOCUS: CHARACTER

Another way to explore character appearance is to pretend you witnessed someone robbing a store. You saw it happen and remember the person in detail. Three detectives, including a sketch artist, ask you to describe the person. Tell the detectives everything you can remember. Was the person male or female? What did the person's face look like? How about the hair (e.g., ponytail, crew cut)? Describe the person's body (e.g., thin, fat, short, tall. How old did the person look? What was the person wearing?

### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Describe your character. Use the same technique to invent a story title or a sign.
- » Trade your description with a partner. Sketch the character.

## 3 INSIDE A CHARACTER

### FOCUS: CHARACTER

Interesting characters have a complete inner world. Answer the following questions to build a new character. What does this character talk about? do for work? think is important? do for fun? Who are this character's friends? heroes? enemies? family members? What are the character's personality traits? secrets? wishes?

### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Describe a character's inner world.
- » Include this character in a story.

## 4 METAMORPHOSIS

### FOCUS: WORDS

Metamorphosis means to change completely. In this activity, write a story where you undergo a metamorphosis. Tell what caused you to change (e.g., fell asleep and woke up changed, went through a strange door, ate something, someone cast a spell on you, etc.). Describe what you became and what happened to you as that new thing. Did you ever return to your old self?

### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Brainstorm a list of how the change might happen.
- » Write a story that includes a metamorphosis.

## 5 PENTASENSES

### FOCUS: DESCRIPTION

Penta is a prefix that means five. Pentasenses (a made-up word) means “five senses.” In this activity, choose an emotion or idea. Use your five senses - sight, taste, smell, hearing and touch - to write lines that tell what color it is and what it looks like, how it tastes, what it smells like, what it sounds like, and how it feels.

### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Describe an emotion using your five senses and a color.
- » Describe an idea using five senses and a color.

## 6 COLORING BOOK

### FOCUS: DESCRIPTION

Think of your favorite color or choose any color you want to use for this activity. Describe your color as a food, an animal, a feeling, a sound, a season, a person in a family, and a place.

### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Write a color description.
- » Write a story that features colors.

## 7 SEE WHAT I'M SAYING?

### FOCUS: DIALOGUE

Photographs and paintings can inspire writing. In this activity, choose a picture and use it to get you writing. Start by looking at the picture. Note the details. When you are ready, try one or more of the following: write from the point of view of the person in the picture, make a list of things in the picture, describe your feelings, write a dialogue, or tell about a place in the picture.

#### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Write while you look at the picture.
- » Write while you look at a different picture.

## 8 HEAR A PIN DROP

### FOCUS: DIALOGUE

The phrase “you could hear a pin drop” is used to describe perfect silence. Sometimes you can say something that creates immediate silence because it raises issues or concerns. Examples: That man told me that you knew he was borrowing your car. Is the couch supposed to be on fire? Look at my new pet tarantula.

#### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Write one or more lines that will create silence.
- » Write the scene that follows the opening line.

## 9 CRAZY LITTLE THING CALLED LOVE

### FOCUS: ORGANIZATION

Love. What can be said about it that hasn't already been said? Well, let's find out. In this activity, take two things that may or may not go together and write about a romance between the two. How did they meet? What do they like about each other? Did it work out? What would happen in a romance between an ant and a violin; a hairstylist and scissors; a lightbulb and a shoe; or a tiger and a pencil?

#### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Write a romance story between two objects.
- » Write a dialogue between two objects.

## 10 RSVP

### FOCUS: ORGANIZATION

RSVP means please reply. It comes from the French phrase *Répondez, s'il vous plaît*, which literally means “Respond, please.” In this activity, create an invitation to an event. Be sure to tell your guests what the event is, what to wear, what to bring, what to expect, and when it starts and ends. A party? A trip? A contest? An eclipse?

#### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Create an invitation.
- » Create an invitation for a strange event.

## 11 KNOW IT ALL

### FOCUS: ORGANIZATION

Think about something you know how to do well. It might be an activity, or a hobby, or a sport or game. Tell what it is and explain how to do it. It may help to think in steps. Or make a list of things you know how to do. I know how to...

#### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Explain how to do something that you know how to do well.
- » Make a list of things you know how to do.

## 12 YOU CAN COUNT ON IT

### FOCUS: ORGANIZATION

In this activity, choose a few numbers in sequence like 1, 2, 3 or 21, 22, 23 and write something that includes these numbers. For example: Of the 21 kids in my class, Jake is the coolest. Today, he wore his red football jersey with a 22 on it. I told him to come to my birthday on May 23rd. He said, “Sure.”

#### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Write a story that includes numbers in a sequence.
- » Write a story that includes numbers.

## 13 BEWARE OF THE LIBREG!

### FOCUS: ORGANIZATION

Libreg is the word gerbil spelled backwards. In this activity, choose an animal and spell it backwards. Describe what your new animal looks like, what it eats, and where it lives. Try putting your new animal into a story. Invent a new object by spelling an object backwards. Instead of a spoon you now have noops. What are noops? You tell me.

#### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Write a description of your new animal.
- » Tell about your new invention.

## 14 I DO

### FOCUS: ORGANIZATION

At some weddings, the bride and groom say “I do” to confirm their wish to get married. In this activity, tell about a wedding you attended. If that doesn’t grab you, make a list of phrases you can use to agree to something such as, okay, sure, I’m down, etc.

#### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Write about a wedding you attended.
- » Make a list of things you can say to agree to something.

## 15 SHAPE POEMS

### FOCUS: POETRY

Poetry is a way of writing that emphasizes feelings, senses, and imagination. Shape poems use both words and formatting to communicate. In this activity, consider ways to write your words that add to the expression. For example, if the poem is about feeling dizzy the words could be written in a spiral. You can change the size of the letters, where the words are written on the page, or anything else.

#### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Make a list of ways you can present the words in your poem.
- » Write a shape poem.

## 16 DIAMANTE POEM

### FOCUS: POETRY

Diamante is a structured poem that describes opposites. Start by choosing two opposites for lines 1 and 7. Use two adjectives to describe your opposites in lines 2 and 6. Use three words ending in ing for lines 3 and 5. Line 4 starts with two nouns connected to the start word and ends with two nouns connected to the end word.

#### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Write a diamante poem.
- » Write a poem in a different shape using any structure you want.

dog  
playful, loyal  
barking, panting, fetching  
labrador, beagle, siamese, calico  
purring, stretching, sleeping  
furry, snuggly  
cat

## 17 HAIKU

### FOCUS: POETRY

Haiku is a traditional form of Japanese poetry. Haiku poems have three lines and rarely rhyme. The first line has five syllables, the second line has seven syllables, and the third line has five syllables. Haiku poems often feature nature and focus on a single image or event. My haiku poem. / Inviting exploration. / Won't you try one now?

#### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Find samples of haiku poems.
- » Write a haiku poem.

## 18 ACROSTIC POEMS

### FOCUS: POETRY

Choose a word from one of your previous pieces. Write the word vertically (down the page.) Start each line of your poem with the letter on that line. If your word is river, your poem could look like:

raging water tips the kayak  
into the rocks  
vest keeps me afloat during  
early swim on sunny day  
rafting next time

#### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Write an acrostic poem.
- » Write a second acrostic poem.



## 19 SENTENCE STEPS

### FOCUS: SENTENCES

Sentences are the basic level of expression. They can be very simple such as: *He sat*, or they can be much more complicated. Sentences with more detail are more enticing to the reader. In this activity, you and a partner will take a simple sentence and give it some zest by adding details. Start with one of these simple sentences: *She ate lunch. He walked. We played.*

#### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Pass the paper back and forth and take three turns per person adding or changing one word at a time.
- » Use one of the new sentences to complete a freewrite.

## 20 INTERROGATIVE EXPRESSION

### FOCUS: SENTENCES

What is an interrogative expression? It's a question. In this activity, your job is to generate a list of questions that you wish you could have answered. Here are a few questions that other students have asked: "Who invented books?" "Can cats swim?" Why are there seven days in a week?"

#### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Generate a list of questions.
- » Make up answers to the questions from someone else's list.

## 21 SOUNDS LIKE WRITING

### FOCUS: SENTENCES

Music can inspire writing. In this activity, write while you listen to music. Try using instrumental music, which is music without words. Start by just listening and then when the mood strikes, do one or more of the following: make a list, describe your feelings, write lyrics, describe the musicians, write about a place the music takes you, or list the instruments that you hear.

#### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Write while you listen to music.
- » Write while listening to music with words.

## 22 SEVEN SETTINGS

### FOCUS: SENTENCES

The setting is where and when a story takes place. The kitchen, the ocean, Los Angeles, the branch of a tree, a haunted house, in the 1800's, this morning, at midnight, and before television are all possible settings. As always, the more details the better. The kitchen sink was overflowing with empty coffee cups.

#### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Make list of seven or more settings.
- » When we arrived at...

## 23 SETTING SENSES

### FOCUS: SENTENCES

Choose a setting from your list. Help the reader smell, hear, see, touch and taste the setting. For example, if your setting were a park: Children screeched as they ran to the swings. The newly cut grass smelled like soup. I dragged my hand through the warm sand hoping to find my ring.

#### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Describe one of your settings in detail using all five senses.
- » Describe where you are right now using all of your senses.

## 24 PALINDROMES WOW!

### FOCUS: WORDS

A palindrome is a word or phrase that reads the same backwards and forwards.

The following are palindromes: dad mom radar sees

These are palindrome phrases: wet stew was it a cat I saw pot top

#### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Make a list of palindromes.
- » Make a list of palindrome phrases.

## 25 NAME HEADLINES

### FOCUS: WORDS

Headlines are titles of stories in newspapers. In this activity, each word of the headline or sign needs to begin with a letter in your name. If your name is Cathy you might go with the headline: “Congress Agrees to Help Yams.” If your name is Luke, you might try: “Large Umbrella Kills Emu.”

### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Write a headline where each word starts with a letter of your name.
- » Use the same technique to invent a story title or a sign.

## 26 ALL ALLITERATION

### FOCUS: WORDS

Alliteration is when words starting with the same sound occur close together. For example, Larry loaded ladders onto lions is a highly alliterative sentence. Sometimes you can add an adjective here and there to create alliteration. Larry loaded long ladders onto large laughing lions lounging leisurely. I got carried away with that one.

### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Create one or more alliterative sentences.
- » Trade alliterative sentences with a partner and add to them.

## 27 FAUX DEFINITIONS

### FOCUS: WORDS

Faux is the French word for “fake.” In this activity, make up definitions for the words below. Since you probably do not know the real definitions, create faux definitions. Words to define: zealot, felicity, verdant, raucous, salubrious, druid, monocle, and veranda.

### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Write faux definitions for the words above.
- » Choose eight words that you already know the meanings of and make up faux definitions.

## 28 26 WORDS

### FOCUS: WORDS

The alphabet has 26 letters. But you knew that. In this activity, find a word that begins with each letter of the alphabet and fits the category. For example, if the category is foods the first few words might be: apricots, bread, and coffee. You don't have to go in order. Just plug in words as you think of them.

### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » List words for one of the following categories: foods, animals, feelings, places, plants, things in outer space, liquids.
- » Write a story using words from your list.

## 29 OUCH!

### FOCUS: WORDS

An exclamation is a word or phrase to express intense feeling. Ouch! is an exclamation. In this activity, tell about a time you were injured. Include an exclamation in your description.

### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Write about a time you were injured. Use an exclamation.
- » Make up a story or write a dialogue that includes exclamations.

## 30 ZZZ... CLANG!

### FOCUS: WORDS

Onomatopoeia are words that spell-out sounds. Words such as buzz, boom, and whoosh, add lively sounds to action and adventure stories. Take a moment to think of sounds you can hear right now. How would you spell the sounds? If you realized there is no one correct way to spell sounds, ka-ching! You're right. Find a few examples of onomatopoeia in books. Write a new piece. Include at least three examples of onomatopoeia.

### PLAY PROMPTS:

- » Find a few examples of onomatopoeia in books.
- » Write a new piece. Include at least three examples of onomatopoeia.

WRITING IS AN EXPLORATION.  
YOU START FROM NOTHING  
AND LEARN AS YOU GO.

**E.L. DOCTOROW**



# WERD Lists

Activity	Focus	Page
<b>1</b> Character & Point of View	Character	47
<b>2</b> Favorites: Descriptive Writing	Description	47
<b>3</b> Dialogue & Voice	Dialogue	48
<b>4</b> This is How We Do It	Expository	48
<b>5</b> Imagery & Description	Imagery	49
<b>6</b> Like It or Not: Persuasive	Persuasive	49
<b>7</b> Convince the World	Persuasive	50
<b>8</b> Top Seven _____ Version 1	Prompts	50
<b>9</b> Top Seven _____ Version 2	Prompts	51
<b>10</b> Here We Come	Prompts	51
<b>11</b> Superheroes in Super Places	Prompts	52
<b>12</b> Feel the Color Wheel	Prompts	52
<b>13</b> Give Them a Hand	Prompts	53
<b>14</b> Out of...	Prompts	53
<b>15</b> Setting & Atmosphere	Prompts	53

# 1 CHARACTER & POINT OF VIEW

## FOCUS: CHARACTER

Use these prompts to describe people and write from different perspectives.

- |                                  |                                 |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| » I spread my wings...           | » I stopped barking...          |
| » She burst through the wall...  | » Everyone knew he was...       |
| » On the leaf...                 | » She always ate...             |
| » His bow tie...                 | » I waited near the milk...     |
| » He'd always been that way...   | » All around him/her...         |
| » Her laugh was unique...        | » She hid under the porch...    |
| » When he picked up the phone... | » He walked like...             |
| » I crawled under the fence...   | » Inside her purse...           |
| » I crowded into the hive...     | » He/she had a special power... |
| » She got off the bus...         | » I walked on the ice...        |
| » Her hands...                   |                                 |
| » My small furry body...         |                                 |

# 2 FAVORITES: DESCRIPTIVE WRITING

## FOCUS: DESCRIPTION

Favorites - we all have them. What are yours? Choose one of the topics below and write a piece that helps the reader get to know your favorite. Appeal to the senses!

- |                            |                        |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| » Sport                    | » Store                |
| » Music or musical artist  | » Number               |
| » Place to vacation        | » Thing to learn about |
| » Fruit                    | » Dessert              |
| » Song                     | » Toy or game          |
| » Thing to do after school | » Thing you made       |
| » Movie                    | » Wild animal          |
| » Dinner                   | » Beverage             |
| » Way to spend a sunny day | » TV show              |
| » Type of pet              | » Memory               |

## 3 DIALOGUE & VOICE

### FOCUS: DIALOGUE

Use these prompts to write dialogue and develop the voice of characters.

- |                                     |                                |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| » “Can I help you?”                 | » “This is how you...”         |
| » “That’s perfect.”                 | » “What are you doing here?”   |
| » “Did you drop this?”              | » “Excuse me, but...”          |
| » “Before you go...”                | » “I noticed that you...”      |
| » “How does it taste?”              | » “Who are you with?”          |
| » “Did you have fun?”               | » “It is so different here...” |
| » “I just found out...”             | » “Can it be fixed?”           |
| » “Is this seat taken?”             | » “Why are you late?”          |
| » “Have you ever done this before?” | » “Can I have a turn?”         |
| » “Tell me why...”                  | » “Are you in line?”           |
| » “Let me explain...”               | » “Let’s talk about...”        |

## 4 THIS IS HOW WE DO IT

### FOCUS: EXPOSITORY

Use these prompts to focus on expository writing.  
Explain how to do the following.

- |                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| » Ride a bike with no hands | » Write a book report without reading the book |
| » Get more allowance        | » Build a sandcastle                           |
| » Make a good sandwich      | » Look cool                                    |
| » Avoid getting sick        | » Clean up a mess                              |
| » Win an argument           | » Decide what to buy                           |
| » Organize your room        | » Behave at a fancy restaurant                 |
| » Do well on a test         | » Give a speech in front of a large group      |
| » Make a teacher like you   | » Impress your friend’s parents                |
| » Win at a video game       | » Get free stuff at a store                    |
| » Cure the hiccups          | » Fix a broken toy                             |
| » Take care of a pet        |  |
| » Find something you lost   |  |



## 5 IMAGERY & DESCRIPTION

### FOCUS: IMAGERY

Use these prompts to explore descriptive writing and using figurative language.

- |                             |                               |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| » When the smoke cleared... | » At midnight...              |
| » It smelled like....       | » The light faded...          |
| » Reflected in the water... | » The clock ticked...         |
| » The coffee...             | » The noise of the crowd...   |
| » The sound of rain...      | » It felt like...             |
| » In the mirror...          | » The paint dripped...        |
| » All of the voices...      | » The water was rising...     |
| » On the chair...           | » On a high shelf...          |
| » It tasted like....        | » The bell in the distance... |
| » The breeze...             | » Through the trees...        |
| » The piano...              | » The buzzer went off...      |

## 6 LIKE IT OR NOT

### FOCUS: PERSUASION

Writing is often used to persuade others. For example, advertisements, essays, and political speeches try to get the reader to think or do something. Choose a topic from below and persuade the reader to like or not like it. First, decide whether to create an advertisement, write an essay, create a chart, or plan a speech. Come up with reasons that support your point of view. Imagine what someone with a different point of view might think. Present your reasons and address the counter-arguments.

- |             |                |
|-------------|----------------|
| » Soccer    | » Ants         |
| » Soup      | » Yelling      |
| » Sleeping  | » Parking lots |
| » Rain      | » Commercials  |
| » Traveling | » Graffiti     |
| » Homework  | » Cleaning     |
| » Broccoli  | » Bees         |
| » Guns      | » Boxing       |
| » Fences    | » Hats         |

## 7 CONVINCE THE WORLD

### FOCUS: PERSUASION

Use these prompts to develop persuasive writing pieces.

- » The best team is...
- » People who cheat...
- » French fries are...
- » It is okay to get angry when...
- » Grades and tests...
- » Being healthy matters because...
- » The best place to go is...
- » It isn't fair that...
  - » The best/worst thing about Disneyland is...
- » The best holiday is...
- » The coolest person is...
- » People shouldn't be allowed to...
- » The best animal to have as a pet...
- » If I had magic powers I would...
- » People steal things because...
- » The most boring thing...
- » Everyone should be allowed to...
- » The biggest problem is...
- » Television is good/bad because...
- » Being famous would be good/bad...
- » Rainy days are good/bad...
- » If I were the president I would change...

## 8 TOP SEVEN, VERSION 1

### FOCUS: PROMPTS

Lists are a common form of writing. Grocery lists, to do lists, top ten lists, and the list goes on. Here is a list of ideas for making lists. Choose a topic from below and come up with at least seven things to make your list. If things are going swimmingly, add more ideas to your list.

- » Big things
- » Things in a city
- » Things to do quickly
- » Names of people you know
- » Musical instruments
- » Types of transportation
- » Ways to communicate
- » Countries
- » Types of clothing
- » Good movies
- » Things you want to accomplish
- » Animals
- » Scary things
- » Colors
- » Hot things
- » Slow things
- » Pretty things
- » Weird things
- » Things that involve a ball

## 9 TOP SEVEN, VERSION 2

### FOCUS: PROMPTS

Lists are a common form of writing. Grocery lists, to do lists, top ten lists, and the list goes on. Here is a list of ideas for making lists. Choose a topic from below and come up with at least seven things to make your list. If things are going swimmingly, add more ideas to your list.

- |                                     |                             |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| » Things not to do                  | » Sports                    |
| » Small things                      | » Careers or jobs           |
| » Things in outer space             | » Good television shows     |
| » Things that happen in the morning | » Things you can drink      |
| » Things you will never forget      | » Types of buildings        |
| » Things to do slowly               | » Things that involve water |
| » Things that are surprising        | » Performers                |
| » Good books                        | » Cold things               |
| » Cities                            | » Fast things               |
| » Places to visit                   |                             |

## 10 HERE WE COME

### FOCUS: PROMPTS

Use these prompts to write about personal experiences, beliefs, and interests.

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| » Now I understand...        | » One thing you should know about me... |
| » I have seen...             | » In the mirror I see...                |
| » There are too many...      | » I know I will...                      |
| » There are not enough...    | » I have never been...                  |
| » The best days...           | » I wake up thinking...                 |
| » One idea I have is...      | » When I write...                       |
| » One time I found...        | » The day I was born...                 |
| » A person I know well is... | » When I'm alone...                     |
| » I feel confused about...   | » I laugh when...                       |
| » I'm lucky/unlucky...       | » I go to bed thinking...               |
| » My mom/dad says...         |   |
| » I'm scared of...           |   |

## 11 SUPERHEROES IN SUPER PLACES

### FOCUS: PROMPTS

Superheroes have special powers. Certain places strike awe in observers. Make up a story with a superhero in a special place. Choose one of each and write.

- |                         |                     |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| » Eiffel Tower          | » Spiderman         |
| » Mount Rushmore        | » Superman          |
| » Empire State Building | » Wonder Woman      |
| » Great Wall of China   | » Batman            |
| » Leaning Tower of Pisa | » Captain America   |
| » Golden Gate Bridge    | » The Hulk          |
| » Taj Majal             | » The Green Lantern |
| » Stonehenge            | » Black Widow       |
| » Pyramids of Egypt     | » Aquaman           |
| » Notre Dame            | » Supergirl         |
| » Grand Canyon          |                     |

## 12 FEEL THE COLOR WHEEL

### FOCUS: PROMPTS

Make a circle. Extend five lines from the circle. Label the lines: see, hear, touch, taste and smell. Think of a color. Write the name of the color in the middle of the circle. Think of your color and write what you can hear, touch, taste, and smell. Stay connected to your chosen color.

- |          |            |
|----------|------------|
| » Yellow | » Purple   |
| » Black  | » Silver   |
| » White  | » Tan      |
| » Gold   | » Lavender |
| » Red    | » Navy     |
| » Green  | » Magenta  |
| » Orange | » Crimson  |
| » Blue   | » Gray     |
| » Brown  | » Teal     |
| » Pink   |            |

## 13 GIVE THEM A HAND

### FOCUS: PROMPTS

The human body has many parts. Pick one and write a story that features that body part.

- |               |            |
|---------------|------------|
| » Toes        | » Back     |
| » Nose        | » Palm     |
| » Forehead    | » Lips     |
| » Fingernails | » Eyebrow  |
| » Eyes        | » Neck     |
| » Knees       | » Legs     |
| » Hair        | » Elbow    |
| » Teeth       | » Belly    |
| » Hands       | » Shoulder |
| » Ears        | » Fingers  |

## 14 OUT OF...

### FOCUS: PROMPTS

Choose one of the phrases below and use it somewhere in your piece.

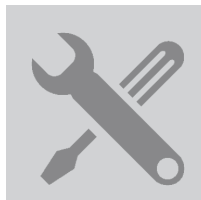
- |                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| » Out of line      | » Out of order |
| » Out of nowhere   | » Out of shape |
| » Out of style     | » Out of touch |
| » Out of bounds    | » Out of tune  |
| » Out of work      | » Out of hand  |
| » Out of here      | » Out of step  |
| » Out of season    | » Out of gas   |
| » Out of breath    | » Out of place |
| » Out of luck      | » Out of whack |
| » Out of character | » Out of range |
| » Out of print     |                |

## 15 SETTING & ATMOSPHERE

### FOCUS: PROMPTS

Use these prompts to emphasize writing about places and moods.

- |                                 |                            |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| » The sound of footsteps...     | » The busy city...         |
| » The smell of cookies...       | » Rising to the surface... |
| » The phone rang three times... | » Through the window...    |
| » She unlocked the gate...      | » In the distance...       |
| » The faucet dripped...         | » Off the trail...         |
| » Clouds gathered...            | » The cold morning...      |
| » Under the rock...             | » The hot afternoon...     |
| » Behind the mirror...          | » On the moon...           |
| » The sound of laughter...      | » Across the field...      |
| » The ticking clock...          | » Everywhere we looked...  |
| » The empty school...           | » A mile away...           |



# WERD Tools

Activity	Focus	Page
<b>1</b> The Writing Process	Editing	55
<b>2</b> Writing Rubric	Assessment	56
<b>3</b> 2-Frame or 4-Frame Comics	Structure	57
<b>4</b> 3-Frame or 6-Frame Comics	Structure	57
<b>5</b> Dialogue Frame	Dialogue	57
<b>6</b> Simple Story Plan	Organization	58
<b>7</b> Detailed Story Plan	Organization	58
<b>8</b> Sensory Details	Description	58

# THE WRITING PROCESS

## FOCUS: EDITING

Freewrites are used to explore ideas. The writing process, on the other hand, is used to prepare a piece of writing to be published. If you plan to submit a piece to be published, use these steps.

Six Step Writing Process	
Prewriting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prewriting means to gather ideas or sources for writing. What topics are interesting to you? What genres? Who is your audience?</li> <li>Prewriting might include brainstorming, collecting pictures from magazines, keeping lists of favorites ideas or words and anything else that helps you get ready to write a piece.</li> </ul>
Drafts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drafts are early attempts at writing. Once you have an idea that interest you, give it a shot. Write a first draft. Try not to get bogged down on choosing specific words, grammar or spelling.</li> <li>Early drafts should focus more on ideas and organization. You can always make changes later.</li> </ul>
Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback means getting reactions and responses from readers about your piece. At this stage, the most useful feedback is what readers are “getting” from your piece.</li> <li>Writing groups here are a great way to get feedback. What ideas are coming through? What stood out about the piece? What was interesting? What made sense? What was memorable to the reader?</li> </ul>
Revising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revising means making changes to the piece based on reader feedback. The writer decides what to change and what to leave alone.</li> <li>Early revisions should focus on refining ideas and strengthening the organization of the piece. Later revisions may emphasize finer points such as sentence structure and word choice. (The writer can seek more feedback and continue revising for as many cycles as desired. Some authors revise a piece more than 100 times!)</li> </ul>
Final Edits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final edits focus on spelling, punctuation, grammar, and technical aspects of writing such as formatting. In this stage the writer makes sure the piece is ready for publication.</li> <li>Use a rubric to make sure you are ready.</li> </ul>
Publishing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publishing means to distribute in print. Now that you have done all the hard work getting your piece ready, it's time to celebrate! Share the piece with new readers in final form.</li> </ul>

## 2 WRITING RUBRIC

### FOCUS: ASSESSMENT

A writing rubric presents criteria that can be used to assess writing. Use the following system to help identify areas you hope to strengthen in your writing. You can even use it to assess the same piece of writing before and after revisions/edits.

Scoring Scale: + or **2** This is a **strength** in this piece of writing.  
 x or **1** This is **OK** in this piece of writing.  
 -- or **0** This area **needs work** in this piece of writing.

Action	Sample 1	Sample 2
<b>Audience</b> The piece targets a specific audience.		
<b>Ideas</b> The ideas presented fit the audience and purpose.		
<b>Organization</b> The piece is well organized. It makes sense.		
<b>Purpose</b> The purpose of the writing is clear.		
<b>Sentences</b> The writer uses complete and varied sentence types.		
<b>Words</b> The writer chooses interesting and specific words.		
<b>Voice &amp; Style</b> The writing has a voice or style that fits the piece.		
<b>Conventions</b> Spelling, punctuation, and grammar do not distract.		
<b>Length</b> The length of the piece is appropriate to the purpose.		
<b>Technical</b> The formatting is appropriate for the piece.		
<b>Total Score:</b>		



WEDD Writing Program

**WEDD TOOL 5: 2-FRAME OR 4-FRAME COMICS**

**FOCUS: STRUCTURE**

Use this for writing two-frame or four-frame comics. Include a setting, characters, and dialogue. Set up a situation and have a "pay-off" or resolution in the last frame.


Copyright © Creative Commons

#### 4 3-FRAME OR 6-FRAME COMICS

WORD WRITING PROGRAM

**WORD TOOL 4: 3-FRAME OR 6-FRAME COMICS**

**FOCUS: STRUCTURE**

Use this for making three-frame or six-frame comics. Include a setting, characters, and dialogue. Set up a situation and have a "pay-off" or resolution in the last frame.


Copyright © McKenzie Learning, 2008

## 5 DIALOGUE FRAME

[illegible]

## 6 SIMPLE STORY PLAN

### FOCUS: ORGANIZATION

Use this planning tool to summarize the beginning, middle, and ending of your story.

WERD Writing Program

**WERD TOOL 6: SIMPLE STORY PLAN**  
FOCUS: ORGANIZATION  
Use this planning tool to summarize the beginning, middle, and ending of your story.

Beginning	If starts, not when...
Middle	In the middle part...
End	If ends when...

Copyright © Global Learning, 2015  
www.litart.com

## 7 DETAILED STORY PLAN

### FOCUS: ORGANIZATION

Use this planning tool to develop a detailed plan for your story.

WERD Writing Program

**WERD TOOL 7: DETAILED STORY PLAN**  
FOCUS: ORGANIZATION  
Use this planning tool to develop a detailed plan for your story.

Setting Where does the story take place?	
Main Character Who is the story mostly about?	
Motivation What does the main character want?	
Obstacle What is keeping the main character from getting it?	
Plot Events What happens when the main character tries to overcome the obstacle?	
Resolution What happens in the end?	

Copyright © Global Learning, 2015  
www.litart.com

## 8 SENSORY DETAILS

### FOCUS: DESCRIPTION

Use this tool to explore sensory details.

WERD Writing Program

**WERD TOOL 8: SENSORY DETAILS**  
FOCUS: DESCRIPTION  
Use this tool to explore sensory details.

TASTE	SMELL
TOUCH	HEAR

Copyright © Global Learning, 2015  
www.litart.com

I WRITE ENTIRELY TO FIND  
OUT WHAT I'M THINKING,  
WHAT I'M LOOKING AT,  
WHAT I SEE AND WHAT  
IT MEANS, WHAT I WANT  
AND WHAT I FEAR.

**JOAN DIDION**



# WERD Words

Activity	Focus	Page
<b>1</b> Need a New Word?	Words	61
<b>2</b> Verb-O-Rama	Words	62
<b>3</b> Verb-O-Rama 2	Words	63
<b>4</b> 300 Common Words (A to M)	Words	64
<b>5</b> 300 Common Words (M to Z)	Words	65
<b>6</b> Your Favorite Words (A to M)	Words	66
<b>7</b> Your Favorite Words (M to Z)	Words	67

## NEED A NEW WORD?

### FOCUS: WORDS

This list provides writers with a list of transitions and synonyms for commonly used words. Help students expand their vocabulary and enliven their writing with these suggestions.

Transitions	Synonyms	
<b>SUMMARIZING</b>	<b>BIG</b>	<b>LIKE</b>
In conclusion	Large	Enjoy
In summary	Giant	Admire
To summarize	Huge	Approve
Finally	Massive	Prize
<b>SEQUENCE</b>	<b>SMALL</b>	<b>DISLIKE</b>
At first	Tiny	Avoid
To begin with	Minute	Detest
Next	Little	Shun
Then	Microscopic	Object to
Earlier	<b>FAST</b>	<b>GOOD</b>
Later	Swift	First-class
<b>COMPARISON</b>	Snappy	Superb
Instead	Quick	Wonderful
Likewise	Rapid	Prime
Yet	Nimble	Exceptional
But	<b>SLOW</b>	<b>BAD</b>
However	Plodding	Awful
Similarly	Tardy	Dreadful
On one hand	Crawling	Rotten
On the other hand	Snaillike	Horrible

## 2 VERB-O-RAMA

### FOCUS: WORDS

This list provides writers with a list of synonyms for commonly used verbs. Avoid overused verbs by referring to this list of descriptive action words.

Ways to...		
SAY IT	WORK	GO FAST
speak	labor	dart
state	toil	dash
talk	plod	bolt
tell	strive	fly
discuss	strain	race
express	struggle	hurry
voice	sweat	rip
announce	exert	rocket
declare	try	rush
avow	STAY	scurry
shout	wait	whip
whisper	dally	hustle
scream	dawdle	scramble
yell	linger	scoot
vent	drag	tear
mumble	lag	whirl
utter	loiter	zip
gossip	stall	zing
chatter	hang out	shoot
converse	remain	speed

### 3 VERB-O-RAMA 2

#### FOCUS: WORDS

This list provides writers with another list of synonyms for commonly used verbs. Avoid overused verbs by referring to this list of descriptive action words.

Ways to...		
<b>RUN</b>	<b>DRINK</b>	<b>THINK</b>
gallop	guzzle	believe
jog	sip	admire
sprint	slurp	approve
trot	swig	consider
<b>SLEEP</b>	<b>PLAY</b>	<b>WANT</b>
relax	frolic	wish
bask	amuse	urge
rest	goof off	desire
doze	romp	yearn
snooze	<b>GO</b>	crave
nap	travel	need
<b>EAT</b>	journey	itch
swallow	tour	yen
devour	trek	<b>AVOID</b>
nibble	voyage	ditch
munch	rove	dodge
gulp	cruise	escape
consume	ramble	evade
chew	roam	shake
gobble	wander	duck

# 4 300 COMMON WORDS: A-M

## FOCUS: WORDS

Use these lists of 300 common words to inspire your writing and help you find the perfect word for your story.

<b>A a</b>	bed	coat	fall	got	<b>I I</b>
about	been	cold	far	green	if
after	before	color	fast	grow	in
again	best	come	fat	<b>H had</b>	into
all	better	could	find	hand	is
along	big	cut	fine	happy	it
also	black	<b>D day</b>	fire	hard	<b>J jump</b>
always	book	dear	first	has	just
am	both	did	five	hat	<b>K keep</b>
an	box	didn't	fly	have	kind
and	boy	do	food	he	know
another	bring	does	for	head	<b>L last</b>
any	brown	dog	found	hear	leave
anything	but	don't	four	help	left
are	buy	door	friend	her	let
around	by	down	from	here	letter
as	<b>C call</b>	dress	full	high	like
ask	came	<b>E each</b>	funny	him	little
at	can	early	<b>G gave</b>	his	live
ate	car	eat	get	hold	long
away	carry	eight	girl	home	longer
<b>B back</b>	cat	end	give	hope	look
ball	clean	every	go	hot	love
be	close	eyes	goes	house	<b>M made</b>
because	clothes	<b>F face</b>	good	how	make



## 5 300 COMMON WORDS: M-Z

### FOCUS: WORDS

Use these lists of 300 common words to inspire your writing and help you find the perfect word for your story.

man	of	red	small	this	water
many	off	ride	so	those	way
may	old	right	some	though	we
me	on	round	soon	three	were
men	once	run	stand	to	what
might	one	<b>S</b> said	start	today	when
money	only	same	stop	too	where
more	open	sat	such	took	which
morning	or	saw	sure	town	while
most	order	say	<b>T</b> take	tree	white
mother	other	school	tell	try	who
much	our	second	ten	turn	why
must	out	see	than	two	will
my	over	seem	thank	<b>U</b> under	wish
myself	own	set	that	until	with
<b>N</b> name	<b>P</b> pair	seven	the	up	woman
near	part	shall	their	upon	work
never	people	she	them	us	would
new	play	should	then	use	write
next	please	show	there	<b>V</b> very	<b>Y</b> year
night	present	sing	these	<b>W</b> walk	yellow
no	pretty	sister	they	want	yes
not	put	sit	thing	warm	yesterday
now	<b>R</b> ran	six	think	was	you
<b>O</b> o'clock	read	sleep	third	wash	your

## 6 YOUR FAVORITE WORDS: A-M

## FOCUS: WORDS

Use these grids to write down your favorite words. Refer back to your lists when you're in need of inspiration in your writing.

[illegible]

## 7 YOUR FAVORITE WORDS: N-Z

## FOCUS: WORDS

Use these grids to write down your favorite words. Refer back to your lists when you're in need of inspiration in your writing.

[illegible]

THE ONLY WAY TO LEARN  
TO WRITE IS TO WRITE.

**PEGGY TEETERS**





**LitART**

---

WERD WRITING PROGRAM