

WRITING FOR SUCCESS

Focus Area: College and Career Readiness
Elevater 2: Supplemental Lessons
Lesson Duration: 50 minutes

OVERVIEW

Elevate students will brainstorm examples of writing they will need to do in the future, respond to an essay writing prompt, present their essays to other students and evaluate the lesson and their learning.

ELEVATE OBJECTIVES

Communication

- Demonstrate how to create an exceptional first impression.
 - *Students will brainstorm how they will use writing skills to make a great first impression in the future.*
 - *Students will respond to an essay writing prompt to connect with others and introduce themselves and their goals.*

Career Minded

- Successfully and confidently write a resume, apply for a job and participate in an interview
 - *Student will brainstorm how they will use writing in their quest for their dream careers.*
 - *Students will practice responding to a common essay writing prompt to get into college or a career.*

COMMON CORE OBJECTIVES

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.10
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.

CASEL COMPETENCIES:

Social Awareness, Relationship Skills

Materials

- Copies of the following handouts, one per student:
 - *Bell Work: "Writing is in Your Future"*
 - *"Writing Prompt Ideas"*
- ½ sheets of copy paper, one per group
- Timer, prizes (optional) for winning team

Preparation

- Room setup: Arrange desks in five groups.
- Write the Elevate Objectives on the board.

Strategies and Best Practices Used

- Competition
- Journaling
- Think/Pair/Share
- Evaluation

Suggestions for Supplemental Learning

- Students can practice their writing skills using *"Writing Prompt Ideas"* to write essays in their journals.
- Students can have a networking simulation where they read their essays to a number of other students while eliciting feedback and noting connections with similar-minded peers.

Warm-Up
5 minutes

Team Teaching

 #1: G

 #2: BW

 #3: A

Competition
10 minutes

Team Teaching

 #1: L

 #2: A

 #3: A

BELL WORK: WRITING IS IN YOUR FUTURE

- Collect Student Action work from last class in a basket as students walk in.
- Hand out the Bell Work: “*Writing is in Your Future*” to each student.
- Questions for Bell Work:

Read the following excerpts from writing pieces and see if you can figure out what type of writing these came from:

- *Your company clearly stood out when I was researching the leading technology companies in the country. I am aware of your dedication to the development of innovative consumer products, and I believe that this role would be the perfect fit considering my strong design background. (Answer: job application)*
- *Thank you for taking the time to speak with me yesterday about the staff writer position with your organization. It was a pleasure meeting with you, and I truly enjoyed learning more about the role and the company. (Answer: thank you letter after job interview)*
- *When I first started to consider going to college so that I could make a better life for myself and my daughter, I thought it was going to be almost impossible. I was working in a convenience store trying to make ends meet as a single mother, but I just knew that there was something more out there for me. (Answer: college application)*
- *Are you interested in cutting the costs of your company by 50 percent? Our product has done just that for several companies, and we can do the same thing for you! Our proven track record speaks for itself. (Answer: business proposal)*

MINI LESSON: WRITING EXAMPLES

Lead Teacher Says: “*Writing is just the written form of speech, so it should express your story and personality in a way that makes the reader want to know more. Regardless of what you’re writing, good writing skills can help you stand out, can give a great first impression of you and can build successful relationships.*”

- Call on students to share their answers to the Bell Work questions with the whole group.
- Divide students into five groups, based on their favorite color. (Rearrange groups, if needed, to make sure each group has at least three students.)
- Explain that teams will have five minutes to come up with many example of writing that they may need to do in the future. Hand out ½ sheets of paper to each team and start the timer.
- Answers could include:
 - *Notes for what you will say in an interview*
 - *Introduction email to a new or potential contact*
 - *Follow-up letter to a job interview*
 - *Email inquiring about a job*
 - *Recommendation for a friend to get a job*
 - *School work in college or trade school*
 - *Marketing and advertising your skills or business*
 - *School/job application*

- When the timer goes off, ask teams to count their responses and announce the winner. Prizes can be given to the winning team, if desired.

ACTIVITY: “APPLY YOUR WRITING”

Lead Teacher Says: “The purpose of writing is usually to interact in some way with the reader. If you can get a reader to really feel what you’re saying, you will stand out from the rest.”

Journaling
15 minutes

Team Teaching

-  #2: L
-  #3: A
-  #1: ONE

- Read the brainstormed examples out loud to the students (don’t include repeats).
- Read the following essay writing prompts to the class and ask students to respond to one of them in their journals (the applications after each prompt are just suggestions):
 - *Why should you be accepted to this college? (college application)*
 - *Name and discuss a problem or issue that you think could come up in this job, and write how you think it should be handled. (trade school or apprenticeship)*
 - *Describe a person who has had a significant influence on you and how your life has been affected by him/her. (military interview)*
 - *Write about why your business venture is important to you, who it will help and how you plan for your business to succeed. (business proposal to a funding source)*
 - *Describe a challenging experience you have faced in your life and how it has made you into the person you are today. (volunteer opportunity interview)*
- Explain that students will choose a writing prompt and take fifteen minutes to respond to it in their journals and that they will present their writing after they finish.
- Allow about fifteen minutes for this activity

ACTIVITY: “PRESENTING IN SMALL GROUPS”

Lead Teacher Says: “One of the best things you can do to improve your writing is to ask people you respect to proofread it. Only ask people who will honestly give you constructive criticism, not people who will tell you what they think you want to hear!”

Think/Pair/Share
15 minutes

Team Teaching

-  #3: L
-  #1: A
-  #2: ONE

- Ask students to get into five new groups, depending on which writing prompt they chose to respond to in their journals.
- Pair students up within their groups (or a triad, if necessary) to edit each other’s responses and give feedback.
- Allow about ten minutes for peer editing.
- After ten minutes, call on two students per topic to read theirs out loud to the whole group.

Wrap Up Evaluation

5 minutes

Team Teaching

 #1: L

 #2: G

 #3: A

WRAP UP AND STUDENT ACTION: EVALUATION

- Hand out ½ sheets of paper to each student.
- Ask students to rate the following
 - *How much did they personally participate in today's lesson?*
 - *How much did the lesson impact them? (Did they learn?)*
 - *How much will they be able to apply from this lesson?*
- Then ask them to write what they liked about the lesson and what they would do to improve it.

Student Action: Write a brief plan for how you can improve on the areas that you rated yourself on in the wrap-up evaluation: participation, learning, application. Bring this information for the next lesson.

BELL WORK: WRITING IS IN YOUR FUTURE

Read the following excerpts from writing pieces and see if you can figure out what type of writing these came from:

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2. Thank you for taking the time to speak with me yesterday about the staff writer position with your organization. It was a pleasure meeting with you, and I truly enjoyed learning more about the role and the company.

3. When I first started to consider going to college so that I could make a better life for myself and my daughter, I thought it was going to be almost impossible. I was working in a convenience store trying to make ends meet as a single mother, but I just knew that there was something more out there for me.

4. Are you interested in cutting the costs of your company by 50 percent? Our product has done just that for several companies, and we can do the same thing for you! Our proven track record speaks for itself.

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WRITING PROMPT IDEAS

- 1. Evaluate an important experience you have faced and its impact on you.** Make sure that you are exploring the complex nature of the event and your response to it.

- 2. Discuss a personal, local, national or international issue and why it is important to you.** Make sure to focus on how the issue is important to you, more than the actual issue, to give the reader a sense of your character and passion.

- 3. Indicate a person who has had a significant influence on you, and describe that influence.**
In an essay about an important influence, analyze the “hero.” The person’s influence may have been positive or negative, but make it clear what learning you gleaned from this person.

- 4. Describe a character in fiction, a historical figure or a creative piece that has had an influence on you, and explain that influence.** Do not describe, but dig deeper to analyze the character or creative work. Why is it powerful and influential to you?

- 5. Given your personal background, describe an experience that represents how you would add to the diversity of _____ (college campus, military unit, trade or volunteer organization).** What they are really asking is how you will contribute your unique experiences and skills to make their organization better.