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	WRITING TO LEARN
Using Writing to Improve Student Thinking & Learning	

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	The Power of Words
“Learning to write is not the same as writing to learn.”	

Writing isn't a special language that belongs to English teachers and a few other sensitive souls who have a "gift for words."	
Writing is thinking on paper. Anyone who thinks clearly should be able to write clearly—about any subject at all.	
<small>William Zinsser, Writing to Learn</small>	

Writing to Learn: Snapshot	
	

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	Video Clip
<p>https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/writing-to-learn</p>	

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	Benefits of Writing To Learn
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Improves Concept Understanding<input type="checkbox"/> Improves Retention in all Subjects<input type="checkbox"/> Gives Teachers Access to Student Thinking<input type="checkbox"/> Leads to better Formal Writing<input type="checkbox"/> Builds Clarity & Confidence	

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<p>MANY WAYS TO USE A THINKING NOTEBOOK</p>	
	See 28 ways for added details.

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	Low Stakes Writing
<p>To clarify, summarize, recall, organize, plan, reflect, respond, share, argue, analyze, and think.</p>	

Writing to Learn: Features	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spontaneous
<input type="checkbox"/>	Short
<input type="checkbox"/>	Exploratory
<input type="checkbox"/>	Expressive
<input type="checkbox"/>	Informal
<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal
<input type="checkbox"/>	Unedited
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ungraded

1. Making Thinking Visible	
Getting it down on paper.	

Sentence Starters	
I noticed...	I'd like to know....
I wonder....	I realized...
I was reminded of...	If I were...
I think...I feel...	I'm not sure....
I'm surprised by....	Although it seems...

Quick Writes: Examples
<input type="checkbox"/> What do you know about photosynthesis?
<input type="checkbox"/> What can you tell us about prime numbers?
<input type="checkbox"/> How do you think the novel will end?
<input type="checkbox"/> Was John Brown a hero or a villain?

$6x^2 + 9x - 105$ (5 steps)

<p>① $3(2x^2 + 3x - 35)$</p> <p>② $2x \cdot x$ $5 \cdot 7$</p> <p>③ $3(2x - 7)(x + 5)$</p> <p>④ $\begin{array}{r} -7x \\ +10x \end{array}$</p> <p>⑤ $3(2x^2 + 3x - 35)$ $6x^2 + 9x - 105$</p>	<p>① Factor out the GCF</p> <p>② Look at factors of 1st and 3rd terms</p> <p>③ Signs are +, -</p> <p>④ Write as binomials</p> <p>⑤ Check using FOIL</p>
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Narrative
Next?

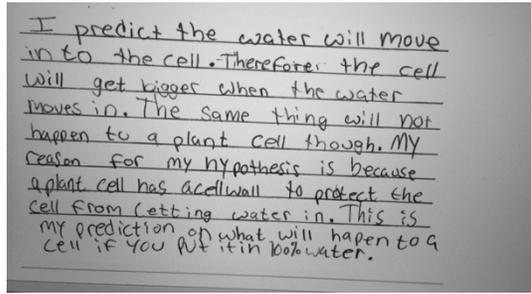
Stop and Write

What I am hearing....	What I am thinking...
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Journaling: Science Sample

An animal cell is in a beaker with 100% pure water. Animal cells are not 100% pure water. Predict the direction the water will move, and predict the new shape of the cell. (Will it shrink or get bigger?) Would the same thing happen to a plant cell?

Sample Response



I predict the water will move in to the cell. Therefore, the cell will get bigger when the water moves in. The same thing will not happen to a plant cell though. My reason for my hypothesis is because a plant cell has a cell wall to protect the cell from letting water in. This is my prediction of what will happen to a cell if you put it in 100% water.

	2. Written Conversations
Pass Your Notes to a Partner. Partners read and respond to each other's thinking. Return.	

	Video Clip
Passing Notes https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/passing-notes-teaching-strategy	

	3. ARGUMENT-BASED Writing
Write 10 LINES in <u>less than</u> 10 minutes.	

The world is more violent today than ever before in history.	

“Every kid would prefer to do his/her homework and be praised for quality. Every grown up would like to generate work that matters to or for someone....Therefore, when someone’s output is too low, we shouldn’t accuse or blame the individual. Instead, we should wonder what could be thwarting that person’s output, obstructing his/her natural inborn inclination to produce.” (Levine, 2003)

Write It Out The “Why”

AGREE **DISAGREE**

4. Summarization

Use writing to help students sum it up.

From Notes/Jots to A Summary

- Notes...

- Sum it Up: (5-10 lines)

- Notes...

- (Repeat).....

A, B, C Listing: Frederick Douglas

Abolitionists, Anna Murray, Anti-Slavery Society Bailey, Baltimore, Boston
 Civil War
 Documents for freedom
 Emancipated
 Farms, fugitive, freedom fighter Garrison (William Lloyd)
 Hugh Auld, hiding
 Independence Jailed, John Brown
 Knowledgeable Liberator
 Maryland
 New York, North Star
 Opinionated Published author
 Quotable
 Reading, Republican Party
 Sailor, slave owner
 Thomas Auld, Tuckahoe Creek, Talbot County
 Underground Railroad Valiant
 Washington, DC; white father X
 Youth
 Zeal

The Executive Summary

- Summarize the main points of the issue;
- Analyze the most important points; and
- Recommend a solution.
- And...
 - ✓ Keep language strong and positive.
 - ✓ Write no more than two pages.
 - ✓ Use different text structures: subtitles, bold fonts, bullets, etc.
 - ✓ Write in short, readable paragraphs.

BLOOM IT on Paper

- Recall: List 2 facts
- Comprehension: Explain one.
- Application: Give an example.
- Analysis: Compare 2.
- Synthesis: Draw a conclusion.
- Evaluation: Rank or Judge.

5. INTERPRETIVE WRITING

MAKING MEANING IN WRITING.

FOUND POEMS

- Find 5-10 lines from any text and use them to craft a poem which summarizes the big idea of the reading.

Found poem—Williamsburg Sunday October 8, 2006

The situation between England
 And her colonies worsens
 And I fear we are headed
 To a conflict the likes
 Of which we have not seen
 In our lives.
 What bloodshed it will cause
 Brother against brother
 Friend versus friend.
 Can you feel the thunder of hooves
 From your country estate
 In England?
 Can we divide ourselves
 When the same blood flows
 On both sides of the ocean?
 What will become of us
 Without the King's protection?
 The useless deaths of family members and friends.
 There is no choice
 But to separate ourselves
 From our motherland.
 I must join the fight
 And defend the land
 I have come to love
 --My America!

Bio-poem of Frederick Douglass

Frederick
 Insistent, hard-working, intelligent, emotional
 Slave of Master Auld Lover of Anna Murray, his wife
 Who feels passionately about Learning to read
 Speaking out about rights Fighting for freedom
 Who needs Freedom
 Independence Recognition
 Who fears
 Being recognized by his slave owners The Underground Railroad being discovered
 Leaving the south to escape
 Who gives Speeches Speeches
 And more speeches
 Who would like to see Women having the right to vote
 Loyal, patriotic, and honorable Americans A solution to the "Negro question"
 Resident of New York
 Douglass

Bio Poem Structure

- First name
- 4 Traits
- Relative of
- Lover of
- Who feels
- Who needs
- Who fears
- Who gives....

R.A.F.T Summative Summaries

- R=ROLE
- A=AUDIENCE
- F=FORMAT
- T=TOPIC

Sample RAFT

- ROLE=Newspaper Editor
- AUDIENCE=Educators
- FORMAT=Newspaper Headline
- Task=Create a headline that reveals a truth about motivation.

Or....

- ROLE=Nutrition Expert
- AUDIENCE= Middle School Students
- FORMAT=A 2 Minute speech
- TOPIC=What to eat in a healthy diet

Or...

- Role=Thomas Jefferson's Advocate
- Audience=Continental Congress
- Format=Limerick Praising JT
- Topic=Write a limerick that captures his heroic qualities

Or...

- ROLE= Decimal
- AUDIENCE=Fractions
- FORMAT=Dialogue
- TASK=Explain to decimals what decimals and fractions have in common.

Happy Endings

- ◆ Write-Around
- ◆ Exit Slips
- ◆ Sticky Notes-*Punch Lines*

Bigger RAFT Projects: SS

You are a newspaper reporter from the *Atlanta Constitution* covering the battle of Gettysburg. You have followed the battle and have now just listened to Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. Write a newspaper article for the people of Atlanta that will inform them of the results of the battle and its impact on the Confederate war effort. Describe the battle and its aftermath. Analyze the balance of power between the two sides as a result of the battle. Reflect on the sentiments of Unionists before and after Lincoln's speech.

Bigger RAFT Projects: Science

You are a biologist hired as a consultant to The Nature Conservancy. Create a brochure for the general public that explains the Greenhouse Effect and its impact on worldwide climatic conditions. Analyze current data on the effects of greenhouse gases and predict the consequences of widespread global warming. Propose alternatives to improve the situation that are consistent with current positions held by The Nature Conservancy.

	Daniel Pink: "The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us"
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6XAPnuFjJc	