

Introduction

In recent years, legislation has brought about big changes in education, especially with regards to the No Child Left Behind Act. How does this affect you, the primary teacher, and how does this affect the teaching of writing? Teaching writing begins in the primary grades and progresses up into the highest grades. Teachers know that writing success is a compilation of what the student has learned throughout the previous grades and is a reflection on every teacher who has instructed the child. Writing is also critical to all subjects, and we know that reading scores improve if writing improves. All academic areas require some assessments to be in the form of written response. And, ultimately, standardized tests, in which writing is increasingly assessed, affect all teachers and all students. We need to make our students feel confident in writing.

QuickWrites is a supplementary, nonfiction-writing program that is designed to teach and support students with the writing process. This program will engage students in writing based on high-interest topics. *QuickWrites* offers 48 writing prompts with topics to promote writing based on real-world experiences. Each card is designed so the students are asked specific questions that will assist them in their writing.

These prompts have been written to help your students learn how to write more effectively. The prompts are very teacher-friendly and can be used for guided, shared, or independent practice. The topics and questions provided will help your students think critically. The more practice they receive, the more confident and successful writers they will become.

The *QuickWrites* program is meant to enhance the writing skills of your students. The materials in the program, including teacher information, the prompts, and the CD, will assist your students with the support they need. The teacher pages provide instructions for using the prompts, setting up writing centers, lesson ideas, graphic ideas, technology tips, parent letters, scoring rubrics, student writing samples, student checklists, and grammar, usage, and mechanics guidelines. The prompts offer practical writing opportunities that are excellent practice and preparation for writing components on standardized tests.

Look for opportunities in your classroom to discuss and address current issues. Students are expected to call upon their studies, reading, personal experiences, and/or observations. Using these experiences can provide background for many writing assignments over time. After all, talking and discussing is where most writing begins.

Writing is essential for success in all subject areas as well as in daily life. Together with the existing writing curricula, *QuickWrites* can help support the teacher and motivate students to become better writers.

Sample Paragraph/Essay #3

Best-Loved Toys

Everyone has a favorite toy. It might be a stuffed bear that you have had since you were a baby or a video game that you got for your last birthday. A toy might have a special meaning because someone you love gave it to you. It might be your favorite because it is so much fun to play with. Even some grown-ups keep toys from when they were very young. Seeing that special toy can make a grown-up feel like a kid again!

Question:

What is your favorite toy?

Directions:

Think about the toys you have loved. Choose a toy that has been one of your favorites. Describe what the toy looks like and what it does. Who gave you the toy? Explain why that toy is so special to you.

Best-Loved Toys

My favorite toy is my car. I started to collect cars when I was little. Now I have a great collection. My friends come over, and we set up the tracks to run all around the backyard. We have a lot of dirt and no grass, so it's great to run the cars all over.

My car is really awesome because it has big tires on it and it can climb up the hills we made. We love to watch the cars crash and fall over, but my favorite thing to do is race one of my neighbor friends. Sometimes we end up playing all day.

When my mom can watch us, we can play in the street and then our cars go really fast. They seem to fly. But my favorite thing to do on a rainy day is to make an obstacle course in the house and run my car all over it. It drives my sister crazy!

My mom and dad gave me my car for Christmas, and it is my favorite toy. I love to play with it every day.

How to Be a Better Writer

What does it take to be a great writer? There are many things that you can do to improve your writing. Revising your work is the best idea!

Read Your Writing

- Does it sound clear and stay on one topic?
- Do you have a beginning, middle, and end?
- Does it have a good topic and concluding sentence?

Read It to a Partner or Friend

- Did they understand what you were saying?
- Did they have any suggestions or ideas to improve your writing?

Check for “Word Choice”

- Are there adjectives or descriptive words in your writing?
- Did you change any overused words (such as “like” and “then”)?
- Did you check the word wall or dictionary for better words?

Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics

- Do all of the sentences have a capital in the beginning and an ending mark?
- Is your writing clear, with spaces and indents?

Read Again!

Check one more time for a clear and fabulous paper!

Vacation at Home

Sometimes it is fun to go on vacation without leaving home. There might be places that are fun to visit not far from where you live. You might enjoy visiting some parks near your home or going to the library. Maybe you are lucky enough to live near a lake, river, or even the ocean! Some people live near amusement parks or zoos that other people drive for hours to visit. Maybe the state fair is even held in your hometown!



Question:

What are some fun places to visit near your home?



Directions:

Think about some fun things to do near your home. Write a letter to a friend who is coming to visit for the first time. Tell the friend about all the fun things you are planning to do together.

The Extra Mile

Has anyone ever asked you to “go the extra mile”? It might not have anything to do with walking or running a mile. When people ask you to go the extra mile, it usually means that they want you to do a little more than what is required of you. For example, if you are asked to empty the trash in the kitchen, then going the extra mile might mean to also empty the trashcans from the rest of the house, too. Another example of going the extra mile is to study extra hard so that you get an A on your test.



Question:

Can you think of a time when you went the extra mile?



Directions:

Write about a time when you did more than you had to. What did it feel like? Are you glad that you did it? Why?

Favorite Color

When you open a new box of crayons, what is the first color you reach for? It is probably your favorite color. Have you ever thought about why you like certain colors so much? Some people like colors that remind them of their favorite places or things. Blue might remind some people of the ocean or the sky. Maybe it makes them feel calm. Green might make some people think of an open field. Pink might be the color of a favorite dress. Maybe your favorite color just makes you feel good when you see it!

Question:

What is your favorite color and why?

Directions:

Think about why you like your favorite color. Does it remind you of something? How does it make you feel? Give reasons why it is your favorite.