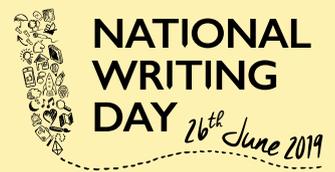


WRITE AWAY: SESSION GUIDANCE FOR TEACHERS



“In this place...”

Write Away! is a seven-minute freewriting exercise which invites anyone to compose a short piece. Developed by creative writing charity First Story and this year led by London Poet Laureate and NWD Ambassador, Laurie Bolger, this activity can be delivered on National Writing Day in schools across all Key Stages. We're trying to beat last year's records for numbers of people involved so please do share any photos of the process as you undertake this activity as well as your outcomes.

Introduction

Freewriting is a technique in which a person writes continuously for a set period of time without regard to spelling or grammar. You do not need to know in advance what you are going to write but this is a great way to get ideas and words down on paper. It produces raw material that can then be used and developed further. Equally, the spontaneity involved often results in unusual ideas and some wonderful and unexpected pieces of writing. The idea is to use a prompt and then write to that prompt to a set time and with no distractions. You should not take your pen or pencil off the paper, just keep writing!

Top tips:

Laurie Bolger's three top tips to this exercise are key to a successful freewrite:

1. **Don't think too hard** (*the less you overthink things the more the creativity will flow*)
2. **Nothing is Wrong** (*you do it your way, don't worry about making perfect sense the more you play and more you write the more fun it'll be to read*)
3. **Enjoy yourself!** (*you don't even have to show anyone this, this writing is for you, so let yourself go!*)



credit Caro Pak

Step one: Discussion

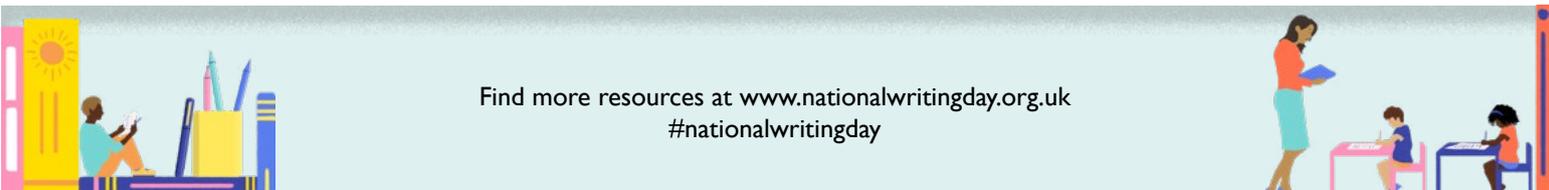
This activity could be adapted to suit the needs and abilities of your group. If you are doing this activity with younger students, perhaps consider decreasing the amount of time that students are freewriting to five minutes to help keep students on task.

A discussion element before the freewrite will help to build confidence of the students and familiarity with the different interpretations of place; whether real or imagined, future or present – and once completed, students will have a unique bank of words that they associate with place.

Step two: Seven-minute freewrite

Set a timer for seven minutes. Using the prompt, ask the students to follow the guidance and take part in the freewriting exercise starting with the line “In this place...”.

The prompts are intended to trigger both concrete and abstract associations as well as current associations and memories. Students may only choose to write about one thing or a number of things, the important thing is for them to add detail and really personalise their writing.



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Sharing:

The sharing aspect of this task allows students to not only explore the alternative perspectives of their peers but also to receive validation for their own work and help in identifying the areas that really resonate with the reader.

Students should not be told to share if they choose not to – some of the work generated might be very personal. However, we very often find that this sharing process and the acknowledgement it provides is a crucial step in building confidence.

Expanding on this task:

As outlined in the PowerPoint, there are several ways that this task can be followed up in a classroom setting. Students can select their most interesting line and use that to start another freewrite. Alternatively, students can be encouraged to develop their freewrite into an individual piece. You might also like to consider compiling favourite lines into a group poem on the theme of place. And students can share this freewrite exercise with friends and family and encourage them to get writing on National Writing Day!

Whatever route you choose, we would love to hear your outcomes so please do share them and photos if you can on social media via the following hashtags #nationalwritingday and #writeaway.

You can also find out more about National Writing Day and download additional classroom resources via our website www.nationalwritingday.org.uk



 **NATIONAL
WRITING
DAY** *26th June 2019*

Find more resources at www.nationalwritingday.org.uk
#nationalwritingday

