

Suggested Writing Activities

1. “Where I’m From”

- (see link in Chapter IV on Project-Based Learning Activities for lesson plan)

2. Silent Discussion

- Put large poster board or paper on wall. Write a question on it that may be an overall question you are posing as a guiding thought or essential question.
- Students respond to question on sticky notes.
- Revisit the question and responses in the middle of the semester (month, unit, etc.) then again at the end.
- You may want students to ask questions on different colored sticky notes at the various time periods.

3. Narrative for POV/Stance: Target, Bully, Ally, Bystander

- Writing in the perspective of one of the above from a text

4. Writing with artifacts

- Put up photos or artifacts or photos of artifacts around the room. Put students in groups of 4 to 5. Have them follow a numbered or lettered route for looking at the artifacts. As they look, they should be writing about what they are looking at...have them focus on the artifact and answer what it says to them/describe it. After they look at all of the artifacts, they should then meet as a group and share their responses to each. They can then relate their responses to the text from which the artifacts relate or were taken.

6. “Where I’ve Been”

- (Follow up to #1)

7. Ink Shedding

- Read a quote (poem, etc). Write a response on the paper responding to each of the five points: 1) Author is saying...2) Respond personally like I feel...I wonder...I wish...I agree...3) Take further...If only...or To do this, perhaps...4) Argue...Yes, but...5) End with a question. Raise hand and wait for someone else to raise hand. Silently exchange papers and respond to the original quote and the response and question from the first responder. Second person writes a response and leaves a question. Raise hand and repeat. Do four to five times. Can use one quote for whole group or several different quotes. Should take about 8 to 10 minutes. Share a few responses within a small group or class.

8. Clustering

- Write a word in the center of the page, then write what comes to mind. Make a cluster and look at potential topics. You can use a phrase for the center as well. You can create a poem or use your own words.
- Read a poem aloud once. Read same poem a second time and have students write down words/phrases from poem to create new poem... (see handout)

9. “Jamming With the Text”

- Using only the words of the text write a new sentence /use single words
- Another option is to write for two minutes (pens or pencils cannot leave the page) then increase time

Writing Historical Fiction

(handout)

Idea from text, Teaching for Joy and Justice by Linda Christianson

Example: Tulsa Race Riots of May 31-June 1, 1921 (African-American neighborhood of Greenwood in Tulsa, Oklahoma)

- Looking at historical pattern to explain contemporary issues
- What happened that night in Tulsa?

Opening Act=Mixer

1. On slips of paper, write down the roles of individuals involved in the riots. Give the name and a brief explanation of each character. Once every student has received a slip of paper with his/her character's information, give three to four minutes for students to read and underline key pieces of information about his/her character for second part of this assignment.
2. Students will "assume" the role of that individual. All students will get up and take paper/pencil for note-taking. Students will meet in small groups of three or four. Each will explain and defend his/her character's position. While one is talking, the others will take significant notes about that character. Each person in the small group must have a turn "assuming" their character's role. Give 15 to 20 minutes. Students may talk with other students in other groups as long as the characters are all different. (Reminders to students: Do not lean into a group to get information. Be a part of a group. Don't hand your slip to someone in the group to read. Become your character. Don't add untrue or unknown information into your role playing. Be as accurate as you can with the information you have on your slip of paper.
3. Come back to the desks and be prepared to share what you learned about other characters in your small group conversations. Discuss for ten to fifteen minutes, depending on the time you have left in your class.

Main Stage

1. Show a video clip of "The Night Tulsa Burned" on YouTube. There are several parts. As students watch, have them take down names of individuals, any unusual language used, what was happening. The more information they can write down, the better they will be able to use that in their historical fiction piece.
2. Students will then discuss what notes they took to create a kind of a bank of images, names, details, etc. from the video clip. These are what they can use as they write their piece. Other sources, such as historical documents, primary source documents, etc. can also be accessed at this point to help them write from a certain perspective.

Final Act

1. Writing pieces can be varied, depending upon your class.
2. A "I Am the Result of..." poem can be written about a character within the text then applied to themselves.
3. For the historical fiction, an essay from a point of view of a character can be written. For the Tulsa Race Riots, the piece could be written from one of the African American residents of Greenwood, one of the Tulsa Police, the white girl operating the elevator, the bullet fired from the gun, etc.
4. Sharing aloud in small groups is also one way to have students bring their voice to their writing.
5. These techniques can be adapted for many different types of texts in all grades of English.

