



Quarrybrook
EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION CENTER

Program Title: Creative Writing in the Forest

Audience: 4th-12th grade students

Program Theme: Students will use their time at Quarrybrook to gain inspiration and ideas in a pre-writing activity, for an assigned writing to be completed back in the classroom. Students will have the opportunity to experience stillness in the woods and have a chance to quiet their minds. The intention is to use nature to help focus one's mind and allow thoughts and ideas to surface for the purpose of a creative writing piece.

Program Goals: Students will be able to sit quietly in the woods, by themselves, and decompress from stimulation. This process will prove to be beneficial for brainstorming their ideas to create a story with the forest as the setting. The story created can be from the viewpoint of themselves or from the viewpoint of a specific species that could be found in the forest.

Common Core Connections:

Topic: Production and Distribution of Writing

Anchor Standards: 4, 5

Topic: Range of Writing

Anchor Standard: 10

Topic: Text, Type, and Purpose

Anchor Standard: 3

Program Outline:



Teachers are always welcome to make any classroom-connecting comments that contribute to student understanding. Teachers and other adults will be helpful in encouraging the participation of all students, and in assisting with the follow-through of directions.

Activity 1: WARM-UP – WRITING USING OUR SENSES (15-20 min.) – We will begin by expressing how we view the world we live in through our five senses. Students will be asked to write and reflect on their point of view.

Objectives: Students will reflect on their own world view. Students will write what they observe while using their five senses.

Intended Outcomes: Students will complete the prompts on the Five Senses worksheet and will share their view of the world with their classmates or teachers. Students will become focused for participation in the upcoming activities.

Activity 2: STARTING THE WRITING PROCESS (60-90 min.) – After students have reflected on and written about their own world, students will be led into the Quarrybrook forest to a sit spot. Students will sit quietly in one or more spots to observe and draw inspiration from the forest, and to make comparisons of their own world versus that of an animal or a tree. Students will use one of the optional graphic organizers offered to begin recording thoughts that will be used next to draft a story.

Objectives: Students will make observations in one or more areas of the forest at Quarrybrook, while sitting quietly. Students will record their observations in the form of a pre-writing activity.

Intended Outcomes: Spending time quietly in the woods will give students the opportunity to calm their minds and heighten their senses to make new observations. Students will draw inspiration from this time to imagine and create a new story.

Activity 3: DRAFTING (30-60 min.) – While in the forest, we will come back together as a group and review the parts of a story to be included in the students’ drafting of their work. Either in the forest or an indoor area, students will begin creating and drafting a story including deciding on the setting, characters, plot, and resolution. Combining their forest observations and their own imaginations should be fun for the students, to craft new stories possibly never thought of before.

Objectives: Students will begin to organize their ideas for a beginning, a middle, and an end to their story. Students will begin drafting or creating an outline from their pre-writing activity.

Intended Outcome: Students will tell their story through the written word. The beginnings of the drafting process at Quarrybrook will lead to a completed piece from a different viewpoint, that students will be proud of and excited to share.

Conclusion/Wrap-up: As the conclusion to this program, students and teachers will be asked to complete the writing process back at school in the classroom. Students will revise, edit, and proofread their writings and turn a final story in to their teachers. Teachers will be asked to mail copies of the final works back to Quarrybrook for our own feedback. It will give us information about the program, if it was useful, and how we may improve upon it in the future.