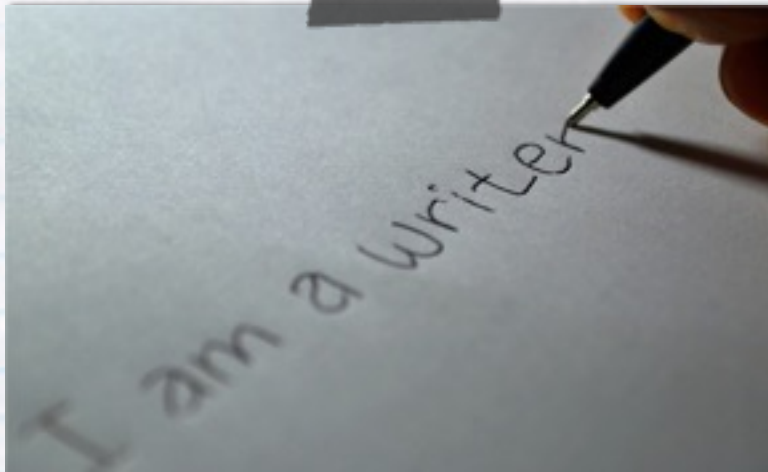


LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD

Writers Matter: Elementary Edition



WRITERS MATTER at La Salle University

Dr. Robert Vogel {Founding Director} & Kim Lewinski {Associate Director}

Compiled & Edited with Written Updates by Kelly Ann Coughlin & Allison Chorneiko

With Kimberly Lewinski

The Writers Matter approach is a motivational methodology used to get students interested in writing, recognize that they are writers, and improve the craft of writing. Throughout this book, students will discover ways to write about what they know best...themselves. When students write about their own lives, they become the expert of their writing putting the teacher in a supportive role. When students feel they are the experts of their writing, they are more invested and motivated to write more and improve the writing that they draft. Students should be given time to write, share, give and receive feedback, and publish their treasured pieces. In doing so, they will improve as writers but more importantly they will grow a greater appreciation and empathy for others in their class while listening and sharing the stories of their lives.



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INTRODUCTION

I... Am A Writer

Hello writer! Yes, I am talking to you, you are a writer. Regardless of what you've been told before, either positive or negative, **YOU ARE A WRITER**. Do you want to know how I know? Read the following questions and answer either yes or no to each of them.

Can you think?	yes or no
Can you feel?	yes or no
Do you have stories to tell?	yes or no
Can you put a pencil or pen to paper and write words?	yes or no
Can you draw pictures?	yes or no
Have you ever had something exciting happen to you?	yes or no
Have you ever been sad or let down?	yes or no
Can you speak or use sign language to communicate?	yes or no
Do you have any burning questions you'd like answered?	yes or no

Now how many times did you circle yes? Even if you only circled "yes" one time, it means you are a writer. You see, writing is any form of communication, either written or drawn, that expresses an idea, information, or a story.

You still don't believe me, try this. On page 5, there is a picture of a heart. Let's pretend this is a picture of your heart. I would like you to think of all the people, places, things, and activities that you love to do. Now, follow the next few steps in the order I write them.

1) I want you to either write or draw inside your heart all the things you can think of that you "love." This could be family, friends, pets, sports, places you like to go, places you've lived, or things you like to do or collect. There is no right or wrong answer, just what is in your heart. Make sure you have at least 10 things in your heart.

2) Next, I'd like you to turn and talk with another student or group of students and share some of the things you put in your heart. After you share, I want you to listen, really listen carefully, to what the other students share that is in their heart.

3) Did you hear something someone else said that maybe you could include in your heart? If so, add it now. Listening to other students' writing is a great way to get ideas for your own writing. And guess what, it's not cheating. I say, you just forgot to write it and your classmate reminded you.

I bet there are a lot of things in your heart. But life isn't always perfect and sometimes there are things that happen that we don't like. I'd like you to go back to your heart but this time on the outside of your heart, write or draw all the things that you don't like, that you REALLY don't like.

Again, share these things that you don't like with a student or group of students and don't be afraid to add things you hear from your classmates that you "forgot" to write.

Look at the masterpiece you created! I bet there are lots of things that are inside and outside of your heart. You may return to this heart at anytime that you think of more things that belong inside or outside of your heart.

Now I am curious, how many things do you have on the inside of your heart? _____

How many things do you have on the outside of your heart? _____

Remember when I told you, you are a writer? This just proves it. Look at all the ways you can think and feel. Look at all the activities you've done, the people you know, the places you've been. You are a writer because you just shared a lot about your heart in this book. Use this heart as a place to start if you are ever stuck on what to write about. When it's time to write and you think, "I have nothing to write about," return to this heart and use some of the ideas you've written or drawn about today to help you get started. **YOU ARE A WRITER! AND I BELIEVE IN YOU!**



Allow students to use this workbook along with the WRITERS MATTER journal to brainstorm, draft, and publish their writing. There is a space in the back of the book titled, "My Published Work" where students can publish or paste published pieces as a keepsake of all that they accomplished throughout the year.

Inside and Outside of My Heart



- Put a star next to three things that mean the most to you.
- Add some details to one of the things you starred.
- In your journal, write or draw about one of the things either inside or outside of your heart.

CHAPTER ONE

Who We Are



In this chapter, your students will begin by writing their own "I Am From" poem. This assignment is based on the poem "Where

I Am From" by the poet George Ella Lyon. Feel free to use the poem or any other resources you can find on her website. There are countless student examples of digital "I Am From" poems you can find on the internet to inspire your students' creativity. There is also an example of a fill-in "I Am" poem template if you feel that your students would benefit from starting with that first!

Now that you have an idea of what **being a writer** is all about, you are ready to take on the "I Am From" and "We Are From" writings.

- The first piece, "I Am From," gives you the opportunity to explore the things that matter the most to you and the people, places, and events that make you unique. Here you want to focus on using rich and descriptive language that shows, or helps the reader visualize, what you are describing.
- The second piece, "We Are From," gives you the chance to build a community with the other students in your classroom by choosing your favorite line from your personal "I Am From" poem and combining it with other students in order to show the diversity of everyone around you.

Now it is time to really "dig in" and read some examples of real student "I Am From" pieces! Just like you, these students brainstormed a list of items to include in their poems, added details to each of these items to create vivid descriptions, and organized their thoughts to create a complete "I Am From" piece.

As you read each of the journal entries, feel free to write notes in the margins. (This book is yours!) Then, answer the questions that follow the piece. These questions will also help you in writing your own "I Am From."

Journal #1

Where I Am From (4th Grade)

MY FAMILY:

I am from a family where there are 6 people that I live with such as my mother, father, 2 sisters, and my 2 cats. I am a girl whose mom is 38 years old. My father is 38 years old. My little sister is 7 years old. My big sister is 18. I am a girl who's part of the family and makes it have 7 people. I am 10 years old and my name is Kayla.

MY FRIENDS:

I am a person surrounded by friends. I am coming from friends who are my favorite. I am from friends who are half part of my family. I am from friends whose names are Asia, Anita, Scarlet, Jazmyne, Alycia, Zakiah, Nevach, Ashanti, Katie, Jessica, and others. I am from friends who are important to me, just like my family.

FOOD:

I am from a family that has cultural foods. I am from a girl whose foods are tacos, corned beef, pork chops, steak, sushi, and lettuce wraps. There is meat inside the lettuce wraps. I am from foods that are delicious and divine.

MY CULTURE:

I am a girl who was born in Philadelphia. I am a girl whose culture is Philadelphia. I am African-American. I am a girl whose family is from Philadelphia.

THINGS I WONDER ABOUT:

I am a person who wonders about things. I am a girl who wonders if my mom is going to give away the newborn kittens from our cat, Misty.

FEARS:

I am a girl who has fears about her family. I am scared if my family gets robbed or shot.

DREAMS:

I am from dreaming in the future of what I wanna be. I am dreaming of being rich and famous.

THINGS I HEAR:

I am from the relaxing and annoying sounds. I am hearing ocean breezes, school bells ringing, and people driving in cars.

1) How is this writer's life similar to yours?

2) How is it different?

Curriculum Connection:

3) Which type of figurative language could be added to this line: "I am hearing ocean breezes, school bells ringing, and people driving in cars"?

Journal #2

I Am From (4th Grade)

I am from countless hours of me in front of the laptop talking to faces I do not see.

I am from a family with kindness.

I am from my favorite restaurant with the aroma of noodle soup.

I am from the many friends and cyber friends that I talk with.

I am from the fear, the fear of things watching and noises in the night.

I am from the games I play with people.

I am from countless hours of me playing Team Fortress 2 and Roblox.

I am from many game names.

I am from the taste of noodle soup.

I am from wonders.

I am from the many lectures I get.

I am from the inspiring books I read.

I am from the games on the Ipad.

I am from a family who gave me anything.

Journal #3

I Am From (6th Grade)

I am from a family of many

From a family that has raised me

Not one, but two, that I love daily

I am from a mother and a father

That have encouraged me to be the girl that I am

now I am from hardworking people

And three loving pets

I am from God and am truly grateful

I am from praying each night for success

From knowing that I am blessed

I am from the past, present, and a bright future

I am from life right at my fingertips

From Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram

From the social connections of friends

I am from just being me

From living life the way that I see

I am from a world filled with hope

From trying to right others' bad decisions

I am from Philadelphia

From returning to Brotherly Love

I'm leaving behind the hate

1) How are the lives of these poets similar and how are they different?

Curriculum Connection:

2) Write one example of figurative language from either of the poems.

Journal #4

I Am From (4th Grade)

I am from a family that tells jokes.
I am from loving and caring friends.
I am from a beautiful family.
I am from friends who give me things.
I am from a strong family.
I am from friends who have talents.
I am from a football and basketball family.
I am from a friend who created a team.
I am from an independent family.
I am from a plum family.
I am from a family that speaks two languages.
I am from a family who loves junk food.
I am from a family who loves pizza.
I am a lovable and caring person.
I am from a bad neighborhood.
I am from a place with only violence.
I am from a place where you have to be tough.
I am from North Philly.
I fear demons because they possess you.
I dream of being a construction worker.
I hear paper moving.
I fear teachers because they talk too much.
I dream about wealth.
I hear people talking about money.
I fear snakes because they are poisonous.
I dream about where I live.
I hear babies crying.
I fear demons.
I dream about school being fun and only 2 hours a day.
I dream about the Earth.
I fear God's strongest level of anger.

1) Do you think the author does a good job of showing and not telling the reader about themselves? Why or Why not?

Curriculum Connection:

2) What do you think it means when the author says, "I am from a plum family"?

Journal #5

I Am From (3rd grade)

I am from my mom and my grandmom, my two most favorite people in the whole universe.

I am from my great great great grandmom who I truly miss. She is in heaven watching over me.

I am from an extended family of older relatives and uncles who love and care for me, and that I can always count on.

I am from the City of Brotherly Love called Philadelphia, a place where they have big playgrounds, cheesesteaks, Rita's Water Ice, Gamestop, Penn's Landing and the Schuylkill River.

I am from Farley Street where we have block parties, great neighbors, great friends to play with, and a block where people care.

I am from Lowell Elementary, where I have education, great teachers, great friends and the STS program

Journal #6

I Am From (3rd grade)

I am from a family, who is sad and happy all day, but you may talk to us, you may.

I am from my friends; they are my light, and they give me all my powerful might.

I am from Vietnam; we like to eat rice, but we do not like to eat things like mice.

I am from a house where there is happiness and fun, but it may turn to sadness and death.

I am from a place with a religion; my God is Buddah and he soothes us.

I am from a school that is fun and happy, but some people are sappy.

I am from a song that "Marries her anyway," and it is true love everyday.

I am from a neighborhood that is beautiful every day, and if there is trash it is still pretty anyway.

My most prized possession is life, and without it I will die.

1) How are the lives of these two writers the same? How are they different?

2) What is one line from either Journal #5 or #6 that you can make a connection with? Explain why.

Curriculum Connection:

Did you enjoy the writer's use of rhyme in Journal # 6? Why or why not?

Journal #7

I Am From (3rd grade)

I am from a warm and cozy bed to a tired lazy night.

I am from a cold windy winter to a hot sunny day.

I am from my caring mom and dad who believe in me and an older sister and a younger brother who keep me company.

I am from a giant school with many classes and two principals plus a caring and helpful teacher.

I am from China where I speak Chinese and from Philadelphia where I speak English, I also love where I come from.

I am from an old street to a beautiful new one.

I am from a curious family who thinks a lot like...How were numbers made? & How was nature created?

I am from a strong family who doesn't give up.

I am from a hardworking family who has to take care of me.

I am from a family who cares and supports me when they cook for me.

I am from unhealthy food to a bad stomach.

Journal #8

I Am From (3rd grade)

I am from a world of adventure.

I am from a place where honking cars sound like gun shots.

I am from a place where I'm never home and always traveling.

I am from a place where my nickname is Khi, Khi Khi.

I am from a place: 5th -in-Godfrey and 20th Street.

I am from a place where my barber knows how to cut my hair.

I am from a place where my favorite song is "Happy".

I am from a place where not-I-but-3 raised me.

I am from a place where on the weekends I play my Xbox 360!

I am from a place where there is no need to fear.

I am from a place where my family loves me!

Journal #9

I Am From (3rd grade)

I am from the country of Haiti that is a big blur of really just nothing
I am from my prized possessions which are my friends' feelings.
I am from being alone in the dark and scary things on TV
I am from my friends to my enemies then back to my friends again
I am from songs to awesome TV shows
I am from little to old
I am from blue skies to winter passing by
I am from being lazy to being crazy
I am from smart and bold to small and cold
I am from open doors to many stores
I am from books to very angry crooks
I am from blisters to little sisters
I am from lasagna to mac and cheese
I am from big trees to hurt knees
I am from learning is fun to Oh I am so so so bummed

1) Notice this poet's technique of using comparisons in most lines: "I am from ____ to ____". Which comparison line do you like best?

2) Curriculum Connection:

There are several examples of rhyme in this poem. Choose one line, circle the two words that rhyme, and discuss the line's meaning.

"I Am" Poem



If you'd like to begin with this template in order to begin brainstorming ideas for the "I Am From" poem, have your students highlight at least 5-10 character traits using the chart on the next page. The students will use those traits for the "I am..." lines. Check out the student examples and character trait silhouette project as well on the pages that follow.

I am...

I am	_____
I believe	_____
I want	_____
I am	_____
I feel	_____
I wonder	_____
I worry	_____
I am	_____
I understand	_____
I try	_____
I hope	_____
I am	_____

To begin your writing, look at the list of character traits listed below. Using a highlighter or pencil, choose ten character traits that can be used to describe you.

Sample Character Traits

able	demanding	hopeless	restless
active	dependable	humorous	rich
adventurous	depressed	ignorant	rough
affectionate	determined	imaginative	rowdy
afraid	discouraged	impatient	rude
alert	dishonest	impolite	sad
ambitious	disrespectful	inconsiderate	safe
angry	doubtful	independent	satisfied
annoyed	dull	industrious	scared
anxious	dutiful	innocent	secretive
apologetic	eager	intelligent	selfish
arrogant	easygoing	jealous	serious
attentive	efficient	kindly	sharp
average	embarrassed	lazy	short
bad	encouraging	leader	shy
blue	energetic	lively	silly
bold	evil	lonely	skillful
bored	excited	loving	sly
bossy	expert	loyal	smart
brainy	fair	lucky	sneaky
brave	faithful	mature	sorry
bright	fearless	mean	spoiled
brilliant	fierce	messy	stingy
busy	foolish	miserable	strange
calm	fortunate	mysterious	strict
careful	foul	naughty	stubborn
careless	fresh	nervous	sweet
cautious	friendly	nice	talented
charming	frustrated	noisy	tall
cheerful	funny	obedient	thankful
childish	gentle	obnoxious	thoughtful
clever	giving	old	thoughtless
clumsy	glamorous	peaceful	tired
coarse	gloomy	picky	tolerant
concerned	good	pleasant	touchy
confident	graceful	polite	trusting
confused	grateful	poor	trustworthy
considerate	greedy	popular	unfriendly
cooperative	grouchy	positive	unhappy
courageous	grumpy	precise	upset
cowardly	guilty	proper	useful
cross	happy	proud	warm
cruel	harsh	quick	weak
curious	hateful	quiet	wicked
dangerous	healthy	rational	wise
daring	helpful	reliable	worried
dark	honest	religious	wrong
decisive	hopeful	responsible	young

"I Am" Template & Character Trait Silhouettes

Here is an example of an I Am... Poem Template written by a third grader:

I Am...

I am respectful

I believe everyone should be responsible

I want to be hard-working

I am gentle

I feel humble

I wonder if anyone is honest

I worry about hyperactive people

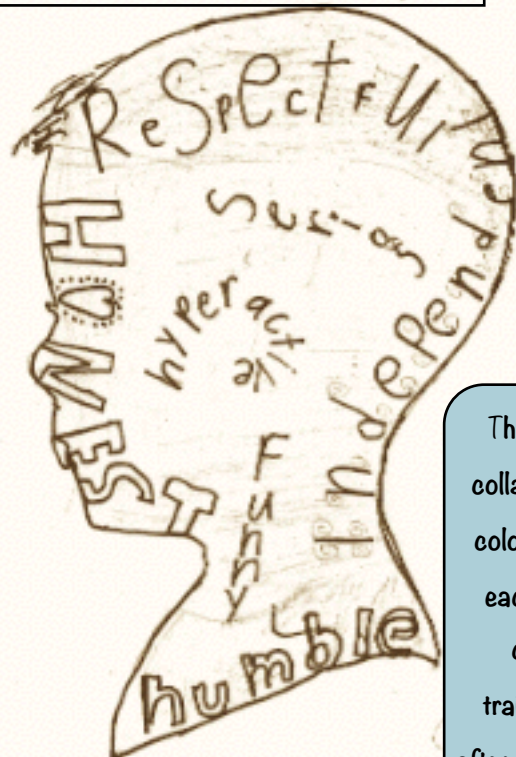
I am independent

I understand people like a mysterious detective

I try to help people with fair words

I hope I am glamorous

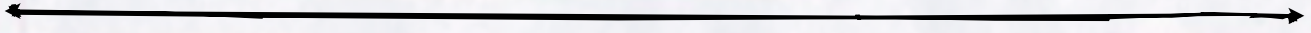
I am funny and serious



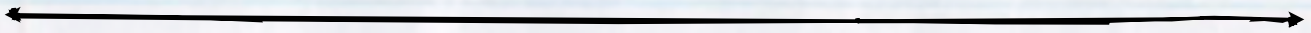
This silhouette collage is done in color to highlight each student's character traits before or after completing the "I Am" template.

STAND OUT LINES from "I Am" Poems

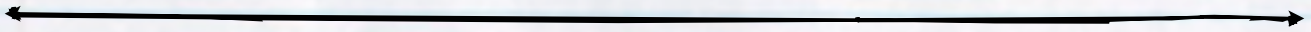
"I believe in my future and in God
I understand that everyone has different ways of doing things"



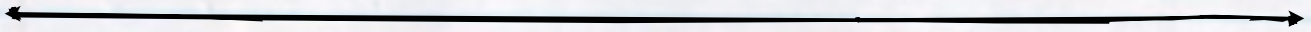
"I wonder what's at the end of the rainbow"



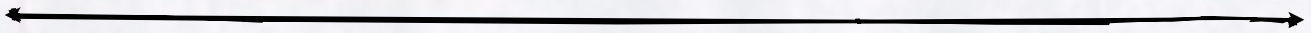
"I want to be right and have the power to do whatever I want"



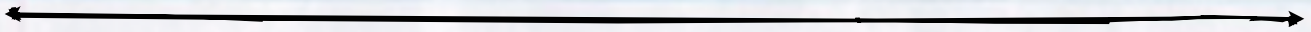
"I want to be an animal saver"



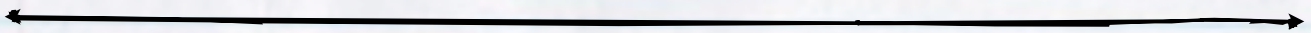
"I am always ambitious in school
I worry about other people who are lonely
I understand that everyone is special in their own way"



"I hope that life turns out great"



"I believe I can do anything if I try"



* Now it's your turn to fill in your "I Am" Template on p. 13. *

Character Trait Silhouettes

DIRECTIONS: In the silhouette below, practice writing your top 5-8 character traits that best describe you. Use the examples on page 15 as inspiration.



"I Am From" Brainstorming

DIRECTIONS: In the boxes below, write details that fit into each category. Remember to write down your thoughts as they come to you. You will be given a chance to organize them later on in the writing process.

My Family

My Friends

Foods I Like or Have A Lot at Home

My Culture/Religion

My Hobbies/After School Activities

My Favorite Line from My Favorite Song

Nickname

My Favorite Movie or TV Show

"I Am From" Brainstorming (continued)

Meaning of My Name

My Neighborhood

Things I Wonder About or Question

My Fears

My Dreams for the Future

Things I Hear When I'm On My Block

My Most Prized Possession

My Values/Morals/Beliefs

Family Sayings/Other Languages Spoken

Any Other Important Details About You

“I Am From” Student Writing

Now that you have completed your brainstorming and have identified many of the items that make you unique, you are ready to expand on your ideas. As you read examples of the “I Am From” poems from other students on the previous pages, you will notice that they are very descriptive. In other words, rather than just telling you about their lives, they show you in the way that they use their words. For example, in Journal #2, the student wrote:

“I am from countless hours of me in front of the laptop talking to faces I do not see.”

Rather than simply telling us that he talks to people on the computer, the student helps us to visualize his hobby by telling us that he talks to faces that “he does not see”. The way this line is written also happens to convey a feeling of loneliness. Now it’s your time to review and revise your writing. Use a few of your ideas from the Brainstorming Guide and use vivid descriptions to help us “see” where you are from. Use the example to help you if needed.

My Idea: I am from playing basketball.

My Revised Line with Description: I am from loud whistles and even louder cheers, from broken bleachers and three-point swooshes through the rim.

My Idea: _____

My Revised Line with Description: _____


My Idea: _____

My Revised Line with Description: _____

My Idea: _____

My Revised Line with Description: _____

Now it’s time to dig deeper and start drafting your “I Am From” poem. Revisit your HEART, your BRAINSTORMING GUIDE, your “I AM” TEMPLATE, and your REVISED LINES ABOVE to capture who you are in your poem.



Feel free to use this space to jot down some lines from your “I Am From” poem that you would like some help with. Share with your peers or teacher for feedback.

"We Are From" Brainstorming



The "We Are From" class poem is a combination of each student's individual "I Am From" poem. As a class, students will be able to work together to create a poem that celebrates the characteristics that make each member unique. I strongly suggest making a copy of your class's "We Are From" poem for each child to take home and post as a source of pride. See the third grade example of a "We Are From" poem on the next page.

In order to write the "We Are From" poem, you are going to choose your favorite line from your own "I Am From" poem, revise it, and put the lines together to create a whole class poem.



My Favorite Line: _____

My REVISED favorite line: _____

Did you...

1. Use language that "shows" not "tells"?
2. Use figurative language?
3. Include important character traits (if needed)?
4. Ask 3 classmates to review your work?

"We Are From" Third Grade Class Example

I am from a cozy but dark stomach where you could never be scared

I am from my family believing in me and me believing in myself

I am from a peaceful and elegant place where angels in heaven are always with me

I am from the beach where I feel very relaxed and sometimes my brother pushes me in the water for no reason

I am from the country of Haiti that is a big blur of just nothing

I am from ones that love me the most

I am from where I win every single game, I win all the time

I am from a mom and dad who fight for people who are mean to me

I am from a family who is lazy

I am from a little brother who is cute and playful

I am from a dark house at night but the dining room with a little bright light and my teddy bear Brownny who was always in my arms, he was my favorite teddy bear ever, I still have him

I am from a family who celebrates every holiday

I am from my mom's cooking, it is my favorite

I am from Ms. Coughlin, who makes me happy and some other people like Emma, Jaiden, and Emilio

I am from the USA because I'll always stand up for my country

I am from two great aunts that love to play music and who both sing lullabies to me when they sleep over, they give me courage

I am from my dad, who loves me and buys me a basketball so we can play together

I am from my favorite friend who lives in an apartment and is in room 101, her name is Emma

I am from a cat that I love

I am from the most used emotions: joy, anger, and sadness. Joy is used when somebody is happy, anger is used when someone is making fun of me, and sadness is used when someone dies

I am from having friends that bring my memories back to when I was in kindergarten

I am from playing soccer, kicking the ball into the air with my soft cleats

I am from friends who love and care about me because they show me their love

I am from the caring, brave, and friendly part of me

I am from my baby brother waking me up while I snooze in my quiet peaceful room

I am from a warm cozy bed to a tired lazy night

I am from my friends that are my light, they give me all my powerful might

I am from clear eyes, full hearts, can't lose

CHAPTER TWO

CHALLENGES









In this chapter, your students will brainstorm the challenges they experienced in life so far. The first writing exercise will be a story/essay about a personal challenge. The second will be an advice letter geared to other students their age on how to deal with a particular challenge. I strongly suggest using the book Bugs in My Hair by: Catherine Stier as an introduction to the Advice Letter Assignment. At the very end of Stier's book, there is an advice letter from the main character, Ellie, that I used an example for my students.

Even as an elementary age student, you have had to deal with challenges. All people go through challenges! A challenge is something that steps in your way, a problem that may be tiny or it may be large. This chapter will allow you to think about a challenge you've been through or a challenge you're going through now.

As you begin brainstorming for your next piece of writing, consider many of the topics that affect students your age. Here's what you're going to do:

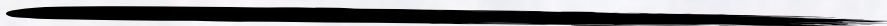
- On the following page, read each of the challenges listed in the left hand column of the table.
- Then, in the right hand column of the table, write down any ideas or examples of how this challenge has affected you. {If this challenge hasn't affected you, think about how it may have affected other people your age.}
- Try to include as much detail as possible.
- Remember you do not have to write in complete sentences, just write ideas!

Challenges Brainstorming

CHALLENGE TOPIC	GIVE AN EXAMPLE OF ANY KIND OF CHALLENGE RELATING TO THAT TOPIC
FAMILY 	
FRIENDS 	
SCHOOL 	
HEALTH 	
PETS 	
TEAM/CLUB 	
COMMUNITY/ NEIGHBORHOOD 	

Personal Challenge

After brainstorming your ideas, you may want to discuss what you have written with a partner, your teacher, or in a small group. Choose ONE of your topics from page 25 to write a story about the challenge that you have been through. Remember to use an interesting opening, specific details, and a conclusion to wrap everything up. Please use the space below to brainstorm or to write your rough draft.



Journal #10 (4th grade)

Have you ever had a day that made you so sad that it ruined your whole year? That day for me was the day my dog, Nellie, ran away; well at least we thought she ran away. It was an early August morning in 2015. The sun was hot, the day was lazy, and my dog was by my side as usual. My sister, Kim, was waiting for her friend to pick her up for camp. She left a little after 8 am and I heard the screen door slam shut. Nellie ran to the door to wave bye to my sister with her cute puppy dog eyes. She must have seen a squirrel or something run by and the next thing I hear is the screen door slam shut again. I ran as fast as I could from the kitchen to my front door fearing that Kim had not shut the door all the way. Nellie had bolted out the door as fast as lightning. I saw her running down the street. I ran barefoot down my front steps to the steaming sidewalk yelling at the top of my lungs, "Nelliiieee! Come back here!" I watched her tail turn the corner. I panicked but realized she had her name tag on with all of our information. The next five minutes were the longest of my life: waiting, running from one end of the block to another, calling my friend two streets away to look for little Nellie, and hoping that someone, anyone, would find her. Crying on my front steps, I looked up to find an older man with gray hair walking Nellie towards me. Nellie ran into my arms. I never hugged my dog so tight before in my life. Nellie was home and that's all I cared about at that very moment. My anger at her running out the door melted away and pure love filled my heart.

Journal #11 (5th grade)

Running off the green grassy field that day, I had a bad feeling, a feeling that I wasn't going to make the soccer team. I worked all week at practice dribbling, passing, and scoring. Okay, I wasn't the best on the team, but I knew I wasn't the worst. Coach Bob told us that he could only keep 18 players. 25 of us tried out. I got a ride home on the last day of tryouts with my friend Megan's mom. She asked all of us, "Welllll, how did it go girls?" Megan was filled with excitement and said, "Mom, it was so much fun! I scored 2 goals today! I can't wait to play for Fox Chase!" Her mom said, "Well, sweetie, how about you? Did you have fun?" I answered in a much less excited voice than Megan; "Yeah, it was okay, I guess. I had a lot of fun, but I'm worried that I won't make the cut." She told us not to worry and we'd both probably make it. Coach Bob had all of our parents' emails. He said he would email the team roster by 5 pm that night. My stomach felt like little roller coasters were riding around inside of it. The email came at 4:30. My dad called me into the kitchen and showed me the new roster for the team. I was #19 on the list, I was an alternate. That means if any girl from #1-#18 doesn't commit to the team, I'm on. My dad told me to never give up and to continue to work hard. The lesson I learned from trying out for the soccer team was to always work hard for what you want, and if it doesn't work out the first time, it doesn't mean it will never work out.

1) What were the challenge topics that were written about in Journal #10 and #11?

Curriculum Connection:

2) Name at least one theme/lesson in either Journal #10 or #11.

Journal #12 (4th grade)

A challenge that I have is my dad being in jail. My dad was convicted for murder. My dad being in jail took a real effect in my life. I was only 6 and in kindergarten. When my dad got locked up, I started to get in a lot of fights. I was being disrespectful to the teachers. I wasn't listening to my mom.

And then I started thinking, why am I messing up? It wasn't going to get my dad out of jail and it wasn't going to make my family feel good and it wasn't going to make me feel good. Then my dad called and said he loved me. That made me want to do better. And then I found out my dad was in prison for life. My mom said they had no proof besides my dad was at the scene.

I'm trying to do better, but sometimes it's hard. My message to kids is don't follow in my past footsteps because it's going to leave you in jail. Don't let things that happen to you control you. That's my message.

Journal #13 (3rd grade)

One of my personal challenges are when my mom and dad argue. My sister and I argue but not the way my mom and dad argue. They scream and it hurts hearing my parents argue. They say they are a team, but I begin to think they are lying. I get scared because I don't want my mom and dad to split up and every time they argue I write them a note. My mom always gets the note and talks to me about it. One of my notes said, "If you must live in different houses to make the family better, then do it for me and my siblings." I didn't want them to but if it helps, I would like them to do it. Having to see this is horrible. They scream and yell. I pray that they don't go to jail. It is hard every week having my mom and dad take turns watching us. Only sometimes they both stay home and I like that, but I wish that they would be here with me, my sister, and my brother every week. My mom is a principal so she isn't home all the time. She has meetings and sometimes my dad struggles without her, but he doesn't tell us that because he doesn't want us to know. I hate seeing them apart instead of together; it doesn't feel right to me. I need them to tell me the truth even though I might not understand. I am the youngest in the house so I'm lonely sometimes. I have brothers and a sister and a friend who feels like my black brother from another mother. He helps me in life and he has put his wonderful skill and soul into me. We are The Brothers Of Destruction. My brother is a gamer and he plays a lot of games with me and he helps me get better in games and things in my life. My sister is the one that has no problem playing with me and that makes me happy. My mom and dad are getting along better and I still love them no matter what. They say, "Every time we argue, it is not your fault or because of you or your brother and sister." My mom and dad are doing their best as parents and I wouldn't want any other type of parent besides the best ones I have. They both help, feed me, give me warmth, keep me safe, and make sure I have a good education. My mom and dad probably argue, but at the end of the day we are a family and family sticks together because blood is thicker than water. My mom is like no other when she is in the kitchen or when she is a principal suspending students. My dad is like no other when he is on a mission to build an aircraft and when he makes TACOS! No matter what happens they will always be there for me.

ADVICE LETTER ASSIGNMENT



I started this assignment by introducing my students to “Dear Abby”--its origins and examples of letters. In addition to “Dear Abby”, we had read Bugs in My Hair by: Catherine Stier and focused on Ellie’s advice letter at the end. I set up posters with each of the topics listed on page 25 and had students rotate in small groups making lists of their challenges on each poster. After our poster work, we discussed the topics and wrote about a personal challenge in detail. Then, we began practicing how to answer and write a helpful advice letter after learning how to format a friendly letter. Finally, we began our individual assignment by doing a gallery walk of the posters and choosing ONE topic, one that they felt passionate about, to write their own advice letter to students their own age. See the examples of the original advice letters from third graders. Feel free to make this lesson your own.

After writing about a challenge you’ve been through, now look back at the **CHALLENGES** you’ve listed and all the **CHALLENGES** your classmates listed, choose **ONE CHALLENGE** that you feel most **PASSIONATE** about! This time you’re going to give someone your age some **ADVICE**!

To be **PASSIONATE about something means:

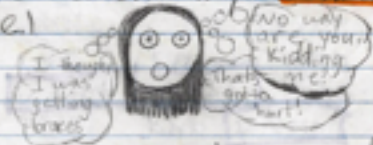
- You **CARE DEEPLY** about it
- It may make you **ANGRY** when you think about it
- It may make you **EXCITED** to share what you’ve been through
- You **FEEL THE NEED** to talk or write about the topic

I AM MOST PASSIONATE ABOUT THIS TOPIC:

How to deal with a RETAINER

Dear Kid who has to get a **retainer**

If you need to get a **retainer** don't **FREAK**. Here's a picture when my **orthodontist** told me!




If you're going to need a **retainer**, your **orthodontist** will put two **rubberbands** in your teeth in your top corner teeth. But if it falls out tell your **orthodontist**; he or she will **replace** it.

When it's time your **orthodontist** will take the rubber bands out and put in the **retainer**; you might feel pressure as he or she is

pushing it in. But when you have a **retainer** or rubber bands, you can't eat any-thing **hard**, **sticky** or **chewy** and hard stuff such as **gum, pizza, turkey, any kind of gummies, and lolly lolly cotton candy and last jaw breakers**.

For **brushing** your teeth you will get a **toothbrush** that you have to brush the **top right and left corner** of your teeth for **30 seconds** and you have to brush your **bottom left and right corner** for **30 seconds** too.

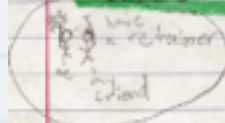
You will get a thing like this  only use it when **brushing** somewhere

on your **teeth** hurts. You **roll** it into a ball, and place it where it **hurts**. Take it off when it's time to eat. Remember to keep it away from your **younger BROTHERS and SISTERS**. 😊 😊

I know it might **hurt** but you have to keep **calm** and you'll get used to it and it will be **taken out soon**.

Just remember don't feel left out just because other people can eat something you can't eat. Having a **retainer** can be hard but sometimes things like this happen.

You might feel like you're the only one who has a **retainer**. ~~I thought that too~~ but don't think that. Think this → **there's always somebody a by your side**.



My friend the



sincerely,
a girl
from room
101.

Journal # 15 (3rd grade)

Dear kid who is sick,
If you are sick
for almost 2 weeks and have to go
to the hospital really late at night
you don't have to be
scared. 3:01
It happened to me
once! If you can be sad
but it's a part of life.
You can think of butterflies
and rainbows. If you're
with your dad he will make you
smile. If you get tired
you could always go to sleep
maybe dream about owls
and other things to do in the hos-
pital. 1 Do not think about
it. 2 Think of your freindship
3 Think of the luck you have
When I was in the hospital,
I did some of these things.
I also thought of my favorite
animal which is a horse.

you might have
to take med. can't
don't we try
it will taste OK
no

from,
a kid
that was
just like
you

1) What was the best piece of advice from Journal #14?

2) What piece of advice from Journal #15 could you relate to the most?

Journal #16 (3rd Grade)

How to Stay Calm when SOMEONE DIES

Family challenge Feb. 23, 2016
Dear kid who just found out
that one of your family members died
It's OK don't cry because it's
gonna make you cry even more
But when my grandma died, I
cried in my bed and I even
in my class I'd cry. Then I
think to myself:

IT'S OK.



Step 1 → Read a book to calm you
down and it can keep your
mind in a peaceful mode because
it always works for the mind.

Step 2 → Whatever you can do don't
ruin that moment or else it
will you sad again and then
your screwed up.

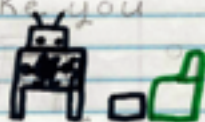
Step 3 → Eat a **Cookie** so that can
make you happy for ever and
when I mean for ever I
mean **FOREVER.**



Step 4 → Think about a **memory** that
you've been through with
that person that died but

just re-think that memory
but make it into a core
memory, so you'll not be sad
for like I guess the first
two weeks.

Step 5 → Watch TV to make you
relax for awhile:



Step 6 → Dress up with your friends
and play with with them.



Then after you've completed all
of these steps then you're
all good. ☺

Sincerely,
your friend
in rm 101

How to deal with a friend rejecting you

Dear Kid who got rejected by your friend,



I got rejected too, it was an experience I had when I was in 2nd grade I felt very sad and upset. My good friend in 2nd grade has new friends in 3rd grade. Now I feel upset because he plays with his new friends now instead of me. Here are some tips I can give you. Also, if he can have new friends so can I.

- ① If he or she says **mean** things, ignore and walk away from them.
- ② If they try to hurt you, defend yourself the best you can.
- ③ When they start to get **meaner**, tell a relative or an adult at your school.
- ④ If they trick you and you just realized, tell them to stop tricking you.

⑤ If they tell you to do something bad, don't do it, you might get expelled.

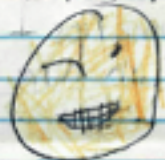
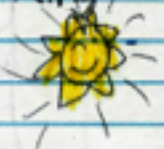
⑥ If they boss you around don't obey them.

That's how I got through my experience.



Sincerely,
The JDM King (AKA)

P.S. Gooooood
uuuuuuck!!!

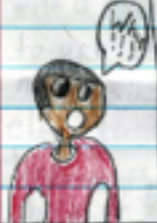


How to deal with a Friend Lost?

Dear kid who lost a friend,

Hi I know you might be stressed out, but here's a picture of me when I lost my friend.

I'll give you steps to deal with a friend lost.



1. Ask Your FRIEND Why They're Not Your Friend

2. Don't be stubborn

3. Play with another kid, don't feel left out.

4. If you can't find a friend you've got family.

These steps I gave you will really be helpful if you try them out. If they don't work

DON'T WORRY! I got you covered. *!!!!!! but, getting new friends isn't that easy.

You have to tell some funny jokes and riddles like knock knock jokes, and if they



say "Hey kid you're really funny, I wanna be your friend," then accept the friend request. And kid, that's my way how to deal with a friend lost. And if you don't want to use these facts, that's ok, I know how you feel. If you want to use someone else's facts. If you're a girl think of happiness and sunshine. If you're a boy think of cool things @ @ * @ @. If it'll make you feel better, play on a game system eat something and also try to distract yourself.

Sincerely,

Your friend from em.
101

Now try writing your own **ADVICE LETTER** in your journal. Here is a checklist that may be helpful to you as a writer (or as a teacher) to help guide you to write the best advice letter you can. If some of this is too much for you, choose a few that might be helpful for you to focus on. Have fun, be creative, and be helpful.

ADVICE LETTER WRITING ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST

Did you...

[FORMAT]

- start your letter with the date at the top right hand side
- begin your letter with Dear _____,
- indent your first line of the body of your letter
- introduce your challenge at the start of your letter
- end your letter with a **CLOSING** like Sincerely, Your Buddy, etc. (should line up with the date on the right hand side)
- sign your letter with a **CODE NAME** (not your real name)-- you could use the code name "Your Friend in the Third Grade"

[CONTENT]

- give at least **3** examples of your experience with the challenge (either through your feelings or your actual experience)
- give facts that could help deal with the challenge (**IF IT WAS A HEALTH CHALLENGE**)
- give at least **2-3** pieces of **ENCOURAGING** advice to help the person get through this challenge

[VOICE & CONVENTIONS]

- add some humor to make the person laugh
- write in kid-friendly words (**IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU ARE TALKING TO A KID YOUR AGE**)
- add little sketches/doodles to add **UMPH** to your letter
- highlight/ **BOLD**/ underline/ **ADD COLOR**/ box/ circle **KEY WORDS** that you want to stick out to the reader

CHAPTER THREE

Light in The World

After reading about the challenges of other students your age, it's time to bring some **LIGHT**



into your writing. There's so many different cultural holidays that are celebrated throughout the year, particularly during the winter holiday. Most of them include **LIGHT** in some important way. If someone or something brings **LIGHT** into your life, usually that means that they did something to make us happy or to cheer us up. In this chapter, you are going to think about how you bring **LIGHT** into the world or how someone else shines some **LIGHT** into your life.

Draw someone or something bringing **LIGHT** into your life, whether it is during a winter holiday you celebrate or just in everyday life.



For this assignment, I found an amazing FREE Light Unit on Teachers Pay Teachers published by Jennifer Martinez. To get the complete unit, please go to her website: everythingjustso.org. On this page and the next, I included 12 task cards that you can use to drive this

assignment. Feel free to use them as free writes or as a student choice board. I had my students publish their final essay of their favorite Light Task Card on the beautiful paper Jennifer provides in the unit.

LIGHT TASK CARDS



HOLIDAY LIGHTS

Think about how lights are used around your home during the holidays. Describe the types of lights you use, where they are placed in or around your home, and how they are used to celebrate the holidays.

1

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BEING A LIGHT TO OTHERS

Think about something you have done to be a "light" to someone else. Maybe you helped someone without being asked, noticed that someone needed a friend, or said something kind to someone you know. Describe your actions and how being a "light" made you feel.

2

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A LIGHT TO YOU

Think about a time when someone was a "light" to you. Was there a time when someone was especially kind or thoughtful? Did someone help you in an unexpected way? Describe their actions and how you responded.

3

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LIGHTING IT FORWARD

Think about someone in your class who could use a little light in his/her day. Explain why you think this person could use some light, ways you could be a light, and your plan to be that light in the next few days.

4

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LIGHTING YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Think about people who live near you that might need a little light in their day. Are there ways you could be helpful? How about saying a kind word to make them feel special? Describe the people you're thinking of, why they might need some light, and ways you can be that light for them.

5

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THE LIGHT IN YOUR FAMILY

What person in your family shares the most "light"? Maybe it's someone who doesn't live with you like a grandparent or cousin. Tell the person's name and describe ways that he or she is a light to the rest of your family. Then, write a short note thanking this person for being a light in your life!

6

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SPREADING LIGHT

What are some ways you can spread light where you live? Sometimes we can spread light by stopping bad habits. Are there actions you can stop doing or words you can stop saying that would help you be more of a light to your family? Write about your thoughts.

7

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LIGHT IN THE NEWS

Do you ever watch the news or read about world events on a computer? How about talk to friends about what happens in their classrooms? There are great things happening all around you. Think about some positive events you've heard about recently and write about them.

8

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LIGHT AS A CLASS

What are some ways that you and your classmates could work together to spread light around your school? Think big! Be creative! Write about ways big and small that you can share light with others as a class.

9

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LIGHT IN A LETTER

Do you like getting mail? I do! I love opening the mailbox to see a letter from a family member or a friend. Write a letter to someone you know and tell why he or she is a great person. Then write about your favorite time spent together. Make a plan to send the letter sometime soon!

10

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LIGHT TO THOSE WHO HELP

Many adults help you every day at school. There are teachers, principals, secretaries, counselors, nurses, special teachers, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, custodians, and others who help make your day great. Choose one person and write a letter thanking them for being a light to you.

11

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LIGHTING WITH COMPLIMENTS

Think about what your classmates do well. Is there someone who is always helpful? Maybe someone else who is great at solving problems? How about someone who is great at art? Make a list of the people in your class and what each one does well. Then, be sure to tell each person what you wrote!

12

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Choose ONE task card writing piece to focus on for your final Light Essay.

I choose TASK CARD # _____.

Below are examples of two published Light Essays written by third graders.

Journal # 19 (3rd grade)

Journal #20 (3rd grade)

TASK CARD #11

TASK CARD #7

Dear Ms. C,

You make me happy because you never give up on kids which makes you important in their lives. I will try to do my best in Math. You always try to make things easy. Like in multiplication, I can answer in a blink of an eye! You are smart like my big sister. Actually, you are smarter than a dolphin. Thank you for showing the educational part of yourself. You will be a good mom to your kids. Keep shining your light on your students.

Love,
Your Favorite Student

Have you ever spread light in your life before? Some ways I can spread light in my neighborhood is by making signs that say "Stop smoking", "Do not litter", and "Do not be a bully". The actions I can stop doing are fighting, bullying, and saying bad words. Another way I can spread light is by not polluting and keeping the roads clean. Also, some people are spreading light to animals by rescuing them from danger. On the other hand, some ways people are not spreading light is by robbing and stealing. Another way people are not spreading light is by killing people for no reason. Some people are even breaking into people's houses. We need to encourage those taking our light to stop it! In conclusion, I think spreading light is better than not spreading light.

1) Do you have someone in your life that makes you happy and brings you light?

2) Highlight any way you've spread light into the world as mentioned in Journal #20.

You are now ready to write the rough draft of your “Light in The World” essay. Feel free to use the space below to write down any ideas or any revisions you’d like to make to your original essay. This writing piece is very personal. So feel free to take risks--be an honest writer and write from the heart!

{Remember you can look back to your HEART on page 5 for ideas.} Use your emotions to express how it feels to be someone who brings light into the world or how it feels when someone brings light into your world. Use the checklist below to help you after your first revision is complete.

LIGHT IN YOUR WORLD ESSAY CHECKLIST:

- Do you have a clear beginning with an interesting topic sentence, a detailed middle, and a conclusion?
- Did you stay on topic and make your essay easy to follow?
- Did you use specific details to support your chosen topic?
- Did you use transition words to guide the reader through your essay?
- Did you spell everything correctly?
- Did you use capital letters where you needed to and correct punctuation?

CHAPTER FOUR

Dreams, Aspirations, and the Future



In the previous three chapters of this book, you've explored topics that relate to your past and present. In Chapter Four, "Dreams, Aspirations, and the Future" you will have the opportunity to examine your future. We never know what the future has in store for us, but it is important to consider the future and think about what you will go through as you grow older.

As you're going through elementary school, you may start thinking about what you want to be when you grow up. Your answer may change many times or you may not even have an answer. Does anyone really know what they want 10 or 20 years from now?

Every person has dreams and ambitions. Some people know what they want and have a well planned future, other people might not. There are many different ways to achieve your dreams.

In fact, psychologists at the University of Pennsylvania have actually discovered that writing about our dreams for the future can help to make us happier. The future is exciting!

It's time to move forward and to give your future all that you have inside.

Your future, and the world, is waiting.

Before we start thinking about our future, we need to reflect on our past.

A TIMELINE OF MY LIFE (PAST)

Using the timeline below, identify happy and sad moments from your life so far.



A TIMELINE OF MY LIFE (PAST): A Small Moment



In this chapter, students will reflect on their past using the timeline provided which will create ideas for their first writing assignment about their past: "A Small Moment". After thinking about their past, they will turn to their future. First, they will brainstorm about various aspects of their future in order to write a letter to their future self. It might be a good idea to remind them of the format of a friendly letter; I've included a template for you.

Use the boxes below to help develop your ideas. Now that you have identified some happy and sad moments from your past, choose ONE of those moments from your timeline and reflect on it by telling the story of that moment in your journal.

WHO was involved?

WHEN did it take place?

WHAT was happening?

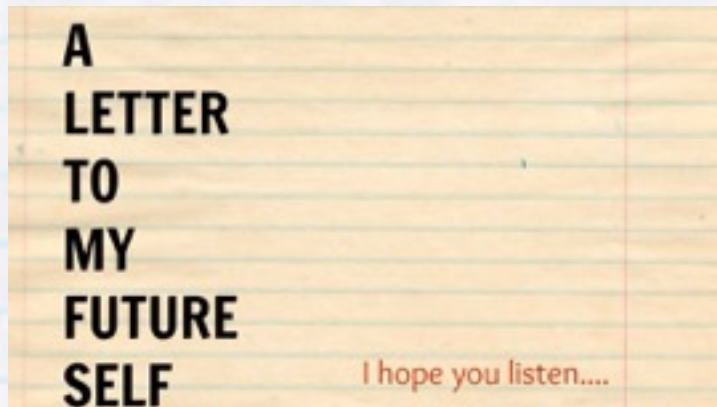
WHERE did it take place?

WHY did it take place?

HOW did it make you feel?

“Where I’m Going”: A LETTER TO MY FUTURE SELF

As you begin brainstorming for your next piece of writing, don’t hold back.
We can only become what we allow ourselves to dream about...



Think: do you want to go to college? Get a job? Have children? Consider what your dreams and aspirations for the future are and plan for what you could do to achieve them.

Sometimes things happen in our lives that can change even the best made plans. Happy and sad events can cause people to lose sight of their goals. Some days it’s hard to get out of bed because it seems like everything is going wrong. When we are having days like that, it helps to hear some advice or words of wisdom. It’s also helpful to look back at the plans you made when you were younger to help motivate you to keep going.

The next writing piece that you will be working on is a letter to your future self. In this letter, you will remind your future self of your dreams and aspirations for the future. You will be working to remind your future self of the plans you made in the past. In this writing, you will offer words of advice to keep the future you motivated.

Think about each prompt on the following pages and answer honestly. They often say the future is yours, so don’t let your future have limits!

"Where I'm Going" Brainstorming

In five years, I see
myself...

In ten years, I see
myself...

My greatest goal for
the future is...

The college I want to
go to is...

I show that I am committed
to my future by...

“Where I’m Going” Brainstorming

I want others to
remember me for...

The job I want
to do is...

In my future, I want to
change...

My favorite memory from
the past is...

My number one dream
in life is...

“Where I’m Going” Brainstorming

It is important not to give up on dreams because...

The people I see in my future are...

In order to reach my goals, my plan is to...

One thing that worries me about the future is...

To make my future brighter, today I will...

Journal #21 (3rd grade)

Dear Future Crazy Cat Lady,

First of all, I hope you STOP FREAKING OUT after each and every rollercoaster. Just have fun, NOT freaking just freaking out! I hope you are healthy and keeping fit. I hope you never gave up on drawing and becoming an artist. I hope you find the Malala book you wrote in 3rd grade, I wonder if you read it to your future kids? I wonder if you still like the book "The Tale of Despereaux". I hope you live in a house like a mansion; I hope you did what you said, "I'm going to buy a big house so mommy and daddy can live w/ me!!!" I hope you are still friends with your third grade classmates! I hope you still visit them. I just know you will. I HOPE YOU GET A DRAWING JOB!!! OR I'LL KILL YOU!!! I know you are very GOOD sketcher! I hope you read this very old letter, but most importantly, I hope you will be a good friend, a BEST friend, people can count on.

Love,
2017 you

Journal #22 (3rd grade)

Dear Future Me,

I hope you are not a SCAREDY CAT anymore! How are your tests? I bet you are getting good grades. You better be getting good grades. Were you able to get in Temple University? I hope you were able to be a vet or a doctor. Remember never give up on your dreams or else you will regret doing that. Make sure have a good strong healthy life. I am wondering about your car: do you have a Honda or a Mercedes? Try to be a very good worker. You should be a good worker by helping people or animals. You should always believe yourself. Remember what we wanted to do. We wanted to help people or animals. Do you see all of the people you wanted to see in your future? In case you forget the people you wanted to see, here they are: your aunt, uncle, aunt, uncle, grandparents, and friends. Oh and the house I want is a mansion. I hope you do have a fun healthy life.

Love,
9 Year Old You

Journal #23 (3rd grade)

Dear Chubby Cheeks,

I hope those cheeks are chubbier than ever!! Did you get straight As? Well you must have (because we are the and we always have good grades, nothing below an A is tolerated). Remember never give up your sense of humor. Hope you go to the gym often. Hope you're enjoying your college life. How's your beautiful wife doing? Name your children Josiah and the other name is your choice. You know how we wanted to be an archeologist, geologist, or an paleontologist. Well you have two backup jobs to use. You remember our 2nd birthday? Well of course you do, I am you! Hope you're keeping your body in shape. Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy, and protein. Are you still acting like a GOOFBALL??!! If you want to make good choices, don't drink alcohol and no drugs. Stay clean. Remember wanting to be all of those scientists, well you're going to have to work hard to achieve your goals. You are all grown up now and you are allowed to make your own life decisions. I hope that one day your child or children can continue the family LEGACY! Remember to tell your child or children to do their best and forget the rest! Also, always be yourself. I hope this inspired you and show this to you child or children and I hope this inspires them too. Well this is all for now. Do Your Best And Well Have Fun!!!!

Sincerely,

Me

Journal #24 (3rd grade)

Dear Future Dinosaur Person ,

What's up old me ? How you doing? I hope you're fine. Now first off, all I really want is for you to achieve your dream of becoming a paleontologist; if not then you better have had to become another type of person that studies prehistoric life or at least another type of scientist! Also try being a BILLIONAIRE and have that fresh mansion and study Aerodynamics to invent a solar powered car that runs on light. Also try very hard to make the world a better place; and if you find a fossil, call your dad first. And get married! Tell me who you married, come on come on I want to know!! And be nice to your wife or else she'll get a divorce with you and leave you; and also your dad will go ballistic! Remember all of those fun times with your family when you were a kid. And if your mom and dad are not alive by the time you're reading this letter, they're graceful angels up in heaven watching , keeping you safe, and saying "That's my son! THAT'S my son!" to you. Finally, if you have a child, name it after your parents depending on if it's a male or female. In conclusion, be a happy man, have a happy family, and believe in yourself. You can accomplish all of your dreams and goals.

Sincerely ,

8 ½ year old Miguel

CHAPTER FIVE

Changing the World



For the past four chapters, you have really gotten to explore yourself and shape your identity through your words. You have also been given an opportunity to make **YOUR** story known to the world. But, what about the world's story? All too often today, people are focused on themselves and forget to pay attention to the issues that affect others around them. People worry about themselves and not enough about the well-being of others, the environment, and society as a whole. While it is important to maintain your personal well-being, it is also important to make a difference in the world around you.

Have you ever walked down the streets of your neighborhood and witnessed something that you wish you hadn't? Maybe it was witnessing the actions of others that you wish you could change. Perhaps it was a homeless man or woman digging through a trash can or maybe it was the trash itself strewn across the street. Perhaps you've witnessed the act of bullying or even someone harming an animal. Did you do anything about it? There are countless unfair situations in our society today, and as young people, it is your duty to make a change and stand up for what is right to improve your future.

As a writer, you have the power to make a change-- not only through your words, but when your words are put into action. Young people have more power than they think. Through your words, **your voice is heard**. So, what will you do to make a change?

When you think of changing the world, who is the first person you think of? Who has inspired you to promote change? Who has stood up and done something you admire? Or maybe who has created or invented something for the good of society? For this piece, you may want to do a little research. Choose a person who has **CHANGED THE WORLD**. The person could have changed the world in a positive or negative way. Take time to research the effect the person has had on the world. Be sure to give a detailed background about who this person is (or was) and what he/she has done to create change.

Person Who Changed the World Brainstorming Chart



Whenever I start this assignment, I break my students up into small groups and ask them to make a TOP TEN list of who they think has changed the world. We

usually compile a class list. I would suggest reading several picture books or news articles about change agents. Then, depending on the level of students you have, decide how in depth you would like your research essay to be. Below is a general guide I use.

Person Who Changed the World: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Date of Death: _____

<p>List 3 Facts about His/Her Childhood</p>	
<p>List 3 of His/Her Accomplishments Which Helped to Change the World</p>	
<p>Name 2 Ways This Person Affected People's Lives</p>	
<p>Find at least 2 Quotes from This Person (brainyquote.com)</p>	

The man I admire is Martin Luther King Jr. because he is a very strong leader to the citizens of America. Martin was born on January 15, 1929 in Atlanta, GA. At that time, something called segregation was in action. This means that black and white people couldn't play with each other. Martin thought this wasn't fair; so when he grew up and became a preacher like his father he made speeches about segregation. Martin Luther King Jr. led marches like the March on Washington and the Civil Rights Movement. Martin Luther King Junior helped stop segregation with the help of Ruby Bridges, Rosa Parks, and Coretta Scott King (which was his wife). He inspired me when I found out that he went to jail several times and every time he got out, he did the same thing and started to help stop segregation over and over again. In 1955, the Montgomery Bus Boycott started and Martin Luther King Jr. began to help when he found out that Rosa Parks went to jail for not giving up her seat to a white male. White people sat all the way in the front and they could tell any black African American to give up their seat. The boycott lasted for 381 days, over ONE year! Finally they removed the law because without black people taking the bus, the bus companies didn't make enough money. In 1956, the law, where black people sat in the back and the white people sat in the front, was lifted. Martin made speeches and his most famous speech was the "I Have A Dream" speech. On January 30, 1956, Martin Luther King's house was bombed. People said, "Let's kill and harm the people who did this." Even though Martin was full of rage that his family and himself could have been killed, Martin didn't want to harm people. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "Violence never solves problems only words do." Martin still led marches and finally in 1964 segregation ended and blacks and whites lived happily separately and together. One of Martin Luther King Jr.'s most famous quotes was, "Darkness cannot drive out darkness only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate only love can do that." Martin Luther King Jr. received the Nobel Peace Prize for helping stop segregation. Martin Luther King Jr. is a very confident man who put his life at risk to stop segregation. In 1968, a man named James Earl Ray was mad at Martin. On a motel balcony in Memphis, Tennessee, James Earl Ray assassinated Martin Luther King Jr. When Martin was found dead, it shocked everyone. A man who put his life on the line and banned segregation-- all for him to just die? Martin Luther King Jr. will forever be known as the man who helped ban segregation. This is why I admire Martin Luther King Jr. SO MUCH!!

Dear Fellow Citizens,

Some people do not care about education but those people should be like Malala Yousafzai, who put her life on line. I am not telling you to do that, but you should at least do a little something. Malala always loved education even if she was not in school. She always stood up for girls and she always will. If you are still thinking, "Well what did she even do?" She gave girls their education back in Pakistan and she risked her whole life but she did not care. She got threatened but she did not care. All that she cared about was her and everyone else's education and that is what matters. Malala also had to go to a hospital in England for a few months because a man from the Taliban group shot her. Malala was still alive. Her two friends also got shot and stayed alive too. But did Malala give up? NO! Malala got even stronger, and when she got shot and went to the hospital, her family decided to live in England. Even to this day, they are not used to it. Back to the point, Malala wrote a blog for the BBC. She told about what the Taliban was doing. She also made a fake name up. That name was Gul Makai. She knew her life was at risk, but again she did not care. Her family and friends were worried for her but they were also so proud of her. This shows what talking can do. All Malala did was talk. You can change the world just by talking and making speeches. Now do not get into things that can kill you like Malala did, but you can do other things like donate to charity or give homeless people money. All of those things can change the world. Also Malala was the one of the only ones who stood up to the Taliban when everyone else was hiding. Hey, I do not judge them. It is good to stay out of things but it is good to do something too (but again nothing crazy). That is what Malala did and that is what you can do too to change the world.

Sincerely,

A 3rd grader

Now it's your turn to write an essay about a person your researched.

How will YOU change the world?

Now that you have had the opportunity to identify the characteristics of people who change the world and learn about the ways people have changed the world, it's your turn. You are going to complete a writing piece about what you would do to change the world.

*Think about any injustices that you have seen or heard of, what would you do to prevent them from happening?

*Would you change something about the educational system in the United States?

*Would you enact laws that protect people or would you get rid of some of the laws that are currently in place?

Think back to your Challenges writing. Is there anything that you would like to change from that list? How would you answer the question, how will YOU change the world? Be specific.

CHANGE #1

CHANGE #2

CHANGE #3

Who Has the Power to Change the World

If there were one thing in this world that I would like to see changed it would be for murder to stop. I want for murder in this country and all over the world to stop because too many moms and dads are losing their kids that they birthed and earned. I also want murder to stop because my dad was convicted with murder and he was given a life sentence. So far my dad has been locked up for six years.

My dad being in jail took a real effect in my life. When my dad got locked up, I started to get in a lot of fights. I was being disrespectful to my teachers. I wasn't listening to my mom. And then I started thinking, why am I messing up? I wasn't going to get my dad out of jail and it wasn't going to make my family feel good and it wasn't going to make me feel good. Then my dad called and said he loved me. That made me want to do better. I'm trying to do better, but sometimes it's hard. My message to kids is don't follow in my past footsteps because it's going to leave you in jail or worse. Don't let things that happen to you control you. That's my message.

So my big and explosive dream for this world is for murder to stop. Nobody wants to lose his or her mother or daughter or son or dad to murder. The world is already bad enough and we don't need people to make it worse. Also, life is hard and when family gets hurt, we feel terrible. So when family gets killed, you feel like you're going to die too. But like I said, I want for murder in this country to stop. And for people who lose someone close to just know, at the end of the day, you always still have God and your family at your side.

I don't know who has the power to end murder, but I do know I can help bring about this change by spreading my message to other people. Hopefully people will listen to me because my words matter. But the world will never be perfect that's just how America is.

Lauren Changes Lives

There are many things we can do to help the community. I can help by helping people who are homeless. I believe it is important to help homeless people because they might not survive. I choose to do this because I think it's cool. Here are some ways I can start. First, pack a book bag with water and maybe \$50.00 so they can buy more food and water. Second, tell a joke. They might need laughter. Here is a joke I will tell. What is an octopus called with seven legs? A septapus. Finally, give them a cover. They might be cold. I know that helping the homeless will make a big difference.



Journal #29 (5th grade)

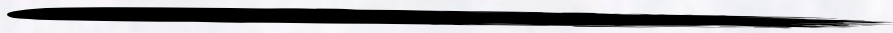
I would like a change
I want a change
I want a change to change the way people look and hate
I will get a change
I will make a change
I have the power to change the world and make it a better place
The change will affect you
The change will affect me
The change will change the hate in the world and make it go away

I want hate gone
I want hate done
There will be a new peace era that will have just begun
You can help me
And I can help you
Just a simple "hello" and there you go, you're being nice already
Be competent and give them a compliment
It really is free for you and me, but it brings in something steady

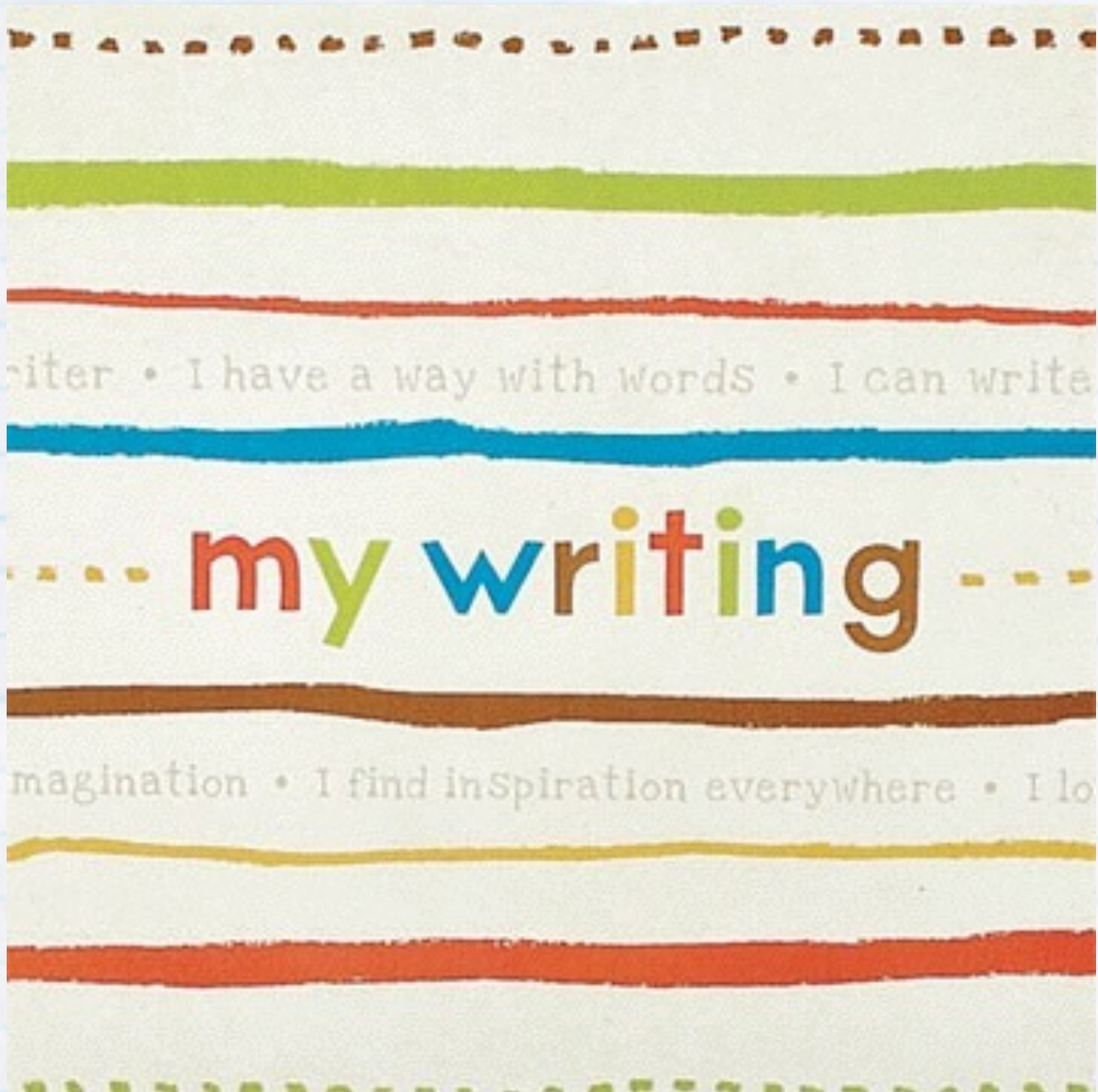
Dear world, please understand that love is in the palm of your hand
Pass this song along and sing a merry tune
You'll make someone's day
They're happy—hooray
You can do it your way
Just find something nice to say
It really is that easy...Ahhh!!



Use this space to jot down some ideas for your "How Will YOU Change the World?" Essay. Think about an interesting way you could introduce your essay. Maybe with a question? Look at your 3 idea clouds on page 55. Try to make them as detailed as you can. Think about how you will end your essay with a clear conclusion.



The following pages are where you can keep your published copies of all of your WRITERS MATTER assignments from this year.



While this is the end of this book, it definitely does not mean that your writing should stop here. As you read, responded to, and wrote about the topics presented in each of these chapters, you have grown both as a writer and as an individual. With each year that passes, you will continue to mature. The voice will always be inside of you-- don't forget to let it out. What you think, feel, and say matters, so share it with the world...

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!

I Am From

We Are From

Personal Challenge

Advice Letter

Light in The World

A Small Moment

Letter to My Future Self

Person Who Changed the World

How will YOU change the World?

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Allison Chorneiko is currently a third grade teacher at James R. Lowell Elementary School in Philadelphia. She has taught for ten years, most of which have been at the elementary level. Allison has been part of the Writers Matter program for three years and has witnessed a huge increase in the abilities of students' writings as a result of this program. She can be reached at asawicki@philasd.org.



Kelly Ann Coughlin is currently a third grade teacher at J. Hampton Moore Elementary School in Philadelphia. She has taught seventeen years, most of which were in a middle school. There, Kelly Ann started a Creative Writing course for sixth through eighth graders including special education students. Writing creatively has been a passion of hers since elementary school. Being part of the Writers Matter program for the past five years has opened many doors for her students, particularly those who never took any pleasure in writing before. She can be reached by e-mail at kcoughlin@philasd.org.



Kimberly Lewinski is Associate Professor of Education, Associate Director of Writers Matter Program, and Associate Director of the Graduate Reading Certification Program at La Salle University in Philadelphia. Kimberly teaches both undergraduate and graduate students in the Education Department. In 2014, she published, with Drs. Yost and Vogel, **Empowering Young Writers: The Writers Matter Approach**. The Writers Matter Program involves over 1500 students yearly in the United States and approximately 900 students in Israel and the Palestinian Territories. She can be reached by e-mail at lewinski@lasalle.edu.