

Writing Activities

Below are some thinking/writing exercises.

They involve mental activities such as **ROQI** --

- 1) Remember.
- 2) Observe (especially observing one's own mind).
- 3) Question one's own mind, be curious, investigate.
- 4) Imagine (visualise).

The following exercises might also be useful for writing in one's Storytelling Journals, especially for thinking/writing about one's Life Story.

Write/think (for 10 minutes, etc) about --

What is on your mind right now?

What has been on your mind lately?

What are some things that tend to be on your mind all the time?

What do you know how to do?

What are you good at?

What do you want to be good at?

What are you interested in?

What do you know a lot about?

What do you have strong opinions about?

What are these opinions?

When your mind wanders, where does it go?

What changes would you like to happen? --

In your daily life and environment (immediate experience)?

Beyond?

What people, places, situations, things, do you carry in your mind?

What kinds of places do you carry in your memory/imagination?

Places you've been?

Places you would like to go to?

Imaginary places?

What scenes, moments, situations, experiences,

physical sensations, body gestures

do you carry in your memory/imagination?

Are there any that you might like to re-live?

Might you do anything differently in any of them?

What people do you carry in your memory/imagination?

What people do you want to remember?

What people haunt you?

Is there some famous person you might like to meet, talk with?

Make a list of things you would like to imagine. Use all your imaginary senses to bring your subject to life in your mind. Include as much sensory details (tastes, smells, textures, sounds, and sights) as possible.

In one's creative writing, seek to avoid generalities, outlines, summaries, overviews. Describe specific and particular things and processes. When possible, do not just tell the reader how the narrator or character feels about some circumstances -- rather also enable the reader him/herself to perceive the circumstances (through descriptions involving the five senses).

Create pictures in one's imagination. Then use written words to re-create these pictures vividly.

Use your imagination to put yourself inside a person or thing you have imagined. Once inside, speak as that person or thing.

After writing -- highlight what stands out. And then write your thoughts about why and how this material stands out.

For Analysis --

One theme of "___" is _____. This essay will explain how "___" expresses this theme, including through the use of Story Elements.

Include in one's Journal --

Thoughts that are parts of -- and are about -- the creative process in relation to a piece of writing.

Additional Writing Activities:

1

Write your Life Story. Ways you have discovered and developed skills, talents, interests. Pivotal moments, important decisions -- past and future (anticipated).

Select or create an important decision/action/statement made by a family member.

Let us hear from each person involved with, and affected by, this decision; *give voice* to the thoughts and feelings of each family member.

2

Write about something you experienced in the last 24 hours.

3

Dreams.

Write in present tense. One could add to a dream.

4

Alter Ego Characters (write about them, or write as them).

Poem of the night went to the beach.

Chameleon went to the beach.

Lonely boy went to the beach.

5

Personify things, ideas, ideals, behaviours, etc

Love Walked In. Lady Luck.

Write **About** and **As** Characters --

Get in the habit of shifting back and forth between

- 1) Writing *about* characters, and
- 2) Writing *as* characters (stepping into characters, role-playing them, enacting them, speaking as them, giving voice to them).

Write About and As 1) **One's Self** and 2) **External-Characters** --

Write *as* yourself (1st person).

Write *about* yourself, your feelings/thoughts/actions/etc (3rd person).

or

Create a character (an *identity*, a *persona*), and --

Write *as* that character (1st person).

Write *about* that characters' feelings/thoughts/actions/etc (3rd person).

- 1) You might begin by writing in the 1st person ("I experienced this", "I feel this", etc).
- 2) Then shift to 3rd person ("He experienced this", "He feels this", etc). You could keep it totally "true", "accurate", and "realistic" -- or you could modify elements of the situation, story, characters, etc. Externalising a character, separating it from yourself, can be called, "giving birth to a character".

Use your own experience, thoughts, and feelings as a starting point. This serves to bring to your awareness the ideas and issues that are on your mind.

Then you could:

- 1) Continue to write about/as yourself.
- 2) Write about/as altered, fantasy, exaggerated, modified versions of yourself.
- 3) Write about/as imaginary characters somehow inspired by your ROQI about yourself (these characters may *come to you*, may *occur to you*, as a result of your ROQI about yourself). These characters may be in:
Situations you might like to be in.
Situations you might be afraid of being in.
Situations that others might be in and that have *captured your imagination, arrested your attention, caught your eye*.

Possible values of finding and creating **metaphor stories** (metaphorical narratives) that are based on, or inspired by, real-life situations and characters include:

- 1) Doing so distances oneself from the material, so that one can consider it calmly and coolly.
- 2) Doing so may make the situation more of a public, shared issue.
- 3) Doing so may help to establish that others have had such challenges, and that our culture has traditional ways of handling such situations. This might communicate that a character is not alone, and is not starting from scratch in seeking solutions to challenges.
- 4) Doing so may relate elements of the story to larger forces in the universe -- including "Mother Nature"; Gaia, the Goddess of Earth in ancient Greek religion; and other Divine figures.

In sum, using metaphors in relation to one's experience may help one to feel and communicate a sense of connection between one's self and the world beyond one's self.

To develop "made-up" stories based on real-life situations: Let your imagination wander. Explore the possibilities, and see how things might play out along numerous possible story branches. At any point in a story, one can ask, "What if this happened instead of that?" Then see how the new version of the story goes.

Imagine

- 1) Variations and exaggerations of real-life situations.
- 2) Possible consequences of each possible decision and act by a character.
- 3) Possible solutions, resolutions.

Seek to come up with colourful, vivid, fantasy situations and objects regarding what might happen when a character might do, or not do, things. Images and objects can be used to symbolise and represent characters' inner natures.

Tell a story from the point of view of various characters in the story -- including characters who might usually be ignored and considered not important. Tell a story from the point of view of various objects in the story.