

Minnesota Writing Project

--- Demonstration Lesson Template ---

Title of lesson: Creative Inspirations

Suggested grade/age: High School but easily adaptable to any grade level

Approximate time needed to complete lesson: One class period to introduce and practice the concept, plus additional time for the technology piece as well as follow-up time to share completed projects.

Learning objective(s) and significance of lesson: I developed this lesson in response to my students' desire for more writing prompts and to better prepare them for future research and the writing that eventually comes from it.

Minnesota Academic Standards: Writing Benchmarks

- Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.
 - Independently select writing topics and formats for personal enjoyment, interest, and academic tasks.
- Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Brief summary/outline of lesson:

After a few weeks of journal writing and using a variety writing prompts, I inform the students that they will be preparing writing prompts to share and use in class. I then present information on Bloom's taxonomy and show them how they can develop good questions not only for their immediate assignment of preparing a writing prompt but also for developing good questions when it comes time for research.

Step One: Show a writing prompt from teachhub.com. Ask students to write for ten minutes in their journal. (Their writing journal is something that the students are already familiar with since we have been writing in it for at least two weeks already. By providing clear expectations and modeling, students have developed a routine yet rigorous habit of 10 minutes of timed writing, three times a week. Assessing the journal may have been troublesome in the past, but an effective technique has been included at the end of this lesson.)

Step Two: When the ten minutes is up, draw students' attention to the levels of questions presented on the teachhub.com website. Explain that just like reading, our brains like to be prepped before fully comprehending and appreciating what is before us. Having multiple questions follow the short video, helps our brains "get into the zone" for writing. Doris Lessing, Nobel Prize winner for literature in 2007, discussed how our brains are patterned for the consecutive in an interview about reading.

Step Three: Share the slide of Bloom's Taxonomy. Show how the levels of questioning get more advanced as we travel up the graph. For the purposes of this lesson, we will concentrate only on the three levels of: knowledge/details, application, and evaluation. Share an example of questions one might use for cross country skiing. Also, share an example of questions one could develop for a potential research topic to show how we will come back to this skill in a later unit.

Step Four: Brainstorm some possible topics. Get students to think about things that inspire them or things they like to do, things they enjoy. In groups of two or three, students can practice writing the different levels of questions. Share some examples with the whole class.

Step Five: The assignment will be to locate a series of photos that could be used to develop a Photostory on a topic of choice and to prepare a writing prompt by constructing multiple questions following the three suggested levels of Bloom's Taxonomy. This could be something students must complete at home, or time in the computer lab is reserved so students can gather their photos and then bring them to class in order to complete the process.

Step Six: Writing prompts can then be shared over the next few weeks during regular journal writing time.

Related Resources:

Dorislessing.org

Teachhub.com

Teach-nology.com/worksheets/time_savers/bloom

Photo Story 3 for Microsoft Windows (a free download)

Possible extensions or adaptations for different purposes/student needs:

One possibility might be to generate a list of questions on the SmartBoard, so students might refer to it when developing their own prompt.

This might also work in other disciplines like biology for things like infectious diseases, the human body, or genetics. (anything really)

Developing a prompt can also be used as a community builder for any classroom.

For additional information, contact:

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