



Reading Resource Library Writing Engagement Activities

The [Reading Resource Library](#) is a tool created for educators to share with learners and is filled with topically relevant, educational, and captivating books for readers of all ages and levels. The books are sorted into 16 different topics that can be explored with learners and their families. Each topic has a general Resource Guide to support engagement with the texts.

We suggest using the collections from the Reading Resource Library when using these writing resources. Books in all collections span different reading levels, including books for children and families to read together. Each text set shares book summaries and additional information, such as book trailers and links to reviews. The guides also offer overall suggestions for using the texts.

This resource provides the following support:

- ◆ Overall Planning Suggestions
- ◆ Activities to Build Writing Stamina
- ◆ Activities to Develop Word Choice
- ◆ Responding to Topics and Themes
- ◆ Daily Writing Prompts
- ◆ Writing on Themes
- ◆ Writing for High School Equivalency Exams
- ◆ Additional Resources

Overall Planning Suggestions

The following activities were designed to explore writing activities and resources when using the Reading Resource Library. When you use these activities, please consider desired learner outcomes, key vocabulary terms, incorporating relevant material based on learners' interests, and any differentiation/modification needs.

- Materials were developed to allow for instructor customization based on their program's standards and learning objectives. Instructors should modify and format lessons, activities, and assessments (formative and summative) based on the needs of their learners and desired outcomes.
- Consider writers' abilities (pre-assess before writing instruction) by offering modifications as needed — graphic or thought organizers, writing partnerships, anchor charts, pre-writing/activation strategies, etc. Writers may struggle without prompts, so offer prompts or lead ins when necessary.
- Review resources for working with adult learners:
 - [Adult Learning Theory](#)
 - [Adult Learner Strategies](#)
 - [Authentic Audiences & Purposes](#)

- [Cultural & Life Experiences Connections](#)
- [Adult Learner - Composition](#)
- [Learner Variability](#)
- To plan a more detailed lesson or unit, view our [Reading Resource Library Instructor Planning Materials](#).

Activities to Build Writing Stamina

A significant factor in building learners' writing stamina and fluency is giving them the time and space to write. Learners must be given consistent, daily opportunities to write for a variety of purposes, as well as be given consistent, specific, and immediate feedback on their progress. Increasing the amount of time learners write also increases their ability to read. Here are some quick writing strategies to get your learners writing every day!

- **Quick Writes:**
These are quick and informal, but help writers brainstorm, organize, and communicate through writing. [This guide](#) will give you over 500 writing prompts you can use with your learners.
- **Writing Frames:**
Frames can provide sentence starters or other structures to help writers formulate and organize thoughts. They also provide support for struggling writers, as well as help all writers predict a structure for any given purpose of writing. [This link](#) will offer additional information about the importance and use of writing frames for learners.
- **Journals:**
Journals can be a great way to help learners keep a collection of their thoughts and communications through writing. There are many benefits to asking learners to keep a journal. Journals become a "safe space" for writers to keep their thoughts, reflections, analysis, and connection to the material they are learning. [Dialogue journals](#) work well for beginning writers to explore ideas with their instructor. [This link](#) will offer additional information about journaling.

Activities to Develop Word Choice

- **The Frayer Model:**
Have students write the vocabulary term in the middle of four boxes. Then, ask them to write the definition, the word in a sentence, synonyms and antonyms, and a visual representation of the word in one of the boxes. (Each box will be its own category.) Examples and templates can be found [here](#).
- **Word Choice:**
To help writers develop and refine their word choice, consider using any of the exercises found in the article, [How to Show Students That Word Choice Matters](#), such as word economy, highlighting the impact of synonyms, or using mood to dictate word choice. Consider exploring [The Writing Center](#) and watching this video, [Word Choice in Writing](#), too!
- **Word Study:**
Give students a list of words about the same content or topic. Read the words aloud to them and discuss their meaning. Then ask learners to group them by particular aspects (e.g., synonyms/antonyms). This requires them to think critically about the meaning and use of the words. Click [here](#) for more details on this strategy.

- **Word Games:**
Word games can be a fun, collaborative way for learners to acquire and use new words in context. The following games are great for learners of any age:
 - Scrabble
 - Scattergories
 - Bananagrams
 - Wordle
 - Boggle
 - Blurt!
 - Charades (act out vocabulary word meanings)

Responding to Topics and Themes

Writing is an important part of daily communication in school, the workplace, and in our own lives. *“Adults in postsecondary education or technical training courses face expectations to produce a variety of writing products from lecture notes, summaries, and critiques to research papers and essays. The pervasiveness of writing in daily life underscores the need for learners and their instructors to focus on adults becoming flexible, fluent, and confident writers”* (LINCS, 2019). Becoming a better writer makes one a better reader, which is also an important skill for one to have for communication skills and practice. Some [studies](#) show that writing by hand is even better for the development of writing along with many other benefits such as:

- Boosting memory
- Improving recognition and learning
- Building creativity
- Offering the same benefits as meditation
- Making writing more meaningful and purposeful

Writing is also very personal, which is one of the reasons why many learners find writing to be so challenging. A great way to engage writers is to make the audience, task, and purpose relevant and meaningful to them. Current events can be used for many writing purposes to engage learners in writing and help them think about topics to write about. [The Learning Network](#) from *The New York Times* offers many ways to bring in current events for both reading and writing purposes. Another fun way to bring in current events for writing is to have learners [caption a picture](#) from different news sources.

Daily Writing Prompts

Asking learners to write daily is imperative to not only building their writing skills, but also their writing stamina and fluency. It is important to allow writers the opportunity to write for a variety of tasks, types, and purposes. This will also help build writers' confidence, critical thinking skills, and vocabulary. As noted in [this article](#), you could ask writers to:

- Write with a wonder in mind
- Write for a travel journal
- Write in [low-stakes](#) environments and formats
- Write creatively
- Write to respond to a child's teacher

- Write to respond to a job posting
- Write an email to a family member

For additional ways to support your writers in daily writing, visit any of the following resources:

- [501 Writing Prompts](#)
- [Over 1,000 Writing Prompts for Students](#) (*The New York Times*)
- [Read and Write Beside Them](#)
- [Parents as Partners in Promoting Writing Among Children and Youth](#)
- [What's going on in this picture?](#)

For ways to support your writers through instruction, visit the following resources for a plethora of ideas:

- [Increase the Amount of Writing](#)
- [Adult Education Writing Library](#)
- [Adult Educator Resource Library](#)
- [RI Adult Education: Reading and Writing Resources](#)
- [The National Writing Project](#)
- [6+1 Trait Writing](#)

Writing on Themes

Writing based on a theme is a great way to engage writers in their learning. It becomes especially meaningful when writers are writing about themes they read about in texts. The following is a list of 16 topics you will find books for in the [Reading Resource Library](#). Consider using the suggested writing prompts as your learners read about these exciting topics!

- **Civil Rights**
 - How can one person change the world?
 - If you could have met Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. for one day, how would you have spent it?
 - How can power struggles lead to positive outcomes?
 - For additional prompts, explore [this link](#).
- **Activism**
 - What does activism look like? Explain the many ways activism can look, sound, feel, etc.
 - Write a creative story based on the life of one of the activists you read about in your texts.
 - Use a photo of activism taking place and write a 10 sentence story based on the photo.
- **Fantasy**
 - Write a creative story about living in one of the places you read about in your Fantasy texts.
 - Create your own fantasy world (and you're in charge).

- Write the sequel to one of the fantasy stories you read.
- **Inspirational Stories**
 - How can one person inspire others?
 - Write an inspiring story with you as the main character.
 - Write a poem based on an inspiring image.
- **Mystery**
 - Write a story in which you are a detective investigating a disappearance.
 - Write a story where you wake up one morning, but everything has changed. You find out time has moved forward by 50 years and everything you thought you knew has changed.
 - You are an investigative reporter for an unsolved crime in your area. Write about what happened based on what you know from your research about the “cold case.”
- **Gratitude**
 - What are you grateful for?
 - What “gift” are you going to leave the world that others will be grateful for?
 - Write a story in which you have the power to do random acts of kindness for an entire day and change the world.
- **Sports**
 - Write an interview transcript that you had with a famous athlete as a sportswriter for a local (or national) newspaper.
 - Write an argument convincing readers that (insert name here) is the best athlete that ever (or will ever) live(d).
 - Create your own (new) sport — what is it? How is it played? What are the rules?
- **Physical Health**
 - Design an infographic or informative pamphlet on the benefits of exercise for physical health.
 - Write an argument convincing readers that the federal government needs to regulate our food and drinks better through agencies such as the FDA.
 - Keep a journal about your physical health for a week — what you eat, how you sleep, how much you exercise, etc.
- **Historical Fiction**
 - Re-write a section of a historical fiction text that you read from the point of view of a minor character.
 - Keep a journal or diary about life in the time period that you read about in your historical fiction texts.
 - Write a documentary script for one of the time periods you researched throughout the historical fiction unit.

- **Diverse America**
 - Put together a collection of photos representative of “Diverse America” and write a caption for each.
 - Create a cookbook full of recipes to represent the diversity within America.
 - Write a welcome speech immigrants may have listened to upon entering the country through Ellis Island in New York.
 - Write about one tradition that your family has.
 - Create a visual with captions showing your family’s heritage and cultural connections.

- **Family and Community**
 - Write a memoir about a special time in your life that involved a family member and/or community.
 - Write a classified (help wanted) ad asking for help with a (fictional or hypothetical) event you want told in your community; create a poster to go with it to hang up within your community.
 - Create a children’s book (similar to those in the Reading Resource Library children’s section) about family and community.

- **Collections & Series**
 - Write a “pitch” for movie executives to convince them to buy production rights to a series of movies you created based on a series of books.
 - Write a critique about one of the books you read in a series or collection that will be posted in magazines, newspapers, and online sources.
 - Write a letter to the author of one of the series or collections of books that you read.

- **Suspense/Supernatural**
 - Write a choose-your-own-adventure suspense story.
 - Write an article for a medical journal explaining to doctors how to treat an unexplained/unknown disease.
 - Write a TED Talk about a supernatural event (based on one of the texts you read) that you survived and how you did it.

- **Realistic Fiction**
 - Write a “how to” guide based on the theme/idea of starting over.
 - Rewrite a chapter from one of the texts you read where things turn out differently for the main character.
 - Write a persuasive speech to one of the characters in your texts trying to convince them to make different choices.

- **All Stories Tell a Story**
 - Write a news story about one of the issues highlighted in one of the texts you read to call attention to the problem and offer solutions for change.
 - Design an awards ceremony highlighting the achievements and lessons of the people in the texts you read about.

- Write a story where people from the texts you read change places and show how things would be different for them (e.g., Elie Wiesel and Reyna Grande switch into each other's situations).
- **Action/Adventure**
 - Design a travel itinerary, brochure, and "feature" on a place people can go for lots of adventure to advertise in magazines, on television, and on social media platforms.
 - Create a map and calculate distances of all the places your characters explored in the texts you read.
 - Write and design a children's action/adventure book with pictures.

Writing for High School Equivalency Exams

- The [GED](#) test is one area where an adult learner's writing skills will be important to explore and support. The test is comprised of four subtests: Mathematical Reasoning, Reasoning Through Language Arts (which includes a writing component), Science, and Social Studies. The writing component has two parts — writing an argument after reading two sources and a grammar/punctuation section. The [Assessment Guide for Educators](#) and the [GED Essay – Reasoning through Language Arts](#) site will help you support learners in writing for the GED test.
- The [HiSET](#) exam is another area where adult writing skills are very important. Like the GED, this test measures college and career readiness of test takers in a variety of subjects, such as math, language arts (reading and writing), science, and social studies. The [Test Prep Resources](#) will take you to a number of resources to help your learners prepare for the test, such as sample questions, examples of writing responses, and formula sheets for them to practice with. [This link](#) will take you to a full example of a Language Arts HiSET exam.
- Please review additional writing resources listed on our [Reading Resource Library](#) to explore general writing activities (including argument writing) and a resource that explores how to provide effective feedback during the writing process.

Additional Resources

- [Visit our Reading Resource Library for more Writing Resources](#)
- [Reading Resource Library Instructor Planning Materials](#)
- [Six Traits of Writing](#)
- [Just Write! Teaching Excellence in Adult Literacy](#)
- [National Writing Project](#)
- [Anti-Racist and Anti-Bias Teaching Resources](#)