



**BIT & RUDDER**

# Basic Writing Plan

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HOMESCHOOL WRITING MADE EASY

# Basic Writing Plan

## Goal

To help students develop a habit of writing

## This plan is ideal for

- students who have no experience or limited experience with writing
- students who dislike writing, especially those who are uncertain or afraid to write
- experienced writers who are looking for a less structured environment to hone their skills

## Duration

4 weeks

## Supplies

A notebook, composition book, or binder/folder with notebook paper; a pen

## Frequency

3 times a week (the schedule is flexible—three days in a row, every other day, etc.; however, it is better to write on three different days rather than do multiple entries on the same day)

## Directions

Tell students they will be writing journal entries for the next 4 weeks. They should

- Write each entry on a separate page.
- Put the date at the top of each entry.
- Make each entry at least 100 words. (There is no maximum.)
- Write at least three entries each week.
- Choose their own topic to write about or select one of the writing prompts as their topic. At least one entry each week should be based on one of the prompts.

## **Assessment**

Inform students that you will not be reading their journals unless they want you to read them. (Please honor that agreement.) However, you should also let them know that you will be checking the journal entries for completion and that you may ask them to summarize their entries (out loud) or read a sentence or two (out loud). You might even count the words if their entries seem short! Checking the journals each week only takes a minute and provides valuable accountability for your students. Remember, the goal is to get them in the habit of writing, and you can help them build this habit by regularly checking on their progress.

## **Journal Prompts**

The prompts are organized to promote different kinds of writing:

Week 1: Descriptive

Week 2: Narrative

Week 3: Expository

Week 4: Persuasive

### **Writing Prompts for Week 1**

- Describe your favorite vacation spot.
- Describe your grandpa or another relative.
- Describe an interesting insect or reptile.

### **Writing Prompts for Week 2**

- Discuss an interesting story from your parent's childhood.
- Retell your favorite fairytale or Bible story.
- Tell about a day in the life of your pet (real or imagined!).

### **Writing Prompts for Week 3**

- A book worth reading is \_\_\_\_\_. Explain.
- Beach or mountains? Which do you prefer and why?
- A job I would NOT want to have is \_\_\_\_\_. Explain why.

## Writing Prompts for Week 4

- Is procrastination ever a good thing? Discuss positives and negatives.
- Do you consider yourself an optimist (someone who sees the glass as half full) or a pessimist (someone who sees the glass as half empty)? Give evidence.
- Do you think it is important to make your bed every day? Why or why not?

## Next Steps

After a month or two of journal writing, consider adding a longer weekly writing assignment that you will direct, read, and evaluate. For help with this, see my [Basic PLUS Writing Plan](#).

Continue to assign journal writing but reduce the number of weekly entries. I have my students do journal writing year round, but they are only required to submit two entries each week. Many students find that they enjoy journal writing after they get into the habit of it—in fact, some of them write more than they are required to do.

For more discussion of journal writing, see my [article](#).