

## FOR-PD's Reading Strategy of the Month

# Quick-Write

October 2008



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### Rationale:

The quick-write is a basic literacy strategy that can be incorporated across the content areas. The purpose of the quick-write is to give students an opportunity to reflect on their learning quickly via writing. It usually involves posing a question and giving students a set amount of time (from one to a few minutes) to respond in writing. This writing activity can be used at the beginning, middle, or at the end of a lesson; usually, teachers allocate one minute to a quick-write. Younger and older students can benefit from the quick-write strategy. Punctuation and spelling do not usually count in this type of writing.

The quick-write is used as a reflective vehicle to reading/learning. Teachers could ask students to reflect on what they read/learned, key ideas from reading, problems they encountered, or questions they still may have about the text(s). Students can record their quick-write statements in a journal, on a note card, on a piece of paper, or on the computer.

A teacher can decide if students will share their responses with the class, or if the teacher will collect the quick-write at the end of a class (at times it can be used as a short learning log or an exit slip). Although the quick-write activity is not graded, some kind of response by the teacher is encouraged. The quick-write can be modified to meet curricular/learning goals.

### Quick-write benefits:

- It is a non-threatening and quick activity.
- It encourages writing and promotes reading-writing connections.

- It facilitates critical thinking skills.
- It allows students to collect thoughts and to briefly respond to reading/learning.

### Quick-write ideas:

- Use at the beginning of a class as a pre-reading strategy to informally assess and activate students' background knowledge on a topic, concept, or text.
- Stop in the middle of a class discussion or reading and ask learners to write about what has been said, what they read so far, and what key points they made individually or as a group (if they were working in small groups).
- Give at the end of the class and ask students to prepare at home and use as an opening activity for next class.
- After reading, working in a small group, or after researching a topic, ask students to do a quick-write to summarize, analyze, synthesize, evaluate or explain a concept/idea/problem.
- Read a poem or speech and ask students to do a quick-write about the entire poem/speech or some key aspect you would like them to reflect upon and write about.
- Use quick writes to encourage student-student or teacher-student discussion.
- Use quick writes as an exit slip.
- Split the class into groups: give 3 groups a minute to quick-write about the beginning of the book/story/text/topic, 3 groups to write about something that happened in the middle of the story, book, or event, and 3 more groups can write about the end. Collect all quick-writes and build the story/event/discussion/topic from students' writing and ask them to evaluate as a class how well they captured the story, book, text, discussion, or event.

### **How to Use the Strategy:**

For the purposes of this publication, we decided to streamline the quick-write strategy and apply a “template” to it that would allow teachers to obtain some targeted information from students' quick-write activity.

The following template asks students to quickly report on key points they learned about a topic (from reading a piece of text, a book, viewing a video/film, a word, participating in a discussion, or listening to a presentation) and note some questions they still might have about the topic/book/issue at hand. This approach will also help teachers to get a quick glance at what students learned from what they read, heard, or discussed and they will also be able to use students' quick-write questions to further explore the topic.

Use the following quick-write as an after-reading strategy. Give students one minute (or a maximum of three minutes) to complete it.



**Florida Online Reading  
Professional Development**

Quick-Write	
Name:	Topic:
Key Points:	Questions I Still Have:

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**Example for  
Elementary Grades:**

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## Florida Online Reading Professional Development

### Quick-Write

Name:

Topic: *The Tale of Despereaux*, by Kate DiCamillo

#### Key Points:

Despereaux does not act like a mouse; he talks to humans and falls in love with the princess, Pea. He likes music, stories, and light. He gets punished and he ends up in the dungeon. He meets some sad rats, Roscuro and Miggery Sow. The book was about friendship and love.

#### Questions I Still Have:

- How did Miggery Sow come to be at the castle?
- What did the Queen love more than anything in the world and why was it banned from the kingdom?
- What do Miggery Sow and the Princess Pea have in common?

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### Example for Secondary Grades:



## Florida Online Reading Professional Development

### Quick-Write

Name:

Topic: US Financial Bailout

#### Key Points:

The October 2008 federal financial bailout is the largest one since the Great Depression. With the US financial bailout plan the government will buy the bad debt of US institutions for the next 2 years. This plan will cost the taxpayers lots of money in taxes for years to come.

#### Questions I Still Have:

- Is this plan going to fix the US economy?
- Will this bailout create more jobs?
- What can be done to prevent it from happening again?

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### Assessment:

Teachers can use the quick-write strategy to informally assess (a) students' understanding of key points read in a book/text or discussed in class; and, (b) questions students have about the topic, book, or issue at hand. Information from the quick-write can assist teachers in planning for further instruction, providing more

information on a topic, or creating small groups based on students' questions that can further research a topic, book, or book character. The quick-write strategy can also be used to informally assess students' writing.

## Resources:

Composing Cinquain Poems: A Quick-Writing Activity (K-2 grades)

[http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson\\_view.asp?id=51](http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=51)

Middle Web \_

<http://www.middleweb.com/CurrLangArt.html>

Strategies and lesson plans for building the reading and writing skills of students in the middles grades.

The National Council of teachers of English (NCTE): Writing in the early grades (K-2)

<http://www.ncte.org/prog/writing/research/113328.htm>

The National Council of teachers of English (NCTE): Writing in the intermediate grades (3-5)

<http://www.ncte.org/prog/writing/research/115617.htm>

The National Council of teachers of English (NCTE): Writing in the middle grades (6-8)

<http://www.ncte.org/prog/writing/research/113177.htm>

## References:

International Reading Association (2008). A joint position statement of the International Reading Association and the National Association for the Education of Young Children. *Learning to read and write: Developmentally appropriate practices for young children*. Newark, DE: The International Reading Association. Available online: [www.naeyc.org/about/positions/pdf/PSREAD98.PDF](http://www.naeyc.org/about/positions/pdf/PSREAD98.PDF)

Langer, J., Close, E., Angelis, J., & Preller, P. (2000). *Guidelines for helping middle and high school students read and write well*. Albany, NY: National Research Center on English Learning and Achievement. Available online: [cela.albany.edu/publication/brochure/guidelines.pdf](http://cela.albany.edu/publication/brochure/guidelines.pdf)

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Wood, K., & Harmon, M. (2001). *Strategies for integrating reading & writing in middle and high school classrooms*. Newark, DE: The International Reading Association.

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