

How To Building A Writing Workshop for Students

Are you excited about making your first writing workshop? Here are some tips to help you get started out! There are many ways you can build your own unique writing workshop, but here are three ways that you can get started right now!

First, let's think about: what is a writing prompt? Most good writing workshops revolve around a prompt. A prompt is a single statement or question that writers can write a poem around.

Here are some examples: Where are you from? Write an ode to something you love. Write a battle poem. Why do you love yourself? etc.

Step One-- Source Material!

You should try to provide two different source materials that both have the same prompt. This helps everyone by giving them more than one way to approach the same idea or topic. The two writing materials do not necessarily have to be of the same genre. For example, you could pair **Franny Choi's "Ode to My Armpit Hairs"** with the song **"Forest Whitaker" by Brother Ali** to write poems that celebrate parts of your physical appearance that you are not or were not always proud of. So the prompt could be "Ode to my [insert physical body part]."

Try to think of two examples of artwork you love that have similar themes. What do they have in common? What could the prompt be for other students to build off of?

First Example of Source Material: _____.

Second Example of Source Material: _____.

What do they share in common:

What is a prompt you can base off of them:

Step 2: Frame the Prompt!

If you want to give more context incase people get stuck, you are going to want to frame the prompt. Lists and freewrites are a good way to allow writers to generate material for their poems, and might even get them to include things that they might not consider when they just hear the prompt. Think about the examples of source materials you are bringing in: what are some ways that you can break down the content?

Here are some example lists that could work for the prompt mentioned above: List aspects of your physical appearance that you are proud of, list aspects of your physical appearance that you are not proud of (or did

not used to be proud of), List aspects of your appearance that have been made fun of, List aspects of your appearance that society doesn't always value, etc.

What are five lists that you could use to generate writing out of the source material?

1. .
2. .
3. .
4. .
5. .

What is a freewrite that relates to the prompt?

Step Three: Set up a starter line!

What happens if you can't find a way to start the poem? Sometimes it is helpful for writers to have an example of a starter line to help kick off the poem. Two easy ways of doing this are by providing an anaphora, or a ghost line.

An **anaphora** is the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of a poetic line. It is kind of like the hook or the refrain, and helps you create a structure around their poem. A **ghost line** is a "starter line" that you can later throw away or erase if they no longer need it. A ghost line can come from the source material itself or is something that you can create from scratch.

Here is an example anaphora that could be repeated throughout a poem for the prompt mentioned above: "O!, [insert physical feature]." Anytime you get stuck, you can just add "O!, [Physical feature]" and see if it takes you in a new direction or adds new momentum.

Here are two examples of a ghost line that you could use to start the poem mentioned in the prompt above: "Here are some beauty tips according to me..." Or "I love my [physical feature] because..."

What is an anaphora that could be used to help break down the prompt:

What is an example of a ghost line from your 1st source material:

What is an example of a ghost line from your 2nd source material: