



Introduction

What is *Daily Writing Fundamentals*?

Daily Writing Fundamentals is a series designed to enhance your current writing curriculum. Comprised of four books for grades 5–6, 7–8, 9–10, and 11–12, each volume includes student grade-level writing examples, as well as selections from well-known authors. The student examples have been gathered from over 30 years of teaching, and have been edited and revised throughout the years.

Developed by a group of five experienced language arts teachers, trainers, and literacy specialists, these brief daily writing activities can fit into any classroom schedule.

Daily Writing Fundamentals is best practice!

Writing is a task that can be challenging for students to master. Other than grammar and mechanics, it is a skill closely connected to reading and critical thinking. Writing difficulties can be overcome through a variety of engaging activities such as making writing a collaborative experience. Most students enjoy reading and discussing other students' writing; it provides them with a sense of security, and may allow a greater sense of ease when analyzing and sharing their own writing.

Try the following best practices in your classroom:

- Study, evaluate, and discuss models of good writing with students.
- Provide students with opportunities to reflect on what good writing is and how writing can be improved.
- Encourage students to spend sufficient time on a piece of writing to learn from it.
- Have students write often and in every class.

Daily Writing Fundamentals is designed around these practices to provide helpful models that will encourage your students to think about writing, to improve their own writing, and to make the art of writing part of their own lifelong learning goals.

(continued)

Using *Daily Writing Fundamentals*

The 32 weekly units are very flexible. Units can be adapted, questions can be combined, and you should feel free to add questions of your own. You may want to write the daily question on the board or on an overhead, or you can copy the five weekly questions and distribute them to students. Ample space has been provided throughout the book for you and your students to make notes.

The majority of the activities will only take your students a few minutes to complete. Some selections may take longer. Consider assigning these as homework.

The selections are numbered but don't have to be used in sequence. To focus on particular skill areas, use the convenient skill chart to find which selections address your students' needs.

Note: It is important to review each selection before use with your class. Because the student examples have been gathered from real-life experiences, some students may be sensitive to the content.

Selection 1

¹ My brother Ricardo has help me in many situations. ² He is my favorite brother. ³ If I'm upset he is there for me. ⁴ If I need advice I can count on him. ⁵ I know that he listens to what I'm saying.

⁶ One time I had a bad day at school. ⁷ One of my friends told the kid that I like, that I like him. ⁸ He told me a friend would do that, then that is not a true friend. ⁹ He also advised me to just tell him how I felt about him since told him. ¹⁰ I haven't done that yet, but I plan on it. ¹¹ I have come close to it. ¹² Anther time is when I was scared to jump off the rock on our vacation. ¹³ He talked me through it. ¹⁴ There was no other way down so he got up and talked with me. ¹⁵ Then we jumped together. ¹⁶ It was scary but I did it. ¹⁷ And with him. ¹⁸ I can't think of a time that when I had a problem he wasn't there. ¹⁹ I know that I can count on Ricardo. ²⁰ He cants on me too. ²¹ We always have a great time together. ²² And we always will!



Selection 12

¹ As I packed my bags a cold November wind flew in through my curtained window. ² My mind was floating far away to a place I would soon visit—Australia. ³ My parents had just decided over the summer to take my Brothers and I on a special vacation to visit my aunt and uncle. ⁴ I had never met my aunt and uncle. ⁵ My mom said they were very nice. ⁶ She showed me pictures of them as well as pictures of my cousins who were the same age as my older brother and me. ⁷ I wondered what we would see in Melbourne, the city where my relatives lived. ⁸ Early the next morning we all awoke very early and carried our bags out to the car. ⁹ My suitcase was almost heavier than I was, and my skinny little legs could hardly carry the weight! ¹⁰ My brothers were as anxious as I was as we drove to the airport in Los Angeles. ¹¹ At the airport, we sat in our chairs til it was time to bored the plane. ¹² My heart was pounding. I felt dizzy and frightened because I had never been on a plane before. ¹³ I slept for a while and then the middle of the night and read til my head pounded and my eyes were blurry. ¹⁴ After 17 hours we arrived at the airport in Melbourne, Australia. ¹⁵ During our visit we went to the Parliament House, St. Paul’s Cathedral, the Sunday Market at the Art Centre, the Victoria Police Museum, and Melbourne Zoo. ¹⁶ Our two-week vacation flew by! ¹⁷ When it was time to go, I cried and hugged my aunt and uncle. ¹⁸ Even though I had never seen them before the trip, I felt like I had known them all my life. ¹⁹ As we drove to the airport, we talked about our favorite memories of our family’s visit. ²⁰ This was an experience that I will never forget.

Selection 30

Jordan's Notes

1. Johann Sebastian Bach was born in Germany in 1685.
2. Quite a few of his male relatives were musicians.
3. His parents died before he was 10.
4. Bach could play the violin and the organ.
5. Bach was married twice and had 20 children.
6. I like to listen to Bach's music, but I really like rock and roll better.
7. Bach wrote classical music.
8. Some pieces of Bach's music were played aboard the *Voyager* spacecraft.
9. My 6th grade teacher played Bach's music to us on Friday afternoons.
10. Bach went blind in his later years.
11. Bach composed over 1,200 pieces.
12. In the Peanuts cartoons, there is a character who likes classical music.

