

## **Teacher Instructions**

### **Round Robin Writing --- TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS**

Title: Round Robin Writing

Grade Focus: 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

Subject: Language Arts and Cross-Curricular

Integration Activity: Keyboarding, Word Processing, Digital Imaging

Recommended Time to Completion: Two to three class periods

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Students will work in teams of four to write a collaborative story. Each student will choose a photo or visual image for their story prompt and begin to write their own story based upon this photo. Then, students will switch computers to add to a teammate's story. Students will continue to rotate computers until the story is completed, contributing to every teammate's story at once. Students will finish their own stories and add additional digital images once the story is completed.

#### **PREREQUISITE EXPERIENCE:**

Students should be able to use a word processor. They will also need to have good keyboarding skills and knowledge of how to use the Edit mode for Word or another writing program. Digital images will be added to the final story.

#### **TEACHER PREP TIME:** 1 hour

This activity works best when each student has his/her own computer. Using laptops or Alpha Smart laptops offers flexibility. More information about the use of digital imagery may be found at the Nortel LearniT site, <http://www.nortellearnit.org/technology/Imaging/>.

#### **PROJECT:**

Students will collaboratively develop and write a story using a word processor and writing software. They will add images to their final product.

#### **ASSESSMENT / GRADING:**

Using a rubric, the stories will be evaluated on their storyline development and use of software for editing and adding images.

#### **TIME MANAGEMENT TIP:**

Teams of four will work together to develop the story. You may choose to "time" each writing session and run the session like "musical chairs." Each person will add to the story in a limited time.

**Engage**



Photo Credit: Dale Gerhard 1/11/02, *Southern Regional ETTC* and *The Press of Atlantic City*

What do you think these children are seeing right now? What are they thinking? Are they friends or brothers and sisters? How old do they look?

Plan a story to tell about these children and what you think might happen next. Will your story be exactly the same as the story your teammates might tell? Share your ideas and thoughts with a friend.

You and your teammates are going to help each other write a creative story based upon a photo or image of you choose.

By the end of your writing time, you will have a unique round robin story with input from your team mates.

## Explore

To complete your project you will need a computer that has an Internet connection, Word (or another writing software program), and digital imaging software.

Before you begin your research you might want to review the **Nortel LearniT Digital Imaging** videos at <http://www.nortellearnit.org/technology/Imaging/>

Choose a photo for your story starter. One place to look is <http://www.etc.net/writing/Thumbnails.htm>

This site offers "Pictures of the Week" from press photo editor Gary Shivers of *The Press of Atlantic City* and *The Southern Regional ETTC*.

Photos and pictures can also be found at:

flickr™

<http://www.flickr.com/groups/storystarters/>

Setting Thumbs

<http://home.freeuk.net/elloughton13/setting.htm>

Picture Prompts

<http://www.storyit.com/Starters/picstart.htm>

Once you've found a photo that you like, brainstorm answers to this list of questions:

- What's happening right now in this image? What happened 10 minutes before the picture was taken? What might happen next?
- What do you know about the people in the picture? If there aren't people there, where might they be?
- Create a list of adjectives to describe what you'd see, feel, smell, touch, or taste if you were *IN* the picture.

These resources may help you as you write:

Dictionary

[www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)

Thesaurus

[www.thesaurus.com](http://www.thesaurus.com)

## **Explain**

1. Begin by forming a team of no more than four people.
2. Practice storytelling with your team. Choose one of the “story starters” below. Ask one person to begin telling a story to the group. This person will continue telling the story until the teacher calls time.
3. Then, the story passes to the next person in the group. This person continues the story until the teacher calls time.
4. The story continues to pass until everyone has had a chance to add to the story.
5. The first person finishes the story.
6. Discuss these questions as a team:
  - How did storyline grow as each person added to the story?
  - Why was it important to be good listeners during this activity?
  - How did the final story reflect each person’s interest? Personalities?
  - What were the benefits of telling a story collaboratively?

Some story starters ...

- Casey took a bite and thought, worms don’t taste so bad ...
- Suzie woke up and looked around, surprised that she wasn’t in her own home ...
- Max had never driven a car before but knew everyone was depending on him ...
- That eerie feeling came over Leslie when ...
- “Don’t look down,” his mother called ...

## **Elaborate**

1. Look through the photos. You and your team will choose ONE photo as the basis of the stories that you will be writing. Each person will begin their own story using the same photo for inspiration.
2. Your teacher will determine the length of each “writing round.” You will have at least five minutes to write before the round closes. You will start your own story and write at least the first paragraph. When time is up, be sure to save the story including your name in the title. Be careful with your file management. If you are saving your stories to disks, be sure you continue to save to the disk. If you are saving the files on a computer’s desktop, be sure you save in the same place at the end of each writing session.
3. Move to one of your team mate’s computers. Carefully read what your team mate has already written. When the teacher officially starts this “writing round,” begin adding to your team mate’s story. You must pick up the story where your team mate left off. Continue writing until the round is over. Save the work again, adding your initials to the end of the title.
4. Continue moving to new stories until you return to your own story. Carefully read to follow the growth of your story. Write your story’s ending.
5. Pair with another classmate to “peer edit” each other’s work. Use the “edit mode” of the writing program you’re using for this edit.
6. Revise your writing based upon comments from your peer edit. Add images throughout the story to help tell your tale.
7. Add an acknowledgement page that will include your name, the names of your collaborative team, the year, your school, and city.
8. Read your story to the class. You and your classmates may also choose to record your stories as audio and video podcasts to share with other students.

## Round Robin Writing Rubric

	<b>Wonderful Wordsmith</b>	<b>Creative Composer</b>	<b>Up and Coming Author</b>
<b>Central Idea</b>	One central idea for each piece. All writing is consistently focused on the topic.	Clear idea but occasional loss of focus.	Unclear central idea. Unfocused writing. May have more than one central idea or may ramble.
<b>Elaboration</b>	Each piece of writing supports its central idea with many details.	Details are included but do not support the central idea.	Lacks details and support.
<b>Tone and Word Choice</b>	Tone and word choice match the audience.	Tone and/or word choice sometimes match the targeted audience.	Inappropriate tone and word choice for designated audience.
<b>Writing Quality (spelling, punctuation, sentence structure)</b>	Writing is mostly free of spelling, grammatical, and mechanical errors.	Writing has several spelling, grammatical, and mechanical errors.	Needs editing because of numerous spelling, grammatical and mechanical errors.
<b>Applied understanding of writing software</b>	Applied understanding clearly evident	Applied understanding somewhat evident	Applied understanding is not evident
<b>Overall Final Product – Image(s)</b>	Image(s) demonstrate technical skills and creativity with purpose	Image(s) demonstrate some technical skills and creativity	Image(s) demonstrate limited technical skills and creativity

## **Extend**

Consider extending this activity using any of these suggestions:

1. Return to the photos from the "Pictures of the Week" chosen by press photo editor Gary Shivers of *The Southern Regional ETTC* and *The Press of Atlantic City*, <http://www.etc.net/writing/Thumbnails.htm>. You can read the caption and story that originally matched the photo to see how close your fictional stories match the "real" story. The captions and stories can be found at <http://www.etc.net/writing/Captions&Stories.htm>
2. Convert your stories into a Webpage to share your stories with other students
3. Add your stories to the school Web site.
4. Try writing a "non-fiction" story with a friend.

