



WRITING DIFFERENTLY IN YOUR NOTEBOOK

HOW TO ADD VARIETY?

I'm going to leave this column mostly the same because this advice holds for the next 2 weeks. Reread!!!

Stop having pre-conceived notions about what should be written on the page. Commonly students assume that the notebook=journal, that it has to be a place where you record and analyze your life and feelings. It can be that sometimes or always. AND, it can be a lot of other things.

Remember – it's a THINKER'S NOTEBOOK. You should be writing about whatever it is you think about when no one is telling you what to think about. So, the things that actually interest and fascinate you – write about those!

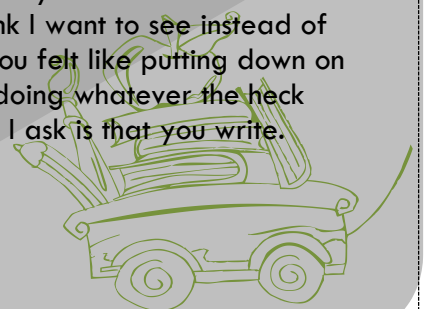
When I've said this to past students, they've used their notebooks to:

- plan for/reflect on/record Robotics events and team drama
- plan for/record/analyze fantasy football
- draft fiction of all kinds: fan fiction, web comics, short stories, novels, etc.
- plan new inventions
- create lists of both really important life events and really mundane every-day stuff
- map out marching band formations
- record conversations that happened or were overheard
- rant about a teacher/class
- write song lyrics, poetry
- plan sermons
- plan/draft OPs (this is perfectly acceptable and encouraged)

Why should you write differently?

Intentionally writing differently opens up the possibility that you will think differently about your subject matter. Doing that means you might access thoughts that would otherwise have lain dormant in your brain. It's like changing your look by changing your hair and your clothes. You'll start to feel and act like a different version of yourself. Well, change up your writing persona and see if you don't write like a new person (even just a little bit).

You may need to first figure out what your "normal" entry is so you know what to move away from. Spend some time rereading your entries up to this point. What habits/ruts are you falling into? Maybe it's working for you, or maybe you're already bored with notebook writing. If you're already bored this early in the year, that's a good indication that you aren't using the notebook for yourself. You're still writing what you think I want to see instead of whatever the heck you felt like putting down on paper today. Start doing whatever the heck you need to do!!! All I ask is that you write.



OTHER STRATEGIES

1. Variety in how you write on the page:

Write in a different color or with a different utensil. Crayons always produce a different kind of writing.

Change colors every time you change subjects in a single entry. See how many different colors you can use in a single entry.

Turn your notebook sideways or upside down and then start writing. Write against the lines.

Make your handwriting HUGE or TINY or Use your non-dominant hand to write or Write in cursive.

Type your entry, print it out and tape it into your notebook.

Hand-write the entry on paper meant to go in the trash and then tape it into your notebook. Think about using receipts, graded work from another class, anything you can find in the recycling bin.

Express yourself in pictures or images.

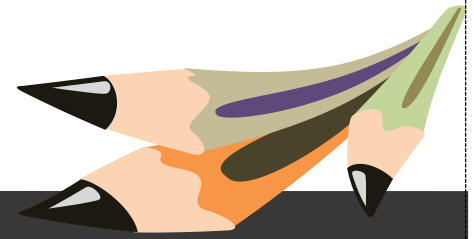
2. Variety in your content:

Revisit an old entry. Rewrite it in a completely different genre or tone. Disagree with yourself. Defend yourself with new evidence.

Be inspired by the words of others. Begin your entry with a quote you find interesting then launch into your own ideas as a response or continuation of the quote.

3. Variety in genre:

If you haven't tried one of the following, now is the time to add some of these to your entries: lists, letters, poetry, pictures/doodles/word art, rants, recounting of dreams, diagrams, charts, conversations (real or imagined)



Third Assignment

You have until Friday, October 2nd to show Mr. Loewen your notebook. This check counts as a third of a major grade. Late points will be taken off if you wait until after the due date to have your notebook checked.

1. **Keep writing**, both during in-class time and outside of class. Make sure you are labeling your entries.

2. Your goal remains to be writing longer/more each time you sit down to write, almost every time you write. Aim for **a page or more for all in-class writing sessions and for some out-of-class writing sessions.**

3. **ADD VARIETY!** Try some of the strategies I've listed here. Be prepared to say which specific ones you tried.

ASSESSMENT

Be prepared to show entries written since the last check. Be prepared (for an A) to show you've gone above and beyond what was asked: by writing more entries than was required and writing more. You should also be able to clearly show you've attempted some of the strategies mentioned here. Having only or just above what is asked is how you get a B. Having less than what is asked is how you get a C.

