

Drafting

Up to this point in the unit of study students have been doing all of their writing inside their writer's notebooks. Drafting is the first step of the writing process when your student writers will be writing outside of their notebooks. All of the work you have been doing in your notebooks to this point was intended to support writers in thinking about what they will make outside of their notebooks. It has been more of an unconscious type of writing where writers are fast writing and just getting their thoughts onto the page. Drafting is a much more intentional writing where the writer has some plan about what they want to say in their writing. Students must know that the draft is really a starting point for what they make as a published piece of writing. When drafting, writers should remember that they will have a lot of opportunities to go back and revise their work after the draft is written. Writers should not be expecting this to be the last of the writing work they will do.

It is a difficult concept for teachers to convey and beginning writers to understand that the draft is something different from what they have been doing in their notebooks. One way to do this is to help students focus on how to begin the draft, setting the stage for the idea that we are transitioning to *deciding* how to assemble our texts, rather than allowing them to emerge organically or "accidentally." Another option might be to have your students think about a plan for their story by creating a story board. This helps them to think about how the story might go. Included in the resources on this page are two lesson plan ideas that show how the drafting day might go.

The example below shows two copies of a student's piece of writing about Florida. The top portion of the page is her first draft. Notice how this writer takes one interesting line from her first draft and creates a second piece of writing around that line. She begins by writing facts about Florida, by the end of her first revision she has transformed her piece into a sensorial experience of a Florida beach through her writing.

Florida

8-28-12

Florida is a very hot, humid place and is a great place to get a tan. In Florida they invest their money on tourist attractions, because most people come there for their beaches. I personally like it ~~because~~ because of my experience I had. This is what I wrote: "I loved visiting Florida. When I first got there I could hear screaming with joyful delight, the warm breeze flowing through the air and the palm trees flowing side to side like the wind, I smelled my sun tan lotion filling up my nose while

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~~When~~ When my toes touched the warm, tan-^{crystallized} sand, I felt it sinking under my toes, I felt the warm, cool breeze flowing through my silk brown hair while the palm trees move side to side like ~~the waves~~ the waves. I smelled my sun tan lotion filling up my nose, while I sensed the burning hot sun, hit my cool skin. The smell isn't enough to to the way the feeling I had. The Celeste type water reach my toes, feeling it's warm silk water. I slowly stepped in the water so I could feel the sensation when I steps into it, when it finally reached my hips, I slowly sunk down untill my hair was up to the surface, At that moment, I was in my world, no one could disturb me, only I could concentrate, I felt the wave hits th crystal sand. I will never forget the feeling I ~~had~~ had in Florida

Indiana Partnership for Young Writers: Writerly Life (07: Drafting)

Try it:

Look back through your notebook entries and begin to think about your first draft. Decide what it is you will be writing: a poem, a memoir, a personal essay before you begin to write your first draft. After deciding what you will be making you are ready to make a draft!

Draft Paper

Name: _____

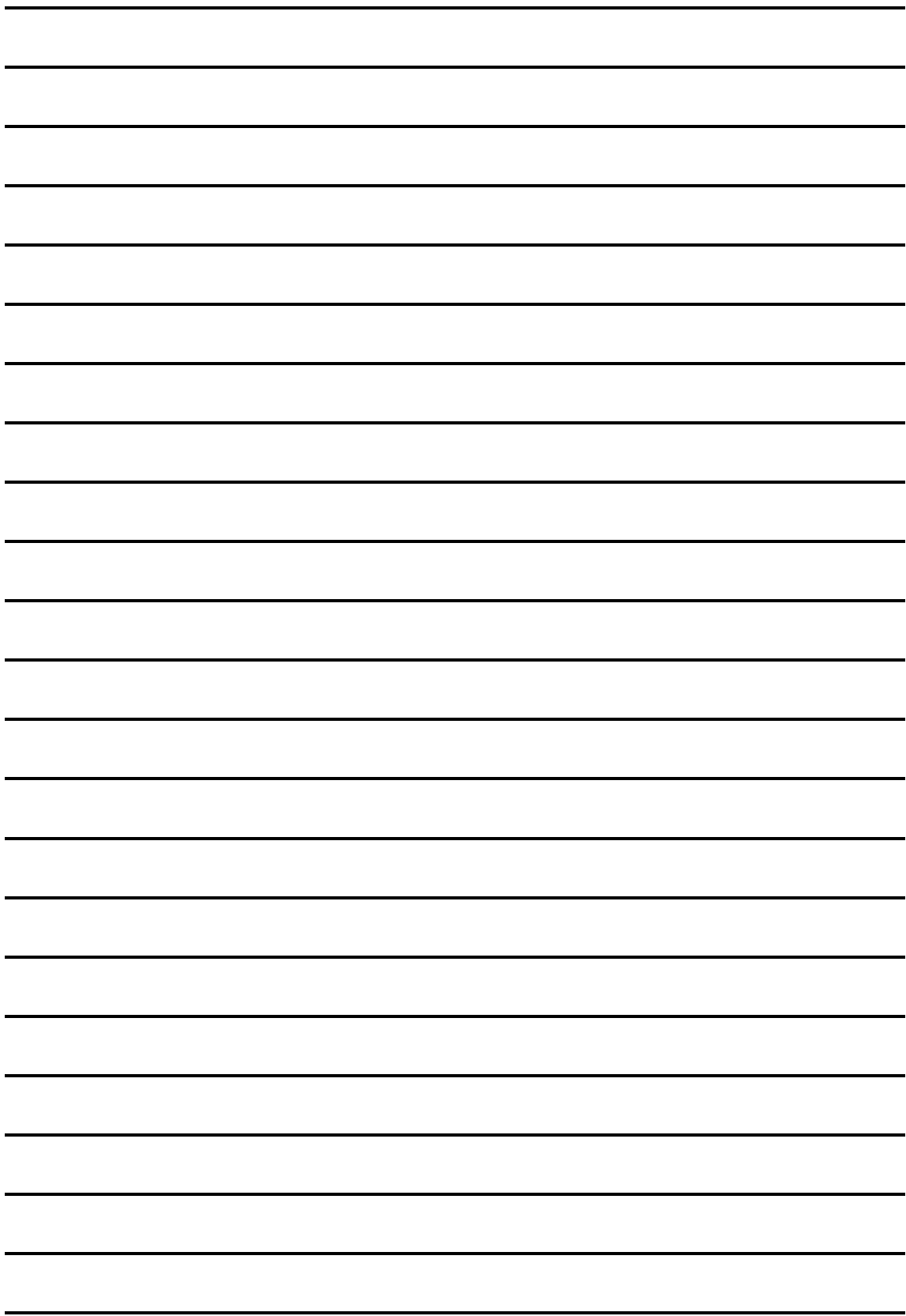
Date: _____

Seed Idea: _____

Genre: _____

Working Title: _____

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.





Unit of Study Writerly Life Day/Date Drafting Day

Focus: (What one thing will you teach and why?):

Authors pay special attention to how they start their stories because they want to hook us and make us keep reading.

Connection (What will you say to the students about why you are teaching this?):

We've been doing a lot of thinking in our notebooks, because many writers think about their ideas for a long time before they actually write a story. But I think we're ready now to try creating a draft. One thing we can do as we move from notebook entries to a draft on clean paper is to pay special attention to the beginning of our story, because we want to hook our readers at the beginning and make them want more!

Give Info: (How will you teach this? What exactly do you want to say?)

We've now read three stories together-*Eleven*, *The Marble Champ* and *Slower Than the Rest*- and I noticed that they started in three very different ways. *Slower Than the Rest* started right in the middle of the action (Leo spotting a turtle in the road). *The Marble Champ* started with sort of a close-up on one character (Lupe) and *Eleven* starts with a reflection on what it's like to be 11 years old.

I'm going to think about my story-getting asked about my brother in the hair salon. I could start it in the middle of the action, my sister and me in the salon, having fun, talking to our stylists. Or I could start with a close-up on one character, maybe the hair stylist since she's the one that asked me the tough question. Or I could start with a reflection on the fact that I hadn't thought about how I'd answer that sort of everyday question until someone asked me. Hmm...I feel like the action or reflection is the way to go for my story. I'm going to try action. [Demo first few lines of draft].

Active Involvement: (How will students "try-it" before they go off to work independently?)

Think about your story. Does it feel like it should start in the action, with a close up of one character or with some reflection? Turn to a writer near you and help each other work that out. Talk about how you'll start your stories.

Link: (What is the relationship between what you taught and what you expect them to do during workshop time?) Now that you've decided how to start your story, I want you to go back to your seats and write the whole story on draft paper. You need to look back at your notebook entries to remind yourself of some of the smart thinking you've already done (like the things you could hear/see/smell/taste/touch at the climax). But you aren't going to copy exactly what's in your notebook, because when you wrote it in there you were just making notes, not writing a real story yet.

Share: (How will students share the work they did w/ each other to further develop TP?)

Make 3 people famous. Invite a student who used each type of opening to tell why he/she