

INTRODUCTION

This is a book that encourages children to write just for the fun of it. In the process, it is our hope that they will become more skillful writers, and will approach writing with less dread and more confidence.

“Just Write!” consists of 50 reproducible activity pages that focus on familiar subjects. You’ll find topics such as “The My Page,” “The Spill Page,” “The Backwards Page,” “The Worry Page,” and “The Air Page.” Since every page has a different theme, the writing projects are varied and unexpected. The fact that students can be counted on to know at least something about the individual topics provides the “hook” for getting them to communicate their ideas. Ask them about their thumbs (“The Hand Page”), or the biggest crowd they’ve ever been in (“The Crowded Page”), or the workings of a drawer (“The Furniture Page”), and you’re bound to get some interesting results because they know a little about all of these things.

You will notice that each writing page is accompanied by a teacher page which provides additional comments about the activities as well as possible responses. In many cases, there are really no right or wrong answers. Be prepared to accept anything a child can justify.

Also on the teacher page, we have included an extending activity to go along with each theme page. In every case, the extender focuses on a simple art challenge that relates to the general theme of the activity. Not only should these extenders help keep “early finishers” busy, they will also serve as fun-to-do rewards once the writing work is completed. If you choose to use the art ideas, you’ll find they are very easy to administer. Most require only pencil and paper.

Of course, it is important to remind youngsters that you want them to treat these assignments with respect and that you expect them to put forth their best efforts. As you know, any activity can be raced through and, therefore, rendered meaningless. It should also be stressed that every part of the assignment must be completed.

Occasionally, some students may need more space than we have allotted for the various challenges. If that is so, simply tell them to finish their writing on the back of their activity sheets.

We hope you enjoy these activities and that “Just Write!” will be just right for your students.

Greta and Ted Rasmussen