

FREE Teaching Guide and Classroom Poster

Color Your Classroom

A language arts program that brings essay-writing skills to life



Welcome, Educators!

All of the world’s great achievements began with imagination. **Color Your Classroom**, a new **language arts** program, offers students the means to explore their own imaginations as powerful tools of expression.

Created by **Expo Dry Erase Markers**, this program features lessons and activities that encourage creative writing and storytelling. Reinforce the concepts by displaying the poster in your classroom and having students reflect on the theme of coloring their imaginations.

Encourage your students to let their creative voices be heard in the **Expo Classroom Makeover Contest**. Students can win a \$500 U.S. savings bond, and you can win a classroom makeover!

Phil Dolci
Expo

Standards	Benchmarks	Lesson 1	Resource A
LANGUAGE ARTS: Writing			
Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process	Prewriting: Uses a variety of prewriting strategies	●	●
	Drafting and Revising: Uses a variety of strategies to draft and revise written work	●	●
	Editing and Publishing: Uses a variety of strategies to edit and publish written work		●
	Writes fictional, biographical, autobiographical, and observational narrative compositions		●
Uses the stylistic and rhetorical aspects of writing	Uses precise and descriptive language that clarifies and enhances ideas and supports different purposes		●
LANGUAGE ARTS: Listening and Speaking			
Uses listening and speaking strategies for different purposes	Plays a variety of roles in group discussions	●	●
	Asks questions as a way to broaden and enrich classroom discussion	●	●

Sources: NCTE (National Council of Teachers of English), McREL (Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning).



Essay Contest!

Your students can **WIN** a **\$500 U.S. savings bond** and a **makeover for your classroom!**
 Visit www.expomarkers.com for details.

Lesson Overviews for Teachers

The following are teacher instructions for the lessons in this Teaching Guide. You may share the goals for each lesson with your students as you prepare to teach the units.



Lesson 1: Writing from Experience

Goals: Students will brainstorm about autobiographical experiences in preparation for writing an expressive essay.

Time Required: 40 minutes

Materials Required: Writing from Experience Student Reproducible 1; pen or pencil; dry erase board (optional); dry erase markers (optional)

Directions:

1. Review the qualities of essay writing (a formal expression of your ideas) with students. Point out that an essay can persuade, inform, or express feelings to an audience.
2. Lead a discussion about the key elements in essay writing. Explain that an essay needs to have an introduction, body, and conclusion. An effective introduction provides a thesis statement that clearly expresses the main point of the essay. It also orients readers to content, perspective, and tone. The body of the essay should include all of the specific details and examples that will support the thesis statement. The conclusion should concisely summarize the main theme of the essay and reinforce your ideas.
3. Explain to students that they will be using autobiographical experiences to write an expressive essay to submit in the **Classroom Makeover Essay Contest**. Provide examples of the many ways in which fiction writers draw on their personal experiences for inspiration.
4. Distribute copies of **Writing from Experience** Student Reproducible 1 and read the introduction together. Give students ten minutes to complete the worksheet.
5. Have students review their responses to **Writing from Experience** Student Reproducible 1. Then have them write notes and brainstorm other ideas or details for their essays. Instruct them to keep their notes, as they will be used in Resource A.

Bonus Challenge: Ask students to think of their favorite book author and share their thoughts with the class about how this author draws on personal experience to be a creative writer.

Marker Tips: Have students take turns illustrating their life experiences on the board using dry erase markers. Have other students in the class guess what the drawings depict.



Lesson 2: Drafting and Revising Essays

Goals: Students will write an expressive essay.

Time Required: 40 minutes, plus homework time

Materials Required: Drafting and Revising Essays Student Reproducible Resource A; story notes; pen or pencil; dry erase board (optional); dry erase markers (optional)

Directions:

1. Lead a discussion on the writing process. Emphasize the importance of a logical sequence, descriptive writing, attention to detail, and inclusion of key elements. Tell students to let their personalities show in their writing. If possible, provide examples from literature. For example, one can clearly see that Jack London's personality differs from Mark Twain's. Remind students that writing an essay affords them the opportunity to use their imaginations. They should be inventive and original. Even when drawing on their own experiences, they should portray those experiences in a new and interesting way.
2. Distribute copies of **Drafting and Revising Essays** Student Reproducible Resource A and have students review the writing and editing tips.
3. Allow students time to write their essay drafts.
4. Once students have completed their essay drafts (on the topic, Why does your teacher deserve a classroom makeover?), allow time for revision. Divide the class into groups of two. Have students share their essays with their partner. Based on the feedback they receive, have students revise their essays for clarity, purpose, and tone.
5. Have students proofread their essays, fixing errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Bonus Challenge: Have students log on to www.expomarkers.com to enter the **Classroom Makeover Essay Contest**.

Marker Tips: Encourage students to use colored dry erase markers to create a colorful advertisement that visually depicts why their teacher deserves to win the **Classroom Makeover Essay Contest**.



Essay Contest!

Your students can **WIN** a **\$500 U.S. savings bond** and a **makeover for your classroom!**

Visit www.expomarkers.com for details.

Writing from Experience

Many writers use their own life experience as the basis for their writing. Fill in the outline below with examples from your own life. Try to be as detailed as possible—your answers will be the framework for your essay.

Teachers Who Have Influenced Me:

1. Name: _____

Personality Traits: _____

2. Name: _____

Personality Traits: _____

3. Name: _____

Personality Traits: _____

Personal Notes: _____

Classes I've Taken:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Personal Notes: _____

Books I've Read in My Class:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Personal Notes: _____

School Trips I've Taken:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Personal Notes: _____

Extracurricular School Activities I've Been Involved In:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Personal Notes: _____

Creativity
is drawn
from
experience

- Mark Twain based the town of St. Petersburg in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* on his boyhood home of Hannibal, Missouri. Many of the characters and events in the books are based on real-life experiences.
- In *The Call of the Wild*, Jack London vividly depicts harsh environmental conditions in order to portray man's never-ending struggle with nature.
- John Steinbeck used fiction as a means of portraying the social injustices of his time, especially in his novels *The Grapes of Wrath* and *Of Mice and Men*.
- Zora Neale Hurston set her novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* in Eatonville, Florida, the town where she grew up.
- Elie Wiesel based *Night* on his experiences in a concentration camp during World War II.

Essay Contest!

Your chance to **WIN** a **\$500 U.S. savings bond** and a **classroom makeover** for your teacher!

Enter Online! Visit www.expomarkers.com for essay topic, entry form, and official rules.

Drafting and Revising Essays

Now that you've brainstormed about your educational experiences, you're ready to draft your first essay. The following suggestions and tips can help make your writing more structured, cohesive, and interesting to readers.

Make Careful Observations

A strong memory and careful observations can make your writing exciting and descriptive. Before you begin writing, take a moment to recall the precise details of the person, place, or event that you're describing. Include those details in your writing to keep your readers fully engaged.

Order Your Paragraphs Logically

Make sure your essay has a clear beginning, middle, and end. Arrange your paragraphs in logical order to give your audience a structured path to follow while reading.

Create a Strong Voice

Learning how to recognize your own voice will help your writing immensely. Ask yourself: Do I like to describe events using sensory details? Do I like to use metaphors or similes in my writing to describe my thoughts? What is my tone? Once you learn to listen to your voice, it will help all of the elements of your essay work together and will favorably influence the reader's experience.

Revise Your Essay

Once you've finished writing your essay, take some time to carefully reread your work. Revise your work accordingly and ask yourself the following questions:

- Have I fully answered the main question of the essay?
- Does my essay include vivid details that will help my readers form strong images?
- Do the sentences in my paragraphs work together to clearly express one main idea?
- Have I included transitional words or phrases that connect my paragraphs?
- Are the events described in my essay presented in a clear, chronological order?



Proofreading Checklist

After you've revised your essay, carefully examine each word, phrase, and sentence to make sure there aren't any spelling, grammatical, or punctuation errors. The following checklist will prevent you from making common mistakes in your writing:

- Have I corrected any sentence fragments?
- Do my verbs agree with their subjects?
- Have I used the correct form of each pronoun?
- Have I used standard punctuation throughout my work?
- Is every word spelled correctly?



Enter Online Now!

Go to www.expomarkers.com and enter Expo's Classroom Makeover Contest!

Complete the online entry form and type in your essay.

Your chance to win a **\$500 U.S. savings bond** and a **classroom makeover** for your teacher!