

**Readington Middle School**  
**Writing Grade 8**

Day 1

Descriptive Writing Prompts: Creating Details

Focus Trait: Ideas

Directions:

Using specific details helps the reader to create a picture in their mind. Think about the ideas that you need to include in your writing to help the reader imagine the scene. Start by using sensory details such as seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, and smelling.

Choose 1 of the prompts below and write for about 20 minutes or more. When you feel you have finished, rate your writing using the Idea Development Checklist.

**Idea Development Checklist:**

Rank **each** skill from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in the following:

- \_\_\_ My written ideas all relate to each other.
- \_\_\_ I stayed on topic throughout the entire writing.
- \_\_\_ My ideas are clear to my reader.
- \_\_\_ Details and examples enrich the central idea.
- \_\_\_ I use figurative language to enhance my writing.

8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Everyone has a favorite object that they treasure. Think of some object in your room that you really like. It could be a toy, or a doll, a game, a stuffed animal, or a book, but whatever it is, it is special to you. What does it look, feel, smell, and sound like? Now, describe this object to your reader so that he or she will be able to picture it clearly.

People gather at places like malls, fairgrounds, schools, gymnasiums, sports fields and swimming pools. Think of a place in your town where there are lots of people. How does it look, sound, smell, and feel to be there? Now, describe that crowded place so that your reader can feel as if he or she is there.

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Day 2

Expository Writing Prompts: Explaining Your Ideas

Focus Trait: Organization

Directions:

Organizing your writing will help the reader to understand your ideas. Think about the order in which to put your ideas or paragraphs.

Choose 1 of the prompts below and write for about 20 minutes or more. When you feel you have finished, rate your writing using the Organization Checklist.

**Organization Checklist:**

Rank **each** skill from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in the following:

- \_\_\_ My introduction grabs the reader's attention.
- \_\_\_ My conclusion links back to my introduction.
- \_\_\_ I used transition words to move from idea to idea.
- \_\_\_ The order of my paragraphs is logical and effective.
- \_\_\_ Organization is so smooth, the reader hardly thinks about it.

8<sup>th</sup> Grade

1. You have been asked by your principal to recommend one course which will help you prepare for the job you want in the future. It could be a course your school is already offering or a new course. Write a letter to your principal about the course you would recommend. Be sure to give the reasons for your suggestion.
  
2. Think of your favorite year in school. Explain why it was your favorite year.

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Day 3

Narrative Prompt: Writing a story

Focus Trait: Organization

Directions:

Organizing your writing will help the reader to understand the order of events. Think about what happens in the beginning, middle and end of your story.

Choose 1 of the prompts below and write for about 20 minutes or more. When you feel you have finished, rate your writing using the Organization Checklist.

**Organization Checklist:**

Rank **each** skill from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in the following:

- \_\_\_ The beginning of the story grabs the reader's attention.
- \_\_\_ There is a clear end to my story.
- \_\_\_ I used transition words to show a change in time or place.
- \_\_\_ The order of my paragraphs is logical and effective.
- \_\_\_ Organization is so smooth, the reader hardly thinks about it.

8<sup>th</sup> Grade

1. A distant relative bequeathed you a strange ring. As you put this ring on, you discover that it has strange powers. What does it look like? What does it do? Tell a story about this ring.

2. Imagine you had a time machine that you could take only to the past. Where would you choose to go? Think of what you would do there, what it would be like. Write a story of your adventure in the past.

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Day 4

Persuasive Essay: Convincing Your Audience

Focus Trait: Voice

Directions:

Voice is all about "you" coming through your writing. It's what gives your writing personality or style. Think about your reader as you write. What will they be persuaded by?

Choose 1 of the prompts below and write for about 20 minutes or more. When you feel you have finished, rate your writing using the Voice Checklist.

**Voice Checklist:**

Rank **each** skill from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in the following:

\_\_\_ I really tried to show passion about my topic by adding words to show my emotions.

\_\_\_ If read aloud, it sounds like something I might really say.

\_\_\_ I spoke right to the reader. I imagined how he or she will feel reading this.

\_\_\_ I knew a lot about this topic and connected it to my own personal experiences.

8<sup>th</sup> Grade

1. Some schools in the United States are requiring that students volunteer for several hours each semester to help on a community problem. What do you think? Write an essay to persuade your reader of your point of view on whether students should be required to volunteer for several hours each semester to help on a community problem.

2. Vandalism is becoming a problem in today's society. Do you think teenagers who vandalize should pay fines or serve mandatory community service to help repair the damage? Write an essay to convince your reader of your position.

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Day 5

Poetry: Writing Free Verse

Focus Trait: Word Choice

Directions:

Write a poem about **ANYTHING** you want! In a free verse poem, the lines don't have to rhyme. Think about choosing vivid adjectives to describe the people, places, or things in your poem.

8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Suggested Topics:

- Colors
- Seasons
- Places (beach, mountains, desert, rainforest, playground, mall, zoo, the bottom of your closet, under your bed, etc.)
- People (family, friends, celebrities, athletes, politicians, etc.)
- Objects (toys, sport equipment, jewelry, clothing, furniture, electronics, etc.)
- Time (past, present or future)
- School (subjects, classes, clubs, activities, etc.)
- Memories or Feelings (happy, sad, angry, surprised, etc.)

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Day 6

Descriptive Writing Prompts: Using Vivid Vocabulary

Trait: Word Choice

Directions:

Using vivid vocabulary in your writing helps the reader to create a picture in their mind. Think about the words that you need to include in your writing to help the reader imagine the scene.

Choose 1 of the prompts below and write for about 20 minutes or more. When you feel you have finished, rate your writing using the Word Choice Checklist.

**Word Choice Checklist:**

Rank **each** skill from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in the following:

\_\_\_ I found just the right words and phrases to make my meaning clear.

\_\_\_ My words are succinct yet rich in meaning, unique to the author

\_\_\_ My verbs are precise, purposeful, powerful and strong; nouns are rich and colorful; phrasing and word choice are unique

\_\_\_ I use striking words and phrases that enrich the writing

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade**

1. Many people love the beach and others love the mountains for a vacation. Which do you like better; the beach or the mountains? Even if you have never been to either, you have seen pictures. Choose one— either a beach or the mountains. What does the place look like? Does the place have a feel to it? What smells are there? What sounds do you hear? Describe your beach or mountains so that your reader can picture the scene you see in your mind.

2. Cities and towns have lots of things going on in them, lots of stores, traffic, people, churches, schools, parks, and maybe even a zoo. Think of your city or a city you have visited. As you walk down the sidewalk in the middle of that city, what do you see, hear, smell, taste, and feel? Describe that city for your reader and what it is like to be there.

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Day 7

Expository Writing Prompts: Explaining Your Ideas

Focus Trait: Ideas

Directions:

Using specific details helps the reader to understand your ideas. Try to develop at least 3 main ideas to express your point of view.

Choose 1 of the prompts below and write for about 20 minutes or more. When you feel you have finished, rate your writing using the Idea Development Checklist.

**Idea Development Checklist:**

Rank **each** skill from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in the following:

- My written ideas all relate to each other.
- I stayed on topic throughout the entire writing.
- My ideas are clear to my reader.
- Details and examples enrich the central idea.
- I use figurative language to enhance my writing.

8<sup>th</sup> grade

1. At school, at work, and at play we have to work in teams in order to achieve our goals. Think of some attributes that make a good team player whether it be in a sport, at work, or at school when working in groups. Now write an essay to explain what makes a person a good team player.

2. Medical studies have shown that exercise is a necessary part of our daily routine. What do you think? Do you exercise? Think about some reasons why you exercise. Exercising is important. Write an essay why it is important to exercise regularly.

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Day 8

Narrative Prompt: Writing a story

Focus Trait: Sentence Fluency

Directions:

Sentence fluency creates a flow or rhythm to your writing. Think about creating strong sentences that vary in length to help with sentence fluency. Using transition words and phrases can also help with sentence fluency.

Choose 1 of the prompts below and write for about 20 minutes or more. When you feel you have finished, rate your writing using the Sentence Fluency Checklist.

**Sentence Fluency Checklist:**

Rank **each** skill from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in the following:

- \_\_\_ My sentences mostly begin with different words.
- \_\_\_ I use a mixture of simple and complex sentences.
- \_\_\_ I use a variety of transitional words when I write.
- \_\_\_ If read aloud, you can hear a rhythm behind my sentences.
- \_\_\_ If I repeated anything, I did it for effect.

8<sup>th</sup> Grade

1. What if you had a personal genie who would grant your every wish? What would your life be like? Think of some of the details. Write a story about having a personal genie.

2. Imagine a city project to have every school student do some hours of community service as a part of the required curriculum. What would you choose to do? What do you think it would be like? What people might you meet? What would you be doing to help? Write a story about your day of community service.



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Day 9

Persuasive Essay: Convincing Your Audience

Focus Trait: Word Choice

Directions:

Using vivid vocabulary in your writing helps the reader to create a picture in their mind. It can also help to send an important message to your reader. Think about using words or phrases that are powerful and persuasive.

Choose 1 of the prompts below and write for about 20 minutes or more. When you feel you have finished, rate your writing using the Word Choice Checklist.

**Word Choice Checklist:**

Rank **each** skill from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in the following:

\_\_\_ I found just the right words and phrases to make my meaning clear.

\_\_\_ My words are succinct yet rich in meaning, unique to the author

\_\_\_ My verbs are precise, purposeful, powerful and strong; nouns are rich and colorful; phrasing and word choice are unique

\_\_\_ I use striking words and phrases that enrich the writing

8<sup>th</sup> Grade

1. You hear the older generation complaining that they wished they had watched what they ate when they were younger so they wouldn't have the health problems they have as older persons. What do you think of this? Should teens (children) watch what they eat? Should young people be health-conscious and eat healthily even though they have few health problems now? Write an essay to convince your reader on your point of view on whether or not children should watch their health through their choices in food.

2. Should students hold after-school jobs? Convince your reader of your point of view.

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Day 10

Poetry: Writing with a Rhyme Scheme

Focus Trait: Word Choice

Directions:

Write a poem about ANYTHING you want! Sometimes poems have lines that rhyme. Write a poem that has lines that rhyme. Think carefully about the words you choose to create a rhyme pattern or scheme.

8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Suggested Topics:

- Colors
- Seasons
- Places (beach, mountains, desert, rainforest, playground, mall, zoo, the bottom of your closet, under your bed, etc.)
- People (family, friends, celebrities, athletes, politicians, etc.)
- Objects (toys, sport equipment, jewelry, clothing, furniture, electronics, etc.)
- Time (past, present or future)
- School (subjects, classes, clubs, activities, etc.)
- Memories or Feelings (happy, sad, angry, surprised, etc.)