
Part I: Guiding Young Authors to Write Autobiographies



Writing autobiographies is a logical step in developing composition skills. The student knows himself better than any other single person or topic. It is logical, then, to guide writing centered about that which the student knows.

Motivation

1. Ask students to bring baby pictures of themselves. Develop a bulletin board with these pictures. Students try to guess the identity of the classmates in the pictures.
2. Focus journal entries during this instructional period on thoughts and feelings of the individual. Use such journal starters as:

The best day in my life was _____

My favorite thing is _____

The person I admire most is _____

Warm-Up

1. Ask students to discuss particularly interesting events in their lives. You may wish to stick to a theme such as: My most exciting experience, The happiest day of my life, etc. Be prepared to share yourself as it will build confidence for students and set the tone of the sharing session.
2. Ask students to identify three characters or personality traits that they feel are most significant in their own personalities. Ask them to give reasons for choices.

Introduction

Guiding Young Authors to Write Biography is a teacher handbook designed to combine creative thinking and the fundamentals of composition skills. Both components are necessary for a good writing program.

Motivation techniques, developmental activities, and idea stimulation help Young Authors foster creative thinking and the development of new ideas. The application of composition skills throughout the instructional plan lends strength to the program. Guiding Young Authors to Write Biography leads to development of skills in these areas:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| -gathering data | -organizing information |
| -recognizing facts and opinion | -outlining |
| -sequencing | -notetaking |
| -interpreting data | -critical reading |
| -analysis of self | -creative thinking |
| -vocabulary development | -analysis and synthesis |
| -interview skills | -self image |

This handbook provides an instructional plan for the systematic teaching of the format for writing both autobiographies and biographies. Teacher pages with background information and teaching strategies are provided for both sections. Too, Young Author Idea Sheets are included and may be reproduced for classroom use. Idea sheets reinforce and extend each concept introduced.

The final products include a finished autobiography of the student and a biography of the person the Young Author selects to research. The final products may be bound or mounted depending on length. Outlets for sharing and certificates of merit are also included for helping to plan student recognition. This gives purpose to work, develops pride, improves self image and builds self discipline.

Sincerely,

Nina Crosby

Elizabeth Marten

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