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VISUAL WRITING PROMPTS

Personal Photograph

You could use your own digital photographs as visual prompts. If you take your camera on vacation, field trips and even everyday experiences, you would be surprised how many visually interesting photographs you could generate.

Macro Lens

Taking close-up shots of common objects is another way to create interesting and even surprising shots. Make sure your camera has a "Macro lens" built-in. Most digital cameras have a setting that allows you to take pictures within an inch or two of an object, for very interesting results. Who knew a flower petal looked like THAT close up?

Introduction

I've often found it difficult to motivate students to write creatively, even after being given an intriguing written prompt. Hanging inspirational or powerful imagery in your classroom is one way to move into the realm of visual prompts, but this can get costly very quickly. With the increasing number of schools and teachers connected to the Internet, literally millions of images are accessible to educators, for free! You can now use digital images as a writing prompt to trigger the creative juices for students. All teachers need to do is project or print these images out for students to view as a writing prompt.

After presenting an image to your class, you can have students write a paragraph, "quick write" or even a short story inspired by your visual prompt.

Appropriate Grade Level(s):

4-8

Subject Area(s):

English/Language Arts, Social Studies

Materials Needed:

Hardware: Color printer, TV, or LCD projector, camera (optional)

Software: Web browser, Internet access

Activities:

1. Select a provocative, intriguing or visually stimulating image for your students.
2. Give the students their writing directions prior to revealing the image, as they may already be reacting to the image while you are reciting instructions.
3. Present this image on a TV or projector screen, or even your classroom wall.

VISUAL WRITING PROMPTS

