

Title: Journaling	Grades: 6th-8th Grades
Content: English Language Arts/Social Emotional	Duration: 15-20 minutes daily

Standards:

- **W.6-8.4:** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **W.6.8.5:** Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting.

Objective: Students will use journaling to write reflectively, helping them navigate the emotions of the time.

Resources Needed:

- Journal (paper or computer-based)

Introduction:

You may have heard of Anne Frank, a Jewish teenager who kept a journal while she and her family hid from Nazis during WWII. Throughout history, many people have kept journals that help us learn about and understand the past. But, did Anne Frank write so you and I would one day know what she went through? No, she wrote to help herself deal with her reality. Sounds like a good idea to me!

Did you know that journaling has physical and emotional benefits? It's true! The action of your pen forming movements across the page, the action of your fingers tapping away on a keyboard, the action of your body releasing tensed muscles as you write: these are some of the physical benefits of journaling. Studies have shown that expressive writing can lower blood pressure, speed healing, and enhance immunity. Sign me up!

In addition to physical benefits, the emotional benefits are numerous! Journaling can help release anxiety, calm the mind, and relieve stress. By letting the thoughts and emotions flow from our bodies and onto the page, we are releasing stress, while also figuring ourselves out! Many times an angry entry will turn into a calm entry, a sad entry will turn into a hopeful entry, because we're allowing our thoughts a voice.

Will someone in 100 years find your journal and know what it was like to live during the CoronaVirus in 2020? Maybe! But, more importantly, it might help us now. It might help us and our overall well being.

Steps:

- **Each day, write at least one journal entry** (hand-written or typed) in a special notebook or digital document. Write about whatever you need or want to write about: whatever is in your head, on your heart, in your world.
- **Once a week, choose and write from a journal prompt** on the “List of Directed Journal Prompts” in the box below. The purpose of this directed journal entry is to enable you to experiment with different topics and possibilities.
- **Each Monday, choose one journal entry to share** with your teacher and/or your class (using whatever medium your teacher has suggested, like Google Hangouts). Revise this entry to make sure it is easily readable by all. (Remember, conventions save lives: “Let’s eat, Grandma” versus “Let’s eat Grandma”). Sharing our writing with each other will help us all remember we are **doing life together**, and together is a great place to be.

List of Directed Journal Prompts:

- Go sit outside, spending at least 5 minutes just listening and looking. Then, write. Write the thoughts that are in your mind. Write about what you see, what you hear. Write a poem or song. Write a list. Just, write.
- Listen to the song, “What a Wonderful World” by Louis Armstrong. Explain the mood of the song. How is the mood achieved? How does the song make you feel? What is the message of the song?
- Choose one of your favorite songs. Listen to it, and write about its mood, message, etc.
- Go walk around outside until you find a living creature, maybe a spider, bird, squirrel, calf, etc. Observe the creature, and write what comes to mind. Feel free to write as if you are the creature. Write a poem or song. Write a scientific observation. Just, write!
- Choose a color and write about it. Like what? Whatever! What are all the things that are that color? What is the mood of that color? Anything! Get creative! It can be nonsense, serious, funny, whatever!
- Set a timer for 5 minutes and make a list of things you are grateful for.
- Write about something that makes you very angry. Rant! Scream! Then, write about what you can and cannot change about the situation (including your response to it).
- Write a list of things you want to accomplish this week. (For example: Clean out my closet. Make cookies. Write a card to thank my Grandpa. Plant a tree. Read a book. Make supper to surprise Mom. Go fishing.)
- Write an article to be published in a newspaper. The topic is your choice. Examples include: sports article, today’s news, movie critique/review, fashion, etc.
- While having extra time at home, it’s easy to get into bad habits in regards to use of time. Write a schedule for yourself: a schedule you will follow Monday through Friday.

You might want to include a workout time, outdoor time, reading time, face time with friends, work time, game time, TV time, etc.

Adaptations: N/A

Finished Product: The finished product will be a journal including:

- Daily, personal entries;
- One directed entry per week;
- One revised entry to be shared with the teacher and/or class.