



LEARNING Activity

Vocabulary Building Activity: Letter to Future Self: Grades 3-12

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Standards and Benchmarks (see page 3)

Activity Description

In this writing activity, students reflect upon their learning after participating in a lesson or unit. Students write a letter to their future self describing what they've learned and what their future self should remember from the lesson or unit. Teachers save the letters and return them to students at a later date, such as at the start of a lesson or unit that continues or requires the knowledge and skills, or they give them to the teacher in students' next course. Students should have time before a future lesson to read and review their letters to activate prior knowledge and experiences.

Grade Level

3-12

Objectives

Students will be able to

- recall their learning about [lesson concept or topic],
- explain the essential steps or information about [lesson concept or topic], and
- illustrate their learning about [lesson concept or topic].

Time Required

30 minutes

Materials

- Stationery and matching envelope, one set for each student
 - Pen, one for each student
 - Materials to record students' responses (e.g., chart paper/markers, interactive white board, etc.)
 - An example of a properly formatted letter
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Procedure

1. At the end of a lesson or a unit, engage the whole class in a discussion about what they learned and what they need to remember about the concept or topic. Record and display students' responses.
2. Introduce the activity: Explain to students that they will write a letter to their future self. In the letter, they should describe what they've learned and what their future self should remember from the lesson or unit.
3. Review the format and key components of a letter with students. Provide the example letter for reference.
4. Distribute stationery, envelopes, and pens to students.
5. Remind students they can refer to their discussion responses (from Step 1) to help them organize their thinking and writing.
6. Give students time to write their letters.
7. When they are finished writing, instruct students to place their letter inside the envelope and seal it. Then, ask students to address the front of the envelope with their first and last names.
8. Collect the envelopes and save for a future lesson where the letters will help activate previous knowledge.

Reference

DePaul Teaching Commons. "[Activities for Metacognition](#)." DePaul University, Center for Teaching and Learning.

Standards and Benchmarks

Elementary

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.4 and CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.4

- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.4

- With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.8

- Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.8

- Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.8

- Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.8

- Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.8 and CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.8

- With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

Middle School

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.4, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.4 and CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.4

- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

High School

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.4 and CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.4

- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.