

A group of students in a classroom setting, engaged in a learning activity. A teacher or adult is standing and interacting with a student who is holding a small card. Other students are seated at a table, looking at cards and papers. A colorful pencil case is visible on the table.

Reluctant writers. Every classroom has them. You might even be a reluctant writer yourself. Don't worry – all that is about to change. Because now you're creating a classroom culture around the idea that writing should be fun.

And these visual writing prompts are the perfect tool to get you on your way. Here are some pointers ...

- **Don't ask students to write a whole text.** Students write at the sentence and paragraph level initially and slowly build up to a whole text as their skills improve. Writing then becomes fun and achievable, and student confidence builds fast.
- **Think first, write second.** Brainstorm ideas as a class or in small groups before students write. Collaboration makes it easy and sparks students' creativity and enthusiasm. Remind students not to be judgy during brainstorming, the purpose is to generate a wide range of ideas to evaluate later. Sometimes the wildest ideas lead to the best outcomes!
- **Verbal is vital.** Writing shouldn't be a silent solo activity. Great writing classrooms are noisy; they buzz with shared ideas, laughter and learning. Students who can verbalise their ideas will find it much easier when it comes to writing them down. Start the conversation with these visual writing prompts.
- **The more you practise the easier it gets.** Provide lots of opportunities to write, but don't make it a formal, stuffy affair. Take the first 20 minutes of a lesson or straight after lunch to get students doing a quick write in response to a prompt. Let them play around with writing and really have fun with it, without rules or revisions.
- **Celebrate students' writing wherever possible.** Create a Wow Wall, share writing at assembly or on the class blog, hand out certificates and create daily sharing moments. Don't save this for whole texts – celebrate a start that sizzles or a nail-biting tension scene. Having an authentic audience is where reluctant writers start to see themselves as authors.

And remember, your reluctant writers are more likely to come to the party when they're part of a culture where people enjoy writing. By sharing your enthusiasm, stories and even your challenges with students, you're showing them that writing is a valuable, lifelong skill worth mastering.

Happy teaching and learning!



Step 1: Plan for Success

Dogs now rule the world!

What do they make the humans do?
Brainstorm at least 10 things – the
crazier your ideas, the better.



Create a character profile that shows
(rather than tells) their personality,
style and special powers.



Step 7: Exciting Endings

They escaped from the jungle!

Brainstorm 3 ways this story could end.
Choose the best one and write
your Exciting Ending.



Putting It All Together

**Your teacher has been acting
weird lately ...**

After school one day, you see this.
What is happening? What do you do?



Step 1: Plan for Success

**What would make a better pet:
a penguin or a monkey?**

Brainstorm 5 arguments for and against each animal. Then pick the better pet.



Step 2: Sizzling Starts

You shouldn't have to go to school on your birthday!

Write a Sizzling Start for this topic.
Include a question and/or humour.



Step 4: Dynamic Dialogue

Aliens are real!

Find at least 3 quotations to support your argument.
Then choose the best one.



Putting It All Together

You're going to live on the Space Station for a year.

Write a letter convincing Space Command to let you bring 3 personal items with you. What do you request and why?



Step 3: Tightening Tension

**Only 20 minutes to go and
the scores are tied!**

Imagine you are a sports commentator.
Describe the most intense part of the
game to your listeners.



Step 5: Show, Don't Tell

‘Shiver me timbers!’

Write a diary entry that shows what life was like on a pirate ship.



Step 6: Ban the Boring

**So you want to be a
professional video gamer?**

Brainstorm 10 skills you would need.
Then edit your list down to the top 3.



Putting It All Together

Behind the scenes at the zoo

Write a recount that describes a day in the life of a zookeeper.