

Overview

Students will have the opportunity to explore their creativity with physical activities followed by creative writing activities. The students will then share their writing and stories about themselves with their peers. This will create community and peace in the classroom.

Context

This project will take place in the context of the Grade 9 English Language Arts class at an immersion high school. The students arrive in grade 9 from 3 different feeder schools. This means that some students may know each other from elementary school but that the majority will not.

Purpose

This project has the goal of writing creatively and sharing stories with others in order to build peace and community in the classroom.

Objectives

English Language Arts Grade 9 General Outcomes

- Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to explore thoughts, ideas, feelings, and experiences.
- Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to celebrate and build community.

Specific Objectives

- Students will create a creative writing portfolio
- Students will share their creative writing with other students
- Students will be able to practice physical activity in order to relax and to focus
- Students will get to know, understand and value their peers to create a classroom community and to promote peace

RATIONALE**Specific Objective #1: Students will create a creative writing portfolio**

“Imagination is more important than knowledge, for knowledge is limited to all we know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand.” — Albert Einstein

By making a creative writing portfolio, the students will have a collection of their writing. Because they will decorate and organize all their writing, this will make the process more personal. In fact, “personal writing is simply an effective way to examine your world.” (Sebranek, p. 301). This demonstrates that the students will not only examine their identity through their writing, but that they will also have a more global perspective.

Creative writing differentiates from other forms of writing in my class in that it is free. The students will write freely not worrying about grammar or editing until the end. They will also be free to write about any subject or in any format. It is important to note that,

“Creative writing is the process of inventing, the process of making something new and different, something made-up. But it also has solid roots in the real-world experiences and memories of the writer— fact and fiction blending together.” (Sebranek, p. 311)

This shows the importance of creative writing. It will then help my students to examine their past, their identity and the world around them.

Specific Objective #2: Students will share their creative writing with other students

“Stories are living and dynamic. Stories exist to be exchanged. They are the currency of Human Growth.” —Jean Houston

An important element of the writing portfolios is that the students will have the opportunity to share their work with others. This should create a sense of ownership and pride for the writer. Moreover, “writing becomes real when it has an audience” (Liner, p.55). With that said, the students will realize that they are all capable of writing. When sharing with another student, they will be sharing a part of themselves. Thus, “storytelling is powerful because of the responsive engagement engendered by the relationship between storyteller and listener.” (Simms, p. 5) The fact of sharing their writing with others will instill pride in their work and enable them to create relationships with their peers.

Specific Objective #3: Students will be able to practice physical activity in order to relax and to focus

“If a man insisted always on being serious, and never allowed himself a bit of fun and relaxation, he would go mad or become unstable without knowing it.”—Herodotus

In order for the students to focus on their writing and to clear their minds, they will do some physical activity beforehand. This is because, “physical exercise...produces in the body chemicals that actually soothe and calm” (Kurcinka, website #1). This will then enable them to calmly embark on their writing task. Some physical exercises will actually be games. It is proven that physical games “help energize the students, getting blood and oxygen to their brains, preparing them physiologically for more and better learning when they return to their seats.” (Erwin, p.164). By doing physical activity before their creative writing, the students will have the opportunity to relax, to have fun resulting in them writing with a clearer mind.

Specific Objective #4: Students will get to know, understand and value their peers to create a classroom community and to promote peace

“Nothing in life is to be feared. It is only to be understood.” –Madame Curie

By writing and sharing their stories, the students will get to know each other and create bonds that will then generate a community in the classroom. The simple fact of writing creatively demands the use of the students’ imagination. Laura Simms demonstrates that,

“The more children are given the chance to exercise their imagination with respect and discipline, rather than rules and preconceived ideas, the more they will be able to embrace and accept themselves and thus begin to acknowledge the vast diversity of the world around themselves “(p. 8).

As they get to know themselves and the world around them, they will then be able to reflect on their experiences that they have written about. It is clear that, “storytelling can be an effective means for youth to reflect on and make sense of their experiences and develop their worldviews in the context of social conflict.” (Senehi, p. 239). Therefore, creative writing and the sharing of stories can then promote peace as the students will better understand conflict. Finally, “through storytelling and other arts, students learn skills of creativity and objectivity that are necessary for problem-solving and envisioning alternatives to conflict and strife.” (Senehi, p. 254). It is then clear that creative writing and sharing will foster understanding and peace in the classroom.

PLAN

At the beginning of the year, each student will receive a folder. They will decorate their folder with their name and a symbol that describes them. In a group of 4, each student will share a story related to their name (source: Jessica Senehi) and explain their symbol. Once a week, the students will write in their folders. The writing assignments will receive a formative grade. The work will be verified to make sure it is being done and points will be given for completing the work. Every creative writing session will follow the same format:

1. Pre-Activity: Physical Warm-Up Activity
2. Creative Writing Activity
3. Post-Activity: Sharing or Discussion

The sharing will take place with a partner or a small group. The discussions will be with either the entire group or a small group. The sharing of the fairytale will take on a different format. The students will work at editing and illustrating their stories. They will then read them to younger children at one of the feeder schools. This will be the final closure activity and will hopefully give the students pride and promote community outside the classroom.

Physical Warm-up Activities: (see appendix for instructions)

- Stress Relief Breathing
- Silence
- Piecing the Puzzle
- Boop
- The Wave
- Greetings
- Zip, Zap, Boing
- Musical Newspapers
- Group Knot
- Shoe Struggle
- The Respect Game
- Imaginary Ball
- Partner Mirror
- Bowing
- Counting down, counting up

Creative writing assignments: (see appendix for instructions)

I will start with the fairytale in segments, as it will be done over several classes. After I've gotten to know my students, I will present the other activities based on their interests. I may not have time to do all the activities. However, the focus of this project is not the product but simply the process of writing.

- Second-hand story
- Description of a childhood play place
- Case Study
- Firsthand Experience
- "Un-peopled" Reminiscence
- Fairytale in Segments
- Story based on music: while music is playing softly in the background, students write a poem or short story that relates to the music. You can give them the title of the song, if they need help.
- Story based on a piece of art: bring a piece of art to the class, students write a poem or a short story that relates to the artwork. Describe superficial details of the artwork, the artist or ask questions about the positions or colours in order to help the students.
- Found Poem
- Jumble Story
- Embellish An Ad
- Treasure Hunt: go for a walk outside and pick up a fallen object without disturbing nature, incorporate the object into a story

Post-Activity Sharing Possibilities:

Students will have the choice to share what they wrote that day or something they wrote on a previous day.

- Students share their written work with a partner
- Students share their written work with a small group
- Students share with a partner, the partner must tell the story they heard to another person
- Students present their partner's story to a small group or the class

Although the focus will mostly be on sharing, some writing activities will close with a discussion instead.

Post-Activity Discussions:

- Students sit in a circle. Every student completes the sentence “If you really knew me, you would know... (source Lori Semchysyhn)
- Students tell a story about an instance when they did something bad and whether they were caught or not. Ask students to nominate their partner’s story, if they really liked it. (source: Mark Kuli)
- Students talk about an accomplishment or something they’re proud of.
- Students talk about the last movie they saw.
- Students explain something that they were scared of as a child.
- Students describe an embarrassing moment.
- Selected discussion questions from “101 relational discussion starters” (see appendix)

APPENDICES

PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

1. Stress Relief Breathing

1. Sit or stand in a relaxed position.
2. Slowly inhale through your nose, counting to five in your head.
3. Let the air out from your mouth, counting to eight in your head as it leaves your lungs. Repeat several times. That's it!

Tips: As you breathe, let your abdomen expand outward, rather than raising your shoulders. This is a more relaxed and natural way to breathe, and helps your lungs fill themselves more fully with fresh air, releasing more "old" air"

Source: "How To Release Tension With Stress Relief Breathing" [Elizabeth Scott](http://stress.about.com/od/breathingexercises/ht/breathing_ex.htm)
http://stress.about.com/od/breathingexercises/ht/breathing_ex.htm

Viewed August 26, 2008

2. Silence

In Silence, silence *is* the name of the game. Students must arrange themselves in order without uttering a peep! For example, challenge students to silently sequence themselves according to height. The game can be adapted with very little preparation to fit almost any curriculum theme. For example, if the class is studying state capitals, count out enough sticky notes for each student. On each note, write the name of a state capital. Each student wears a "capital" tag on his or her shirt. The students must silently sequence themselves in alphabetical order. You might make the game even more challenging by asking them to line up according to the *state* for each capital!

Options: Students can create their own tags. They might write their birthdays on tags and arrange themselves in order from January 1 to December 31. They might write their seven-digit phone numbers as a seven-digit number and arrange themselves in numerical sequence.

Other categories: The possibilities are endless, but students might include U.S. presidents (arrange in order of the presidencies), fractions (arrange in order of size), clocks (arrange printed a.m. and p.m. clock

faces in order of the time shown), or largest U.S. city populations (arrange tags with the largest cities and their populations from largest to smallest).

Source: "Ten Games For Classroom Fun!" Gary Hopkins Education World® Editor in Chief Copyright © 2008 Education World http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson169.shtml

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3. Piecing the Puzzle

This game requires a little preparation -- but it's worth it! To prepare, laminate five pictures. Calendar pictures are great for this activity! You might laminate pictures relating to a teaching theme and then cut each picture into four to six puzzle pieces. (Note: You want to end up with *one* puzzle piece for each student in your class, so you might create a variety of four-piece, five-piece, and six-piece puzzles.) Hand a puzzle piece to each student. Let students wander around the classroom to find their "puzzle mates"!

Extra challenge! Laminate pictures from a themed calendar. Imagine students' trying to piece together pictures of the 'N Sync musical group -- or the confusion spotted puzzle pieces from a calendar of Dalmatian pictures might cause.

Tip: This activity might be fun for the first teacher meeting of the year too! Every teacher could contribute a five-piece puzzle to a collection of puzzles that travels the school!

Source: "Ten Games For Classroom Fun!" Gary Hopkins Education World® Editor in Chief Copyright © 2008 Education World http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson169.shtml

Viewed August 26, 2008

4. Boop

This activity will get the students laughing while demonstrating the importance of cooperation and interdependence (Henton,1996):

1. Have students form groups of three to five.
2. Give each group a balloon to blowup.

3. Have the groups of students form circles, facing inward, hands joined.
4. The object of the game is to keep the balloon up in the air without letting go of hands. They can use any body part to keep the balloon afloat.
5. For a challenge, give the groups a second balloon, or give them directions like “Heads only,” “Elbows only,” and so forth.
6. Afterward, hold a discussion about what made the groups successful. One point that students may bring up is the importance of being flexible and resourceful in our attempts to achieve goals. Also, students may mention that different people may accomplish similar goals in diverse ways.

(Source: “The Classroom of Choice: Giving Students What They Need and Getting What you Want” By: Jonathan C. Erwin, 2004)

5. The Wave

You’ve seen this one at football games, but this classroom variation can be hilarious while it teaches students to focus (Craig & Ward, 1994):

1. Students stand in a circle.
2. The first person in the circle assumes some position of arms, legs, and body and holds it. Fun 1673.
- The second person copies and holds, then the third and so on until all members are holding the shape.
4. The second person in the circle can then try her own shape.
5. Try to move in sequence as quickly as possible to see the wave occur.

(Source: “The Classroom of Choice: Giving Students What They Need and Getting What you Want” By: Jonathan C. Erwin, 2004)

6. Greetings.

Some people shake hands when they meet. Others give each other a “high-five.” In some cultures people kiss each other on either cheek. In this game, the students are paired up and challenged to work out a new way of greeting each other. After 5 or 10 minutes, to the accompaniment of lively music, pairs are invited to demonstrate to the teacher and the class their new greeting.

(Source: “The Classroom of Choice: Giving Students What They Need and Getting What you Want” By: Jonathan C. Erwin, 2004)

7. Zip Zap Boing

This game helps students learn to focus and concentrate. It begins with students standing or sitting in a circle. One player starts by turning his head sharply to the right, and exclaiming, “zip!” with energy and enthusiasm. The player to his right keeps it going, snapping her head to the right and saying “zip!” This continues around the circle until a player shouts “boing!” as he turns back to the person to his left. This person snaps his head to the left and says, “zap!” Now the wave of zaps continues to the left around the group until another player says, “boing!” Then it goes back to the right in a new wave of zips. Just remember:

Fun 189•

Zip—to the right

•Zap—to the left

•Boing—change directions

The object of the game is to create a fast continuous flowing sound and movement around the circle. It takes practice to get to that point, but the practice is lots of fun!

(Source: “The Classroom of Choice: Giving Students What They Need and Getting What you Want” By: Jonathan C. Erwin, 2004)

8. Musical Newspapers

For this activity, which will bring your class closer together (in more ways than one), you’ll need a tape or CD player and some newspapers (Craig&Ward,1994):

1. Place about 15 single newspaper pages (open) on the floor.
2. While the music is playing, students walk around the room. When the music stops, everyone must get on to a newspaper. The object is to get everyone onto the available newspapers.
3. Reduce the number of newspapers each time until you are down to one or two.
4. Encourage students to think of ways to get the whole class on one or two newspapers.
5. A discussion might follow about how we often use more resources than we need and how we might work together to maximize our use of materials and natural resources.

(Source: “The Classroom of Choice: Giving Students What They Need and Getting What you Want” By: Jonathan C. Erwin, 2004)

9. Group Knot

This popular group challenge is guaranteed to create laughter as it develops cooperation (Craigén&Ward,1994).

1. Have an odd number of students stand in a circle.
2. Ask all to reach out and grab two other hands (you cannot have both hands of the same person, and you cannot have the hand of persons on each side of you).
3. One person must leave her right arm out, and one person must leave his left arm out.
4. Next, direct the group to untangle, without letting go of hands, so that the students are standing in a straight line.

(Source: “The Classroom of Choice: Giving Students What They Need and Getting What you Want” By: Jonathan C. Erwin, 2004)

10. Shoe Scramble

The importance of cooperation will become evident as soon as this game gets started(Craigen&Ward,1994):

1. Students stand in a circle.
2. Each person in the circle takes off one shoe and places it in the middle.
3. Everyone joins hands.
4. Then, without letting go of hands, each person must pick up a shoe other than their own, find the owner of the shoe and return it to him or her.
5. Hands must be held at all times.
6. Discussion may follow on how (or if) leadership emerged or how important it is to have a process to accomplish certain tasks.

(Source: “The Classroom of Choice: Giving Students What They Need and Getting What you Want” By: Jonathan C. Erwin, 2004)

11. The Respect Game

This is a great energizer for 10 to 25 players and sends a positive message at the same time. I learned this one from AmandaMcCaslin

1. Students arrange their chairs and sit in a circle, with one student (“It”) standing in the center holding a Respect Wand (something safe like a rolled up newspaper or a long skinny balloon works well).

2. It taps one student on the shoulder with the RespectWand. All taps in the game should be on the shoulders (no head taps). As It taps the student, It says, “ ____ (It’s name) respects ____ (the name of the tapped student).”
3. The student who was tapped (Student A) stands and says, “ ____ (Her own name) respects ____ (another student’s name—Student B).”
4. It must now tap Student B before he stands up, says, “ ____ (His name) respects ____ (another student—Student C),” and sits down.
5. If It is unsuccessful at tapping Student B before he finishes his sentence, It stays in the center and play continues.
6. If It succeeds in tapping Student B, then Student B and It change places.
7. Now, before the former It sits down, the new It must start the play again by saying, “ ____ (Her name) respects ____ (any other student).” If the former It sits down before she finishes,” then he goes right back to being It. It takes a little while before students catch on to how the game works. But be patient; before long, you will have kids popping out of their chairs like popcorn, laughing, and respecting each other all over the place. (Source: “The Classroom of Choice: Giving Students What They Need and Getting What you Want” By: Jonathan C. Erwin, 2004)

12. Imaginary Ball

Students stand in a circle. One student looks at another and throws an imaginary ball to him or her. To make it more challenging, as the students to go faster. (Source: Laura Simms)

13. Partner Mirror

Students pick a partner. They face their partner. One person starts moving their hands slowly while the other mimics the movements like a mirror. Students take turns being the leader. This activity is done silently. (Source: Laura Simms)

14. Bowing

Students stand in a circle. One student looks at another and starts walking toward the centre of the circle until the two people are facing each other. They slowly bow and take each other’s place in the circle. This activity is done silently. (Source: Laura Simms)

15. Counting Down, Counting Up

Students stand up. Make sure they have enough room to lie down. Students make the movements of lying down, ensuring that their body is continuously moving. Count from 1-10. At 10, the students need to be lying down. Go up, counting from 1-6. Vary the numbers 1-30 or 1-15. (Source: Laura Simms)

CREATIVE WRITING ACTIVITIES

1. Second-hand story

Share a memorable story told to you by someone you know very well—a grandparent, neighbour, etc. This story should come from the past, from a different time and place. (Source: Patrick Sebranek, *Writers Inc.: A Student Handbook for Writing and Learning*.)

2. Description of a childhood place

Describe a specific place or location that has left a strong impression on you. You're your readers see, hear, and feel this place. (Source: Patrick Sebranek, *Writers Inc.: A Student Handbook for Writing and Learning*.)

3. Case Study

Share the story of one individual whose experiences speak for the experiences of a larger group of people (disaster victims, recent immigrants, groupies, etc.). The effectiveness of a case study depends on your ability to conduct interviews, make firsthand observations, and gather timely information from print materials. (Source: Patrick Sebranek, *Writers Inc.: A Student Handbook for Writing and Learning*.)

4. Firsthand experience

In a report of a firsthand experience, a writer shares the details related to an event she or he has recently participated in.

(Source: Patrick Sebranek, *Writers Inc.: A Student Handbook for Writing and Learning*.)

5. “Un-peopled” reminiscence

Share a memory about an unforgettable object or place from an earlier time in your life. Help your readers feel why the object or place is unforgettable. (Writing an “un-peopled reminiscence is really a matter of linking a place or an object from your past to a strong feeling.)

(Source: Patrick Sebranek, *Writers Inc.: A Student Handbook for Writing and Learning*.)

6. Fairytale in Segments

Give students 5-7 minutes (or more, if required) to write each of these steps. This should be done over the course of several days.

- a) Describe a special object with as much detail as possible. You can just write words, you do not need to have sentences.
- b) Attribute a magic power to your object.
- c) How could this object affect the world?
- d) If a monster got a hold of the magical object, how could he use it to spread evil?
- e) Describe your monster. Just write down descriptive adjectives. Do not mention any feelings you might have towards him or her or the feelings he or she might stir up. What’s his or her body like? Does he or she have a body? What colours do you see?
- f) What would be the monster’s magical power?
- g) What could the monster accomplish with his or her power?
- h) If this monster could use this power for good, what would he or she do?
- i) Describe the place where the monster lives, hangs out or calls home.
- j) Why does the monster want to steal the special object?
- k) Explain the childhood of the monster.
- l) How did the monster discover the existence of the object and its location?
- m) What’s the monster’s secret name?
- n) Describe the location of the special object. Describe a protector animal who would guard the object.
- o) What could have distracted the protector animal long enough so that the monster could get the object?
- p) How did the monster get the object?
- q) Explain how the protector animal discovered the object was stolen.
- r) Have a conversation with the protector animal, explaining to him or her that it’s okay.

- s) What capacity or power does the animal have that helps the hero or heroine?
- t) Name 3 objects or animals that the hero or heroine will encounter a long his or her journey.
- u) What is a special ability that the hero or heroine has?
- v) What might have been missing in the world that made this object need to be hidden?
- w) Describe the happy ending, the object is back with the hero or heroine, and the problem is resolved.
- x) How does the quality or ability of the hero or heroine manifest in the end of the story?
- y) Why is the object hidden where it is?
- z) The animal approaches the hero or heroine and wishes to accompany him or her on the journey. Write about the journey and the 3 objects or animals that you will encounter.
- aa) Write about how the monster encounters the hero/heroine and the animal protector. What makes the monster give the special object back?
- bb) Put your story in order. You can put brackets and a question mark, if you still do not know what happens. Follow this order:
- Begin with "There was once/once upon a time there was...boy/girl who (ability)
 - Explain the setting and introduce the special object
 - BUT, (introduce the monster)
 - Write about the decision to go on a journey
 - Write about the journey
 - Write about how the monster gives back the object
 - How are the world and the characters changed?
 - THE END

(Source: Laura Simms)

7. Found Poem

A found poem is created by working with existing words and phrases on signs and bumper stickers, in titles and headlines, and so on. Students can create the poem using magazine clippings as well.

(Source: Patrick Sebranek, *Writers Inc.: A Student Handbook for Writing and Learning.*)

8. Jumble Story

Preparation: Have students choose three numbers (from 1 to 10). Each number corresponds to an item on the list below. The first number is the character their stories are to focus on, the second number is the setting for their stories, and so forth.

Assignment: Write a story with the character, setting, time period, and situation that you've chosen. The character that you've chosen should be the main character in the story, but isn't necessarily the ONLY character in the story. Likewise, most of the story will take place in the setting that you've chosen, but you can include other settings or elaborate on the setting that you have chosen (breaking it into several smaller settings, for example). The situation or challenge that you've chosen may involve the main character or your main character may observe someone else who must deal with the situation or challenge. In other words, you can combine these elements anyway that you desire, so long as all four are included in your story.

Character

1. a new mother
2. a photographer
3. a recent high school graduate
4. a restaurant owner or manager
5. an alien from outer space
6. a homeless child
7. a 93-year-old woman
8. an environmentalist
9. a college student
10. a jazz musician

Setting

1. near a National Forest
2. a wedding reception
3. a celebration party
4. an expensive restaurant
5. a shopping mall

6. a city park
7. the porch of an old farmhouse
8. a polluted stream
9. a college library
10. a concert hall

Time

1. during a forest fire
2. after a fight
3. the night of high school graduation
4. after a big meal
5. sometime in December
6. late at night
7. after a big thunderstorm has passed
8. in early spring
9. first week of the school year
10. during a concert

Situation/Challenge

1. an important decision needs to be made
2. a secret needs to be confessed to someone else
3. someone's pride has been injured
4. a death has occurred
5. someone has found or lost something
6. someone has accused someone else of doing something wrong
7. reminiscing on how things have changed
8. someone feels like giving up
9. something embarrassing has just happened
10. someone has just reached an important goal

(Source: <http://tengrrl.com/tens/017.shtml> viewed August 28, 2008, Traci's 17th List of Ten: Ten Creative Writing Activities, Traci Gardner)

9. Embellish and Ad

Choose an advertisement from the Classifieds section of a recent newspaper. Use the advertisement as the starting point for a short story that explores the people and situations behind the ad. Who wrote the ad? What was the writer's motivation (beyond buying or selling an item)? What kind of life does the writer have? What is the social setting behind the ad? What kind of family or community is involved? Using the advertisement as your starting point, create the story behind the ad that you've chosen. Here are a couple of example ads in case you have trouble finding one on your own:

For Sale

CLOTHING, UT apparel. Worn only a few times by former UT athlete.

Wanted To Buy

BICYCLE, free. Working poor. I'm married with 2 small children. Need bike and helmet to work nights. I use Capital Metro for day job-school.

[NOTE: You could create a similar assignment where students take the facts in a newspaper story and write a fictionalized account of the people and situations referred to in the story.]

(Source: <http://tengrrl.com/tens/017.shtml> viewed August 28, 2008, Traci's 17th List of Ten: Ten Creative Writing Activities, Traci Gardner)

101 relational discussion starters

- 1 . Do you have a hero? Describe him or her.
2. Imagine a "best day ever." What kinds of things would you do?
3. If you could choose a vacation spot anywhere in the world, where would it be, and why?
- 4 What's your favorite TV show? What do you like best about it?
5. What's your favorite movie? What do you like best about it?
6. Who's your favorite music artist or group? What makes you gravitate to him/her/them?

7. What's your favorite time of year-winter, spring, summer, or fall? Why?
8. What's your favorite food? Where's your favorite place to eat it?
9. Do you have a pet? If so, describe one of your most memorable experiences with that pet. If not, what kind of pet would you like to have, and why?
10. Who's your favorite author? Describe the last book you read by that author.
11. What's your dream job? What might be your dream job 10 years from now?
12. What's your best subject in school? Why are you so good at it?
13. Have you ever been stung by a bee, wasp, or hornet? Tell me about it.
14. If you had to be allergic to something, what would it be?
15. What's your favorite sport to watch? to play?
16. What's your favorite hobby? How does that hobby reflect your personality and passions?
17. If you sat down next to Jesus on a bus, what would you talk about?
18. Do you recycle? Why or why not?
19. Tell me about the best teacher you ever had.
20. What's your favorite time of day? Why?
21. What's your favorite dessert? Describe a time when you had that dessert as a child.
22. What makes you happy? Why?
23. What makes you sad? Why?
24. If money and time were no object, what would you be doing right now?
25. What do you like best: rivers, lakes, ponds, or streams? Why?
26. Have you ever caught a fish? If so, tell me about it. If not, would you like to? Why or why not?
27. Do you like to cook? If so, what do you like to make? If not, what do you wish you could make for yourself?
28. What's the strangest thing you ever ate?

29. What chores or responsibilities do you have at home?
30. Do you get an allowance? If so, how much, and what are you supposed to use it for?
31. When and how have you volunteered to help others? How did it make you feel?
32. What would you do with \$1,000? Why? \$1 million? Why?
33. What's something you've seen or done you wish you could get out of your mind?
34. If you had one day to live over again, what day would you pick? Why?
35. What adult, other than your parent(s), would you turn to if you needed help? Why?
36. Do you have any musical ability? If so, what do you enjoy about it? If not, what skill would you love to learn?
37. What's your favorite Web site? Why?
38. Have you ever built anything? What was it? How did you feel when you finished?
39. When and what have you collected during your life?
40. If your house was on fire and you could choose only one thing to save (besides family members), what would it be? Why?
41. Have you ever seen a falling star? Did you make a wish? What was it?
42. Have you ever seen a sunrise? What were you doing, and how did it feel?
43. Which do you like better-sunrise or sunset? Why?
44. What's your favorite ride at an amusement park? Why?
45. Do you have a bike? If so, what do you like about it?
46. What's your favorite part of a newspaper? Why?
47. Have you ever received an award for anything? If so, what was it, and how did it feel to get it?
48. Do you belong to any clubs? Why or why not?
49. Are your grandparents still living? If so, what do you like best about them? If not, what's your favorite memory of them?

50. Let's say you were sent to live on a space station for three months and you were allowed to bring only three personal items with you-what would they be?

51. Do you have brothers or sisters? If so, what do you like most and least about them? If not, what do you imagine would be the best thing about having siblings? the worst thing? Do you have extended family? If so, do they live close to you or far away? How often do you see them? What's the best time you ever spent with them?

53. What's the best and worst thing about your school?

54. What's your school mascot? If you could change your mascot, what would you change it to?

55. What's your favorite thing to wear? Why?

56. Do you have family rules? What are they?

57. When your family eats a meal together, what do you typically talk about?

58. If you could buy a car right now, what would you buy? Why?

59. Do you have a job? If so, what do you like and dislike about it?

60. What's your favorite day of the week? Why?

61. Have you ever grown anything? If so, what?

62. Describe your favorite toy as a child.

63. What's your favorite fast food restaurant? Why? What's the most memorable thing that ever happened to you at that restaurant?

64. What's the best gift you've ever received? Explain.

65. What's the best gift you've ever given? Explain.

66. How does your family celebrate birthdays?

67. What's your favorite holiday? Why?

68. Describe a time you felt special.

69. What makes you laugh? Why?

70. What's the worst injury you ever sustained?

71. Would you rather go to the dentist or the doctor? Explain.

72. What's your favorite piece of jewelry? Why?
73. Have you ever been in a play? What part did you play?
74. Can you swim? If so, describe what it was like to learn how to swim. If not, have you ever been scared of the water? Why or why not?
75. Have you ever ridden in a boat? What was it like?
76. If you've ever flown in an airplane, describe what it was like the first time you took off and landed.
77. What's the best and worst thing about church?
78. When you're alone, what's a song you like to sing or hum, and why?
79. If you could be any actor in the world, who would you be, and why?
80. What's your greatest achievement?
81. Do you like cats or dogs better? Explain.
82. What's your favorite city? Why?
83. Have you had a pet that's died? If so, what was the experience like?
84. What's been the highlight of your day or week?
85. What's been the low point of your day or week?
86. What's your favorite candy? Why?
87. Have you ever been to a concert? What did you like and dislike about it?
88. Have you ever been "cut" from a team? How did you cope with that?
89. What's your favorite thing to do on an unexpected day off from school?
90. Who's your "faith hero"? Explain.
91. Would you rather cut grass or rake leaves? Why?
92. Would you tell someone the truth even if it hurt that person's feelings? Why or why not?
93. Has someone close to you ever died? How did you handle that?
94. What surprises you most about adults?

95. What disappoints you most about adults?

96. Describe the scariest experience of your life.

97. Would you rather have many friends or one good friend? Explain.

98. During your free time would you rather be alone or with a group?

99. Do you make decisions slowly or quickly? Why?

100. Would you rather lead or follow? Why?

101. If you were hiking down a path and it came to a "Y," would you take the well-traveled path or the overgrown path? (Source: Tony Akers

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