

Writing From the Heart

The Diary of Anne Frank

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Grade Level	8th Grade	**Time Frame**	100 minutes
Subject	English/Language Arts	**Duration**	3 class periods

Essential Question

How could personal writing, such as a diary, help people express and preserve their experiences during difficult times?

Summary

In this lesson, students will explore how personal writing captures human experience by examining "The Diary of Anne Frank." Students will analyze excerpts from Anne's diary to uncover emotional themes through a sorting activity. Then, students will learn about types of nonfiction writing and compare a historical article to Anne Frank's diary to understand how purpose and perspective shape content. Finally, students apply this understanding by writing their own diary entries from the perspective of someone living through a challenging time, then reflect on how audience and purpose affect writing choices.

Snapshot

Engage

Students connect personal experiences to the topic of the lesson through a Quick Write activity.

Explore

In pairs, students sort diary quotes from *The Diary of Anne Frank* into emotional and thematic categories.

Explain

Students compare the purpose and characteristics of different types of nonfiction writing forms then make comparisons between an encyclopedia article on Amsterdam and Anne Frank's diary.

Extend

Students use the RAFT strategy to write an original diary entry from the perspective of a person experiencing struggle or conflict.

Evaluate

Students reflect on how changing the role or audience would alter their diary entry and share insights.

Standards

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Reading (6-12)

PPV501: Infer a purpose in somewhat challenging passages and how that purpose shapes content and style

Oklahoma Academic Standards: English Language Arts (Grade 8)

8.3.R.1: Analyze works written on the same topic from a variety of historical, cultural, ethnic, and global perspectives and analyze the methods the authors use to achieve their purposes.

Attachments

- Card Sort—Writing From the Heart.docx
- Card Sort—Writing From the Heart.pdf
- Lesson Slides—Writing From the Heart.pptx
- Nonfiction Writing—Writing From the Heart.docx
- Nonfiction Writing—Writing From the Heart.pdf
- RAFT—Writing From the Heart.docx
- RAFT—Writing From the Heart.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Card Sort cards (attached; one set per pair; print one-sided)
- Nonfiction Writing handout (attached; one per student; print two-sided)
- RAFT handout (attached; one half page per student; print one-sided)
- Plastic bags (optional)
- Paperclips (optional)
- Notebook paper

15 minutes

Engage

Use the attached **Lesson Slides** to guide the instruction. Begin the lesson by displaying the title on **slide 2**. Then, transition through **slides 3–4,** reviewing the essential question and learning objectives in as much detail as you feel necessary.

Show **slide 5** and introduce the Quick Write strategy. Have students take out a piece of notebook paper and answer the prompt on the slide: "Imagine you had to hide or go silent for weeks or months—no posting, talking freely, or seeing your friends. What would be the most difficult part for you? How would you try to keep your sense of identity and hope?"

Transition through **slides 6–7** and have students continue using the Quick Write strategy as they respond to the prompts:

- "Why do you think people choose to write, even when it is dangerous or forbidden?"
- “If you were living through a major event, what kinds of things would you write about that might never appear in a textbook?”

Give students approximately 3–4 minutes for each prompt.

Teacher's Note: Purpose

The purpose of this activity is for students to connect their own experiences to the topic of the lesson (diaries and perspectives), which is why the Quick Write strategy is used.

20 minutes

Explore

Move to **slide 8** and assign partners or have students pair up on their own. Introduce the Card Sort activity and distribute a set of Card Sort cards to each pair. Each pair will have five category cards (*Fear*, *Hope*, *Loneliness*, *Courage*, and *Daily Life*) and 14 cards with quotes from *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Direct students to sort the quote cards into the category that best describes the quote. Tell students they have 5 minutes to sort their cards, then play the 5-minute timer on the slide.

When the timer expires, transition through **slides 9–11** to show how the quotes are intended to be sorted. Facilitate a discussion and encourage students to share their thoughts on why they may have sorted differently.

Teacher's Note: Guiding the Activity

When reviewing slides 9–11, pause as needed for discussion of multiple correct ways to sort the quotes. For example, students may sort the "Writing in a diary is a really strange experience for someone like me. Not only because I've never written anything before...I feel like writing, and I have an even greater need to get all kinds of things off my chest." card into the *Daily Life* category since writing in a diary was a typical part of Anne Frank's life. However, help students consider that this quote is more of an indication of loneliness if one considers why she wrote those words.

Facilitate these types of discussions to help students see how word choice helps communicate meaning beyond the surface level.

30 minutes

Explain

Pass out the attached **Nonfiction Writing** handout to each student and display **slide 12**. Explain to students that diary entries like the ones they have been exploring are examples of nonfiction writing. Use slide 12 to review nonfiction writing and a few different examples: *diary*, *newspaper/magazine article*, *textbook*, *encyclopedia entry*.

Transition through slides **13–14** and prompt students to record information from the slides in the "Notes" portion of their handouts. Use the slides to discuss the purpose and characteristics of different types of nonfiction writing. Elaborate as needed, and answer any questions that students may have.

After students have had time to take notes and understand the different types of nonfiction writing, move to **slide 15**. Hand out a highlighter to each student and direct their attention to the "Amsterdam" portion of the Nonfiction Writing handout. Tell students that they will read an encyclopedia entry about what was happening in Amsterdam, the capital of the Netherlands, during the time period when Anne Frank's family was in hiding there. Explain to students that this activity aims to demonstrate how different types of writing related to the same topic can serve distinct purposes and contain varying content. Tell students that they will use the Why-Lighting strategy as they read by highlighting details in the article that connect to either Anne Frank's diary or the story of Anne Frank and her family and writing a brief note in the margin near their highlighted detail that explains the connection. Read the article aloud as a class or have students read it independently, and give them time to make their own highlights and annotations.

After students have finished reading and completing their Why-Lighting activity, ask them to share some of the connections they found between the article and the details from Anne Frank's diary.

Sample Student Responses

These are just a few examples:

- **First Paragraph:** The first sentence reflects the same month that Otto Frank was forced to give up control of his business because of the German occupation.
- **Second Paragraph:** In the first sentence, that specific date and information more than likely prompted Otto Frank to begin searching for a hiding place in the summer of 1941.
- **Third Paragraph:** the sentence starting with "In July 1942" refers to the same month in which the Frank family went into hiding in the Secret Annex.

20 minutes

Extend

Display **slide 16**. Discuss *The Diary of Anne Frank* and how Anne Frank's diary gives us a personal, emotional insight into her life during a difficult time. Explain how diaries capture personal thoughts and feelings, often revealing struggles and conflicts.

Teacher's Note: Setting and Communicating Expectations

Students are asked to write a diary entry for the following activity. The length of a diary entry can vary and students could type or handwrite them. Consider having students write at least a half-page diary entry and follow classroom norms for how students submit work. Regardless of your preferences, determine and clearly communicate your expectations with your students before students begin writing their diary entries.

Show **slide 17** and use it to introduce the RAFT strategy. Then, move to **slide 18** and explain that students are to use the RAFT strategy to write a diary entry:

- **Role:** As the person writing the diary entry, have students assume the role of a historical or fictional character living through a challenging time. For students struggling to think of a role, consider giving suggestions: a refugee fleeing war, a soldier in a war zone, a person experiencing homelessness, etc.
- **Audience:** Remind students to think of who the diary entry is written for. This is often the writer herself/himself or a close confidant.
- **Format:** Let students know that they are to write a diary entry, which is personal, reflective, and dated. Let students know of any other expectations you have of their final product.
- **Topic:** Have students focus their writing on the struggle or conflict the writer (the character of their assumed role) is experiencing. Encourage students to think about the Card Sort activity from earlier in the lesson and also include any fears, hopes, etc. that they would be experiencing.

Give each student a half-page of the attached **RAFT** handout and discuss the RAFT strategy, as listed on the slide. Then, review the example from *The Diary of Anne Frank* using **slide 19**.

Teacher's Note: Guiding the Activity

If students need additional support with the assignment, consider brainstorming conflicts or struggles that affect people today or historically.

Give students approximately 15 minutes to write their diary entry, which is from the perspective of their character and contains their character's struggles, hopes, dreams, and so on.

15 minutes

Evaluate

Display **slide 20**. Have students reflect on the diary entries they just wrote and how specific changes might impact their writing by asking them to answer one of the following prompts:

- Imagine you had a different role for your diary entry. Identify a different role and describe how that would have changed your diary entry.
- Imagine you were writing to a different audience. Identify a different audience and describe how that would have changed your diary entry.

Have students record their responses on the back of their diary entries or on a piece of notebook paper. If time allows, have students share their responses with the class.

Resources

- K20 Center. (n.d.). Card sort. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/147
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Quick write. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/1127
- K20 Center. (n.d.). RAFT. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/158
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Why-lighting. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/128
- K20 Center. (2021, September 21). K20 Center 5 minute timer [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EVS_yYQoLJg