

Ideas to go...

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Character-Inspired Writing

Getting into character can help students be more creative in their writing. In my AP English class, students select a character from the prologue of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and are encouraged to dress, speak, and act like that person. Then, when students are asked to write an original short tale that emulates Chaucer's characterization and that uses one of the narrative types Chaucer employed, they can more easily project themselves into the story and write more creatively. This enriching activity results in highly engaging tales that all students enjoy.

—Contributed by Ronald T. Sion, Rhode Island educator

Writing Topics from A to Z

Often when students are asked to brainstorm ideas related to a specific topic, the result is brain freeze. To avoid this phenomenon and generate creative ideas for papers, divide the alphabet into two columns, A–M and N–Z. Then ask students to think of words related to the topic that begin with each letter of their half of the alphabet. Next, have the students incorporate three related words into a topic sentence. This approach eases students into their writing assignment.

—Contributed by Robin Hecht, New York educator

Writing Is in the Bag

A fun assignment for student writers is to create a story out of random objects placed in a paper bag. Simply go around the house, yard, or classroom, select 10 different items, and place them in a bag. Give the bag to a group of students and ask them to write a story using these elements. Determining the roles these items have in their stories is completely up to the students. The only rule: use all 10 objects and have fun.

—Contributed by Kerry Jones, Pennsylvania educator

Writing

