

Risky Writing

Journals: The Perfect Summer Activity

Call it a journal, a diary, a spy pad, a writer's notebook, or a daybook. Whichever name you prefer, they all mean the same thing: a fun, personal, perfect way to enhance a student's reading and writing skills. Journaling encourages students to be observers of the world, to be reflective of their experiences, and to become expressive writers. A journal can become an invaluable tool for the emergent writer, one that provides a safe place for privacy, creativity, and individuality. Journals don't have to be elaborate, just staple some pages together and have students write, write, write.

Bonkers for Books

With summer quickly approaching, books for summer reading are on the minds of teachers, parents, and students. The International Reading Association offers numerous resources and has posted its 2013 Choices Reading Lists. Visit their website to view the children's, young adults', and teachers' choice lists.

[2013 Children's Choices](#)

[2013 Young Adults' Choices](#)

[2013 Teachers' Choices](#)

Monthly Memoir

Summer... a time for the 3 R's for teachers: relax, recharge, and reflect. By taking the time to relax and recharge, we can truly reflect on our teaching. When we reflect, we can grow. Reflection lends itself to goal making. Is there something we'd like to get better at? A strategy we'd like to try? A professional book or author we'd like to read? This is the perfect time to set goals for the next school year. Write your goals down; it makes them real. Revisit your goals as the year progresses, revise or refine as necessary. Just remember to celebrate when you achieve your goals.

Tipsy for Technology

As the classroom becomes infiltrated with the newest technology, we as teachers must take a moment to make sure that we are properly supporting digital literacy. One way to ensure this is by first explaining and modeling any and all activities students are expected to engage in on a device. Following the explanation and modeling, guided and independent practice with the activity is imperative. These steps will ensure that your students are getting the most out of digital literacy.

Working with Words

The 'use it or lose it' philosophy is not only true for reading but for word work, too. Students need continued opportunities to practice what they have learned about how words work throughout the summer. One place for students to practice these skills is at www.funbrain.com. Funbrain.com is a website with numerous word games that are fun and easy to understand. Students can practice using parts of speech, spelling and word origins while having fun. Encourage students to visit this website this summer and keep their word knowledge current. The website also provides other academic activities, such as math and reading for students to practice over the summer months.

Teacher Talk

Middletown's 2013 Summer Reading Lists are out! There have been a few changes to the summer reading requirements. Take some time to look over the new summer reading lists, activities and literacy calendars. Encourage your students and parents to visit the district website for all updated information. Remember these activities are required for all Middletown students. Happy Reading!

[2013 Summer Reading Lists](#)

Collaborative Comprehension

"Summer Reading Lag" is a term we are all accustomed to. Students return to school in September typically reading at or below the level they left school at in June. Summer reading is essential to helping avoid this common set back. Encourage your students to create a summer reading list of their own. Try starting with the required summer reading list and expanding from there. Self selected texts are a major factor in getting students to read over the summer as well as keeping them engaged in what they are

reading. Urge your students and their parents to visit the local library over the summer. Guide your students in setting a goal of a certain number of books read over the summer or a certain number of minutes/hours read for the entire summer. The more we expose our students to the importance of summer reading, the more likely they will be to spend the time picking out books and reading over the summer months!