



Good as Gold Writing Activities

for Grades 1–2

Teacher Instructions

Field Trip

Objective: Practice opinion and persuasive writing to support an idea for a class field trip destination

Time needed: 30 to 45 minutes

Materials needed: copies of the “Field Trip” student activity sheet

Skills supporting learning standards: opinion/persuasive writing, letter writing, participation in group discussions

Getting Started

1. Ask students to identify places in the US that they have visited or heard about that sound interesting or exciting. List the places on the board and locate some of them on your class map.
2. Encourage students to describe the places on the list and explain why they chose them.
3. Next, ask students about places they have visited on class field trips and describe what they liked about these trips.
4. Distribute the activity sheet and read the directions to the class. Each student will choose a place in the US that he or she would like to visit on a class field trip and write a letter to you with the suggestion. Remind students that they can select any US destination they want.
5. Tell students to include exciting descriptions and details in their letters about the place they want to visit. Their goal is to convince you that the class should go there.
6. Review how to start and close a letter.
7. Have students share their final letters. For additional writing fun, take a class vote on the field trip locations. Select the top five and have students work in teams to write adventure stories that take place in one of these locations. This is also a great charting opportunity. Create a chart to represent the options presented, organizing them by state, type of place, etc.

Our Great Community

Objective: Practice informative and explanatory writing by describing your community

Time needed: 30 to 45 minutes

Materials needed: copies of the “Our Great Community” student activity sheet

Skills supporting learning standards: informative/explanatory writing, vocabulary development, participation in group discussions

Getting Started

1. To encourage students to enhance their writing with details and descriptions, start by reading them the two examples below—one that is nondescriptive and one that includes a lot of descriptive detail:
 - ★ The playground is fun.
 - ★ The playground has a big yellow tube slide and swings that go really high.

Ask students how each sentence makes them feel and why. *Do they get the same picture in their minds for each sentence?* Help students understand that the second sentence is more interesting and helps us paint a better picture of the playground in our minds because it has more detail and descriptive language.
2. Next, ask students to think about your community. Explain that a community is a group of people who live in the same area, such as a neighborhood, town, or city. Ask students to identify your community.
3. Have students practice using details by providing a descriptive example of a person or place in your community.
4. Distribute copies of the student activity sheet and review it with the class. As a group, brainstorm answers to the questions about the people, places, geography, and things to do in your community.
5. Have students work independently to complete the activity sheet and write an informative paragraph that describes your community. Encourage them to think about what makes the community special and to use exciting words so that people who are unfamiliar with your community might want to visit.
6. Ask students to draw a picture to go with their descriptions.

Teacher Instructions | Grades 1–2

Meet the President

Objective: Practice narrative writing by describing an imaginary visit with the President

Time needed: 30 to 45 minutes

Materials needed: copies of the “Meet the President” student activity sheet

Skills supporting learning standards: narrative writing, sequencing events, sentence and paragraph formation, participation in group discussions

Getting Started

1. To start this activity, display pictures of the White House in your classroom and share the following fun facts with your class with a True/False quiz. Explain to students:
 - ★ *You know that the President of the United States lives and works in the White House in Washington, DC. We’re going to play a True/False game to see what other facts you know about the White House.*
 - ★ **True or False:** *There are 32 rooms in the White House. (False. There are 132 rooms, 35 bathrooms, and 6 levels in the White House.)*
 - ★ **True or False:** *George Washington was the first president to live in the White House. (False. John Adams was the first president to live in the White House.)*
 - ★ **True or False:** *There is a bowling alley at the White House. (True. The White House has its own flower shop, tennis/basketball court, jogging track, movie theater, and bowling alley.)*
 - ★ **True or False:** *The White House receives thousands of visitors a day. (True. Imagine that many people coming to your home each day!)*For additional information to share with students, visit Ben’s Guide to the U.S. Government (bensguide.gpo.gov) and the kids’ portal for the US government (kids.gov).
2. Next, ask students what they think it would be like to visit the White House and meet the President. What would they do on a visit with the President?
3. Distribute the student activity sheet and read it with your students. Students might work independently or with a partner to write stories about a day at the White House. The sheet includes prompts to help them identify who they will meet (the characters), where they will go in the White House (the setting), and what they will talk about.
4. Remind students that the story is imaginative, so it can be serious, funny, or adventurous. Encourage them to use details in their stories to describe the White House and people.
5. Remind students to use dialogue when writing about conversations they might have with the President or other characters.
6. Have students illustrate and share their stories with the class when done.

Red, White, and Blue, This Poem Is About You

Objective: Practice narrative writing and vocabulary development with a fill-in-the-blanks poem

Time needed: 30 to 45 minutes

Materials needed: copies of the “Red, White, and Blue, This Poem Is About You” student activity sheet

Skills supporting learning standards: narrative writing, vocabulary development, participation in group discussions

Getting Started

1. Ask students to identify the colors of the American flag. Then ask them what the colors signify or stand for. Explain that the colors have come to symbolize bravery (red), purity (white), and justice (blue).
2. Next, ask them to brainstorm other things that are red, white, and blue.
3. Explain that they are going to create poems that celebrate these colors.
4. Ask students to name the five senses and write them on the board: see, hear, smell, taste, and touch.
5. Brainstorm examples as a class of things that look, sound, smell, taste, and feel like each of the colors. Ask students:
 - ★ *What are some things that look red? (strawberries, stop signs)*
 - ★ *What does red feel like to you? Is it happy or angry? Soft or hard?*
 - ★ *What do you think white smells like? (coconut, rice, marshmallows)*
 - ★ *What does white feel like? (cotton, snow, soft)*
 - ★ *How do you think blue tastes? (cold, blueberries, corn chips)*
 - ★ *What words or things sound like blue? (water, birds)*If your students need additional support, brainstorm a list of words associated with each sense for each color.
6. Distribute the activity sheet and read the directions to the class. Students should fill in a word or phrase to finish each sentence. They might complete the page on their own or with partners.
7. Once students are done, invite them to share their poems. As a follow-up activity, have students create collages to represent their poems.

Sources:

Meet the President
whitehouse.gov/about/inside-white-house
whitehouse.gov/interactive-tour/flower-shop
whitehouse.gov/interactive-tour/basketball-court
whitehouse.gov/about/inside-white-house/rooms
scholastic.com/teachers/article/white-house-facts

Name: _____

Field Trip

It's time for a class field trip! If you could go anywhere in the United States, where would you go? It can be near or far away.

Directions: Write a letter to your teacher about your idea. Describe the place. Explain why the class should visit. Don't forget to end your letter!



Dear _____,

For a class field trip, I think our class should go to _____

This would be a good place to visit because _____

Sincerely,

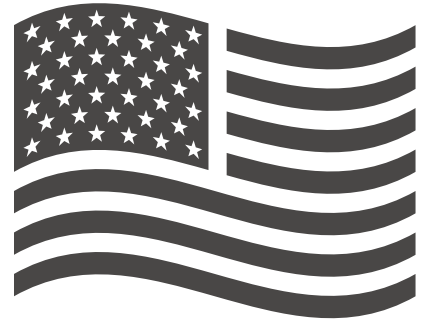
Name: _____

Our Great Community

Let's celebrate America! What makes your community or town special?

Directions: Think about your community.

- What is the land like? Are there mountains? Is it flat?
- Are you near an ocean, river, or lake?
- Is your community big or small?
- What are some things to do in your community?
- Why do you like your community?



Write About It!

Describe your community below. Let others know what makes it great!

I live in _____

It is a special place because _____

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Name: _____

Meet the President

Imagine it! You've been invited to the White House. You are going to meet the President of the United States.



Directions: Write a story about a trip to the White House to meet the President. What will your visit be like? What's the White House like? First, plan your story. Answer the questions below to help you.

1. Thousands of people work at the White House. Who will you meet during your visit? Circle your answers. They will be the characters in your story.

- The President
- The First Family
- Advisors (people who help the President make decisions)
- A chef
- A gardener
- A reporter
- Other _____

2. Where will you go at the White House? Circle your answers. This will be the setting for your story.

- Oval Office (the President's office)
- Rose Garden/South Lawn (*Marine One*, the presidential helicopter, lands and takes off there)
- State Dining Room (up to 140 people can dine in this room)
- Green Room (you can have tea by a fireplace there)
- Bowling alley (time for fun!)

3. What will you talk to the President about? List two questions you will ask.

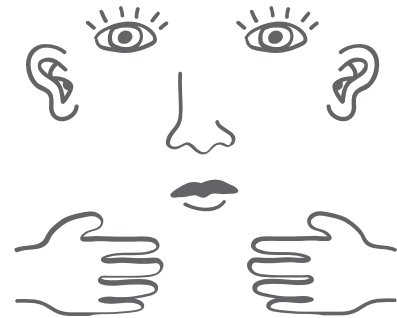
Time to Write! On a separate piece of paper, write your story. Remember to include:

- A strong beginning. This sets up the story.
- A middle with details about what happens. Think about how you feel, what you see, and what you do.
- An ending to the story.

Name: _____

Red, White, and Blue, This Poem Is About You

Directions: Write a poem about the colors red, white, and blue. **Use your five senses** to think of words to describe these colors. Then fill in the blanks to create your color poem.



RED, WHITE, AND BLUE, THIS POEM IS ABOUT YOU!

Red is the color of _____ .

Red sounds like _____ .

Red tastes like _____ .

Red is the smell of _____ .

Red feels like _____ .

White is the color of _____ .

White sounds like _____ .

White tastes like _____ .

White is the smell of _____ .

White feels like _____ .

Blue is the color of _____ .

Blue sounds like _____ .

Blue tastes like _____ .

Blue is the smell of _____ .

Blue feels like _____ .

**RED, WHITE, AND BLUE,
WE'RE HAPPY TO HAVE YOU!**