



All About Adolescent Literacy

RAFT Writing

What is it...

RAFT is a writing approach that asks students to write in order to learn (Mitchell, 1996). Students learn to respond to a writing prompt that requires them to think about various perspectives (Santa & Havens, 1995):

- Role of the Writer: Who are you as the writer? A pilgrim? A soldier? The President?
- Audience: To whom are you writing? A political rally? A potential employer?
- Format: In what format are you writing? A letter? An advertisement? A speech?
- Topic: What are you writing about?

Why it's so great...

Students must think creatively and critically in order to respond to prompts, making RAFT a unique way for students to apply critical thinking skills about new information they are learning. RAFT writing is applicable in every content area thereby providing a universal writing approach for content area teachers.

How to create it...

1. Explain to your students the various perspectives (mentioned above) writers must consider when completing any writing assignment.
2. Display a RAFT writing prompt to your class and model on an overhead or Elmo how you would write in response to the prompt.
3. Have students react to another writing prompt individually, or in small groups. It works best if all students react to the same prompt so the class can learn from varied responses.
4. As students become comfortable in reacting to RAFT prompts, you can create more than one prompt for students to respond to after a reading, lesson, or unit. Varied prompts allow students to compare and contrast multiple perspectives, deepening their understanding of the content.

What it looks like...

Example 1:

R: Citizen
A: Congress
F: Letter
T: Taxation

Example 2:

R: Scout Finch
A: Community of Monroeville, Alabama
F: Eulogy for Atticus Finch
T: Social Inequality for Atticus Finch

Mitchell, D. (1996). Writing to learn across the curriculum and the English teacher. *English Journal*, 85, 93-97.

Santa, C., & Havens, L. (1995). *Creating independence through student-owned strategies: Project CRISS*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt.

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