

Writing Lessons

for

Quarterback Season

by Fred Bowen

Created by Johanna Littlewood
Teacher, Boston, Massachusetts

These lessons match Grade 6 Common Core Standards listed at the end.

Chapter 1:

Writing exercise:

Correct the narrator's grammar and spelling in his first three entries. You should be able to find at least 15 mistakes to correct.

Chapter 2:

Creative writing prompt:

Ms. Ignacio's email signature was a quote from E.B. White which read "The best writing is rewriting." Choose one of Matt's three original journal entries to rewrite as if you were him. When you rewrite it, be sure to include figurative language and sensory descriptions. You may make up details as long as they are consistent with the original entries.

Chapter 3:

Prediction prompt:

Sometimes authors use foreshadowing in their writing. Make a prediction about what will happen to Devro in the story. Be sure to defend your reasoning based on evidence from the first three chapters.

Chapter 4:

Debatable Question:

Is Matt a good teammate?

Give evidence from the text to support either opinion.

Have the students divide into the two sides of the debate (either you assign or they pick.) Stage a class debate either before or after they write their responses.

Chapter 5:

Creative Writing Prompt:

The chapter starts off with how practice smells. Now narrate the game against Western using only descriptions of how the game sounds from Matt's perspective. Imagine and describe what he would be hearing when he makes his catches and also when his teammates get tackled. Don't forget that both teams have fans in the stands for this game.

Math connection question: Who had a better passing percentage – Monroe or Beech from the stats sheet? By how much?

Chapter 6:

Personal Connection Prompt:

At the end of the last chapter Ms. Ignacio's email signature had a quote from Samuel Beckett that ended with "Fail better." Why did the author choose to include this quote? When have you failed but you could have failed better?

Chapter 7:

Debatable Question:

Who was a better quarterback: Joe Montana, Johnny Unitas or John Elway? Your job is to convince as many people in your class as possible.

Chapter 8:

Inference prompt:

Draw inferences from the text to support your opinion. Do you think Matt would rather win a big game with Devro as quarterback or lose a big game with Devro as quarterback?

Chapter 9:

Personal narrative:

In this chapter, Matt writes about his Halloween adventures. What was your scariest Halloween moment? If you don't have one, write about a moment when you have been most afraid.

Chapter 10:

Writing Analysis Question:

Matt's writing has clearly improved from the beginning few chapters until now. Think about the writing skills you have worked on this year. (The class could brainstorm a list.) Of these skills, which one do you think Matt has improved upon the most? Use specific evidence from the text to support your assertion.

Chapter 11:

Personal Narrative:

Michelle is extremely proud of Colby in this chapter. When is a time you've been more proud of someone else's accomplishment than of your own?

Chapter 12:

Partner Activity:

In this chapter, Matt learns that Jerry Kramer spoke into a tape recorder and then a sports writer wrote the book from his words. One way to become a better writer is to speak the words you want to say first. Think of a time you persevered through a challenge. It could be sports story or it could be from any point in your life. You have one minute to brainstorm the story you will tell.

Pair up with the partner your teacher has given you.

Then you will have two minutes to tell your partner your story. Make sure you include why the challenge was difficult and what you did to persevere.

The partner sitting closest to the door will go first. The listening partner can make notes but shouldn't write down whole sentences.

Then the next partner will tell his or her story. Finally, I will give you 30 minutes to write a compelling piece about your partner's story. Make sure you include an introduction, explain why the challenge was difficult, and a resolution to the challenge.

(Teacher note: If you choose, you could have the students write about their own challenges instead of their partners' but this exercise should still show them that it is often easier to write when they have spoken the words first.)

Chapter 13:

Read the nonfiction piece at the end of the book. The author clearly used *Instant Replay* as one of his inspirations for this book. Which topics did *Instant Replay* and *Quarterback Season* both cover?

Grade 6 Common Core Standards:

Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.

Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.

Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- a. Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly.
- b. Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
- c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons.
- d. Establish and maintain a formal style.
- e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

- a. Introduce a topic; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
- c. Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
- d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- e. Establish and maintain a formal style.
- f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.