

◆ Quick Write / Focused free-write

Use: Before or after reading

This is a low-stress way to get students to **ease into summarizing** information, especially those students who are still resistant to or uncomfortable with writing formal summaries.

This can be used as a **pre-reading** activity to activate prior knowledge, **or** can be used as a **closure activity**. It allows for more participation than simply posing an open question for group discussion.

Preparation:

None

Procedure:

1. **State the topic**, question, or statement.
2. Give students a **specific length of time** (usually 2 - 3 minutes) to write. Projecting a timer on the board often helps keep them focused.
3. **Students write non-stop** about the topic. If they get stuck, they should keep writing – even if they are just repeating the last phrase or sentence – until another thought comes.
4. If done as closure, it can be a “**ticket out the door.**”
5. **The next day**, after having read them over, **read some of the free-writes aloud** to the class (anonymously). This adds perceived value to their writing and encourages future participation. Including a few from lower-performing students (read with corrections) boosts their confidence.

