

## Tip: How to Start a Writer's Notebook



### Grades 3-12

#### Why Use This Tip

Children often struggle with the idea of getting started on their writing, whether it be in or out of school, and need an structured way to "get going." Writer's notebooks allow children and teens to take in the world around them and document their daily lives and provides an easy, informal way to start thinking about new topics and ideas. These notebooks are a great place to store favorite quotes, random facts, dreams, and ideas for the future. So, what are you waiting for? Get writing!

#### What to Do

To encourage students to write freely and take ownership of their writing, acquire a composition notebook, spiral notebook, journal, or create a booklet out of blank or lined paper for your child/teen to use as their writer's notebook. A [Flip Book](#) or [Stapleless Book](#) will also serve the same purpose.

Share books written to mimic a writer's notebook so that your child has an example to follow. They can also use some of the ideas in the book(s) to spark ideas for their own writer's notebook. Some good books to check out include the *Amelia's Notebook* series (Simon & Schuster) and *Sienna's Scrapbook* (Chronicle Books).

Suggest some topics/writing starters to get your child's writer's notebook started, using one of these options:

- Write down questions that you have. What do you wonder about?
- Keep a running list of things that are scary, hilarious, surprising, etc. to you. Why do these things affect you like they do?
- Clip out pictures and articles from some of your favorite newspapers and magazines. Why are these your "favorites"?
- Write down a quote that really made you think. How did you relate to it?
- Create a list of books you've heard about that you want to read. Check them off when you're done, and write about your reaction to the book if you'd like. You can use the [What I've Read printout](#) to help organize your thoughts.
- Collect ticket stubs, photographs, brochures, etc. from places that you visit and things that you do.
- Devote a page to your silly sketches and doodles—no explanations necessary!
- Write about a special tradition in your family and why you enjoy it so much. Include a family recipe that's one of your favorites!

Encourage your child or teen to keep their writer's notebook handy and write or draw about whatever comes to mind, whenever it comes to mind! From time to time, have your child go through his/her notebook to see if there are any entries that spark ideas for further writing. Write on!

<http://www.readwritethink.org/parent-afterschool-resources/tips-howtos/start-writer-notebook-30601.html>

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