

October 2022

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
10 <i>Thanksgiving (No school)</i> National Day on Writing (in the US)	11 World of Octobers	12 Site Work, Tracking, and a “Moss-eye” View	13 Attitude of Gratitude	14 Found Poetry
17 Mapping Your Neighborhood	18 Human Impact Walk	19 (Never) Quit Playing Games	20 Linguistic Landscape	21 <i>MTS PD Day (No School)</i>
24 Mapping Natural Features	25 ABC Walk	26 Poetry Hike	27 Rating Walkability	28 Found (and Haunted!) Objects

Write Out, Manitoba!

Hosted by the Manitoba Writing Project

<https://www.manitobawritingproject.ca>

Staff Invitation

For a staff meeting this month, we invite you to take an interdisciplinary walk through your school's neighborhood and surrounding community. **As you walk, invite individuals to share what they notice about the area using different disciplinary lenses (e.g., science, social studies, health, math, art).** This can also work with long-term staff and newer staff sharing the differences in what they notice about the area.

World of Octobers

Tuesday, October 11

"I'm so glad I live in a world where there are Octobers."

– Anne Shirley-Cuthbert, *Anne of Green Gables*¹

Today, we invite you to use the month of October as inspiration for your writing, specifically looking at how the natural world is changing.

Site Work, Tracking, and a “Moss-eye” View

Wednesday, October 12

Ecologists study nature by engaging in close, systematic study of it. Nature becomes a site for research and fieldwork that involves various practices. Tsing (2018), in her study of matsutake mushrooms writes how fungi “show us worlds” by paying close attention to where and how they grow.² Gabrys (2012) who writes about the study of moss, describes engaging in “site work from a moss-eye view” and that the process of “tracking” moss “allowed the trackers to see their city as an ecology, rather than just as an infrastructure” (as cited in Tsing, 2018, p. 74). Through following nature, we are open to “unexpected journey(s)” leading to “transformations of persons and of worlds”, to “worlds worth caring about” (Tsing, 2018, p. 74). Generate ideas about what students might track, and how to pay close attention. Sketch, take photos, and write “close up”!

Attitude of Gratitude

Thursday, October 13

Today, we invite you to recognize people in your school and/or the community who often do not receive thanks. You can write letters of thanks to send out, write messages in chalk on the sidewalk where the messages will be seen, or find ways to express your gratitude in other ways.

¹ Montgomery, L. M. (1925). *Anne of Green Gables*. George G. Harrap Limited, p. 140

² Tsing, A. L. (2018). Getting by in terrifying times. *Dialogues in Human Geography*, 8(1), 73-76.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2043820617738836>

Found Poetry

Friday, October 14

A found poem is created by taking words, phrases, even whole passages from other source texts. Play with arranging, spacing, even sizing the words to communicate ideas. Create a found poem with specific kinds of texts found in the park, voices you hear, or other inspirations. You might write the poem over time, putting words, voices or events into conversation with one another. Experiment with irony, juxtaposition, rhythm, language and meaning.

Mapping Your Neighborhood

Monday, October 17

Today, we invite you to map a neighborhood of importance to you, whatever that means. You may consider drawing a map of a local neighborhood, reflecting on places of importance to you, your family, or the community. You could start by drawing the map, then walking the neighborhood to see what you missed, or you could walk the neighborhood first, then try to get every detail on the map. Consider writing stories about places marked on your map. You may also ask students to collaborate on a larger map of the area or to share their maps of the same places and see how their maps compare.

Human Impact Walk

Tuesday, October 18

“There are no passengers on spaceship earth. We are all crew.” Marshall McLuhan³

Today, we invite you to think about the impact each of us has had and can have on the planet—for good and/or for bad. What actions can you imagine taking to be a better crew member for “spaceship earth”?

(Never) Quit Playing Games

Wednesday, October 19

Today, we invite you to consider outdoor games you used to play when you were younger and/or games you still enjoy playing outside. Take time to play such a game and/or reminisce about the game. Then, write down the rules of the game for someone who may be unfamiliar with it (or your version of it). Consider adding stories and highlights about why you enjoy(ed) this game so much.

³ Statement in 1965, in reference to Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth (1963) by Buckminster Fuller, as quoted Paradigms Lost: Learning from Environmental Mistakes, Mishaps and Misdeeds (2005) by Daniel A. Vallero, p. 367.

Linguistic Landscape

Thursday, October 20

A linguistic landscape is the “visibility and salience of languages on public and commercial signs in a given territory or region” (Landry and Bourhis 1997, p. 23). Consider the “linguistic landscape” of your school, campus, or neighborhood—how is language used in these spaces/places to inform, frame, or shape our experience? You might also think critically about the landscape: Whose languages are used (and whose are excluded)? What concepts are prevalent (and to what effect)? What metaphors are evoked (and what are their implications)? We might also expand the “linguistic landscape” to consider the physical landscape—the geography of the land, the architecture of a bridge, or the placement of a bench. How are various ecologies positioned? Another focus might be the “soundscape” of this place: what do we hear (and don’t), what is louder and softer; how natural and other sounds (or silence) contribute to the space and your experience.

Mapping Natural Features

Monday, October 24

Today, we invite you to draw a map, thinking only about the natural features of your walk—the trees, the birds’ nests, the puddles ... You may choose to first draw your map, then go for a walk to see which details you missed, or you may choose to walk first, then draw the map when you return. Try to write down what you experience through your senses and what you feel emotionally as it relates to the natural features of your walk.

ABC Walk

Tuesday, October 25

“There is another alphabet, whispering from every leaf, singing from every river, shimmering from every sky.”

– Dejan Stojanović

Today, we invite you to take a walk and consider the alphabet as a catalyst for noticing, attempting to name objects and sensations relating to each letter of the alphabet.

Poetry Hike

Wednesday, October 26

Today, we invite you on a 30+ minute poetry hike: 5 Stops. 5 Steps. Click/Sketch. 5 Minutes. 5-word Poems. Plan a route with 5 stops. At each stop, follow the same process:

1. Create a shoulder-to-shoulder circle. Then turn and face outwards. Each person takes 5 steps (this can be in any direction/path you choose, but be mindful of others).

Once we have taken our 5 steps, we will have 5 minutes to do the following:

2. Take a photo or make a quick sketch of something that captures your interest.
3. Write a 5-word poem. Or, if you have time, you are welcome to write more than one! A 5-word poem can be about anything you see, feel, notice, observe, think, etc., but you are allowed only 5 words in total. You can use punctuation, line breaks, etc. in whatever way you choose.
4. At the end of 5 minutes, return back to the circle.

The photos and poems can then be shared to make a collective text (PowerPoint or Padlet can work well for this). Share together and celebrate!

Rating Walkability

Thursday, October 27

Today, we invite you to consider the walkability of your neighborhoods, thinking about how we access spaces. You may reflect on the following questions:

- Are there sidewalks in your neighborhood?
 - o If so, are they well-maintained? Are there ramps so people who use mobility aids (e.g., wheelchairs) can use the sidewalk with ease? If the sidewalk has ramps, do they have tactile paving to help blind people?
 - o If not, what is the impact of this?
- Are there bike lanes in your neighborhood?
 - o If so, are they well-maintained? Are there barriers between cyclists and motor vehicles?
 - o If not, what is the impact of this?
- Is the neighborhood accessible by public transport (e.g., buses)?

After reflecting on your neighborhood's walkability, you may consider numerous writing projects, such as drawing maps of the area to highlight (in)accessible areas, write letters to city council about increasing access, or write reflections about how your neighborhood's (in)accessibility make you feel.

Found (and Haunted!) Objects

Friday, October 28

Today, we invite you to think about objects and histories. Go on a walk and take notice of objects that have been lost or have gone unnoticed (e.g., a single forlorn glove or a crinkled up receipt). Think about their stories: how did they get to that place, how long have they been there, what does their future look like? Perhaps try writing from the perspective of that object.

Because it's Spooky Season, you can also consider asking your students to think about everyday objects (both indoors and out) and/or everyday places and how they might be haunted. You may try using the following formula:

1. What is the object/location? What does it do that makes it (appear) haunted?
2. Explain how it became haunted. What's its backstory?
3. Describe what moral/message should readers learn from this story.