

Free Writing

Goal: to reflect on themes and topics of the course.

General Concept: allow for freedom of expression by eliminating the need for perfect structure and grammar.

Process:

1. Give each student 5 minutes (or more) to write down his or her thoughts about a particular theme or assignment (readings, video, etc.). During a free write students are not allowed to stop writing or pick up their pen. They should not worry about using correct grammar, punctuation, or sentence structure. The activity is designed for them to freely write down whatever comes to their mind about a particular theme or assignment. This gives students the freedom to get their thoughts down on paper without worrying about the structural elements of writing. The focus is just on their thoughts, not how those thoughts are put down on paper – that can come later.
2. Once the time is up, give students a minute or two to read to themselves what they wrote.
3. Have the each student circle or underline dominant themes, ideas, reflections that came out in their free write.
4. Ask the students if anyone would like to read their free write out loud for the class to hear. Ask the students if anyone would like to share a response to one of the following questions: what were the dominant themes that came out in your free write? Were you surprised by anything that you wrote? Were there any new themes/reflections that came out in your free write that make you think about the reading, theme, or assignment in a new way?

Ideal for: *intrapersonal learners* who are aware of and enjoy reflecting on their own inner thoughts; *verbal-linguistic learners* who enjoy writing.

Important for peace education because it opens up new ways of thinking and reacting that is not confined by structure. It can tap into higher level thinking, even though it thrives in “lower-level” writing.

Modifications:

- Take the main themes, ideas, and reflection from the free write and use them in a ten-line poem activity.