



Tips for Teachers

A Guide for Using *New Youth Connections* in the Classroom

September/October 2005

Letters to the Editor

We are eager to publish letters from our readers. It can be a good way to frame a short writing assignment. It may help to frame the assignment as writing a letter directly to the writer of the story expressing. We give several letter writing suggestions in the following lessons.

Parent Snooping

"Invasion of Privacy," by Patricia Rogers, p. 3

This is a simply written, powerful story that can be used to start discussions about teen-parent relationships: building trust, maintaining communication, establishing independent identities, setting limits, and handling conflict.

If you decide to read the story aloud with your group or class let one student read the author's part of the dialogue and another read the mother's pieces.

Some discussion questions: What is the source of conflict between the author and her mother? In the end, how is it resolved? Do your students think somebody won the conflict? If so who won? Have they been in a similar situation with a parent or guardian? If so, did they do or say anything differently? Depending on your situation you might ask two students

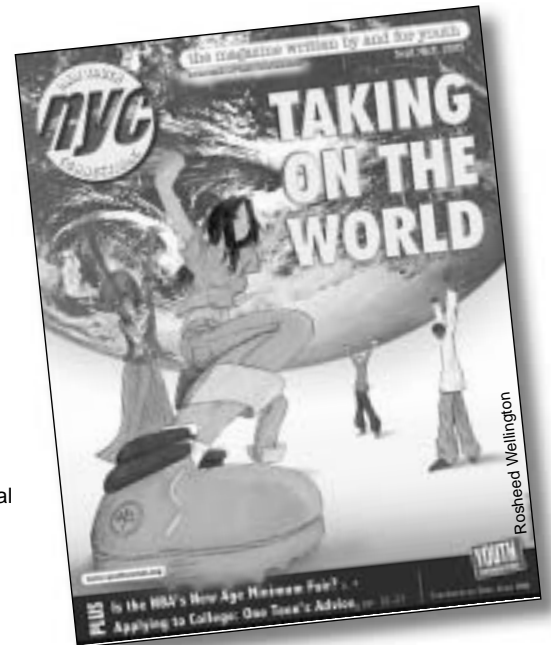
to stage a different ending to the story. Or you might ask students to write an alternative ending. Or they can write a letter to the author giving their opinions about how she handled the situation.

Why does the mother feel she has the right to read her daughter's emails and letters?

Letter writing opportunity: Write a letter to the author expressing your approval or disapproval of the way she handled her mother's invasion of her privacy.

College Application Help

Writer Janill Briones offers peer friendly advice on picking schools, essays, interviews, the SAT, financial aid, etc. She also tells readers about free counseling services and informative Web sites. You might want to clip and copy pages 22 and 23 to give to seniors and juniors



throughout the year. Janill also describes her own application process to warn readers against ignorance and complacency.

(continued on back)

Tips for Teachers is written for the bulk subscribers to *New Youth Connections* to help them use the magazine more effectively with teens in their classes and programs.

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Your Students Can Write or Draw for New Youth Connections. Here's How.

OPEN HOUSE FOR NEW WRITERS

We are holding an open house on October 4 from 4-6 p.m. for young people who want to write for New Youth Connections. It is at our newsroom: 224 West 29th St. between 7th and 8th Avenues, 2nd fl. The most important "prerequisite" is that students want to make their voice heard and tell stories that will help their peers. Good writing skills are helpful, but not essential. We have a good training program. One of the best indicators that a teen will benefit from our program is that they like reading the magazine. And many of our best writers are referred by teachers who sense

that spark and send them our way.

NEEDED: TEEN ARTISTS

If you have students who like to draw, encourage them to consider joining our illustration staff. The illustration workshops are open on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3-6 p.m. Students who are interested should call Joanne Pendola, the illustration instructor, at 212-279-0708 extension 108. If they call during workshop hours they may reach her directly. Otherwise, they should leave a message with their name and number. This is a great opportunity for students who want to try their hand at editorial illustration. They get to work with a first-rate art instructor (Joanne is a graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design and a professional illustrator), and with their peers to create illustrations that will grab readers and pull them into the stories.

Goals:

- Students will read to discover factual information.
- Students will identify ways in which peers make a difference by taking action.
- Students will learn to summarize and make inferences about writing.
- Students will gain practice writing one-paragraph and five-paragraph essays

Preparation: Copy the attached Bingo board. Copy the clues. (*Be sure to cut off the answers in the right hand column before you copy the clues!*) Hand out the board and the clues and this month’s *New Youth Connections*. Ask them to turn to the centerfold, pages 12 and 13.

Instructions for Bingo game: Tell your students that you’re going to play Bingo. In this version of Bingo they’re going to have to complete the squares with answers to questions. The answers are found in the three articles about teen activism on pages 12 and 13: Stomping Out Cigarettes in the Media; Taking Back Neighborhood Parks, and Rising Up Against Polluters.

Ask them to look down the list of clues to N-3 and to give the answer. Note that Patricia Rogers’ name is already in box N-3. Explain that they are to find the answers to the rest of the clues until they complete a 5-clue row (vertical, horizontal, or diagonal). All of the answers are in the stories.

Very Important: In addition to writing the answer on their board, they must write the clue number (e.g., N-3) on the page next to the place where they found the answer. So they would write N-3 next to Patricia Rogers’ name. When they have five in a row, they shout “Bingo!” Then they must point out where in the text they found the answer to each clue.

After the first person wins, continue playing until a couple more people have won. Then tell the class, “We’re now going to see who can completely fill the board first.” (This, of course, will encourage them to read more of the stories.)

Instructions for Writing Exercises

Preparation (pre-writing exercise)

Draw a one line Bingo board on the blackboard, like this:

B-1	I-1	N-1	G-1	O-1
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Tell the students you are going to read a clue for each box and they have to write a short answer (one or two sentences) for each clue. Tell them the answers are not in the stories. They should write their opinion or feelings about the topic. If it will make the students more comfortable, tell them these will not be collected. This exercise is just to get them thinking—it’s a “pre-writing” activity. (Note: You may have to give the students some time to read the stories before doing this exercise if they didn’t read them carefully while searching for the Bingo clues.)

B-1: Why do they think the students in the stories decided to get involved in protesting smoking in movies or polluting in Sunset Park, or in building a park on the Lower East Side? What motivated them?

I-1: Of the groups, which one would they consider joining (if there was a similar group in their school or neighborhood, for example)? Why?

N-1: Is there a problem in their school, neighborhood (or country) they would like to see addressed? What’s one thing they think teens could do to address it? (This could be as simple as no toilet paper in the bathrooms or as complex as the President’s reaction to hurricane Katrina.)

G-1: Can getting involved make a difference? Why or why not?

Now that the students have thought a bit more about the stories and the themes, have them do one or both of the following writing activities.

One Paragraph: Ask the students to write a one paragraph reaction to one story. The form of the paragraph should be: One sentence that summarizes the story; two or three sentences that give further details about the actions taken by the teens in the story, and a concluding sentence or two giving their impression or reaction to the story.

Five Paragraph Essay: Give students this outline

Paragraph 1: Introduce the topic of overall theme of the stories on these two pages (teen activism).

Paragraphs 2, 3, and 4. Each paragraph should give a short summary of one of the three stories on the page.

Answers

- O-4 (3)
- B-5 (Open Road)
- G-4 (painting, pick up litter)
- O-5 (power plant)
- N-1 (3,000)
- B-2 (New Design)
- N-3 (Patricia D. Rogers)
- I-2 (two NYC teens)
- N-4 (50)
- I-3 (East Side HS)
- N-5 (pollutants)
- O-2 (440,000)
- I-1 (two-thirds)
- G-2 (several)
- I-5 (stomp their feet)
- B-3 (UPROSE)
- G-3 (70%)
- B-1 (Gowanus)
- G-5 (remove smoking ads)
- O-1 (Lakendra Byrant)
- N-2 (Industrial Takeover)
- O-3 (\$1,500)
- B-4 (white blankets)
- G-1 (200,000)
- I-4 (Eliot Spitzer)

Paragraph 5: This paragraph should summarize and evaluate. The writer can compare and contrast the teen activists (which ones were most effective, for example). She can give her reaction to what they are doing. She can go outside the story and compare them with other examples of teen activism she may know about, or talk about a problem she would like to see teens address and show how the tactics of these activists might be used to address it.

		B	I	N	G
		O			
1					
2					
3			Patricia D. Rogers		
4					
5					

- Clues**
- O-4 How many basketball courts could fit in the park behind Seward Park HS
 - B-5 It's a park on East 12th St.
 - G-4 How are teens beautifying Tompkins Sq. Park?)
 - O-5 What did Murad Awawdeh fight to keep out of his neighborhood?
 - N-1 How many kids under age 18 start smoking each day?
 - B-2 Bianca Hendricks goes to this high school.
 - N-3 Who wrote "Rising Up Against Polluters?"
 - I-2 Who designed the Open Road Park?
 - N-4 How many tobacco ads did Simone Davis count in one magazine?
 - I-3 What high school did Nano and Ralphie go to?
 - N-5 What do power plants release into the air?
 - O-2 How many people die from smoking each year?
 - I-1 How many movies still show tobacco use?
 - G-2 What is one youth justice issue that UPROSE tackles
 - I-5 What did the teens plan to do to when they saw smoking in the movie?
 - B-3 Dyhalma is an organizer for this group.
 - G-3 How many teen smokers wish they never started?
 - B-1 This expressway runs through Sunset Park.
 - G-5 What did Time and Newsweek agree to do?
 - O-1 Name an Open Road member whose name starts with L
 - N-2 What's the name of the film teens made about pollution?
 - O-3 What budget do teens get for their park projects?
 - B-4 When the teens protested smoking, what did they wrap themselves in?
 - G-1 How many cars use the Gowanus Expressway each day?
 - I-4 Who is the New York State Attorney General

(continued from front cover)

Gender Issues

Are Boy Babies More Valuable Than Girl Babies?

May Mai describes the pressures her mother was under to produce a boy baby ("What's a Girl Worth?" page 17). She then reflects on how Chinese society devalues girls and women in favor of boys and men.

Discussion ideas

Where in the story does May give reasons for why Chinese families prefer boys to girls?

What is China's "One-Child Policy" and how is it enforced?

Where in the story does May describe how this gender bias will effect her life? What areas does she mention (career, marriage choices, where she will live)?

Ask students if other cultures differ radically from what May describes. Do Latino, European, African and other cultures favor male children over female children? What about when people are grown up? Do men or women get favorable treatment in some ways? Ask students to explore gender differences and privileges. Who has them? Why? Are they important? What is the impact on day-to-day life? Is to good or bad?



Kat Morris

GIRLS TEAM

Letter writing opportunity: Point out to your students that May has decided not to "go against the traditional female role." She announces this decision in the fourth column under the subhead "Trapped by My Culture."

Have your students write letters to May about her decision to go along with her family's plans for her. Ask them to address May's fears that if she makes her own decisions her family will cut her off from them.

Are Boy Tennis Players More Valuable than Girl Tennis Players?

In "Unfair Advantage" (p. 5), Anonymous

describes how the boys' tennis team at her high school gets more court time, better equipment, and more pats on the back than the girls' team. She tries unsuccessfully to discuss the issue with the principal, considers a filing lawsuit, and in the end quits the team.

Do your students think that boys get preferential treatment when it comes to high school sports? What is the situation at their school? Do they care about this issue? Are there any areas (academics, classroom interactions, other extra-curricular activities) in which girls get treated better than boys?

Vocabulary Lesson

Hattie Rice not only describes her struggle to conquer the vocabulary section of the SAT. ("Bookin' It" page 24) She peppers her story with real live SAT words so your students can add to their store of words.

Writing exercise: Can your students write a very short story using Hattie's SAT words? Give them some scenarios (prom night, big game, important date, first day on the job) and maybe some examples: "My impetus for going to the party was to continue my vendetta against the guy who had incontrovertibly dumped me. After all, I am obstinate and no mood to be lenient with Jim. He would be petrified if he knew how contemptuous I am of him now."



Leo Maisouradze

Writing Contest

page 2 \$175 in Prizes
Deadline: Oct. 3, 2005

"What's the one thing you've done in your life that you're most proud of and why?"

Submissions can be emailed to info@youthcomm.org or teens can enter through our Web site youthcomm.org.

Encourage your students to read the prize-winning entries from last issue's contest on page 18. Point out that the first and second prize winners described one specific incident to illustrate the character of their most memorable teacher. The third prize winner used lots of nouns to highlight the creativity and energy of her teacher. Grace Molina, the author of "Kindergarten Nightmare," also provided a very detailed physical description of her subject.

After they read the submissions urge them to enter the contest. If their finest hour took place over a period of time (caring for a sick parent, studying hard to do well in a class, training for an athletic event) ask them to describe in detail one or two events which demonstrate why they feel proud about what they did. This is the difference between writing something like "I ran 3 miles everyday to get ready for the upcoming race and in the end it was worth it," or writing "I'll never forget that cold rainy Tuesday night when I dragged myself out to the park to run my daily 3 miles."

Classroom & Advisory Resources from Youth Communication

Youth Communication has published over 70 books and booklets written by teens. Each one is an anthology of the best stories from our magazines on topics like conflict resolution, food and nutrition, friendship, parents, gender issues, identity, resilience, and others.

These anthologies inspire teens to read and help teachers start discussions and improve their students' writing skills. Visit our E-store at www.youthcomm.org. Or you can get our catalog by calling Loretta Chan at 212-279-0708 extension 115.

Tips for Teachers is also available on our web site at:
www.youthcomm.org