

Value Writing Intervention

Instructional Strategy – What is it?

This is a writing exercise that students can complete one or more times during the semester. In this activity, students reflect on beliefs that help them stay motivated. Specifically, this activity asks students to focus on reasons for learning that go beyond the typical motives of making money or making family proud.

Why does it work?

Students are more willing to persevere through challenges because they understand how doing so ties into their long-term goals and vision of their future self. By providing students with an opportunity to reflect on their purpose for learning, students can reappraise the value of the coursework and classes, and ultimately persist longer.

How to do it?

1. **Preparation required:** *Print the Writing activity sheets.*
2. *Introduce this as an activity for the teacher to get to know students' motivations.*
 - a. Ex: "Everyone wants to pass the class and move on during school, but I wanted to take a minute to hear from you about why you want to learn and use the things we teach you in this class. This writing exercise has been created by people who study goals of students like you and it's a great way for me to get to know you."
 - b. Explain your intentions of what will happen with their responses.
 - i. Ex: "I will keep these responses in a safe place." "I won't share the content of these responses with anyone else without your permission."
3. *Offer individual writing time - About 30 minutes to write.*
 - a. This is an individual writing exercise. Ask students to complete it privately without talking.
 - b. If it feels appropriate, have students share in small groups or with the full class what their most important motives are for learning and retaining the information in the class.
 - c. ALTERNATIVE: Assign the activity as a homework assignment.
4. *Read student responses and respond accordingly.* Consider how best to signal to students that you read their responses and heard what they had to say.

Example #1: High School Science (from Hulleman & Harackiewicz, 2009, Science)

Reflecting On Your Purpose for Learning

Now that we have reviewed the main topics and concepts from this unit, it is time to reflect on one specific topic or concept.

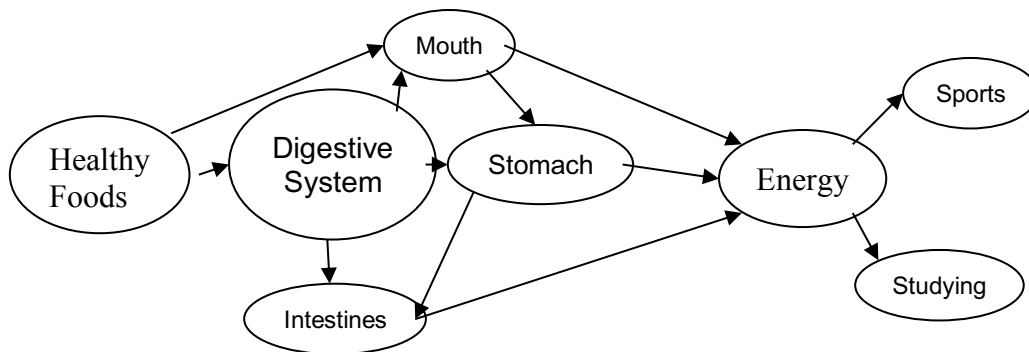
Part A: Pick one of the topics or concepts that we have covered in this unit and briefly summarize the main parts.

Part B: Apply this topic/concept to your life, or to the life of someone you know. How might the information be useful to you, or a friend/relative, in daily life? How does learning about this topic apply to your future plans?

You can either: 1) write about it in at least 5 sentences, 2) draw a concept map with a description, or 3) draw a sketch with a description. If you do a concept map or a sketch, be sure to describe it well enough so that the reader can understand it.

For example, if you were studying nutrition, you could choose a topic such as how food is digested. Briefly summarize the digestive process—how foods are broken down in the mouth, stomach, and intestines to make energy. Then you could write about how this applies to your own life. For example, eating healthy foods helps your body produce energy to play your favorite sport or study for exams.

You could also draw a concept map of how your knowledge of digestion applies to your life. An example is provided below. Remember that you would also need to add a brief written description with a concept map or diagram.



Part A:

The unit we are studying is: _____

The topic/concept I pick is: _____

My brief summary:

Part B: Apply this topic/concept to your life, or to the life of someone you know. How might the information be useful to you, or a friend/relative, in daily life? How does learning about this topic apply to your future plans?

You can either: 1) write about it in at least 5 sentences, 2) draw a concept map with a description, or 3) draw a sketch with a description. If you do a concept map or a sketch, be sure to describe it well enough so that the reader can understand it.

Example #2: *Community College Math* (Kosovich, Hulleman, Lee, & Phelps, 2018)

Thinking About Math

Have you ever wondered about how math relates to your life? Many of us – whether in middle school, high school, or college – have had these thoughts when trying to learn math. And, why not? Often, we only think that we’re “doing math” when we’re solving problems for a homework assignment or test. But, when you really think about it, though, math is everywhere.

Math in Daily Life

Math is used all the time in our daily lives. For example, do you ever check the weather forecast? It was calculated using the time of year, past weather patterns, wind speed, and many other things. Consider these other examples provided by several former math students at YOUR INSTITUTION:

"Math is useful in my life when I am working at the cash register. Many times I have mistaken a number and I gave the customer the wrong change back. This can not only be bad to the customer but it also affects me. If there is any money missing, it is taken from my paycheck. It can affect the customer by making them feel lied to and taken advantage of, this is also a disadvantage to the store because they can get bad reputation and lose customers." – **Cameron, 27, Camp Counselor**

"I recently decided that I wanted to redecorate one of the bedrooms in my home. When I started, I didn't realize just how much I would be using math. How much paint do I need to buy? What is the size of the room I am painting? Do I have enough wall space to hang this picture? When I find myself in these situations, it still surprises me just how much we use math without realizing it." –**Jaylin, 23, Writer**

"On a daily basis, anyone who owns a car or needs to make a purchase will use math. It is helpful to know how many gallons it takes to fill up a gas tank and how much money each gallon will cost. If a person needs to make a purchase, they need to know how to calculate how much they will be spending and verify if they have enough money." –**Gerry, 19, Engineering Major**

Example #3: College Biology, four-year institution (from Harackiewicz, Canning, Tibbetts, Priniski, & Hyde, 2016)

Assignment:

Select a concept or issue that was covered in lecture and formulate a question. This question should be stated explicitly in your assignment, either as the title or in the first paragraph. Select the relevant information from class notes and the textbook, and write a 500-600 word essay (double-spaced, Word ONLY [.doc or .docx], no PDFs).

Write an essay addressing this question and discuss **how the information could be useful to you in your own life**. Be sure to include some concrete information that was covered in this unit, explaining *why* this specific information is relevant to your life and useful for you. Be sure to explain *how* the information applies to you personally and give examples.