READ, WRITE, SUCCEED: Models for Advancing Student Writing

Content provided by GREAT MINDS
Poll:
What are the most important tools of excellent writers?

a) Reading rich, substantive texts
b) Understanding the topic deeply
c) Using consistent model writing structures
d) Spelling accurately and using correct grammar
Meet the Team

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Poll:
What is your current role?

a) Teacher
b) Coach
c) Administrator
d) Other
Poll:
What grade level?

a) Elementary School
b) Middle School
c) High School
d) Other
What do we know from research?

“Not surprisingly, the data clearly suggest a strong and consistent relationship between topic-specific background knowledge and the quality of student writing...[these findings] reemphasize the extent to which teaching of writing is inextricably intertwined with the exploration of the topics about which students are writing.”

Langer, Judith A. “The Effects of Available Information on Responses to School Writing Tasks.” Research in the Teaching of English
What do we know from research?

“The study of models provides adolescents with good models for each type of writing that is the focus of instruction. Students are encouraged to analyze these examples and to emulate the critical elements, patterns, and forms embodied in the models in their own writing.”

- Steve Graham and Dolores Perin, “Writing Next: Effective Strategies to Improve Writing of Adolescents in Middle and High Schools”
What makes effective and proficient writing?

1. Deep Content Knowledge
2. Clear Structure
3. Precise Use of Language
Exemplar

In 1879, after the Nez Perce tribe had lost its homeland in the Wallowa Valley and been defeated by the US Army, their chief, Chief Joseph, traveled to Washington, DC to speak about the need for the Nez Perce to get their land back and to be treated fairly by the United States government. Today, this famous speech is known as the “Lincoln Hall Speech.” In it, Joseph describes the history of the Nez Perce’s relationship with the white men who came onto their land. In reading the speech, we can see some strong values that the Nez Perce people hold as a culture. Two values that stand out are the importance of honesty and the importance of their homeland.
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First, Joseph talks about the importance of honesty in Nez Perce culture. He says that he will speak with a “straight tongue” (Part 1), which means he will tell the truth. He tells his listeners that his Nez Perce ancestors have taught them that “it is a disgrace to tell a lie” (Part 1) and that they should always “speak only the truth” (Part 1). As the speech continues, Joseph talks about the explorers Lewis and Clark. He points out that the Nez Perce promised to never make war on white men, and that they kept that promise. Joseph is clearly proud of this value of honesty. He believes it has been the right value to have, and has helped the Nez Perce live in a good way for a long time.
Besides honesty, Joseph talks in his Lincoln Hall speech about the great importance of the Nez Perce homeland to its people. Staying on their own land is a deeply held value for Joseph’s people. In Joseph’s eyes, the land that the Nez Perce live on is not just land that can be bought and sold, it is their home. He reminds the people listening to this speech how hard his father tried to keep the land. He put up poles in a circle and said that, “It circles around the graves of our fathers, and we will never give up these graves to any man” (Part II). Joseph and the Nez Perce value the land deeply. It connects them to all the people who have come before them. To leave this land, or to sell it away, is unthinkable.
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Overall, Chief Joseph’s Lincoln Hall speech is a strong reminder about the values of honesty and keeping their ancestral land that are so important to the culture of the Nez Perce. In reading speech, it seems very sad that so many of the settlers did not share these values – and that Joseph and his people lost so much.
How do we help our students get there?

1. Read rich, substantive texts
2. Set meaningful, focused writing tasks
3. Dive deep into language
4. Analyze model writing structures
Read Rich, Substantive Texts

Chief Joseph’s Lincoln Hall Speech

Chief Joseph, Nez Perce, August 1, 1885

I have labored hard to lose the reservation taken from my people. I want you to think an Indian is like a wild animal, and you can judge whether an animal was killed to feed ourselves or opened our eyes to look for the things. The white man has more words and more words to speak the truth. What I have is a straight tongue, who can lie in the river.
Read Rich, Substantive Texts

Chief Joseph’s Lincoln Hall Speech

“Good words do not last long unless they amount to something... Good words will not give my people a home where they can live in peace and take care of themselves. I am tired of talk that comes to nothing. It makes my heart sick when I remember all the good words and all the broken promises.”
Read Rich, Substantive Texts

Nimiipuu Homeland - Nez Perce Country

Long before Meriwether Lewis and William Clark ventured west; before the English established a colony at Jamestown; before Christopher Columbus stumbled upon the 'new world'; the Nez Perce who call themselves the Nimiipuu, lived in the prairies and river valleys of north central Idaho, Montana, northeastern Oregon, and southeastern Washington, an area of approximately seventeen million acres.
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In 1879, after the Nez Perce tribe had lost its homeland in the Wallowa Valley and been defeated by the US Army, their chief, Chief Joseph, traveled to Washington, DC to speak about the need for the Nez Perce to get their land back and to be treated fairly by the United States government. Today, this famous speech is known as the “Lincoln Hall Speech.” In it, Joseph describes the history of the Nez Perce’s relationship with the white men who came onto their land. In reading the speech, we can see some strong values that the Nez Perce people hold as a culture. Two values that stand out are the importance of honesty and the importance of their homeland.
Set Meaningful, Focused Writing Tasks

Your task: For an audience who has read and studied Chief Joseph’s “Lincoln Hall Speech” as you have, write an essay to explain how his speech conveys two important beliefs and values of the Nez Perce people. Develop your ideas with evidence from Chief Joseph’s “Lincoln Hall Speech.”
Dive Deep Into Language

“At last I was granted permission to come to Washington and bring my friend Yellow Bull and our interpreter with me.”

“At last I was granted permission to come to Washington. I was permitted to bring my friend Yellow Bull. I was allowed to bring our interpreter with me.”
Precise Use of Language

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Analyze Model Writing Structures

INTRODUCTION

POINT #1

THESIS

POINT #2

PROOF PARAGRAPH #1

TRANSITION

PROOF PARAGRAPH #2

CONCLUSION
In 1879, after the Nez Perce tribe had lost its homeland in the Wallowa Valley and been defeated by the US Army, their chief, Chief Joseph, traveled to Washington, DC to speak about the need for the Nez Perce to get their land back and to be treated fairly by the United States government. Today, this famous speech is known as the “Lincoln Hall Speech.” In it, Joseph describes the history of the Nez Perce’s relationship with the white men who came onto their land.

In reading the speech, we can see some strong values that the Nez Perce people hold as a culture. Two values that stand out are the importance of honesty and the importance of their homeland. Besides honesty, staying on their own land is a deeply held value for Joseph’s people. In Joseph’s eyes, the land that the Nez Perce live on is not just land that can be bought and sold, it is their home. He reminds the people listening to this speech how hard his father tried to keep the land. He put up poles in a circle and said that, “It circles around the graves of our fathers, and we will never give up these graves to any man” (Part II). Joseph and the Nez Perce value the land deeply. It connects them to all the people who have come before them. To leave this land, or to sell it away, is unthinkable.
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Besides honesty, Joseph talks in his Lincoln Hall speech about the great importance of the Nez Perce homeland to people. Staying on their own land is a deeply held value for Joseph’s people. In Joseph’s eyes, the land that the Nez Perce live on is not just land that can be bought and sold, it is their home. He reminds the people listening to this speech how hard his father tried to keep the land. He put up poles in a circle and said that, “It circles around the graves of our fathers, and we will never give up these graves to any man” (Part II). Joseph and the Nez Perce value the land deeply. It connects them to all the people who have come before them. To leave this land, or to sell it away, is unthinkable.

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How to Have a Great Heart

Do you think you have a great heart both literally and figuratively? Do you know what a figurative great heart is and a literal great heart is and how they differ? A literal great heart is a healthy muscle inside your body, and a figurative great heart is being brave, kind and loving.

A literal great heart is healthy from doing things like eating healthy food, not eating junk food, exercising often and drinking lots of water. A great heart has valves that don’t leak and let blood go the wrong way because it is bad for your body. Next, a great heart has a good sinoatrial node so it can beat faster or slower when it is needed. Also, a great heart has clean arteries by not eating junk food. When you are an adult having clean arteries is essential because they will be in risk of a heart attack.

On the other hand, a figurative great heart means being brave, kind and loving. In a book called *Love That Dog*, many characters showed a figurative great heart. In *Love That Dog*, a teacher named Ms. Stretchberry showed a great heart by not giving up on her students, and encouraging them to try harder, and like the poetry lessons. Also, in *Love That Dog*, a famous poet named Walter Dean Myers comes to their school without much planning for him to come and the poet laughed and smiled. This shows that Walter Dean Myers has a great heart figuratively.

In conclusion it is very important to have both a great heart figuratively and literally. The differences of a figurative and a literal great heart are that a literal great heart is a healthy muscle inside your body, but a figurative great heart means you are brave, kind and loving. We should all try to have a great heart all around.
• Knowledge-rich curricula
• Standards-aligned
• Comprehensive
• Written by teachers for teachers
Resources

Vermont Writing Collaborative: Painted Essay
Wit & Wisdom: greatminds.org