



Make It Fun

Invite Students To Envision A Scenario

A question like “What plants are most important to the New York State ecosystem and why?” is fine but unlikely to spark students’ excitement. Rephrasing the question to ask, “If you were stuck on an unplanted island with New York State’s climate, what four species would you bring with you to create the best ecosystem, and why?” provides a more exciting project. Although they ask for the same knowledge, envisioning a scenario lessens the barriers to writing. With a little practice, making assignments more fun can be done in any subject area.

Invite Students To See Themselves In The Prompt

Instead of “Compare and contrast the approaches of Marx and the Utopian Socialists...” ask, “If you were living in the time of the Industrial Revolution, would you follow Marx or the Utopian Socialists?” These are hardly different, but the latter allows students to see themselves as part of the question rather than as mere reporters. Personalizing prompts makes writing more fun.

Spice Up The Prompt

Writing doesn’t have to be a drag, for students to write or for you to read. List the knowledge and skills you want students to demonstrate, and then spice up prompts aiming for the same goals. The more fun students are having, the more likely they are to want to write; the more they want to write, the less writer’s block they will face.