

R.A.F.T. Writing Assignments

Effective writing assignments enable students to write fluently and purposefully for an audience. R.A.F.T. can help you identify and incorporate the elements of an effective writing assignment. The R.A.F.T. strategy engages students in explaining what they know about a topic and then elaborate.

What is it?

- **Role of the writer**
 - Helps the writer decide on point of view and voice.
- **Audience for the piece of writing**
 - Reminds the write that he must communicate ideas to someone else.
 - Helps writer determine content and style.
- **Format of the material**
 - Helps the writer organize ideas and employ the conventions of format, such as letters, interviews, and story problems.
- **Topic of writing**
 - Helps the writer focus on the main ideas.

Steps in the Process:

1. Think about the concepts or processes that you want students to learn as they read a selected passage. Consider how writing in an interesting way may enhance students' understanding of the topic.
2. Brainstorm possible roles students could assume in their writing.
3. Decide who the audience would be as well as the format for writing.
4. After students have completed the task (i.e., reading, video, discussion, etc.), identify the role, audience, format, and topic (R.A.F.T.) for the writing task. Allow for structured choice from among the various components.

Strategy Adaptations:

- Vary the audience for the product (i.e., R.A.F.T. where students choose their Audience – such as a class presentation or an outside audience such as a school club or local organization).
- Let students choose a perspective from which they work (i.e., R.A.F.T. where students choose their Role).
- Allow students to show what they know through a lens of interest (i.e., R.A.F.T. where students choose the Topic).
- Allow students to choose their product or performance (i.e., R.A.F.T. where students choose the Format, such as a note home, tweet, or cartoon with caption).

R.A.F.T. Scoring Rubric

| Criteria/Rating | 20 points | 17 points | 14 points |
|--------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Role | Role is convincingly and accurately portrayed | Role is accurate but lacks convincing details | Role lacks both accuracy and convincing details |
| Audience | Point of view of audience is addressed appropriately and convincingly | Point of view of audience is addressed but lacks supporting details | Point of view of audience is briefly addressed but not supported |
| Format | Format is correctly used | Format is alluded to but not consistently used | Format is not used correctly |
| Topic | Point of view on the topic is clear, precise, accurate and includes supporting details | Point of view on the topic is clear and accurate, but lacks precision and/or supporting details | Point of view on the topic is unclear or inaccurate |
| Neatness and Creativity | The R.A.F.T. is completed thoroughly and creatively, if written has no mechanical errors | The R.A.F.T. is completed and includes some creativity, if written has no more than two specific mechanical errors | The R.A.F.T. is incomplete or does not use creativity, if written has more than two specific mechanical errors |

Examples:

- Elementary: pages 3-5
- Secondary: pages 6-8
- Subject Area: pages 9-12

3rd Grade English/Language Arts: Charlotte's Web

- **Role:** You will assume the role of Wilbur or Charlotte.
- **Audience:** The audience is “himself” or “herself.”
- **Format:** In reading this story, we discussed the unusual friendship between a pig named Wilbur and a barn spider named Charlotte. When Wilbur was in danger of being slaughtered by the farmer, Charlotte writes messages praising Wilbur, such as “Some Pig” in her web to persuade the farmer to let him live. The format you will use is a personal journal or diary. Assume or pretend that your chosen character talked things over in his or her head, as the action of the story played out. What was he or she thinking? How did it feel? What did he or she think that the farmer should do? How can you describe these things? When you assume the role of Wilbur or Charlotte, you will be using words to describe how you feel—you will become the character.
- **Topic:** The actions taken to save Wilbur from slaughter.
- **Writing Task:** Write a response in which you assume the role of Wilbur or Charlotte. You must decide what you think he or she was thinking and feeling, and then describe it in detail. Use specific references to the text. You should have at least four or more references to the text and at least three quotations. Your response should be at least five paragraphs long.

1st Grade English/Language Arts: How to Write a “How To” Paragraph

| Role | Audience | Format | Topic |
|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Student | Friend | Friendly Letter | Explain how to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. |
| First/Second Grader | Younger Student | Labeled Sequence Pictures | Draw and label a series of pictures that show the steps in making a peanut butter sandwich. |
| Student | Student | Write a Post-it Note Response | What could happen if you did not follow the steps for making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich in order. |
| Jelly Man | Sandwich Girl | Check List | List the steps in making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. |

2nd Grade Science: Living Things / Plants

| Role | Audience | Format | Topic |
|-----------|-----------|---------------|--|
| Lady Bug | Flower | Song | Sing the song of the life cycle of a plant from seed to the blooming flower. |
| Baby Seed | Newspaper | Cartoon Strip | Draw and write your story of becoming an adult plant. |
| Student | Parent | Post Card | Draw and describe the parts of a plant and their purpose. |
| Flower | Children | Story Book | Describe how the parts of a plant are like a factory. |

2nd Grade Math: How Do People Pay for Things

| Role | Audience | Format | Topic |
|--------|------------------|-----------------|--|
| You | Lucy | Draw and Label | Draw and explain all the different combinations of coins that Lucy could have used to pay for a birthday card that costs \$1.00. |
| You | Parent | Written Request | Convince your parents to give you the coins in their pockets to pay for the birthday card for your friend. Let them know what coins you will need to pay for a card that costs \$1.00. |
| Lucy | Charlie Brown | Make a List | Make a list of the names of coins you used to buy a birthday card for \$1.00. |
| Snoopy | School Newspaper | Cartoon Strip | Draw a cartoon strip to show how Lucy might have saved \$1.00 in coins to buy Charlie Brown a birthday card. In each frame show how much money she saved. Be sure it adds up to \$1.00 by the end. |

3rd Grade English/Language Arts: Character Point of View

| Role | Audience | Format | Topic |
|---|---|---|---|
| Students choose a perspective from which they work: | Students choose an audience to address: | Students choose their product or performance: | Students choose a “lens” or topic of interest: |
| Red | Police | Deposition or plot chart | Tell what really happened. |
| Grandma | Red | 1-2-minute conversation | Save lives. Don't talk to strangers. |
| Wolf | Defense Attorney | 1-2-minute conversation | Help me! I was framed! |
| Neighbor | PTO | Warning Posters with Captions | Strangers & Red: Beware! (A Cautionary Tale) |

4th Grade Science: Astronomy

| Role | Audience | Format | Topic |
|-------------------|----------------------|----------------|--|
| Tourist | A friend or relative | Postcard | Your trip to Pluto and what you saw on the way. |
| Astronaut | NASA | Scientific log | Scientific entry on each planet you pass on your way to Pluto. |
| Advertising Agent | Tourists | Advertisement | An advertisement for an adventure in the Solar System that persuades people to become cosmic tourists. |

Secondary R.A.F.T. Examples

6th Grade Math: Types of Angles

| Role | Audience | Format | Topic |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Vertical angle | Opposite vertical angle | Poem | It's like looking in a mirror |
| Acute angle | Missing angle | Wanted Poster | Wanted: My complement |
| Any angle less than 180 degrees | Supplementary angle | Persuasive speech | Together we make a straight angle |

7th Grade Science: Invasive Species

| Role | Audience | Format | Topic |
|------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Ecosystem | Humans | 1-2-minute conversation | Explain the effects. |
| Human "Neighbor" | Nearby communities | Warning Posters with Captions | Why I am not "wanted!" (A Cautionary Tale) |
| Native Species | Invasive Species | Obituary | It's Not Fair! How I Lost My Home and My Life... |
| Invasive Species | Ecosystem | Memoir Letter | Don't Blame Me: I Can't Help Myself! |
| Invasive Species | Nonnative Species | 1-2-minute conversation | Why I am going to win... |

8th Grade Social Studies: Taxation Without Representation

| Role | Audience | Format | Topic |
|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| British newspaper reporter | English citizens | Newspaper article | Boston Tea Party |
| Eyewitness | Reporter | Interview | Boston Tea Party |
| King George | Parliament | Speech | Declaration of Independence |

9th Grade English/Language Arts: Inference Lesson on “The Pearl”

- **Role:** You will assume the role of Juana, wife of Kino in John Steinbeck’s, *The Pearl*.
- **Audience:** The audience is “herself.”
- **Format:** In reading the novel, we considered the “Song of Evil” and the “Song of the Family;” now, you are to create Juana’s “Song to Herself.” The format you will use is a personal journal or diary. Assume or pretend that Juana communicated with herself, talked things over in her head, as the action of the story played out. What was she thinking? How did it feel? What did she think her family should do? Now, how can you describe these things? When you assume the role of Juana, you will be using words to describe how you feel—you will be singing the “Song of Herself.”
- **Topic:** The time you will use is during the action of *The Pearl* and a speculation on what happened afterward—what did the family do after they threw the “pearl of the world” back into the ocean?
- **The Writing Task:** Write a response in which you assume the role of Juana, wife of Kino in John Steinbeck’s *The Pearl*. You must decide what you think she was thinking and feeling, and then describe it in detail. Use specific references to the text. You should have at least seven references to the text and at least three quotations. You must also specifically mention all four of the essential questions, which is cake because Juana is an indigenous female in a sexist and racist culture that was neither fair nor just because those in power—including her husband—used it over the powerless, a group of which she is a member. Your response should be at least two typed double-spaced pages in 12 point font.

9thth Grade English/Language Arts: Analyzing Viewpoints Lesson

| Role | Audience | Format | Topic |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| Doctor | Cancer Patient | Prescription | Health Risks to continued use of tobacco |
| Health Insurance Executive | Healthy People | Advertising Postcard | How to cut the cost of health insurance |
| Funeral Director | Tobacco Company Executive | Thank You Card | Why business is booming |
| Tobacco/Liquor Company President | Tobacco/Liquor Control Board | Fact Sheet | Why use is okay and a human right |

Writing Task: There are many views on the use of alcohol and tobacco. They range from those vehemently against it to those who believe there should be no laws regulating it. It is important to be able to see and understand viewpoints different than our own. Although understanding does not mean agreeing, seeing the other side allows us to have a deeper understanding of the complexity of these social issues. Based on the US Health Department video we watched to complete your graphic organizer showing the research findings about short and long term consequences of alcohol and tobacco use, complete two of the following R.A.F.T. assignments. Choose one from A and B, and one from C and D. You will be graded based on the rubric displayed on the front board. Please look over the rubric before you begin. This will give you a clear picture of my expectations for this activity. Your R.A.F.T. will be due tomorrow as you enter the classroom.

10th Grade Biology: Photosynthesis

| Role | Audience | Format | Topic |
|------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| The Chloroplasts | Sunlight | Love Letter | We're perfect for each other! |
| Plant | Job-seeking chloroplasts | Help Wanted Advertisement | Wanted: Sugar Producing Organelle |
| Author | Comic Book Fans | Comic Book | The Adventures of Photosynthesis |
| Plant | NO ONE- TOP SECRET | Diary Entry | It is tough being green! |

Subject Area Examples

Social Studies

| Role | Audience | Format | Topic |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|---|
| Newspaper Reporter | Readers in 1851 | News report | Native Americans sign treaty at Ft. Laramie |
| Dead Confederate Soldier | Robert E. Lee | Complaint | Pickett's Charge |
| Bird | Wright Brothers | Complaint or Advice | New invention disrupts skies |
| 21st Century Woman | Susan B. Anthony | Thank-you note | Woman's rights |
| Alexander the Great | Aristotle | Letter | What I have seen on my journeys |
| Ben Franklin | Dear Abby | Advice column | My son likes the British |
| Kaiser Wilhelm II | European Heads of State | Recipe | How we can start a World War |
| Mohandas Gandhi | Martin Luther King Jr. | Letter | Nonviolent opposition and resistance |
| Great Wall of China | Self | Diary | Invaders I have seen and stopped |
| Colorado River | Rafters | Travel guide | What you will see when you travel my length |
| Rain Forest | Humans | Complaint | Deforestation |
| Constituent | Governor | Proposition | State taxes |
| Newspaper reporter | Readers in the 1870s | Obituary | Qualities of General Custer |
| Lawyer | US Supreme Court | Appeal Speech | Dred Scott Decision |
| Talk Show Host | Television public | Talk Show | Women's rights |

Science

| Role | Audience | Format | Topic |
|------------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Water drop | Other water drops | Travel guide | Journey through the water cycle |
| Bean | Self | Diary | Process of germination |
| Frog | Tadpole | Letter | Life cycle |
| Electron | 9th grad students | Letter | Journey through a parallel circuit |
| Limestone rock | Cave visitors | Postcard | Chemical weathering process |
| Statue | Dear Abby readers | Advice column | Effects of acid rain |
| Trout | Farmers | Petition | Effects of fertilizer runoff |
| Duck | Senator | Letter | Effects of oil spills |
| Star | Self | Diary | Life cycle |
| Peregrine falcon | Public | News column | Effects of DDT |
| Red blood cell | Lungs | Thank-you note | Journey through circulatory system |
| Liver | Alcohol | Complaint | Effects of drinking |
| Lungs | Brain | Thank-you note | Quitting smoking |
| Rusty old car | Previous owner | Letter | Chemical |
| News writer | Public | Press release | Ozone layer has formed |
| Oreo | Other Oreos | Travel guide | Journey through the digestive system |

Math

| Role | Audience | Format | Topic |
|-------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Zero | Whole numbers | Campaign speech | Importance of the #0 |
| Scale factor | Architect | Directions for a blueprint | Scale drawings |
| Percent | Student | Tip sheet | Mental ways to calculate percentages |
| Repeating decimal | Customers | Petition | Proof/check for set membership |
| Prime number | Rational numbers | Instructions | Rules for divisibility |
| Parts of a graph | TV audience | Script | How to read a graph |
| Exponent | Jury | Instructions to jury | Laws of exponents |
| One | Whole numbers | Advice column | Perfect, abundant, deficient amicable numbers |
| Variable | Equations | Letter | Role of variables |
| Container | Self | Diary | Comparing volume measurements |
| Acute triangle | Obtuse triangle | Letter | Explain the differences of triangles |
| Function | Relations | Article | Argue the importance of functions |
| Square root | Whole number | Love letter | Explain their relationship |
| Repeating decimal | Set of rational numbers | Petition | Prove that you belong to this set |

English/Language Arts

| Role | Audience | Format | Topic |
|----------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Comma | 9th Graders | Job description | Use in sentences |
| Doctor's Association | Future Parents | Web page | Need for Prenatal Nutrition |
| Shakespeare | Romeo and Juliet | Play Script | Recreate the ending of Romeo and Juliet |
| Stalin | George Orwell | Book Review | Reactions to Animal Farm |
| Scout Finch | Community of Monroeville, AL | Eulogy for Atticus Finch | Social Inequality |
| You | Best Friend | Poem | Summer Holidays (tone of amusement / purpose to entertain and inform) |
| Semicolon | Classmates | Diary Entry | I Wish You Really Understood Where I Belong |
| Dictionary | Younger Students | Love Letter | Why you need me |
| Cartoonist | Newspaper Readers | Comic Strip with Captions | The definition of onomatopoeia or alliteration |