

LESSON ON GENERATING IDEAS FOR PERSONAL NARRATIVE WRITING

Learning goal:

At the end of this lesson we will...

- understand how authors generate ideas for personal narrative writing.
- be able to generate ideas for our own personal narrative writing.

Materials:

- Learning goal posted
- Blank chart with *Backyard Stories* as the heading
- Smart Board or projection screen for viewing the Travel4life website
- Writer's Notebooks or other writing paper
- Pencils

Lesson sequence:

1. Present and discuss the learning goal. Tell students that today we will learn how an author came up with an idea for writing many different stories. We will use this strategy to think of many ideas for our own stories as well.
2. Give some background information on Dean Jacobs and his travels around the world. Explain to students how Dean wrote several articles for the local newspaper about his walks through the nine towns of his home county of Dodge, Nebraska.
3. Show a map of Nebraska that includes where Dodge County is located. (Wikipedia has a nice map of Nebraska with Dodge County highlighted.)
4. Demonstrate how to get on the travel4life.org website. Then show the *Newspaper Column* section and tell students that in this section Dean has written an article about how he got the idea for ten more stories.
5. Show how to get to the article entitled: My New Journey is to Explore my Own Backyard, Dodge County. Read part or all of the article to the students.
6. Show some pictures from various articles in the "A Walk Across Dodge County" series and talk about the idea for writing that the picture suggests. For example:
 - Hooper: Two men laughing
 - Snyder: Children running
 - Fremont: Walking Dog
7. Go to the blog section of the website and show students the *Exploring Your Own Backyard* posting on Sept. 9, 2008. Read Dean's words and tell how these photos show even more ideas for "small moments" they could write about. (If time, show how to write a comment back to Dean Jacobs on the blog.)

8. Tell students that a strategy for Generating Ideas for Personal Narrative Writing is to think of a special place in their lives and write short stories about things they did in that place.
9. Put up a chart with “Backyard Stories” written on it. Model how to add a personal idea to the chart. For example:
 - When I jumped off the fence and went straight through the picnic table.
 - When I caught a crawdad.
10. Have students turn to a partner and share a backyard story they could write about.
11. For writing time, have students create a list of *Backyard Stories* they could write about.