

Teach Journaling Skills

with

Amelia

Welcome Amelia into your classroom or library and watch your students get excited about writing! Created by author Marissa Moss, Amelia is an imaginative ten-year-old who records the ups and downs of her life in her notebooks. Her witty words and quirky drawings will inspire your students to write about and draw their thoughts and feelings in their own journals.



Journal keeping is a remarkably valuable activity for children. It hones language skills and allows opportunities for nonverbal expression. The journal format frees reluctant writers to express themselves without the fear of criticism, without the need to analyze and edit. A journal provides

practice for formal writing assignments in which we do expect organization, revision, and final copies. Using words and pictures to express ideas suits students

with nonverbal learning styles and expands the breadth of experience for verbal learners. Regular guided journaling gives practice in problem solving as students examine issues in depth and have time to explore a variety of solutions. And a glimpse into another's diary or journal shows students that everyone experiences doubt, joy, disappointment, fear, and pleasure.

Look inside for lessons to get your students off to a solid start, as well as for journal prompts to maintain the momentum. Let Amelia lead the way! Also included are ideas on how Amelia can inspire learning in other curricular areas, and a fun reproducible created by Marissa Moss to help kids kick off their own journals.

Amelia® Titles

Written and illustrated by Marissa Moss

- *Amelia's Notebook*
- *Amelia Writes Again*
- *Amelia Hits the Road*
- *My Notebook (with help from Amelia)*
- *Amelia Takes Command*
- *Dr. Amelia's Boredom Survival Guide*
- *The All-New Amelia*
- *Luv, Amelia Luv, Nadia*
- *Amelia's Family Ties*
- *Amelia Lends a Hand*
- *Oh Boy, Amelia*
- *Amelia Works It Out*
- *Amelia's Easy-as-Pie Drawing Guide*
- *Madame Amelia Tells All*
- *Amelia's School Survival Guide*
- *Amelia's Best Year Ever*

Plus:

- Amelia's Stationery Set

This Guide Includes:

- Two-week unit planning chart
- Guidelines for using journaling in the classroom
- Additional journal prompts to use after the unit
- Cross-curricular activities
- Selected related titles
- Reproducible "Write On! Tips for Your Own Terrific Notebook," written and illustrated by Marissa Moss



Unit Planning Chart

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
<p>Objective: Define the role of journaling.</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Amelia's Notebook</i>. • Discussion questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What reason did Amelia's mother have for giving her a notebook? Did her mother's plan work? • Compare a journal entry with an essay or a report for school. • Share other examples of personal or published journals. • Ask students about their experiences with journaling. Elicit the types of journals or diaries available for recording one's thoughts. • Assign a self-portrait on drawing paper. Encourage the use of symbols and abstract designs as well as purely physical representation. Students should label significant features. <p>Journal Gem: The famous diary that Anne Frank kept while in hiding during WWII was a blank book that had lined pages. It was covered in red-and-white-checked fabric.</p>	<p>Objective: Define the process of journaling.</p> <p>Preparation: Photocopy and distribute "Write On! Tips for Your Own Terrific Notebook."</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the pamphlet with the class. For each suggestion, recall examples from <i>Amelia's Notebook</i>. • Distribute journals and assign a choice from the journal prompts below for the first entry. • Encourage students to personalize their journal covers with stickers. <p>Journal Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write about what's most important to you right now. • Introduce yourself—your likes, dislikes, family, and friends. Use words to create a self-portrait. • Write a story. <p>Journal Gem: <i>Journal</i> is a French word that means "daily." <i>Diary</i> is a derivative of the Latin word <i>diarium</i>, which means "daily allowance."</p>	<p>Objective: Write short stories in groups.</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Amelia Writes Again</i>. • Create an oral group story. Here are possible story starters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There once was a teacher named [your name] who had a terrible secret. . . The class won a field trip to anywhere they wanted to go. . . • Write joint-author stories in notebooks. Students write the first sentence in their own journal. Journals are exchanged as partners add new sentences. <p>Journal Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you feel when someone else wrote in your notebook? • What do you like about the story? • What would you change if you were writing as sole author? <p>Journal Gem: E.B.White, author of <i>Charlotte's Web</i>, kept journals as a child. He never published them or let anyone read them. But when he was writing <i>The Trumpet of the Swan</i>, he referred back to a journal he kept when he was 11 years old to get ideas about how Sam would behave.</p>	<p>Objective: Examine issues of privacy in journal keeping.</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recall the concerns Amelia had about privacy in <i>Amelia Writes Again</i>. • Discussion questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why does Amelia have misgivings about sharing her journal with Leah? Why might you want to keep your journal private? How can you ensure privacy? <p>Journal Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a letter about something that has upset you. Get it all off your chest. • What would you put into wet cement as a symbol of yourself? What would it signify? Are there things that better symbolize you but would be too personal to display? <p>Journal Gem: Beatrix Potter, author of <i>The Adventures of Peter Rabbit</i>, wrote diaries in code. After her death, relatives failed to decode them and asked a friend to help. It took him more than a year to crack her code.</p>	<p>Objective: Describe an imaginary trip.</p> <p>Preparation: Put up a map showing the western United States.</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Amelia Hits the Road</i>. • Use the map to trace the route Amelia took. • Discussion questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why would Amelia keep a separate journal for a trip? How else do people share information about a trip? <p>Journal Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pick an imaginary destination for a vacation. Tell about what you'll pack, how you'll get there, what you'll see, where you'll eat, and where you'll stay. Why did you pick this destination? Who would you like to take along on this trip? What would be a perfect souvenir? • Design a postcard, front and back, that you would send back home. <p>Journal Gem: President Theodore Roosevelt kept a travel journal every day for 377 days while on a family trip to Europe when he was ten years old.</p>

General Guidelines for Using Journaling in the Classroom

Make journaling a regular component of your lesson plan. Once you've established a foundation with Amelia, set aside a 15- to 20-minute period daily or three times a week for students to write in their journals. Consider these guidelines:

- Utilize a quiet gathering time to prepare for journaling.
- After discussion, give opportunities for individuals to ask questions and share their ideas. Clarify the tasks, then provide a quiet time for journaling without distractions.
- Allow time to share the result of the exercise. Sharing might be between partners, among small groups, between

students and the teacher, or with the group at large. Keep it voluntary.

- Journals are not graded, or even read if the author desires privacy. However, students should be held accountable for using the journal time productively. Use observation and self-evaluation of the role of journaling for assessment.
- Consider the journal format for an alternative assessment tool in other units of study. It allows students to reflect on and personally respond to what they are learning in a way that is less threatening than essays or papers. In a separate subject notebook, have students respond to prompts that tap into their level of understanding.

Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
<p>Objective: Apply conflict resolution techniques.</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Amelia Takes Command</i>. • Discussion questions: Why do you think Amelia is chosen as commander? Why is Amelia able to respond to Hilary's taunts after her trip to Space Camp? Is Amelia able to defend herself without attacking Hilary? <p>Journal Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how Amelia feels when she is teased by Hilary. Have you ever felt this way? • Recall an argument you've had. Write some of it as a dialogue. Then rewrite it in a way in which no one attacks the other person, but each person's points are made. • Which role would you have wanted in the shuttle mission at Space Camp? Why? <p>Journal Gem: Sally Ride, the first female astronaut, wrote a book, <i>To Space and Back</i>, about her first shuttle mission. She included the kinds of details Amelia might have written about.</p>	<p>Objective: Visualize personal goals.</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss Amelia's desire to attend Space Camp. Why did she want to go? • Ask students to close their eyes and think about responses to the following questions: What job do you imagine doing when you are an adult? What will your home and lifestyle be like? How can you make the world a better place to live? • Ask students to pick one really important experience they would like to have and visualize everything about planning it, achieving it, and reflecting upon it afterward. <p>Journal Prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write an entry as if you already had the experience you imagined in our visualization. Give lots of details and tell how you feel. <p>Journal Gem: Frances Parkinson Keyes, author of <i>Dinner at Antoine's</i>, wrote 51 books in her lifetime—all of them in black and white notebooks, just like the ones Amelia uses.</p>	<p>Objective: Make resolutions.</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>The All-New Amelia</i>. • Discussion questions: How does Amelia try to become "all new"? How do these changes make her feel? • Try out the "looks" and accents described in this book. <p>Journal Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try out some new signatures. • Resolutions can be more productive than Amelia's attempts to change. List three things you could try that might help you become the person you want to be. • List three wishes. However outrageous they may be, they might come true! <p>Journal Gem: Benjamin Franklin made a list of resolutions in a journal when he was 20 years old. Many years later, he said the resolutions had helped him achieve his goals: being frugal, truthful, and industrious, and saying only good things about other people.</p>	<p>Objective: Use illustration to re-create a memory.</p> <p>Preparation: Make art supplies available.</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to close their eyes and imagine themselves in a place that makes them feel good. • Help them visualize returning to that place, with prompts to recall sights, sounds, smells, and feelings associated with each image. <p>Journal Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw a picture of yourself in this special place. Include all the details that make it so extraordinary. • Write a few sentences about what you imagine doing in the place you drew. <p>Journal Gem: Many diarists name their journals and address their entries to that name. Anne Frank called her diary "Kitty." Zlata Filipovic told her story of life in Sarajevo to "Mimmy."</p>	<p>Objective: Explore literary relationships.</p> <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Luv, Amelia Luv, Nadia</i>. • Compare and contrast Nadia's feelings about caring for her father with Amelia's longing to know her father. • Chart letter closings. Examples from earlier books are "Yours till the banana splits" and "Yours till Saturn rings." Explain how the final word, normally a noun, acts as a verb to create the joke. Encourage students to add to the chart. <p>Journal Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw or write how you think Amelia's father will respond to her comic strip. • Nadia and Amelia have related Halloween costumes every year—devil/angel, Bo-Peep/sheep, crayon/notebook. Describe or sketch some other pairs of costumes. <p>Journal Gem: Cartoonist Lynn Johnston draws on the daily events of her life with family and friends to inspire her syndicated comic strip "For Better or for Worse."</p>

Additional Journal Prompts

- Write a name poem. Put each letter of your name at the beginning of a line in your journal. Now write a line about yourself that begins with that letter.
Example: Always writing,
Mostly happy,
Ever friends with Nadia.
Lucky to be a writer,
I'm a ten-year-old
Author, Amelia!
- Make a name cartoon. Draw your name in large letters, then turn the letters into other objects that represent you.
- Be a family historian. Retell a family story you have heard. It might be the history of a relative coming to the U.S. or a

funny incident about growing up. Describe it as you might tell it to your children someday.

- Use your senses to create a journal entry. Close your eyes to imagine scents, sounds, tastes, and textures. Try to come up with at least five sensations you love and five you hate.
- Write yourself a letter of congratulations. You are the best judge of your successes. Think of something you have done well recently. Describe in your letter all the positive results of your action.
- Spend ten minutes sitting quietly outside observing nature. Then write a journal entry describing that time.
- If you were an inanimate object, what would you be? Draw yourself and describe the life of this object.