

Quickwriting

What is Quickwriting and why is it important?

Quickwriting (Elbow, 1973) is a brainstorming strategy that can be used before and after reading. It prompts students to recall any and all information they know about a topic. The strategy is useful in helping students connect their ideas with new information from a text.

How can I use Quickwriting with my students?

Ask students to think about a selected topic and write everything they know about it, without regard to spelling and grammar rules. You can guide students by discussing a few selected vocabulary words related to the topic. After reading, students can review their Quickwriting to see how much they have learned.

If you use vocabulary words, you may include the Knowledge Rating Scale (Blackowicz, 1986) where students rate their understanding of the selected words on a scale ranging from “Have No Idea” to “Can Use in a Sentence.”

The following is an example of Quickwriting with a Knowledge Rating Scale for the topic, the body.

| Quickwriting | Knowledge Rating Scale | | | | |
|--|------------------------|--------------|-----------|------------|-----------------------|
| Write what you know about the following words: | Words | Have No Idea | Have Seen | Can Define | Can Use in a Sentence |
| <p>Student response:</p> <p>Muscles help us move our bodies. You can pull a muscle.</p> <p>Bones are in our body. They can break.</p> <p>We breathe oxygen to live.</p> | Cells | ✓ | | | |
| | Muscles | | ✓ | | |
| | Nerves | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Bones | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Oxygen | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Arteries | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

