

National Day on Writing



Saturday, October 20, 2018

Eastern Michigan Office of Campus and Community Writing
Eastern Michigan Writing Project



October 20 is fast approaching! And why is that day so special to all of us who value writing? It's the National Day on Writing. And it's time to start thinking about how you will celebrate!

For those of you who are new to the National Day on Writing, here's some background: NDoW was originally created by the National Council of Teachers of English and supported by the US Senate. It's designed to bring together people all over the country to celebrate and promote writers and writing.

Want to join us in the celebration? In the weeks leading up to October 20, try out any of the ideas listed below, or devise your own plan. Then share how you celebrated with our writing community by following the instructions below.

It's easy to do:

1. Take a picture of what you've created or showing writers at work.
2. Add a caption that lets others know what you did and how you did it.
"For the National Day on Writing, we at [enter your school's or organization's name here] celebrated by [enter your activity here]."
3. Email your picture and caption to Mona Beydoun, mbeydoul@emich.edu, so we can add it to our website.
4. Post your pictures on social media using #EMUNDoW18

NDoW Celebration Ideas for K-12 Schools

Ideas that help students think about their identities as writers:

- Write **6-word literacy memoirs** about who they are as writers: why they write, what they write, how they write.
- Create a **literacy life map** that visually shows examples of their writing throughout their lives -- in and out of school.
- Compose an **author blurb** about themselves as writers: look at an assortment of published blurbs and have them write their own (with examples of writing they've done throughout their years in and out of school).
- Keep a **diary** of everything they write over a 24 hour period.

Ideas that help students recognize and learn about other writers:

- **Interview** someone (parent, other family member, teacher, staff member, community friend) about their writing practices. (What do they write? How do they write? Why do they write?)
- Take a **field trip** through the school and jot down all the examples of writing they see.
- **Interview teachers** of multiple subject areas to see what counts as writing in their field of study.

Ideas that help promote your school as a center of writing:

- **Publish student writing** on the walls of the school.
- Publish student writing by **chalking poems** on the sidewalk.
- Create a **Writers of xxx School** on your school web page, profiling a different writer each week (student, staff, faculty, administrator).
- Offer **weekly tips** for how parents can support student writers and writing on home communications.
- Organize a **school or family writing event**.

Ideas that promote writing in your community:

- **Share student writing** in the community: ask store owners to display student writing in their windows.
- Place student published literary magazines in **public places**: libraries, doctors' offices, gyms.
- Organize a **writing night** at a local library.
- Organize a **poetry slam** at a local coffee shop or library, inviting parents, students, and community members.

NDoW Celebration Ideas for Universities

- Contribute to **“Writers of EMU”** site by contributing a picture of yourself in your “natural writing habitat” and writing a one-paragraph description of what, why, or how you write.
- Try a **“genre switch”** writing experience in your class: turn a lab report into a poem; rewrite a research paper as a blog post; restructure a reflective response as a series of tweets.
- Try an **“audience switch”** writing experience in your class: have students try writing about their research project (1) to their best friend who is not in the class; (2) to a family member; or (3) to a potential grantor.
- Have students **interview another professor** in your discipline, discovering what, how, and why they write.
- Ask students to bring in **writings from different classes**. What do they notice is the same across disciplines? What is different?
- Create a **“What We Write” display** for professors in your department with samples of faculty and student writing of different types.
- Create a **“How We Write” display** for professors in your department with drafts and revisions highlighted.

NDoW Celebration Ideas for Community Groups

Ideas that use writing to capture the essence of your community:

- Ask members of your community to **interview elders and write up profiles** of these important community members.
- **Invite community writers to write up stories** they remember about their communities.

Ideas that promote writing in your community:

- Organize a **community writing event** in which community members respond to a writing prompt, write, and then share their writing with each other.
- Organize a group in which **members of the community who are expert** at certain kinds of writing (blogs, power points, news articles) share how they write.
- Organize a **community mentoring program** in which experienced writers mentor novice writers.
- Organize a **poetry slam** in which poets share their writing.

NDoW Celebration Ideas for Libraries

- **Promote National Day on Writing** with brochures, flyers, and events.
- Create a **display with books about writing and writers**.
- Expand that **display with samples of literary magazines** written by area students.
- Expand that display even more with a **bulletin board** where people can write on sticky notes and post a response to: what I write, why I write, how I write.
- Organize an **evening of writing**: a poetry slam, a writing support group, a talk by a writer.