



Literacy Activity: Diary writing

This activity is ideal for Key Stage 2 (age 7 - 11 years) but can be used by any age.

You will need: a blank book or paper, pens or pencils

Learning Objectives:

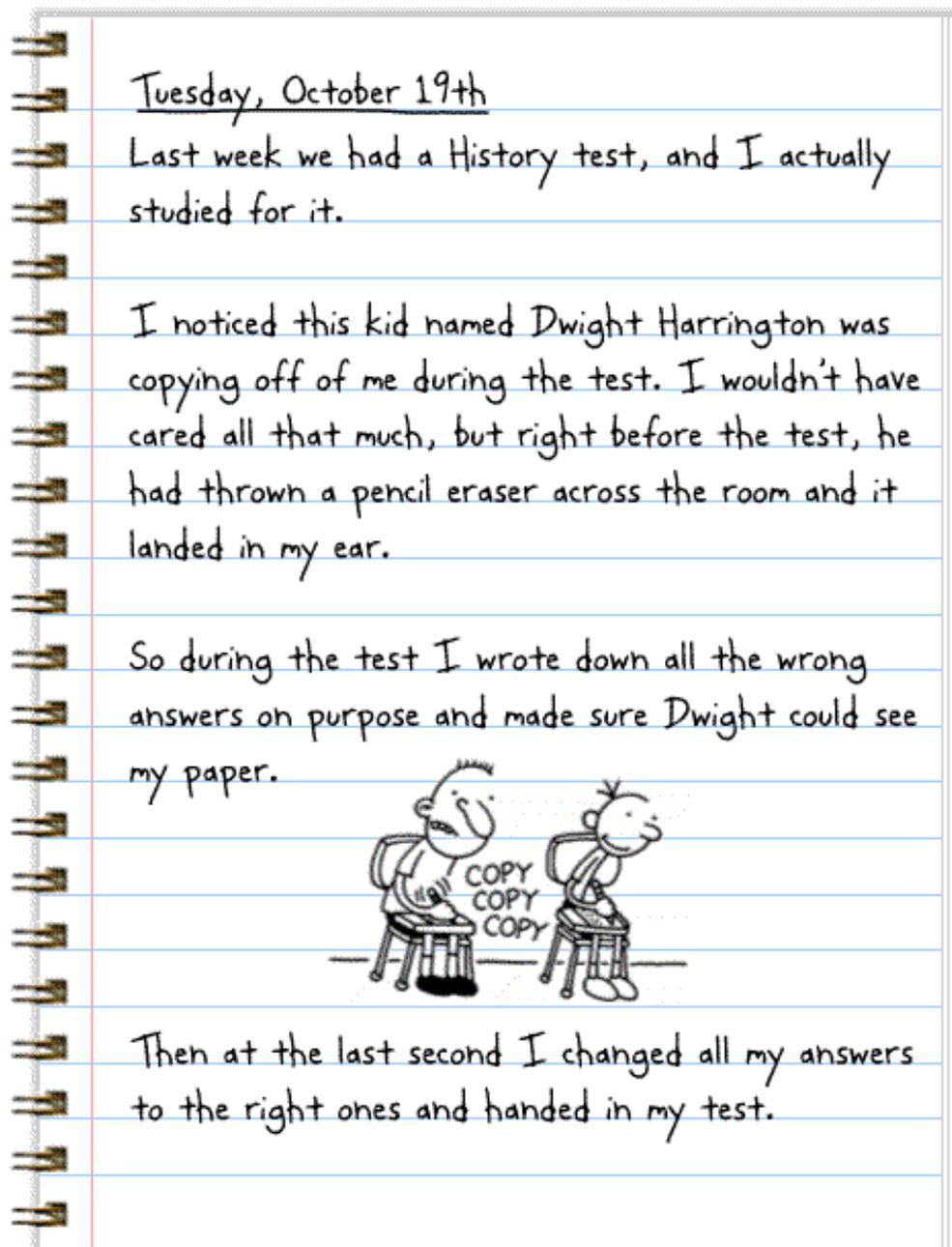
- Improve writing skills
- Develop an understanding of a diary entry
- Develop the imaginative skills and techniques required for writing a diary

Questions

Begin with asking children some questions about diaries, let them answer the questions if they can. Give them hints, or answers, if needed:

- **What is a diary?**
A diary is a where an individual keeps a record of their events, feelings and experiences
- **Why do people write diaries?**
To tell the story of what is happening in their lives, so they can remember what happened, to share their feelings
- **Can you think of any famous diaries?**
Diary of a Wimpy Kid is a fictional book series that journals the life of school boy Gregg Heffley, written by Jeff Kinney.
The Diary of Samuel Pepys (pronounced Peeps) was written in the 1660s. As well as recording public and historical events, Pepys paints a vivid picture of his personal life.
The Diary of a Young Girl by Anne Frank is one of the most famous diary ever written, Anne's diary is an inspiring and tragic account of her family's flight during the Second World War.

Example of a diary entry, from *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*



Activity

Real life diaries are historical records that show us what life was like at a certain point in history. Ask the child / pupils to create their own real life diary which tells the story of what their life is like now.

A diary can be one entry or multiple entries. Each diary entry should include the following elements:

- **Name, age and school** – shows who has written the diary
- **Date** – shows when the diary was written
- **First person** – write about yourself. A diary tells the story of an episode in the writer's life
- **Past tense** – write about what has already happened (although you can include sections about what their plans are for the future).
- **Self-reflection** - write about your feelings, thoughts, hopes and fears
- **Rhetorical question** – the writer can ask questions about what is happening
- **Different punctuation marks** – used to emphasise the writer's words!
- **Paragraphs** – use a new paragraph when a new time, place, person or topic is written about
- **Personal pronouns** – use words such as 'I', 'my', 'we' and 'our'
- **Time conjunctions** – use words such as 'first', 'next', 'then', 'yesterday'

Children can decide what to write about and how many entries their diary will have.

Thinking time

Before they start writing, ask the child / pupils to spend some time thinking and planning how they will lay out their diary, how many days will they cover, what events they will write about, whether they will include illustrations etc.

This activity sheet has been created by St Helens Archive Service, part of St Helens Library Service. We would be very interested in collecting diaries that have been written by children in 2020 to preserve as a historic record for the future. If your school is organising a donation of diaries, please arrange to donate via the school. Alternatively, to donate your diary directly, please contact us:

St Helens Archive Service

Gamble Building, Victoria Square, St Helens, WA10 1DY

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