

Reflective Focusing Activities

Hot Pencil

Grades 3–12

Hot Pencil gives students a chance to write about a theme or question in an unedited way. In Hot Pencil, students write without stopping for 1 to 3 minutes on a particular question or theme. They are not to worry about what they write, as this writing is only for themselves. The point is to see what emerges when we write about a theme in an unedited way, letting go of our inner judge and editor.

Quote and Reflection

Grades 2–12

Write a quote on the board, and ask students to write about the quote for 3 to 5 minutes at the beginning of class. Then ask a few people to share a short excerpt from their writing or something they realized in the process of writing about the quote. This quote could relate to the content you are teaching.

Silence or Mindful Breathing

Grades K–12

Begin class with a “golden moment” or a few moments of silence in which students simply sit in silence together. Students can open or close their eyes. You may also ring a chime or bell and ask students to put their attention on the bell and notice when they can no longer hear it. Additionally, ask students to take five full-body breaths—breaths that expand their belly and ribcage.