

## Appendix 28.2. Keeping an Activity Journal

Outside of school, your students are athletes, artists, hobbyists, and workers. An activity journal offers students an opportunity to think and write about their lives beyond your classroom walls. You might augment your students' daily journal writing with activity journal prompts, or have your students keep an individual activity journal over a set period of time. The following steps outline one way to introduce activity journals to your students:

*Activity 1: Quickwrites*—Ask your students to identify a favorite out-of-school activity (e.g., athletics, arts, hobbies, or jobs). Perhaps a student lives to play lacrosse or sketch caricatures; another student loves gaming or working at the local zoo. Have your students compose a five-minute *quickwrite* describing anything that comes to mind about their sport or activity (e.g., favorite moments, challenges, how they started).

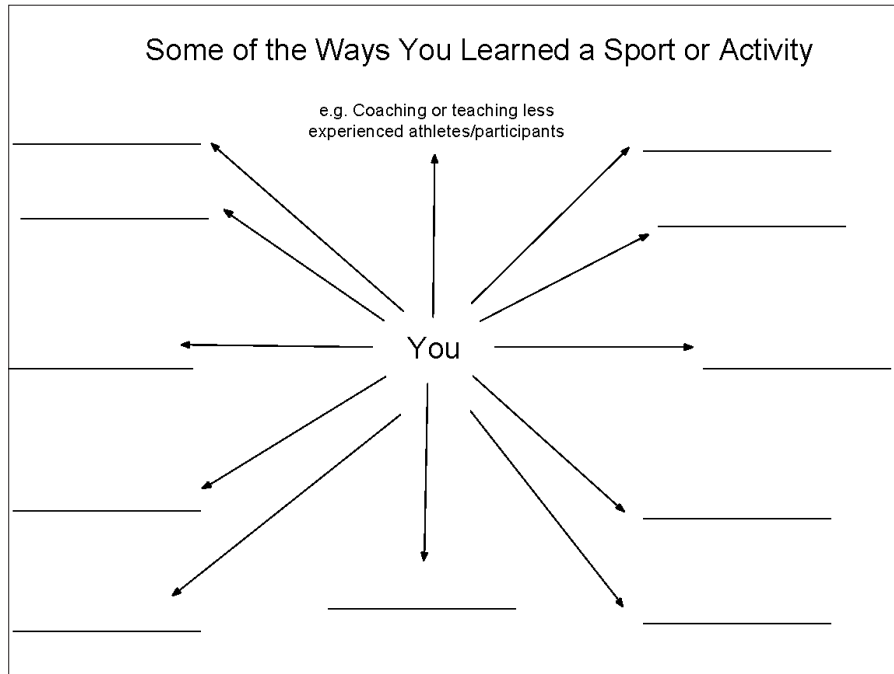
*Activity 2: Reading in the Round*—After the quickwrite, ask your students—now self-identified as athletes, artists, hobbyists, or employees—to select one line from their piece to share with the class for a “reading in the round.” Students will not comment on or explain the line they share. The entries might resemble these:

“I love to get my paycheck on Fridays and know that I can do whatever I want with the money.” (Activity: job)

“When I dance, any struggles I may be facing in school, with my little sister, or at work just seem to melt away.” (Activity: dance)

As a class, discuss the themes and sentiments that emerged from the reading.

*Activity 3: Make a Chart*—Ask your students to think about the ways they learned their sport or activity. Have them fill out Figure 1 with the ways they learned how to play lacrosse (athletics), sketch a person's profile (art), play a computer game (hobby), or care for penguins at the local zoo (job). Those ways of learning might include listening to a coach or boss, taking art lessons, or reading about penguins. In a whole-class discussion, ask your students to share some of the ways they learned their activity. Write them on the whiteboard.



**Figure 1.** Ways You Learn a Sport or Activity

*Activity 4: Develop Activity Journal Prompts*—Lead your class in creating a series of prompts for their activity journals. Sample prompts include the following:

- Create a timeline of your activity. Identify milestones, events, and important people (e.g., coach, boss, teacher) in your activity.
- List five attributes of an effective coach, boss, or teacher. Write about one.
- Write about a favorite teammate, training partner, or coworker.
- In your activity, who brings out the best in you and why?
- It's said that we are who we spend the most time with. Who are the five people—athletes, artists, coworkers, or others—you spend the most time with? In what ways do these people affect who you are as a person both in and out of your activity?

You might ask students focusing on different activity areas (e.g., athletics, arts, hobbies, or jobs) to form groups and come up with additional prompts. Refer to [WritingAthletes.com](http://WritingAthletes.com) for more journal prompt ideas in sports that might be adapted for other activities.

## Resources

Graves, D., & Kittle, P. (2005). *Inside writing: How to teach the details of craft*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Writing Athletes Resource Webpage: [www.WritingAthletes.com](http://www.WritingAthletes.com).

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