

## Skill 12: Write Well

### Students will be able to (SWBAT):

1. Define the skill **Write Well** and identify why the skill is important.
2. Develop a plan to improve their own proficiency in the skill **Write Well**.

### Provided Materials:

- Skill 12: **Write Well** – Sample College Essay 1
- Skill 12: **Write Well** – Sample College Essay 2
- Skill 12: **Write Well** – Development Plan

**Skill Definition:** **Write Well** means effectively communicating, using text, in order to convey one's ideas, knowledge, and opinions.

**Warm Up Brainstorm (5-10 minutes):** Make one list with your students of people who have to write well in their careers, which can include almost anyone. Then make a second list with your students to identify possible occasions when they will actually have to write well. The list can include (but is not limited to): college essay, school paper, resume or cover letter, business proposal, instructions or directions for someone else to follow, request for a raise, complaint to a politician, etc. After the two lists are complete, write the provided skill definition on the board for students to copy along with both lists. When students look at both lists and the skill definition, you should emphasize that this is a very important skill regardless of what kind of job you have.

**Guided Activity (20-25 minutes):** Distribute the **Skill 12: Write Well – Sample College Essay 1 and 2** handouts. Explain that soon they will have to write college essays and writing them well can make a very big difference in determining whether they are accepted or not. One of the sample essays is “good” and uses proper writing techniques, where the other does not. Ask the students to read each essay and decide which sample was written better. When students are finished reading the essays, ask them to arrange themselves into pairs where they should discuss which applicant would be admitted. Ask each pair to report which student they chose and why to the entire class. The class should realize that the student who wrote the stronger essay is also the student most likely to be admitted to the college.

**Independent Practice (5-10 minutes):** Students complete the **Skill 12: Write Well – Development Plan**.

**Evaluation:** Assess the quality of the plans completed by the students and provide feedback using Part Three of this manual; compare to the responses they gave for Skill 12 in their initial **Student Skills Assessment**.

### Extension Activity:

- Ideally, you are providing your students with many opportunities to write well and receive feedback from you in their coursework.

## Skill 12: *Write Well* – Sample College Essay 1

By Sanju Poudel

In summer 2003, my aunt suggested I deliver babies. That was what volunteering at her small town hospital in Bharatpur, Nepal meant to me anyway. The more she insisted, the more frustrated I became, fearing what I felt would be another one of my parents' ways for me to build character. My aunt, on the other hand, was determined to show me otherwise and literally dragged me to her work on a rickshaw. Throughout the ride, I did not hold back my aggravation. After all, what did I know about small time hospitals?

Nevertheless, I had certain expectations of the well-known hospital before entering. I pictured succeeding red-bricked buildings with tidy carpeted rooms and people arriving in cars for minor checkups. I imagined how in each room a doctor with a white lab coat and a stethoscope around his/her neck would be consulting individual patients.

However, the very moment the rickshaw slid through the gate, my naïve conceptions dissolved into disease, disorder, and destitution: the truth of what was in front of me. Hesitating to get out of the rickshaw and stepping into a foreign world that was threatening to suppress my innocence, I closed my eyes. I closed my eyes to the make-shift wooden stretchers carrying frail men and women stomaching their inevitable deaths; I closed my eyes to a young girl with a tattered school uniform and undone ribbons leading a blind woman by the hand; I closed my eyes to the sorry, languishing environment of which I did not want to be a part.

My astonishment peaked when entering the maternity ward. In what I considered a room fit for two patients, there were fifteen women sprawled in rusting, metal-framed beds with sheets on the floor. In the little gaps about the room were green plastic pans where the women would uncomfortably station themselves to urinate and vomit in. I immediately imagined all of these women in nice comfortable beds in their own separate rooms, which was the way my mom had given birth to my younger brother in New York.

The longer I stayed in the hospital, the more I wanted to help these people. Although the hospital had initially been a place I was reluctant to even see, I ended up visiting everyday that week even if merely to speak to the patients. It was because of this day that I finally understood why my aunt continues to refuse better paying jobs abroad. Her strong conviction of returning to her native land and using her education to help her own people has filtered into me. Before this event, I had always planned on living in New York and indulging in its luxuries. Now, however, the prospect of going back to my home country and living among a community to whom I can lend a hand is much more appealing. At the end of the day, I was very thankful that my aunt had pushed me into an experience I now consider to be a crossroads in my life.

## Skill 12: Write Well – Sample College Essay 2

By Emily Allen

I have always wanted to play professional hockey. It's a big dream of mine and I am really good at hockey already. I think that going to college can help me get to a place where I can play professional hockey because I can go to the gym a lot. As a college student, you have a lot more freedom and with that freedom I will be able to work out more and get on the ice more so that I can get better than I already am. I know that college is going to be really hard but I think that if I set my mind to doing well with my work and stuff that I will be able to be successful during college.

Every kid has a dream to do something big in their life and going to college and playing hockey is mine. I even want to go to the Olympics one day. That's how big my dream is. There are so many opportunities for me to do well in college and I can't wait to take advantage and make my dream come true so that I can be successful and make my parents proud.

Some people think that I am crazy for having my life's ambition to play hockey. I don't think people give me enough credit for the effort I put into it and the drive that I have behind me. My dad told me that my first word was hockey and that ever since then I have done everything in my day to day life directed at the dream of one day making it big on the ice. Dreaming big is something that I consider to be a very strong character trait of a person. If you can't dream big, then you can't do big things. I don't think that life is worth living unless you're willing to make the most of it. College is a chance where everyone is allowed to make it big by fulfilling their dreams. I can't wait to have the opportunity to do that.

One important memory I have about hockey was the game where I scored the overtime goal against our rivalry team. It was a really good game and it was scoreless until the third period and then each team scored a goal. So with a tie of 1-1 at the end of the period we went into overtime and we were all really tired and just wanted to win against Barrington because we knew that we could and with fourteen seconds left in overtime I scored and everyone in the rink went crazy! Everyone jumped on me and then my team and I went out to dinner and everyone was so happy but especially me.

It was that night that I realized that I could really do big things. If I just set my mind to scoring, I was going to score. My thoughts are the same thing for college. If something in college happens that I really want, like to make the team, then I will definitely get it. I think that I would be a strong asset to your school because I am good at staying focused and making things happen for myself. This is an important quality to have because you can motivate other students at your school to do the same thing. I can inspire people I come into contact with with my dreams just as I was inspired by other athletes and people with big dreams.

## Skill 12: Write Well – Development Plan

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Give yourself a rating of 1, 2, 3, or 4 in this skill, with 1 indicating poor proficiency and 4 indicating excellence in the skill. Provide evidence for your rating.

Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

Evidence:

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Where do you want to be in six months and how will you measure your progress?

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List academic and non-academic activities to help you achieve your goal in six months, using the back of this page if necessary. Each activity should be a specific academic experience, class, community service project, extra-curricular activity, internship or job. List them in order from the most important to the least important.

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