## An Italian Menu of Writing Ideas

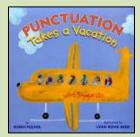
**Restaurant attendees**: Remember, using this two-page menu is completely optional and should be consulted only if you are stuck coming up with your own topics for future writing assignments. It's preferable if you come to class with your own ideas to write about in your notebooks, but if that's difficult for you, here is a menu of interesting choices.

"A special notebook sticker?" you ask. If you are interested in earning a special writer's notebook sticker, you need to create a "meal" from this menu that includes: 1 appetizer, 1 soup, 1 entrée, and 1 dessert. There is also an optional "salad" course, which your teacher may or may not use this month.

Appetizer Choices: (Select one of these writing trait-inspired activities to record in your notebook.)
Good Lead Bruschetta: First, brainstorm three different settings where a scary or suspenseful story might take place. Then for each of your three settings, compose a one- or two-sentence introduction that would start a scary or suspenseful story in a really interesting way for your reader. Illustrate the introduction you like the best. Trait focus: IDEA DEVELOPMENT (brainstorming) and ORGANIZATION (introductions).
Synonym Calamari: First choose just one of these five basic emotions to title this entry: happiness, sadness, anger, love, or hate. From memory, brainstorm and record as many synonyms (in noun format!) for the emotion you selected as your title, then use the thesaurus or ask a friend to come up with 3-4 more synonyms. Beneath your list of synonyms, describe what someone experiencing would look like to an observer. Illustrate, if you have time. Trait focus: WORD CHOICE (using precise nouns) and IDEA DEVELOPMENT (relevant details).
Perspective Prosciutto: Think about a time you were grounded or scolded by an adult who's a relative. If you happen to be a totally perfect child at home, then you may create a fictional scenario where you were naughty. Write a 45-second speech/reprimand, using in the voice of the adult you are thinking about, that sums up what it is that you did to be scolded and makes clear how the adult felt about your behavior. Trait focus: VOICE (perspective).
[Alphabet] Soup Choices: (Select one of these word-play activities to record in your notebook.)
<u>Minestrone</u> : Create three acrostic poems for three <i>proper</i> (capitalized) <i>nouns</i> : use a person (like Einstein) you might write about someday for the first poem, a place (like Jupiter) you might write about someday for your second poem, and a product's name (like Corn Flakes) you might write about someday.
Italian Sausage Soup: In Frindle by Andrew Clements, the book's main character creates a new word for pencil ("frindle") and hopes that everyone will begin using his invented word instead of <i>pencil</i> . What classroom item would you create a new word for? What would be the word? Write a paragraph that both explains why you'd assign the object the new name you've chosen for and your strategies for helping others begin using your new word.
Traditional Wedding Soup: Create an alphabet list for one of the following two topics: things that frighten children but not adults or things that frighten adults but not children. How many letters of the alphabet can you represent with your list? 26= a perfect score, 18-25= a great score, 12-17=a good score, 11 or less=a bad score but at least you tried, right? Right?

**This Month's Creative Salad:** (With each menu, your teacher might share a unique challenge that will help you add a very creative page to your writer's notebook. This creative page—or writer's notebook "salad"—is healthy for your higher-level thinking!)

Personified Abstraction Pasta Salad: Inspired by Robin Pulver's very funny kids' book—Punctuation Takes a Vacation—students will create a writer's notebook page that personifies an abstract noun by imagining what that abstraction would do if it went on a vacation or a holiday. Click here to access this notebook suggestion on-line.



Eniov!

	s" are actually three-step pre-writing task oose an entrée that will help you become	
	der and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, '	<u>very Rotten Day</u> (by Judith Viorst), the e an original story about a student having a
really bad day on—of all days—school		our original story about a stadent naving t
<ul> <li>First, brainstorm and record 10</li> <li>Second, prioritize the list by asl laugh the most?" and circle tho item better at the beginning, the</li> </ul>	-15 different things that would make schoking, "If I had to choose just five to focus se; decide which order they should be st	on, which five would make my reader nared in your story. Would the funniest
know this is going to be a very	funny story.	
		ve read in the last year, and what could I
do to convince another person to read in review of the book that a friend might re	t (without giving away too much of the st	ory)?" Prepare to write an organized
<ul> <li>First, draw a quick picture of the</li> </ul>		er, and right next to the drawing record all e qualities the character showed in the
<ul> <li>Second, create either a "Top Fi</li> </ul>	ve Exciting Moments" or a "Top Five Re ou decide which three reasons—from eit	asons to Read This Book" list. Ask a her list—would convince them to read the
<ul> <li>Create a graphic organizer in your t</li> </ul>	introductory paragraph that would launch	ts, and 3) how you'll conclude your review
Expository Eggplant, Parmesan	Every four years, we enjoy the summe	r Olympics. It's fun to watch 'the best of
It's hard to imagine that every one of the imagine spending their time doing anyth every free moment pursuing? It could be pursuing on a regular basis. How did the Take ten minutes and write down are needed; what space is needed. Then write down things that you activity? There are so many que period to research and answere.  On a different day, organize all Create appropriate categories of Write an amazing paragraph the so that you could give it to som	be a sport, a hobby, an organized activity his activity become popular? Research to the EVERYTHING you already know about ded; who participates; the rules of the gase wished you knew—like who invented you estions—ask your own questions and the these questions.  of your ideas both those you already know put everything in chronological order. at shares several pieces of your newly-lead.	their sport so much that they couldn't activity, that if you could, you would spend of or anything else you spend time actively he activity in order to write about it! but your activity. What skills and equipment or expectations of participants, etc. our activity and why; why is this a popular ten take some time before our next class are and those you had to research to learn the earned information. Write the paragraphing about your favorite activity. Maybe this
Dessert, Choices: (Choose one dessert from the menu and create a notebook entry that also includes a funny		
<u> </u>	ed/glued next to your writing. Have fun	
Colored Gelato Rhymes!	Tiramisu Transformations!	Silly Spumoni! Think of an
Select a color (obviously not <i>orange!</i> )	Design an amazing original animal	original character for an original story
and compose a paragraph that	that is built out of the most amazing	you haven't written yet. The
contains as many words you can	characteristic of five other actual	character must have a very silly-
think of that rhyme with your color!	animals. Draw the animal and	sounding name. Write about the
Provide an illustration.	explain what it has the ability to do.	character's personality and provide a