

**Write Out Loud! Workshop**  
Grand Valley Institute for Women  
September - November 2005

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**WRITE OUT LOUD! WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION**

This workshop will consist of eight weekly sessions with one facilitator and a small group of participants, ideally four to seven participants. The group will meet for two-hour sessions.

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**PROGRAM OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY**

The objective of this workshop is to teach participants to express their thoughts and feelings in a written format. These skills will be taught through various activities, including reading, writing, reflection, discussion and journaling. Each session will be focused on one theme and one or two skills. Participants will participate in unstructured writing, structured writing. Students will also be encouraged to share their written work during the sessions. And, the instructor will be available for further assistance with writing, including help with grammar, spelling, punctuation and sentence structure.

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**PROGRAM EVALUATION**

During the early stages of the workshop, students will be required to state their desired goals in participating in the workshop. In the last session, students will be asked to revisit these goals and assess whether they have or have not met these goals, as well as the contributing factors.

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## **PROGRAM CONTENT**

### **Session One: Become Familiar With Writing**

- Identify guidelines
- Inform them of instructor's availability to assist with grammar, spelling and punctuation
- Discuss "fear of writing"
- Introduce Free-writing
- Grab Bag Activity (WOL 2, pg 70)
  - o Objective: Practice using senses; practice writing sentences; practice using adjectives and similes
  - o Students "grab" an item from a bag, write a short description of the item's qualities and answer the question, "How are you like or not like this object?"

### **Session Two: Us**

- Free-writing
- Program Evaluation: students are asked to submit statements about the goals they want to meet in this workshop. These goals will be revisited in the last session.
- Authority List Activity (WOL 2, pg 89)
  - o Objective: Learn about each other; consider personal strengths; express own strengths in words
  - o Students write a list of the things they are authorities on. Then they choose one and free-write about it for 10 minutes.
- What People Assume About Me Activity (Produced by Kimia)
  - o Objective: Convert perceptions into written words; write from someone else's perspective (third person narrative)
  - o Students write a list of what they believe other people assume about them, using third person narrative, and how these assumptions impact them.

### **Session Three: Hopes, Dreams & Frustrations**

- Free-writing
- Day By Day Activity (WOL 2, pg 59)
  - o Objective: Describe satisfying and frustrating experiences
  - o Students provide four endings to each of the following sentences: "I know I am having a bad day when..." and "I know I am having a good day when..."
- Happiness Is... Activity (WOL 1, pg 63)

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- o Objective: Describe own values, belief system and preferences
- o Students provide endings to each of the following sentences:
  - Happiness is...
  - Loneliness is...
  - Fear is...
  - Change is...
  - Love is...
  - Hope is...
  - Frustration is...
- The Magic Wand Activity (WOL 2, pg 100)
  - o Objective: Consider their dreams and aspiration; think outside of the usual mental framework of “reality”; transfer ideas and hopes into written words; use conditional language and sentence format (If..., then...)
  - o Students write about what they would change in their lives if they were granted all the power/resources necessary

**Session Four: Sensations**

- Free-writing
- Sense-able Writing (Favourite Food) Activity (WOL 1, pg 38)
  - o Objective: Produce descriptions using all senses; describe sensations; use simile/metaphor
  - o Students describe their favourite food by completing the sentences:
    - It tastes like...
    - It feels like...
    - It looks like...
    - It sounds like...
    - It smells like...
- I See, I Feel... Activity (WOL 1, pg 45)
  - o Objective: describe an image using a report-based approach and emotional approach; become familiar with the two approaches to providing a description
  - o Each students describes an image based on what they see and then how the feel about the image (what the image “makes” them feel)
  - o Students are to pair off and share their written piece with their partner. The listeners are instructed to express the image they saw and how they felt from having heard the piece.

**Session Five: Change...**

- Free-writing
- I Remember..., I Forget... Activity (WOL 2, pg 128)

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- o Objective: write about the past; practice writing about own experiences
  - o Students complete the sentence “I remember...” and then the sentence “I forget...”
- If The Shoe Fits Activity (WOL 2, pg 76)
  - o Objective: describe likes and dislikes; student become more familiar with each other; write about the past; describe own history
  - o Students answer the following question: “Describe your favourite pair of shoes (ever) and state why they are/were your favourite.”
- How The World Has Changed... Activity (Produced by Kimia)
  - o Objective: describe change; write comparatively; write about the past and present
  - o Group reads a literary piece about change over time (past vs. present). Students write their observation of how the world has changed in the last 5, 10, 20 years.

**Session 6: The Unreal**

- Free-writing
- Dinner-For-Two Activity (WOL 1, pg 55)
  - o Objective: use imagination; brainstorm and write about a fictional situation
  - o Students answer the question, “If you could have dinner with anyone (dead or alive), who would it be, and why?”
- Next Firaday...Activity (WOL 2, pg 65)
  - o Objective: use imagination; brainstorm and write about a fictional situation
  - o Each student brainstorms about a fictional holiday. Each names their holiday, describe its commemoration and how it is celebrated, and why they chose such a holiday.
- If You Were All Guts... Activity (Produced by Kimia)
  - o Objective: use imagination; brainstorm and write about a fictional situation
  - o Students answer the question, “If you had no fear of death, what activity might you do that you wouldn’t consider doing now?”

**Session 7: Understanding The Words Of Others**

- Free-writing
- Instructor introduces the idea of producing a handmade magazine composed of the submission offered by group members. Members are asked to consider submitting a piece. Those who would like to submit a piece will be producing the layout of the magazine next session.
- Quality Quotes Activity (WOL 2, pg 104)

**Write Out Loud! Workshop**  
Grand Valley Institute for Women  
September - November 2005

- o Objective: practice inferring another person's meaning
  - o Students choose a quote from a list and write about their interpretation of the quote (author's message) and their opinion of the message
- Opinion Of A Poem Activity (Produced by Kimia)
  - o Objective: practice inferring another person's meaning; produce feedback
  - o Group discusses purpose and technique of giving/receiving feedback
  - o Students choose a poem from a selection provided; after reading the poem, they write their reactions to the poem. Students are encouraged to share their reflections and discuss the features of the poem that incited their response.

**Session Eight: Empathy**

- Free-writing
- Challenges Activity (WOL 2, pg 139)
  - o Objective: write emphatically
  - o Instructor shares a story about someone who is facing a challenge. Students write about someone they know who is dealing with a challenge in their life.
- Produce the Write Out Loud! Magazine
- Program Evaluation: students provide feedback on the writing group by revisiting the goals they stated originally and writing in response to whether they achieved those goals
- Certificates are distributed

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Grand Valley Institute for Women  
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## **Evaluation Scheme**

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### **OBJECTIVE**

For this program, the purpose of performing evaluations is three-fold.

First, regular reflection by the students will help to:

- identify their own strengths and weaknesses in writing
- observe their own progress throughout the program
- identify the strategies and activities they found useful/rewarding
- identify deficiencies in the implementation of the program

Second, regular reflection by the facilitator will help to:

- record useful strategies and rewarding activities
- evaluate the efficacy of various activities
- identify learning difficulties and barriers
- record students' progress
- problem-solve difficulties in curriculum and with students

Third, by continuously incorporating the students' evaluation/feedback the program will ensure a balance of meeting program objectives while remaining geared to the needs of the learners.

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### **SCHEME**

#### **At The Beginning/At The End:**

At the beginning of the program, each student will identify her goals in participating in the program. Throughout the program the student will perform writing activities related to these goals. At the end of the program, the student will reflect on the progress/success she achieved in accomplishing their goals, the challenges/barriers she faced, and how she would overcome those challenges in the future.

#### **At The End of Each Session:**

At the end of each session, students will reflect on their work. They will be asked to consider:

- their success in completing the day's activity
- the challenge/obstacles they faced in writing

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- the helpful/useful techniques they used
- what they believe might have helped them

The facilitator will read their reflections and address their concerns.

At the end of each session, the facilitator will reflect on the session. She will be asked to consider:

- the natural flow of activities
- the success/challenges in implementing the activities
- the helpful techniques she used
- what she believes might have helped improve the session

**During Each Session:**

Each student will participate in one writing activity. After completing the activity, she will be asked to review and edit her work.

She will be asked to consider:

- spelling
- grammar
- punctuation
- natural flow
- use of diverse vocabulary
- describing “seeing” and “feeling”

After she has reviewed her own work, the facilitator will help her identify any mistakes she may have overlooked. Based on her skill-level, the student will be evaluated based on her ability identify and correct spelling/grammatical/punctuation errors and describe observations and sensations.