

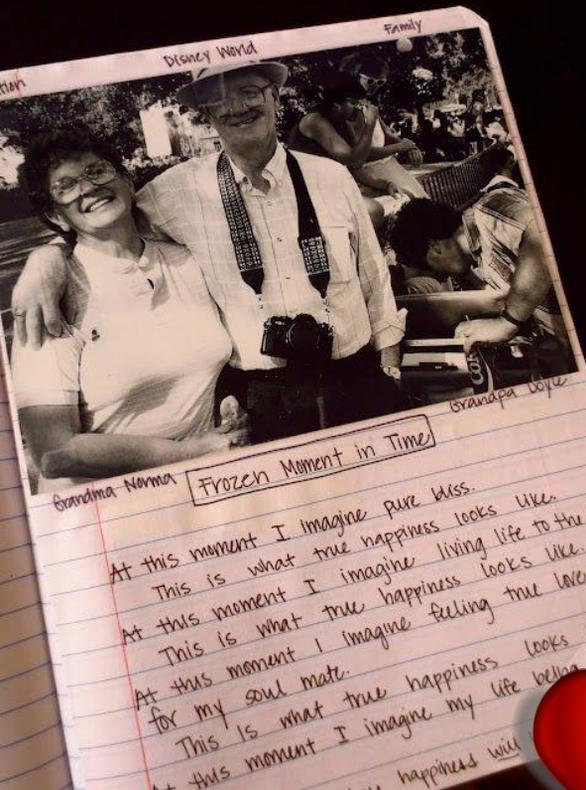
Christmas COUNTDOWN Freebies



Activities that you can use to keep your secondary students engaged during those crazy days before the holiday

MERRY CHRISTMAS from Room 213

A Gift from the Heart



I saw this on [Pinterest](#) (from [Life is Messy Blog](#)) and thought it would make a great activity during the days before break—anything that keeps them focused and learning!



As teachers, we all know how wonderful it is to get a note from a student or parent, telling you how much you've meant to them/their child. Get your students to write a note to a special someone—a parent, a sibling, a grandparent, a friend. Ask them to bring in a picture of either that person, or of a special moment shared with him/her. Have students adhere the photo to a piece of paper and then write a note at the bottom that explains why the person and/or moment was special. It's a great opportunity to work on writing skills while students make something special for a loved one!

Happy Holidays from [Room 213!](#)



It's Christmas at...

If you are in the middle of a novel or play, use this activity to not only provide your students with a holiday-themed activity, but also to do some creative writing while they make connections to the text.



Option One: Create a Christmas wish list for one (or more) characters in the text. Think carefully about what this person would request, as the items you choose should reflect your understanding of who s/he is. To increase the challenge, you could ask students to include quotations that back up their choices

Option two: Imagine it is the holiday season in the text you are studying. Write a descriptive paragraph that shows how the holidays would be celebrated in the town or area where the story is set. You could do an overview that includes several of the characters, or focus on only one and his/her family/friends. Your description must illustrate your understanding of the novel so be sure to think about what you know about the town/area and the characters. (you could also put students in groups and assign each group a different character.)



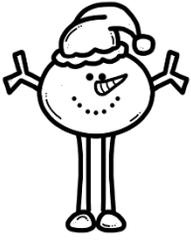


Frosty the Snowman is a much-loved song that gives life to a symbol of winter: the snowman. Choose a symbol that is associated with either winter or Christmas, and give it life.

Procedure:

1. Ask students to brainstorm as many symbols of winter and/or Christmas that they can think of. Once they have done so, ask them to turn-and-talk with the person beside or behind them, so they can share their ideas.
2. Next, ask students to think about the symbol—a star on top of a tree, a stocking, a shovel, a sled, an icicle—and brainstorm ideas that could give it life, a back story.
3. Finally, tell students to choose a format to present their ideas. They could write a song, like *Frosty*, a descriptive paragraph, a scene, a diary entry from the perspective of the object, etc. If they are artistic, they might create a comic strip, a story board, etc. Let them be creative—the main idea of the activity is to get their creative juices flowing.
4. If time allows, have your students present their work to the class.





Frosty the Snowman, was a jolly happy Soul,
With a corn cob pipe and a button nose, and two eyes made of
coal.

Frosty the Snowman, is a fairytale, they say.
He was made of snow, but the children know he came to life one
day.

There must have been some magic in that old silk hat they found,

For when they placed it on his head, he began to dance around!

Oh, Frosty, the Snowman, was alive as he could be;
and the children say he could laugh and play,
just the same as you and me.

Thumpety thump, thump, thumpety thump, thump,
look at Frosty go.

Thumpety thump, thump, thumpety thump, thump,
over the hills of snow.

Frosty the Snowman, knew the sun was hot that day,
So he said, "Let's run, and we'll have some fun now, before I melt
away."

Down to the village, with a broomstick in his hand,
Running here and there, all around the square,
sayin', "Catch me if you can."

He led them down the streets of town, right to the traffic cop;
and only paused a moment, when he heard him holler, "Stop!"

For Frosty, the Snowman, had to hurry on his way,
But he waved goodbye, sayin' "Don't cry, I'll be back again some
day."



Dear Santa

It has probably been some time since your students wrote a letter to Santa. This letter will put a different--and more mature--spin on the process!

Procedure:

1. Ask students to brainstorm injustices that they see in the world. They could be ones close to home or far away (my sister never cleans our room, poverty, global warming, etc).
2. Next, ask students to imagine that Santa could actually bring change, rather than material goods. What would they ask him to bring? Tell them to fine-tune their list from above.
3. Have students do a free-write where they explore the ideas they have come up with. Tell them to try to flesh them out with as much detail as they can.
4. This would be a good opportunity to teach your students about using rhetoric in their writing to make it more persuasive. Handout included.
5. Finally, students will write a letter to Santa that asks him to bring change to the world. Give the choice to make it serious and formal, or light and funny.
6. As an extension, have students read their letters to the class.

The Art of Rhetoric

According to Merriam-Webster, rhetoric is:

the art or skill of speaking or writing formally and effectively especially as a way to persuade or influence people

The following are some common **rhetorical devices**:

Alliteration draws attention to a string of words through the repetition of their initial sounds.

Ex: *Lucy licked lollipops*

Analogy is a comparison between items that share a similarity, but are actually quite different.

Ex: *Seasons of life; life is a highway*

Climactic Word Order presents several facts in order of least important to most important.

Ex: *The young woman's career rise was meteoric; after beginning as an administrative assistant, she became a supervisor, and three short years later, the president.*

Exaggeration emphasizes a fact through hyperbole.

Ex: *The wait until Christmas seemed like an eternity.*

Imagery an appeal to one or more of the senses by creating a vivid impression through the use of details and figures of speech like metaphors, simile, personification.

Ex: *Fingers of fear ran down his spine; She ran like the wind.*

Opposites contrast two opposing ideas.

Ex: *Students hate the short lunch hour; however, administration loves it as it has cut down on so many problems.*

Parallelism repeats specific words, phrases or clauses in a series, giving key emphasis to key words, making them memorable.

Ex: *Abraham Lincoln said government was "of the people, by the people, for the people."*

Repetition is used for emphasis and rhythm.

Ex: *It was a strange night, a hushed night, a moonless night.*

Reversal makes a balanced sentence even more memorable by repeating words in reverse order.

Ex: *"Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." JFK*

Rhetorical Question is one whose answer is already known or implied.

Ex: *You don't expect me to do homework on the weekend, do you?*

Sentence Fragments place emphasis on key words to create an overall effect, such as humour or suspense.

Ex: *A dark day. A dreary day. Typical for gray and cold November.*

Understatement creates the reverse effect and adds a touch of irony, by making the fact seem less important.

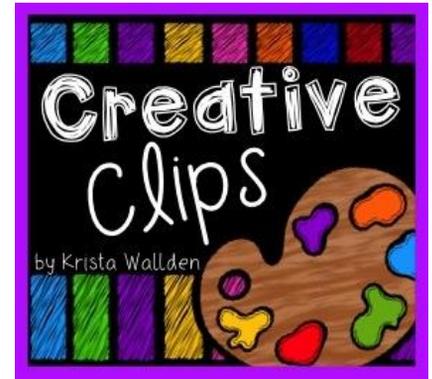
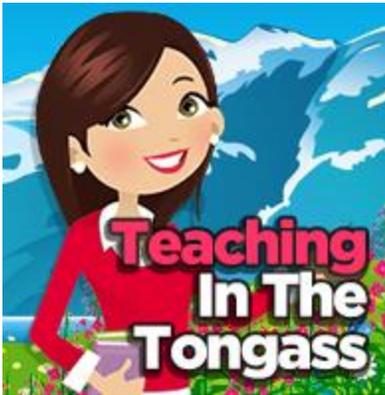
Ex: *Bruce Willis's onscreen characters frequently find themselves in a bit of a jam.*

Sources: Dictionary.com and *Canadian Students Guide to Language, Literature and the Media*, pgs 130- 133



I was inspired to create this freebie but the following amazing clip artists who posted free images for TpT sellers to use. This is my attempt to pay it forward.

Click the images to be taken to their stores:



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