

Language Arts: Blog & Journal Writing
An Interdisciplinary Education 'Function to Flow' Approach to Learning About Climbing

Grade: Junior/Intermediate		Subject/Course: Language Arts		Time: 175 mins	
Teacher:		Strand: Media Literacy and Writing			
Lesson Description					
- Students will learn how to create blogs or online diaries to communicate their knowledge, thinking and strategizing processes, feelings and emotions about their climbing experiences					
Desired Results					
Fundamental Concepts/Skills					
- Traits of Writing: Convention, Organization, Ideas, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, Presentation					
- Function2Flow					
- Creative Writing					
- Blogging					
- Climbing					
Big Ideas					
- Through the Function2Flow model, students can explore the physical literacy of climbing via creative writing					
Essential Questions					
- How can you explore physical literacy through the creative writing process?					
Overall Expectation(s)					
Specific Expectation(s)					
Lesson Goals					
- To allow students to explore Function2Flow physical literacy of climbing					
- To help students develop their creative writing and editing skills					
Key Concepts and/or Skills to be learned/applied			Prior Knowledge		
- Critical thinking, questioning, analysing, interpreting, describing, creative writing, editing, blogging			- Prior knowledge of how to blog and climbing is an asset but not required		
			- Knowledge of the traits of writing		
Connections to the Function-to-Flow Model					
The video clips, novel excerpts, discussions and stories develop all hit the four pillars of the F2F model: function, form, feeling and flow. They all consider the fundamental movements and climbing form but also take into consideration the climber's experience - the feelings and emotions being experiences and the flow with the surrounding environment.					
Planning Learning Experience and Instruction					
Student Groupings			Instructional Strategies		
- Whole group, pairs, individual			- Whole group discussion, pair discussion and editing, individual application		
Materials			Considerations		
- Video clips: <i>Touching the Void</i> , <i>Into Thin Air: Death on Everest</i>			- Be sure to preview movie clips ahead of time as there are parts of the movie where the language is not appropriate for school children		
- Novel Excerpts: <i>The Climb</i> (by Anatoli Boukreev and G. Weston Dewalt, 1998), <i>Touching the Void</i> (Joe Simpson, 1997)			- Have computer lab time available for students who may not have access to computers at		

- Computer Lab	home
Accommodations	
- Be aware of IEPs in the class and modify accordingly i.e. scribing, etc.	
Learning Experience and Instruction	
Motivational Hook (5 mins)	
- Show students an example of a blog, preferably someone who would be of interest to their age group - celebrity or someone their age	
Open (10 mins)	
- Critical Inquiry: What is a blog and what is its purpose?	
- Define a blog and blog vocabulary (blogging, blogger, blogosphere)	
- Provide a history of blogging	
Body (150 mins)	
Block 1 (50 mins): Watching Video Clips of Climbers and Reading Excerpts to Inspire Creative Writing	
- Show students 10 - 15 minute clips from climbing movies based on novels, i.e. <i>Touching the Void</i> , <i>Into Thin Air: Death on Everest</i>	
- Teacher will then read novel excerpts: <i>The Climb</i> by Anatoli Boukreev and G. Weston Dewalt (1998) - the importance of equipment (pp. 30), the importance of adjusting to the environment (pp. 61); <i>Touching the Void</i> by Joe Simpson (1997) - rhythmical motions of climbing (pp. 29 - 30), a moment of living life by a thread (pp. 38 - 39), what it is like to reach the summit (pp. 52 - 53)	
- Students will then have time to brainstorm on ideas for their blog	
Block 2 (50 mins): Preparing to Write a Climbing Blog with Intelligence & Imagination	
- Ask students if they have done any sort of climbing before – even if it means running or hiking on an incline with others. Describe that experience to a partner in the class	
- Introduce the idea of rock climbing and concepts of function, form, feel, flow. (See the ‘Function to Flow’ chart)	
- Brainstorm ideas about what kind of climbing character & adventure they wish to imaginatively create for an online Blog identity OR suggest that they might simply blog about their real climbing experience without any creative elaboration or embellishment	
- Ask the students to imagine the details of what they are experiencing in terms of their thoughts, emotions (fear of falling, exhilaration when they finished), how they help or are helped by others, the thinking strategies they use to solve problems, their growing knowledge of technical terms used in climbing, etc.	
- Get students to draft rough copy of their blog	
Block 3 (50 mins): Peer Editing and Blog Posting	
- Review traits of writing with the class	
- Students will peer edit each other's work using the traits of writing and teacher will sign off on it once they are finished	
- Students then will post their blogs during time in the computer lab	
Close (10 mins)	
- Instruct students to read 2 or 3 of their classmates' blogs and end the unit with a compliment session	
- Facilitate discussion with class on how elements of function, feeling, form and flow were evident in their writing	
Extension Activities	
- Students can continue to work on their blogs, exploring different types of physical activity	

Assessment

- Mark blog submissions based on traits of writing (language arts curriculum) and the presence of elements of the Function2Flow model (health and physical education)

1. An excerpt from *The Climb*: by Anatoli Boukreev and G. Weston Dewalt (1998) that hones in on the importance of equipment:

With a jerk, I was torn from my ice axe, which I had used in belaying the pair. Sliding down the mountain and falling more than twenty metres, we were stopped by a rope that I had fixed to an anchor just a moment after we had stopped for tea. No one was seriously injured, but somehow I lost my gloves in the fall. In the fifteen minutes it took to get our tents at Camp III, my hands were frostbitten, but fortunately, my exposure was for a short time and I did not suffer any lasting damage. (p. 30).

2. An excerpt from *The Climb*: by Anatoli Boukreev and G. Weston Dewalt (1998) that hones in on the importance of adjusting to the environment:

One of my first priorities in Base Camp was to formalize an acclimatization plan. The demands of properly acclimatizing required that team members stay in Base Camp for at least a few days until their bodies had adjusted to that altitude, and then we would begin a series of excursions that would take our climbers higher onto the mountain, climbing from Base Camp to succeeding higher camps that our Sherpas would establish. The idea is that you gradually allow your body to adjust to higher and higher altitude and then retreat to an altitude to which you have acclimatized. Our first excursion would be to 6,100 metres, which is where we would establish our Camp 1, but on the first excursion we would not overnight there. On this excursion and on all those that followed, the clients would carry only their personal belongings and personal equipment, so that they could save their strength. Our climbing Sherpas would carry rope and whatever supplies we might need. (p.61).

3. An excerpt from *Touching the Void* by Joe Simpson that describes rhythmical motions of climbing:

When I next looked up Simon was nearly at the end of the rope, 150 feet above me. I had to crane my neck to see him. It was very steep.

Following his cheery shout I sorted out my axes, checked my crampons, and started up towards the wall. As I reached the crevasse I realised how precipitously steep it was. I felt off balance, forced out by the angle, until I had hauled myself out over the lip of the crevasse and up on to the ice wall. Stiff and unco-ordinated at first, I struggled unnecessarily until, warmed by effort, my body began to flow into rhythmic movements, and a rush of exultation at being here set me off up towards the distant figure. (Simpson, 1997, pp. 29-30).

4. An excerpt from *Touching the Void* by Joe Simpson that describes a moment of living life by a thread:

At last we fell silent. A terrible fear and insecurity had overtaken our boisterous reaction to the unimaginable event. Shining torches below, we saw the remains of our two ropes, which had been hanging beneath the ledge. They were cut to pieces, shredded by the falling rock. Turning round to inspect the safety line, we were appalled to find that the old ring peg on which we hung was moving, and that the spike of rock had been badly damaged. It looked as if one of the two attachment points would give way at any moment. We knew that if just one anchor point failed we would be hurled into the void. [...] We hung on that fragile rope for twelve interminable hours. Eventually our shouts were heard and a rescue helicopter succeeded in plucking us from the wall. The experience of that long, long night, expecting to

fall at any time, one minute laughing hysterically, then silence, always with stomachs clenched, petrified, waiting for something we did not wish to think about, will never be forgotten (Simpson, 1997, pp. 38-39).

5. An excerpt from *Touching the Void* by Joe Simpson that describes what it is like to reach the summit:
Simon joined me happily as we took off our sacks and sat on them, carelessly dropping our axes and mitts in the snow, content to be quiet a while and look around us.
'Let's leave the sacks here and go up to the summit,' Simon said, interrupting my self-indulgent reverie. The summit! Of course, I had forgotten we had only reached the ridge. Escaping from the West Face had seemed to be an end in itself. I looked up at the icecream cone rising behind Simon. It was only about 100 feet away.
'You go ahead. I'll take some photos when you reach the top'. He grabbed some chocolate and sweets before getting up and tramping slowly up through the soft snow. The altitude was having its effect. When he was outlined against the sky, bending over his axe on top of the spectacular summit cornice, I began feverishly snapping photographs. Leaving the sacks at the col, I followed, breathing hard, and feeling the tiredness of my legs. We took the customary summit photos and ate some chocolate. I felt the usual anticlimax. What now? It was a vicious circle. If you succeed in one dream, you come back to square one and it's not long before you're conjuring up another, slightly harder, a bit more ambitious – a bit more dangerous. (Simpson, 1997, pp. 52-53).