

# RAFT Assignments

(Acronym: Role, Audience, Format, Topic)

This strategy encourages creative thinking and motivates students to demonstrate understanding in a nontraditional yet informational written format. The student has a **role** to play and as they think in that role, they have to talk to a given **audience** using the **format** noted on the **topic** listed. This strategy forces students to process information rather than just write answers to questions. You may even ask the students to develop their own creative RAFT assignment for each other or for upcoming units based on essential questions.

## How to use it:

1. Using your essential questions, analyze the important ideas or information you want students to learn. Consider how writing might enhance student' understanding of a topic (e.g., stages of the digestive system). This focus established the writing topic. The topic can be a creative title or stated in general terms, as long as it is clear to the student the goal of the assignment.
2. Brainstorm possible roles students could assume in their writing. For example, a student in auto class could imagine he was a spark plug and describe what occurs when an engine starts.
3. Next, decide the audience for this communication. Using that audience, determine the writing format. For example, the spark plug could be writing in the format of a diary to be read by new spark plugs just placed in cars.
4. Explain RAFT to the students and list the role, audience, format, and topic for writing. You may want to choose different roles from which they can choose based on the same knowledge, reading, or concept.

This strategy works with all disciplines and across disciplines as an exciting strategy for student writing.

Based on the work of Doug Buehl cited in Teaching Reading in the Content Areas: If Not Me Then Who? Billmeyer and Martin, 1998.

## Examples of RAFT Assignments

ROLE	AUDIENCE	FORMAT	TOPIC
<b>Language Arts/Literature</b>			
Semicolon	Middle Schoolers	Diary Entry	I Wish You Really Understood Where I Belong!
N.Y. Times	The Public	Op Ed Piece	How Our Language Defines Who We Are
Huck Finn	Tom Sawyer	Note Hidden In A Tree Knot	A Few Things You Should Know
<b>Science</b>			
Plant	Sun	Thank-you note	Sun's role in plant's growth
Rain Drop	Future Droplets	Advice Column	The Beauty Of Cycles
Lungs	Cigarettes	Complaint	Effects of smoking
Trout	Self	Diary	Effects of acid rain on the lake and my family
Wheat Thin	Other Wheat Thins	Travel Guide	Journey through the digestive system
Rain Forest	John Q. Citizen	Paste Up "Ransom" Note	Before It's Too Late
Themselves at 18 years old	Current _____ graders	Full page newspaper ad	Highlights of grade ____ science class
<b>Social Studies</b>			
Martin Luther King	TV Audience Of 2010	Speech	The Dream Revisited
Thomas Jefferson	Current Residents Of Virginia	Full Page Newspaper Ad	If I Could Talk To You Now
<b>Math</b>			
Fractions	Whole Numbers	Petition	To Be Considered A Part Of The Family
A Word Problem	Students In Your Class	Set Of Directions	How To Get To Know Me

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