Creative Writing Emergency E-Learning Plans

Grades 10-12 | South Carolina

These five assignments are designed for independent completion at home during an emergency school closure. Each day stands alone. You may type your work in the LMS or complete it on paper if your teacher has provided another submission method.

E-Learning Day 1: Make the Reader See It

Skill/Focus: Show, Don't Tell

Learning Objective: I can replace general statements with specific actions, details and reactions that help a reader experience a scene.

South Carolina ELA Standards Connection

South Carolina College- and Career-Ready ELA, high school Written and Oral Communications: develop narrative writing using effective technique, relevant details, logical sequencing, precise language and appropriate style. This assignment also supports the Language strand through purposeful word choice and conventions.

Directions

Complete each section in order. Read the review and model before beginning the main writing activity. Your final work should be your own writing. Save or keep your work as you go.

1. Warm-Up

Rewrite each sentence so the reader can infer the feeling instead of being told it directly.
1. Jordan was nervous before the presentation.
2. The little girl was excited about the surprise.
3. Marcus was angry when he read the message.

2. Skill Review

In creative writing, **telling** names a feeling or condition directly. **Showing** gives the reader evidence through actions, body language, dialogue, thoughts, setting details or sensory details. You do not have to remove every telling sentence. The goal is to slow down important moments and make them vivid.

3. Model

Telling: Maya was embarrassed.
Showing: Maya stared at the floor as laughter moved across the room. She tugged at the sleeve of her sweatshirt and wished the bell would ring early.

Why it works: The writer never says 'Maya was embarrassed,' but her actions allow the reader to infer it.

4. Independent Writing Assignment

Choose **one** situation below and write a complete scene.

A. A student realizes they studied the wrong chapter for a major test.
B. Someone opens a door and sees something completely unexpected.

C. Two friends meet again after a serious disagreement.
D. Create your own school-appropriate situation.

Do not directly name the main character's primary emotion for the first 150 words. Let the reader figure it out from what the character does, says, notices and thinks.

Final Response Requirements

• 250-350 words

• A clear setting and situation

• At least 4 specific actions or physical reactions

• At least 3 sensory or concrete details

• At least 2 lines of dialogue or internal thought

• A title

• Proofread for complete sentences, capitalization, punctuation and spelling

What to Submit

Submit your three warm-up rewrites and your titled 250-350 word scene.

E-Learning Day 2: Build a World With the Five Senses

Skill/Focus: Sensory Details and Imagery

Learning Objective: I can use specific sensory details and imagery to create a vivid setting and a clear mood.

South Carolina ELA Standards Connection

South Carolina College- and Career-Ready ELA, high school Written and Oral Communications and Language: use precise words, sensory language and stylistic choices to develop ideas and strengthen narrative writing.

Directions

Complete each section in order. Read the review and model before beginning the main writing activity. Your final work should be your own writing. Save or keep your work as you go.

1. Warm-Up

Pick an ordinary place you know well, such as a kitchen, bus stop, gym, bedroom, hallway or store. List one detail for each sense: sight, sound, smell, touch and taste. If taste does not naturally fit, write a second strong detail for another sense.

2. Skill Review

Sensory details appeal to sight, sound, smell, touch and taste. **Imagery** is descriptive language that creates a picture or experience in the reader's mind. Strong imagery is specific. Instead of 'The room smelled good,' a writer might describe 'warm cinnamon and butter drifting from the oven.' Mood is the feeling the writing creates for the reader.

3. Model

Plain: The storm was bad.
Vivid: Rain hammered the metal roof. Water crawled under the back door while the windows flashed white with every strike of lightning.

Why it works: Sound, sight and movement make the storm feel immediate without relying on the vague word 'bad.'

4. Independent Writing Assignment

Write a description of **one place during an unusual moment**. You may choose: an empty school after dark, a neighborhood just before a storm, a kitchen during a family celebration, a stadium seconds before a final play or your own school-appropriate setting.

Your goal is to make the reader feel as if they are standing inside the setting. Create one clear mood, such as peaceful, tense, joyful, lonely, mysterious or chaotic. You may include a character, but the setting should remain the focus.

Final Response Requirements

• 250-350 words

• A title

• A clear mood

- Details from at least 4 senses
- At least 2 examples of figurative or imaginative description, such as simile, metaphor or personification
- Specific nouns and strong verbs
- Avoid relying on vague words such as nice, bad, good, pretty, scary or fun
- Proofread your final response

What to Submit

Submit your five-senses warm-up and your titled 250-350 word setting description.

E-Learning Day 3: Create a Character With Layers

Skill/Focus: Character Development

Learning Objective: I can create a believable character whose wants, strengths, flaws and choices reveal personality.

South Carolina ELA Standards Connection

South Carolina College- and Career-Ready ELA, high school Written and Oral Communications: create narrative texts that develop experiences, characters and events through effective details, sequencing and technique.

Directions

Complete each section in order. Read the review and model before beginning the main writing activity. Your final work should be your own writing. Save or keep your work as you go.

1. Warm-Up

Invent a character and answer these four questions in 1-2 sentences each:
1. What does this person want right now?
2. What is one strength?
3. What is one flaw or weakness?
4. What is something this character would never want other people to know?

2. Skill Review

Believable characters are more than a list of physical traits. Writers reveal character through **motivation** (what the person wants and why), **strengths**, **flaws**, habits, speech and choices. A useful question is: 'What would this character do when getting what they want becomes difficult?' The answer often creates conflict and reveals personality.

3. Model

Flat description: Eli is a smart, confident student.
Developed characterization: Eli answers every question before anyone else can raise a hand, but he deletes each text to his older brother before sending it. At school, he acts certain about everything. At home, he rehearses simple conversations in the bathroom mirror.

Why it works: The contrast between confidence and insecurity gives the character more than one layer.

4. Independent Writing Assignment

Use the character from your warm-up or create a new one. Write a scene in which the character **wants something specific but encounters an obstacle**.

Possible wants: make a team, hide a mistake, earn someone's trust, return something without being caught, win a competition, convince a family member, protect a friend or solve a problem.

Do not begin with a long paragraph explaining the character. Reveal who the character is through behavior, thoughts, dialogue and decisions.

Final Response Requirements

• 300-400 words

- A title
- A clear character goal
- At least one obstacle
- At least one strength and one flaw shown through the character's behavior
- At least 3 lines of dialogue or internal thought
- A meaningful choice made by the character
- An ending that shows the result or consequence of that choice
- Proofread your final response

What to Submit

Submit your four warm-up character responses and your titled 300-400 word character scene.

E-Learning Day 4: Let the Conversation Tell the Story

Skill/Focus: Dialogue and Subtext

Learning Objective: I can write realistic dialogue that reveals character, creates tension and moves a scene forward.

South Carolina ELA Standards Connection

South Carolina College- and Career-Ready ELA, high school Written and Oral Communications and Language: use narrative techniques, purposeful dialogue, precise language and standard English conventions to communicate effectively.

Directions

Complete each section in order. Read the review and model before beginning the main writing activity. Your final work should be your own writing. Save or keep your work as you go.

1. Warm-Up

Write two different ways a character could say 'I'm fine' while clearly meaning something else. After each line, add one action that helps the reader understand the character's real feeling.

2. Skill Review

Good dialogue sounds natural, but it is usually more focused than real conversation. Dialogue should do a job: reveal character, create conflict, provide necessary information or move the scene forward. **Subtext** is the meaning underneath the spoken words. Characters do not always say exactly what they feel.

Dialogue punctuation reminder: Put spoken words inside quotation marks. Start a new paragraph when the speaker changes. A comma usually separates dialogue from a dialogue tag: *'I already checked,' Lena said.*

3. Model

Malik set the permission form on the counter. 'You don't have to come.'

His father looked up from the sink. 'I didn't say I wasn't coming.'

'Right.' Malik folded the paper in half. 'You just haven't signed it for six days.'

Why it works: Neither character directly explains the conflict, but the short responses and actions reveal disappointment and tension.

4. Independent Writing Assignment

Write a scene built mainly around a conversation between two characters who **want different things**.

Choose one situation:
A. One person wants to tell a secret. The other does not want to hear it.
B. Two people both want the same opportunity.
C. One person wants permission. The other refuses to give it.
D. One person knows the truth. The other believes a lie.
E. Create your own school-appropriate situation.

Allow the conflict to become clear through the conversation instead of explaining everything to the reader.

Final Response Requirements

• 300-400 words

• A title

• Two clearly distinguishable characters

• At least 10 lines of dialogue

• At least 4 action beats that show what characters are doing while speaking

• At least one example of subtext

• Correct quotation marks and paragraph breaks for speaker changes

• A clear conflict

• Proofread your final response

What to Submit

Submit your warm-up responses and your titled 300-400 word dialogue scene.

E-Learning Day 5: Flash Fiction - A Complete Story in a Small Space

Skill/Focus: Plot, Conflict and Flash Fiction

Learning Objective: I can write a focused short story with a clear conflict, purposeful details and a meaningful ending.

South Carolina ELA Standards Connection

South Carolina College- and Career-Ready ELA, high school Written and Oral Communications: produce coherent narrative writing with effective organization, narrative technique, relevant details and an ending appropriate to the events. This assignment also supports revision and language conventions.

Directions

Complete each section in order. Read the review and model before beginning the main writing activity. Your final work should be your own writing. Save or keep your work as you go.

1. Warm-Up

Choose one prompt and write a quick story plan using only five lines:
1. Character: Who is the story about?
2. Want: What does the character want?
3. Problem: What gets in the way?
4. Choice: What important decision does the character make?
5. Result: What changes because of that decision?

Prompt choices: The message arrived one day too late. / Everyone heard the announcement except one person. / The object in the lost-and-found should not have been there. / Create your own school-appropriate idea.

2. Skill Review

Flash fiction is a very short story that still feels complete. Because space is limited, every detail should matter. A focused plot usually includes a character with a goal, a conflict, a choice or turning point and an ending that shows what changed. You do not need to explain a character's entire life. Begin close to the important moment.

3. Model

Story plan: Character: Nia, a student waiting for an audition result. Want: She wants the lead role. Problem: Her best friend gets the role instead. Choice: Nia must decide whether to leave or stay for her friend's performance. Result: She stays, but realizes her friendship and her own next opportunity matter more than one result.

Why it works: The plan contains a focused goal, conflict, decision and change. A full flash-fiction story could build from these parts without needing a complicated plot.

4. Independent Writing Assignment

Turn your five-line warm-up plan into a complete flash-fiction story. Start near the moment when something changes. Give the main character a clear goal and place an obstacle in the way. Build toward one important choice, discovery or turning point. End by showing what is different because of what happened.

You may use first person or third person. Your story can be realistic, mysterious, humorous, suspenseful or imaginative as long as it is school appropriate.

Final Response Requirements

• 400-550 words

• An original title

• A clear main character and goal

• A central conflict

• A logical beginning, development and ending

• At least one important choice, discovery or turning point

• Specific details and strong verbs

• Dialogue if it helps the story, but it is not required

• An ending that shows a change, consequence or new understanding

• Proofread and revise before submitting

What to Submit

Submit your five-line story plan and your titled 400-550 word flash-fiction story.