

# Welcome to the Daily Discipline of Writing!

**IB Learner Profile Characteristics:** Communicators, Inquirers, Risk-Takers, Reflective

*Approaches to Learning Skills:* Communication, Thinking

The following is a modified from an assignment given by Professor Callahan (Teachers College, Columbia University). The assignment was originally designed and implemented by Professor Sheridan Blau. Adaptation for high school students created by English Teacher and TC Columbia M.A. student Ashley Gramolini.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

For this assignment, you will practice the Daily Discipline of Writing. You will start this today in class. The goal of this assignment is to have you writing every day. This is what great writers do, and writing skills are directly tied to our ability to communicate and think critically. This assignment will be a risk for many of you. You are encouraged to be inquisitive and reflective in your writing.

According to Professor Callahan at Columbia University, “writing daily has been found by a great many writers to be a key to successful writing. It promotes the deepening of thought by maintaining and continuing attention over time, and it often yields new ideas and discoveries through the continuing dialogue with the self.”

Your goal should be to eventually get to a place where you are writing for at least 20 minutes a day. Right now, that might seem crazy, but as everything else in life, the more you practice something, the more you improve and the easier it becomes.

To begin, you can start off by completing two writing sessions of 5-10 minutes instead of doing it all at once. You don't have to do this - you are free to write all at once. Professor Callahan suggests that if you decide to break your writing up into two sessions that one of them take place as soon as you wake up in the morning.

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

*Freedom*

There is no rule about what you write about! Your writing will be private and you will not be asked to share it. You will, however, reflect on it at the end of the semester. That will be explained later.

You may decide to write about something different each time. Or, you may decide to work on the same piece of writing for several days in a row.

You may decide to work on something that is due in another class. Or, you may decide to write about something that is interesting to you. You are totally free to write about what you like.

You may decide to simply write about what's on your mind, how you feel, what you observed today on the way to school. Some even write about their dreams.

Regardless of how you write, please include the date and place that you completed the writing. If you choose to change what you wrote before, keep a record of what you wrote originally so that you can see your progress.

According to Professor Callahan: "the larger portion of this exercise is to get you to experience the daily discipline of writing that has been of such enormous importance to generations of successful writers."

Or as Macklemore said: "the greats weren't great because at birth they could paint; the greats were great because they painted a lot."

Please take this seriously. This is a great learning opportunity. Remember, IB Learners are Open-Minded and Risk-Takers! Enjoy this by writing about what you want to write about and by witnessing the improvement you'll be seeing in your skills.