

What is a writing marathon?

- An event with several hours of dedicated writing time with shifting locations

Why should I do one? Because I want to...

- dedicate myself to my writing in a painless manner.
- commit myself to the writing process.
- embrace my identity as a writer.
- think and not just produce.
- enhance community between writers.
- enjoy experiencing locations in my community.

Traditional Logistics:

- Setting: select a place with plenty of writing options (campus, downtown city area, shopping center, zoo, outdoor park)
 - map
 - ending location for reflection and voluntary sharing
- Schedule: two- to seven-hour block of time
 - includes going to a location, settling in, socializing a bit, writing for 10-20 minutes, sharing without response beyond “thank you,” and moving on to another place or staying for another round.
- Publicity: post flyers, send emails to potential participants, announce in classes and staff meetings, have a session at a conference
- Writers: upon arrival to the marathon setting, have writers place themselves into groups of 2 to 5 (self selection is critical)
- Bonus:
 - work with businesses to offer perks for groups (Saying, “I am a writer” = free coffee with purchase of a pastry)
 - replace a class meeting with a marathon
 - use the marathon as a component of professional development for teachers, tutors, student teachers (The National Writing Project hosts several marathons each year).

Benefits to writing marathons:

- A way to write without immediately receiving judgment...
 - “...for once...a teacher wasn’t telling you you’re wrong” (Woodward et al. 24).
- A way to connect with students...
 - “I enjoyed sitting with my students and writing; I model a lot for them, but I don’t really become part of their group as a writer. Today I wrote with them” (Woodward et al. 25).
 - “Teachers remember and know what it’s like to write—the pain, the frustration, the fear and the glory!” (Urbanski 13).
 - Students see writing teachers “struggling with the same issues they have and are empowered by that” (Urbanski 13).
- A way to see yourself as a writer who happens to be a writing teacher...
 - “...I need to continue to write and see myself as a writer all the while that I am teaching writing...when I commit myself to the task of *being* a writer the payoff for my student writers is undeniable” (Urbanski 12).