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| **Mapping the Neighborhood****Generating Writing Ideas from Personal History** |
| **Summary:** The purpose of the lesson is to help students develop ideas for writing narrative/memoir. Students talk with one another and provide feedback on another student’s writing.  |
| **Objectives:** * Students will create a neighborhood map to use as a springboard for writing a narrative/memoir.
* Students will use cooperative learning techniques to work with a partner.
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| **Materials:** * Chart paper
* Marker or colored pencils
* Notebook paper
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| **Time Span:**  * 2-3 class periods
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**Procedures:**

1. To begin, teacher draws a map of his or her own neighborhood from childhood, and marks several spots where memorable events took place.
2. The teacher tells a brief story that goes along with the specific spots. (Ex. This is where I learned to ride my bike; this is where I received my first kiss; etc.)
3. The teacher gives each student paper. Larger paper works best.
4. Students are given 15-20 minutes to create a map of a neighborhood where they currently live or have lived at one time.
5. Students will target specific areas on the map that relate to memorable experiences. (6-10)
6. Students will share their map with a partner and listen as their partner describes his/her map.
7. Choosing one of the sites on the map, students relate the memory to their partners. The students are to use as much detail as possible. Each student has 2 minutes to tell his/her story. Be specific about the time. Use a stopwatch and when the time is up, he/she must stop talking. Now the other partner tells his/her story.
8. As soon as the second student’s time is up, tell the class they now have 12 minutes to write the very same story they just told their partner. This is a quick-write. Make sure the students have already taken out a sheet of notebook paper so there isn’t a break between the talking and the writing.
9. When time is up, students read their quick-write to their partner. (See extensions)

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| **Extensions:** * Students will have a piece of writing to take to the next level in the writing process, to develop into a final that will be assessed.
* As the students share with their partners, some possibilities for specific feedback include the following: listen for descriptive language, sensory details, strong nouns and verbs, etc.

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| **Rationale:*** Talking about one’s own life is something everyone is able to do. All students have stories they are able to share. The talking is key. It eliminates the “I don’t have anything to write about” scenario. This activity is also a great way to get students involved with one another. The map can be kept in the students’ writing folders to use for other assignments during the year.
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