Back to school writing ideas
from ‘The Writing Book’ and other sources.

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Graphic organisers

1. Alphabet brainstorm (p 101, PM 12)
Students describe experiences from their holidays using the letters of the alphabet as prompts.

2. Setting T chart (p 124, PM 14)
Students choose a setting from their holiday and describe eg: family barbeque, campsite, at the beach, on a boat, Christmas dinner.

3. Character brainstorm Y chart (p 103, PM 13)
Students choose to describe themselves, a person they know or met during their holiday.

4. Make a desk mat
Go to Sheena’s Wikispace classroomenvironmentdownloads.wikispaces.com to ‘Downloads’ on the left hand-side. There are templates at junior and senior levels.

5. Personal Timeline

Students make a timeline of the important events in their lives. Timeline templates are downloadable from sheenacameron.com – go to the resources link and under ‘Reading activities’ there is an A4 photocopy master with 2 timelines - one for students up to 7 years and one for students up to 12 years. Once they have completed their timeline, they could choose one event and write a more detailed memoir.
Quick writes to get to know your students

1. **Speed writing** *(p127)* Use the generic writing ideas on p180. Here are some from the ‘All about you’ section.

- What is your favourite time of day? Why?
- What is your favourite room in the house? Why?
- What is the best gift you’ve ever given to anyone? What made it so special?
- What is the most special gift that you have ever received?
- Have you ever been given a present you didn’t like? Who gave it to you? What was it? What did you say to the person who gave it to you?
- What person outside your family is most special to you? Why?
- Describe a time when you were brave.
- How old were you four years ago? Describe some things you can do now that you could not do then.
- What is one of the funniest things that has ever happened to you?
- Think of a time when you achieved a personal goal. What was it, and how did you feel when you accomplished this goal?
- Write about a time when you felt really disappointed about something.
- Describe a time you were hurt. What happened, and who helped you?
- What do you think about when you can’t fall asleep?
- Describe your favourite place to go swimming.

2. **List it** *(p116)* Students make a list of their favourite smells, sounds or memories from their holiday.

3. **Map it** *(p117)* Students draw a map of a place they visited in the holidays or around their own community. They could also make a travel brochure.

4. **Fact or fib** *(p108)* Students write a fact or fib about themselves. Other students guess whether it is a fact or fib. Use as an activity for students to get to know each other.

5. **A moment in time** *(p100)*

   This writing structure can be adapted across many levels.

   **My summer challenge**

   I **heard** splashing and the other kids laughing.
   I **heard** my brother say, ‘Hurry up Troy!’
   I **saw** the deep green river a long way down in the distance.
   I **felt** the roughness of the rope swing.
   I **felt** my heart pounding.
   I **wondered** if my hands would slip on the rope.
   I **wondered** if I would finally be able to do it this time.

   – Troy
6. Change it (p102) Students write about a holiday experience but change it from a personal recount to another writing form such as a TV news report, eg: Boy catches first fish. Postcards or Twitter tweets could also be used.

**Ideas to display writing**
Remember you don’t always have to publish a whole piece of writing. Students could choose their best word, sentence or paragraph.

**Writeable dioramas link**
http://profehanson.weebly.com/templates-for-foldables.html
Scroll down the page and download the pyramid template and the diorama template. This is a quick publishing idea as students can insert photos and write directly on to the template.

**In the moment pictures**
Take a photo of the student in an appropriate position for their sentence/writing. Students cut out their photo and glue onto their paper and illustrate the background.

**Flip stories**
Cut out two circles (other shapes work too). Glue one circle to the backing paper. Fold the second circle in half. Glue the top half to the other circle.

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