“Sacred Writing Time” Slides!

My wife, Dena Harrison, and I require ten-fifteen minutes of writer’s notebook time every day we meet with our students. It’s how we begin every class session. We train our students to observe the world with “a writer’s eyes,” and they constantly ask themselves, “Could I write about what just happened in my writer’s notebook today or tomorrow or Monday?” We call the ten-fifteen minutes “Sacred Writing Time” because it’s our guarantee to our students.

It takes many students some time to learn they’re supposed to always come to class with a personally-interesting idea to write about, so we also provide them with some prompting. Our [Monthly Writer’s Notebook Bingo Cards](#) and [Restaurant-themed Choice Menus](#) are two of our favorite tools for students as they learn to use their “writer’s eyes.” These Sacred Writing Time PowerPoint slides are our latest tool to use during the writing time our students have daily. These slides are displayed as students walk in and take out their notebooks. There are four different pieces of information on each slide (we are designing them for August 1-June 15); each piece of information could inspire a student to respond to for fifteen minutes with writing.

The 31 slides that follow this one are the slides we created for the month of January. We invite you to use them, and should they inspire your writers as they do ours, please know that we actually sell the entire set of slides at our website. Check out our [Products Page](#) at Corbett’s website for information on acquiring all of our completely editable Sacred Writing Inspirational Slides.

Yours in improving education,

--Corbett & Dena Harrison, lifelong learners and writing teachers

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Sacred Writing Time

Did you come to class with an idea to write about? As soon as class starts, quietly make that pencil dance!

It’s January 1.

Today is “Creative Ice Cream Flavors Day.” How many creative flavors can you list in your notebook?

**Trivial Fact of the Day:** Women blink twice as much as men. Why do you suppose that is?

**Interesting Quote of the Day:** “Wheresoever you go, go with all your heart.” --Confucius (Chinese philosopher)

**Vocabulary Word of the Day:** *resolute* (adjective) – use this modifier to describe someone or something that is firmly determined. What *resolute* facial expressions might you see on someone who is determined to succeed at something?
Sacred Writing Time

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It’s January 2.

Today is “National I Forgot Day.” Do you have a bad memory you
would like to forget? Would you pay to have it surgically removed?

Trivial Fact of the Day: A snail can sleep for three years. What would you miss
most if you started sleeping for three straight years...starting tomorrow?

Interesting Quote of the Day: “Only surround yourself with people
who will lift you higher.” --Oprah Winfrey (American TV personality)

Vocabulary Word of the Day: abase (verb) – this action word means
to humiliate or degrade. Bullies—unfortunately—think it’s okay to
abase their victims? Who else thinks it’s okay to abase others?
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It’s January 3.

Today is “National Chocolate-Covered Cherry Day.” What do you like inside your chocolates? What would be frightening to find in one?

Trivial Fact of the Day: “Dreamt” is the only English word that ends in “mt”.

Interesting Quote of the Day: “Go confidently in the direction of your dreams.” --Henry David Thoreau (American Author)

Vocabulary Word of the Day: effrontery (noun) – if someone shows a great deal of rudeness or nerve, you can say they showed this noun. When was the last time you showed a lot of effrontery, accidental or on purpose?
Sacred Writing Time

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It’s January 4.

Today is “National Trivia Day.” What is the most trivial fact you know?

Trivial Fact of the Day: A polar bear’s skin is black. Its fur is not white, but actually clear.

Interesting Quote of the Day: “You don’t have to be great to start, but you have to start to be great.” --Zig Ziglar (American author)

Vocabulary Word of the Day: hallowed (adjective) – this modifier can be applied to a place or item that is greatly revered or respected, perhaps religiously. What’s the most hallowed place a person might travel to?
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It’s January 5.

Today is “National Bird Day.” How many birds can you list in your notebook in ten minutes? Can you list both carnivores and herbivores?

Trivial Fact of the Day: The electric chair was actually invented by a dentist. Have you ever been sadistically** treated while in a dentist’s chair?

Interesting Quote of the Day: “Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.” --Martin Luther King (American Civil Rights Leader)

Vocabulary Word of the Day: **sadist (noun) -- a person who takes pleasure in another’s pain and suffering can be called this fancy noun. Can you paint a picture in your writer’s notebook of a sadistic P.E. teacher or a sadistic math teacher?
Sacred Writing Time

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It’s January 6.

Today is “National Cuddle Up Day.” When was the last time you were so cold that you had to cuddle up with someone?

Trivial Fact of the Day: A rhinoceros’ horn is made of compacted hair.

Interesting Quote of the Day: “Be yourself. Everyone else is taken.”
--Oscar Wilde (Irish Writer and Poet)

Vocabulary Word of the Day: **impeccable** (adjective) – this descriptive word can be applied to something that serves as a very high-quality or flawless example. What chocolate company makes an **impeccable** type of candy?
Sacred Writing Time

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It’s January 7.

Today is National “I’m Not Going to Take it Anymore” Day. What are three things you can’t take any more of?

Trivial Fact of the Day: China actually has more English speakers than the United States does.

Interesting Quote of the Day: “Listen to the voice of nature, for it holds treasures for you.” --Huron Indian saying

Vocabulary Word of the Day: anathema (noun) – this is a fancy synonym for a very cursed or detested person. In your country’s entire history, who do you believe are the top two anathemas who are also citizens of your nation? Would your history teacher agree with your choices?
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It’s January 8.

Today is “National Show and Tell Day.” What would be three most interesting items people brought for Show and Tells from your past?

Trivial Fact of the Day: Hey, who invented rock? The Kazakh tribe invented paper in 105 A.D., and scissors were invented in Ancient Egypt in about 1500 B.C.

Interesting Quote of the Day: “Fall seven times. Stand up eight.”
--Japanese proverb

Vocabulary Word of the Day: medley (noun) – use this word to stand for a mixture of different things. An album might contain a medley of songs, a buffet features a medley of entrees, and a sweater can display a medley of colors. Can you think of an interesting way to use the word medley?
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It’s January 9.
Today is “National Clean Off Your Desk Day.” Describe your messiest teacher’s desk in your writer’s notebook?

Trivial Fact of the Day: Our eyes are almost the same size from birth. Our nose and ears, however, never stop growing. Did you realize what a big-eyed baby you probably were? Do you ever wish your ears or nose would just stop?

Interesting Quote of the Day: “Those who do not trust enough should not be trusted.” --Lao-Tzu (Chinese philosopher)

Vocabulary Word of the Day: *impecunious* (adjective) – use this fancy word to describe someone who is poor. What type of personality would use a fancy word like *impecunious* to describe someone else?
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It’s January 10.
Today is “National Cut Your Energy Costs Day.” How many ways to save energy can you explain in your writer’s notebook in ten minutes?

Trivial Fact of the Day: Your tongue has about 10,000 taste buds, which are replaced every two weeks. The tongue is also the fastest healing body part.

Interesting Quote of the Day: “We have two ears and one tongue so that we would listen more and talk less.” --Diogenes (Greek philosopher)

Vocabulary Word of the Day: multilingual (adjective) – this adjective can be applied to a person who speaks multiple languages. The Latin root for tongue is lingu, which is why linguistics is the study of language and how the tongue (and mouth) create sounds. What other words come from this Latin root?
Sacred Writing Time
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It’s January 11.
Today is “Learn Your Name in Morse Code Day.” Do you think you have more dots or dashes in your name in Morse Code?

Trivial Fact of the Day: In 1844, Samuel Morse sent the very first message via telegraph: “What hath God wrought?” It was sent from a chamber in the Supreme Court to Baltimore, Maryland. Would that count as the very first text message?

Interesting Quote of the Day: “We all have the power to make wishes come true, as long as we keep believing.” --Louisa May Alcott (author)

Vocabulary Word of the Day: eponym (noun) – this fancy noun refers to a word that became a common word based on someone’s name. Morse code, for example, was named for its inventor. So was diesel. So was sandwich. Know any other eponyms?
Sacred Writing Time
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It’s January 12.
Today is “National Pharmacist’s Day.” If you were a creative pharmacist, what medicine would you think the world needed?

Trivial Fact of the Day: The first novel written using a typewriter was *Tom Sawyer*.

Interesting Quote of the Day: “Kindness is a language the the deaf can hear and the blind can see.” --Mark Twain (American Author)

Vocabulary Word of the Day: *imperious* (adjective) – use this word when describing someone who acts like he/she likes to be in charge and likes to lead with little or no help from others. What’s it like to do group-work with someone who is *imperious*? Or are you the *imperious* one during group-work?
Sacred Writing Time

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It’s January 13.

Today is “Rubber Ducky Day.” What was your favorite bathtub toy from childhood? Or did you ever take a bath back then? 😊

Trivial Fact of the Day: The names of all seven continents end with the same letter they begin with. How many countries or states or cities can you name that have that same characteristic?

Interesting Quote of the Day: “I’d rather regret the things I have done than regret the things I haven’t done.” --Lucille Ball (American actress)

Vocabulary Word of the Day: amicable (adjective) – apply this describing word to people or gestures that are friendly. What’s something you did last week that was amicable?
Sacred Writing Time

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It’s January 14.

Today is “Dress Up Your Pet Day.” Do you think it’s weird or okay for pet owners to put costumes on their animals?

Trivial Fact of the Day: Ancient Egyptians first domesticated cats 4000 years ago. Egyptians welcomed these animals into their homes for protecting their grain, and they became so revered that many cat cults popped up.

Interesting Quote of the Day: “I am fond of pigs. Dogs look up to us. Cats look down on us. Pigs treat us as equals.” --Winston Churchill (Former British Prime Minister)

Vocabulary Word of the Day: mollify (verb) – this action word means to soften someone’s bad temper. How do you mollify your family when someone’s moody?
Sacred Writing Time

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It’s January 15.
Today is “Humanitarian Day.” What are some good deeds you could do for someone today?

Trivial Fact of the Day: Peanuts are one of the ingredients of dynamite.

Interesting Quote of the Day: “All great achievements require time.”
--Maya Angelou (American author and poet)

Vocabulary Word of the Day: imperative (adjective) – use this word to describe something that is not simply necessary but is necessary soon! Finish this sentence: “To celebrate Humanitarian Day, it is imperative that we all __________.”
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It’s January 16.
Today is “National Nothing Day.” Is it really possible to do nothing? If you’re doing nothing, isn’t that doing something?

Trivial Fact of the Day: Which of these is not true about the number zero? a) it is an even number; b) it is an integer; c) it is a prime number.

Interesting Quote of the Day: “Love is so short, forgetting is so long.”
--Pablo Neruda (Chilean Poet)

Vocabulary Word of the Day: anarchist (noun) – use this fancy synonym to stand for a person who wants to do away with all forms of government or organized power. If our government was really reduced to nothing, could mankind behave civilly and fairly to each other? If so, for how long?
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It’s January 17.
Today is “Kid Inventor Day.” What are some ideas you have for an invention that could make a kid’s life easier?

Trivial Fact of the Day: Tigers have striped skin as well as striped fur. Ever seen a shaved tiger?

Interesting Quote of the Day: “Peace begins with a smile.” --Mother Teresa (Catholic humanitarian)

Vocabulary Word of the Day: innovation (noun) – this is a fancy word that can be used as a synonym for a beneficial new invention or product. This word contains the Latin root nov-, which means new. Renovate (to make something new again) and novice (a person new to something) also use this root. Can you think of two or three other new-related words that use nov-?
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It’s January 18.
Today is “Thesaurus Day.” Why is the word *dictionary* defined in the dictionary, but you can’t look up the word *thesaurus* in a thesaurus?

**Trivial Fact of the Day:** The average person falls asleep in 7 minutes. Are you above or below average?

**Interesting Quote of the Day:** “Always look at your moccasin tracks first, before you speak of another’s faults.” --Sauk Indian saying

**Vocabulary Word of the Day:** *immutable* (adjective) – this descriptive word can modify nouns that are unchangeable. The laws of physics are *immutable*. Are any of your parents’ rules immutable?
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It’s January 19.

Today is “Popcorn Day.” Besides popcorn, what other amenities** help you enjoy watching movies with your family?

Trivial Fact of the Day: On average, an inch of rainfall is equivalent to ten inches of snowfall. What’s the most snow or rain you watched come down in one storm?

Interesting Quote of the Day: “Mistakes are part of the dues one pays for a full life.” --Sophia Loren (Italian Actress)

**Vocabulary Word of the Day: amenity (noun) – use this fancy word as a synonym for an item that increases one’s comfort. What amenities do guests at hotel rooms receive? What amenities do you expect when visiting a favorite relative?
Sacred Writing Time

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It’s January 20.

Today is “Penguin Awareness Day.” What are some favorite facts you know about penguins? Might you make them into an acrostic poem?

Trivial Fact of the Day: Penguins eyes actually work better underwater than they do outside of the water.

Interesting Quote of the Day: “Every child is an artist. The problem is staying an artist once we grow up.” --Pablo Picasso (Spanish painter)

Vocabulary Word of the Day: mawkish (adjective) – use this word to describe any noun (like a book, poem, movie, or person) that is comes across as overly sentimental or emotional. When was the last time something mawkish brought either a genuine tear to your eye or a disgusted feeling to your gut?
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It’s January 21.

Today is “National Hugging Day.” Who in your family gives the best hugs? Who is your favorite anti-hugger?

Trivial Fact of the Day: Carrots were originally purple. Orange carrots came about through hybrid** attempts of Dutch farmers. You can still grow purple carrots from seed companies.

Interesting Quote of the Day: “Wisdom begins in wonder.”
--Socrates (Greek Philosopher)

**Vocabulary Word of the Day: hybrid (adjective) – use this word to describe something that comes from a mixture of two (or more) origins. Some cars and plants can be described as hybrids, but what else? Be creative!
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It’s January 22.
Today is “Celebration of Life Day.” What are three unique ways you could celebrate life today?

Trivial Fact of the Day: An apple is 25% air. That’s why they float on water. Have you ever bobbed for apples?

Interesting Quote of the Day: “A child’s life is like a piece of paper on which every person leaves a mark.” --Robert Heinlein (American writer)

Vocabulary Word of the Day: *nondescript* (adjective) – use this word to describe something or someone that has no specific characteristics to distinguish it from something or someone else. Finish this sentence: The lemur was *nondescript* except for its __________________.
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It’s January 23.
Today is “National Handwriting Day.” How will you legibly celebrate?

Trivial Fact of the Day: Leonardo Da Vinci wrote many notes to himself in “mirror style,” writing the letters backwards from right to left. Write “in mirror” here.

Interesting Quote of the Day: “It had long since come to my attention that people of accomplishment rarely sat back and let things happen to them. They went out and happened to things.” --Leonardo Da Vinci (Italian Renaissance man)

Vocabulary Word of the Day: laudatory (adjective) – use this word to describe a noun that is expressing praise or admiration. Where do you find written laudatory remarks? Where would you like to find more such remarks?
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It’s January 24.
Today is “Belly Laugh Day.” When was the last time you had a good laugh? Who has the funniest laugh you know?

Trivial Fact of the Day: The average-sized tree can make wood for 170,000 pencils.

Interesting Quote of the Day: “Don’t tell me the sky is the limit when there are footprints on the moon.” --Paul Brandt (Canadian Musician)

Vocabulary Word of the Day: nonchalant (adjective) – use this word to describe a person or a statement that shows a lack of concern or shows indifference. What’s the most nonchalant response to not passing a quiz or test?
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It’s January 25.
Today is “Opposite Day.” What would it be like to meet your exact opposite...or your own personal antithesis**?

Trivial Fact of the Day: One of William Shakespeare’s relatives—William Arden—was arrested for plotting against Queen Elizabeth I, imprisoned at the Tower of London, and executed for treason.

Interesting Quote of the Day: “No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.” --Eleanor Roosevelt (Former U.S. First Lady)

**Vocabulary Word of the Day: antithesis (noun) – use this fancy noun as a synonym for something that is the direct opposite; it is usually followed by the word of or to, like “He is the antithesis of generosity.”
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It’s January 26.
Today is “National Peanut Brittle Day.” What’s the best treat out there that combines salty and sweet? Has it been invented yet?

Trivial Fact of the Day: 2 and 5 are the only prime numbers that end with a 2 or a 5. What are the numbers that no prime number can ever end with?

Interesting Quote of the Day: “Make each day your masterpiece.”
--John Wooden (American basketball player and coach)

Vocabulary Word of the Day: **anachronistic** (adjective) – use this word to describe things or ideas that are out of their proper timeline. What **anachronistic** item might a time-traveler bring with him/her to best change the future?
Sacred Writing Time

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It’s January 27.

Today is “Holocaust Memorial Day.” What are some facts that you remember about the Holocaust?

Trivial Fact of the Day: Eating a lot of onions should make you sleepy because they act like a sedative.

Interesting Quote of the Day: “The way I see it, if you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain.” --Dolly Parton (American singer/actress)

Vocabulary Word of the Day: commemoration (noun) – this is a fancy word for a remembrance of something (like the Holocaust), especially one that has a ceremony associated with it. Your graduation from high school will be a commemoration you remember the rest of your life. What other future commemorations will probably happen to you?
Sacred Writing Time

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It’s January 28.

Today is “National Kazoo Day.” Is there any musical instrument that requires less musical talent than a kazoo?

Trivial Fact of the Day: Your heart is just about the same size as your fist. In your life, which of these two body parts packs the more powerful wallop***?

Interesting Quote of the Day: “Boldness has genius, power and magic in it.” --Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (German poet)

**Vocabulary Word of the Day: wallop (noun) – use this fancy word as a synonym for a heavy blow or punch. Boxing gloves can deliver these, but so can unexpected emotions. What else (be creative) can cause a wallop?
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It’s January 29.
Today is “National Puzzle Day.” What is the best puzzle ever introduced to mankind?

Trivial Fact of the Day: \[ 12 + 3 - 4 + 5 + 67 + 8 + 9 = 100 \]

Interesting Quote of the Day: “There are no extra pieces in the universe. Everyone is here because he or she has a place to fill, and every piece must fit itself into the big jigsaw puzzle.” --Dr. Deepak Chopra (Indian physician and writer)

Vocabulary Word of the Day: **palatable** (adjective) – use this descriptive word to modify a noun that is agreeable to the taste buds or agreeable to one’s sensibility. Some people find caviar palatable. What’s something weird that you find palatable?
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It’s January 30.
Today is “National Inane Answering Machine Day.” Can you create an inane** message for an answering machine during SWT today?

Trivial Fact of the Day: Pet hamsters can only see six inches in front of them, and they can run up to eight miles a night on their little exercise wheels.

Interesting Quote of the Day: “Everything you need is already inside [you]. Just Do It.” --Bill Bowerman (Co-founder of Nike)

**Vocabulary Word of the Day: inane (adjective) – this adjective can be applied to a noun that is silly and meaningless. What’s the most inane television show or movie you ever watched? What made it both silly and meaningless?
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It’s January 31.
Today is “Backward Day.” Can you write an original story or poem where things go a little bit “wardsback”?

Trivial Fact of the Day: Horseshoe crabs existed before dinosaurs.

Interesting Quote of the Day: “Life is a daring adventure or nothing.”
--Helen Keller (American author)

Vocabulary Word of the Day: presage (noun) – use this fancy word as a synonym for something that predicts a future event, or for a feeling of intuition one has about something that’s soon to happen? Have you ever met (or read about) anyone who experienced something that could be considered a presage?
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Yours in improving education,

--Corbett & Dena Harrison, lifelong learners and writing teachers

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