Activity Plan to Build Community

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Aim: To develop descriptive writing through word association

Motivation: What words come to mind when you think of your high school years at Huntington? What aspects of your experience do these words represent?

Presentation: Read a piece of your personal writing aloud to students and ask for feedback.

What aspects of my personality are revealed in this piece?

To which images could you relate on a personal level?

What are your suggestions for further exploration?

Share your experience writing this piece with students, paying close attention to the planning stages.

Show copies of the piece at various stages of development.

Note the sheer messiness of the writing process.

Guided practice: Students brainstorm words that represent themselves.

They select one word on which to focus that best reflects their unique experience.

They participate in a “quick write” in which they draft their own pieces based on the word of their choice.

Choose volunteers to sit in the author’s chair and read their pieces aloud to the class.

Class discussion ensues and the volunteers receive feedback.

Create a plan for furthering this draft.

Which part needs to be explained more?

Is there a point at which my story lacks vivid details?

What other word associations can be made to allow me to explore my unique experiences more profoundly?