

RAFTS: Role, Audience, Format, Topic + Strong Verb

RAFTS: This is a writing strategy where students take on a Role to write for a specific Audience. The Format might be a letter, speech, poster, video, or other display. The Topic is what the student must address in their work. Strong verb starts the Topic as a form of call to action for the writer.

Role: Point of view or perspective the writer takes.

Audience: Who the writer is communicating through the task.

Format: The medium of communication, e.g. journal, letter, scripted role play.

Topic: The focus of what the learner is communicating about.

Strong Verb: Creates a call to action for the participant. Usually phrased at the start of the Topic.

Here is an example for reading comprehension of Little Red Riding Hood:

- **State Objective:**
 - R.NT.02.03:** Identify and describe—character’s actions and motivations, setting (time and place), problem/solution, and sequence of events
 - R.CM.02.05:** Compare and contrast relationships among characters, events, and key ideas within and across texts to create a deeper understanding.
 - W.PR.02.01:** Consider audience and purpose for writing.
- **Lesson Objective:**
 - Show understanding of the story
 - Demonstrate knowledge of composing for a specific audience
 - Analyze motivation from the character’s perspective
- **Assessment:** Students will be able to articulate in writing and discussion understanding that story elements support character actions and motivation for an engaging story.

Role	Audience	Format	Topic
Grandma	Red	1-2 minute conversation Analytical	Save lives. Don’t talk to strangers.
Wolf	Defense Attorney	1-2 minute conversation Creative	Help me! I was framed!
Neighbor	PTO	Warning Posters Practical	Strangers & Red – Beware (A Cautionary Tale)
Wolf	Oprah	Memoir Letter Creative	Save me! I’m misunderstood.

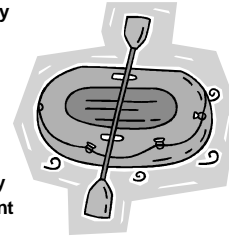
This RAFT example also incorporates a Sternberg activity as highlighted under Format. Students choose from the brain intelligence that best suits them for success.

A RAFT is...

- ... an engaging, high level strategy that encourages writing across the curriculum
- ... a way to encourage students to...
 - ...assume a role
 - ...consider their audience, while
 - ...examine a topic from their chosen perspective, and
 - ...writing in a particular format
- All of the above can serve as motivators by giving students *choice*, appealing to their *interests* and *learning profiles*, and adapting to student readiness levels.

RAFTs can...

- Be differentiated in a variety of ways: readiness level, learning profile, and/or student interest
- Be created by the students or incorporate a blank row for that option
- Be used as introductory "hooks" into a unit of study
- Keep one column consistent while varying the other columns in the RAFT grid



Sample RAFT Strips

	Role	Audience	Format	Topic
Language Arts	Semicolon	Middle School	Diary Entry	I Wish You Really Understood Where I Belong
	N.Y. Times	Public	Op Ed piece	How our Language Defines Who We Are
Science	Huck Finn	Tom Sawyer	Note hidden in a tree knot	A Few Things You Should Know
	Rain Drop	Future Droplets	Advice Column	The Beauty of Cycles
	Lung	Owner	Owner's Guide	To Maximize Product Life
History	Rain Forest	John Q. Citizen	Paste Up "Ransom" Note	Before It's Too Late
	Reporter	Public	Obituary	Hitler is Dead
	Martin Luther King	TV audience of 2000	Speech	The Dream Revisited
Math	Thomas Jefferson	Current Residents of Virginia	Full page newspaper ad	If I could Talk to You Now
	Fractions	Whole numbers	Petition	To Be Considered A Part of the Family
	A word problem	Students in your class	Set of directions	How to Get to Know Me

Format based on the work of Doug Buehl cited in Teaching Reading in the Content Areas: If Not Me Then Who? Billmeyer and Martin, 1998

Grade 6 Social Studies RAFT

Students will

Know:

Names and roles of groups in the feudal class system.

Understand:

Roles in the feudal system were interdependent. A person's role in the feudal system will shape his/her perspective on events.

Be Able to Do:

Research

See events through varied perspectives
Share research & perspectives with peers



Feudal System Raft

cont'd

Role	Audience	Format	Topic
King	The Subjects	Proclamation	Read My Lips, New Taxes
Knight	Squire	Job Description	Chivalry, Is it for You?
Lord	King	Contract	Let's Make a Deal
Serf	Animals	Lament Poem	My So Called Life
Monk	Masses	Illuminated Manuscript	Do As I Say, Not As I Do
Lady	Pages	Song	ABC, 123

Following the RAFT activity, students will share their research and perspectives in mixed role groups of approximately five. Groups will have a "discussion agenda" to guide their conversation.

-Kathryn Seaman

RAFT Assignments Grade 10 English

Know: Voice, Tone, Style

Understand:

- Every writer has a voice
- Voice is shaped by life experiences and reflects the writer
- Voice shapes expression
- Voice affects communication
- Voice and style are related

Be Able to Do:

- Describe a writer's voice and style
- Mimic a writer's voice and style
- Create a piece of writing that reflects a writer's voice and style



Role	Audience	Format	Topic
Edgar Allen Poe	10th grade writers	Letter	Here's how I found my voice
Garrison Keillor	10th grade writers	E mail	Here's how I found my voice
Emily Dickinson	Self	Diary entry	Looking for my voice
10th grader	English teacher	Formal request	Please help me find my voice
Teacher	10th graders	Interior monologue	Finding a balance between voice and expectations
3 authors	The public	Visual symbols/logos annotated	Here's what represents my voice
3 authors from different genre	One another	Conversation	What shaped my voice and style

RAFT Assignments: 3 Differentiated Versions ⇨ Interest, Learning Profile, Readiness

To differentiate the RAFT strategy, provide more than one choice. The choices are constructed based on Interest, Learning Profile, and/or Readiness of students.

Example:

Text: Little Red Riding Hood

Complete one of the following giving 2-3 reasons/points:

Differentiated by Interest

Role	Audience	Format	Topic
Grandma	Red	1-2 minute conversation	Why should you not talk to strangers?
Wolf	Neighbor	1-2 minute conversation	I was framed!
Neighbor	PTO	Warning Posters	Strangers & Red: A Cautionary Tale
Wolf	Oprah	Memoir Letter	I'm misunderstood.

☞ = Students choose the RAFT that most interests them.

Differentiated by Learning Profile (Sternberg Multiple Intelligences)

Role	Audience	Format	Topic
Grandma	Red	1-2 minute conversation Analytical	Why should you not talk to strangers?
Wolf	Neighbor	1-2 minute conversation Creative	I was framed!
Neighbor	PTO	Warning Posters Practical	Strangers & Red: A Cautionary Tale
Wolf	Oprah	Memoir Letter Creative	I'm misunderstood.

☞ = Students have limited choice or Teacher assigns the RAFT on how students learn best. Teacher might assign or limit student choice to areas that are not the strongest to challenge students to work from a different perspective. Relationships is critical when stretching students in their not so strong areas.

Differentiated by Readiness (Tiered: Less complex to more complex)

Role	Audience	Format	Topic
Red	Police	Deposition or plot chart	Here's what really happened.
Grandma	Red	1-2 minute conversation	Why should you not talk to strangers?
Wolf	Neighbor	1-2 minute conversation	I was framed!
Wolf	PTO	Warning Posters	Strangers & Red: A Cautionary Tale
Red	Friends	Obituary	A lesson I did not learn...
Wolf	Oprah	Memoir Letter	I'm misunderstood.

☞ = Students have limited choice or Teacher assigns the RAFT on students current skill level needs. If students get choices, it is limited to prompts in their readiness area. A struggling learner might get to choose between the first 2 options, but not the last option. Assigning is based on a student's zone of proximal growth (Vygotski).

Name: _____ Subject: _____ Lesson: _____

Objective:

Assessment:

Role	Audience	Format	Topic (Lead with a Strong Verb)

Guiding Questions for planning:

Objective: What should students know and understand when this lesson is completed?

Assessment: How will students show what they learned or did not learn the objective after the activity are completed?

Activity: How does the RAFTS support the objective and prepare students for the assessment?

List the lesson's objective and related assessment, before developing the RAFTS for best results.