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**Activity 12. Journal Topics**

*Are you ready to write just for fun? Write for 15 minutes without stopping on one of these topics. Try a new topic each day.*

1. Write about your school. What do you study? Where do you study? Do you like it?
2. Write about where you live. Is it an apartment or a house? Do you like it? What are the good things about living there?
3. Write about what your average day is like. What part of your day do you find boring? What part do you find exciting?
4. Write about your favorite animals. What kinds of animals do you like? Do you have any pets?

**Activity 13. Guided Sentence Practice**

*Answer the questions in full sentences. Start with a capital letter and end with a period or an exclamation point. Check for subjects and verbs.*

1. What is your name?

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2. How old are you?

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3. Where are you from?

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4. Are you a student?

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5. What do you study?

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6. Do you have a job?

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7. What work do you do?

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8. Where do you live?

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9. Do you like living in the U.S.?

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10. What do you like about living here?

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11. What do you miss most from your country?

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**Activity 14. Writing a First Draft**

*On a separate page, write a paragraph introducing yourself. Write about ten sentences. Use the sentences you wrote in Activities 12 and 13, and add more sentences if you like. Reread Benito's paragraph (see Activity 6 on page 7). Frank's and Ana's paragraphs follow. You may get some ideas from their writing too.*

**Sample Paragraphs:**

**A Little Bit about Me**

by Frank Forke

I am Frank Forke. I am from a small town in Germany, Lilletaal. It is twelve kilometers outside of the larger city of Bremen. I like the peacefulness and slow pace of a small town. However, I also enjoy the excitement of a big city. I am a musician. I play the guitar. I especially love Spanish and Latin American music. I want to earn a degree in music from City University. Then, I want to teach music and play as a professional.

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### An Introduction

by Ana Oprisan

My name is Ana. I am from Romania. I teach physics. I also study physics at City University. I am married. My husband studies at the university too. We have two children. Our son's name is Andraei. He is sixteen years old. Our daughter's name is Andra. She is fourteen. We live in a small apartment near the university.

## Transition Words

When writers link sentences in a paragraph, they sometimes add words to make the ideas between the sentences more clear. These words are often adverbs. **Adverbs** are words that add meaning to verbs, adjectives, sentences, or other adverbs. Adverbs that link sentences are called **transitions**. Look at the examples from Benito's, Ana's, and Frank's paragraphs:

- He thinks the apartment is small. **However**, he likes being near his classes.
- I like the peacefulness and slow pace of a small town. **However**, I also enjoy the excitement of a big city.
- I want to earn a degree in music from City University. **Then**, I want to teach music and play as a professional.
- My husband studies at the university **too**.

Transitions often come at the beginning of the sentences but not always. Try using transitions in your paragraphs.



## Revision

Even good writers do not write a perfect paragraph the first time. They write first, and then they rewrite. They look back over what they have written and make decisions. They can add or take away what does not seem to fit. This process is called **revision**.

Revision is hard work. It is difficult to see how a paragraph can be changed to make it better. Other readers can help. Your classmates will help you revise your paragraph.