

## Welcome!

Whether this is your first or 191st issue of *Teen Ink*, you and your students are part of a vibrant community. Created in 1989 to inspire teen writing, creativity and communication, *Teen Ink* is a forum for sharing experiences, opinions, ideas and more.

Teachers use *Teen Ink* in a variety of ways. For many, it has become an indispensable part of their curriculum. Some use the entire publication; others focus on certain sections. Some teachers send submissions to *Teen Ink* for their students; others encourage students to submit independently, while many teachers just give the magazine to interested students to take home.

Maybe you have plans for this publication in your classroom, maybe you're intrigued but unsure of how to incorporate it into your already-busy schedule. One thing is certain: the magazine inspires a new, positive attitude among teens toward writing and reading.

This guide, created by members of the *Teen Ink* Teacher Advisory Board, is full of ideas on how to use *Teen Ink* in the classroom. We hope this will help your students become proud, published authors joining more than 45,000 teens published over the years.

Here's to a great year of writing and publishing!

*John Meyer and Stephanie Meyer*, Publishers  
*Emily Sperber*, Editor

## You're Invited!

### Join the *Teen Ink* TEACHER ADVISORY BOARD

*No meetings!*  
*No obligations!*

As a member of the Teen Ink Teacher Advisory Board, you may serve as a liaison, participating in surveys and other special projects. You could also be listed on our website as a resource for other teachers.

If you want to join, just email us your name, subject, school address, and phone number.

**Email Teachers@TeenInk.com**

## Coming up in *TEEN INK* ...

### SEPTEMBER

Give your students writing assignments with the goal of getting published. Have them read this first issue and send us feedback on an article, or submit their own.

### OCTOBER

- **Fall Poetry Journal in your box of magazines**

- **The clock keeps on ticking ...**

Now's the time to introduce project ideas like the Interview and Educator of the Year contests. See [TeenInk.com/Contests](http://TeenInk.com/Contests) for details on these and other *Teen Ink* contests.

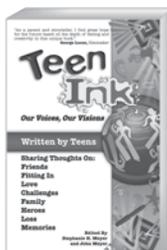
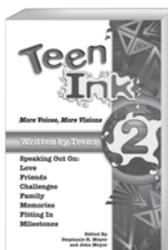
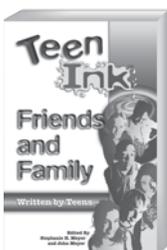
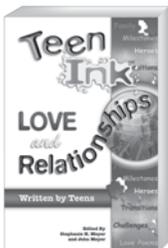
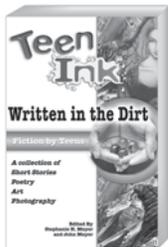
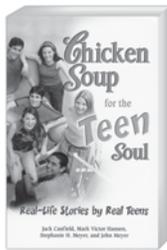
- **Winter holidays approach**

Holiday pieces should be submitted *now* to have a shot of getting in the December issue.

## Keep in Touch!

Write to  
**teachers@teenink.com**  
and let us know what  
your students think of the  
magazine, and if this guide  
is helpful to you.

Send us an email, and we will keep you up-to-date on what's new at *Teen Ink* throughout the year.



**“I** have been teaching for 33 years, and I am still learning. Once a teacher falls back on the ‘tried and true,’ the class and the world pass him or her by. Teen Ink has been a new approach to writing. It has become my writing curriculum, and slowly, for others in the department.

Almost all students write for an audience of their teacher. That’s wrong. They need to learn to use the teacher as an editor and Teen Ink as the audience. If this simple formula becomes the modus operandi, wonderful things will happen in the classroom.”

Tom Helms, Cortez High, AZ



## LANGUAGE AND READING

In small groups, have students read aloud selected poems and stories to help build vocabulary and reading skills.

Let students read the publication again and again before opening the door to writing. Have them discuss and analyze what makes a particular story, poem, essay or review worthy of publication. Help them develop their ability to argue points about literature.

*“There are so many articles with so many interests that my students always find something they want to read. The fact that they are reading when the bell rings and ask to borrow the magazine so they can finish is an indication of the interest level.”*

Barb Baltrinic, Ellet High, OH

## Teen Ink Books

Inspiring teen voices speak of the highs and lows they experience completely unfiltered by an adult viewpoint.

Available everywhere

Learn more at [TeenInk.com](http://TeenInk.com)

Have students study the Reviews section. Ask them to highlight words or phrases writers used to express both negative and positive opinions. Which reviews do they feel would encourage them to read, listen or view a work? Which would they now avoid?

Use the publication to teach figurative language. Have students find a specified number of examples of similes, metaphors, allusions, hyperboles, etc.

*“Not only have my students been more successful in the identification of literary devices, but they also see the value of figurative language in good writing. It’s not just Shakespeare, Spenser, Shelley and Keats who speak of things in a lofty manner; it’s good writers everywhere – including teens. After this assignment, students don’t complain as much about the complication of symbolism in literature.”*

Lila Petre, Macon R-1 High, MO



## OVERALL WRITING

Use a particular issue as a guide to encourage students to write on a particular topic or in a certain style.

Give students a worksheet describing each of the magazine’s sections and request a potential submission (with the option of submitting artwork or photography for extra credit).

If some complain they can’t write poetry or short stories, point out other sections, including reviews, community service and feedback.

*“Empower your students to be authors, to find their voices and speak out. Don’t limit their choices. Let them choose what they will write about (within the bounds of propriety) and encourage them to exercise chutzpah! Be creative and be an original.”*

Christine Berman, Cohasset High, MA



## OPINION ESSAYS

Use the opinion articles each month as potential essay focus, or give students a controversial topic and ask them to rate its importance. Then conduct a class discussion on which would be easiest to write about. Students usually choose topics they feel most strongly about.

Use the magazine to help students practice defending their opinions and reacting to others.

Use Teen Ink to furnish examples of opinion pieces and articles where the author feels very strongly. Have students write a feedback

to that article and, ultimately, write their own opinion piece.



## COLLEGE ESSAYS

Have students write about topics which are often asked on college application questions, such as an event or experience which demonstrates a quality about them; someone they admire; or what they want to be doing in 10 or 20 years.

Read the college essays in Teen Ink. As a class, discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each. Does the essay begin with an “attention grabber”? How is the essay focused? Are the language and diction appropriate for the purpose and the audience? Is the same word used frequently? Are words used accurately? Could any sentences be rewritten or combined to be more effective? Are sentence beginnings varied or are the sentences primarily noun-verb in structure? Are transitional words or phrases used to unify the essay?

Use the above questions as a score sheet for one or two of the essays in the magazine. Pretend to be a scholarship committee or admissions officer and judge which student you would admit to your school based on his or her essay in Teen Ink. Then as a class, vote and rank your selections.

*“Students are appreciative of the in-class opportunity to make a start at a task that often seems overwhelming and scary. Reading the college essays in Teen Ink helped students see that they had their own ideas to write about. I learn much about my students by reading essays in which they stress a piece of family history or a significant talent or event in their lives.”*

*Kathryn Symmes, Poudre High, CO*



## CRITICISM AND PEER EDITING

Divide students into small groups and have them read a *Teen Ink* story aloud, then list four strengths and four weaknesses.

Encourage them to be as specific as possible. Then compare how the groups responded to the same story.

Using *Teen Ink* as a revising tool, help students develop workshop skills without putting anyone on the spot. In small groups, each uses the same issue of the magazine and chooses a piece to workshop.

Brainstorm as a class as to what kind of feedback writers want: areas/images that are strong/confusing/trite; wording that is fun/unusual/unclear/old/over-used; titles that help/hinder; etc. Have each student read and mark his/her own copy of the group piece. Next, have the group discuss the piece, including the best way to give criticism.

*“Teen Ink publishes work from all age groups and ability levels. My students enjoy criticizing or praising individual selections without regard for the feelings of the student author. Honest analysis is an important concept for students to learn. Practicing these skills with examples that approximate their level of writing without the added burden of guarding their opinions is quite liberating to these authors.”*

*Gale Applegate, Eufaula High, OK*



## POETRY

Try exercises that take the focus off the feeling and meaning and place it on language. Most classes find this fun, and it often produces ideas for new poems.

Inexperienced poets can learn to play with words. Use *Teen Ink* to give them some

words to play with:

*Borrowed Words:* Have students revise by working in nouns or verbs (as many as one per line) which they borrow from a poem they admire. This exercise can also work by borrowing from a piece of prose.

*Reversal:* Have students revise a poem they admire by expressing the ideas in reverse order. They will discover how much of the original is logical and how much is emotional.

*Negation:* Revise an admired poem by negating the sense. Remember Yeats’ “Sailing To Byzantium”? “That is no country for old men.”

*Pastiche:* Assemble a new poem by taking single lines from poems spread out over two pages of *Teen Ink*.

*“Part of the problem is the kind of poetry studied in literature classes. High school courses tend to be heavy in romantic poetry wherein the poet most often tosses on his/her bed of pain. The teacher’s main function is usually explication, putting the emphasis on the expression of emotion and ideas, while often ignoring language. The*

*poems typically published in Teen Ink make a good bridge from that kind of teaching to a focus on more precise use of language.”*

*Anthony Backes, Brown Deer High, WI*



## FEEDBACK

Use the Feedback section to challenge reluctant students to write. Even a student for whom writing can be a chore can send in feedback about an article or the magazine in general.

Have students type the letters using proper business-letter format, and peer edit each other’s work before submitting.



## REVIEWS

After students attend an event, have them write a review. Talk about what is included in review writing.

Choose a sample book review from *Teen Ink*. Ask small groups to study the tone and structure.

Using a novel or story the class has read, ask groups to create a review. Have them

share their reviews.

Ask each student to review a favorite CD, movie or book, regardless of how current. Consider allowing class time to go over the drafts.

When all students have shared their reviews, allow classmates to vote on the books, CDs or movies they feel they would most consider or avoid.

*“One of the first sections my students turn to is the ‘Reviews.’ They want to know what their peers think of the same concerts, CDs, movies and videos they see and listen to. This year, Teen Ink published a review to which one of my more cynical, surly students sat down and wrote Feedback because he found a mistake. I encouraged him to do so; it was his first attempt at writing to anyone other than me, his English teacher.”*

*Kathy Megyeri, Sherwood High, MD*



## INTERVIEWS

Have students participate in the ongoing Interview contest with the chance to win an interview with a famous person.

Encourage teens to reach out and learn more about their families and community figures.

After they choose their subjects, have students prepare by learning about the person’s history and achievements. Then have them think about the questions they will ask. Suggest open-ended questions that will encourage long responses, rather than detailed questions that will make the interview mechanical.

*“Interviews are one of the greatest single sources of information for writers operating in the real world, yet are rarely assigned in high-school classes. The interviews Teen*

*Ink provide are great examples. My students don’t always believe it, but any person engaged in real conversation with an active listener can provide the raw materials for an excellent piece of writing. Sometimes students have learned surprising things about their parents or grandparents. Other times, a boss or teacher with whom the student has had a hard time getting along can provide insight into a life that makes the young person see that adult in a new light.”*

*Anthony Backes, Brown Deer High, WI*

## NOVEMBER

### • The College Issue

Encourage upperclassmen to send college essays, reviews of schools they've visited, and articles about the application process.

## DECEMBER

### • Ah, Family Time

Those gatherings make for great stories and photographs, even when students are on vacation and "off-duty."

## JANUARY

### • Resolved: I Will Send Work to *Teen Ink*, I Will ...

Send one last present – your students' writing, art or photography to *Teen Ink*. It could be the gift that keeps on giving, if one of your students is published.

### • Winter Poetry Journal

## FEBRUARY

### • But, of course ...

This we know for sure: the Focus will zero in on love.

## MARCH

Before the crush of final exams, encourage students to send their best work for possible publication.

## APRIL

- Spring College Issue

## MAY

### • Focus on Mothers & Fathers

## SUMMER ISSUE

### • It Could Be You

Educator of the Year Contest winners announced.

### • Creative Writing Issue

*More to follow! Send us your email address (to [teachers@teenink.com](mailto:teachers@teenink.com)) so we can keep you updated!*

## CROSS-CURRICULUM

Share copies with other teachers who might do a cross-curriculum exercise.

Encourage students to create "found poems" using biology terms.

Ask the yearbook advisor to do a unit on photography for creative expression.

Share *Teen Ink* with art and photography teachers so they can send students' art.

Many schools have community service requirements for students. Use *Teen Ink's* Community Service section to show students the possibilities and opportunities available, and have them write about their own experiences for publication.

## RECOGNITION

Display your students' writings outside your room for other students to read.

When students are published, have their names read over the loudspeaker during morning announcements. Have them listed in the school newspaper. Give members of the school committee a copy of the publication with their articles highlighted so they can be recognized at meetings.

Have students keep a PEP (Personal Education Plan) folder. Whenever they are published, add this to their folder, and include it on their resumé. Being published may give an added push to a scholarship committee looking over a student's credentials.

Offer extra credit points to students who submit articles for publication.

## CASUAL USES

Even if you don't have time in class to devote to the magazine, its mere presence is often enough to make the difference for a young writer or reader. Why does a casual approach work? Because *Teen Ink* is fun and interesting to read.

Simply make *Teen Ink* available to students. Give them time to read as much or as little as

they want.

Allow students to take issues home.

After a lesson or test or during study hall when some students finish early, make the box of magazines available for students to enjoy reading during this quiet time.

## FINAL COMMENTS

Many teachers have told us that everything changes when the first student in a school is published in *Teen Ink*. The magazine takes on a whole new importance and relevance.

*"I am quite dependent on this publication – I would be lost without it. One of my greatest 'teaching moments' occurred this year when I introduced Teen Ink to my new class of skeptical juniors. I told them how it was a teen publication and all they heard was 'poetry' (yuck!) I passed out the magazine, and after a few minutes of paper shuffling and a few groans, the class grew silent – completely silent – for the remainder of the period! To see a student during the last period on Friday look up disappointed as the dismissal bell rings is the greatest sight a teacher can behold, and because of Teen Ink, I had that 'teaching moment' – the rare instance which lets those of us in education feel successful. I wanted to shout and*

*"English Teacher Heaven: where your students write circles around you and credit you with teaching them how to do it ... it's real! I've been there!"*

*Faith Krinsky,  
Ward Melville High, NY*

*skip down the hallway that day, 'I did it! I turned their lights on! They liked it!' "*

*Lila Petre, Macon R-1 High, MO*

You may improve your students' chances of being published by suggesting they submit to sections other than poetry.

Encourage your students to submit often, since all submissions are also considered for our new website, *Teen Ink Raw* ([TeenInk.com/raw](http://TeenInk.com/raw)).

*Teen Ink* thanks the members of the Teacher Advisory Board for their contributions to this guide.

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