

*** SPARK**

Life in the Time of Coronavirus

GRADES 9–12

TYPE
NARRATIVE

Whether students write to process, to remember, to imagine, or to heal, this collection of prompts asks students to recognize how their world has changed in response to COVID-19.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- Life in the Time of Coronavirus — Handout
- Pencils, pens, computer, markers, or other writing device of your choice

WHAT YOU WILL DO

As we are all grappling with a new reality in the wake of COVID-19, 826 believes it's [#agoodtimetowrite](#). Writing offers students an opportunity to process, to imagine new worlds, to heal. This collection of writing prompts asks students to reflect how their experiences and relationships have transformed in response to the Coronavirus, and reminds us that there is power in writing through the most difficult of moments.

STEPS

- 1.¹ Students will select one or more topic(s) from the options below, review the questions, and read the related article.
2. Next, students will create a list, freewrite, or [mind map](#) to begin brainstorming. They should only respond to the questions that most resonate within their chosen topic. Optional: If a structure for informal peer feedback is available to your students, arrange for them to pair up and share their brainstorm with a peer to get early feedback on their ideas.
3. Ask students to choose one idea, phrase, or detail from the brainstorm to begin their written response. Students should also determine a preferred form for their response: memoir/narrative, a journal entry, a letter to a community member (or their future selves), a poem, etc.

4. **Once students are done writing, they can [submit their work](#)**

for a chance to be featured in the 826 Digital Writing Gallery, shared in a video on our #agoodtimetowrite YouTube channel and more! 826 National is accepting submissions at the url listed below:

<https://826national.org/submityourwriting/>

PROMPTS

1. Life in the Time of Coronavirus:

- What does a regular day look / sound / feel like while you shelter-in-place?
- What's been the biggest change in your day-to-day life?
- Describe a moment when you felt most hopeful, frustrated, scared, etc.
- Take photos or record quotes from a “day in the life” with your family members. What do you want to remember from this extended time together?

Related article — [Photos: Life in the Time of Coronavirus](#)

2. Coronavirus Academy:

- What do you wish your teachers or parents could understand about your experience learning at home?
- What do you miss most about school?
- How has this experience changed the way you think about school and/or learning?

Related article — [“I Can’t Believe I Am Going to Say This, but I Would Rather Be at School”](#)

3. Who Bought All the Toilet Paper?:

- What have you observed or learned about human behavior?
- What kinds of human responses to the Coronavirus and shelter-in-place order have surprised you?

- Your daily routines and behaviors have shifted in some dramatic ways. What have you learned about yourself through this change?

Related article — [Fear of coronavirus sends consumers into a grocery-hoarding frenzy](#)

4. #AloneTogether or Social Distancing with Friends:

- How have you and your friends been spending time together?
- Have your friendships changed?
- Do you believe “social distancing” is an accurate phrase to describe your social life right now? If not, what’s a better phrase?

Related article — [Instead of social distancing, practice “distant socializing” instead](#)

5. State and Local Response:

- Do you think the best solution is to shelter-in-place? What other solutions do you envision?
- What does the national, state, and/or local response to the Coronavirus say about our government’s relationship with underserved communities? How do COVID-19 orders and policies, such as the shelter-in-place order, impact people differently?

Related article — [Opinion: Social Distancing is a Privilege](#)

6. Life After Coronavirus:

- How do you think the world will change once the pandemic ends?
- When you think back to this pandemic twenty years from now, what moments do you most want to remember? What do you hope you'll forget?
- Imagine your first day back at school. How will this return to “normal” feel?

Related article — [Generation C Has Nowhere to Turn](#)

Optional Extension: Encourage students to keep a “shelter-in-place” journal with these prompts in mind to record their experiences and remember this moment in their lives long after it passes.