

Phrases for Building Students' Writing Stamina

Student Who Stops Writing Says/Does	Potential Response(s)
<p>"I don't know what to write. I'm confused."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "If you're confused, write down your question(s)."/ "Jot down what's confusing for you in the margin..."/ "Try writing a sentence that starts with 'I'm confused by.'" • "Give me your best, even if you're not sure it's right."
<p>"My hand hurts! I need to take a break."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The goal is to push yourself, so keep going—<i>especially</i> when it's tough." • "If your hand hurts, that means you're building stamina. That's the goal, so keep it moving!" • "In college, you'll be expected to write for a lot longer. This is preparing you for that." • "You only have two minutes left to finish that beautiful start to your <i>Everybody Writes</i>. Don't quit now!" • "Everyone will get a break when the writing task is over. Until then, I need to see you writing. Thank you."
<p>"I'm done. I already answered the question."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "If you're done, go back and check your work for _____ (spelling, grammar, etc.)" • "It looks like you responded to the first part of the question but not the second. Reread the question to make sure you respond to <i>both</i> parts." • "Good. Now let me see if you can tackle this question: (insert <i>Stretch it</i> Question). • "Good. Now try to see if you can rewrite your answer using the sentence starter, 'At first glance...'"

<p>Engages in the “slow play”—continually writing a few words, then erasing them</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “ I see that your pencil is moving, but you’ve only written X sentences in X minutes. You’ll need to pick up the pace if you want to finish.” • “I don’t want perfection, I just want you to show me your best. No need to keep tweaking it to make it perfect. You’ll have a chance to revise when you’re done.” • “This is just a first draft, so get all of your thoughts down and answer the question as best as you can. We’ll save revision for later.” • “If you’re having trouble getting started, try beginning your paragraph with the phrase “ _____...”
<p>...“What time is lunch again?” (or other off-topic question)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Back to work.” • “We haven’t started discussion yet, so keep writing.” • “Write first, and we’ll talk later.” • “What I asked you to do was respond to X question, so pick up your pencil and start writing.
<p>Raises his/her hand to ask an on-topic question</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “When your hand is raised, your pencil should still be moving.” • “No need to stop writing to raise your hand.” • “I’ll take your question once I see you writing.”