

LabVenture! Writing Activity

Dear Teacher,

The Gulf of Maine Research Institute (GMRI) and The Telling Room thank you for participating in this enrichment opportunity! Enclosed you'll find a lesson plan, writing prompts, and a student response template.

We are interested in learning what students take away from the *LabVenture!* program, so we designed a writing exercise that we hope will reveal some of the lasting qualities of the program. GMRI wants to make *LabVenture!* as powerful a student experience as possible. The Telling Room, a nonprofit writing center also based in Portland, will consider submissions for publication in its annual anthology of student writing. The Telling Room will also support GMRI in evaluating student responses. Together, our two organizations hope this writing exercise also benefits you and seamlessly integrates into your curriculum; we encourage you to make it a graded assignment and send us copies of student work rather than the originals. Any feedback you have to help us make this writing activity mutually beneficial is welcome.

Once your students transition back to school, they have a chance to reflect on what they learned in *LabVenture!* The writing activities enclosed seek to reinforce the tools students learn in *LabVenture!* We recognize that this writing activity is still in its infancy, and we are open and eager to hear what you think.

Please use the provided envelope to return students' writing.

We are hoping that completed materials can be returned by:

Please mail completed writing to:

The Telling Room c/o Nick Schuller, 225 Commercial Street #201, Portland, ME 04101

Please don't hesitate to contact us with questions or comments.

Thank you!

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The Telling Room
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Teacher Guide

Writing Assignment:

30 minutes

Now that your students have experienced the *LabVenture!* program, we invite you to enrich their experience with a short writing assignment.

The three prompts on the following worksheet are designed to encourage your students to have fun while thinking more deeply about themselves as scientists and the process of scientific inquiry. Have students choose one of the prompts that they want to respond to. The recommended minimum length for a finished response is a half page single spaced, though we hope that students want to write more! During the drafting process ask students to cite specific examples from their experience in *LabVenture!* at GMRI, the use of evidence, data, and scientific reasoning. This exercise should take an entire class period.

To get the students in the right frame of mind we suggest a brief writing warm-up exercise.

Warm-up:

15- 20 minutes

Have students get out a notebook or laptop and prepare to do some quick sensory writing. Have a clock, stopwatch, or timer on hand. Say each of the following phrases aloud one at a time and ask students to write in response to the phrase. This is rapid response writing. Encourage pens to paper before saying the phrase, set your timer and go! Give them one minute to respond to each phrase. Their writing should be stream of consciousness.

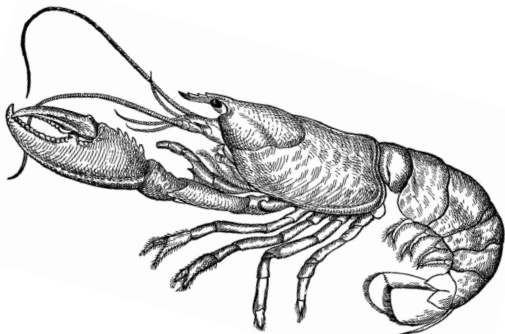
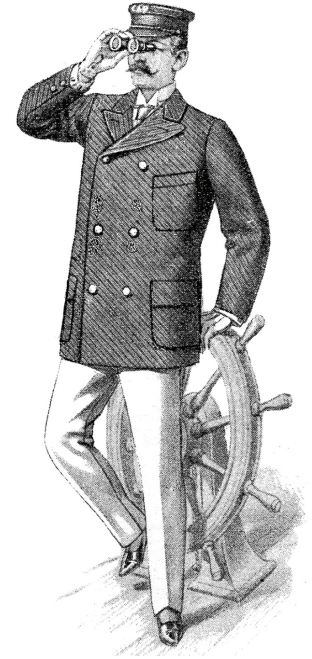
- *The smell of the ocean*
- *The feel of rubber gloves*
- *The sound of the GMRI research lab*
- *The sight of the LabVenture bus*
- *The taste of seafood*

Circle up and ask each student to choose one response to share aloud with the full group.

LabVenture! Writing Prompts

1. You are a scientist in 10 years (describe yourself, draw a picture). While on a top secret research experiment on your boat in Casco Bay, you discover a new species of _____ in the water (draw it). Being careful not to disturb the ecosystem, you harvest a small sample to take back to your lab for further study. On the boat ride back, you _____ (pick one sense from smell, hear, see, taste, feel) something strange coming from the sample, and when you get closer you notice it does _____ when it interacts with _____!

How will you study this new species?
What could the new species' role in the ecosystem be?



2. Imagine you are a lobster of the future in the year 3000! Warming water, due to climate change, has caused your old predators, like cod, to move further north. However, a new predator has moved into the Gulf of Maine. What does this predator look like? How does it find and eat lobsters? How does this new predator affect your behavior? How can you adapt to survive?

3. Harry the Herring and Colleen the Copepod form an unlikely friendship. Write a conversation of them explaining their daily lives to each other.

