Project-Based Learning (PBL)
(International Cycle)
Guidebook for Students

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2015

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A Program for Improving English Proficiency

Exercise 1: Answer these questions individually, then discuss in your groups.

1. Do you think learning English is important for you. Why?
2. What are your problems in learning English?
3. Do you like learning English?
4. Are you willing to try new ways to learn English?

Exercise 2: Read the following section on self-learning carefully and underline the main points. Do you agree with the views expressed in this section? Discuss with your groups.

Cultivate ‘Self-learning’ habits so as to become an independent learner. Here are some suggestions specially to improve your English. Learning English or any other language is different from learning other subjects. Language learning is a skill and you learn it only by using language meaningfully, as much as you can in your everyday life. Grammar and vocabulary give you the ‘base’ but you can only learn English if you use it and practice it in everyday life. For other ‘subjects’, you can read books and learn but remember you can learn English only if you use it.

Have you ever noticed how children learn a language? They first listen to other people speaking the language around them. Then they start making sounds. After that they start speaking one word at a time. This increases to two to three words such as ‘abba cap’ ‘amma go’. Slowly and gradually they start expressing themselves and their needs. Researchers say that children gain good control of language by the time they are ten years old.

You have had very little exposure to English language that is why you have problems in using English.

If you want to learn English well, you must do the following regularly:

1. **Listen** to as much English as you can and observe carefully what goes around you. Listen to radio programs (specially the news), watch English movies. You can also listen to English language learning tapes. (Online references)

2. **Speak** as much English as you can. Talk to your friends and peers in English. Talk to your tutors in English. Use your hands or gestures, if you can’t find the word for what you want to say. Use Urdu/native language words in between but make a note of these words and ask someone their English version later. **Do not be afraid of making mistakes.** If you keep practicing, your mistakes will automatically be reduced.

3. **Read** as much English as you can. Read newspapers and magazines. Look up encyclopedias for facts which you need for your project work. Keep a ‘scrap book’ with newspaper articles
and writings which you like. Read short novels, stories, news about cricket, or any other topic which interests you. Remember, you have to have a lot of ‘input’ before ‘output’ in language. So you will be able to speak and write fluently only if you continue to read a lot and your brain gets enough vocabulary, correct grammatical structures, and of course ideas. Another useful point to remember is that it is important to get the general idea of the text you read. **It is not important to know the meaning of all the words you do not know.** Try to guess the meaning from the context. Consult a dictionary only if the word hampers overall meaning. Allocate a section of your notebook to keep a record of new word you learn.

4. **Write** regularly. Only by writing regularly will you be able to gain confidence as a writer. Write summaries of what you read. Write a daily diary of your activities and do the free writing exercise, which is being outlined for you. Make sure you do the collaborative writing task regularly and exchange your work with a class fellow. Write items for your project work, class newspaper and book reviews. When you write regularly, you will discover you are gaining fluency automatically.

This is the very special program which aims at improving your English language skills through exciting, self-directed, self-generated activities.

Remember, YOU are the key figure in your journey to learning English. Just as no one can see for you or hear for you, no one can learn for you. This program will help you to find ways and strategies to learn English by providing you occasions to use English meaningfully. Your teacher will help you and guide you. But you will need to take initiatives and be responsible for your learning.
On-going activities for improving your English:
The following activities will be part of your self-learning program.

1. Profile Card
An exciting activity which aims to give you an opportunity for self-expression will contain. Specification Double A-4 size card paper page 1 will be the title page, and 2-3 your personal information e.g.

The first page is your title page. On this page you write your name and photograph (optional) In the two inner pages you write:

(Note: Your profile card will be displayed at the closing session, and the three best profile cards will be awarded certificates.)

Here are some sample profile cards:
2. Improving Oral Skills

- Your group of 3/6 members is also your “Language Club”, which you can use to practice and improve or gain fluency in speaking. Your hesitation will disappear only if you speak, even if you make mistakes. So do not worry about mistakes. Make communication your goal. Use gestures, and words from your mother-tongue/or common language of the group, if you cannot find the English word. Note down the word, and ask another peer, or your teacher. ONLY THROUGH SPEAKING TO YOUR FRIENDS IN ENGLISH REGULARLY YOU WILL IMPROVE “SPEAKING POWER”.

- In the 10-12 week program, use the following procedure:
  - Try to converse to each other in English at least while working on PBL.
  - Help and remind each other to speak in English

**Language Club**

Here is a suggested time for your speaking practice in your language club.

**Week 1-3**  
Set “structured speaking time” at least 10/15 minutes per day in your group. Allocate 2-5 minutes to each group member to talk about “what I did/or learn yesterday”. Nominate in rotation one time keeper, so everyone gets equal opportunity. Make sure everyone contributes. Use hands, gestures for words you cannot remember in English. Ask others to help in the beginning, use words from your native language but as little as possible.

**Week 4-6**  
Reduce time to 1 minute per member on topic “What I did yesterday”. Use the other three minutes to give ‘prepared talk’. If you cannot think of a topic, choose a topic from the “Pot of Gold” in the Students’ handbook.

**Week 7**  
Use 1 minute for “What I did yesterday” One minute for ‘prepared talk’  
(onwards) topic and 2 minutes for extempore speech for which; write lots of topics on chits of paper, put in the middle of the group. Pick up one and talk to your group member on the topic given. While one member talks others must listen
carefully to understand what is being said. Also note mentally, or jot down mistakes and questions.

Note: Structured speaking times will help you improve your speaking power, it will make you fluent. You can continue these practices even after the PBL research is over, so that you continue to improve your English.

**Project-based Learning**

**Peer Evaluation of Oral Presentations:**

**Group or Individual**

Presenter(s): __________________________________________________________

Topic: _______________________________________________________________

Directions to the class: Check the box that best describes how you feel about each phrase.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spoke clearly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looked at the audience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gave accurate information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stayed on the topic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made the information understandable and interesting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seemed to know what they were talking about and had prepared their presentation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used visual aids when appropriate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I learned______________________________________________________________

The most interesting part of the presentation was ____________________________

That part was interesting to me because ____________________________________

One suggestion for improvement might be ____________________________

Further questions I have about the topic are ________________________________

**3. Procedure for Self-Created Cloze**

* Use your English textbook for this activity or ask your teacher for guidance.
* Try to write at least one paragraph every day.

The aim of this exercise is to improve your
* Handwriting
* Punctuation
* Reading comprehension
* Grammar
* Proofreading skills

**Step: 1**

a. Select a paragraph.

b. Mark or underline every 5th word.

c. Copy the passage in your best handwriting, leaving out the marked word, draw a blank line instead.

d. Close the book. Take a break.

e. Fill in the blanks.

**Step: 2**

Check your work:

Have you put in a margin?
Have you put in the date?
Have you indented the paragraph?
Does the writing look neat and tidy?

Open your textbook and check if you punctuated your work correctly.
Check your responses in the blanks.
Check the number of blanks and give yourself one mark for each correct answer.
Example: Now what are you **doing** with yourself when you **aren’t** working? Before examination some **students** do nothing at all except sit in a chair and worry. Marks 4/4.

(Note: If you score below 40% marks, leave out every 6th/7th/8th word. Move to the next level after you have gained 80% marks.)

**4. Procedure for Newspaper**

1. Form groups of four.
2. Decide in the group whether you want to do a newspaper or a book. Your teacher will guide you.
3. Go to the library and look at English Newspapers. What do they contain? (e.g. political News, sports, business, advertisements etc.).
4. Decide on topics/sections you want to have in your newspaper/book
Find information/pictures etc. to put in your newspaper
Write a draft of the things you select for the newspaper/book.
In your group correct/check spellings grammar of the drafts.
You can take help from someone/teacher before you write your final draft.
The final presentation will be shared in a display.

5. Procedure for Book

1. Decide on a topic. It can be from your course book, or a topic your group chooses.
2. Look at some books i.e. their title, inside title, blurbs, division of chapters' etc.

From 3 onwards, the same process as for the class newspaper will be followed.

Here are some samples:

Sample Project Work

6. The Magic of Free Writing

The aim of this activity is to gain confidence and fluency in writing. It also helps you to gain the power of self-expression.
Language researchers say that students all around the globe have found ‘Free writing’ a wonderful strategy to gain fluency in writing. Here are the steps to follow.

1. Allocate a separate section in your notebook for free writing
2. Everyday, devote at least five minutes to free writing
3. Draw a margin, put the date.
4. Begin writing, AND DO NOT STOP YOUR HAND MOVEMENT FOR FIVE MINUTES. If you do not come up with a new sentence or idea, just repeat the old one, but continue to write.
5. You can write on any subject. It can be personal – how you feel about something, someone, or how happy/unhappy you are and the reasons. You can describe what’s around you or a person who is in the room or someone you think of, or remember. You can write about issues, which you feel strongly about. Or you can narrate something enjoyable that happened to you or you were unhappy about. In short, free writing can be on any topic of your choice.
6. Free writing can be entirely personal, i.e. writing which you do not want to share with anyone. Or you can exchange your writing with a friend and ask for comments. You can also give it to your teacher for comments. Remember free writing is only for ‘comments’ not correction; so that you can write without fear of mistakes.

If you practice free writing regularly, you will notice your hesitation and fear of writing will go away. You will also discover your volume of writing will increase as you go along practicing regularly.

Remember: Free Writing is Magic only if you write regularly.
Look at the Annexure 1 “Pot of Gold” if you need any ideas for writing.

7. Radio News
Aim: This exercise will improve your listening skills. It will also improve your note-taking skills.
Step 1: Make the following grid in your English Language Proficiency workbook.

Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Doer/Person</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yesterday</td>
<td>Prime Minister</td>
<td>Inaugurated conference</td>
<td>Kathmandu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 2: Listen to the radio news at a time convenient to you.
Tape only the headlines while listening to it.

Fill in the grid as you listen to the news. See example above.

**Step 3:**

Put your workbook face down
Play back the recorded news.
Fill in the portions you missed in the first listening.
Play back the recorded news again.
Check your responses and complete the grid as you play the recorded news.
Look at a newspaper to check spellings/compare facts.

**8. Cinquaine**

A five-line grammar poem

You can be a poet! Choose any topic to write on - Things/people/places/ideas that you love, admire or appreciate. But the rule is to five line pattern using the grammar item(s) allocated for each line -- NOT MORE, NOT LESS. Then, in five lines your poem is complete. An example is given below. You can follow it as a model. You can learnt to be a poet!

**Steps to follow:**
1. Choose your topic,
2. Write your poem following the pattern
3. Share it with a peer.
4. After that, get feedback from your teacher on your writing.
5. Then, re-write the corrected version on a card paper in your best handwriting for the final display of your work. You can decorate the edges of the card, or draw/paste pictures about the noun you choose to write about. Make your poem card look as attractive as you wish.

Have fun writing your grammar poem!

Here is a sample for you;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Grammar Item</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Line 1</td>
<td>One Noun</td>
<td>Mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line 2</td>
<td>Two adjectives for the noun</td>
<td>Beautiful, strong.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Line 3  Three gerunds for the noun Loving, caring, sharing.

Line 4  A phrase for the noun Making our home a cozy nest

Line 5  One more adjective for the noun Graceful!

Now you try! As you continue writing, you will be confident to write poems and you can gradually modify the format and create your own poems. Here are some samples of what a Nepali student wrote during the PBL course.

9. Jazz Chants
Chants are excellent for English pronunciation practice. You can find chants in English textbooks and there are plenty online. Below is an example of a jazz chant that you can practice. Ask your teacher to help you find more jazz chants.

Sh! Sh! Baby's Sleeping

A  I said, Sh! Sh! Baby’s sleeping!
    I said, Sh! Sh! Baby’s sleeping!
B  What did you say?
    What did you say?
A  I said, Hush! Hush! Baby’s sleeping!
    I said, Hush! Hush! Baby’s sleeping!
B  What did you say?
    What did you say?
A  I said, Please be quiet, Baby’s sleeping!
    I said, Please be quiet, Baby’s sleeping!
B What did you say?
What did you say?

A I said, Shut up! Shut up! Baby’s sleeping!
I said, Shut up! Shut up! Baby’s sleeping!
B WAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
Not any more.

Source: Graham, C. (1978) Jazz Chants. OUP.USA

10. Reflective Log Journal

Maintain a learning log journal with the following questions:
1. What did I learn today?
2. What was new?
3. What needs to be explained?
4. What can be used from what I have learnt, in my own classroom.
5. Any other comments.

- listening comprehension
- copying and reading comprehension
- extensive reading skills

The integrated exercises offer you practice in realistic language use, listening to the radio, reading the newspaper as well as your text books. This will not only improve your English, but also your general knowledge.

- NOTE: These exercises have been used in a research class for many years and have proved successful for students who have followed them regularly. If you continue to use the exercises provided, it will improve your English even after the project is over. You can continue these practices even after the PBL research is over, so that you continue to improve your English.

Radio news will bring confidence to you when someone speaks to you in English.
- “Cloze” will help you understand reading texts and improve your grammar.
- Free writing will give you fluency in writing. Also you can use what you have written in your free writing copy to ‘talk’ in your group, but you must NOT read from it in your speaking time.
- Structured speaking times will help you improve your speaking power, it will make you fluent.
- Remember only your active learning habits and strategies will help you to improve your oral interaction as well as your reading and writing skills!
11. Some suggestions for YOU!
1. You must follow instructions for on-going activities step by step. For this you must read and understand all the instructions before you start to work.
2. Keep a separate copy for free writing, and diary entries.
3. When you write something, learn to proof-read your own work carefully. Instructions for proof-reading are given in self-created cloze. You must follow the same method when you write your collaborative writing assignments also.
4. Maintain a diary in which you write what you have done during the day. When you write the diary, keep in mind instructions about margin, punctuation, good and neat handwriting.
5. Read an English newspaper daily, and maintain a scrapbook of articles you like.
6. Form a group/pair and work together, whenever you find time.
7. Make it your personal goal to be a fluent speaker of English by the end of the project.
8. To achieve this goal speak to each other in English as much as you can.
12. Stories for Role Play

The Old Women In A Bottle

Instructions
1. Work in groups of four.
2. Act out the story in class
3. Do you approve of what fairy did to the old women in the end?
4. What did you learn from this story? Discuss with your partner.

Once upon a time, there was an old woman. She lived in a bottle. One day she was crying suddenly a fairy came there and asked her.

Fairy: What’s the matter? Why are you crying?

Old Woman: I don’t want to live in a bottle. I want to live in a little house

Fairy: (said the old woman) Stand up, shut your eyes, turn around three times and open your eyes”.

So the old women stood up, she shut her eyes and turned around three times and opened her eyes. Now she was in a little house. She was happy for a few days, but after a few days, she was crying again. So the fairy came back and asked her

Fairy: What’s the matter? Why are you crying again?

Old women: I don’t want to live in a little house. I want to live in a big house.

Fairy: Ok, stand up shut your eyes, turn around three times and open your eyes.

The old women stood up, she shut her eyes and turned around three times and opened her eyes. Now she was in a big house. She was happy for a few days. But after a few days, she was crying again. So the fairy came back again and asked her.

Fairy: What’s the matter? Why are you crying now?

Old women: I don’t want to live in a big house. I want to live in a castle.

Fairy: Ok, stand up shut your eyes, turn around three times and open your eyes.

The old women stood up, she shut her eyes and turned around three times and opened her eyes. Now she was in a castle. After a few days she was crying again. The fairy came back and asked her.
Fairy: What’s the matter? Why are you crying now?
Old women: I don’t want to live in a castle. I want to live in a palace.
Fairy: Ok, stand up shut your eyes, turn around three times and open your eyes.

The old women stood up, she shut her eyes and turned around three times and opened her eyes she was not in a palace; she was not in a castle; she was not in a big house; she was not in a little house; she was in the bottle again. The fairy never came back again.

a. Do you approve of what fairy did to the old women in the end?

b. What did you learn from this story? Discuss with your partner.
The Lost Ring

Instructions
1. Work in pairs
2. Put this scrambled story (sentences A-M) in order
   i. Do you think the man found the ring? If not, why not?
   ii. What “lesson” do we learn from this story?
3. Act out the story in class

A Man: ‘I lost it inside my house:

B Man: ‘I have bought a gold ring. Here it is!’

C One day a man went home to his wife and said:

D Friend: ‘Where did you lose it?’

E Man: ‘I have bought something for you!

F Friend: What’s the matter? He asked.

G He held it out for his wife to see, but he dropped it.

H Friend: ‘You lost your ring inside your house but you are looking for it outside in the street! That seems very foolish!’

I He began to look for it on the floor but it was dark inside the house and he could not see anything. He went outside the house and began to look for the ring in the street. Just then a friend came along.

J Wife: ‘Oh, Thank you!’ said his wife. What have you bought?

K Man: Ah! But it is dark inside my house. I shall never find it there. But here in the street, there is more light and I can see more clearly.

L Man: Oh dear! I have dropped it.

M Man: I have lost a ring
Heera And The Police

Instructions
1. Work in groups of four
2. Act out the story in class

On Azmat’s twelfth birthday his uncle Jamal gave him a parrot. “If you teach him well, he can talk”, uncle Jamal said.

Azmat named his parrot “Heera”. He began teaching him every day. The parrot learned the words “Hello”. He greeted everyone. He learned more words every day.

One day, Azmat’s mother said, “I am going to the bazaar. You stay at home. Do your homework and don’t open the door for anyone.

Azmat finished his homework in an hour. Then he said to Heera.

Azmat: It’s your turn to learn now. Can you say: “Help”

Heera: Help, Help

Azmat: Good very good now say, Help, Police

Heera (said happily): Help, Police, Help, Police

Suddenly, there was a loud knock on the door. Amzat peeped out. He saw two policemen standing outside. He remembered his mother’s instructions. “Don’t open the door for anyone.”

The policemen knocked at the door again and again. They said, “If you don’t open the door, we will break it”. Azmat was afraid.

Azmat: What do you want Sir?

Policeman: Who was calling the police?

Azmat: Oh, I was teaching my parrot, Heera say “Help, Police”. The bird was also afraid. He did not speak. The policeman searched the house. No one was there.

Azmat: Believe me Sir, it was my parrot.

Policeman (said angrily): Nonsense, how can a parrot talk? There was someone calling us.

Heera (suddenly shouted): Help, Police, Help, Police

Azmat and the policeman started laughing.
The legend of Salt and Honey

Instructions:

1. Work in groups of four.
2. Act out the story in class

Narrator. Once upon a time there were two traders. Their names were Musa and Omer, but they did not know each other as they lived in different villages. However they were very alike each other in some of their habits. In their own villages, nobody wanted to do business with them, because everyone knew that they were both dishonest and unreliable. So every Thursday they walked to go to the big town, with the merchandise on their donkeys and tried to make some money at the weekly market.

One Thursday Musa's donkey was carrying large straw baskets that contained fine white salt. Omer and his donkey were walking along another road not far away. Omer's donkey was carrying two red jars. At the crossroads between the villages, on the road leading to the big town, Musa met Omer, and soon they were walking together and they started talking.

Musa: Hello, my name is Musa. And you?
Omer: My name is Omer. Pleased to meet you!
Musa: Pleased to meet you too. Where are you going?
Omer: Oh I am going to the big town. I am a merchant.
Musa: Oh, are you? so am I. What a coincidence!
Omer: Its very hot today. Lets stop and talk. May be we can do our business here and not walk all the way to the town in this heat.
Musa: What a wonderful idea!
Omer: That looks like fine salt you are carrying on your donkey. Are you going to sell it?
Musa: Oh yes, that's excellent salt. Everyone knows I'm an honest merchant and I always have quality merchandise. What are you carrying in those jars?
Omer: well, I have some wonderful honey today. The best. I am sure I will get a good price for it. And I don’t normally do business with strangers. But I can see you are an honest man.

Narrator: before long they had exchanged their goods and re-loaded their donkeys. Happily they started back for their homes, feeling very pleased with themselves. Suddenly Omer's donkey saw a snake crossing the road and he jumped to one side. The baskets with the salt fell off his back and spilled on to the road.

Vow! what a surprise! Underneath the fine salt on the top, there was only sand. Omer was furious. He ran back with a stick towards Musa and called out...
**Omer**: Hey Musa stop! You are a cheat and a liar. You sold me sand!

**Musa**: Are you crazy? What are you talking about?

**Narrator**: Omer started beating Musa and by mistake his stick hit the jar on Musa’s donkey. The jar broke. Oh what a surprise! liquid mud started pouring out instead of honey! Now both of them were angry.

**Musa**: YOU are cheat! Look what you sold me?! and you said you were an honest man.

**Narrator**: They both started fighting each other, calling each other names. Suddenly the Police inspector came by.

**Inspector**: STOP at once. That’s an order. What is the matter? Why are you creating such a noise?

**Narrator**: Both Omer and Musa together started complaining.

**Inspector**: Stop shouting and beating each other. You are both cheats and liars. I will go and tell your story to the villagers. And that will be your punishment, because everyone will now be sure that you are both dishonest people.
The Appointment

Instructions:

1. Work in groups of four.
2. Put this scrambled story (sentences A-O) in order
3. Act out the story in class.

A. He turned around and saw a very tall man dress in black. He couldn’t see the man’s face, only his eyes.

B. “I have just met Death in the market.” Abdul replied.
   “Are you sure?” said the Caliph.

C. “I was surprised, because I’ve an appointment with him tonight in Samara.” replied he stranger

D. The man was staring at him, and Abdul began to shiver.
   “who are you and what do you want? Why are you following me” Abdul asked

E. “Excuse me Master! I have to leave Baghdad immediately,” said Abdul.

F. “I didn’t want to frighten him. I was surprised to see him in Baghdad.”
   “Why were you surprised?” asked the Caliph.

G. He decided to go to the market and investigate. When he found the man in the black, the Caliph spoke to him angrily,
   “Why did you frighten my servant?”

H. The man in the black did not reply.
   Abdul said again, “What is your name?”

3. The Caliph sent Abdul to buy some fruits from the market

J. The Caliph could see that Abdul was terrified and gave him permission to go to Samara.
   But he was puzzled. He was fond of Abdul so felt angry because abdul had been frightened so badly by the stranger in the market.

K. As Abdul was walking through the market, he suddenly felt very cold

L. Once upon a time there was a Caliph. His servant’s name was Abdul

M. “Yes. He was dressed in black and he was staring at me and following me. I am going to my father’s house in Samara. If I go now, I will reach before sunset”.

N. “I ..am .. Death!” The stranger replied coldly, and turned away.
   Abdul was so frightened that he dropped his basket and ran all the way back to the Caliph’s house. He rushed to the Caliphs room.

O. “Who is your servant?” the stranger replied
   “His name is Abdul.” answered the Caliph.
Annex

Pot of Gold

Description

journal writing

Rationale:
Directed journal writing gives you the kind of daily practice in composing which you need to turn quantity into quality. The general journal-topic lists which is given below is to keep for reference; you are free to write on any of the topics in any entry. If and when you get stuck for ideas to write on, picking something from the list simply provides a starting point and a direction.

Preparation:
You can adapt the following topic list to suit your needs-or use it as a guide to draw up your own. In either case, I think you'll be happy with the results.

Please remember to date each notebook entry, try to write every day, and to use both sides of the paper. You can share your entries with your friends / peers or in the class if you like!

Topic List:
1. Begin or end some of your journal entries by completing this statement and commenting on it, if you wish: "Today was like a...."

2. Start pages of lists of various types and add to the lists at any time. Here are some ideas to get you started:
   Things that make you angry or sad or happy.
   Pet peeves, dislikes.
   Sounds you hear as you sit quietly or think back over your day.
   Snatches of conversations overheard.
   Books you've read.
   Dreams or hopes.
   Memories.
   Questions you'd like answered.
   Things you'd like changed.
Later you can use these lists to write other entries, poems or stories or opinion or stories or opinion pieces.

3. Try to explain something that puzzles you.

4. Write your opinion on a current controversial topic such as censorship of rock music, a new school rule, or a current problem. AVOID political / religious issues, if you want to share your writing with others.
5. Look at yourself in the mirror for as long as you can stand it. Describe what you see.

6. Tell about a funny (or sad, exciting, frightening, challenging) experience you've had.

7. Describe the most expensive thing you ever bought and how you got the money for it; tell why you wanted it and whether it was worth the price.

8. Describe an older person you know or have known.

9. Describe a person. Include details such as physical characteristics, personality traits, and how others regard that person.

10. What can you tell about a person by stepping into their room?

11. Tell about your most prized possession and explain why you treasure it.

12. Based on your experiences, give advice on a particular topic to a younger person.

13. Tell what you like about the area where you live as well as what you don't like about it.

14. If you had only two days left to live, tell how you would spend them.

15. Describe a time when you lost something important to you:

   What were you thinking and feeling?
   What did you do to try to get it back?
   If you got it back—or if you didn't—how did you feel?

Adapted from
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