

Copywork for Older Students

Bible readings, historic speeches, and poetry

Eight longer selections for middle and high school, arranged to build toward more demanding passages. Each selection has a model page and a lined continuation page.

Read. Notice. Copy. Check.

Read the passage before writing. Discuss unfamiliar words and historical context, then copy a few lines or a paragraph at a time. Use print or cursive. Continue onto the matching second page as needed, and compare your work with the model.

These are copywork activities, not a complete history or Bible lesson. Choose selections to suit your student. The Bible passages include faith, death, and war; families and teachers may select only the secular pages. Difficulty also depends on vocabulary and sentence structure, not just length.

Historic wording, capitalization, and punctuation follow the editions listed. Poetry retains its line breaks; Bible passages are set as prose. Apostrophes and quotation marks are standardized for printing. Dickinson editions vary: this is an early published version.

Selections and sources

1. Love and kindness

<https://bible-api.com/1%20corinthians%2013:4-8?translation=web>

2. Hope

<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/12242>

3. The better angels of our nature

<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/9>

4. A Psalm of Life

<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1365>

5. The Gettysburg Address

<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/4>

6. The shepherd psalm

<https://bible-api.com/psalm%2023?translation=web>

7. Rights and government

<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1>

8. A time for everything

<https://bible-api.com/ecclesiastes%203:1-8?translation=web>

Bible translation: World English Bible (public domain). Literary and historical selections are public-domain texts. Print on A4, or choose "Fit" for US Letter. Personal and classroom use.
Free copywork worksheets | Personal and classroom use

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Name: _____ Date: _____

[illegible]

How does the passage describe love through actions?

☐ No missing words

Hope

Emily Dickinson | Early published version

Name: _____ Date: _____

Keep the poem's line breaks and stanza spaces.

Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul,
And sings the tune without the words,
And never stops at all,

And sweetest in the gale is heard;
And sore must be the storm
That could abash the little bird
That kept so many warm.

I've heard it in the chilliest land,
And on the strangest sea;
Yet, never, in extremity,
It asked a crumb of me.

Copy below. Continue on the next page when needed.

Work slowly. Keep the spelling and punctuation shown in the model.

Hope

Emily Dickinson | Early published version

Name: _____ Date: _____

Continue your copy here. Return to the model whenever you need to.

[illegible]

Think about it:

How does the bird metaphor develop the idea of hope?

- ☐ Spelling ☐ Punctuation ☐ No missing words

Continue your copy here. Return to the model whenever you need to.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

What does Lincoln ask his listeners to value?

- ☐ Spelling ☐ Punctuation ☐ No missing words

A Psalm of Life

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow | First three stanzas

Name: _____ Date: _____

Keep the line breaks, exclamation marks, and older spellings.

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us farther than to-day.

Copy below. Continue on the next page when needed.

Work slowly. Keep the spelling and punctuation shown in the model.

Continue your copy here. Return to the model whenever you need to.

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page, leaving margins at the top and bottom. There are no vertical margin lines or other markings on the paper.

What kind of life does the speaker encourage?

- ☐ Spelling ☐ Punctuation ☐ No missing words

The Gettysburg Address

Abraham Lincoln | 1863 (opening excerpt)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Copy the punctuation shown, including the spaced dots.

Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation: conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war. . . testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated. . . can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that this nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

Copy below. Continue on the next page when needed.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Work slowly. Keep the spelling and punctuation shown in the model.

Continue your copy here. Return to the model whenever you need to.

[illegible]

What connection does Lincoln make between the past and the war?

- ☐ Spelling ☐ Punctuation ☐ No missing words

Name: _____ Date: _____

Yahweh is my shepherd: I shall lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He guides me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me. Your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil. My cup runs over. Surely goodness and loving kindness shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in Yahweh's house forever.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Free copywork worksheets | Personal and classroom use

Name: _____ Date: _____

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

☐ No missing words

Continue your copy here. Return to the model whenever you need to.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

What does "consent of the governed" mean? Who was excluded in practice?

- ☐ Spelling ☐ Punctuation ☐ No missing words

Continue your copy here. Return to the model whenever you need to.

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

How do the contrasting pairs help communicate the main idea?

- ☐ Spelling ☐ Punctuation ☐ No missing words