FALLING UPHILL

Teacher's Guide

Falling Uphill and Scott Stoll's bicycle ride around the world.

This teacher's guide contains some ideas and exercises to keep your students busy for many hours. I had some help from professionals in the education field to create this guide utilizing a variety of learning styles, but you will still need to customize the vocabulary and concepts for your age groups. I've put this into a Word Document (rather than a pretty PDF) so that you may edit the content. If you have any additional content (trivia, exercises, ideas) that you would like to contribute to this guide and the other teacher's and students, please email them to me.

The concepts behind the lessons are:

1) *To inspire students to be the creators of their own life.*
2) *To begin imagining the "impossible" – thinking outside the box.*
3) *To develop basic life skills.*
4) *To begin mapping their own adventures, whether that be artist, scientist or street sweeper.*
5) *To peek into the world's cultures, politics, geography and amazing diversity....*
6) *To motivate students to partake in regular physical activity.*

If you have any queries please ask! I hope that you and the students enjoy this!

~ Thanks, Scott.
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Online Resources

There are more resources online, including: movies, photos, a full-color map that can be projected on screen, and more. Please visit:

https://scottstoll.com/motivational-speaker/classroom-resources/

Backyard Adventures

There are a lot of fun adventures that your students can find in their own backyard, such as: The Photo Safari, The Hunter-Gather, The Stargazer, Internet Scavenger Hunt and more. Please visit our website and don't forget that your students can contribute their ideas.

https://scottstoll.com/topic/backyard-adventures/

How to turn dreams into reality

Teacher's NOTE: For this main lesson, please refer to "Falling Uphill: Dreams for the young adventurer" pages 136-143. You'll find a step-by-step guide for turning dreams into reality. In summary, this exercise will guide students from dreaming a dream, to making a plan, to taking the first step of action. I recommend teachers verbally walk the students through these steps, while the students brainstorm and make notes.

1) Dream it! The magic time capsule. Brainstorm your ideas.
2) Plan it! How do you eat an elephant? Begin making a plan.
3) Do it! Reap a destiny. Take a step of action.

The following three exercises are alternative versions of these three steps.

Suggestion

These lessons should fit within the Core Curriculum Standards. And, I'm sure you can find ways to tie these lessons into your teachings. Some fun examples include a music teacher asking her student to write a song about bicycling, and a science teacher using a friction experiment to pull a block over different surfaces to demonstrate what it might be like to ride a bicycle on a road, through mud, or even water.

Memoir & Creative Writing Lesson!

A wise man once said: "If you become the author of your own life, you can leap off the pages."

Today we are going to become the author's of our own life. Imagine you have lived a long and full life. You're on the porch with your family and friends telling them the short story of your life. You will combine elements of fiction and non-fiction to create a story about living the life of your dreams.

- ✏ In the beginning of your story, give the reader some background information about who you are now. Tell them how you discovered your dream and why you decided to live your dream.
- ✏ In the middle of your story, tell people about the problems you encountered as you attempted to live your dream.
- ✏ In the end of your story, inspire people with how you triumphed over your adversity. Describe all the adventures you had in your life. Be as descriptive as possible. Tell the reader all the wonderful things you did with your life. The more detail you can imagine, the more real it will become.
- ✏ In conclusion, give the reader some advice about how they might live the best life possible.

Please DO

- Enjoy the process of writing. Try to feel the excitement of living all your dreams as you write.
- Remember you can always keep rewriting until you are 100% happy with your story and your life. ☺
- Ask your teacher for some more writing tips.

Please Do NOT

- Be pessimistic. We all have doubts, but this is a story of inspiration.
- Don't be boring. No one wants to live a boring life. And no one wants to read a boring story. Write a story that someday will become a blockbuster movie.

How to plan traveling the world.

Imagine that your dream is to travel the world. How would you begin? Well, you could just start walking and keep going until you get back where you started, but you might soon discover you are tired and thirsty and have nowhere to sleep and nothing to drink. So, it might be more useful to make a plan. There is no perfect plan because you won't be able to predict everything, but that is also the beauty of an adventure—the mystery of exploring the unknown. Nonetheless, you must prepare for the unexpected. There are many things to think about before taking a big journey. Use these questions to help plan your adventure:

1) **Why?** This is the most important question, and the basic answer is: Because it is your dream. Now it is time to be specific. What are your goals? What do you want to do?
    - List 3 physical goals you want to achieve. It can be anything from sailing around the world on a boat made from plastic bottles to making a photo book of the flowers of the world.
    - List 3 personal goals. It can be anything from discovering who you are to setting a personal record.
    - What are some of the potential rewards and lessons of travel?
2) **Who?** Do you want a solo adventure? Do you want friends?
3) **Where?** You're goals will help you decide where you want to go.
    - Make a list of places you would like to visit. Explain your reasons.
    - Use the Internet to research interesting places. Try searching for "world wonders".
        i. Add to your list any world wonders that interest you.
        ii. Can you list 3 more key search terms?
    - The World Heritage Organization has already made a list of places considered "as having outstanding universal value".
        iii. Add to your list a few WHO places that interest you.
        iv. Can you find another organization that has a list of places to visit?
    - Use the map exercise to help plan your route.
    - Remember you will refine your plans as you travel.
4) **How?** Do you want to travel by car, boat, plane, bicycle, camel, canoe, pogo stick or something else?
    - Where would you sleep?
    - What would you eat?
    - How would you communicate?
    - Where are you going to use the toilet?
    - What are you going to do in bad weather?
5) **When?** If you are traveling by bicycle, weather is very important; for example, you want to bicycle in North America in the summer, and Australia in the winter when it is still hot but not dangerously hot.
    - How does weather affect your trip?
    - Do you want to see an annual festival or animal migration?
    - Do you want to visit a waterfall in dry or rainy season?
    - When is the best time in your life to travel the world? Explain your answer.

6) **What?** What equipment do you need to take? You can only carry so much weight before getting tired. List no more than 20 items for your backpack.
    - Class discussion about packing list and why certain things are more important than others. Try and reach class agreement upon a packing list.
    - What else would you need to organize, apart from the equipment? Hint: Health, money, energy….
7) **Cost?** Make a list of the various items you will need to purchase to begin your journey? What things will you need to purchase while you travel? Can you make a roug**h** estimate of the total cost of your journey?
    - List 3 ways you can raise the money.
8) **Contingencies?** That's a fancy word meaning, what are some of the difficulties that you should expect while traveling round the world?
    - When one door closes, another opens. What sacrifices would you have to make? What doors would you have to close?
    - What would you miss while you were away? Is it worthwhile?
    - What is your emergency plan (exit strategy) if you get in trouble or decide to quit one adventure and start another?
9) **Reevaluate.** Is it a worthwhile journey? Do the benefits outweigh the costs? Do you still want to go?

Show & tell weekend adventure.

Teachers NOTE: It is very important for people to take a step of action, otherwise dreams can often turn into frustrations. Also, it is useful to develop skills to refine the process, perhaps restructuring the plan or even creating a new dream. Teachers may like to discuss some of the caveats on page 137.

I'd recommend the students pick a small dream that they can accomplish in a weekend. This weekend adventure can be the subject for the travel writing exercise at the end of this guide or a classroom show & tell.

See our "Backyard Adventures" online for more ideas:

https://scottstoll.com/topic/backyard-adventures/

Map Exercise

These are some of the famous world monuments that Scott visited during his travels. Which of these places would you like to visit? Find these places on the map. You may want to cut out the pictures below and paste them to the map. Draw a line from the picture to its location on the map. Now discover at least 7 more places that you want to visit. Pick one destination for each continent. It can be a building, landmark, historical monument, culture, flora or fauna—just about anything. Add these to your map. Now connect the dots.

Voila! You just planned an adventure around the world.

Sphinx, Giza Necroplis, Egypt | Big Ben, London, England | Uluru (Ayer's Rock), Australia

The Parthenon, Greece | Machu Picchu, Peru | Tikal, Guatemala

Victoria Falls, Zambia/Zimbabwe | Yosemite National Park, USA | Mount Everest, Nepal/Tibet

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Class Discussion

Read these quotations. Then choose one quote and explain why you agree with it? And choose a second quote and explain why you disagree with it.

1. A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step. **~ Lao Tzu**
2. Life is like a ten-speed bicycle. Most of us have gears we never use. **~ Charles M. Schulz**
3. Courage is going from failure to failure without losing enthusiasm. **~Winston Churchill**
4. The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes. **~ Marcel Proust**
5. Nothing is particularly hard if you divide it into small steps **~ Henry Ford**
6. In the universe, there are things that are known, and things that are unknown, and in between, there are doors. **~ William Blake**
7. He who does not travel does not know the value of men. **~ Moorish proverb**
8. Far better is it to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs, even though checkered by failure... than to rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy nor suffer much, because they live in a gray twilight that knows not victory nor defeat. **~ Theodore Roosevelt**
9. Years from now, you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. **~ Mark Twain**

More topics for discussion

Here are a few more key questions that you may want to consider discussing. Alternatively, teachers may want to assign a book report or critical evaluation of the pros and cons of Scott's talk.

1. Have you ever had an Aha! moment?
2. If you could do anything, what would you do?
3. If you aren't doing it, why not?
4. Can you list some personal and/or cultural beliefs that are framing your reality?
    - — Are these beliefs true or false?
    - — Are they beneficial or detrimental?
5. Can you discover any new patterns to the questions or other themes in the book?
6. Is the book's structure successful?
7. What is your take-away from reading *Falling Uphill*, meaning in one sentence how would you describe what you learned?
    - — Do you feel this lesson will make a lasting impression, alter your behavior and significantly benefit your future? Please explain.

Trivia Quiz

You might not know the answers, but try to guess anyway! In fact, to get the most benefit out of this quiz, it is better if you don't know any answers. Why? Because only when you do not know the answer do you get to discover a new way of seeing the world and add value to who you are by learning a new thing. Give yourself extra credit if you discover a new answer or phrase your answer in a creative way.

1. **Example:** How many countries are there in the world? **Answer:** Most authorities recognize 196 countries in the world. **Extra credit:** 197. Reason: The people of Tibet dispute China's claim to their country. Can you discover another answer?
2. **Example:** What is the equatorial circumference of the planet? Answer: 24,901.55 miles. **Extra credit:** 40,075.02 km. Can you discover another answer?
3. What is the meridional or polar circumference of the planet?
4. Why is the circumference longer around the equator?
5. If Scott cycled through 50 countries, what percentage of countries did Scott visit?
6. How many continents are there?
7. Is Australia a country, continent or island?
8. Which continent did Scott not visit?
9. What is the biggest country in the world?
10. What is the longest river in the world?
11. How high is the highest mountain in the world?
12. What is the most populous city in the world?
    a. How many people live there?
13. Where is Timbuktu?
14. If Scott was gone for 4 years why does that add up to 1461 days and not 1460 days?
15. What are the three steps to creating dreams into reality?
16. Is failing good, bad or neutral? Explain.
17. Why is fear beneficial? How many reasons can you list?
18. Why is doubt beneficial? How many reasons can you list?
19. What three basic measurements define the metric system? Here is a hint: What do you live on and how big is it? What is vital for life? Look at your hands.
20. Convert these temperatures from Fahrenheit to Celsius.
    a. 212 °F
    b. 32 °F
    c. What do these two numbers represent?
21. Convert 0.621371192 miles into kilometers.
22. Einstein said, "Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance you must keep moving." That is a simile. Can you think of another simile for how bicycling is like life? Hint: start your sentence with, "Life is like a bicycle because…."
23. If you are carrying your bicycle, is it a bicycle or a backpack?
24. If you are standing on the equator does water swirl down the drain clockwise or counter clockwise?

25. **Extra credit:** Antipodes are two points on a globe that are on exact opposites sides. Since the Earth is mostly water, there aren't many antipodes on land. You can see where I bicycled through a set of antipodes on the map (Near Northern Peru and the Thailand/ Malaysia border).
    a. Can you name a famous pair of antipodes?
    b. Can you find another set of antipodes somewhere along my route?
26. **Extra credit:** Is the boiling point of water the same, more or less on the top of Mount Everest? Why?
27. **Extra credit:** If Scott traveled at the speed of a bicycle at approximately 15 kilometers per hour, how long would it take him to reach the star nearest our sun, Proxima Centauri, a distance of approximately 39,900,000,000,000 km.

Answers

1. Hint: There is no correct answer.
2. Hint: Try a different unit of measurement like furlongs, leagues or nautical miles.
3. The meridional circumference is 24,859.82 miles or 40,007.86 km.
4. The Earth's rotation or centrifugal force.
5. Scott cycled through approximately 25.5% of the world's countries.
6. Seven.
7. Trick question. Australia is a country, continent and island.
8. Antarctica.
9. Russia. (17,075,200 km2 or 6,591,027 mi2.) Interesting fact: The United States is the third largest country. (9,631,418 km2 or 3,717,727 mi2.)
10. The Amazon River (6,937.08 km or 4,300 miles). Interesting fact: The Mississippi River is fourth (6,275 km or 3,902 miles).
11. Mount Everest. 8848 meters or 29029 feet.
12. Tokyo, Japan.
    a. About 32,450,000 people. Interesting fact: The entire continent of Australia has only about 21,374,000 people.
13. Mali. In western Africa.
14. Don't forget Leap Year.
15. Dream it. Plan it. Do it.
16. Failing is neutral. Your perception is what makes it good or bad. Class discussion: Can you think of a time when it is good to fail? Or bad to succeed?
17. Fear cautions you. Fear shows you a new mystery.
18. Doubt protects you from taking unnecessary risks. Doubt also highlights hope. Like day and night, you can't have one without the other.
19. The circumference of the planet, or more specifically, the distance from the equator to the pole. The scientists defined this distance as 10,000 kilometers. The freezing and boiling point of water. And the base unit of 10, which is the same amount of digits on your hand. Is this a coincidence?
20. Conversion
    a. 100 °C
    b. 0 °C
    c. The boiling and freezing points of water.
21. One kilometer.
22. There are infinite examples. Here's one more: Life is like bicycling, because you never know what is around the next corner.
23. This is a Zen Koan, it's like a riddle, but the only right answer is to make you think like you've never thought before.
24. Neither. The water goes straight down.
25. **Extra credit.**
    a. The North and South Poles.
    b. Approximately Madrid, Spain and Auckland, New Zealand.
26. **Extra credit:** Less. The boiling point on top of Mount Everest is 69 °C. (156.2 °F). The boiling point decreases with the decrease in atmospheric pressure.

27. Extra credit: Approximately 304 million years of bicycling day and night.

Travel Writing Lesson

[Teacher's note: You might want to assign your students to write about their weekend adventure.]

My name is Scott Stoll. I spent 4 years cycling around the world and I wrote a book about what I discovered. I also write magazine articles when I get the opportunity. They help earn money and also help tell as many people as possible about my journey and my book.

Today we are going to use the short magazine article below to help us think about travel writing and then we will do some writing of our own. Please read the attached Milwaukee Magazine article "Tour De Force" and observe your first impressions: good, bad, neutral, inspiring, foolish, boring....

Now let's practice critical thinking. Read the article again and consider the following important points and whether you think that they help make the article better or not. These are things that you must think about when you write your own travel story.

- ✏ The first sentence is the most important. If it is not interesting the reader will be bored. Grab their interest and make them want to keep reading.
- ✏ First paragraph: You need to set the scene, giving clues about what is coming. The reader should be curious to find out more.
- ✏ Middle paragraphs: Learning about the author and the adventure. Developing a character, so that the reader can imagine himself in the story and relate to the character's decisions.
- ✏ Final paragraphs. What is the point of the article or moral to the story? What is it trying to say? The first paragraphs tell the story. The final paragraphs explain the lessons learned on the ride.
- ✏ Does each sentence or section advance the story? If not it is a waste of space. Every single word has to count in a magazine.

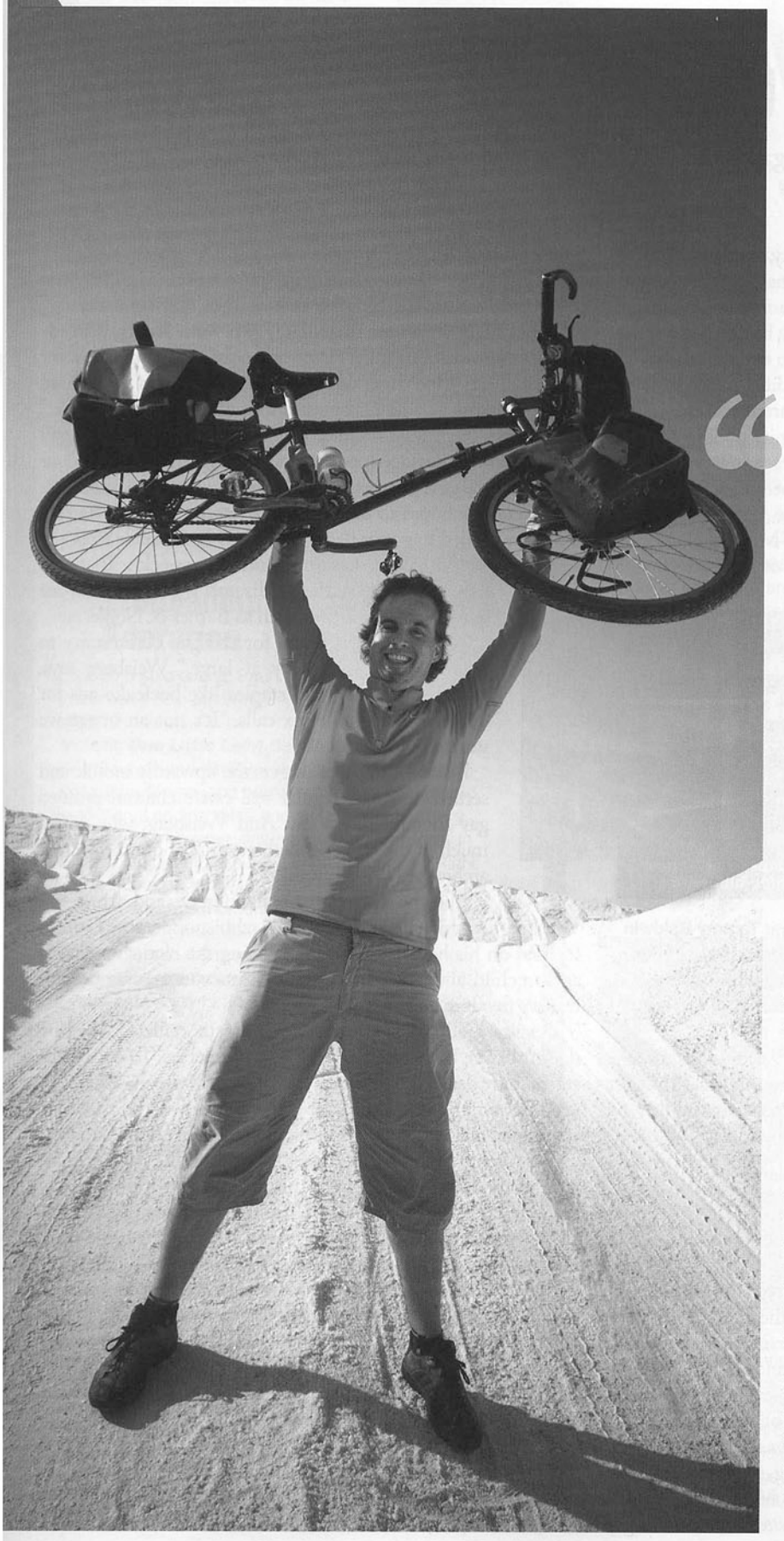
Now it is time for you to do some travel writing yourself! Pick any adventure you've had. You can write about a journey you have taken on a bicycle or in a car or boat or school bus, or even something that you discovered in your own backyard. It all counts as adventure. To help you, here are a few tips...

Please DO

- Tell a story. Travel writing is telling a story just like any other writing. It has to be interesting. Make the reader want to keep reading.
- Hook the reader with an exciting opening sentence, such as: "I was so scared, I almost threw my dream away, until I realized...."
- Think about the structure. All stories have a beginning, middle and end. What is the point of your story? What are you trying to say?
- Make every word, sentence and paragraph count.
- Remember your reader may not have been to the place you are describing. You have to take them with you on your journey through clear descriptions.
- You have 5 senses. Use them!
- Include dialogue (speech) where appropriate.
- Vary the pace. When you speak you change the volume and speed for emphasis – good writing does the same thing.
- End the story well. Tie everything together, such as: "I will be forever thankful that I didn't throw my dream away, or I would have never...."

Please Do NOT

- Use clichés: tropical paradise, snow-capped peaks, the road less traveled.... Yawn! BE ORIGINAL!
- Write every single thing that happened. Yawn! Be selective. Nobody cares what you had for breakfast, unless it is an important part of your story.
- Bore your readers with dry descriptions. Use words to convey feelings. Wet your reader's appetite.
- Waste your audience's time. It is a busy world and we all have lives to live. Give your story something of value for your reader. Make it funny or educational.



Tour De Force

SCOTT STOLL \\ 39 \\ WORLD TRAVELER

The Milwaukee native spent 2001-2005 biking around the world. He chronicled this in his book, Falling Uphill. *He is touring the United States, primarily on a bicycle, to promote it.*

I have this memory of following my dad in the car as he bicycled to the lakefront. I was amazed that somebody could ride their bike in the road as if they were a car. That planted the seed.

I like to say I had a really bad week. In one week I got fired, my girlfriend broke up with me, and my best friend eloped and left me alone in the apartment, stuck with the rent. I just felt crushed.

I sat for hours and asked, 'If I could do anything, what would I do?' I don't want to be lying on my deathbed thinking of all the things I wish I'd done. It kind of popped into my head, 'Why not ride a bicycle around the world?' The idea was so contagious, it wouldn't let me go. My skin tingled.

Typically I rode four or five hours, some days 12 hours, pedaling and brooding. I was alone the majority of every day. That was the hardest part. I was always lonely.

I bicycled more meters of Mount Everest than the average climber. In Africa, I almost got trampled by an elephant, and I had a little run-in with the Tanzanian army. In India, some old wise men invited me to share lunch with them and their family. It felt like they were giving me a part of their life.

I quit thousands of times. South America was the hardest. I was sick and my bike wasn't working well. I just kept saying, 'OK, one more day, one more country.'

It was a spiritual quest. I sampled all the religions and cultures as I went along, and I'd like to think I discovered the meaning of life. I think I finally got a little peace.

Coming back was a shock. I looked in the mirror, and I had all these flaws that were so easy to see now. A lot of those things I tried to run away from were still there. That took me years to get over. You haven't really traveled until you go home again. ■

– as told to Rosemary Lane

Photo by Dan Zaitz