

## Inspiration Assignment

When we are inspired we are filled with a certain feeling that moves us. Inspiration leads to creativity, and this gives us energy to accomplish goals. Here is an interesting question: What inspires you?

People can inspire you, nature can inspire you, music can inspire. You get to decide what inspires you. Anything you see that brings forward that special energy could be called "inspirational."

Example poem:

They Move Me...

The people  
In my life  
Inspire me.

My baby sister inspires me,  
Her bright blue eyes  
Focused on me and  
Looking for answers.  
Her eyes are filled with joy

My grandfather inspires me,  
His hands  
Covered with calluses  
From years  
Of working  
On the railroad.  
Toughness and perseverance

My neighbor Jim  
Inspires me.  
He lost his leg  
In the war.  
I see him circling the block  
On crutches.  
Sweat pouring down his face.

My mother inspires me.  
Her warm smile  
Always comforting,  
Saying the right words  
In times  
Of need

Those special people  
Move me,  
Give me energy,  
Inspire me to do more  
With my life.

## They Move Me...

The people in my life inspire me. My baby sister inspires me, her bright eyed focused on me and looking for answers. Her eyes are filled with joy. My grandfather inspires me, his hand covered with calluses from years of working on the railroad. Toughness and perseverance.

My neighbor Jim inspires me. He lost his leg in the war. I see him circling the block on crutches. Sweat pouring down his face. My mother inspires me. Her warm smile always comforting, saying the right words in times of need. Those special people move me, give me energy, and inspire me to do more with my life.

Read the following parts of inspiration poems to get an idea about how different student authors approached this assignment. Notice the CONCRETE DETAIL. Notice the focus on each of the senses, of sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch. Notice the comparisons using simile (like or as) and metaphor. THESE ARE ONLY PARTS OF THE POEMS!

### **Everyone Wants to Make a Play**

By Andrew Lane

Baseball inspires me,  
The loud cheering of a walk off homerun,  
The bench clears,  
The batter flips the bat and stares at the pitcher,  
He starts trotting slowly around the bases,  
A huge smile across his face.

### **Inspiration is Closer than You Think**

By Farzeel Lodhi

There are many people that inspire me.  
But you may know now,  
That inspiration is closer than you think.  
It is quite literally,  
The people you know that are closest to your heart.  
Inspiration is my mom, when she works harder  
than granite,  
For nothing more than care.  
When she is more honest than truth itself.  
When she is nicer than an angel.  
When she is the funniest she can possibly be.

My dad inspires me.  
Inspiration is my dad.  
When he is more positive than an addition  
symbol.  
When he is more stubborn than a rock.  
When he is more enduring than a mountain.  
My dad inspires me.

### **Watercolor Sunset**

By Sarah Hoogstraten

Nature inspires me

A clear,  
Cold,  
Gurgling river  
Passing through  
The moss-coated rocks  
Of an ancient forest.

The way that  
The waves crash,

Again and again  
At the beach.  
Seagulls cry overhead.  
You can taste the salty air.

### **They No Longer Are Just Circles and Lines**

By Olivia Berding

Inspiration pours out of my soul like a river,  
As I express my fingers across the piano  
keyboard.  
Every muscle in my hand is at work.  
The sound,  
Getting louder,  
My hands,  
Pushing harder,  
Then give in and play soft,  
I am amazed in the passion that is reflected like  
a mirror,  
Through the humming hammer and strings of  
the wooden piano,  
To the ringing in my ears.

Notice how these writers created the first drafts of their poems in normal paragraph form. Most people don't write much poetry so it is easier to write your ideas in paragraph form first. Create the line structure last and try to have main ideas end at the end of a line.

**Everyone Wants to Make a Play** by Andrew Lane

Baseball inspires me, the loud cheering of a walk off homerun, the bench clears, the batter flips the bat and stares at the pitcher, he starts trotting slowly around the bases, a huge smile across his face.

**Inspiration is Closer than You Think** by Farzeel Lodhi

There are many people that inspire me. But you may know now, the inspiration is closer than you think. It is quite literally, the people you know that are closest to your heart. Inspiration is my mom, when she works harder than granite, for nothing more than care. When she is more honest than truth itself. When she is nicer than an angel. When she is the funniest she can possibly be.

My dad inspires me. Inspiration is my dad. When he is more positive than an addition symbol. When he is more stubborn than a rock. When he is more enduring than a mountain. My dad inspires me.

**Watercolor Sunset** by Sarah Hoogstraten

Nature inspires me. A clear, cold, gurgling river passing through the moss-coated rocks of an ancient forest. The way that the waves crash, again and again at the beach. Seagull cry overhead. You can taste the salty air.

**They No Longer Are Just Circles and Lines** By Olivia Berding

Inspiration pours out of my soul like a river, as I express my fingers across the piano keyboard. Every muscle in my hand is at work. Sound getting louder, my hands pushing harder, then give in and play soft, I am amazed in the passion that is reflected like a mirror, through the humming hammer and strings of the wooden piano, to the ringing in my ears.

Assignment: Start with a word web, a jot list, or free write to make a list of the things that inspire you. Read your list and write a poem that focuses on concrete details and answers the question: What inspires you?

- ❖ Let the poem tell a story of your inspiration.
  
- ❖ It would be best if the whole poem focused on one topic that inspired you
  - Family: Mom, Dad, Brother, Sister, Grandparents(you could choose one)
  - Nature: flowers, trees, water, sunsets, etc.
  - Sports: baseball glove, soccerball, basketball, football, etc.
  - Seasons: spring, summer, fall, winter
  - Music: Tell the story of an instrument you play
  - Dance: Tell the story of your dance
  - Theater: Tell the story of you on stage
  
- ❖ Capitalize the first letter of each line.
  
- ❖ Use concrete details to make the inspiration real for your reader – CONCRETE DETAILS MAKE YOUR POEM COME ALIVE!
  
- ❖ Work toward a minimum of five stanzas, but don't limit yourself to only five.
  
- ❖ Left align your margin.

Two more examples of poem "starters."

Natures Gives Me Energy  Roses inspire me Bright red beauty Hanging from stems Covered with thorns	East Lansing  East Lansing inspires me. Grand River Avenue, Store after store, Stopping for ice cream At Tasty Twist. Chocolate fudge What a flavor!
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Jack Morse

## IT ALL PAYS OFF

I see the blood and I see the sweat.  
I smell the blood and I smell the sweat.  
That's a cold hard fall football game right there!

I'm in the middle of the pile.  
Kids breathing as heavily  
As a marathon runner just crossing the finish line.

It doesn't matter what happens to you.  
You could've broke a bone,  
You could have something bothering you in your head,  
Or you could be so tired your legs are  
Throbbing and shaking you would fall on the cold  
Hard ground of a football field in a blink of an eye.  
You never give up!  
Hard work and sports inspire me.

If you put in hard work  
It all pays off in the end.

Just like something sour,  
At the start it's sour,  
But at the end it's sweet.

# Now We Have the Ball

All the Sports  
In my life  
Inspire me

Playing football inspires me.  
On offense I feel the ball  
Touching my hands,  
Leather on my skin  
As I run for my life,  
From eleven kids  
All wanting to hit me  
Speed and agility

Playing defense inspires me.  
My shoulder hitting someone  
In the stomach  
With my shoulder pad.  
Fumble, grab it,  
Now we have the ball  
Toughness

Basketball inspires me.  
The ball in my hands  
Dribbling up the court  
Going for the lay-up  
Get the rebound  
Go for three  
It's good

Playing defense inspires me.  
Crouching down  
Hands out  
On the balls of my feet  
Meet the person I'm guarding  
Hard Work

My coach inspires me.  
My dad,  
Coaching all my sports  
Fun but stern  
Teaching  
Perseverance

My teammates inspire me.  
Working together  
As a team  
In perfect unison  
Trying to win  
Pushing each other,  
To become better players  
Companionship

My opponents inspire me.  
Trying to beat me  
With their skills  
Mine against theirs  
Competitiveness

Sports inspire me.  
Teaching me things like,  
Competitiveness,  
Companionship,  
Perseverance,  
Speed,  
Toughness,  
And hard work,  
Sports inspire me,  
They are my motive,  
They are my all.

# Failure Inspires Me

Failure inspires me,  
It makes me want to succeed even more.  
All failure does,  
Is give more of a reason to succeed.  
Failure gives me,  
More confidence,  
More confidence.

In myself,  
In my team.  
I have to fail,  
In order to succeed.  
I have to try hard.  
Especially after I fail  
Because after I fail  
I feel all the guilt and,  
I think of all the people,  
All the things  
I need to succeed for.

I remember all my swim meets,  
I remember how it felt waiting,  
Waiting for the relay to begin,  
I remember standing on the diving board,  
Getting down,  
Watching the wall,  
Just waiting for Grace,  
Or Lilly, or Callie.  
Just to barley touch the wall,  
With their fingertips.

Then,  
I would dive,  
The water would rush  
Against my face  
Against my arms  
My legs,  
I would kick,  
And kick,  
Not too hard  
But with just enough power.  
My arms would spin around,  
As if I were a windmill.

As all of this was happening,  
All I was thinking about,  
Were the people,  
The people cheering me on,  
I also remember losing that race,  
It made me feel,  
Like I had a one million pound weight,  
On my shoulders, and my chest,  
I felt horrible,  
But I knew that it would be ok,  
Because failure only makes me try harder,  
For next time.

Kaylee Seyka

Bea Campbell

## When We Have Tea

My Auntie Catherine inspires me.  
She's a hard worker.  
Loving, caring.

Her smile is like a breeze  
on a hot summer day.  
Cool.  
Her blue eyes are soft and kind.  
She calls me Bebe.

A nurse at Sparrow Hospital.  
Touching people's lives every day.  
Her love knows no end.

Our special time is when we have tea.  
She tells such good stories.  
Summers at girl scout camp.  
She says "Your turn Bea!"

I talk and talk.  
Funny stories  
over Earl Grey tea.  
She throws her head back  
with a big, loud, laugh



# Snow Hides All

By Hugh Hankenson

Winter inspires me  
The cold, clear beauty  
Of ice formations  
The dark of a blizzard  
After the storm,  
The quiet.  
Everything smothered  
In a beautiful white blanket,  
Broken only by the green  
pines  
Who have survived the cold.

Water freezes.  
It solidifies.  
It becomes swirls and shapes  
All from liquid.  
Ice like tree branches.  
Sometimes easy to break,  
Other times stronger than a  
mountain.

Ice  
Crackling day and night  
Covering water  
Made of water  
Formations  
Spires and sheets  
In caves  
Glittering  
From the roof like giant  
chandeliers.  
Ice is a breaking force  
Anything can be destroyed  
by it.

Snow piles up.  
It covers the mountains  
It covers the plains  
All but the most resilient  
plants  
Are bare and leafless  
Animals hide  
Even the Grizzly bear  
Cannot survive  
In the cold.

Wind controls  
The snow and ice  
It can blind and hinder  
It can clear the way and help  
Shards of ice and flakes of  
snow  
Whip endlessly  
Across fields of snow  
Bombarding travelers.  
Like a sweeping broom  
It gently clears drifts away.

Snowflakes drift down  
In endlessly changing shapes  
Like people,  
Flakes look similar  
But all are different  
They come in all ways  
Pointy  
Round  
Star-shaped  
But all are made of the same  
things

Snowcapped mountains  
Tall pines trees  
Dot the rocky crags  
Like hair  
They cover the mountains  
rough hide  
Snow hides all  
And none  
Deep Valleys  
And flat plains  
Everything looks the same  
Covered in the cold and  
quiet.

To me  
These are reasons  
Why winter is inspiring  
It is dark  
It is bright  
It can bring joy and fun  
Or worry and boredom

To me  
There is nothing more  
beautiful  
Than seeing a white curtain  
Draped over the landscape  
With nothing but shapes  
visible

To me these are all reasons  
Why winter is inspiring  
Majesty  
Power  
Beauty  
These are traits of winter.



## The First Tee Peter Carney

Golf inspires me.  
Focusing on that one spot  
In the fairway,  
As I step up to the first  
Tee,  
I can feel my body  
Tensing up  
As the swing starts  
Then I loosen up  
As the ball  
Soars like an eagle,  
Into the fairway.

Wood shots inspire me,  
I see 300 yards ahead of me  
I pull my 3 wood  
Out of my bag and,  
WHACK!  
I see the ball fly 200 yards  
And land with a  
THUD!  
100 yards away from the hole.

Iron shots inspire me.  
As I try to pick the right club,  
Like a kid  
Trying to choose  
Which doughnut to eat.  
As I line up to the ball  
I think about the swing,  
In my head, and  
Whack!  
The ball soars  
Ten feet away from the hole,  
On the green.

Thirty yard chips inspire me.  
The way you know that  
If you hit the ball too hard,  
You'll be over the green  
And too short,  
You'll chock,  
And that sensational feeling when you  
Chip it,  
And five seconds later,  
Plop!  
The ball goes right in the hole

Putting inspires me.

The way you take your  
Careful time reading the putt.  
Like a person  
Looking for bad ingredients  
In a cereal box.  
Then the focus of the putt,  
And swish.  
The ball goes in  
Like a piece of candy  
Going into a child's stomach.

The mentality of golf inspires me.  
The way that if you have a bad hole  
That you have to come back stronger,  
For the next hole.  
And how if you are on top,  
You know you have to stay on top.  
That's why golf inspires me.

## Music

Music inspires me  
When I hear the beautiful music being played,  
As I press the keys while not looking up,  
Worried I might mess up,  
Trying to stay in the moment.

Getting more nervous  
My finger hits the wrong note,  
But I don't stop.  
I stay in the moment,  
Making the music sound even better.  
You know you messed up because you were so nervous.

you calm down, proud the way you fix that mistake.  
Knowing you learn from the mistake and make it even better.  
When you finish the song, people clap,  
Not realizing my mistake they keep clapping.  
And know it won't always be perfect.  
That why you practice.

Music inspires me because it teaches me to learn from my mistakes,  
And it won't always be perfect,  
Practice, and no matter how many times I mess up

The people who love you will still clap  
Because they were proud,  
That's why music inspires me.

By: Thalia Centeno

Bliss

By: Zoe James

I tell a story,  
Through my movement.  
Moving each muscle to my emotion.  
Finding that rhythm,  
That helps me through life.  
Using that beat to guide me.

Dance is my inspiration.

I solve,  
I celebrate,  
I explode,  
I let go.  
All through dance.

When I dance,  
I feel free.  
Like a bird soaring above the clouds.  
When I dance,  
I feel excited.  
Like a kid at their birthday party.  
When I dance,  
I feel lively.  
Like the sun on a hot day.  
When I dance,  
I feel marvelous.  
Like a flower when it blooms.

I solve my troubles  
Figuring them out like math problems,  
When I dance.  
I let out my anger  
Pounding the floor like an earthquake,  
When I dance.  
I let go of my fear  
Swiftly brushing my feet of the floor,  
When I dance.  
I celebrate  
Leaping like I have won the lottery,  
When I dance.

I dance when I am as free as a bird.  
I dance when I am as angry as a bull.  
I dance when I am as lively as the sun.  
I dance when I am as marvelous as a flower.

When I dance  
I sometimes feel,  
As if I'm trapped in a box.  
There is no way out.  
But then I break it.  
I free myself from that box.  
I know that this box represents  
My troubles,  
Fears,  
Problems.  
But I overcome them  
With my happiness.

When I dance  
I am sometimes so happy,  
And cheerful.  
Like there are rainbows  
Around me.  
I think about how  
That makes me  
Happy.  
Knowing when I am sad  
I can go to this land  
In my,  
Dancing dreams.

Backstage I practice,  
I am scared,  
My stomach turning.  
But I know I will do great,  
I am trying my Hardest.  
On stage I see the crowd  
My mom,  
My dad they are cheering for me.  
I am finished I run of stage to my parents' arms.  
They glve me flowers, hug me  
I know I have done a great job.

Dance is my inspiration.

I dance like nobody's watching.  
I dance to my heart's content.