牛奶里的彩虹，写进了我的作文

我以前最怕写作文。老师一说题目，我就咬着笔头发呆，觉得没什么可写。这个学期发生了一件小事，让我对作文没那么怕了。我把做实验的事写进了作文，还被老师念给了全班听。

事情要从那个周末说起。科学老师布置了一个小实验：盘子里倒一层牛奶，在牛奶中间滴红、黄、蓝三种食用色素，再用棉签蘸一点洗洁精，轻轻点在色素上。我按着做，色素一开始不动，棉签一碰，颜色忽然炸开了，红的往边上跑，黄的追着蓝的转圈，像盘子里放了一挂烟花。

妈妈提醒我：别忘了记录。我拿出一个本子，把每一步都写下来：倒了多少牛奶，色素滴了几滴，棉签点下去以后颜色怎么跑，跑了多久。我还画了一张图，把颜色跑的样子画成一条条弯弯的线。写的时候我尽量写我看到的，不写我想的。比如我不写颜色真美，我写蓝色追着黄色转了两圈才停。

第二周作文课，题目是写一件有趣的事。我翻开本子，把实验那天的记录一段一段整理成句子。因为记录写得细，作文也顺：先写牛奶平平整整躺在盘子里，再写色素滴下去不动，急得我喊妈妈，最后写棉签一点，颜色全活了。写完六百多字，我自己读着都笑。

第二天，老师把我的作文念给全班听。念完她说：这篇作文好就好在写得细，颜色怎么跑的都写出来了。我坐在座位上，耳朵有点热。下课好几个同学过来问：你那个实验真能做？我说能，本子借你看。

现在我懂了一个以前不懂的道理：不是生活里没有东西可写，是我没把它记下来。做实验的时候手在动，眼睛在看，本子上的字把这些都留住了。写作文的时候，只要回到本子里，事情就重新发生在眼前。这个办法我自己试过了，是真的管用。

The Rainbow in the Milk Went Into My Essay

I used to dread essays most of all. The moment the teacher gave a topic, I would chew my pencil and stare, feeling I had nothing to write. This term a small thing happened that made me less afraid. I wrote about an experiment in my essay, and the teacher read it aloud to the whole class.

It started that weekend. Our science teacher assigned a small experiment: pour a layer of milk into a plate, drip red, yellow, and blue food coloring into the middle, then dip a cotton swab in a little dish soap and touch it gently to the coloring. I did exactly that. At first the colors sat still. The instant the swab touched them, they burst outward - red ran to the edges, yellow chased blue in circles - like a string of fireworks going off inside the plate.

My mother reminded me: do not forget to record it. I took out a notebook and wrote down every step: how much milk I poured, how many drops of coloring, how the

colors moved after the swab touched them, and for how long. I even drew a picture, tracing the paths of the colors as curving lines. When writing, I tried to record what I saw, not what I felt. Instead of writing the colors were beautiful, I wrote that blue chased yellow for two full turns before stopping.

The next week in writing class, the topic was to write about something interesting. I opened the notebook and turned the experiment notes into sentences, paragraph by paragraph. Because the notes were detailed, the essay came easily: first the milk lying flat and calm in the plate, then the coloring dropping in and refusing to move, me calling for my mother in a panic, and finally one touch of the swab bringing every color to life. I wrote over six hundred words, and laughed at it myself while reading.

The next day the teacher read my essay to the class. When she finished, she said: this piece is good because it is detailed - it even shows how the colors moved. I sat at my desk with hot ears. After class several classmates came to ask: can you really do that experiment? I said yes, and you can borrow my notebook.

Now I understand something I never got before: it is not that life has nothing to write about; it is that I never wrote it down. During an experiment the hands move and the eyes watch, and the words in the notebook keep all of it. When writing an essay, I only have to go back to the notebook, and the event happens again right in front of me. I have tested this method myself, and it truly works.

作文本上的那颗红星

我的作文本第十页上，有一颗老师画的红星。每次翻开本子，我都先看它一眼。这颗红星背后，是一杯盐水、一个鸡蛋和一张写满数字的记录纸。

那天科学课，老师端来一杯清水，把鸡蛋放进去，鸡蛋直直沉到杯底。老师问：有办法让它浮起来吗？教室里安静了几秒，有个同学喊：加盐！老师真的拿出一袋盐，请我们小组上台加。我负责加，李雨桐负责数，王浩负责搅拌。第一勺下去，鸡蛋没动；第三勺，没动；第五勺，鸡蛋晃了一下，慢慢离开了杯底，悬在杯子中间。全班哇的一声。我紧张得手心出汗，因为鸡蛋是我加的盐喂浮起来的。

下课前，老师让我们把过程记下来。我记的是数字：清水一杯约二百毫升，鸡蛋一个，盐每次一勺，加到第五勺鸡蛋离开杯底，第七勺浮到水面。我还记了鸡蛋的样子：沉底的时候横躺着，浮起来的时候头朝上歪着。老师说过，记数字比记感觉靠得住。

过了几天，作文课写《一次有趣的实验》。别的同学开始就写鸡蛋浮起来真神奇，我照着记录纸写：先写鸡蛋沉底时横躺的样子，再写第一勺到第四勺它一动不动，我们以为盐不管用，第

五勺它忽然晃了一下。写到晃了一下这里，我想起当时王浩的搅拌棒都停了。我把这个也写了进去。

作文讲评课，老师把我的本子举起来，说这段写的是真的，因为加了几勺、鸡蛋怎么动，都有数。她在末尾画了一颗红星。我心里记着这句话：都有数。

从那以后我做实验都留一张记录纸，写数字，写东西的样子。我发现一个秘密：作文里数字越多，文章越像真的。一勺、五勺、第七勺，这些数字替我说话，比写一百个真有趣都有用。实验帮了我作文，不是因为它好玩，是因为它给了我一张写满数字的纸。

The Red Star in My Essay Notebook

On page ten of my essay notebook there is a red star drawn by my teacher. Every time I open the notebook, I look at it first. Behind that star sit a cup of salt water, an egg, and a sheet of notes covered in numbers.

That day in science class, the teacher carried in a cup of clear water, put an egg in, and the egg sank straight to the bottom. She asked: is there a way to make it float? The room went quiet for a few seconds, then a classmate shouted: add salt! The teacher really brought out a bag of salt and asked our group to come up and add it. I added the salt, Li Yutong counted, and Wang Hao stirred. One spoonful in - the egg did not move; three spoonfuls - no movement; at the fifth spoonful the egg wobbled and slowly lifted off the bottom, hovering in the middle of the cup. The whole class gasped. My palms were sweaty, because the egg was floated to life by the salt I added.

Before class ended, the teacher told us to write down the process. I recorded numbers: one cup of clear water, about two hundred milliliters, one egg, one spoonful of salt at a time, and at the fifth spoonful the egg left the bottom; at the seventh it floated to the surface. I also recorded how the egg looked: lying on its side at the bottom, head tilted upward when it floated. The teacher had said numbers are more reliable than feelings.

A few days later, writing class asked for An Interesting Experiment. Other students opened with how magical it was that the egg floated. I followed my note sheet: first the egg lying sideways on the bottom, then spoonful one through four with no movement at all, us thinking the salt would not work, and at the fifth spoonful it suddenly wobbled. Writing that wobble, I remembered that Wang Hao had even stopped his stirring rod. I put that in too.

At the essay review class, the teacher held up my notebook and said this passage was real, because the number of spoonfuls and the egg's movements were all counted.

She drew a red star at the end. I kept her words in my heart: all counted.

Since then, every experiment I do leaves behind a note sheet with numbers and descriptions of how things looked. I discovered a secret: the more numbers in an essay, the more real it reads. One spoonful, five spoonfuls, the seventh spoonful - these numbers speak for me, more useful than writing truly interesting a hundred times. The experiment helped my essay not because it was fun, but because it handed me a sheet covered in numbers.

铁钉生锈的八天，和我的四百字

老师表扬我那篇作文的时候，说的是同一句话：这是你自己观察的吧。其实不是我观察得好，是我记的时间长。那篇作文写的是铁钉生锈，前后八天，每天一小段，连起来就成了文章。

实验很简单。三个玻璃瓶，第一只放一根干铁钉，盖紧盖子；第二只放半瓶水，铁钉泡一半在水里；第三只装满煮沸放凉的水，再滴一层油盖住水面。科学老师说，猜猜八天后哪根先锈。我猜不出来，就想自己看。

第一天，三根钉子都亮闪闪的，我在本子上写：没有变化。第二天还是没有变化。第三天，第二只瓶里水面那一圈出现了很淡的褐色，像铅笔灰落在瓶壁上。我把它描下来，标上日期。第四天，褐色变深了，水有点发浑。第五天，钉头开始翘起细小的锈皮，一碰就掉渣。第六天、第七天，锈往下爬，水变成茶色。第八天，第一只瓶里的干钉子还是亮的，第三只瓶里的钉子也几乎没变，只有泡在水里的第二根，锈得像放了一年的旧钥匙。

八天里我每天只写两三行，有时一行。写的全是看到的：褐色像铅笔灰，锈皮一碰就掉渣，水变成茶色。我没写一句我觉得科学真神奇，因为那八天里我大部分时候觉得它慢死了，天天看一点变化都没有。

作文课写观察作文，我把八天的记录抄下来，按日期排好，开头加了一句我猜不出来就想自己看，结尾加了一句只有泡在水里的第二根锈成了旧钥匙。四百多字，比平时写得快，因为一句都不用编。

老师念完作文，问我是怎么写出这些细节的。我说：每天记一行，记了八天。同学笑，老师没笑。她说：一行一行记，比坐在桌前想半天都管用。

这件事给我的心得很实在：有的作文不是写出来的，是攒出来的。一天一行不多，八天就是一篇。做实验是这样，写东西也是这样，先让日子把材料攒够，笔只要负责把它们连起来。

Eight Rusty Nails and My Four Hundred Words

When the teacher praised my essay, she said the same thing every time: you observed this yourself, didn't you. Really, it is not that I observed well; it is that I kept recording for a long time. That essay was about rusting nails, eight days in all, a few lines a day, strung together into one piece.

The experiment was simple. Three glass jars: the first held a dry nail with the lid sealed tight; the second held half a jar of water with the nail half submerged; the third was filled with boiled water that had cooled, covered with a layer of oil on top. Our science teacher asked us to guess which nail would rust first after eight days. I could not guess, so I decided to watch for myself.

Day one, all three nails still gleamed, and I wrote: no change. Day two, still no change. On day three, a very faint brown ring appeared at the water line in the second jar, like pencil dust settled on the glass. I traced it and dated it. Day four, the brown deepened and the water turned cloudy. Day five, the nail head began to lift tiny flakes of rust that crumbled at a touch. Days six and seven, the rust crept downward and the water turned the color of tea. On day eight, the dry nail in the first jar was still bright, the nail in the third jar had barely changed, and only the second nail, the one soaked in water, looked as rusty as an old key left out for a year.

Over eight days I wrote only two or three lines a day, sometimes one. Everything I wrote was what I saw: the brown like pencil dust, rust flakes crumbling at a touch, water turning the color of tea. I did not write a single line about how amazing science is, because during those eight days I mostly thought it was painfully slow, with no change day after day.

In writing class, for the observation essay, I copied down the eight days of notes, arranged them by date, added one line at the start - I could not guess, so I decided to watch for myself - and one at the end: only the second nail, the one in water, rusted into an old key. A little over four hundred words, written faster than usual, because not one sentence had to be invented.

After reading the essay, the teacher asked how I got such details. I said: one line a day, for eight days. The classmates laughed; the teacher did not. She said: one line a day works better than sitting at a desk thinking for half an hour.

My lesson from this is plain: some essays are not written, they are saved up. One line a day is nothing; eight days make an essay. Experiments work this way, and so does writing - let the days gather the material first, and the pen only has to string it together.