



**Jost van Dyke**  
Preservation Society



## **Jost Van Dyke's Community-based Programme Advancing Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development**

Creative Writing Exercises: Using language arts skills to develop understanding of key concepts in the *Environmental Profile for Jost Van Dyke (including Little Jost Van Dyke, Sandy Cay, Green cay and Sandy Spit)* to learn more about our island.

Here are just a few words related to the nature and heritage of Jost Van Dyke that may come in handy as you work on the exercises below:

Bats	Lizard	Anole	Gecko	Insect
Birds	Pelican	Dove	Stilt	Heron
Fish	Conch	Sea Turtles	Hind	Grouper
Trees	Tamarind	Sea Grape	Acacia	Mangroves
Orb Weaver	Spider	Coral Tree	Prickle Pear	Century Plant
Ocean	Salt Pond	Coral Reef	Seagrass	Beach
Wind	Tide	Rain	Sunny	Storm
Genip	Soursop	Banana	Mango	Lime
White Bay	Bubbly Pool	Little Harbour	East End	Dog Hole
Tortola	Anegada	Virgin Gorda	British Virgin Islands	
Climate Change	Sedimentation	Pollution	Erosion	
Tarantula	Scorpion	Jewel Bug	Dragonfly	Invertebrate
Buttonwood	Grass Anole	Cape Wright	cattle	bateaux
Turk's cap	Turpentine	Butterfly Orchid	killiwang	island sloop

### Creative Writing Activity #1: Acrostic Poems

An **acrostic poem** uses letters from a name or a word to begin each line in a Poem to spell out a word--- all the lines must relate to the word to or describe the topic. Some people even use these acrostic poems as pneumatic devices to help aid memory retrieval.

Example:

#### **Jost**

Just 3 square miles in size-

Our island has 12 species of special concern

Surrounded by rich marine habitats like coral reefs and seagrass beds

Tortola is the main political centre.

Using the Environmental Profile for Jost Van Dyke, Can you create an acrostic poem to help describe our special island? We'll help you out a little!

#### **JOST VAN DYKE: OUR SPECIAL ISLAND**

Joined to Puerto Rico during the Last ice age 10,000 years ago (Pg 3)

**O** \_\_\_\_\_

**S** \_\_\_\_\_

**T** \_\_\_\_\_

Vegetation communities: There are thirteen on our island! (Pg 20)

**A** \_\_\_\_\_

**N** \_\_\_\_\_

**D** \_\_\_\_\_

**Y** \_\_\_\_\_

Kapok Trees found on the island were once used to stuff pillows (Pg 80)

**E** \_\_\_\_\_

Having a hard time? Try to think of adjectives that describe things you are writing about: For example for "V" you could say "**Vibrant** coral reefs surround our island or for "T" "**Tall** trees like the \_\_\_\_\_ tree are found here." Try to be creative.

Writing Exercise #2: Express yourself! Using Literary Devices

**Alliteration:** Alliteration is a literary device that involves the repetition of sounds, usually consonance.

Example:     The pretty, perky pelican perched on the pier.  
              The tall, twisted tamarind tree  
              The gull soared silently to Sandy Cay.

Try it out using one of the words above or think of another plant, animal or place on Jost Van Dyke to write about.

Now you try:

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**METAPHORS:** compare one thing to another:

Example:     The Bubbly Pool on Jost Van Dyke is a Jacuzzi in the sun.  
              Sandy Cay's beaches are filled with crystal white sugar.

(Is the Bubbly pool really a Jacuzzi? No. Is Sandy Cay really filled with sugar? No, it's sand, but it makes your statement more interesting and visual to your reader).

Now you try:

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**SIMILES:** Similes also offer comparisons, just like metaphors, but usually introduce the comparison with the word "like" or as.

Example:     The Red-billed Tropicbird is like a lady wearing lipstick.  
              The tall Kapok tree stands as a skyscraper in Great Harbour.

Now you  
try: \_\_\_\_\_

**PERSONIFICATION:** giving an inanimate object or abstraction human-like qualities.

Example:     The Great Harbour Salt Pond **moaned and cried** as the man dumped garbage on her. **She ached** from the old tires **pushing into her sides** and the shards of broken glass bottles that jabbed the mud around the Black Mangrove prop roots.

The seagrasses **arched and stretched** their blades towards the surface of the water, **drinking up** the sunlight that filtered through the clear shallow water.

Do salt ponds really moan and cry? No, but the writer wants you to understand that dumping garbage is bad for the salt pond, so personification is used to make a point. Do seagrasses literally "Drink Up" sunlight? No! but they need sunlight to live (to photosynthesize)

Now, let's put it all together. Pick an animal or plant in the Environmental Profile and use write a few sentences about it using the literary devices you have practiced.

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**Writing Exercise #3:** Writing in Nature (using all your senses)

Find a quiet spot in one of the many important habitats described in the Environmental Profile for Jost Van Dyke- maybe the shade of a sea grape tree on the beach or by the edge of a salt pond.

What do you see? \_\_\_\_\_

What about plants or other living things? Can you use alliteration or one of the other devices above to help describe it? \_\_\_\_\_

Close your eyes? What kind of sounds can you hear? Describe them: \_\_\_\_\_

Can you hear things or smell something? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you feel? (Hot sun, cool breeze, etc.?) \_\_\_\_\_

Choose an item (leaf, tree trunk, flower). Close your eyes. How does it feel? Does it remind you of anything? \_\_\_\_\_