Beth Baldwin’s lesson plan for Franklin seminar
To be used in 7th grade English and Language Arts classes

Indiana standards addressed:

7.2.4 Identify and trace the development of an author’s argument, point of view, or perspective
7.2.7 Draw conclusions and make reasonable statements about a text
7.3.4 Identify and analyze themes which appear in many different works
7.4.1 Keep a notebook of ideas for writing
7.4.5 Identify topics; ask and evaluate questions; and develop ideas leading to inquiry, investigation, and research
7.5.2 Write responses to literature

The lesson is to be introduced early in the school year and to continue the entire year.

Keeping a common place book.

To introduce the lesson, I will show the students my grandmother’s common place book from 1918. It includes letters, death notices, newspaper clippings, a commencement program, gum wrappers, and other interesting items. It shows what that year meant to my grandmother.

Students will then be given a composition book to use for their own common place book. We will brainstorm ideas of things to put in their own book to make it an important keepsake from their school year. Students should learn much about themselves from keeping such a
record. I will also keep a book and show them what I have put in it so far.

In addition to the items they feel are important to put in the book, there will be assigned topics to write about. These will be responses to literature, important current topics, and other things that will be important to write about. These topics will be designed to meet the Indiana Academic Standards that were stated.

The students’ common place books will be given to them at the end of the school year and hopefully will be important keepsakes for them. This should help the students to be lifelong learners and may start a tradition of keeping a common place book.