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Transferable Writing Strategies, Individualizing Learning

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Neena Kumar is a Writing Strategies teacher at Legacy Charter School in Greenville, South Carolina. She works with 3 classes of 12 students each, whose post-high-school goals are often community college or technical school, to improve their writing to equip them for college-level writing. Because of her relatively small class size, Neena is able to individualize instruction in ways that teachers of classes of 25 students cannot. Yet she wants to develop common understandings and approaches to writing that will benefit her students as well as students in other classes in other schools. Her interest in the AVD High Impact Fellows Program stems from a desire to enable her students to follow a writing process that allows them to progress independently in their areas of learning need within a small group context.

Lauren Kirby is a junior at Wofford College from Sherman, Texas. She is majoring in English while completing the Teacher Education Program. Lauren is a member of the Wofford women's basketball team and hopes to one day coach and teach high school English. Her interest in the High Impact Fellows Program stems from the opportunity to collaborate with educators on writing strategies that can be used in the classroom.

Carol Wilson is an Associate Professor of English at Wofford College. In that role, she teaches 100- and 200-level English courses that emphasize reading, writing, analysis, and speaking skills required for college-level work. Her upper-level teaching includes courses in modernist novel, European drama of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, teaching of adolescent literature (along with lesson and unit plans), and business and professional writing. She offers academic support services as the Coordinator of Academic Advising, coordinating information for general education advisors for first and second year students. She also coaches students on personal management, study strategies, and strategies for stronger academic performance.

Our group’s hope is to develop a unit of writing instruction that invites a variety of specific instructional strategies, so that she can encourage individual students to meet their potential and transfer their knowledge from project to project, from class to class, and from high school to college.

Goal: To create a 10-day unit of instruction for Neena to use in her classroom in January 2014 that accomplishes several objectives:

- Create one unit that guides students through writing one specific piece of writing.
- Describe a 4-step, transferable writing process that Neena can use in teaching her class and that students can use in writing independently.
• Find and develop instructional strategies that enhance students’ abilities to write effectively for audience and purpose.
• Find and develop multiple activities and handouts that will allow Neena to vary group and individualized instruction and learning.
• Find and develop strategies that students can use in independent writing throughout the year, across different writing contexts.
• Create a bibliography of resources that Neena and others can use in further development of writing strategies for high school students.
• Consider the following ideas in developing the unit and bibliography:
  o Ways to foster individualize and differentiate learning and writing
  o Varying instructional approaches to meet differing learning needs
  o Developing different writing assignments to encourage students to transfer learning from one project to another.
  o Including low stakes writing that requires little grading, but that affirms progress and success

**Process:** Our group met several times on Wofford’s campus to plan Neena’s lesson and to discuss resources that would be most helpful. In January 2014, on separate occasions, Lauren and Carol visited Neena’s classroom, to meet her students and to see her teach. The visits emphasized for us all that while Neena’s small class size is unusual, all students need a clear understanding of the writing process that they can use to structure their writing in different contexts, for different disciplines.

**Neena’s original description of the process she uses** to guide students’ writing emphasizes a clear process of writing; however, she wanted to define an overall structure that students will find easy to remember and follow. She will incorporate much of these approaches into that process.

List what is given/available/known to you

Understand what is being asked/what is the task/what is the goal.
1. Select a relevant and attainable task.
2. Know what is the end result.
3. Ask, “What is the purpose of the task?”
4. Ask, “Who is the audience?”

Outline existing information/Summarize what is available
Identify information you need in terms of research
Create a list of resources you will consult
Make a timetable and decide how will you divide your time in order to get to the goal.
Research the selected topic
Collect and organize information
Use a variety of resources to gather information

Build the product
  • write report/letter/story/response
  • Make video/powerpoint/slide show
  • Draw graphic organizer/poster/map/collage
Revise and Reflect
· Strengths and weaknesses of the finished product.
· List takeaway pointers for next drafts

The writing process developed for a 10-day unit
The highlighted topics 1-4 incorporate Neena’s existing practices (included here in *italics*) and will organize the resources we have gathered. A great deal of Neena’s original process appropriately emphasizes brainstorming and idea development. Our plan is to give students 4 broad, easy-to-remember steps in the writing process: Generate ideas, Draft, Revise ideas, Edit. In this project, we have found and included several graphic organizers that to help her students generate ideas and create the first draft. Then, we have include guided readings and an error log to assist students in editing their work.

1. **Generate Ideas:** Brainstorming activities: 2 days
   - Vocabulary development and guidance
   - Oral collaboration among students
   - Individual note-taking and planning by students

   *This section includes Neena’s original directions for students:*
   *List what is given/available/known to you*

   *Understand what is being asked/what is the task/what is the goal.*
   1. Select a relevant and attainable task.
   2. Know what is the end result.
   3. Ask, “What is the purpose of the task?”
   4. Ask, “Who is the audience?”

   *Outline existing information/Summarize what is available*
   *Identify information you need in terms of research*
   *Create a list of resources you will consult*
   *Make a timetable and decide how will you divide your time in order to get to the goal.*
   *Research the selected topic*
   *Collect and organize information*
   *Use a variety of resources to gather information*

2. **Draft:** 3 days
   - Writing in sections: introduction, body, conclusion
   - Sometimes the students work for 1 day on each section.
   - This section could be extended, to allow for intensive paragraph work in the body.

   *This section includes Neena’s original instructions for students:*
   *Build the product*
   · Write report/letter/story/response
   · Make video/powerpoint/slide show
   · Draw graphic organizer/poster/map/collage

3. **Revise ideas** (big picture revision): 3-4 days
• Focus on organization, ideas, evidence, explanation
• Include 1-on-1 conferences with teacher
• Include peer editing

Included: guided readings (for individual writers and peer editors), response sheet from the teacher to use in revision

This section includes Neena’s original instructions for students:
Revise and Reflect
- Strengths and weaknesses of the finished product.
- List takeaway pointers for next drafts

4. **Edit** to produce final draft to go in the portfolio: 1 day
   • Prepare the paper to be typed for submission later
   • Evaluate with rubric

This stage could be extended to allow careful attention to specific needs: for example, spelling, punctuation, or transition words.

**Assessment**

Our group created a short-term assessment of the one unit that Neena implemented in February, 2014. Because the impact of the unit should transfer across the school year, we are much more interested in the long-term, assessments that would reach across the semester or year than in assessment of the initial unit. The descriptions of those possibilities are options for others to try. Neena will rely upon a combination of the 3, when she begins the 2014-15 school year’s instruction.

**Short term, first unit assessment**

As the unit opens, students will write a 250-300 word paper on “how I write papers,” describing their writing process, with great reassurance that they will not be penalized for an honest description of their writing papers in one sitting, or with no revision or editing. Neena will read each essay looking to note how many students mention the steps of our writing process:

1. Generating ideas
2. Creating a first draft
3. Revising for organization, ideas, and content
4. Revising and editing on the paragraph and sentence level, for phrasing, punctuation, and grammar

At the end of the unit, students will be asked to write a 250-300 word paper about what they changed or learned in this one paper. Neena will use the same 4 point list to see if student awareness of the writing process has changed.

**Semester or year-long assessment: possibilities**

Since our project runs from October, 2013, to March 2014, these are possibilities, all holding interest for Neena in a year-long course.
1. **Error log over semester**: Students will keep an error log for each paper, in which they notice the frequency of pre-determined errors in their work. The goal will be to reduce the number of errors of each kind.

2. **Portfolio over semester**: Neena already has her class create a portfolio, and she may decide that it’s a good long-term assessment vehicle. The Portfolio would include final versions (and perhaps drafts) of each paper written over the term, along with a metacognitive essay about how process for writing has changed, or what the student has learned. This metacognitive essay could also be shaped as a letter to next year’s class on the topic of “What you need to know to write well.” In this instance, they become teachers in their writing to next class and can provide models for use with the next class.

3. **COMPASS test success**: At the end of the school year, students will take the Compass test. Neena could rely upon earlier testing, either standardized or her own practice Compass, to compare with the final scores on this test as a measure of learning in grammar and mechanics.
Neena Kumar’s implementation of the plan

**Assignment:** Write a five-paragraph essay for the school news magazine

**Schedule of activities:**

**Day 1**

Pre assessment:
The students are given a free writing assignment.
"You are given a writing task. Describe in complete sentences, the steps you would follow to turn in a complete publish worthy task.

Students spend fifteen minutes writing their response and then share it with the group. We generate a list and I go over the holes that might be there in their list, justifying each step.

**Day 2**

The students are invited to browse through the recent issues of magazines. (I subscribe to *Upfront, Time, Ideas and Discoveries, Mental Floss, Sports Illustrated, National Geographic* and *Popular Science*)

They are asked to browse and see what catches their eye in terms of stories. They spend thirty minutes browsing and then share with class the stories that caught their eye.

A mini-lesson on the different kinds of articles that can be found in a newspaper includes

- **News articles:** These are found at the front of a newspaper. They inform readers about things that are happening in the world or in the local area.

- **Feature articles:** These explore news stories in more depth. They may be triggered by a story that has been in the news for a while. The purpose of a feature is not just to tell you what has happened, but also to explore or analyze the reasons why.

- **Editorials, columns and opinion pieces:** These are pieces by 'personality' writers. They might be there to inform (because the writer's expert opinion is valued), or they might be there to entertain (because the writer has a comic or interesting way of describing everyday life).

(Above information excerpted from Bitesize BBC website)

Now the students are asked to decide, which kind of article do they want to write? They submit their ideas/ title and what they would like to cover in it, how long do they think it will be and how would they go about accomplishing it.
Day 3

The students are asked to do a Prewrite/Brainstorming session.

They are given a minilesson on ways to brainstorm or pre write. Based on the list that Lauren came up with, I made a quick guide line for the students. I am attaching a picture of the guide line:

Picture 1
Day 4
The students are asked to start thinking how they are planning to organize their ideas in the 5 paragraph organizer. Once an outline is established, a mini-lesson on drafting follows.

The following guideline is created and shared with the students:

DRAFTING

DEVELOP
SUMMARIZE your topic.
* State your thesis, theme or objective in a sentence or two.
* Note the key ideas or words (search keywords).
* Identify what you want to do with those ideas.
* List out the resources you will use - books, internet, interviews.

Start small, think big!

* Analyze your topic - Is it too big? too vague? too narrow? Is there a controversy to explore?

* WRITE YOUR OPINION
Analyse and keep an open mind.
The next two days are allowed for research, drafting and organizing the first draft. In these days, a mini-lesson on how to write a topic sentence and weave the main idea into the same and what it means to have paragraph unity are taught and modeled. The students bring in their first draft by the day 5

**Day 5**

**Peer editing:**
Each student is provided with a guided reading response and a peer’s first draft. They are asked to read and edit for spelling, main idea and organization. (one of Carol’s Guided Response Sheets was used in the test lesson.)

**Day 6**
**Revise**
The students revise and type and email their revised version. I start conferences, giving one on one edits and feedback on each one’s writing.

**By Day 10**
The students type their final drafts after incorporating the edits and suggestions and turn in the final draft. The final draft is graded on Ideas, Organization, Word Choice and Sentence Variety,
Resources


Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL). [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/)


Study Guides and Strategies. [http://www.studygs.net/writing/prewriting.htm](http://www.studygs.net/writing/prewriting.htm)


10
Generate Ideas (GI)
Handouts and Resources
Four exercises in prewriting:
http://www.studygs.net/writing/prewriting.htm

Focused Free writing

1. **Use a blank paper or computer screen** and set a time limit of 5 - 15 minutes
2. **Summarize the topic in a phrase or sentence**; generate a free flow of thought
3. **Write anything that comes to mind**, whether on topic or off, for the period of time you chose,
4. **Don't pause**. Don't stop. Don't rush; work quickly
5. **Don't review** what you have written until you have finished
6. **At the end of your time**, refer back to the beginning:
   - Rephrase the initial topic
   - Repeat a word, phrase, or important thought or emotion that makes sense.
7. **Review**:
   - Are there words or ideas you can grab onto for the topic?
   - Is there a main idea to this sequence of ideas?

Listing and outlines

This is a more structured and sequential overview of your research to date. You may also outline to organize topics built from free writing, brainstorming, or mind mapping:

1. Arrange items or topics, usually without punctuation or complete sentences
2. List topics and phrases them in a grammatically similar or parallel structure (subjects, verbs, etc.)
3. Sequence topics in importance, defining what "level" of importance they are. Items of equal importance are at the same level

Brainstorming

1. **Use a blank paper or computer screen** and set a time limit of 5 - 15 minutes
2. **Summarize the topic in a phrase or sentence**;
   generate a free flow of thought
3. **Write down everything** that comes to mind to generate a free flow of thought:
   - **Think of ideas** related to this topic, the crazier the better: be wild and amuse yourself; eliminate nothing
   - **Make up questions and answers** about the topic, no matter how strange: Why am I doing this? What could be interesting about this to me? Why don’t I like this? What color is it? What would my friend say about it?
4. **Review**:
   - are there words or ideas you can grab onto for the topic?
   - Is there a main idea within this sequence of ideas?

(continues on next page)
Mind mapping

1. Think in terms of key words or symbols that represent ideas and words
2. Take a pencil (you’ll be erasing!) and a blank (non-lined) big piece of paper or use a blackboard and (colored) chalk
3. **Write down the most important word or short phrase or symbol in the center.** Think about it; circle it.
4. **Write other important words outside the circle.**
   - Draw over-lapping circles to connect items, or use arrows to connect them
   - (think of linking pages in a web site)
   - Leave white space to grow your map for
     - further development
     - explanations
     - action items
5. **Work quickly** without analyzing your work
6. **Edit this first phase**
   - Think about the relation of outside items to the center,
   - Erase and replace and shorten words for these key ideas
   - Relocate important items closer to each other for better organization
   - Use color to organize information
   - Link concepts with words to clarify the relationship
7. **Continue working outward**
   - Freely and quickly add other key words and ideas (you can always erase!)
   - Think weird: tape pages together to expand your map; break boundaries
   - Develop in directions the topic takes you--don’t bet limited by the size of the paper
   - As you expand your map, tend to become more specific or detailed

**LINK:** [http://www.studygs.net/writing/prewriting.htm](http://www.studygs.net/writing/prewriting.htm)
GI: 5 Ws Diagram

Cause and Effect

http://www.curriculumassociates.com/educator-resources/write/Graphic_Org/ceGrades3-5.htm
GI: Chronological Narrative

Directions: Planning your narrative is easy.
Step 1: Fill out the 5 W’s Chart.
Step 2: Write 4 or more events from beginning to end.

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GI: Comparison Matrix

Comparison Matrix

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http://www.cobbk12.org/Cheathamhill/LFS%20Update/Graphic%20Organizers.htm
GI: Sequence Steps
Graphic Organizers

Reasons and Facts Diagram

Opinion

Reason

Fact/Example

Fact/Example

Reason

Fact/Example

Fact/Example

Reason

Fact/Example

Fact/Example

Fact/Example

http://www.curriculumassociates.com/educator-resources/write/Graphic_Org/PDF_C-E/
PDF_Opinions/reasonsFactsDiagram.pdf

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Story Pyramid

1. ________

2. ________  ________

3. ________  ________  ________

4. ________  ________  ________  ________

5. ________  ________  ________  ________  ________

Directions:

1. Insert 1 word that names a central character.
2. Insert 2 words that describe the setting.
3. Insert 3 words that describe a character.
4. Insert 4 words that describe one event.
5. Insert 5 words that describe another event.
WRITE!

**Graphic Organizers**

Name_________________________________    Date____________________

**Summary Diagram**

- Topic
  - Idea 1
  - Idea 2
    - Idea 3


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GI: Story Map: Character Change
http://www.marion.k12.fl.us/schools/dms/extra/file/Story_Map_Character%20Graphic%20Organizer.pdf

Story Map Showing Character Change
GI: Venn Diagram

http://www.cobbk12.org/Cheathamhill/LFS%20Update/Graphic%20Organizers.htm

Name ________________________  Date ________________

Venn Diagram

__________  ____________
Drafting (D)
Handouts and Resources
D: DRAFTING

What you need

- Adequate time period for focus
- Clear study area to eliminate distractions, whether other school projects or friends’ demands, in order to concentrate on the task at hand
- Preparation and research with as much current and historical data and viewpoints as necessary
- Target audience or a clear idea for whom you are writing: your professor, an age group, a friend, a profession, etc.
- Prewriting exercises and notes on ideas from your research
- Review all the above.
  Don’t "study" it; just refresh yourself on the main concepts for now

What you will NOT need:

- Title or introduction: derive these from your prewriting exercise
- Reference works, print-outs, quotes, etc.
  Rely on your notes, and don’t overwhelm yourself with facts.
  Details can be added; you now want to focus on developing your argument
- Edits!
  Do not revise as you write, or correct spelling, punctuation, etc.
  Just write, write, write.
  This is the first draft, so what you put down will be revised and organized "after"

Take a break after your prewriting exercise!
  Refresh yourself

- Review the ideas, topics, themes, questions you have come up with in your prewriting exercise. Try reading the prewriting text out loud (a type of self-mediation). Listen for patterns that seem most interesting and/or important. Summarize them.
- Evaluate the ideas, topics, themes, and questions whether by scoring, prioritizing, or whatever method seems best.
  Keep this list in case your first choice(s) don’t work
- Sequence what you have prioritized as in outlining, above.

(continued)
Writing your draft

Your first paragraph

- Introduce the topic; entice the reader (remember: audience)
- Establish perspective and/or point of view!
- Focus on three main points to develop

Establish flow from paragraph to paragraph

- Topic sentences of each paragraph define their place in the overall scheme
- Transition sentences, clauses, or words at the beginning of paragraph connect one idea to the next
- Avoid one and two sentence paragraphs which may reflect lack of development of your point
- Continually prove your point of view throughout the essay
  - Don't drift or leave the focus of the essay
  - Don't lapse into summary in developing paragraphs. Wait until its time, at the conclusion
- Keep your voice active
  - "The Academic Committee decided..." not "It was decided by..."
  - Avoid the verb "to be" for clear, dynamic, and effective presentation
    (Avoid the verb "to be" and your presentation will be effective, clear, and dynamic)
  - Avoiding "to be" will also avoid the passive voice
- Support interpretations with quotes, data, etc.
  - Properly introduce, explain, and cite each quote
  - Block (indented) quotes should be used sparingly; they can break up the flow of your argument

Conclusion

- Read your first paragraph, the development, and set it aside
- Summarize, then conclude, your argument
- Refer back (once again) to the first paragraph(s) as well as the development
  - do the last paragraphs briefly restate the main ideas?
  - reflect the succession and importance of the arguments
  - logically conclude their development?
- Edit/rewrite the first paragraph to better set your development and conclusion

Take a day or two off!

LINK: http://www.studygs.net/writing/roughdrafts.htm
D: Developing a topic: Seven stages of writing assignments

If a topic is not assigned, identify a subject that interests you.
Refer to your textbook, a lecture, a hobby you have that relates to the subject, something that you are curious about.

Summarize your topic
State your thesis, theme, or objective in a sentence or two at most.

If the topic is assigned, or when you have identified your subject:

- **Note key ideas or words (search terms!) you think will be important.**
  Use only short phrases or individual words at this point
  Construct a map using these words and phrases
  Refer to our Guide on concept mapping on how to create one

- **Identify what you want to do** with the concepts!
  Refer to our list of terms for essays
  Pick a likely verb (or two) and write out the definition to keep before you.
  Are you to develop a persuasive or expository essay, or a position paper?
  What has the teacher assigned?

- **List out what sources you will need**
  to find information for your essay:
  Start small: what does an encyclopedia say about it?
  Is there a reference librarian who can help you find sources, both for an overview and for detailed research?
  Is a search engine enough? Or too boring?
  Think big: are there experts you can talk to? an organization?

- **Analyze your topic so far**
  Is it too vague or broad, or too narrow?
  Is it interesting enough? Is there a controversy to explore, or do you think you can help others understand a problem? Will you provide information from two points of view, or only one while anticipating questions and arguments?

- **Summarize your topic**
  and present it to your teacher for feedback.
  Bring these first few steps with you in case the teacher will want to help you refine or restate your topic

- **Write out your opinion on, or approach to, the topic**
  Remember: you are writing an essay as a learning experience and you may find information that is against your position. You will need to resolve this.
• **Keep an open or critical mind** as you research:
  You may only see your side and not be objective.
  Your position could be prejudicial to, or otherwise affect, your investigation

**LINK:** [http://www.studygs.net/writing/topic.htm](http://www.studygs.net/writing/topic.htm)
D: DRAFTING

Writing an essay: research

Develop your time line
Allow for editing, revision and unexpected developments

- **Inspiration phase:**
  This is continuous to prevent losing ideas and inspirations
  Keep a convenient place to organize phrases, vocabulary, events, etc. for later use

- **Research phase; information gathering and recording:**
  Do not copy research word-for-word unless using quotes to illustrate ideas.
  The goal is to transform source material into your ideas and organization while adequately representing the authors in a neutral manner.
  Keep a good record of source material for citations and bibliography.

- **Organizing/prewriting phase**
  with concept mapping, outlining, even brainstorming
  Determine how you will build the scenes of your argument, narrative, story, etc.
  See our definitions of writing terms in our Guides.

Research phase: information gathering and recording:

Document all interviews, readings, experiments, data, websites, reports, etc.
People: instructor, teaching assistant, research librarian, tutor, subject matter experts, professionals

1. **Develop research strategies and a list of resources**

2. **Narrow your topic and its description;**
   Pull out key words and categories
   Develop a list of key words--50 or so--that form the foundation of both your research and writing. Build the list from general sources and overviews

3. **Bring your topic and keyword list** to a local research librarian, teacher, support professional on resources available
   Text books (!), reference works, web sites, journals, diaries, professional reports

4. **International conventions of copyright govern the use** and reproduction of all material: all information should be properly cited

A. **What are some resources?**
   - **Search engines**
     c.f. Search Engine Colossus with links to search engines from 148 countries
   - **Directories and portals on the Internet that categorize/organize information and links**
     c.f. Open Directory Project; Librarians Index to the Internet; Infomine
Web sites devoted to particular topics, including text, graphics, movies, music files
- e.g. Internet Directory for Botany

Government documents, forms, laws, policies, etc.

Services and information by
- non-profit organizations and by for-profit businesses

LISTSERVs or discussion groups
- c.f. L-Soft "the official catalog of LISTSERV® lists"

Resources at your local (public) library
- These may require membership or registration

Newspaper, journal, magazine databases
- Often restricted to subscribers, require registration, or can be fee-based for access

Using an Internet search engine

Find the best combination of key words to locate information you need;
Enter these in the search engine

- Refer to known, recommended, expert, or reviewed web sites
- Review the number of options returned.
  - If there are too many web sites, add more keywords.
  - If there are too few options, narrow/delete some keywords,
    or substitute other key words
- Review the first pages returned:
  - If these are not helpful, review your key words for a better description
- Use advanced search options in search engines:
  - Search options include
    - Key word combinations, including Boolean strings
    - Locations where key words are found
      - For example: in the title, 1st paragraphs, coded metadata
    - Languages to search in
    - Sites containing media files (images, videos, MP3/music, ActiveX, JAVA, etc.)
    - Dates web sites were created or updated
- Research using several search engines
  - Each search engine has a different database of web sites it searches
  - Some "Meta-Search" engines actually search other search engines!
  - If one search engine returns few web sites, another may return many!
- Evaluate the content of the web sites you've found:
  - Beware referencing blogs as they are often opinions and not "fact"
- Track your search:
  - List resources you checked; the date your checked them
  - Identify the resource, especially its location and the date you found it
- When printing, set your options to print the Title of the page | the Web address | the date printed

LINK: http://www.studygs.net/writing/research.htm
**Chronological Narrative**

**Directions:** Planning your narrative is easy.

Step 1: Fill out the 5 W’s Chart.

Step 2: Write 4 or more events from beginning to end.

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<td>Where?</td>
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1. 

2. 

3. 

4.
D: http://www.cobbk12.org/Cheathamhill/LFS%20Update/Graphic%20Organizers.htm

Descriptive Organizer

..............................................................

Topic

Details

Main Idea Sentence
D: Events Chart

WRITE! Graphic Organizers

Name ___________________________ Date ________________

Events Chart

Beginning -> Middle -> Ending
Opinion Chart

What is the topic?

What is your opinion?

What reasons or facts back up your opinion?
Sequence Chain for
II. Story Map

A story map can help you plot out just what happens in a story.
- Fill in each part of the story map.
- Use the story map to guide your writing.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Main Characters</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Other Characters</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Conflict</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Setting</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Rising Action</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Event 1</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Event 2</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Event 3</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Climax</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Resolution</td>
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</table>
Story Pyramid

Directions:

1. Insert 1 word that names a central character.
2. Insert 2 words that describe the setting.
3. Insert 3 words that describe a character.
4. Insert 4 words that describe one event.
5. Insert 5 words that describe another event.
### III. Time Line
For how-to essays, a time line can help you organize the steps in the process.
- Type time indicators in the left column.
- Type events or steps in the right column.

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<tbody>
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<td>1.</td>
<td>First</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Next</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Then</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Finally</td>
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</table>
D: Graphic Organizer
D: Graphic Organizer 2

I will write about ________________________________

My tentative thesis is __________________________

Argument: ________________________________
Evidence: ________________________________
Explanation: ________________________________

Conclusion

Intro ideas

Argument: ________________________________
Evidence: ________________________________
Explanation: ________________________________

Paragraph

Argument: ________________________________
Evidence: ________________________________
Explanation: ________________________________
D: Newspaper Article Summary

Newspaper Article Summary Questions

1. What is the title of the article you are considering?

2. What is the main idea of the article?

3. Fill in the table below to outline the main points in the article. Use the back if you need additional space.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Point</th>
<th>Connection to Main Idea</th>
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4. What is your final impression of the main points included in the article? How do they combine to support the main idea?

5. What ideas do you have for the letter that you will write in response to this article? What position will you take and why?
Using transitional words and phrases helps papers read more smoothly, and at the same time allows the reader to flow more smoothly from one point to the next.

Transitions enhance logical organization and understandability and improve the connections between thoughts. They indicate relations, whether within a sentence, paragraph, or paper.

This list illustrates categories of "relationships" between ideas, followed by words and phrases that can make the connections:

Addition: 
also, again, as well as, besides, coupled with, furthermore, in addition, likewise, moreover, similarly

When there is a trusting relationship coupled with positive reinforcement, the partners will be able to overcome difficult situations.

Consequence: 
accordingly, as a result, consequently, for this reason, for this purpose, hence, otherwise, so then, subsequently, therefore, thus, thereupon, wherefore

Highway traffic came to a stop as a result of an accident that morning.

Contrast and Comparison: 
contrast, by the same token, conversely, instead, likewise, on one hand, on the other hand, on the contrary, rather, similarly, yet, but, however, still, nevertheless, in contrast

The children were very happy. On the other hand, and perhaps more importantly, their parents were very proactive in providing good care.

Direction: 
here, there, over there, beyond, nearly, opposite, under, above, to the left, to the right, in the distance

She scanned the horizon for any sign though in the distance she could not see the surprise coming her way.

Diversion: 
by the way, incidentally

He stumbled upon the nesting pair incidentally found only on this hill.

Emphasis 
above all, chiefly, with attention to, especially, particularly, singularly

The Quakers gathered each month with attention to deciding the business of their Meeting.
Exception:
aside from, barring, beside, except, excepting, excluding, exclusive of, other than, outside of, save

Consensus was arrived at by all of the members exclusive of those who could not vote.

Exemplifying:
chiefly, especially, for instance, in particular, markedly, namely,
particularly, including, specifically, such as

Some friends and I drove up the beautiful coast chiefly to avoid the heat island of the city.

Generalizing:
as a rule, as usual, for the most part, generally, generally speaking, ordinarily, usually

There were a few very talented artists in the class, but for the most part the students only wanted to avoid the alternative course.

Illustration:
for example, for instance, for one thing, as an illustration,
illustrated with, as an example, in this case

The chapter provided complex sequences and examples illustrated with a very simple schematic diagram.

Similarity:
comparatively, coupled with, correspondingly, identically, likewise, similar, moreover, together with

The research was presented in a very dry style though was coupled with examples that made the audience tear up.

Restatement:
in essence, in other words, namely, that is, that is to say, in short, in brief, to put it differently

In their advertising business, saying things directly was not the rule. That is to say, they tried to convey the message subtly though with creativity.

Sequence:
at first, first of all, to begin with, in the first place, at the same time, for now, for the time being, the next step, in time, in turn, later on, meanwhile, next, then, soon, the meantime, later, while, earlier, simultaneously, afterward, in conclusion, with this in mind,

The music had a very retro sound but at the same time incorporated a complex modern rhythm.
She didn't seem willing to sell the car this week, but in any case I don't get paid until the end of the month.
RI: Peer Editing

Peer Editing of ____________________________
(title of the paper)

Author of the Paper ____________________________

Editor of the Paper ____________________________

1. Compliment the author’s work in the paper. What is interesting, clear, or accurate here? Be specific. Offer 3-5 observations.

2. Suggest ways that the author can improve the paper. Consider the ideas, organization, transitions, evidence, and explanation.

3. Point out any corrections that the author should make: spelling, punctuation, or formatting, for example.
Read your partner’s paper carefully. Write “thesis” next to the sentence that you believe is the main idea or argument of the paper.

Choose one body paragraph from the paper. Write the main idea of that paragraph here:

List the evidence the author uses in this paragraph to make the main idea convincing:

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 

Does the author explain the evidence?

Ask the author questions here about the evidence to help with explanation.

Offer the author suggestions about organization. Remember that your job is to make suggestions, and the author will decide whether to take your advice.
RI: Guided Reading: Organization

Organization

Date: ________________________________

Author: ________________________________

Reader: ________________________________

Title: _____________________________________________________________

Read your partner’s paper carefully. Write “thesis” next to the sentence that you believe is the main idea or argument of the paper.

List the main idea of each body paragraph here:

1. __________________________________________________________________________
2. __________________________________________________________________________
3. __________________________________________________________________________
4. __________________________________________________________________________

Why is the first idea first in the paper?

Why does the second idea follow the first?

Why does the third idea follow the second?

Why does the fourth idea follow the third?

Does the author use language to signal a transition from one idea to the next?

On the author’s paper, put a box around each transition phrase that connects ideas between paragraphs and within each paragraph.

Offer the author suggestions about organization. Remember that your job is to make suggestions, and the author will decide whether to take your advice.
Read your partner's paper carefully. Write “thesis” next to the sentence that you believe is the main idea or argument of the paper.

List the main idea from each body paragraph here:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.


Offer the author suggestions about the main ideas of the paragraphs. Remember that your job is to make suggestions, and the author will decide whether to take your advice.
RI: Guided Reading: Thesis

Thesis

Date: _______________________________________________________

Author: ____________________________________________________

Reader: _________________________________________________

Title: ____________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Read your partner’s paper carefully. Write “Thesis” next to the sentence you believe is the paper’s main idea or argument.

Is any part of the main idea unclear?

Tell the author what is interesting about the main idea here:

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________________


Give the author one or two suggestions here. Remember that the author is responsible for the paper, so just make the suggestion. The author will decide if it’s an idea to include.
RI: Guided Reading: Peer Edit

Name: ____________________________

PEER EDIT WITH PERFECTION!
WORKSHEET

1. What is peer editing?

2. What are the three steps in the peer-editing process?
   1. ____________________________
   2. ____________________________
   3. ____________________________

3. How should you always start your peer edit?

4. ____________________________ are not allowed when peer editing another person's paper.
E. Proofreading writing assignments

http://www.studygs.net/writing/proofreading.htm

Intentionally separate "proofreading" from the "writing" and "revising" processes. Writing and revising focus on content, message and style; proofreading focuses on "mechanics."

Work with another
It is twice as hard to detect mistakes in your own work as in someone else’s! Get a second opinion! A fresh set of eyes may not only find errors, but also have suggestions for improvement. Professional editors proofread as many as ten times. Publishing houses hire teams of readers to work in pairs, reading out loud. And still errors occur.

Cultivate a sense of doubt
Take nothing for granted. If you know you repeat certain errors, double check for them. Most errors in written work are made unconsciously.

Read out loud, word for word
Take advantage of two senses: hearing and seeing. It is often possible to hear a mistake, such as an omitted or repeated word that you have not seen.

Slow down
Read what is actually on the page, not what you think is there. This is difficult, particularly if you wrote what you are reading.

Why slow down?
When you read normally, you often see only the shells of words -- the first and last few letters, perhaps. You "fix your eyes" on the print only three or four times per line, or less. You take in the words between these points, and get less accurate the more you stray from the point. The average reader can only take in six letters accurately with one fixation. This means you have to fix your eyes on almost every word you have written and do it twice in longer words, in order to proofread accurately. You have to look at the word, not slide over it.

LINK: http://www.studygs.net/writing/proofreading.htm
E. Revising and editing writing assignments

Before the revising/editing, take a break to gain a new perspective.
It will help you review how effectively you have communicated your message.

General review strategies:

1. **Revising takes practice:**
   Try reviewing with a limited agenda, for example with focus on vocabulary, and build from there.

2. **Read the paper out loud to yourself.**
   Read it slowly. How does it "sound?"

3. **Cover the text with a blank paper,** and lower it down as you read for a line by line analysis.
   - Does the text flow in an effective manner?
   - Is it too long for what you wish to say? too short?
   - Keep in mind your audience: they do not know what you do.
   - They rely on what information you give them, *in the order* you give it to them.

Title
- Does the title briefly describe and reflect the purpose of the paper?
- If there are headings and sub-headings, are these similarly brief and concise?

**Introductory paragraph/introduction**
- Get a good start!
- Capture attention at the beginning or you may lose your audience.
- An introduction should present the purpose in an inviting way.
- Is your first sentence interesting and inviting?
- Does your first paragraph predict the development of the piece?
- Does it clearly introduce the subject, project, or idea to be developed?

**Supporting paragraphs**
- Does each paragraph build the argument or story? Did you follow a plan or outline?
- Is each paragraph in an effective or logical order?
- Is your train of thought, or that of the "characters," clear?
- Do your transitions between paragraphs work?
- Are relationships between paragraphs clear?
- Can any paragraphs be eliminated as unnecessary, or combined with others more effectively?
- Does each sentence support *only* the topic sentence of *that* paragraph?
- Can any sentences be eliminated as unnecessary, or combined with others more effectively?
- If there are side-stories or digressions, are their purposes clear in the context of the whole?

**Conclusion**
- Does the conclusion summarize and clarify important information and resolve the thesis statement?
- Does the conclusion leave the reader thinking?
- Is it supported by the paper?
E: Error Log

Error Log

Name:  

Period:  Dates:  

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<th>Paper 1</th>
<th>Paper 2</th>
<th>Paper 3</th>
<th>Paper 4</th>
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Carol Wilson, Wofford College

LINK: [http://www.studygs.net/writing/revising.htm](http://www.studygs.net/writing/revising.htm)
Error Log

Name: ____________________________________________

Period: _____________________ Dates: ________________

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<th>Paper 4</th>
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<td>Apostrophe</td>
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