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Revision and Rewriting, Theory of Knowledge, Grade 11-12

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High Impact Fellows Project Overview

Project Title, Course Name, Grade Level

Revision and Rewriting, Theory of Knowledge, Grade 11-12

Team Members

Student(s): *Victoria Putnam*

High School Teacher: *Candice Cliff*

School: Southside High School

Wofford Faculty: *John Miles*

Department: English

Brief Description of Project (<150 words)

This project takes into consideration something that high school writers often overlook—revision and rewriting. We visited the classroom on three occasions to lead different kinds of revision workshops. Victoria led workshop one that focused on structure at the thesis and paragraph level. The second workshop was developed using some specific methods from Dr. Miles. We also took time to individually help students discuss structure on the larger scale and how to make that structure useful at the level of argumentation. The third visit was for individual and group conferences with students. Tori also took the role of mentor for two students and read, offered insights for revision, and signed off on their individual projects.

This project, although small in scale, offers a set of practices for beginning writers to rethink how they approach revision and rewriting—two projects often overlooked by novices.

List of Materials Required and Costs, if Applicable

We did photocopy materials, but our main expense is gas.

Guide for Peer Review

1. Introduction

- a. Does the introduction define the topic—the issue, question, or problem—and say why it matters?
- b. Does it indicate the method of approach to the topic?
- c. Does it provide necessary background or context?
- d. Does it offer a working thesis (hypothesis) that the paper claims to develop?

2. Body Paragraphs/Sections

- a. Is there a central point to each paragraph? If so, where is it located? If not, can you write a sentence that captures what the paragraph is about.
- b. Is there in-depth analysis of the examples?
- c. Are there specific details?
- d. Is there a system of analysis for each paragraph and example?
- e. Are the ideas from previous paragraphs connected to subsequent paragraphs? How?

3. Patterns

- a. Is there a pattern or tendency in the evidence that the writer makes (or does not make) explicit? [This pattern should be developed or discussed in the introduction. If it is not, then that is a good system of revision]

4. Conclusion

- a. Does it revisit the way the paper began? (Often it could return to some key phrase from the context established in the introduction and update it.)
- b. Does the conclusion show the practical consequences or applications, or future-oriented issues, such as avenues for further research?
- c. Does the conclusion identify limitations of the analysis and qualify its conclusion?

Before sitting down to revise your paper, it might be a good idea to let it sit for a couple days, provided you have the time. Let the paper go cold before reading it again, and you'll be more likely to find mistakes and typos you might have missed the first time around. It will also be easier to approach your paper from an objective standpoint. Try reading it as if it belongs to someone else—that means taking out a red pen and being your own harshest critic. Next, try imagining you're having a conversation with someone as you read through your paper. Do you make convincing segues between topics? Does your argument progress logically? Are there any points where you think your conversation partner might jump in and ask a question? If so, mark these areas and write the question down—they might indicate trouble spots where more elaboration/clarification is needed.

Claims/Evidence/Analysis Exercise

Another way to look at the paragraphs of your paper is to think about the three levels of presentation. I will define each for you here.

Claims—like the exercise above, each section of your paper should be organized by a given claim. That is, you should be telling your readers your points very clearly in the form of claims. These are not statements of summary and they should be debatable. Generally speaking these come early in paragraphs or as framing sentences for sections of your paper.

Evidence—claims must be supported by evidence. Phrases like “for example,” “for instance,” “in some cases,” etc., show your readers that you are presenting evidence. Evidence comes in the form of quotes, paraphrases and summary. Citations follow evidence.

Analysis—evidence must be connected to your claims via analysis. Analysis should be the bulk of your writing. Here is where you show your audience your thinking and your ability to apply it to your topic.

In this exercise you take three different highlighters/markers (or three different marks—underline, squiggly line, box, etc.) and assign each to one of the concepts. For example, take a yellow highlighter and highlight all the claims you make. Then, follow this for both evidence and analysis. Do not highlight anything that does not function as a claim, evidence or analysis. This exercise allows you to visually see what work you have done. Again, the bulk of the work should fall under the category of analysis.