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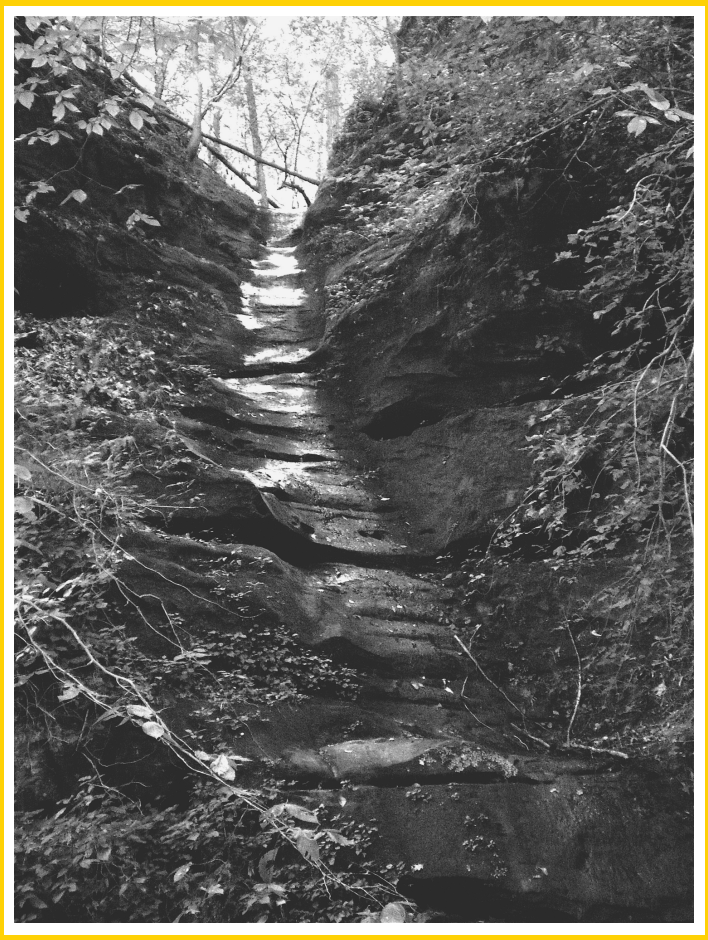

Illinois Association of Teachers of English

IATE is a professional organization for teachers of English/language arts. IATE publishes the *Illinois English Bulletin* and the *IATE Newsletter* and hosts an annual fall conference. IATE is organized by districts throughout the state, each district having a district leader and providing local activities to members throughout the year.

IATE also maintains standing committees that address a number of professional interests and works with other professional organizations to further the interests of teachers. Composed of nearly 1,500 teachers throughout the state, IATE provides a working network for the exchange of teaching tips, current research, and professional development as well as enduring friendships.

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Editor: Janice Neuleib
Publications Unit Director: Tara Reeser
Production Director and Proofreader: Steve Halle
Assistant: Emily Moody
Cover Image: Lisa Thetard

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INTRODUCTION TO THE *ILLINOIS ENGLISH BULLETIN* 99.2 (SPRING 2012)

JANICE NEULEIB

This collection of essays will excite readers with their new ideas and concomitant practical teaching applications. In "Implementing Technology-Facilitated Writing Groups in the Middle School Classroom," Jennifer Smith explains how students can use technology to enrich their writing groups. Smith, a middle school teacher, constantly updates her teaching techniques, and in this essay, she helps us see a way to use the most recent advances in our writing classes. Nicole Mackinson and Jill Uhlman follow with "Literature-Based Writing Assessment: The Authenticity of Audience, Purpose, and Publication," an essay that demonstrates in detail useful lessons on rhetorical situations in the writing classroom. Since so often teachers find that they must combine, or want

to combine, writing and literature, this essay spells out successful means to combine the two. With "Writing Curriculum: Revised Writing Workshop, Accommodations for Personality Type," Sarah Johnson provides helpful explanations of the Myers-Briggs personality grid. She then offers teachers a variety of interesting ways to use type in class, as well as a useful list of resources. In "Helping Students Become College Ready: A Community College's Response," Lindsey Cuti, community college professor, explains how college instructors can help high school students become ready for college writing. "Composing Ourselves in Spanish," from eighth-grade Spanish teacher, Tisha Ortega, explains how great resources in writing research led her to better teaching of writing in her Spanish classes. Finally, in "Are Short Story Assignments the Write Stuff?," Mike Springston shows how short story writing can enrich the writing experiences of student writers.

I also want to introduce our new Production Manager, Steve Halle, and his staff. IATE remains ever grateful to the English Department's Publications Unit at ISU for their work, and I especially want to thank Steve for coming on board with the *Bulletin*.

IMPLEMENTING TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED WRITING GROUPS IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASSROOM

JENNIFER SMITH

Though I have only been teaching for six years, my teaching style and practices have changed greatly since I began teaching, especially in the area of writing instruction. Many of the changes that I have made have been due largely in part to a greater understanding of educational theory but also through the reliable, yet frustrating, process of trial and error. One specific area of my teaching, writing groups, has been especially slow to develop. Even as an undergraduate, I read and believed the theories stating that students are social learners and learn best when they are working together and constructing their own knowledge. Looking back, this was a belief I neither practiced nor effectively explored or utilized. The more I read and understand about writing pedagogy, the more I feel that using small groups during all stages of

the writing process can be a very powerful tool, and I am determined to transform the current grouping practices in my classroom in order to make them more effective. After reading *An Unquiet Pedagogy* and *Inside Out*, I know it is time to stop ignoring writing groups. I have decided that it is imperative to reexamine and improve both the way I group my students for writing instruction and the tasks I have them complete while they are working in those groups.

My reexamination of the way I group students in the writing classroom was prompted by a review of the research detailing the importance of the role of social interactions in relation to the learning process. Kutz and Roskelly include a discussion of the social theories of Piaget and Vygotsky in *An Unquiet Pedagogy*. They review Piaget's idea that "children's knowledge is an active, constructive process" that must come through interaction with and operation in the physical world (37). Belief in this idea means that teachers must be willing to give students an active role in learning and group work is an excellent place for this to occur. While Piaget focused on the physical world, Vygotsky focused more on the role of the social environment in the learning process. Vygotsky theorized that a "child's development of thought and language is not just an individual but a social process" (39). This idea, too, supports the use of an interactive classroom where students are encouraged to discuss and share ideas in a group in order to assimilate new knowledge.

Reviews of educational research have also prompted me to examine another necessary change that needs to be made in my writing classroom—the meaningful incorporation of technology. In our ever-changing society, technology is becoming more and more vital to success in the career world. My students are constantly surrounded by technology in the world outside the classroom and it is vital that I bring that

technology into the classroom to most effectively educate the students of the digital age (Magana and Frenkel). Currently, my students go from having constant internet access on their phones, gaming systems, and computers, to a classroom relatively devoid of technology. It is difficult for many students to function in this environment and to be "unplugged" while trying to remain focused on school work. Using technology as an educational tool for writing can help remedy this situation. Also, using technology will increase overall student engagement in classroom activities (Bebell and O'Dwyer). Increasing the use of technology in my classroom will help meet state and national standards that require students to be able to effectively utilize and gain meaning from a variety of modalities, including technology. Using technology in my writing classroom will help my students become familiar with the technology they will be expected to use for writing in higher levels of academia and the corporate world (Magana and Frenkel). Furthermore, meaningfully incorporating technology into my writing classroom will help reduce the dichotomy that currently exists between students' digitally rich world at home and the current classroom.

Grouping

I recognize the need to improve both technology and grouping in my classroom but feel that grouping students will be the most difficult of the two because while students are able and willing to use technology, they struggle with the idea and process of working in groups. The main struggle my students face when working in groups is that they simply do not understand how to work in a group. Group work is a skill that many of them pick up over time but some of my students struggle tremendously when it comes to working with others. With every group activity I use, students struggle

to find their place. The lower students tend to sit back and let the higher-achieving students do all the work or the "bossy" students run the show while the others simply do what they must to get through the project.

Because working in groups can be difficult, students need to be specifically shown how to work in a group and be given opportunities to successfully complete group work. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways. Kutz and Roskelly suggest that "some of the activities of the group should center on developing procedures and reflecting on processes" (259). They emphasize the fact that consensus building is vital to the success of group work. Scharton and Neulieb note the importance of building a writing community and getting to know the other members of the community before beginning the writing process. It is also important for each member of the group to share information with one another in order to find common ground and create trust (Scharton and Neulieb 65-67). Additionally, Kutz and Roskelly suggest using groups of four or five people and having the students work with the same group over an extended period of time, thus helping students build trust and familiarity with one another.

Based on this information, my first goal for implementing group work is to knowledgeably and purposefully create groups for my students and then use brief activities to help build familiarity within the group prior to giving writing projects or assignments. It is my intent to use both writing communities and collaborative writing groups in my classroom. My idea of writing communities is based upon the work of Scharton and Neulieb. In order for writing communities to be successful, the members of the group should have a vested interest in being a part of the group and that each person must be willing to take the other group members' projects as seriously as they take their own (Scharton and Neulieb 97).

Members of writing communities share ideas and learn from one another while working on their own projects. I currently use writing communities during small portions of the writing process but have never used them for the entire creation of a paper from start to finish. Collaborative writing groups, on the other hand, are groups of students contributing in some form or another to a common project (Kutz and Roskelly 98). I have used collaborative writing from time to time when students are working on brief one or two day projects. I rarely use collaborative writing in the classroom because I fear one student will end up doing all of the work as has happened time and time again in past grouping experiences.

I have come across two calculated methods for placing students in groups, which I feel would work well with both writing community groups and collaborative writing groups. I think each of them is valid and useful depending on the goal of the assignment. One such method for grouping students in the writing classroom, as presented by Scharton and Neuleib, is based on personality type. Kutz and Roskelly also call on teachers to keep personality types and group dynamics in mind when creating groups (259). There are many different manners in which to distinguish personality type and many different personality categories or descriptors. For my purposes, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and personality descriptors are used. The MBTI includes combinations of eight different preferences including introvert, extravert, sensing, intuitive, thinking, feeling, judging, and perceiving. Varying combinations of these eight preferences allow for sixteen different personality types. Students with different personality types approach writing in different ways, which, depending on how students are grouped, has the potential to be either a positive or negative influence on the writing process. By understanding the characteristics of personality types and how each different

type approaches writing, I can create realistic expectations for groups and be more aware of which students will work well with one another on a project while I can avoid creating groups of students who will struggle with working together.

The second method for grouping students is based on Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences and the idea that different students learn best through different means. At the beginning of the year I give the students a brief multiple intelligence survey to fill out and score in order to determine the intelligences they are most comfortable with using. I keep track of their results and when it is time to group them to work on a project, I review their information and place the students in groups based on similar intelligence preferences or by varied preferences depending on the assignment format and requirements. While I have used this grouping method in every subject but writing, I believe I can easily implement the use of the multiple intelligences survey when creating writing communities or collaborative writing groups.

Despite the fact that allowing students to work in groups is a bit worrisome, I can eliminate most potential problems by closely monitoring and participating in the groups and through the use of task checklists. I feel that incorporating effective group work is something that will take time in my classroom, so I intend to begin by using one group project a quarter. This way, I can place the students in groups for the duration of a school quarter to allow them to become comfortable with one another yet still have the flexibility to allow them to work with a variety of their classmates throughout the year, especially since a large majority of my students have been in school together since kindergarten and have already developed relationships with one another.

One of my main concerns when grouping students is that they will not focus on the task. Creating groups using

a purposeful method can help relieve this worry and using group roles, in which each student is assigned a specific daily task, such as leading or transcribing, within the group, can also take some of the worry out of group work and keep students on task. Since I rarely use structured group work in the writing classroom, assigning group roles is not something I have done. I have, however, assigned roles for group work in my science classes so I am comfortable and familiar with the process. I had gotten to the point where I felt like assigning roles might have been a little elementary for my students until I read an article in which Linda Young provided examples of how she successfully uses roles for group work in her first-year poetry class at State University of New York. The roles she implements stay the same throughout the semester but the responsibility for each role varies by assignment. Along the same lines, Kurth cites research reviewed by Shepherd who found that one main criterion for successful group work was for each member to know his or her role. Kutz and Roskelly also emphasize the importance of using roles when having students work in groups (260).

Brainstorming

One of the areas in which I would like to strengthen my use of group work and technology is in the brainstorming phase of writing. Recently, I have gotten better about giving students more time to think of topics and allowing them to talk quietly with a neighbor until they come up with a topic to write about. While this method does allow for minimal collaboration, it is unstructured and could be made more effective. Scharton and Neuleib note that "one of the best ways to discover topics is through group interaction" (64). Similarly, Kutz and Roskelly note that brainstorming in groups is effective because "everybody contributes and makes associations

quickly," accomplishing the process of selecting writing ideas "fairly painlessly" (263). Although both Scharton and Neuleib and Kutz and Roskelly noted the positive impact of group work on brainstorming and topic selection, Huang offers a different perspective on the topic. Huang performed a study using university EFL students in China and found that regardless of the language spoken, English or Chinese, students working in brainstorming groups tended not to use the ideas from their peers and instead chose to use teacher-presented ideas and examples. Granted, while the educational systems in China and the United States have different social constructs, I plan to keep this information in mind as I implement group brainstorming activities into my classroom in order to be attentive to whether or not group brainstorming is effective for my students.

There are several occasions during which I already use technology to lead whole-group brainstorming activities with my class, so using technology during brainstorming in writing groups should be a relatively seamless transition. My classroom is equipped with a SMART Board which the students love to use. I use their desire to draw on the SMART Board to elicit responses to class discussions. During a whole-group brainstorming session I have the students write their ideas on the SMART Board. When we have mentally exhausted our options, I leave the SMART Board on and have the students begin planning their papers. Using the SMART Board also gives me the option to print out what is on the screen and give it to students for reference later. This method of brainstorming could be facilitated in small groups by having individual groups work on the SMART Board or through the use of laptops or tablets, giving the students a boost of motivation through the use of technology.

Another way to more meaningfully incorporate technology into the brainstorming process is to tap into the potential

of the internet (Bacci). Bacci suggests that teachers have students enter a keyword into an online search engine, such as Google, and then write down the list of topics generated by the search engine. From there, students can explore the links to see if they come up with topics they would be willing to write about. Due to the great variety and level of appropriateness of information supplied by such a search, use of this technique would require students to be cautious of the information they ultimately select for their papers but would provide them with a wide variety of information. I could also use a list of guiding questions, a scenario, or a guiding website to help student groups begin a discussion to use as a starting point for coming up with their own ideas.

Planning

After the brainstorming process I intend to have students begin working on the planning process of their papers. Generally, unless they are working specifically on a group project, I have the students work on their own through the planning process. For the most part, I give them some form of graphic organizer on paper to complete, review it with them individually, and then have them begin working on drafting their paper.

An easy way to incorporate technology into the planning portion of writing is to have the students create graphic organizers using a software program such as Inspiration to map out their ideas. This can be done as students work together in a small group, or individual members of a group can take responsibility for a section of the graphic organizer and then bring all of the pieces together when they are finished.

I value the use of graphic organizers in the classroom but have found additional means through which to encourage student planning. For instance, Strong cites a study in

which students are asked to create a list of words they plan to use in their paper. The study revealed that students using this method of planning wrote longer compositions than students who did not create word lists. I can use technology to incorporate this idea into my writing instruction by having groups of students use a word processing program to create a list of words they intend to use in their papers then have them refer to the list as they write the paper. The word list could be drafted as students worked together, or each person could contribute two words to the list. If the latter method were used, the group could then go through and discuss each word that was used, and the student who selected it could explain its purpose for being on the list. Additionally, the group could highlight words that were selected more than once, noting their inherent value to the project, to ensure that they appear in the paper. This idea carries over to the drafting stage of writing because after the paper has been drafted, I can have the groups use the Find option in the word processing program to locate if and when each word on the list was used in the paper and revise the paper based on their findings.

Drafting

When using writing communities to perform the drafting process, I intend to have students each work on their own draft and consult each other if they happen to get stuck or need help wording a phrase. I want students to be able to write independently, but I also want to provide them with the opportunity to seek help if they need it; I do not want them to write in a vacuum. I would like to allow individual students a certain amount of time to write on their own, making note of any problem areas or questions they have in their writing, and then provide them with workshop time where they ask each other questions and seek out additional ideas for their drafts.

While reviewing research, I have developed different ideas for incorporating more collaborative writing into my classroom. Roskelly and Kutz mention that during collaborative writing group members can either divide up the work and put together a final project or group members can create an entire piece together. With the first method, dividing work up between individuals, I would use drafting in the same manner as I would conduct drafting in the writing community. The only difference in using the second method, where students create an entire draft as a group, would be that the students would spend the entire time working together. Using roles at this stage of the writing process would be vital to the success of the collaborative writing group.

In the past, incorporating technology into the drafting phase of writing in my classroom included the use of a word processing program to simply type a draft of a paper. I intend to continue to use this method for some of the projects required but have researched options that will better integrate editing and revising later on in the writing process. One of these methods is the use of an online wiki. According to Morgan and Smith, "Wikis are collaboratively authored, searchable documents linked internally and externally. For classroom purposes, wikis are designed to be created by more than one student" (Morgan and Smith). By their very definition, wikis enable students to become collaborative partners and members of writing communities. Morgan and Smith note that wikis can be used by students to work together to create "a single, collaboratively authored document" or allow students to help one another on individual projects.

Using the wiki will work well with both the writing community and in collaborative writing groups. For projects assigned to the writing community, each student will be required to create his or her own page on the wiki. From

there, the other members of the community will be able to access, view, and comment on the page as it is being written. For projects assigned to collaborative writing groups, each group will be given their own wiki page to create as a collective. Each of the members of the group will be able to access, manipulate, and add pages to the main page at any time during the project.

Revising

Revising and editing are tasks that students can find difficult to perform at the middle school level. They either rip each other apart over minor errors or they tell one another they did a great job without ever really looking at the paper. Roskelly and Kutz remind that during a revision session, a reader should only make comments on a paper after the entire piece has been read, something I have found that middle school students rarely do when working through the revision process (276). Scharton and Neulieb provide information on two methods for peer revision. The first is the Rogerian argument in which participants attempt to understand and state the other participant's opinion in a disagreement. I have found that many of my students have difficulty with the Rogerian argument and, therefore, intend to only consider using it with more advanced middle school students. The other suggested method of revision is a three-step process by which the reviewer summarizes the main point of the paper, points out the strongest part of the paper, and envisions the expected final form of the project.

I have spent a great amount of time trying to refine the revision process that occurs in my classroom. I currently use peer-response workshops with assignments I give to writing communities. During these workshops, each student reads his or her paper aloud while two or three other students listen

and take notes on what is being read. I have the students read aloud because this helps them find some of the more obvious errors in their papers. Once the reader has finished, each group member poses three questions about areas of the paper that might have been unclear or needed greater detail. The reader then writes down at least one question from each of the other group members and incorporates the ideas into his or her final paper. The reader also writes a brief summary on which questions were chosen and how the information was incorporated into the final draft of the paper. This summary is turned in with the next draft of the paper. I may change this format by adding an area for summaries, to include some of the information offered by Scharton and Neulieb in order to ensure that students are listening to their peers read the entire paper.

Incorporating technology into the revision process leads back to the idea of the wiki. Morgan and Smith note that the "collaborative wiki format makes revision an integral part" of the writing process. This is due to the fact that as soon as something is added to the wiki, other participants are able to see and comment on the content of the page. Morgan and Smith also note that the use of a wiki in their class included continual revision through collaborative modification. Following a writing community format, wiki use in my classroom would consist of students commenting on one another's work. The use of the wiki in collaborative writing groups in my classroom would follow a format that is similar to the project by Morgan and Smith in which each group member could continually change and add to the group project. Using the wiki would also allow me to monitor group participation because all activity on each page is noted with date, time, and the name of the person responsible for making changes.

Editing

I shy away from having students work in groups on the editing portion of writing in my classroom because many of my students either cannot find the mistakes or tell their group members that corrections are needed when no correction is necessary. In the past, I have left editing up to the individual writer. After reviewing some of the literature, though, I think that if students are working in a group throughout the writing process, they will have a much better idea of what their peers are trying to write and will be better able to help each other with the editing process. I intend to use editing checklists in both the writing community groups and the collaborative writing groups. A possibility I would like to try is having the members of collaborative groups use a jigsaw method to share their paper with members of other groups for the peer editing process since the students from other groups are more likely to find mistakes.

Currently, technology use during the editing process of writing in my classroom is limited to spelling and grammar check functions on word processing programs. Adding more effective technology into the editing process of writing will be easily accomplished through the use of a wiki or other online program where students can see and then correct or comment on grammatical errors.

Final Thought

Toward the end of *An Unquiet Pedagogy*, Roskelly and Kutz give teachers a call to action in which they admonish teachers to reinvent the curriculum. They cite the ideas of Freire and call teachers to make changes in the curriculum that reflect "what they've come to understand about learners and about their own practices as both teachers and learners" (302). They suggest that a reinvented curriculum lies in

small changes and that teachers can reinvent the curriculum through adding, problematizing, redefining, sequencing, formalizing, combining, and revising small elements of their teaching in order to create a curriculum that is more responsive to the needs of the learner (318). I have examined these ideas and know that elements of my writing curriculum, grouping and technology incorporation, need to be reinvented to better meet the needs of my students. I also realize that these changes will need to be re-evaluated for each group of students that I have. What I create and change for this year's particular group of students will need to be reexamined and refined each year. I feel that revamping the group work that takes place in my curriculum and increasing technology use within those groups will go a long way in helping me become a more effective writing teacher.

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Example Activity: Collaborative Writing—Society and Seuss

Previous assignment requirements: This weeklong assignment begins with a whole group reading and discussion of *Sneetches* and how its theme relates to greater world issues. The accompanying assignment requires groups of students to read and interpret a book by Dr. Seuss in order to create a three dimensional cube project. The entire project involves students making and writing about text-to-text connections, text-to-self connections, and text-to-world connections. Each of the connections must tie back to the Dr. Seuss book assigned to the group. For instance, the group with the book *The Butter Battle* would have to find another text that each group member is familiar with to relate the book back to, a current world event that relates to the book, and make personal connections to the text. The students work in groups to determine how to divide the labor. Most groups choose to work on each piece of

the assignment together as a group while some groups choose to divide the tasks among group members.

Society and Seuss

(Original Assignment)

For this activity you will be working with a group to create a four-sided representation of a story and how it relates to your life as well as other stories. The following is a list of what should be on each side of your cube. You will give a brief presentation of your cube to the class.

> Side A – Story Map – work together to complete the story map for your book. The story map must include the main elements of the story but should also be in a creative format.
>
> Side B – Text to self – write about how this text relates to your personal experiences. You may each write your own section for this or think of a shared experience you could write about as a group.
>
> Side C – Text to text – compare your book to another text we have read in class this year. Write half a page about how they are similar and half a page about how they are different.
>
> Side D – Text to world – search through newspapers and magazines to find an article that relates to your book. Cut out the article and write a comparison about how it relates to your book.

Enrichment Activities

If your group finishes with each of the sides, begin working on one of the following activities individually. These projects will also be extra credit so you may work on one outside of class if you choose.

1. Write a sequel to the story you read.
2. Draw new illustrations for your story changing one key element, such as how the characters look.
3. Create one of the scenes out of clay or create a diorama of a particular scene.
4. Write a poem about your book.
5. Rewrite the ending of the story.
6. Rewrite the beginning of the story.
7. Other – think of an idea of something you would like to do and check with Mrs. Smith to see if it would work.

Modifications:

Forming Groups: Since this assignment requires a writing component as well as speaking and drawing, I have decided to form groups based on the results of the multiple intelligences survey. I intend to create groups using different intelligence types to allow students to complete activities they feel most comfortable with.

Getting to know my group activity/ies: This activity takes place in the middle of the year and by this time students are very familiar with one another so I think a group/consensus building activity would be most appropriate. For this specific activity I would like for the students to respond to a story I read aloud to the class.

Roles: As far as developing roles goes, in order to maintain consistency for all group activities, I could use the same roles as those implemented during writing community activities.

Historian: The historian is responsible for taking notes of the group activities during the group meeting session.

Team Leader: The team leader is responsible for making sure everyone stays on task for the day.

Publicist: The publicist is responsible for providing the teacher with an oral report of the day's activities.

Liaison: The liaison is responsible for going to the teacher with any group questions or concerns.

Scribe: The scribe is responsible for writing or typing group work.

If I decide not to use these roles, I could tailor roles to fit this particular assignment knowing the roles would have to be changed for other collaborative writing assignments.

Brainstorming: I would like for students to brainstorm their project using either the SMART Board or a word processing program.

Planning: Planning for this project would be done using a graphic organizer template found on Inspiration software.

Drafting: For this particular assignment I would like to have students draft their papers using a wiki so each student could see and participate in the writing of the information.

Revising: Like drafting, revising would take place on the wiki. While I hope the students would continually revise while writing their paper, I will set aside one class session where revision will take place. This would be a great time to incorporate the technology of instant messaging, too.

Editing: For the editing portion of the assignment I plan to have students work in a jigsaw format so members from different collaborative groups are working on reviewing one another's papers using a checklist, preferably on a wiki.

Sample worksheets for group work and technology integration

Team Building
Society and Seuss

Since you will be working with your group members for the duration of this project, I would like for you to take some time to get to know them a little bit better. We will start of with a couple of simple questions and then begin working on information that will help you with your project.

1. Talk with your group members and share a unique experience or fact about yourself that you think the other members of your group have not been experienced.
2. Now talk with your group members and come up with an experience that you have all shared: starting kindergarten, riding a bicycle for the first time, etc. See how creative you can be on this one because we will share our answers with the class.

Answer the next question after I have read the story to the class.

3. How does this story relate to one of your life experiences?

Group Roles
Society and Seuss

You will take turns using the following roles as you work on this project.

Historian: Take notes on group activities during the group meeting session.

Team Leader: Make sure everyone stays on task.

Publicist: Provide the teacher with an oral review of the day's activities.

Liaison: Asks questions or shares concerns with the teacher during work time, turn in work at the end of class.

Scribe: Write or type assignments as necessary.

Brainstorming
Society and Seuss

We are going to the computer lab to brainstorm ideas for your project. Your group will need to sit together at one computer to create a web of ideas using Inspiration. Working together you need to complete the following steps.

1. Open Inspiration
2. Click on Diagram
3. In the main idea box you will need to type the question/goal of the activity.
4. From there, create branches to the sides that contain your ideas.

5. Continue to branch your ideas out to the sides of the appropriate boxes.

*At this point, do not worry about how well ideas fit together, just focus on getting your ideas down.

6. You may use any font or pictures you would like so long as you do not become distracted from the task at hand.
7. When you feel like you have run out of ideas, discuss and refine them.
8. Print and turn in your web.

Planning
Society and Seuss

We will spend today's class working on planning a paper for one side of your cube. You need to begin by selecting which paper you want to work on. As we discussed in class, it is important that you come to a consensus during the planning stages of your paper. Follow the steps below to complete the planning phase. If you have any questions, please send your liaison to see me.

1. Find your brainstorming web.
2. Go through your web as a group, discussing the pros and cons of each idea. Then write the initials of each person who agrees with writing about a certain idea by each idea.
3. Review the initials and decide what option would be best for your group.
4. Look at the sections of your web that go with this idea. If you do not have enough information to write your paper, you may need to do some more brainstorming.

5. Open Inspiration.
6. Select Outline.
7. Create a detailed outline for your paper.
8. Print your outline and turn it in.

Drafting Using Word Society and Seuss

Today you will be writing a first draft of your paper. Please read the options below and follow the directions for the option you all agree on as the best fit for your group.

Option 1—Complete Collaboration

Using this option you will all work together and write your paper line by line.

1. Open a word document.
2. The scribe needs to begin typing.
3. Follow your outline and type your first draft.

Do not worry if it does not look or sound the way you want it to right away. The important thing is to get the information down. We will spruce it up later.

4. Print and turn in the paper.

Option 2 – Partial Collaboration

Using this option each of you will write a paragraph and put them together to create your final paper.

1. Look at your outline and decide who will write each section. You must each write at least one section.
2. Each group member needs to open a word

document and type his/her portion of the paper.
3. Print out the typed pages and review them as a group to determine what types of transitions or changes are necessary to make the paper cohesive.
4. Copy and paste the individual documents into a complete document.
5. Print and turn in the paper.

Drafting Using the Wiki
Society and Seuss

Today you will be writing a first draft of your paper. Please read the options below and follow the directions for the option you all agree on as the best fit for your group.

Option 1 – Complete Collaboration

Using this option you will all work together and write your paper line by line.

1. Open your designated wiki page.
2. The scribe needs to begin typing.
3. Follow your outline and type your first draft.

Do not worry if it does not look or sound the way you want it to right away. The important thing is to get the information down. We will spruce it up later.

4. Print and turn in the paper.

Option 2 – Partial Collaboration

Using this option each of you will write a paragraph and put them together to create your final paper.

1. Look at your outline and decide who will write

each section. You must each write at least one section.
2. Each group member needs to create a wiki page and type his/her portion of the paper.
3. Review the pages online as a group to determine what types of transitions or changes are necessary to make the paper cohesive.
4. Copy and paste the individual documents into a complete document.
5. Print and turn in the paper.

Revising
Society and Seuss

Your goal for today is to revise your group paper on the wiki. You need to open your group's wiki page and read your paper aloud. Any time one of the group members hears a spot that is unclear or has a question about the content, highlight the passage and continue reading. Once you have finished reading the paper, go back and discuss, and change if necessary, the highlighted sections of your paper. Read the paper aloud again and follow the same steps as before. When everyone is satisfied with the paper, print out a copy and turn it in.

(*Teacher note: I may use this revision strategy using a word processing program instead of a wiki. The directions will stay the same except I will substitute word processing program for wiki.)*

Editing
Society and Seuss

For this class period you will be working with a group other than your original group. You will work with one member from each of the other groups to edit your papers. Follow the steps below to begin the editing process.

1. Sit in a circle.
2. Hand your paper to the person to your right.
3. Read the paper you have, make note of any spelling or grammar errors that you find by highlighting and initialing the error.
4. When you have finished reading, pass the paper to the person to your right.
5. Repeat steps three and four until everyone has had a chance to read each paper.
6. Once the paper gets back to the original owner, review the hightlighted portions of the text. Be sure to ask your group members if you have any questions about portions they may have marked.

(Teacher note: In order to add technology to this editing lesson, students could perform these actions using a wiki or by using word documents and switching computers.)

Example Activity: Writing Community—Persuasive Paper

Previous assignment requirements: This is a three-week assignment that includes various group projects but is primarily based on students creating their own draft of a persuasive paper based on a topic of their choice. The group work is used to help students explore and examine elements of written works from the civil rights era. The students work in groups for planning and for revision, but the groups change with each activity and do not remain constant.

Modifications:

Forming Groups: Since students will be working on individual projects, I feel that it is important to group students based on similar personality type so no one

becomes too frustrated during the process.

Getting to know my group activity/ies: This activity takes place in the middle of the year so the students already know quite a bit about one another. I think a simple team building activity or ice breaker will be enough to get the ball rolling on group work. In this case, I would like for the opening activity to lead into brainstorming. I will start by having the students create a list of things that bother them or a list of things they would like to change about the school/community.

Roles: In order to help keep the students on task, I have come up with the following roles. The roles will stay the same but the students will switch roles on a daily basis so each student has a chance to perform the role.

Historian: The historian is responsible for taking notes of the group activities during the group meeting session.

Team Leader: The team leader is responsible for making sure everyone stays on task for the day.

Publicist: The publicist is responsible for providing the teacher with an oral report of the day's activities.

Liaison: The liaison is responsible for going to the teacher with any group questions or concerns.

Scribe: The scribe is responsible for writing or typing group work.

Brainstorming: For the brainstorming part of this unit, I plan to have the students complete idea webs using Inspiration software by having them work with the ideas they came up with in the introductory activity. Each student will pick a topic from the original list and have

everyone in the group brainstorm further ideas, creating an individual web for each person in the group. After a topic has been selected by each student, additional webs can also be created to help group members find support for their topics.

Planning: I would like for students to work on their own using Inspiration software to create graphic organizers of their papers and then work with their group to discuss their ideas before they begin drafting.

Drafting: For the drafting stage, I still want students to work on their own but would like to rearrange the classroom so group members are free to talk to one another as they write in order to allow them to better bounce ideas off of one another. Technology will be incorporated through the use of word processing software or a wiki.

Revising: I plan to continue using the peer-response workshop that I have been using with my students. I can incorporate technology by having the students use the comments section of a wiki page to respond to one another's work.

Editing: I have created a checklist for students to use when they are ready to edit their work. I think it would be great to have the students place their work on the document camera so each group member can read it at the same time and discuss errors as they come across them. That way, students can also discuss and debate what they presume to be errors.

Sample worksheets for group work and technology integration

Team Building
Persuasive Paper

Since you will be working with your group members for the duration of this project, I would like for you to take some time to get to know them a little bit better. We will start by creating a list.

1. Each group member needs to create a list of the top five things that annoy them.
2. Make a list of the top five things you would like to change about school (Not going to school is not an option).
3. Now share your list with your group members. From the lists you have, create a master list of the top eight things that annoy you as a group and the top eight things you would like to change about school.

(Teacher note: This activity can be performed on the SMART Board in order to incorporate technology.)

Group Roles
Persuasive Paper

You will take turns using the following roles as you work on this project.

Historian: Take notes on group activities during the group meeting session.

Team Leader: Make sure everyone stays on task.

Publicist: Provide the teacher with an oral review of the day's activities.

Liaison: Asks questions or shares concerns with the teacher during work time, turns in work at the end of class.

Scribe: Write or type assignments as necessary.

Brainstorming
Persuasive Paper

We are going to the computer lab to brainstorm ideas for your project. Your group will need to sit together at one computer to create a web of ideas using Inspiration. Each person will create their own idea web with the help of the other group members.

1. Open Inspiration.
2. Click on Diagram.
3. In the main idea box you will need to type the topic you want to explore.
4. From there, create branches to the sides that contain the arguments/support your group members suggest.
5. Continue to branch your ideas out to the sides of the appropriate boxes.

At this point, do not worry about how well ideas fit together, just focus on getting your ideas down.

6. You may use any font or pictures you would like so long as you do not become distracted from the task at hand.
7. When you feel like you have run out of ideas, print and turn in your web.

Planning
Persuasive Paper

We will spend today's class working on planning out our persuasive paper. Follow the steps below to complete the planning phase. If you have any questions, you may talk to your group members or come and speak with me.

1. Find your brainstorming web.
2. Share your web with your group, discussing the pros and cons of each idea.
3. Open Inspiration.
4. Select Outline.
5. Create a detailed outline for your paper.
6. Print your outline and turn it in.

Drafting
Persuasive Paper

Today you will be writing a first draft of your paper.

1. Find the outline of your paper.
2. Open a word document and begin typing.
3. Follow your outline and type your first draft.

Do not worry if it does not look or sound the way you want it to right away. The important thing is to get the information down. We will spruce it up later.

4. Print and turn in the paper.

(Teacher note: The drafting process can be completed in a word processing program or on a wiki.)

Peer Response Workshop
Persuasive Paper

You will need to begin by having one person read their narrative to the group. While that person is reading, write down any questions that come to your mind about the paper.

You will be assessed on the type of response you give your team members, so do the best you can. Fill out the sheet below while your group members read aloud. Remember to write only questions. When the reader is finished, go around the group sharing questions. The reader will need to write down at least one question from each person to take into consideration during revision.

Writer's Name_____
Write at least three questions about the narrative.

Writer's Name_____
Write at least three questions about the narrative.

Writer's Name_____
Write at least three questions about the narrative.

Writer's Name_____
Write at least three questions about the narrative.

If you are the reader, write down at least one question from each of your peer responders.

Name_____
Question

Name_____
Question

Name_____
Question

Name_____
Question

(Teacher note: This activity can be used as a wiki page or with writing done on a wiki page.)

Editing
Persuasive Paper

For this class period you will use the document camera and work with your group to edit your paper.

1. Each group member needs a draft of his or her paper.
2. Place your paper under the document camera.
3. Read your paper aloud.
4. As one person reads, the rest of the group should point out errors in spelling and grammar.
5. The person reading his/her paper should make corrections to the paper as the corrections are being pointed out.

(Teacher note: This activity can also be performed on a wiki page.)

Jennifer Smith teaches eighth grade grammar and literature in a small school district in central Illinois. She received her Bachelor's

and Master's degree in Education from Eastern Illinois University. She is currently working on a Master's in English at Illinois State University.

LITERATURE-BASED WRITING ASSESSMENT: THE AUTHENTICITY OF AUDIENCE, PURPOSE, AND PUBLICATION

NICOLE MACKINSON AND JILL UHLMAN

In our combined 15 years of teaching experience, we have worked with our curriculum to make it the best, most authentic, learning for our students. We have edited writing units, vocabulary units, grammar units, and other units we teach in our classrooms daily to reflect the authentic skills students will need beyond the secondary classroom. Through years of professional development and graduate level Curriculum and Instruction and English courses, we find that there is one unit we still struggle to make authentic for our students: literature-based writing assessments. Although we both feel strongly that writing essays to analyze literature is an important skill for high school students to learn, we are aware that writing about literature is not typically seen as valuable in modern society, as most students do not go on to compose copious amounts

of literary analysis papers after high school. This conundrum led us to think about and evaluate the way we teach and assess writing about literature. Our goal: to create assessments that could be used, along with the traditional essay, to help students gain a better understanding of literature.

It is no secret that the value of education today lies in what is authentic. No longer are students evaluated by their sole ability to write a beautiful analytical essay, but they must be able to write for authentic purposes, and more importantly—authentic audiences. Grant Wiggins notes the importance of authentic assessments in his book *Educative Assessment: Designing Assessments to Inform and Improve Student Performance* when he states, "Assessment must be anchored in and focused on authentic tasks because they supply valid direction, intellectual coherence, and motivation for the day-in and day-out work of knowledge and skill development" (21). In other words, in order to keep students motivated, they need to understand why the task we ask them to do is important. Students want to know what skill they will need and how that skill will benefit them beyond the classroom. Although we as teachers see analytical essays as an important skill and not one that should be done away with, we also understand that students will very rarely be asked to write analytically about literature outside of academia. High school students who plan to further their education by attending college will certainly use analytical essay writing skills later in their life. Analysis skills, be they applied to any subject, need to be honed, and literature analysis helps to hone those skills. Also, literary analysis aids in the development of cultural literacy and good citizenship because students are asked to think critically beyond themselves and the face value of the information with which they are presented. However, we realize that we need to find a way to provide other, more

authentic, literature assessments to supplement essays and to interest all the students in our classrooms.

Maja Wilson states that schools assign too many "artificial writing assignments" which give students no rhetorical purpose (76). To us an artificial writing assignment is a literary analysis paper intended for the sole use of the teacher to evaluate what a student knows, or does not know, about the literature. This writing assignment is not going to be seen as "authentic" to the student, because they are not writing for a "real-life problem that solicits a real-life answer" (Wilson 76). Pamela Moss uses two terms to describe different types of tasks that take place in a modern classroom: hermeneutic and psychometric. Psychometric tasks are representative of a "typical" assessment: students are given a topic and they must discover their meaning and demonstrate their knowledge. Hermeneutic assessments allow student choice (85). Moss describes that a hermeneutic approach " can allow students and others being assessed substantial latitude in selecting the products by which they will be represented—a latitude that need not be constrained by concerns about quantitative measures of consistency across tasks" (89). Perhaps the most attractive feature to this approach, which we consider to be authentic, is the fact that students can choose a product that best represents their interest and their skills. Wilson's comments on student writing adds to our beliefs about authenticity: "Our ability to teach students to write more effectively depends equally on two factors: our students' desire to be understood, and clear, kind, honest articulation of how their words affect us" (68). For students to become better writers it is essential that they are given authentic tasks to practice their writing skills.

A skill that all educated people need to know is how to determine their audience and purpose, as we are continually communicating for different audiences and purposes in order

to persuade or inform. It is essential that students learn to write for a broader audience than their instructor. We decided to work with this concept when developing our lessons and assessments. We wanted to provide a way for students to interact with their peers to provide a more authentic audience for them. We also wanted to provide multiple writing styles with which students could experiment. When students enter the "real world," they will rarely be asked to write a formal essay but will most likely need to decide who their audience is and what the best mode of writing will be to engage their audience. Grant Wiggins provides two valuable questions for instructors to help them determine how student assignments and assessments relate to audience and purpose; we used these two questions to help create our lessons:

> 1. Is the student regularly required to achieve a real-world result, appropriate to context, as a consequence of writing, and learn from the result/feedback?
> 2. Is the student regularly required to write for specific and varied audiences, so that studying and coming to empathize with that audience is part of the assignment? ("Real-World Writing" 33)

We feel that we have created several authentic Common Core Curriculum Standards—aligned assignments and assessments that instructors can use in their classroom with their own curriculum-required literature. Instructors can modify the assignments to assess the literature they read in their classroom and to relate to the lives of their students. Often, the hardest part of changing what teachers do in the classroom stems from starting a new framework for assessment. We are providing a new framework, and we hope that it will serve

the needs of other literature instructors. Each of our assignments and assessments is authentic and fits into the standards set by Fred Newmann at the University of Wisconsin, which Wiggins addresses. These standards include:

Construction of Knowledge

1. Student organization of information (higher order skills)
2. Student consideration of alternatives

Disciplined Inquiry

3. Core disciplinary content knowledge
4. Core disciplinary processes
5. Written communications to elaborate understanding

Value Beyond School

6. Connecting problems to the world beyond the classroom
7. Involving an audience beyond the school ("Real-World Writing" 25)

Our lessons showcase these standards and allow students to experience authentic assessments in their literature units to match the authentic assessments supporting the curriculum. These units will also ensure that students use higher-order thinking skills to connect what they are reading to their personal lives, the lives of others, and modern society. Students' knowledge of and connections to the material read should be apparent from completing these assessments.

As instructors we want our students to invest themselves in classroom assignments because this interest will lead to better and further learning. When our students are writing, we want them to be invested in what they create, to want to edit and make their writing better, and to be proud of and connected to their final product. In order for this to

happen, students need to be invested in what it is they are doing. Kelly Gallagher, author of *Teaching Adolescent Writers*, suggests that students need to understand their real-world purpose for writing before they will become invested in the assignment. They need to understand what they are writing, why it is important, and for whom they are writing before they begin to understand how important writing skills will be to their adult life (122). Although we have learned through time and research that students need to be given choice in their writing assessments, this does not always solve the interest problem because students do not typically choose about which piece of literature they will write. Students are aware that the writing they are doing to analyze literature will not be read by anyone other than their teacher, and so they automatically see this as inauthentic to their life. We decided to use technology to allow students to "publish" on a regular basis, which will automatically make them more invested in their task, particularly because their peers will be reading and responding to the publication. When students know that others, especially their peers, will be reading their work, they will be more careful about what they are writing and publishing for others to see. Diane Davis, a professor of rhetoric at the University of Iowa, suggests encouraging students to publish their writing, even if only on a class blog or wiki. She states, "I've noticed that when students realize their work is going online,… they tend to work harder" (Leibowitz 4). This could be a result of being conscious of others reading their work and their audience having the ability to comment on the written work, which leads to students wanting to be able to "publish" good writing. This is a valid idea because a widely known suggestion supported through research on how to get students to be more invested in the writing process is to have students write for an authentic purpose. Even if

this purpose is for a class blog or wiki, students understand that someone other than their instructor will be viewing their written work. For this reason, we decided to make our lessons technology-friendly and to use wikis and blogs to encourage the best possible writing about literature from our students.

Because of the importance of technology in society, we decided to make technology-based assessments. We see the importance of our students being able to work with and manipulate different technologies. Technology will become more and more prominent in our schools and work places, so we have decided to further embrace technology in our classrooms. Michael Neal suggests that because our students are familiar with technology, and because they like to work with technology, that it is a disservice to instructors to not promote this student interest: "Much of the current discussion surrounding new literacies revolves around teachers keeping up with the latest technologies our students are using and discovering how we can use them to accomplish goals within our writing class" (2). In our assessments, students will be expected to use and manipulate classroom technology to create written responses for a variety of literature assessments, thereby using technology to accomplish our goals for literature instruction and assessment. Although we chose to use technology in our classrooms for these assignments we see no reason why these assignments/assessments could not be modified to be used in a classroom where technology is not available.

We chose to focus on three aspects of literature assessment that we felt could be modified and used by a variety of English teachers. We will focus on differentiated blog topics, using wikis for problem-based learning, and using wikis to include silent sustained reading assignments into the classroom. These three approaches represent best practice in English Language Arts instruction. We will provide some

explanation of each of the three assessments and then full lesson plans with rubrics, that could be modified and used by any other Language Arts teacher.

Differentiated Blog Topics:

In a bold list entitled "Seven Ways to Kill Students' Motivation," Alfie Kohn lists "Restrict their choice" as way number seven to eradicate student motivation to learn about literature (18). Oftentimes when students respond to literature by writing an essay, their topic options are limited. Students have to write in a prescribed way and often have a slim number of choices available to them to show their knowledge and analysis of the material. By giving students differentiated blog topics, which are linked to a myriad of subject matters or curriculum, they will not only be able to make more choices when it comes to responding to literature, but they can relate their responses to their lives, their friends and family, and their society, thereby providing authenticity. The variety of topics also lend themselves to authenticity because what is authentic or real world to one person may not be to another based on their interests. Those interests often offer inspiration; for example, a student's biological and genetic justifications of Daniel Defoe's theories in "The Education of Women" inspired topic 14. To this student anything dealing with science is authentic; his scientific theory made writing about literature authentic for him. In the article "Creating Motivating Learning Environments: What We Can Learn from Researchers and Students," Erika Daniels explains that student choice is directly related to motivation. When students are able to make choices about how they will display knowledge, it gives them a chance to "develop ownership over their learning, which leads to increased desire to participate in school" (26). The differentiated blog topics aim to let students do

just that. Students will be required to write a certain number of blog entries throughout the literature unit. Students will determine their audience and purpose and choose from a list of topics that demonstrate higher-order thinking skills and relate the literature to their circumstances. Students will "publish" their blog entry and be required to respond to another peer's blog entry; in an age where many students maintain a website or blog, this activity provides a "real world result." It would seem that almost any technology-based assignment resonated as authentic with students, as they place the most value on technology for information acquisition and communication. A blog provides both. This will not only give them the practice of writing for an authentic audience, but also allow them to respond to a peer through writing, which models the best practice of continually revising and rewriting a work. Students will also use the comments of their peers to revise their entries; this will provide engagement with their authentic audience, thereby creating authentic revisions that go beyond grammar issues. The goal is to provide a more personal way for students to respond to literature while still focusing on producing writing that is of publishable quality. Although the provided blog topics are focused on a district-mandated curriculum (*To Kill a Mockingbird, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, When the Emperor Was Divine, A Raisin in the Sun,* and *Of Mice and Men*), instructors interested in using this lesson/assessment could modify the questions to represent their literature and interests of their students.

A note about the logistics of the blog entries: A chart with student names on the left side and top side will be used to keep track of student responses to each other. If students need help determining who they should respond to, that information will be easily accessed. The use of class rosters as checklists for entries and comments would be the most effective.

A word about wikis:

Recently there have been many articles published about the use of wikis in classrooms. Essentially a wiki is used to "allow students to take an active role in composing while teaching them to work together to compose, revise, and edit an end product" (Tharp 41). Wikis can be edited and changed and allow for students to respond to each other's work. Wikis also provide an immediate outlet for students to publish and a way to get immediate feedback from others on their work. Often teachers who use wikis will comment that their students feel more comfortable writing on a wiki. Scott Gibbons adds that "students fell into their comfort zone and were more willing to share and contribute" than students who did not write on wikis (36). Gibbons continues to state that students merely knowing that others are reading their work encourages them to publish their best work because it will be read by a broader audience. Student performance and the convenience of wikis make them attractive to a public school teacher. However, along with technology comes the necessity of students having access to the technology; therefore, instructors must ensure that all students have equal access to the technology and ample time to complete the task.

Problem-Based Learning wiki:

Problem-Based Learning requires complex skills by students. Students will work in small groups, but will also be forced to examine situations on their own. Students will examine a problem that is posed by the teacher regarding the text they are reading. These problems relate to the characters of the text and could be seen as problem in our society today; therefore the solutions or discussions are more focused in real world application, lending to the authenticity of the assessment. The Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model was first

used in medical schools with practicing medical students; over time this model has become widely used in medical schools, business schools, schools of education, architecture, law, and even high schools (Savery & Duffy 139). This model is widely used because students have to problem solve to meet program requirements. This problem solving requires students to identify the problem, conduct research to find out more information about the problem, and reconvene in a group to learn what others discovered about the problem. PBL allows students to set their own objectives and experience self-directed learning in the highest capacity (Savery & Duffy 141). Our unit will allow instructors of high school English to use this highly complex model in their classroom. We ask students to look at a problem that presents itself in the text and to research and provide a written solution for that problem on the wiki. Students then examine the problem with their small groups to discover more about what each member learned. Once all groups have discussed, a whole-class discussion will occur with each group defending their solution to the problem. This lesson will demonstrate the depth to which students have understood and connected with the reading. The goal is to provide an authentic way for students to use research to respond to literature. Students have to use readily available sources to solve their problem, much like they might have to in the real world. Students also get the experience of working with others to solve a problem. Although the provided PBL assignment prompts are focused on a district-mandated curriculum (*To Kill a Mockingbird, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, When the Emperor Was Divine, A Raisin in the Sun,* and *Of Mice and Men*) instructors interested in using this lesson could modify the questions to represent their literature and interest their students.

Sustained-Silent Reading Assessment:

One goal that we strive to meet as English teachers is making our students life-long readers and writers. A majority of the time students are told what they must read in the classroom, but there is one particular opportunity to allow students to choose what they want to read. Alfie Kohn echoes the idea of students having a choice of what they read to increase student motivation in his article "How to Create Nonreaders: Reflections on Motivation, Learning, and Sharing Power." However, Kohn cautions teachers who assign projects to students for the purpose of "proving to you that they have read." Kohn states that this is one way to ensure that students will lose the joy of reading, even when they are able to choose what they want to read (17). Upon reading this the typical SSR reading assignments came to mind, ones we ourselves have been guilty of assigning: make a diorama to show the setting of the novel, write a journal to explain one of the character's thoughts and motivations, among many others. Although these are valuable assignments that require students to use their creativity to produce a product about the book they have read, they have little authenticity. Typical SSR assignments are often due at the end of the semester, so these creative assignments are rushed and students take little knowledge away from them. How can an SSR assessment prove that a student has done the required reading, yet use their reading for a more authentic purpose?

The best way to help students take SSR assessments seriously is to ensure that they write for an authentic audience. Students love to give their opinion, and they love it more when they know someone is listening. In this unit, students will write entries on class wikis to monitor their progress through an SSR book. The final assessment will be a book review that can be used by students who later enter the

course and who might need assistance in choosing their own SSR book. Every semester students struggle with choosing a book they want to read because they are not experienced readers. Students complain that they "don't like to read" or "don't know what they want to read"— this assignment is a perfect way for students to make their decision but base their decision off of others who have come before them. They can choose books based on a theme, genre, or a previous student's posted blog entry. The intention is that the database would continue to grow to include additional reviews every year; it would be a database of books students could refer to. By having students write on a wiki about their SSR book, they are writing for an authentic audience and this makes their reading a social process. Kohn says that "isolating students" in reading is another way to "kill motivation." Contributing to the class wiki space about their SSR book will allow students to voice their opinion about their book while interacting with their classmates. It can allow students to conduct conversations about literature outside of the prescribed classroom environment. The goal is to make students excited about reading and to learn how to enjoy reading— a skill they will use outside of their classroom life, whether they are reading for business purposes or pleasure. We hope that students learn to conduct intelligent conversations about what they are reading and conduct these conversations long after their time spent in our classrooms.

A word about rubrics:

The one issue English teachers struggle with is the questions of how to assign a grade to an assessment. English is not a subject where one can simply give a subjective grade. On the contrary, the ideas and processes behind English curriculum are objective and teachers must view it as so.

We found that with the types of lessons we were creating we needed to provide rubrics that allowed for a variety of responses from students, yet made the parameters and our expectations for the assignments clear. We decided to use holistic rubrics for some assessments because we felt they allowed for our students to produce a greater variety of writing with a more reliable grade outcome. Michael Neal states that holistic rubrics allows for "direct writing assessment," which we found attractive (63). As with our units the holistic rubrics are meant to be frameworks. Individual instructors can modify each rubric to represent the writing qualities that are most important to them.

A note from us:

We hope that practicing teachers will find these units not only useful, but compelling. We have conducted research about our practice and feel that the units we are providing represent best practice in the modern English Language Arts classroom. We enjoy the fact that our lesson/unit framework can work for any teacher with little modification. We hope we have found an authentic way to assess literature writing that can be widely used by others, but most importantly provide authentic learning experiences for our students.

Literature Writing Assessment: Composing Blog Entries

Context: In conjunction with the formal essay writing that should and will take place within the literature-based English class, students will engage in authentic writing assessment about literature. The students will work independently and predominantly outside of class to create blog entries. The blog topics are designed to fit multiple genres and works of literature; the topics are also differentiated to promote multiple intelligences and different learning abilities. These blog

entries represent authentic writing assessment because they are published with a specific and real audience in mind. In addition, the students' purpose will focus on personal and social connections to the assigned readings or novel. This assessment will be continuous throughout the semester, as students will produce one blog entry per week. Part of the students' assessment will also involve responding to each other's entries and using those responses to continue the writing process. Each week they will focus on a new topic. The students will be evaluated using a holistic-style rubric. This rubric clearly states the objectives for the weekly writings, and it allows for a myriad of topics to be assessed equitably.

Student Learning Outcomes: Students Will Be Able To:

- Utilize technology to create a blog entry
- Determine appropriate audience
- Effectively address their intended audience with the appropriate style and tone
- Clearly write for a purpose that does not stray from their purpose
- Demonstrate insightful and clear ideas that reflect the chosen blog topic and relates to the story, poem, or novel chapter(s)
- Uses constructive comments to formulate an intelligent response that extends the ideas in the original blog entry
- Use appropriate grammar, mechanics, and spelling to ensure that the purpose and meaning of the entry is not difficult to discern

Student Preparation: Students should read the assigned readings or chapters.

Instructor Preparation: Instructor should create a free Blogspot account for each section of their literature-based classes. Instructor should also prepare handouts, and assign reading to the students.

List of Required Materials: Blogspot account for each section of the instructor's literature classes. Computer access.

Handouts: "Weekly Literature Assessment: Blog Entries" handout and "Weekly Literature Assessment: Blog Entries Rubric" handout (see below)

Activities: For the first assessment, the students must be acclimated to the class Blogspot account. After that, all activities (listed on student handouts) will occur outside of class. For students that do not have Internet access at home, they can access the computers in the Instructional Media Center during lunch, homeroom, study hall, and before or after school hours.

Homework: Each day has a prescribed part of the assessment due, and they are listed on the assignment handout. These assignment due dates will only change when the school week is compromised by the Board of Education.

Weekly Literature Assessment: Blog Entries

Each week you will choose a different topic to which you will respond. Your entry will be due on Tuesday of each week. Each blog entry should be ½ to 1 page long. You will then respond to at least one classmate's entry by Thursday. To get started, log on to the class Blogspot account. Please remember that this is a published and public document; represent yourself intelligently and maturely. Be sure to include your first and last name at the close of your blog entry.

Answer the following questions:

Before you write (submitted on Monday):
Who is your audience?
What is your purpose beyond achieving a grade?
What type of responses do you desire?

After you write (submitted on Wednesday):
What type of responses do you anticipate?

After you read your responses (submitted on Friday):
Were your responses what you anticipated?
What could you have included in your blog entry to better convey your ideas to your audience?

Respond to those that responded to your entry; clarify your original entry (by Friday).

Blog Topics

1. Relate a memory from your childhood to a situation in the novel/story.
2. Reflect on the events of the chapter or reading from the point of view of a minor character.
3. How do you see the events of the novel reflected in modern society?
4. Relate one of the characters in the novel or reading to a character from a film or television show. What physical and/or emotional characteristics do the characters share?
5. As you read the novel, keep a reading log. It is not necessary to respond to each chapter, although you may do that. At the minimum respond to the

reading after every three chapters. This log can contain your reflections, irritations, joys, or questions regarding the text.

6. Should this book be censored or not taught in our high school? Why or why not? (*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, To Kill a Mockingbird,* or *Of Mice and Men)*
7. What modern issue would the author address? (i.e. Twain, Swift, Lee, Defoe, Chaucer)
8. Compare the story to a novel you like or are reading. Is the story similar? Is one better than the other? Why?
9. Create a news story relating an event in the reading or novel?
10. Give advice to a character in the story regarding their questionable behavior or feelings.
11. Should we be sympathetic for the character (i.e. Curley's Wife, Atticus Finch, Laura Wingfield, Walter Lee Younger, Esmerelda, etc.)? Why or why not?
12. Responding to the novel, *Of Mice and Men*, to you, what is loneliness? How do you respond to loneliness?
13. When have you experienced self-reliance or independent thinking in your lifetime? How can you relate your experience to Emerson or Thoreau?
14. What scientific arguments can you use to prove or disprove the events of the story or claims of the characters?
15. Create a blog entry relating to the social injustice or social problem occurring in the reading. Respond to that social problem and appeal for a solution.

16. The English Department is currently rewriting the curriculum. Make a case for keeping this novel (currently reading) in the curriculum, or make a case for removing the novel from the curriculum.
17. Focus on a quotation from the reading that you find inspiring. How will you apply this message to your life? Why does it hold value to you?
18. Sometimes we just need to rant about things or ideas that do not make sense to us. Is there something from your reading that brings about this need? Be sure to explain what it is, why, and how you would like to see it changed.
19. Parents always ask, "What did you learn in school today?" Instead of saying "nothing," write and entry telling them what you have learned from this novel or reading.
20. How would the events of this novel or reading unfold in modern society with our modern values?
21. Free write about the reading, but stay away from plot summary.
22. Create your own prompt! Please have it approved by the instructor before you begin your response.

Weekly Literature Assessment: Blog Entries Rubric

The A entry (9-10 Points):

- Effectively addresses the audience with the appropriate style and tone
- Clearly writes for a purpose and does not stray from that purpose
- Follows the parameters of the assignment
- Demonstrates insightful and clear ideas that reflect

the chosen blog topic and relates to the story, poem, or novel chapter(s)
- Uses constructive comments to formulate an intelligent response that extends the ideas in the original blog entry
- Is not convoluted with extraneous grammar and mechanical errors so that the purpose and meaning of the entry is difficult to discern

The B entry (8 points):

- Attempts to addresses the audience with the appropriate style and tone
- Writes for a purpose but may stray from that purpose
- Follows the parameters of the assignment
- Demonstrates clear ideas that reflect the chosen blog topic and relates to the story, poem, or novel chapter(s)
- Uses constructive comments to formulate a response
- There are few extraneous grammar and mechanical errors that may make the purpose and meaning of the entry difficult to discern

The C entry (7 points):

- Weak attempt to addresses the audience with the appropriate style and tone
- Strays from purpose
- Follows some of the parameters of the assignment
- Demonstrates vague ideas that reflect the chosen blog topic and relates to the story, poem, or novel chapter(s)
- Uses few constructive comments to formulate a response or does not respond

- There are many extraneous grammar and mechanical errors that may make the purpose and meaning of the entry difficult to discern

The D entry (6 points):

- Poor attempt to addresses the audience with the appropriate style and tone
- Purpose is not evident
- Follows few of the parameters of the assignment
- Demonstrates ideas that do not reflect the chosen blog topic or relate to the story, poem, or novel chapter(s)
- Does not use constructive comments to formulate a response or does not respond
- Grammar and mechanical errors make the purpose and meaning of the entry difficult to discern

The F entry (0-5 points):

- Does not attempt to addresses the audience with the appropriate style and tone
- Purpose is not evident
- Follows few to none of the parameters of the assignment
- Demonstrates ideas that do not reflect the chosen blog topic or relate to the story, poem, or novel chapter(s)
- Does not use constructive comments to formulate a response or does not respond
- Grammar and mechanical errors make the purpose and meaning of the entry extremely difficult to discern

Literature Writing Assessment: Problem-Based Learning through Wiki Space

Context: In conjunction with the formal essay writing that should and will take place within the literature-based English class, students will engage in authentic writing assessment about literature. These problem-based learning wiki space submissions represent authentic writing assessment because they are published with a specific and real audience in mind. They also address real problems for which students have to research or create solutions, forming an authentic connection and response to the literature. Problem-based learning will be a continuous and permanent part of the literature curriculum. On the wiki space, they will create a written response to the problem. Students will work collaboratively in teacher-assigned small groups to solve the problem based on their knowledge of the text, characters, and real-life scenarios. After students collaborate in their small groups, the class will reconvene to discuss the different outcomes. The small groups will analyze and defend their choices in a group-written response on the wiki space, as well as orally. The students will be evaluated using a rubric that clearly states the objectives for the wiki submissions. The rubric allows for group and individual grades so that students are assessed on their own merits as well as those of the group, and it allows for a myriad of topics to be assessed equitably.

Student Learning Outcomes: Students Will Be Able To:

- Create, as an individual, a thoughtful and feasible solution to the problem facing the characters in the novel
- Work together as a group to create a written document free of errors

- Create a well-supported, insightful solution to the problem as a group
- Defend group response with text-based and/or researched support and persuasiveness
- Demonstrate effort, research, and/or critical thinking

Student Preparation: Students should read the assigned readings or chapters. Each problem-based learning scenario requires different preparation. Some require research, extra reading, interviewing, or group discussion. Preparation will vary.

Instructor Preparation: Instructor should create a free PBWorks account for each section of their literature-based classes. PBWorks will supply logins and passwords for students even if an email address has not been provided. This makes this wiki space ideal for school districts that do not allow student email access. Students can also access the space from home. The instructor should create a different page or space on the wiki for each PBL topic so that students can organize their submissions. The instructor should also prepare handouts, and assign reading to the students. The instructor will need to create the small groups.

List of Required Materials: Computer, Instructional Media Center, Novel or Short Story, Medical Websites, and Databases. Required materials will vary with different PBL scenarios.

Handouts: Rubrics with learning goals and directions (see below)

Activities: For the first assessment, the students must be acclimated to the class PBWorks account. For students

that do not have Internet access at home, they can access the computers in the Instructional Media Center during lunch, homeroom, study hall, and before or after school hours. Most work will be completed during class time. Each PBL assessment will take two to three days to complete.

The instructor will facilitate the small groups and monitor their progress. The instructor will need to stress to the students that they need to develop their answers thoroughly and explore any obstacles or challenges that may come. He or she may ask students probing questions or add a new element to the problem. Before the large group discussion, all students will read the group-written responses in order to prepare for large group discussion. In the large discussion, the instructor will listen to responses and question students for defense of their answers in the case that they do not naturally defend their answers. The instructor will read all wiki space submissions and pose questions on the space to further student thinking and promote continuation of the writing process.

Homework: Although class time will be provided, not all students will finish the problem-based learning responses. For those students, they will have homework so as not to thwart small- and large-group discussion.

Problem-Based Learning Rubric

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn
Pre-Reading Problem

Learning Goal: Students will create a well-developed solution that demonstrates critical thinking skills for a problem that relates to the moral struggle that Huckleberry Finn faces in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.*

Directions: Formulate a solution to the following problem, and on the wiki space, create a written response to the problem (be sure to title your response with your name and Individual Response). After your initial wiki space response, you will collaborate in small groups. Take time to read each other's wiki space responses. Share responses and try to come up with a common solution that represents all of the group members' original ideas. Your small group will analyze and defend your choices in a group-written response on the wiki space, as well as orally (be sure to title it with your names and Group Response). We will then reconvene as a class to discuss the different outcomes.

***The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* Pre-Reading Problem Prompt:**

You are an independent person who likes to take care of yourself and live on your terms. You have had experiences in life that have caused you to grow up a little more quickly than the other children of your age. You like to do the right thing, even though it might not always be easy. You are going on a long journey with no clear destination simply because it is time for you to move on; you are actually kind of excited to be away from other people. Lucky for you, you are used to living off the land and water. As you begin your trip, you hit a snag. You encounter an escaped criminal who you judge to be a really great person; you are convinced that a great injustice has been committed against him. You deeply struggle with whether or not you should let him go on your journey with you, which sounds like a potential escape plan for him. Law and morality are swimming in your mind. You just don't know what to do…

Individual was able to create a thoughtful and feasible solution to the problem facing the characters in the novel:

0 2 4

Group was able to work together to create a written document free of errors:

0 2 4

Group was able to create a well-supported, insightful solution to the problem:

0 2 4 6 8 10

Group was able to defend their response with confidence and persuasiveness:

0 2 4 6

Group demonstrated effort, research, and/or critical thinking:

0 2 4 6 8

Total: /32

Comments:

Problem-Based Learning Rubric

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn
Reading Problem

Learning Goal: Students will create a well-developed solution that demonstrates critical thinking skills for a problem that relates to the moral struggle that Huckleberry Finn and society as a whole faces in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* pre-Civil War America.

Directions: Formulate a solution to the following problem, and on the wiki space, create a written response to the problem (be sure to title your response with your name and Individual Response). After your initial wiki space response, you will collaborate in small groups. Take time to read each other's wiki space responses. Share responses and try to come up with a common solution that represents all of the group members' original ideas. Your small group will analyze and defend your choices in a group-written response on the wiki space, as well as orally (be sure to title it with your names and Group Response). We will then reconvene as a class to discuss the different outcomes.

***The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* Reading Problem Prompt (after chapter 12):**

Convince Huckleberry Finn to go against his upbringing and believe that slavery is not only morally wrong, but also a shameful societal act and that he should not feel any remorse about letting Jim escape.

Individual was able to create a thoughtful and feasible solution to the problem facing the characters in the novel:

0 2 4

Group was able to work together to create a written document free of errors:

0 2 4

Group was able to create a well-supported, insightful, text-referenced solution to the problem:

0 2 4 6 8 10 12

Group was able to defend their response with confidence, persuasiveness, and support from the text:

0 2 4 6 8

Group demonstrated effort, research, and/or critical thinking:

0 2 4 6 8

Total: /36

Comments:

Problem-Based Learning Rubric

Of Mice and Men
Post-Reading Problem

Learning Goal: Students will create a well-developed diagnosis and solution that demonstrates critical thinking skills for a problem that relates to the psychological condition of Lennie and the ethical struggle that George faces as Lennie's caretaker.

Directions: Using databases and medical diagnosis websites, research Lennie's psychological (mental) and physical behaviors or characteristics. Formulate a solution to the following problem, and on the wiki space, create a written response to the problem (be sure to title your response with your name and Individual Response). After your initial wiki space response, you will collaborate in small groups. Take time to read each other's wiki space responses. Share responses and try to come up with a common solution that represents all of the group members' original ideas. Your small group will analyze and defend your choices in a group-written response on the wiki space, as well as orally (be sure to title it with your names and Group Response). We will then reconvene as a class to discuss the different outcomes.

***Of Mice and Men* Post-Reading Problem Prompt:**

Create a diagnosis of Lennie based on psychological and medical diagnosis information. In your diagnosis report, you must cite examples of his behavior that support your outcome. With your diagnosis, you must determine whether or not Lennie is harmful to himself and/or society. What is your recommendation for those that look after Lennie?

Individual was able to create a thoughtful and feasible solution to the problem facing the characters in the novel:

0 2 4

Group was able to work together to create a written document free of errors:

0 2 4

Group was able to create a well-supported, insightful, text-referenced solution to the problem:

0 2 4 6 8 10 12

Group was able to defend their response with confidence, persuasiveness, and support from the text:

0 2 4 6 8

Group demonstrated effort, research, and/or critical thinking:

0 2 4 6 8

Total: /36

Comments:

Problem-Based Learning Rubric

Of Mice and Men
Post-Reading Problem

Learning Goal: Students will create a well-developed solution and survival plan that demonstrates critical thinking skills for a problem that relates to the struggle that George and Lennie face in *Of Mice and Men.*

Directions: Formulate a solution to the following problem, and on the wiki space, create a written response to the problem (be sure to title your response with your name and Individual Response). After your initial wiki space response, you will collaborate in small groups. Take time to read each other's wiki space responses. Share responses and try to come up with a common solution that represents all of the group members' original ideas. Your small group will analyze and defend your choices in a group-written response on the wiki space, as well as orally (be sure to title it with your names and Group Response). We will then reconvene as a class to discuss the different outcomes.

***Of Mice and Men* Post-Reading Problem Prompt:**

George has decided to not kill Lennie. How will George and Lennie overcome the challenges that now face them? What is their survival plan?

Individual was able to create a thoughtful and feasible solution to the problem facing the characters in the novel:

0 2 4

Group was able to work together to create a written document free of errors:

0 2 4

Group was able to create a well-supported, insightful, text-referenced solution to the problem:

0 2 4 6 8 10 12

Group was able to defend their response with confidence, persuasiveness, and support from the text:

0 2 4 6 8

Group demonstrated effort, research, and/or critical thinking:

0 2 4 6 8

Total: /36

Comments:

Problem-Based Learning Rubric

A Raisin in the Sun
Pre-Reading Problem

Learning Goal: Students will create a well-developed solution that demonstrates critical thinking skills for a problem that relates to the struggles that Walter Lee faces in *A Raisin in the Sun.*

Directions: Formulate a solution to the following problem, and on the wiki space, create a written response to the problem (be sure to title your response with your name and Individual Response). After your initial wiki space response, you will collaborate in small groups. Take time to read each other's wiki space responses. Share responses and try to come up with a common solution that represents all of the group members' original ideas. Your small group will analyze and defend your choices in a group-written response on the wiki space, as well as orally (be sure to title it with your names and Group Response). We will then reconvene as a class to discuss the different outcomes.

***A Raisin in the Sun* Pre-Reading Problem Prompt:**

You lead a modest existence. Your family lives in an apartment, and your sense of family is pretty strong, even though they really don't understand you most of the time. You have dreams, dreams that require money. As luck would have it, you are about to come into a large sum of money. You can't stop thinking about all the things you can do with that money, but that money is not just yours. It seems that several of your family members have plans for that money. Some of them want education, some of them want a new house, some of them want to save, and you want to open up a store with a couple of friends that you only know on a basic level. What is your plan to convince your family that you should have the money, even though they are pretty adamant about their desires for the money?

Individual was able to create a thoughtful and feasible solution to the problem facing the characters in the novel:

0 2 4

Group was able to work together to create a written document free of errors:

0 2 4

Group was able to create a well-supported, insightful solution to the problem:

0 2 4 6 8 10

Group was able to defend their response with confidence and persuasiveness:

0 2 4 6

Group demonstrated effort, research, and/or critical thinking:

0 2 4 6 8

Total: /32

Comments:

Problem-Based Learning Rubric

A Raisin in the Sun
Reading Problem

Learning Goal: Students will create a well-developed solution that demonstrates critical thinking skills for a problem that relates to the struggles that Walter Lee faces in *A Raisin in the Sun.*

Directions: Formulate a solution to the following problem, and on the wiki space, create a written response to the problem (be sure to title your response with your name and Individual Response). After your initial wiki space response, you will collaborate in small groups. Take time to read each other's wiki space responses. Share responses and try to come up with a common solution that represents all of the group members' original ideas. Your small group will analyze and defend your choices in a group-written response on the wiki space, as well as orally (be sure to title it with your names and Group Response). We will then reconvene as a class to discuss the different outcomes.

***A Raisin in the Sun* Reading Problem Prompt (after Act 1, Scene 1):**

You are Walter Lee; convince Mama that you should have the money for your dreams and that she should not support Beneatha's education or buy a house in Clybourne Park.

Individual was able to create a thoughtful and feasible solution to the problem facing the characters in the novel:

0 2 4

Group was able to work together to create a written document free of errors:

0 2 4

Group was able to create a well-supported, insightful, text-referenced solution to the problem:

0 2 4 6 8 10 12

Group was able to defend their response with confidence, persuasiveness, and support from the text:

0 2 4 6 8

Group demonstrated effort, research, and/or critical thinking:

0 2 4 6 8

Total: /36

Comments:

Problem-Based Learning Rubric

To Kill a Mockingbird
Reading Problem

Learning Goal: Students will create a well-developed solution that demonstrates critical thinking skills for a problem that relates to the struggles that Atticus faces in *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Directions: Formulate a solution to the following problem, and on the wiki space, create a written response to the problem (be sure to title your response with your name and Individual Response). After your initial wiki space response, you will collaborate in small groups. Take time to read each other's wiki space responses. Share responses and try to come up with a common solution that represents all of the group members' original ideas. Your small group will analyze and defend your choices in a group-written response on the wiki

space, as well as orally (be sure to title it with your names and Group Response). We will then reconvene as a class to discuss the different outcomes.

***To Kill a Mockingbird* Reading Problem (after chapter 20):**
Develop a plan for getting Tom acquitted on appeal.

Guest Speaker: Secure the services of an attorney-at-law in criminal defense and death penalty punishment. The attorney could speak to the class regarding the requirements for appealing a verdict, and he or she could assist the students in their arguments. They could also present their arguments to the attorney, and he or she could judge whether or not the students have a strong case. He or she could also deliver appellate verdicts of student cases. Contact the Bar Association for a list of qualified attorneys.

Individual was able to create a thoughtful and feasible solution to the problem facing the characters in the novel:

0 2 4

Group was able to work together to create a written document free of errors:

0 2 4

Group was able to create a well-supported, insightful, text-referenced solution to the problem:

0 2 4 6 8 10 12

Group was able to defend their response with confidence, persuasiveness, and support from the text:

0 2 4 6 8

Group demonstrated effort, research, and/or critical thinking:

0 2 4 6 8

Total: /36

Comments:

Problem-Based Learning Rubric

When the Emperor Was Divine
Pre-Reading Problem

Learning Goal: Students will create a well-developed solution that demonstrates critical thinking skills for a problem that relates to the struggles that the children face in *When the Emperor Was Divine.*

Directions: Formulate a solution to the following problem, and on the wiki space, create a written response to the problem (be sure to title your response with your name and Individual Response). After your initial wiki space response, you will collaborate in small groups. Take time to read each other's wiki space responses. Share responses and try to come up with a common solution that represents all of the group members' original ideas. Your small group will analyze and defend your choices in a group-written response on the wiki

space, as well as orally (be sure to title it with your names and Group Response). We will then reconvene as a class to discuss the different outcomes.

***When the Emperor Was Divine* Pre-Reading Problem:**

Your family immigrated to America when your mother was just a child. The same is true for your father's family. You were born in the US, and you consider yourself a patriot and would do anything to support your country. Then, tragedy happens; the people of your ancestral country have committed an act of terrorism and war against the USA. You are so sad for all of those that died; you attend vigils to remember those that were lost. You now notice little signs going up all over the town and in the newspaper that order you to relocate. It seems you have no choice. One day, your father is taken from your home. You are so confused by what is happening. What on earth are you going to do? What does this all mean to your family? Is the US still your country?

Individual was able to create a thoughtful and feasible solution to the problem facing the characters in the novel:

0 2 4

Group was able to work together to create a written document free of errors:

0 2 4

Group was able to create a well-supported, insightful solution to the problem:

0 2 4 6 8 10

Group was able to defend their response with confidence and persuasiveness:

0 2 4 6

Group demonstrated effort, research, and/or critical thinking:

0 2 4 6 8

Total: /32

Comments:

Problem-Based Learning Rubric

When the Emperor Was Divine
Reading Problem

Learning Goal: Students will create a well-developed solution that demonstrates critical thinking skills for a problem that relates to the ethical struggles that father faces in *When the Emperor Was Divine*.

Directions: Formulate a solution to the following problem, and on the wiki space, create a written response to the problem (be sure to title your response with your name and Individual Response). After your initial wiki space response, you will collaborate in small groups. Take time to read each other's wiki space responses. Share responses and try to come up with a common solution that represents all of the group members' original ideas. Your small group will analyze and defend your choices in a group-written response on the wiki space, as well as orally (be sure to title it with your names

and Group Response). We will then reconvene as a class to discuss the different outcomes.

***When the Emperor Was Divine* Reading Problem (after chapter 4):**

What do you, as the father in the novel, say or do to get released from an internment camp for enemies of the state?

Individual was able to create a thoughtful and feasible solution to the problem facing the characters in the novel:

0 2 4

Group was able to work together to create a written document free of errors:

0 2 4

Group was able to create a well-supported, insightful, text-referenced solution to the problem:

0 2 4 6 8 10 12

Group was able to defend their response with confidence, persuasiveness, and support from the text:

0 2 4 6 8

Group demonstrated effort, research, and/or critical thinking:

0 2 4 6 8

Total: /36

Comments:

SSR Reading Assignment

"Netbooks"

Objective: To provide information about your book in a "Netbook" queue for other students. To help your peers choose a book they might find interesting to read.

Directions: You will use Moodle to create a blog entry about your book at least three times throughout the semester. You can choose any book that you want as long as it is relatively close to your grade level, and it must be a book (no magazines or newspapers).

1. Introduction of book (approx. length: 1 paragraph)
2. In the middle (how the book is going) (approx: 2 paragraphs)
3. Book Review (do not give away the ending) (approx: 2 pages)

Remember: your goal is to provide useful information to your peers about the book you read.

Some topics to write about:

Title and author
Brief synopsis (don't give away too much— you want your audience to be curious)
Themes the book focuses on
Do you like the book? Why?
Do you not like the book? Why not?
Favorite characters and why?
Least favorite characters and why?
What do you like about the writing style?
Is it a quick book to read, or does it take more time?
Does it remind you of any other style of writing? Any other authors? Any other book?

Final wiki entry:

The first page of your wiki entry should consider at least three of the topics above. It should serve as an overview for your book and inform your readers about the book and why they might want to read it. The second page will require research into books other students in the class have read. After reading classmates' first two blog entries choose one student's book to respond to. How does this book sound similar to yours? Might this be a book someone could read if looking for similar reading to the book you have already reviewed? Your final wiki entry will be published on our class Moodle site and will be read by later students so be sure to look over your work for its grammatical quality.

Grading:

The first two wiki entries will be graded by completion (you do it and you get credit); the last entry will be assessed using the rubric below.

Rubric:

A— wiki entry response:

- Student gives title of book and name of author in their final response
- Student provides a meaningful book review that will be helpful to a future student
- Student's response shows a knowledge and expertise in the book they read
- Student writes a response appropriate for their intended audience
- Student's work is not convoluted with extraneous grammar and mechanical errors so that the purpose and meaning of the entry is difficult to discern

B— wiki entry response:

Student gives title of book and name of author in their final response

Student provides an informational book review that will be helpful to a future student

Student's response shows a knowledge in the book they read

Student write a response appropriate for their intended audience

Student's writing includes a few extraneous grammar and mechanical errors that may make the purpose and meaning of the entry difficult to discern

C— wiki entry response:

Student gives title of book and name of author in their final response

Student provides an informational book review that might be helpful to a future student

Student's response shows some knowledge in the book they read

Student writes a response that may be for their intended audience

Student's work contains many extraneous grammar and mechanical errors that may make the purpose and meaning of the entry difficult to discern

D— wiki entry response:

Student gives the title of the book or the name of the author (or neither) in their final response

Student provides a book review that does not provide much information and will not be helpful to a future student

Student's response is lacking in knowledge in the book they read

Student write a response without an intended audience

Student's work contains grammar and mechanical errors that make the purpose and meaning of the entry difficult to discern

F— wiki entry response:

Student does not provide the title of the book or the name of the author

Student's review is lacking any information that might be helpful to a student in the future

Student does not show knowledge in the book they read

Students has no audience/ or does not attempt the assignment

Student's work contains grammar and mechanical errors that make the purpose and meaning of the entry extremely difficult to discern

Enrichment Assignment:

For those who read more than one book per semester…

Follow assignment guidelines for the last journal entry (you may skip entries 1 and 2). Be sure to share your knowledge and provide helpful information for future students. Your job is to help add to the wiki book database. You will not have to research peers' books and write the second page of the journal entry. Some extra credit will be given for the additional entries you write.

Common Core Curriculum Standards Addressed throughout Units and Assessments

RL.11–12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

RL.11–12.2: Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.11–12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.

RL.11–12.10: By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

RI.11–12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

RI.11–12.2: Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and

build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

RI.11–12.3: Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

RI.11–12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text.

RI.11–12.10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction independently and proficiently.

W.11–12.1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

W.11–12.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

W.11–12.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

W.11–12.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

W.11–12.5: Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

W.11–12.6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

W.11–12.9: Draw evidence from literary or information texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

W.11–12.10: Write routinely over extended time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

L.11–12.1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

L.11–12.2: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

L.11–12.3: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

L.11–12.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

L.11–12.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

L.11–12.6: Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

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Jill Uhlman is a secondary English/Language Arts teacher at Olympia High School in Stanford, Illinois. She has taught all four levels of high school Language Arts but currently teaches sophomore American Literature and Contemporary Literature— a senior level elective. Jill has her Masters of Science in Curriculum and Instruction from Illinois State University and a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in the Teaching of Writing from Illinois State University. She lives in Morton with her husband.

Nicole Mackinson is a National Board Certified Teacher of English at Normal Community West High School in Normal, Illinois. She teaches sophomore American Literature and Composition, Honors English Literature and Composition, and Composition, Vocabulary, and Grammar ? a senior elective writing course. She is currently pursuing her Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in the Teaching of Writing at Illinois State University to supplement her Masters Degree in English Education. She lives in Towanda with her husband and two daughters.

REVISED WRITING WORKSHOP: ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PERSONALITY TYPE

SARAH JOHNSON

Introduction:

The extensive and varied research into the differences in learning style and writing development conducted by David Keirsey and Marilyn Bates, George H. Jenson and John K. DiTiberio, Maurice Scharton and Janice Neulieb, and others provides a blaring wake-up call to teachers: if we want to meet the needs of all our students and achieve their own personal best, we must know and make accommodations for their personality types. For more information on how personality type affects learning style, see Appendix E.

What follows is a proposed writing curriculum format that blends the best qualities of a writing workshop with the necessary considerations and accommodations for personality type. This curriculum aims to empower each student with the knowledge of his or her own unique strengths

and weaknesses as writers and the ability to develop those strengths and combat those weaknesses. In this curriculum, students are encouraged to reflect on their personality types as they affect the writing process, to identify and use their own unique writing process, to cultivate their strengths as writers, and to face and build up their weaknesses.

The lesson plans that follow are only a small sample of the procedures to be followed throughout a school year, but they are meant to be representative of the style and goals of teaching in this format. These lessons are intended for use as the start of the school year to get the ball rolling and will consume approximately the first month of class.

Before the lessons, however, the basic structure and procedures of the class are explained:

Environment:

The classroom should be designed to accommodate for those students who prefer to work alone and for those who prefer to work in small groups. Desks should be positioned to allow for easy movement into collaborative grouping, but should also be available for solitary work. One or two comfy corners in the room might also be provided for those who want to get away from the crowd. Teachers might also consider having a study carrel and/or desk in the hall available for any students who might be distracted by noise. Easy access to a variety of resources is recommended: dictionaries, thesauruses, word processors, paper, utensils, markers, glue, etc. should all be available, as well as internet access and library passes, if possible. For more information on the accommodations that should be present to suit all personality types, see Appendix D.

Structure:

The basic lesson plan should include a brief mini lesson on a chosen writing strategy or technique and plenty of time for writing. Students should keep all mini-lesson materials in a Writer's Notebook to refer to at all times throughout the year. The purpose of the Writer's Notebook is to provide them with a plethora of options to choose from when following their own writing process. When writing, students should feel free to collaborate or conference with peers as much as possible, but should also feel free to work independently as much as possible. Writing conferences with the teacher and peers should be encouraged on a frequent basis, and may need to be a bit forced at first, depending on student temperament. Students should be allowed to follow their own writing process, rather than forced into the usual steps of prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing. Writing assignments should be open-ended as often as possible with more explicit directions/topics available for those who need it. Students must be encouraged to write freely and often, even abandoning topics and/or text if it becomes boring or isn't working out. To achieve this last item, a unique due date system needs to be put into place.

Due date Procedure:

The following suggestion for a due date procedure will give certain students others to have the relaxed timetable they need (Intuitive type), while giving others the structure they need (Sensing type). Indeed, students with a Perceiving quality might possibly never get anything done without an ultimatum of some kind. Establishing basic due dates will also allow for the ever-present need for filling a grade book. Students should be supplied with a tracking sheet to include in their Writer's Notebook to keep a record of their progress.

When turning in drafts, students should use the Draft Cover Sheet and when turning in final drafts, they should use the Published Cover Sheet. These cover sheets are available in Appendix A.

I. First Quarter
   A. One "draft" due every week, participation points
   B. Minimum of four writing conferences, participation points
   C. One final draft due every four weeks, graded according to Rubric*

II. Second Quarter
   A. One "draft" due every week, participation points
   B. One writing conference per week, participation points
   C. One final draft due every three weeks, graded according to Rubric*

III. Third Quarter
   A. Minimum of eight "drafts," participation points
   B. One writing conference per week, participation points
   C. Total of two final drafts, graded according to Rubric*

IV. Fourth Quarter
   A. Minimum of eight "drafts," participation points
   B. Writing conferences as needed
   C. Total of two final drafts, graded according to Rubric*

*Rubric is available in Appendix B.

Before Beginning:

Before following the lesson plans provided, teachers should work with students to identify each individual's personality type and to discover what it means. I recommend

using the Kiersey test in *Please Understand Me* to identify personality type. Revised versions of Kiersey's type descriptions should be provided to students to assist them in understanding their type and its implications. A sample of the sort of handout that might be used in available in Appendix C.

Introduction

Writing Lesson One—Individual Writing Process

Context

In the past few days, students have discovered their personality types and been grouped based on those types. They are now going to begin thinking about writing habits based on their personality types.

Objectives

- review the steps of the writing process
- identify writing strengths and weaknesses based on personality type
- determine which steps each individual is likely to follow and when

Procedure

- Distribute What's Your Writing Style handout. Review objectives. Give students time to complete the first section of the handout individually. Instruct students to leave questions blank if they don't know how to answer them.
- Direct students to discuss their answers in their groups. Compare and contrast answers with peers. Teacher will move through groups and answer questions about any parts students did not understand.

- Give a few additional minutes if some students need to answer questions they previously left blank.
- Share answers as a class, and discuss similarities and differences.
- Direct students to underline answers to second section of handout.
- Direct students to circle their strengths, etc. in the chart. As students are engaged, teacher moves around room clarifying any information that students don't understand.
- Discuss strengths, etc. as class. Allow students to disagree with their strengths, etc. based on type and judge whether they are accurate.
- Direct students to answer last questions on handout. Have them discuss their responses with their groups.
- Debrief activity as a class. Discuss differences in writing style throughout class. Decide as a class whether we should follow the textbook instructions for the writing process, or whether each individual should be given the opportunity to choose their own writing process.

Personality Type Accommodations

- Reviewing objectives ahead of time gives students a chance to anticipate the activity (I and J)
- no students are required to answer question aloud until first being allowed to think about them on paper (I)
- no students are required to share with group or class unless comfortable doing so (I)
- students are given ample opportunity to interact with peers (E) and share thoughts and feelings (E and F)

- assignment delves into both facts (S) and feelings (F) about its topics

Student Handout

What's Your Writing Style?

Objectives: to review the steps in the writing process; identify writing strengths, weaknesses, and habits; and determine which steps we use and when we use them

The Writing Process

Answer the following questions about the steps in the writing process.

Prewriting

What is *prewriting*? When is it supposed to be done?
What are some things you could do to *prewrite*?
Do you like *prewriting*? Why / why not?

Drafting

What is *drafting*?
What is the *drafting* step supposed to be for?
When you are done *drafting*, do you think you should read through what you've written to make sure it's the best it can be? Why / why not?

Revising

What is *revising*?
What are some things writers are supposed to do when they are *revising*?
Do you like *revising*? Why / why not?

Editing

How is *editing* different from *revising*?
Are you good at *editing*? Why/why not?

My Writing Process

Underline your answer in each sentence below.

If you were assigned to write an essay, do you think you would plan it out first or just start writing? After you wrote it, would you read it over and think about changing or reorganizing it, would you read it over to check for spelling and grammar errors, or would you turn it in without reading it over at all? If you were told the assignment was due next week, would you probably start thinking about it now, or would you wait until the night before it was due?

My Writing Strengths and Weaknesses

Find and circle your writing strengths and weaknesses below.

Extraverted	**Introverted**
STRENGTHS—writing about experiences; w/ dialogue; using voice; friendly, conversational writing WEAKNESSES—not very specific or detailed, may not consider audience, may be too informal HABITS—don't follow outlines, might use outlining or other prewriting *after* drafting as part of revision	STRENGTHS—writing that is deep; consideration of audience; clean, formal writing WEAKNESSES—difficulty connecting writing to experiences, lack of feeling, too formal HABITS—use and follow outlines, think about writing well ahead of time, not comfortable free writing
Sensing	**Intuitive**
STRENGTHS—following directions, communicating information correctly, able to understand complicated data WEAKNESSES—may not communicate info so that it meets the purpose or situation, may not be creative or interesting HABITS—like following clear directions, like sticking to familiar formats, revise to edit	STRENGTHS—unique topics and perspectives, imaginative writing WEAKNESSES—may not include enough support or details, may not follow directions, writing may be difficult to follow HABITS—like to be creative and experimental with formats, prefer having fewer directions

Thinking	**Feeling**
STRENGTHS—writing logical and organized essays, writing that is clear and objective WEAKNESSES—too objective/lose personal connection; too structured, so boring or dry HABITS—rely on structure rather than content	STRENGTHS—using personal examples to make points, connecting personally w/ audience WEAKNESSES—too sentimental, lack of organization HABITS—rely on content rather than structure
Judging	**Perceiving**
STRENGTHS—quick decisions, quick writing; use time wisely, writing done on time WEAKNESSES—too quick, so writing is incomplete HABITS—set goals, follow step-by-step process, plan ahead	STRENGTHS—research topic with great detail, writing is well-supported WEAKNESSES—include too much info w/out clear focus, tendency to procrastinate writing HABITS—procrastinate writing because write best under pressure

After considering your strengths, weaknesses and habits, do your answers to the above questions make sense based on your personality? Why/why not? How does this affect your attitude towards writing?

Writer's Notebook

Writing Lesson Two*—Ideas *Experience, Free Writing

Context

After deciding to follow individual writing processes rather than a prescribed one, the class spent one writing period preparing their Writer's Notebook. The notebook has six sections: Ideas, Organization, Format, Revision, Conventions, and Techniques. Throughout the year, students will engage in mini-lessons that will provide them with "options" to include in each of the sections. When given a writing assignment, students will be free to choose which "options" they would like to use to complete the assignment. **Turn-in procedures have also been explained.

Objectives

- experiment with a prewriting/idea-generating writing strategy
- evaluate the strategy for personal use

Procedures

- Review objectives. Describe free writing process. Points to stress: write about anything, write as much as you can, don't worry about conventions or form, change topics as often as you'd like, write whatever comes to mind
- Describe use of observing as an idea-generating tool. Points to stress: ideas are all around us, observing one thing might give you an idea about something else
- Direct students to bring paper and writing utensils to the gym (or outside). Have class observe and free write about the gym class that is taking place.

To help those who might struggle with free writing, provide a few options: pick one student and describe his actions, explain the sport they are playing, tell a story about a time when you were in gym or playing this sport, etc. Write for 15 minutes.

- Return to classroom. Invite students to share free writing with the class if they want to. Teacher may also share his/her free writing.
- Direct students to read through their free writing and underline any ideas that they like in it or would like to write about more.
- Invite students to use the product of their free writing experience to create a polished piece of writing. (Beginning the following day)
- Distribute the Writing Experience Feedback and Reflection handout. Have students record their answers.
- Debrief the experience by first asking students to share their answers with their groups, then with the whole class. Direct students to insert Writing Experience Feedback and Reflection Handout into their Writer's Notebook under Ideas.

Personality Type Accommodations

- Objectives ahead of time give students a chance to anticipate the activity (I and J)
- no students are required to answer question aloud until first being allowed to think about them on paper (I)
- students are given ample opportunity to interact with peers (E) and share thoughts and feelings (E and F)
- writing possibilities are wide open (N) and include personal experiences (E), but specific writing

prompts are also given (S) and the activity is discussed in detail ahead of time (I)

Student Handout

Writing Experience Feedback and Reflection

Objective: to employ a new prewriting strategy and evaluate that strategy for its personal usefulness

Strategy Practiced: _____
Date: _____

How is the strategy used?
What did you like about this prewriting strategy?
What did you dislike this prewriting strategy?
Would you choose to use this strategy in the future? Why/why not?
Do you think this strategy suits your type? Why/why not?

Writer's Notebook

Writing Lesson Three* – Ideas *Experience, Brainstorming

Context

After Writing Lesson Two, students are given several class days to follow their writing process in developing an idea generated from the free writing. Specific writing prompts are provided as accommodations for those students who did not get anything out of the free writing. Students may continue to work on their current piece or abandon it (turn in for drafting credit), and it is time to learn a new strategy.

Objectives

- experiment with a prewriting/idea-generating writing strategy
- evaluate the strategy for personal use

Procedures

- Review objectives. Describe brainstorming process. Points to mention: jot down all ideas that come to head, don't use complete sentences, don't worry about conventions or quality of ideas
- Distribute Brainstorming handout. Question whether this format is for organized or random idea generation. Give topic, "My Summer Vacation," and give ten minutes to brainstorm. Then give five minutes to share ideas with their groups.
- Distribute Bubble Chart handout. Questions whether this format is for organized or random idea generation. Make sure students know how to use a bubble chart. Give topic, "Household Pets," and give ten min. to brainstorm, then five to share.
- As a class, discuss the pros and cons of the Brainstorming handout format. Have students record ideas. Discuss pros and cons of Bubble Chart handout and record. Ask how Bubble Chart could be used as organization tool instead of ideas tool.
- Distribute second copy of Bubble Chart handout and direct students to use it to organize their ideas from the Brainstorming handout. (Summer Vacation)
- Discuss pros and cons of using a Bubble Chart to organize, and record.
- Invite students to use ideas generated today to create a polished piece of writing.

- Distribute Writing Experience Feedback and Reflection handout. Have students respond to questions, then debrief experience by sharing thoughts/feelings.
- Direct students to insert Feedback and Reflection form, Brainstorming chart, and Bubble Chart 1 into the Ideas section of their Notebook and Bubble Chart 2 into the Organization section.

Personality Type Accommodations

- Reviewing objectives ahead of time gives students a chance to anticipate the activity (I and J)
- no students are required to answer question aloud until first being allowed to think about them on paper (I)
- students are given opportunity to interact with peers (E) and share thoughts and feelings (E and F)
- writing possibilities are to include personal experiences (E), specific writing prompts are also given (S) but there is an opportunity for sentimental reflection (F), and the activity is discussed in detail ahead of time (I)

Student Handout

Brainstorming

Topic: _____

Ideas:

*

*

*

*

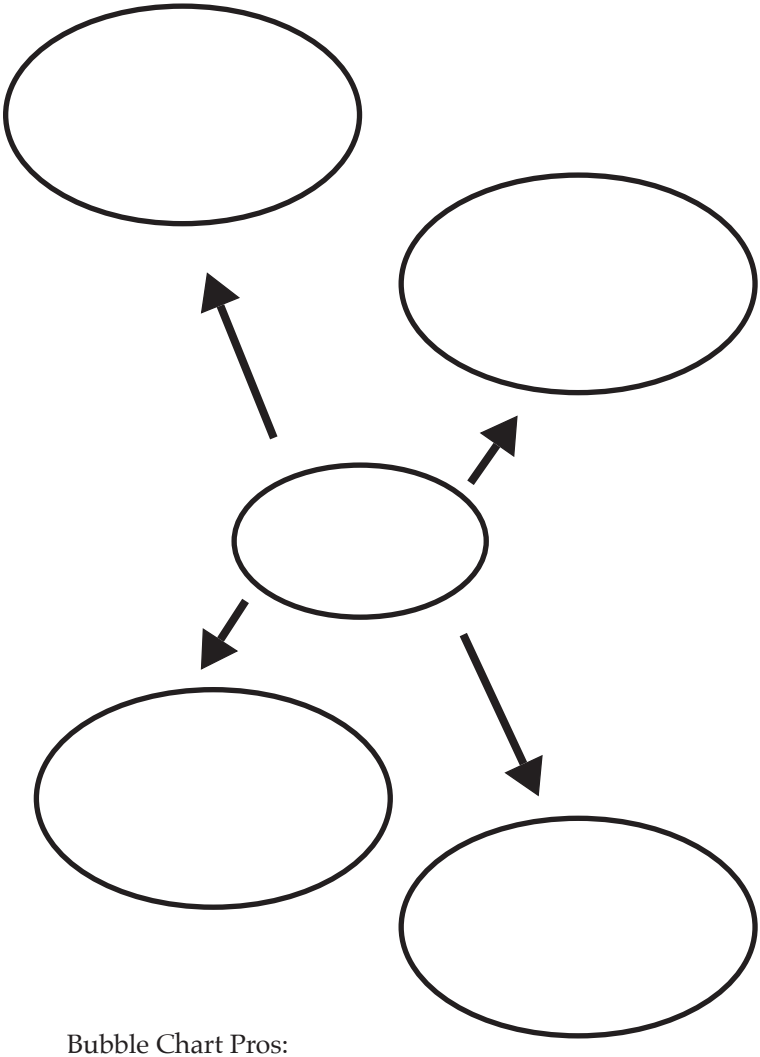
*

Brainstorming Pros:

Brainstorming Cons:

Student Handout

Bubble Chart 1 (Ideas)

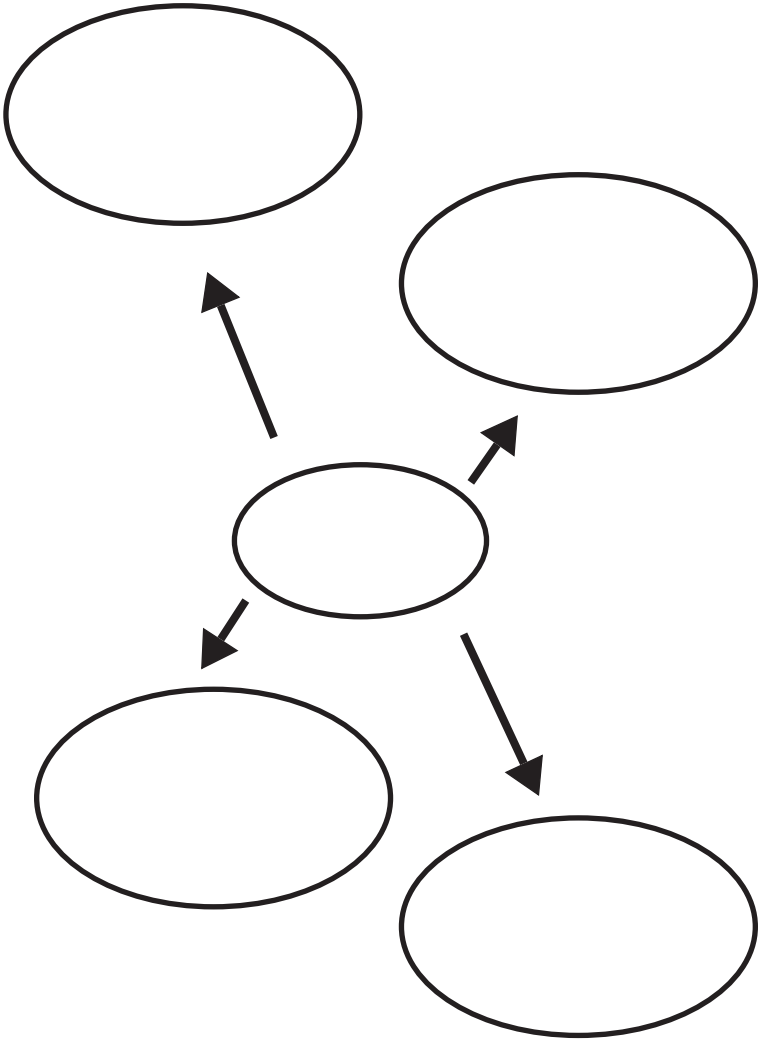


Bubble Chart Pros:

Bubble Chart Cons:

Student Handout

Bubble Chart 2 (Organization)



Bubble Chart Pros:

Bubble Chart Cons:

Student Handout

Writing Experience Feedback and Reflection

Objective: to employ a new prewriting strategy and evaluate that strategy for its personal usefulness

Strategy Practiced: _____

Date: _____

How is the strategy used?
What did you like about this prewriting strategy?
What did you dislike this prewriting strategy?
Would you choose to use this strategy in the future? Why/why not?
Do you think this strategy suits your type? Why/why not?

Writer's Notebook

Writing Lesson Four—Writing Conferences

Context

Immediately after Writing Lesson Three, students should be introduced to the writing conference process. Until now, students have experienced conferencing in an informal form while they were drafting. Several students may have been uncomfortable with this impromptu brand of conferencing (I) and most will not have understood its purpose or value. When moving on to other strategies and techniques, the basics of Writing Conferences will be very useful.

Objectives

- Identify procedure and purpose of writing conferences
- Introduce writing conference prep form
- Define personal use of writing conferences

Procedures

- Review objectives.
- Distribute Writing Conference Procedures handout. Review and discuss the handout as a class.
- Distribute several copies of the Writing Conference Form to each student. Go over the form as a class and answer any questions about how to fill it out. Make sure to stress that students can write "IDK" to answer question one if they are in the beginning stages, and they may write "n/a" to answer questions two or three if they have not yet started to write.
- Direct students to insert the Writing Conference Procedures handout and all copies of the Writing Conference Form into the beginning of their Writer's Notebook for future reference.
- The rest of class time can be spent developing drafts/conferencing.

Student Handout

Writing Conference Procedures

Summary:

Writing conferences with your teacher or peers are available to you throughout the writing process. If you need help generating ideas, organizing your thoughts, getting started on your draft, or making meaningful revisions to your writing project, all you have to do is fill out a Writing Conference Form and place your Conference Request Card on your desk—blue side up for peer conference and red side up for teacher conference. Your need will be met as soon as possible.

At times, you may be required to engage in a writing conference, even if you don't feel one is necessary at the time. You may be assigned to a peer or group conference or

a teacher conference. Conferencing is *always* useful, no matter what stage of the writing process you are in, so take these opportunities for what they are—opportunities!

Purpose:

A writing conference has many purposes. It provides: an opportunity to gather opinions and advice, help in getting out of a rut, a fresh pair of eyes to find errors or disorganization, suggestions for revision, encouragement, opportunities for collaboration, and more!

Steps:

1. Fill out a Writing Conference Form as completely as you can. (note to teacher: E's and N's may prefer to skip this step and speak extemporaneously in their conferences, but I would suggest having them go through the motions the first few times until they are comfortable with the process.

2. Place the Conference Request Card on your desk, blue side up for a peer conference and red side up for a teacher conference.

3. Wait *patiently* for your teacher to arrange for your conference.

4. When the conference begins, if you have a draft, you might have your teacher/peer read it out loud to you, you might read it to them, or you might ask them to read it quietly to themselves. Then work through your Writing Conference Form with your peer or teacher until all your concerns have been dealt with. Take notes on your discussion.

5. Turn in your Writing Conference Form for participation points.

6. Continue working on your writing project until you have a need for another conference.

***Note: It is not necessary to fill out a Conference Request for simple, quick questions for the teacher, such as: "Does this sentence make sense?" or "Do I need a comma here?" If you have a question like that, just raise your hand! ☺

Student Handout

Writing Conference Form

Name: _____
Stage of Writing Process:_____
Reason for Conference Request: _____
Type of Conference (circle one): TEACHER PEER
What are you writing about? _____
What do you like about your piece? _____
What do you dislike about your piece? _____
What questions do you have? _____
NOTES:

Writer's Notebook

Writing Lesson Five* — Organization *Experience, Timeline

Context

After Writing Lesson Three, students use several class days to follow their writing process in developing a piece of writing from their brainstorming (I) or return to their previous writing theme, which came from the free writing activity (E). Students may choose to pick a few ideas from

their brainstorming and free write a draft about them (E), or they may choose to engage in a form of prewriting that they are comfortable with (I). They are allowed to develop their idea(s) into any format they choose (S/N) and may work on their own or with a partner or small group on a collaborative effort (T/F).

It is now time to move on to a new mini-lesson, and students may continue to work on their current piece or abandon it (turn in for drafting credit).

Objectives

- recognize value in using a timeline to organize chronological text
- evaluate the strategy for personal use

Procedures

- Review objectives. Explain the use of timelines to organize many forms of writing, fiction and nonfiction.
- Provide students with copies of the Timeline double-sided handout and copies of "The Dinner Party" by Mona Gardner (chosen only b/c it's short). Read the story aloud, then work together as a class to timeline all the events mentioned in the story. Demonstrate proper use of a timeline.
- Work together as a class to write a short summary of the story using the events on the timeline, linking them together with signal words such as "first," "next," "then," etc. Explain how useful signal words are in communicating chronological order.
- Distribute copies of "The Hope Diamond" by _____. Have students work in pairs to timeline the major events in the history of the Hope diamond. Then have them

write a brief summary of their article using the events on their timeline and chronological signal words. Invite students to share their summaries with the class.

- Discuss differences between what the class has just done, and what it is like to use timelines as an organizational tool: we take our disorganized ideas and sort them out.
- Provide students with another copy of the Timeline handout. Assign students to use it to organize a piece of writing on any topic (N) and in any genre—fiction (N) or nonfiction (S). They may use it to reorganize one of the pieces of writing they have been working on so far, or they may start something new (E). They may use the timeline as prewriting, or they may prewrite first, then use it to sort their ideas before they draft. Provide one story starter and one nonfiction topic for those students who are uncomfortable coming up with ideas of their own (S/T).
- Have students fill out a Reflection form and put it and a copy of the Timeline in the Organization section of their Writer's Notebooks.

Student Handout (double-sided)

Timeline

Signal Words
First
Next
Then
Last
Finally
Before
After
While
Since

Summary:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Student Handout

Timeline

Student Handout

Writing Experience Feedback and Reflection

Objective: to employ a new organization strategy and evaluate that strategy for its personal usefulness

Strategy Practiced: _____

Date: _____

What did you like about this prewriting strategy?

What did you dislike this prewriting strategy?

Would you choose to use this strategy in the future? Why/why not?

Do you think this strategy suits your type? Why/why not?

Writer's Notebook

Writing Lesson Six* – Format *Experience, Five-paragraph essay

Context

Immediately after Writing Lesson Four, students should receive a format lesson. So far, they have begun at least three pieces of writing without an explicit discussion of format, and many students might be uncomfortable with this amount of freedom (S and T). Most of them will have heard of/been taught the five-paragraph format before, so covering now will provide both a lifeline to those who need its comfort and an opportunity to stress that it is not necessary to write in such a format.

Objectives

- Review the basics of the five-paragraph format
- evaluate the strategy for personal use

Procedures

- Review objectives. Explain that they will be evaluating the strategy for personal use, because they have many other options for formatting a piece of writing.
- Distribute copies of "The Three Africas" from www.taftcollege.edu. Read aloud the entire five-paragraph essay. Ask students to skim back through the essay and underline or highlight any qualities they can find that are a key part of the five-paragraph essay format. Invite students to share their ideas, and record them on the board, keeping a list of all qualities of a five-paragraph essay. If they miss any important points, guide them toward discovery by giving clues and using the sample essay. When you are finished, you should have something like the Five Paragraph Essay Format handout.
- As a class, discuss the kinds of writing that can be done in this format. Encourage general ideas like: narrative, informative, etc. After generating several ideas, have students work in partners to come up with more specific ideas under each general category. Invite students to share and record ideas.
- Briefly discuss the type of organization tool that is most commonly used for this format: the outline. A more in-depth discussion will be had later.
- Distribute copies of the Reflection handout. Have students complete their reflection, and include a copy of it and the Five Paragraph Essay Format handout in their Writer's Notebook under Formats.
- Give the rest of class time for students to continue working on a piece of writing. As they work, move around the room and conference with any students who need assistance.

Student Handout

"The Three Africas"

http://www.taftcollege.edu/newtc/academic/liberalarts/owl/SAMP-FIVE.HTML

When many people hear the word Africa, they picture steaming jungles and gorillas. Hollywood films have shrunk the public image of this immense, varied continent into a small segment of its actual diversity. To have a more accurate picture of the whole continent, however, one should remember that there are, roughly, three Africas, each with its distinct climate and terrain and with a style of life suited to the environment. The continent can be divided into the northern desert areas, the southeastern grasslands, and the tropical jungles to the southwest.

The northern regions have the environment and living patterns of the desert. Egypt, Libya, Algeria, and Morocco have hot, dry climates with very little land suited to farming. Therefore, the population tends to be clustered into cities along rivers or the seacoast or into smaller settlements near oases. For thousands of years, people have lived in this vast region, subsisting partly on what crops and animals they could raise and partly on trade with Europe.

The southeastern grasslands provide a better environment for animal life and for some kinds of crops. Many wild animals inhabit the plains in this region—elephants, giraffes, rhinoceros, antelopes, zebras, and lions. The people in this area have long been expert cattle raisers and hunters. Tea, coffee, cotton, cashew nuts, and tobacco are some of the main products grown in this region. Fishing also provides some food and income for people along the coast. The population here is less concentrated in cities and towns than in the north, but tends to be denser in areas where adequate rainfall and fertile soil make farming possible.

West Africa is the region closest to the Hollywood image of mysterious jungles. As in the other two regions, the way people subsist depends upon their environment. This does not mean that most of the people live in grass huts in the jungle. Such nations as Nigeria have become highly modernized by income from oil, timber, and minerals. Most of the western countries have some farming that provides food and income; sugar cane, coffee, and tobacco are the important cash crops, while bananas, rice, and corn are raised for food. Fishing in the rivers and along the coast also accounts for food and income, and precious stones, especially diamonds, enhance the economy of Angola and the Ivory Coast.

Even a superficial look at the major regions of Africa shows that it is a varied continent with several environments. Although most of the continent is tropical in its range of temperature, the climate ranges from deserts to rain forests. Similarly, human life-styles vary from the simplest rural villages to industrial cities, both new and ancient. Contrary to the myth, however, jungle life makes up only a very small portion of the whole of Africa.

Student Handout

Five Paragraph Essay Format

Introductory Paragraph

- Hook/Compelling Introduction to Topic
- Summary of first main point or subtopic
- Summary of second main point or subtopic
- Summary of third main point or subtopic
- Transition sentence

First Body Paragraph

- Summary of first main point or subtopic
- First detail/supporting sentence
- Second detail/supporting sentence
- Third detail/supporting sentence
- Summary and Transition

Second Body Paragraph

- Summary of second main point or subtopic
- First detail/supporting sentence
- Second detail/supporting sentence
- Third detail/supporting sentence
- Summary and Transition

Third Body Paragraph

- Summary of third main point or subtopic
- First detail/supporting sentence
- Second detail/supporting sentence
- Third detail/supporting sentence
- Summary and Transition

Conclusion Paragraph

- Summary of topic
- Review of major points/details/arguments
- Wrap Up

Student Handout

Writing Experience Feedback and Reflection

Objective: to review a formatting technique and evaluate that technique for its personal usefulness

Technique Reviewed: _____
Date: _____

What do you like about this writing technique?
What do you dislike this writing technique?
Would you choose to use this technique in the future? Why/why not?
Do you think this technique suits your type? Why/why not?

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Student Handout

Draft Cover Sheet

Name: _____
Date: _____
Topic: _____
Number of Draft (circle): 1st 2nd 3rd
Do you want to: talk about draft read about draft
Estimated grade? YES NO

Student

What I like about this draft:
What I dislike about this draft:
Questions I have:

Teacher

What has been done well:
What could be done better:
Steps to take:
Estimated Grade: _____

Student Handout

Published Cover Sheet

Name: _____

Date: _____

Topic: _____

How many times did you revise? 1 2 3 or more

Student

Why is this draft complete?

What grade do you think you deserve? Why?

Did you try anything new? If yes, what?

Teacher

What has been done well:

What to work on for next time:

Appendix B

Teacher/Student Resource

Published Writing Rubric

	Excellent	Well Done	Needs Work
Topic	Unique, clear, interesting; author clearly cares or thought about it; precise. NOTES: 10	Apparent and interesting, author put some thought or feeling into, not too broad. NOTES: 9 8 7	Unclear and/or unoriginal; author does not seem interested. NOTES: 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

Organization	Makes sense for the material, easy to follow, nothing is out of place NOTES: 20 19 18	Makes sense for the material, easy to follow, a few details are out of place. NOTES: 17 16 15 14 13	Lacking and/or doesn't make sense, difficult to follow, many details out of place. NOTES: 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
Style	Makes sense with subject matter, unique and shows voice of author, successful creative choices. NOTES: 20 19 18	Makes sense with subject matter, contains voice, attempt to be creative. NOTES: 17 16 15 14 13	Not present or doesn't make sense with subject matter, no attempt to show voice, no creative chances taken. NOTES: 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
Audience	Clear and appropriate audience, audience obvious by style and format of piece. NOTES: 20 19 18	Distinct audience, possibly a bit unclear. NOTES: 17 16 15 14 13	Not considered or not apparent. NOTES: 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Support/Detail	Purpose and author's message are clear, plenty of appropriate and interesting support or detail. NOTES: 20 19 18	Purpose and author's message are clear, sufficient support or detail is present. NOTES: 17 16 15 14 13	Purpose and/or message are unclear, lack of support or detail. NOTES: 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
Mechanics	Little or no errors in conventions, communication is successful. NOTES: 10	A few errors in conventions, errors do not affect reader's understanding NOTES: 9 8 7	Many errors in conventions, errors make comprehension difficult. NOTES: 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

TOTAL GRADE: _____/100

Appendix C

Sample of Student Handout

Your Personality Type

Objective: to compare and contrast this personality type description to your identify and to evaluate its accuracy

ISTJ

You are usually quiet and reserved. You have a strong sense of duty, which causes you to be serious about your responsibilities. When you promise or are supposed to do something, you do it and are often successful at it. When you have an important chore or assignment to do, you are able to work on it for long periods of time, and you feel great and proud of yourself when you are finished with it. In school, you prefer to work on assignments and projects alone, but you are able to work well in small groups, too.

You are loyal and your friends and family can count on you to do the "right thing." Although you are serious, you have a unique sense of humor and have a lot of fun in comfortable situations. You believe in laws, rules, and traditions and are not comfortable in going against these rules and traditions unless there is a very good reason. You may not understand your feelings or the feelings of others very well, and you might be uncomfortable showing your emotions.

How well does this describe you?

Underline the parts you think describe you pretty well.

Circle the parts that you don't think describe you very well at all.

Overall, do you think this description is pretty accurate? YES MAYBE NO

Appendix D

Teacher Resources

Materials and Strategies for Student Writers

Based on Personality Type

Extraverts	**Introverts**
Prewriting free writing, group discussion, hands-on experiences Drafting use free writing as drafting, use drafting to discover purpose and meaning Revising outlines or graphic organizers, peer feedback	Prewriting journaling, outlines and graphic organizers, plenty of time to plan Drafting set a deadline, so don't spend too much time planning and become over-prepared or bored Revising pre-conference worksheets, solitary revision
Sensors	**Intuits**
Prewriting explicit instructions, traditional outlines Drafting allowed to use five-paragraph theme or other familiar format examples of other formats to model Revising clear steps to follow for true, meaningful revision, so as not to fall into editing mode	Prewriting open-ended assignments, free writing, task timeline Drafting collaboration or peer feedback Revising peer evals from audience perspective to ensure points are sufficiently supported (not too inferred)

Thinkers	Feelers
Prewriting rationale or goal for assignment Drafting allowed to use five-paragraph theme or other familiar format Revising peer evals from audience perspective to ensure points are clear (not too blunt)	Prewriting guidance toward personal connection, writing territories, personal response to articles and experiences Drafting follow flow of thoughts and feelings through writing, develop form and meaning accordingly Revising small-group peer revision with focus on positives
Judgers	**Perceivers**
Prewriting plenty of style and organization options with purpose/uses for each, brief planning Drafting prescribed structures to follow Revising additional research time, if necessary	Prewriting plenty of time to research, plenty of resources available, tools to narrow topics Drafting set deadline so don't become bogged down in research Revising as part of drafting

Needs of Student Writers Based on Personality Type

Extraverts	**Introverts**
• opportunities to talk over ideas and drafts with peers and/or teacher • opportunities to work in groups and/or collaboratively • allowances for trial and error rather than planning and prewriting • ability to abandon one project for another when it becomes boring • ability to move at own pace • plenty of positive attention, so they do not seek attention negatively	• places to work quietly • opportunities to work alone as much as possible • time and resources to anticipate interview and discussion questions • time to plan ahead • time to adjust to anything new
Sensors	**Intuits**
• opportunity to write fact-based material as often as possible • clear and achievable expectations • allowances for desire to write to a specific format, such as 5-paragraph opportunities for exercise breaks and hands-on experiences	• open-ended assignments in topic and form • opportunities to use imaginations as often as possible • assistance at establishing priorities and working out a timeline

Thinkers	Feelers
• explicit instructions and expectations • allowances for straightforward way of communicating • allowances for systematic, depersonalized writing style	• opportunities to work in groups • freedom to set own expectations as much as possible • sincere and frequent encouragement
Judgers	**Perceivers**
• structured environment • ability to turn assignments in early • opportunities to go above and beyond expectations	• flexible environment • ability to turn in assignments at leisure (but may need ultimatum) • accommodations for little revision time • meaningful assignments to increase motivation

Appendix E

Personality Type and Learning Style

According to research summarized by Kelley M. Brownfield in "The Relationship between the MBTI Types and Learning Styles," it is possible to identify very clear and often disparate qualities of learning preference based on the eight personality type categories. Naturally, the learning styles best understood by a teacher are those that she herself possesses, i.e. those that correspond to her own personality type. It is necessary, therefore, for teachers to familiarize themselves with the learning preferences of other personality types if they ever are to become effective at reaching every single student in their classroom.

A brief summary of the learning style "highlights" based on personality type will be followed by a discussion of how such a cumbersome list of differences can ever be accommodated in an ordinary classroom.

The first category of personality type addresses the question "Where is one's energy naturally directed?" As made apparent by the prefixes, extraverts direct their energy outward and introverts direct their energy inward. Speaking as a clear and definite introvert, extraverts and introverts, more than any other personality dichotomy, are mirror-opposites of each other in their learning preferences and interactions with the world.

Extraverts focus their energy and attention to the outside, that is, to the world around them. They learn best by talking in groups, but they dislike being required to keep pace with others. E's prefer to meet challenges with a trial-and-error attitude and most enjoy activities that are hands-on. They become bored with long tasks so do better when given the opportunity to spend brief periods of time on a variety of tasks (Brownfield 8).

Extraverts in and out of the classroom are generally very responsive, expressive, and enthusiastic people. They enjoy attention, even to the point of seeking negative attention over none at all. It is also noteworthy that the extraverted type is more generally accepted as the "way to be" in America, so they often feel more acceptance and self-confidence than their counterpart (Kiersey 103).

Introverts focus their attention and energy on the inside, to the world within. They prefer working alone and need a quiet environment to work effectively. Though not instinctively abhorrent to group work, introverts prefer preparation time ahead of a group collaboration to organize their thoughts and anticipate possible questions, answers, and opinions. Very different from the trial-and-error attitude of the E's, I's prefer to think before they act, as they need time to absorb their surroundings and new information before having the confidence to respond to it (Brownfield 8).

Introverts are likely to hold back when confronted with the unfamiliar, and they only show to the public those aspects or qualities of themselves that are fully developed rather than experimenting with new ones. As they make up approximately twenty-five percent of individuals, Introverts are very often misunderstood and pressured to be extraverts, which can be quite damaging to their self-concept (Kiersey).

The next set of types answers the questions, "What kind of information do you generally notice?" In general, Sensors notice details and facts, whereas Intuitors notice the big picture and hypotheticals. In a writing classroom, I believe these two types should be considered with respect to the kinds of writing prompts/topics assigned.

For example, those students with a Sensing personality prefer to work with facts, especially knowledge that they already possess. Sensors are generally very detail-oriented and

are good with memorization. They prefer the concrete and do not like using their imaginations (Brownfield 9). Sensors often prefer to be active and like competition (Herbster 3).

An Intuitive personality is one that prefers to see things "big picture." They do not like overly-structured tasks, thus preferring open-ended assignments. I's are generally more curious than S's, so they can often be counted on to approach information-gathering with enthusiasm. In our daily interactions with I's, we should keep in mind that they have a vulnerable self-concept and can't handle broken promises (Kiersey 103).

The categories of Thinking and Feeling were created in response to the question "How do you make decisions?" In these two categories, the name pretty much says it all. Thinkers weigh all evidence before coming to a decision (Brownfield 11). They are logical, sequential, and rule-oriented (Herbster 3). A Thinker wants reasons for being asked to do something and works best with a given set of criteria. (Kiersey 104). Thinkers can be counted on as effective leaders, they have an orderly and systematic way of talking, and they are generally very blunt, making points quickly (Brownfield 11).

Most important to note, Feelers do not like a traditional, rigid, strict classroom environment. Those with a Feeling personality love working in groups, and are good at doing so, as they are capable of perceiving others' feelings. Feelers are very verbal and social, and can often be sensitive, taking criticism personally. Therefore, they often need encouragement to be productive (Brownfield 11, Herbster 3, and Kiersey 105).

Finally, there are the Judgers and Perceivers. This dichotomy answers the question "What kind of environment makes you most comfortable?" Those with a Judging personality like a structured environment, much like a traditional classroom. They make quick and final decisions, get assignments done early, and feel good about getting things done. Judgers

can be counted on as overachievers and they put pressure on themselves to get things accomplished and to do things well (Brownfield 12). Those with a Judging personality do not respond well to surprises and like things to be neat and orderly (Kiersey 106).

In all my research, the Perceiving category of personality type receives the least favorable description. It was surprising that such little good could, apparently, be said of it. Perceivers like a flexible environment that gives them time to come to decisions slowly, turn in assignments late, and underachieve (Brownfield 12). Perceivers can be counted on to be disorganized, messy, and irresponsible. Perceivers enjoy a good surprise and like to be given a choice, no matter what the occasion (Kiersey 106).

As if that weren't enough for a teacher to think about, there are also very distinctive conclusions that can be made about the learning styles of certain combinations of types. According to Kiersey, an individual with a Sensing-Perceiving combination needs physical involvement in learning, loves to make presentations, rebels against close supervision, and needs constant variety. Of all the combinations, SPs are the most likely to drop out, and they hate homework (121–123).

Students with a Sensing-Judging combination are comfortable with a traditional classroom environment, accept the values of the teacher, and follow her rules to the letter, do well with very structured activities with explicit directions, and prefer to work alone rather than in groups. SJs care deeply about their grades and complete all assignments in a timely manner (123–124).

Individuals with an Intuitive-Thinking combination are hungry for information and possess a scientific mind. NTs have difficulty expresses themselves in writing, are prone to self-doubt, and need help establishing priorities. Intuitive

Feelers thrive on recognition, caring, and personal attention, and they take criticism quite hard. They also have difficulty expresses their thoughts through writing, and prefer oral communication and group discussions. Rather than focusing on facts, like their NT counterparts, NFs prefer to use their imaginations. It is also interesting to note that NFs do not respond well to sarcasm, which is something that really hit home for me, since I am an extremely sarcastic person, though I know I shouldn't be! (125–128).

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Sarah Johnson is a middle school teacher of Reading, Language Arts, and Social Studies at Thomasboro Grade School. She also works as a Scholastic Bowl coach and Student Council supervisor, and she serves as a member of the Response to Intervention Data Team. Sarah holds a BA in Communication from Bradley University and a teaching certificate from Northern Illinois University, and she is currently a graduate student in English Studies at Illinois State University.

HELPING STUDENTS BECOME COLLEGE READY: A COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S RESPONSE

LINDSEY CUTI

Due to the alarming number of students entering colleges underprepared, having to take developmental courses to become college-ready, Kankakee Community College developed a College and Career Readiness Program. The program, originally started in 2008, significantly expanded after receiving a grant from the Illinois Community College Board in 2009. All 23 feeder high schools in the Kankakee district were invited to participate, and thus far, ten have accepted. The program offers: outreach to local high schoolers and their parents, educating them on subjects such as "what it takes to go to college," offers college placement exam testing for high school juniors to inform them of deficiencies that should be addressed in high school and/or at KCC, and offers a "summer bridge" program for high school students entering their senior year to address deficiencies through developmental

courses and tutoring assistance. Based on this early testing, one high school received Board approval to require a fourth year of math for all seniors (Illinois only requires 3), and another high school eliminated Algebra 1A and Algebra 1B from the curriculum offering, thus requiring all incoming students to take at least Algebra 1 during their freshman year. The program also offers "math interventions" by pre- and post-testing students using MyMathXL, ALEKS, or Carnegie which are all math diagnostic assessment systems. They can be individualized according to a student's need and provide step-by-step help through multimedia learning resources and unlimited practice sessions. Finally, the program also focuses on collaborations between high school faculty and college professors to align math and English curricula. The process of alignment began with workshops that helped faculty get to know and trust each other. A common barrier in this process is the fear of preaching…that one institution, typically the college, will preach to the high schools on what needs to change. Thus, an important part of the process included an understanding that in order to have productive conversations, no single institution was in charge. As a full-time English professor at KCC, and the appointed faculty liaison between the English high school instructors and KCC English faculty, the following will focus on our attempts to align English curricula.

The agenda for the first meeting included sharing learning objectives, syllabi, lesson plans, etc. This allowed college faculty to gain a clearer sense of where students are coming from in regard to types of assignments, activities, and teaching practices students generally have experience with/knowledge of, and how students are evaluated. This also allowed high school instructors to clarify what students are expected to know and do once in a college, how they are generally evaluated, along with typical classroom policies.

Once the groundwork was established, we met for a second meeting to discuss the glaring disconnects between high school and college curricula. The composition sequence at the college level [English 101 and 102], based on the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI), is rhetorically based, focusing instruction and evaluation on students' writing skills. In KCC's sequence (even including our developmental course, just prior to English 101), these courses include the reading of nonfiction, with a heavy emphasis on finding/reading research to support one's claims. Students are asked to write argument and analysis based assignments that are supported with research/documentation. Most significantly, teachers evaluate writing by offering revision suggestions and an opportunity to revise. In our local high schools, English curricula is heavily focused on the reading of fiction, and aside from "the research paper," writing doesn't generally go beyond literary analysis. The writing is typically not process-based, thus there are no opportunities to receive feedback and revise. Grammar also seems to be taught in isolation rather than in the context of students' own writing.

Despite having unveiled such disconnects, there was a common barrier felt among high school faculty: the pressure to prepare students for various standardized exams. As a result, many felt it would be challenging to revise curricula. So, the starting point focused on senior year, since all standardized testing is complete prior to this. A few high schools immediately began revising their senior-year curriculum to include more writing assignments, process-based writing, including focusing feedback on global issues with an expectation for students to revise beyond local issues, the reading and analysis of nonfiction, and finding, evaluating, and documenting sources. More specifically, teachers at Watseka High School began teaching rhetorical analysis to seniors with the

assistance of *Everything's an Argument*, a college-level textbook. The textbook offers many nonfiction pieces for students to read, discuss, and analyze. They have also incorporated peer response and self evaluations in an effort to increase students' critical reading and reflection skills. Tri-Point High School actually began revising their junior and senior year curricula to include more opportunities for writing. In addition to incorporating nonfiction for students to read and respond to, their writing assignments launched from the reading of fiction went from traditional literary analysis to assignments based on social issues present in the works (i.e. poverty). Students are asked to research such issues to better understand context and to grapple with them, comparing them to the present-day status of the issue, for example. They have also begun working on grammar in the context of students' writing, abandoning grammar exercises and the habit of pointing out every mistake, to now, only pointing out patterns of error, placing more responsibility on students. Finally, Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School has begun offering a senior-year English class intended to prepare both the community college and four-year college bound student. This course emphasizes writing, using both nonfiction and fiction for students to analyze and respond to. The course emulates typical college policies (i.e. no late work) and typical college teaching practices (i.e. process writing with an emphasis on global revision). These are just some examples of the types of curricular changes taking place. The other seven schools are also working on revising, some further along than others. Future meetings will focus on how the high schools work to revise their curricula, as this has been the most valuable part for them, hearing *how* and *what* their peers have done.

The most significant implication this initiative has had on KCC faculty is better understanding where we must meet

our students; by better understanding where they are coming from, we have a better sense of how to order our assignments, what they may need extra practice/exposure to, etc. For example, some of our smaller feeder high schools don't have access to library databases; therefore, students may not only need an introduction to these once they reach our classrooms, but also extra practice in order to be skilled researchers.

Aside from curriculum alignment, I also make classroom visits to senior English classes to discuss some of the differences between high school and college expectations. By informing students, that there is no A for effort, there are little, if any, opportunities for extra credit, deadlines aren't merely suggestions, and personal responsibility is now key to succeeding, raises their awareness that college will be different. I also emphasize that in college, there is no pressure to pass students; if they haven't met the goals of the course, they simply will not pass. Students are typically quite engaged with such visits and ask a wide range of questions.

The final effort in my role as faculty liaison includes participating in high school English staff meetings. When invited, I act as a consultant to whatever issue may be facing that department at that time. For example, I have advised on topics such as rubrics, textbook choices, types of assignments, and curriculum revision.

Ultimately, this is a long-term project that requires a genuine commitment and effort from both the high schools and the college(s). It takes time to bring the various issues of college readiness to the surface, discuss them, and strategize how to change or improve them. But ultimately, I am encouraged that students' transition from high school to college, and their success in college, will be improved as a result.

Linsey Cuti has been teaching college-level composition for eleven years, seven of those at Kankakee Community College. She has served as the faculty liaison for the College and Career Readiness Program since 2009. She is also the co-founder of the Southland Writing Consortium which provides a forum for writing colleagues to network and discuss their work in the south suburban area of Chicago.

COMPOSING OURSELVES IN SPANISH

TISHA ORTEGA

I have been a Spanish teacher for over twenty years, but I have considered myself a writer since I had my first poem published when I was just 12 years old (longer than twenty years ago!). However, it has only been in the last four years that I have considered myself a teacher of writing. Considering the fact that writing is so important to me and such a vital part of my life, it seems strange that I never really embraced "teacher of writing" as part of my identity. Oh, I certainly paid lip service to it when we talked about Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) in our faculty meetings. But it was not until I started taking teaching of writing classes at Illinois State University that I began to realize the potential that writing has to be such an important part of my classroom.

When I look back at my own education as a foreign language teacher, I can see where the teaching of writing slipped by me. I was lucky enough to be in a progressive

foreign language department as an undergraduate preparing to be a Spanish teacher. Gone were the days of having students fill sheet after sheet of verb conjugations or doing tedious grammar drills. We focused a lot on proficiency and authentic situations. What skills did students need to be able to go to another country and order food in a restaurant or visit the doctor's office? It was exciting to use real world situations in the classroom. However, our primary focus was on oral proficiency. The concentration on oral proficiency came from a sincere desire to mimic how students learn their first language. The logic was that most children do not start writing in their first language until they are at least three or four. Why should second language be any different?

The first three years of my teaching career I was not even allowed to use a textbook in my classroom and in the first year of language study students were not to be encouraged to write in the target language. I remember distinctly that my department head, who was in my classroom to evaluate me, reprimanded me for having my students write down the letters of the alphabet. The message was clear; writing was not an important part of a foreign language classroom, especially in the beginning levels of language study.

Even when I began teaching upper-level Spanish classes such as Advancement Placement and Spanish 5 and 6, I did not have my students do a lot of writing. Instead, I still focused on oral proficiency, and we read a lot of Spanish literature. I distinctly remember one lesson that I consider to be one of the most memorable lessons I ever taught with an advanced class and it did involve writing. The students had read Gabriel García Márquez's short story, *Un día de éstos* ("One of These Days") about a dentist who gets revenge on a patient who had caused others a great deal of suffering. I had my students write in Spanish about having one of those days when things

never seemed to go right. When I read my students' essays I was shocked. I had expected to read typical teenage angst stories about getting an F in math class or breaking up with a boyfriend. Instead, I had one student write about the day he was diagnosed with cancer. Another student wrote about the day her mother died. Another student wrote about his parents' divorce. It was an eye-opening experience, and one my students embraced with few reservations. Not one of them complained about writing that essay. It was an experience that had value to them, and I think they were more open to sharing their experiences because it was through writing.

I wish that I had used that lesson as a model for the rest of my teaching, but I think I viewed this type of writing as something only my advanced students could do. The lower level students did not have the knowledge base to be able to write in Spanish, and I did not see the value of having them write in English.

It was not until I experienced the Writing Project that I began to realize that I was under using (or not using at all) the valuable tool of writing in my classroom. I applied to the Writing Project because, in addition to teaching Spanish that year, I was teaching middle-school language arts for the first time. I realized that I was deficient in my skills as a writing teacher, and I was hoping that the Writing Project would help me improve my teaching of writing.

One of the great things about the Writing Project was that there were teachers from many grade levels and disciplines involved. As I watched various teachers demonstrating writing lessons, I started to realize that I was wrong in thinking that the class would only help me in my language art classes. If math teachers could have writing lessons, why can't Spanish teachers? I also realized that even though I said that I believed in Writing Across the Curriculum, I was

not doing it in my classroom. I came to the conclusion that it did not matter if my Spanish 1 students could not write in Spanish yet. They could write in English, and it would be a meaningful learning experience for them.

One of the scholars I was exposed to during the Writing Project was Bob Broad, author of *What I Really Value*. Broad emphasized the fact that teachers should be analytical about what they value in student's writing. It made me start to think about what I value in students' writing, and I came to the conclusion that I wanted students' writing to be meaningful to them. I wanted them to feel like writing was worthwhile and that it had value.

Another author of interest to me was Nancy Atwell, author *of In The Middle* and *The Reading Zone*. Atwell writes a great deal about how students should be allowed to choose what they read and write about because they write better and more meaningful work when they are allowed to write about what they value. I do not always give students as wide of a variety of choices in their writing as Atwell might like, but I do try to give them assignments that relate to what they value. One of the first assignments I now give my language arts students every year is to make a list of what they value. Then, whenever they get stuck and do not know what to write about, they can refer back to their list. They are always excited and motivated to write about something they value; no writer's block there.

I started to think about how this understanding of writer's values could extend to the Spanish classroom. Certainly, one of the major goals in a foreign language classroom should be to teach about culture, especially in the globalized world that we live in. Teaching about culture is one of the state and national standards for teaching in a foreign language classroom. Our world has become so globalized, and our students

will come into contact with people from many other cultures. In his book, *Intercultural Communication*s, James Neuliep wrote about how knowing about different cultures can have great economic benefits and reduce conflicts. Knowledge about different cultures improves people's ability to communicate effectively with others.

I was inspired by a lesson plan I saw in Barry Lane's book, *A Reviser's Toolbox*, about how to help students see through the eyes of others. Lane wrote about having students take a picture of someone, like Martin Luther King Jr., and imagine how he would feel if he were looking out from the picture at the world that student lives in today. I felt that this was an important lesson because the school I teach at has little diversity. My students have a hard time conceiving how the world can be different outside the community they live in, and they are not very tolerant of differences in others. I first started this lesson with my language arts students when we were reading Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream." These students were a struggling group of readers and were all below their grade level in reading. They were having difficulties understanding the concepts expressed in the speech. I had students take various figures from the Civil Rights Movement, such as Malcolm X, King, and Emmet Till, and write through their eyes. The students wrote wonderful essays. They did not write the stereotypical informative essay about when someone was born or when someone died. They gave so much more information that showed a deeper level of understanding. The students also shared their essays with each other, which led to even more discussion as the students did not always agree with each other. It was a meaningful experience for the students, and led to a deeper understanding of the concepts than may have occurred if I had presented the information in a different way. It made the students think.

I have also used similar assignments with my Spanish students. I like to ask them to place themselves in the culture they are studying and to imagine what life would be like if they were visiting or living in a different place. I love what Paul Gee expressed in his book, *What Video Games have to Teach us about Language and Literacy*. He wrote that when children take on projected identities they learn a new way of looking at and of being in the world. Even though he is specifically talking about the type of learning that occurs when playing video games, his comment can be applied to teaching culture through writing as well. I think that is a valuable skill for students to learn because when they do interact with people from other cultures it will help them be prepared and open to the idea of doing things in a different way.

Certainly, technology is one way that students can learn about culture. Even though some of my students think they will never interact with someone from another culture, they may be doing just that every time they get on the Internet. They have no way of knowing if someone halfway across the world is reading what they are typing in a blog or a wiki. In the future, they may have jobs that require them to work with people from other countries, even if they never meet face to face. I think my brother is a good example of this. He works for a company that writes computer programs. He is the supervisor of a team where some of the employees are in Arizona and California, and some of them are located in India. Even when he does not leave his office, he is working on an international level.

In their book, *Multimodal Composition,* Cynthia Selfe and Gail Hawisher wrote that digital communities span across traditional geopolitical boundaries, and students need to be able to successfully compose in multimodalities. I have had great success with multimodalities by using different types

of technology for my students' writing lessons. It is a way for my students to learn about other cultures that is easily accessible. For example, I have had my students create a blog with pictures where they imagined that they were visiting Puerto Rico for a week. They had to describe what they did each day in their blog. I gave each student a particular city in Puerto Rico. My students were very creative. Some of them wrote from the viewpoint of an animal, such a sea turtle, visiting Puerto Rico. Another student wrote from the perspective of someone solving a mystery that had happened in her city. Another student wrote from the perspective of a protestor complaining about the bombing going on in his area of Puerto Rico. The students then all shared their blogs with each other. I feel that this assignment helped students learn more in-depth information about Puerto Rico than a traditional paper report would have. I have also had students use other types of technology, such as wikis, PowerPoints, and PhotoStories. My students have also created their own websites, which many of them actively maintain, even if they are not required to do so for their class.

I think that incorporating more writing in my class, especially combined with the use of technology, has greatly improved my students' understanding of various Hispanic cultures. Not only are they learning more in depth information, they are retaining their cultural knowledge more than when I did not have them write so much. I can see it reflected in my advanced students. When they find out that my beginning students are studying a particular Spanish country they always have information they remember and can share with them. For example, my Spanish 3 students just finished creating a travel brochure for a Mexican state and I overheard one of them telling a Spanish 1 student that of course Mexico has states. The student then went on to tell the Spanish 1 student

more about his particular state. Maybe sometime in the future my Spanish 3 student will be able to get the business deal he is seeking because he knows Chihuahua is a state, not just a dog!

There is a reason why three of the five national standards for the teaching of foreign language focus on culture. Although most Spanish teachers would like to think that all of our students will go on to be fluent speakers of Spanish, it is just not the case. A school might start with 400 students in Spanish 1 and end up with 50 in Spanish 4. How many of those 50 will even go on to study Spanish in college? How many of those 400 Spanish 1 students will end up in contact with someone from a Spanish culture? Probably all of them.

I think Spanish teachers would do well to incorporate more writing in their classroom, especially for the teaching of culture. It can be intimidating when a person thinks of twenty-one Spanish-speaking countries and the different Hispanic cultures within the United States. That is a lot to teach. Also, with the current economic situation schools find themselves with less money and opportunity to have travel-abroad experiences. Here is where technology can help fill that gap. Most schools (although not all) have access to technology of some sort. There are many different lesson plans that can be done with technology and writing to help students learn about culture. In schools where technology is not so readily available there are still many lesson plans centered on writing that can help teach culture, such as the example I gave about writing through the eyes of others from Barry Lane's book.

I do consider myself a teacher of writing now and I would never go to back to where I was before I started my educational journey at ISU. I am excited about the teaching of writing and I have had the opportunity to share my knowledge with many of my colleagues. Two years ago, I was able to participate in the opening of the school year professional

development for my school district. I gave a presentation about Writing Across the Curriculum, and I felt that my words were really supported by my actions this time! I have helped several of my coworkers use technology and writing with their students. I have also had a great deal of success with co-teaching with our special education teacher as we learn together how successful writing can span across all academic abilities. In addition, I have created two websites. One website is called "Career Writing", and it is for teachers and students to learn about the different types of writing involved in various occupations. My second website is my classroom website where students can participate in weekly assignments and learn about Spanish culture through various modalities. I find that my classroom website is especially active and is being accessed by many people every week. I hope to be able to continue to assist my colleagues in as many ways as possible in the future.

There is one last thing that I would add that makes me realize that I am a teacher of writing. Students at my school, regardless of whether or not they are my Spanish students, my English students, or not in my classroom at all, will constantly come to me to talk about writing. Almost every week, I am asked to read an essay, pick my favorite poem, or critique the ending of a story. These students know that writing is important to me, and they want my opinion because writing is also important to them.

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Tisha Ortega has been a Spanish and English teacher for over 20 years. She currently teaches at a small, rural school in central Illinois. She has a Bachelor's degree in Spanish Education and a Master's degree in English Studies from Illinois State University.

ARE SHORT STORY ASSIGNMENTS THE WRITE STUFF?

MIKE SPRINGSTON

At my first job interview for a teaching position, I was asked to discuss a lesson I had developed during my student teaching internship. I outlined a short story writing assignment worked up for my sophomore class. Traditionally, the Trico High School staff had assigned essays as part of the short story unit. Students could compare and contrast the different stories they read or write an expository composition about one of the authors. With the blessing of my cooperating teacher, I constructed a project that asked students to engage in creative writing.

One of my interviewers, an administrator who had also taught English during her teaching days, curtly stated that students at her school only engaged in formal, academic writing. The school taught to the standards and the classroom focus was squarely on meeting the benchmarks required by

No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Deviation from the MLA format was not part of the curriculum.

There are other reasons high school English teachers shy away from creative writing assignments. Allowing students to write in a less-structured format can produce some incoherent copy. Subject matter preferred by adolescents is often a laborious read for adults used to quality literature produced by professional writers. Teachers also fear the grading process will become more subjective.

Students do need to develop academic writing skills. Aside from scoring well enough on standardized tests to show their schools are making adequate yearly progress, ill-equipped writers struggle mightily when they need to write papers in college. Post-secondary institutions report that incoming freshmen are less prepared than in the past and required more remedial courses in reading, math and writing (Kendall et al. 1). Research papers and essay assignments are necessary bedrocks of any secondary English class, but students also need to master other writing formats.

If a student needs to submit an article for publication in a newspaper, he or she should know how to frontload the submission so that the relevant information is at the top of the story. A cover letter accompanying a job application also requires stylistic skills designed to focus on the writer's attributes. Business e-mails and memos are another genre that puts a premium on clarity, brevity and a professional tone. Effective writing, as championed by authors Steve Graham and Dolores Perin in their book *Writing Next*, does involve familiarizing students with writing in different styles for different audiences:

Writing in schools often focuses on the short essay, including spelling and grammar, rather than on expressing ideas in a variety of written forms. If effective writing requires

mastery of a variety of cognitive processes and must be carried out in multiple contexts for multiple audiences, then educators need substantive directives on how to teach the skills and strategies necessary to make this happen (Coker and Lewis, 235).

The emphasis on academic-oriented compositions over other forms of writing, particularly in teacher training programs, has undermined educator confidence in assigning creative writing projects. Creative writing assignments do not address all of the skill sets that must be utilized in post-secondary writing, but they are effective avenues for honing grammatical competence and giving students a sense of writing for enjoyment.

The use of a short story assignment provides students with a project which emphasizes spelling, sentence structure and grammar while minimizing concerns for citations and other conventions associated with formal academic papers. Emphasizing the use of the various elements of a short story did coincide with the lessons taught during the short story unit, while also providing students with some guidance in this project. The short story assignment also provided a formative assessment related to the overall unit, a focus emphasized in a study of effective New Zealand teachers (Parr and Limbrick 586). The New Zealand teachers gave their students a clear understanding of what constituted a successful writing assignment, and lessons were geared to practices designed to achieve writing goals. In *Writing Next*, Graham and Perin list eleven effective elements of writing instruction. They include writing strategies, summarization, collaborative writing, specific product goals, word processing, sentence combining, prewriting, inquiry activities, process-writing approach, study of models, and writing for content learning (Coker and Lewis 237-38). Giving students a short

story writing assignment after studying a unit that analyzed short stories also provided students with effective models for their assignment.

The Trico students read six short stories prior to their writing assignment. As a result, their assignment had the additional benefit of reinforcing the components of a short story studied earlier in the unit. The grading rubric that accompanied the assignment required students to include the elements of a short story in their submissions. Several of the early drafts omitted some elements, but that contributed to the learning process as the teacher could point out omissions and offer suggestions for improving the stories during the revision process.

Kenny wrote a story about a football game in which he was the main character. The paper was grammatically sound, but the story lacked any dramatic arc. Kenny's team routed their opponent in a one-sided contest that had no climatic moment. The teacher suggested introducing a moment that would give the story a climax. In his revision, Kenny scored a defensive touchdown at the end of the game. The contest was still a one-sided affair, but the touchdown gave the story a sense of culmination that also provided the main character with additional dimensions.

The best revision came from Amanda. This sophomore struggled with grammar, but her first draft also lacked focus. Writing about a troubled child who endured numerous hardships before dying young, Amanda covered 15 years in her main character's life. The seven-page draft was a litany of misfortune endured by her protagonist, with a scarcity of detail. Grammatical errors were also abundant. Despite the story's weaknesses, it was also obvious that Amanda was engaged by this assignment and was willing to do the work necessary to improve her composition.

The teacher made several suggestions. First, Amanda was instructed to focus on a single incident in the protagonist's life and provide greater detail. Some of the grammatical errors in the first draft were retained for an epistle that strengthened the characterization of her protagonist. In the revision, Amanda wrote passages in a standard descriptive format that set up the climatic incident. As the story unfolded, she retained the grammatical errors for inclusion in journal entries written by her main character. The device effectively conveyed the character's personality. By selecting misspelled words and other errors that would be true to her youthful character, Amanda was also more careful in her non-journal passages and committed fewer grammatical mistakes in that portion of the revision.

Building on the teacher's suggestions, Amanda made another change that was entirely her creation. After her protagonist's death, she added one final journal entry written by the main character's stepmother. It gave the resolution additional impact. The assignment gave an unskilled writer who liked to write a chance to demonstrate strengths other teachers had never seen.

As much of a revelation such an assignment can have for the struggling pupil, it can also provide a challenging project to engage gifted students. Jerry was an exemplary student at the top of his class who easily mastered every assignment. Even as a sophomore, he took top honors in WYSE competitions and easily aced every test and writing assignment. But there was always the sense that Jerry already knew most of the material covered in class and was being underserved by a curriculum designed for less-advanced students.

Jerry's first draft contained twelve pages. The story was a well-developed science fiction saga with strong characterizations, exciting action, crisp dialogue and a setting that felt

complete from the opening page. His revision covered twenty-four pages. He was asked to seriously consider submitting the final product to the L. Ron Hubbard Science Fiction Writing Contest, but I suspect what I graded was actually excerpted from Jerry's first novel.

Rachel was another gifted student who wrote an excellent story about a teacher at a one-room schoolhouse who helped a student with learning disabilities. This story also had strong elements of character, plot, theme, mood and setting, but its real strength came from Rachel's remarkable ear for dialogue.

Several of the students struggled with dialogue in their first drafts. Some students even strung several lines of dialogue together in a single paragraph. Rachel wrote one exchange between the teacher and student that demonstrated an exceptional sense of character. The dialogue was so true to character, she did not even have to attribute the speakers:

"Wendall?'

"I've been studying…"

"Yes, I know. I know—you try. You try very hard, much more than the other students."

"But I still ain't no good."

"Don't say ain't, say aren't, and you <u>are</u> good."

"No I'm not! Everybody always lies to me to make me feel better, but I don't!"

After identifying some common weaknesses other students made in their first draft submissions, the teacher used Rachel's passage as an example of how to write dialogue. Rachel's use of grammar made the speakers easily identifiable and reinforced the personalities of Wendall and the teacher.

Passages from the short stories read by the class could also provide helpful models for student writers. One advantage with attaching this assignment to a short story unit is that the students have already been exposed to preferred practices.

Students can also draw inspiration from those models.

This same assignment was given when the junior class had their short story unit. Levi's story was influenced by "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge." His modern take on the story centered around two teenagers who crash a vehicle after a police chase, but his twist ending was an homage to Ambrose Bierce's short story.

The freedom to select the subject matter for their short stories allows students to engage in learning at the highest level. Creating their own world puts them at the top of the Bloom's Taxonomy pyramid. The level of engagement is also bolstered by the chance to practice authentic writing. Jerry may not live on another planet and Rachel never studied in a one-room schoolhouse, but Amanda, Kenny, and Levi all explored subject matter that was relevant to their everyday lives. In an article on authentic reading, author John Gaughan said students have an easier time connecting to literature if they can make a connection to their own lives (44). Authentic writing has a similar cachet with students. The attitude they display toward personal work can pay additional benefits for teachers.

For many writing assignments, students fail to make full use of the revision process. Oftentimes, student writers will correct mistakes and pay scant attention to any significant reworking of the composition. As Amanda demonstrated with her short story, students will undertake major revisions if the project is meaningful to them. English teachers know the value of revision, but student writers are often too undisciplined to make more than cursory changes on later drafts. The short story assignment is an excellent vehicle for demonstrating the value of revision in the writing process.

A key element in developing a short story writing assignment is constructing a rubric that outlines the purpose of the project. In this assignment, surface error categories such

as spelling and sentence structure constituted one-third of the total grade. Content and organization were also graded elements. Since the assignment was part of a short story unit, students were also graded on their use of short story elements. A final portion of the grading rubric was the submission of a first draft. To emphasize the importance of revision, the draft submission needs to carry weight in the final grade.

	A Paper	B Paper	C Paper	D Paper	F Paper	Points
Spelling	No spelling errors.	1-2 spelling errors.	3-4 spelling errors.	5-6 errors.	7 or more spelling errors.	
Sentence Structure	Sentences grammatically correct and varied.	1-2 sentence structure errors with some variety.	3-4 sentence structure errors with no variety.	5-6 sentence structure errors.	7 or more sentence structure errors.	
Short Story Elements	Uses all 7 Short Story Elements.	Uses 6 Short Story Elements.	Uses 5 Short Story Elements.	Uses 4 Short Story Elements.	Uses 3 or fewer Short story Elements.	
Organization	Story arc progresses from beginning to conflict/climax and then resolution.	Progress of story lacks or misplaces beginning, conflict, climax or resolution.	Lacks or misplaces 2 organization elements.	Lacks or misplaces 3 organization elements.	Story arc crashes and burns.	
Rough Draft	3 or more pages by deadline.	2-3 pages by deadline.	2 pages by deadline	2 pages & 1 day late	Less than two pages or more than 1 day late	

Content	Clever plot, believable characters and generally well-written.	Good plot and characters, but not as well-written as A paper.	Adequate plot and character development.	Sketchy plot and character development.	"Jersey Shore" is better than this.	
Points	54–60	48–53	42–47	36–41	0–35	

The rubric also helps teachers identify comfortable grading elements and minimize concern that subjectivity may become too great a factor in the final grade. Even teachers who consider science fiction to be a low-end fiction genre would be able to recognize and reward a gifted student such as Jerry for his writing skills, sense of organization, and incorporation of short story elements.

Teachers are not alone in feeling creative writing projects are outside their comfort level. Most of the students in these two classes were enthusiastic about the project, but some are reluctant to expose weaknesses—particularly underdeveloped ones such as creativity. A convenient safety net for these students was an alternative project to write a compare-and-contrast essay about two of the short stories read in the unit. One sophomore student wrote the essay. For the majority of the students, however, the short story was their most ambitious undertaking. The assignment did have a minimum page requirement (three pages for the sophomores and four pages for the juniors), but two-thirds of the submissions exceeded five pages in length. Students tended to write until their stories were told.

Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has begun dismantling NCLB, so the emphasis on "teaching to the test" should lessen in the near future. When teachers are again able to more fully define what constitutes adequate yearly progress in their classrooms, they should enjoy a sense of liberation

that encourages them to design curriculum that allows for a larger teaching toolbox. Hopefully, creative writing will enjoy a greater presence in more English classrooms.

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Mike Springston is a 2011 Master of Arts in Teaching (Secondary Education-English) graduate from Southern Illinois University Carbondale. After a 32-year career as a journalist, he hopes to teach high-school English.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS TO THE *ILLINOIS ENGLISH BULLETIN*

As the written forum in which Illinois English teachers share their ideas, the *Illinois English Bulletin* welcomes all kinds of materials related to the teaching of English.

We seek articles dealing with literature, writing, language, media, speech, drama, film, culture, technology, standards, assessment, professional development, and other aspects of our profession. Any combination of research, theory, and practice is appropriate. Some articles take a formal and conclusive approach, while others are informal and exploratory.

Book reviews, poetry, black-and-white photographs, and line drawings are also welcome.

When you are ready to share your work with your colleagues across the state, please consult the submission guidelines on page 168. We look forward to hearing from you. If you have questions or suggestions for the editor, please don't hesitate to get in touch (contact information on page 170).

Thank you for reading, supporting, and contributing to the *Illinois English Bulletin*.

Submission Guidelines

(See page 170 for the editor's contact information.)

- Via U.S. mail, send one clean, paper copy of the manuscript to the editor. See below for manuscript formatting guidelines and information to include in your cover letter.
- Attached to an e-mail message addressed to the editor, send an additional copy of the manuscript in an MS Word or PDF attachment. See below for manuscript formatting guidelines and information you should include in your e-mail message.
- In your cover letter (mailed with hard copy) and in your e-mail message (with electronic copy attached), include the following information: your manuscript title, name, mailing address, institutional affiliation, and phone number. Also indicate whether you are currently a member of the Illinois Association of Teachers of English (IATE). State that the manuscript has not been published or submitted elsewhere.
- Manuscript formatting guidelines: follow the current *MLA Handbook* guidelines for parenthetical in-text citations, the works cited section, and other technical elements; follow NCTE's "Guidelines for Gender-Fair Use of Language"; place page numbers at the top right corner of every page; type and double-space throughout (including quotations, endnotes, and works cited), with one-inch margins all around.

- With both your paper and electronic manuscript submissions, please also include a biographical blurb of 50 words or fewer. (Blurbs for manuscripts with multiple authors should total 50 words or fewer.) Blurbs usually mention institutional and professional affiliations as well as teaching and research interests.
- The *Bulletin* editor will acknowledge receipt of your manuscript via e-mail.

Submission Deadlines

You are welcome to submit your materials at any time to the editor of the *Illinois English Bulletin*. Traditionally, the *Bulletin*'s spring issue features shorter articles based on presentations made at the previous autumn's IATE annual conference. Summer issues may be themed or all-inclusive. The fall issue presents the "Best Illinois Student Poetry and Prose." The winter issue is the program for our annual IATE fall conference.

To be considered for inclusion in the spring issue, materials must be received by the editors by the previous November 1.

To be considered for inclusion in the summer issue, materials must be received by the editors by the previous January 15.

To be considered for inclusion in the fall issue ("Best Illinois Student Poetry and Prose"), materials must be mailed to the special editor for that issue and postmarked by the previous January 31. Please see page 171 for the two-page special submission guidelines and contact information for fall issues and page 173 for the required enclosure. Please note that as of 2005, the poet laureate of Illinois will designate several of the poems selected for publication in the *Bulletin* as "Poems

of Exceptional Merit." These poems will be identified in a message written by the poet laureate and published in this issue of the *Bulletin*. The poets will receive a certificate from the poet laureate in the U.S. mail.

Editor's Contact Information

U.S. mail: Janice Neuleib, Editor
Illinois English Bulletin
Illinois State University
Campus Box 4240
Normal, IL 61790-4240
E-mail: jneuleib@ilstu.edu
Telephone: (309) 438-7858

CALL FOR STUDENT WRITING FROM ALL LEVELS FOR IATE'S BEST ILLINOIS POETRY AND PROSE CONTEST

DEADLINE: Postmarked no later than January 31, 2013.

FORMAT: Typed copy is preferred. $8^{1/2}$ x 11 paper is mandatory (one side only). Copy must be clear, legible, and carefully proofread, and must not include drawings or illustrations.

LABELING: Each entry must be accompanied by its own cover sheet stapled to the entry, which states:

- Full name of student
- Student's grade level at time piece was written
- Full name of school
- School's complete mailing address
- Full name of teacher (indicate if IATE member)
- Email address of instructor

IMPORTANT: The student's name, the school's name, and the teacher's name must not appear anywhere else.

LIMITS:
1) Five prose and ten poetry entries per teacher.
2) One thousand words of prose per entry; forty lines of poetry per entry.

SOME SUGGESTIONS FROM THE JUDGES:
1) Please see that students abide by the line and word limits. Have them revise and shorten pieces that exceed these limits.
2) Please emphasize to students that prose and fiction are not synonymous. Encourage them to explore the possibilities of expository essays, arguments, and personal narratives.

REQUIRED ENCLOSURE FOR STUDENT
POETRY AND PROSE ENTRIES

When submitting manuscripts, include a signed statement to read:

To the best of my knowledge, the enclosed manuscripts were written by the students whose names they bear. I have submitted work by the following students (give complete list of students represented):

_____ _____ _____

(Name) (Title) (Grade)

_____ _____

(School) (Instructor's Email)

_____

(Teacher's Signature)

MAILING: Send prose to: IATE Prose Contest
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Illinois Valley Community College
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Oglesby, IL 61348-9692

Send poetry to: IATE Poetry Contest
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