,A WRITING PROCESS HANDBOOK

FOR ELEVENTH GRADE ENGLISH TEACHERS,

MASTER'S PROJECT

Submitted to the School of Education

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Master of Science in Education

by

Cheryl A. Besozzi

School of Education

University of Dayton

Dayton, Ohio

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Approved by:

Official Advisor

THIS PROJECT IS DEDICATED TO MY HUSBAND-

DOUGLAS, MY DAUGHTERS- BRANDI AND TIFFANY,

AND MY PARENTS- MARY JEAN AND WAYNE ADAMS;

FOR WITHOUT THEIR SUPPORT, I WOULD NOT HAVE

BEEN ABLE TO TO COMPLETE THIS PROJECT.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

Educators, community and parents, businessmen, the media, and politicians have all cited the need and strengthened the pressure for increased emphasis on composition. Critical thinking and written communication of ideas are vital skills in today's competitive and rapidly changing world. According to Benjamin DeMott (1990) reading and writing are crucial in maintaining democracy today. He cites the changes in Russia and Eastern Europe and the memories and ideals of truth and freedom that--through the written word--survived decades of repression. DeMott writes of the importance of reading and writing.

> We write and read in order to know each other's
> responses, to connect ourselves more fully with
> the human world, and to strengthen the habit of
> truth-telling in our midst. No national resource
> is more precious--more essential to our promise
> and our true security than the habit. (p. 23)

Major text book companies have increased their emphasis on composition and have included the process approach to writing. Heath (1988), Houghton Mifflin (1990), Prentice-Hall (1990), and Harcourt Brace Jovanovich (1988) have made composition a major

component in their texts, generating a vast amount of teacher/student aids to enhance the learning and teaching of the writing process.

Statement of the Problem

Composition is a learned skill that is necessary for achieving effective written communication. This skill can be heightened and strengthened through the use of a writing process.

Purpose of the Project

Having taught composition for 18 years and having worked on teacher committees dealing with developing curriculum, establishing pupil performance objectives, evolving writing process procedures and grading rubrics, the project writer has seen not only many changes in the emphasis on composition, but also the need for those changes as well as the effects of those changes.

The purpose of this project is to develop a writing process handbook specifically designed for use with eleventh grade, non-college preparatory students. The handbook will provide instructions and advice to the teacher on how to guide students through the writing process and how to use peer response groups within the classroom.

Scope of the Project

This project will involve an eleventh grade, non-college preparatory English class in a small, rural

school in eastern Ohio. The handbook will be used with these students during the 1991-1992 school year.

Definition of Terms

<u>Non-college preparatory</u>- students who are not in the college preparatory class established for eleventh grade English students. These students have voluntarily chosen this class instead of college preparatory English.

<u>Effective written communication</u>- written communication that is acceptable by standards set by the Ninth Grade Proficiency Test and the Tenth Grade Composition Competency Test.

<u>Writing process</u>- step-by-step procedures for writing compositions as outlined in the handbook

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Many skills are needed to learn to write
effectively; therefore, a variety of skills and steps
are involved in the writing process. Not only were
those skills (prewiting, drafting, editing, revision,
and postwriting review) dealt with in the following
articles, but all the skills were also implemented
within the classroom using peer groups, sharing
procedures, or teacher/student conferences.

The recursive writing process of generating ideas,
drafting, editing/evaluating, revising, and
proofreading, extends to all writers and all levels of
writing. Often as teachers, we have fulfilled the role
of instructor, assigner, and evaluator, but not that of
WRITER. Margie Krest (1990) as a published author in
English Journal applied her experiences and revelations
as a writer to the situation of student writers in her
classroom. Being in the situation of having to use the
writing process herself, she gained a new perspective
in helping her students. Krest found that in order to
make writing worthwhile, she needed an individualized
audience and purpose rather than ones that had been
assigned. Freedman (1987) also recognized that
students needed to feel personal ownership of their

writing--a reason to write that extended beyond teacher assignment and grading; consequently, they would feel ownership when they could select their own audience and purpose. The revision process also gained new perspective when seen through Krest's own experience; revision surpassed mechanics and rewording and focused more upon lack of purpose and missing issues. Transferring her experiences to the classroom, Krest became less directive during the revision process and encouraged students to "re-see their own papers so that they need not rely on me" (p. 23). Students should select their own revision strategies not be forced to work with rigid rules imposed by the teacher.

The writer agrees that students do write more willingly and usually better when they can select or identify with the topics, audiences, and purposes they employ in their composition. In the realistic classroom, situations arise when students need to learn to write a particular type of essay; their personal choices may be limited here. Students in non-college preparatory classes often need more assistance in selecting topics, audiences, and purposes because their scope of experiences and background knowledge may be narrower than that of other students.

Establishing topics, audiences, and purposes has become an essential component in the prewriting process. In working with remedial students, Susan

Abbott (1989) found that talking out their writing
ideas became a valuable prewriting tool for these
students; therefore, she strove to connect their
talking with the writing process. At first, the peer
groups established for brainstorming ideas seemed,
according to the teacher's logs, to be contributing
more noise than progress to the prewriting process.
Upon continuing the logs and taping the student
interaction within the peer groups, Abbott discovered
that the "noise" actually represented effective
prewriting. "I no longer hear just noise, but I
recognize it as a talking out of ideas that has become
essential in their writing processes" (p. 50). The
students paired up and told their partners what they
were writing about and how they would accomplish the
final product; the listener would then paraphrase what
had been said. After repeatedly using this process,
Abbott surveyed the class, discovering that, "The
students overwhelmingly felt that they did well on the
essay and that it was easy for them to write" (p. 50).
Discussing their ideas and taping and listening to
these discussions induced the students to select and
better defend ideas, thereby improving their writing.

     The emphasis Abbott placed upon the use of peer
groups provided novel ideas for implementing peer
groups in both the classroom and in a writing process
handbook. Many of the students could verbally explain

their ideas well, but faltered when they attempted to commit the ideas to paper in an organized and competent manner. Perhaps Abbott's method of prewriting through talking out ideas has aided in bridging this gap between oral and written communication. Although the time element could be a problem considering the time needed for discussions, paraphrasing, taping, and evalauating tapes, the writer feels that if the introduction of Abbott's process to the classroom could effectively advance the students' writing efforts, then the time would be well spent. Abbott maintained a research log of her project and surveyed her students concerning their opinions of the effectiveness of using this procedure. The class overwhelmingly supported the use of the talking-out prewriting procedure and furthermore felt more positive and became less hesitant about writing. While removing hesitancy about writing, developing positive attitudes about written communication, and encouraging a consistent and ongoing prewriting stage in composition were beneficial components of the writing class and might have been effective results of the procedures used, further research could offer proof that the talking-out prewriting was the definite cause of better writing.

Carolyn Boiarsky (1982) listed four stages of prewriting:

1. The writer participates in an event.

2. The writer gives meaning to the event.
3. The writer selects an angle for
   communicating the event's meaning.
4. The writer develops an organizational
   structure based on the angle to design
   an effective piece of written discourse
   (p. 44)

She maintained that the second and third stages have

received comparatively little time in the classroom,

that teachers need to lead students through giving

their own meaning to an event based upon their own

individualized reactions--not what the teacher wants as

a response. The students should be required to employ

their own responses and interpretations, to consider

differing viewpoints, to recognize weaknesses and

ambiguities in their reasoning, and to research

further. Brainstorming, then delaying discussions

until the students could develop more interpretations,

or even writing the prewrite and rough draft, then

delaying further work on the project--according to

Boiarsky--could increase students' abilities to

recognize and incorporate their interpretations in

their work. Having accomplished Step 2, students would

then be able to facilitate Step 3 and not only

recognize a variety of perspectives from which to view

their experience, but also be able to choose the best

one for the most effective communication of their

thoughts. Boiarsky concluded by cautioning against

forcing too many structures in teaching compostion and

drilling with the five-paragraph theme format and

therefore stifling motivation. Prewriting should allow students to recognize and select choices in writing.

As with Nunnally (1991) who also cautioned against over-use of the five-paragraph theme format, Boiarsky teaches at the university level. The writer argrees that interpretation of ideas and then communication of these interpretatons are essential to successful writing. Prewriting is imperative to good composition development, but on a high school level, especially non-college preparatory, organizational structure is a necessity. While interpretation and communication are essential, they must be developed within an organized structure in order for today's Ohio students to succeed within the bounds of state-mandated testing and teacher accountability. Prewriting may engender a veritable fountain of ideas, expressions, and interpretations; it should--that is its purpose. Further stages of the writing process must organize this data.

Gloria Neubert and Sally McNelis (1986) in "Improving Writing in the Disciplines" discussed implementing the Writing Response Group and using the Praise-Question-Polish Technique (PQP) in the writing process. They further reinforced the accepted writing process involving prewriting, drafting, editing and revision. The purpose of Writing Response Groups was to provide students during the revision process with peer feedback concerning strengths and weaknesses of

their work. Groups of two to five students could learn the PQP process through the fishbowl demonstration wherein the teacher and a few prompted students role-played a PQP session.

To give the students a focus for their revision suggestions, the teacher should develop focus questions based upon the instruction that took place prior to writing the assignment. These questions should enable students to focus on a limited number of aspects and to look for revisions beyond grammar and mechanics. In conducting the process, Neubert and McNelis had students in each group take turns being the focused writer who read his work aloud while the others responded--ideally each with his own copy of the reader's writing. Neubert and McNelis commented, "This oral reading allowed the reader to hear the material in a different 'voice' and to recognize where the changes would be appropriate" (p. 57). After the author then examined his own writing silently and the peer responders used the PQP form, the responders then orally shared with the writer their comments. While the writer was encouraged to be open minded, the group was taught to begin with praise first, then to follow with questions and with polish. The student writer was then given the written comments to use during revision.

Neubert and McNelis reinforced the importance of both the writing process and the writing response

groups--both of which would be essential components of this writing process handbook. The peer responders needed to be focused in order to respond within the Praise-Question-Polish response structure. For many years students have been encouraged to read their essays aloud when revising and looking for mistakes. While this article reinforced the use of oral reading of compositions, implementation of the process within a classroom might be difficult due to time and class size. The writer feels that statistical results showing effects on writing progress due to implementation of the authors' ideas would have strengthened the article.

Although peer groups can be implemented throughout the writing process, they could be especially advantageous when used in revision. One problem that often arose when using peer response groups for revision concerned deriving specific suggestions from the peer responder. In "Peer Response: Teaching Specific Revision Suggestions" Neubert and McNelis (1990) wrote about improving upon their organizational technique of Praise-Question-Polish (PQP) in order to aid students in focusing on the revision process. Students responded in three categories, telling what they found good, what they did not understand, and what they specifically suggested for improvements. The process was introduced to the class through a role

playing session in which the teacher and three students rehearsed and performed in order to acquaint the students with the PQP procedure. Once the program was implemented, an analysis of transcripts of audiotapes of the sessions showed responses falling into three categories. Neubert and McNelis (1990, pp. 53-54) stated, "Our results revealed that only 28 per cent of our students' comments were 'specific' comments, 53 per cent were 'general but useful,' and 19 per cent were 'vague.'"

To generate more specific responses, the teacher conducted class sessions based on studying peer responses via the overhead projector. Students then broke into small groups who explained "why each example was 'effective' or 'not effective' in the light of generalizations derived from the previous class activity" (Neubert & McNelis, 1990, p. 54). Each student then chose three responses and made them more specific. Follow-up required the entire class reviewing the specific responses and then using the peer response activity with a new writing assignment. The results of the study showed that after the instructions, "the 'specific' comments rose to 42% of the comments, 'vague' comments dropped to 14%, and 'general but somewhat useful' to 44%" (p. 56). Following the next assignment and response, "'specific' comments were up to 60%, 'general but somewhat useful'

down to 34%, and 'vague' comments down to only 6%'" (p. 56).

In using peer response groups in classes during the 1990-1991 school year, the writer has found that many of the peer responses were vague or general; the study by Neubert and McNelis (1990) offered concrete ideas for training students to develop more specific responses. The PQT technique offered praise, asked questions, and suggested revision. When students discovered mistakes and could offer specific corrections for them, their learning and their writing ability increased. The PQP technique will be implemented within the composition handbook because it will encourage as well as enable students to make specific revision suggestions.

Gerry Sultan (1988) also dealt with using peer response groups to aid students in revising their compositions. The student population was 95 percent black, living in rural Mississippi, with 70 percent having mothers with less than a high school education. These students would soon be taking a statewide basic skills test as well as a functional literacy exam which would contain a direct writing sample. Sultan did not include grammar, workbook review of skills, or revision following teacher evaluation. Instruction was done individually within in peer response groups. Test results of the students' composition skills showed 44

of the 47 eleventh graders passing the direct writing sample of the BSAP and FLE--a 93.5 percent success rate compared with statewide results of 46 percent of black students failing the FLE.

Despite successful test results and improved composition skills within the classroom, actual revision skills did not show a marked increase. From taped conversations within the response groups, the author learned that peer comments aided the students either in better composing the first draft or in implementing improvements in the next assignment. Based upon the test scores and the improvement of writing skills, Sultan concluded that the peer response groups had been successful in producing a type of revision that aided the students.

Three major factors in this article were of special interest: the use of peer response groups, the attempt to make revision a consistent element within the writing process, and the application of these methods among basic level students. Although revision between first and final drafts did not show marked improvement, according to the article, a type of revision did take place while the students were writing or were assisting one another. Furthermore, peer suggestions that may not have been applied between the first and final drafts were applied to the next composition. Once again, sessions were taped, thereby

enabling the teacher to be aware of what was taking place in all situations. Additionally, individual instruction and intervention can be extremely effective with basic level students, and this teacher was able to implement this.

Although some of the ideas purported in this article were sound, the writr feels some seemed to be rather discordant. While teacher evaluation of writing projects and the results of the statewide basic skills test and the functional literacy exam showed gains in writing skills, one of the stated purposes of the plan was not fulfilled. The teacher was not able to show measurable improvement in the students' actual use of revision within the writing process. Considering the importance of students learning to revise first drafts (beyond mechanics and neatness), it was disappointing that the teacher could not show gains in this area. Also, "basic level" can also be a very generic term for a rather wide spectrum of ability levels.

Journals and self-evaluation were integral parts of B. Dawn Latta's (1991) "In-Process and Retrospective Journals: Putting Writers Back in Writing Processes." While the writing process has become the "hub" of many composition classes and writing workshops, it has during some of its implementation become a linear process rather than the recursive process it was intended to be. Rather than a process the student was

involved in and used to further evolve his writing abilities, it became, in some instances, merely a set of steps students performed based upon teacher instructions. Latta recommended the use of In-Process and Retrospective Journals composed of a series of questions which guided the student writer through a self-evaluation. The purpose of the In-Process Journal was to supply prompts that would help the student brainstorm ideas and techniques as well as motivate him to write, to evaluate, and to revise. In a like manner the Retrospective prompted self-evaluation, but after the writing process had been completed. The student turned this in with the final draft, allowing the teacher to read the Retrospective Journal before reading the final draft.

The primary aim of the writing process is to enable students to develop ideas better, to write about them, then to evaluate and revise their writing. Latta's In-Process and Retrospective Journals intimately involved the student writer in the writing process by posing questions which forced the writer to "think" about what ideas were being written upon the paper--to originate and develop the ideas on his own. The journal questions both prompted students to develop their own ideas and also persuaded students to reflect upon what had been written. Classroom implementation of these journals especially aided students who were

underchievers because the questions impelled the students to think about what they were writing and then to respond. As a disadvantage, time--particularly for the teacher--might have been an inhibiting factor with the use of this process which added more work for composition teachers already overwhelmed with their paper load. Realistically, teachers must turn in grades--in some school districts a suggested number per grading period; the article did not state if these special journals were to be a part of the grading process. The value and need for students to have personal purpose for writing was also discussed in articles by Freedman (1987) and Krest (1990).

Self and peer evaluation will be integral components of the writing process proposed in this project. Jeffrey Schwartz (1991) used student self-assessment as a pivotal exercise in his English classroom with students ranging in ability levels from remedial to advanced. Evaluation--grading--should not be seen as a mysterious process but one that involved students and enabled them to become independent learners. According to Schwartz, being a part of the assessment process allowed students to see their progress more clearly, something especially helpful with students having weaker abilities and low self-confidence. Compositions were peer evaluated with peer evaluators being required to identify both the

single strongest area and the one most in need of
improvement. First modeling responses in a large group
situation, students moved on to small peer groups.
Response sheets accompanied final products when they
were handed in, along with a cover sheet composed of
questions "to reinforce self-awareness of process and
to make judgements of strength and weakness" (Schwartz,
1990, p. 69). Midterm exams centered around an inquiry
of strengths and weaknesses and an analysis of their
writing. After sharing the responsibilities of an
evaluator, the students published a book including
their work, giving them further experience in analysis
and evaluation.

Schwartz (1990) also reinforced the importance and
value of the writing process--particularly evaluation.
His students learned to analyze and evaluate their own
work as well as that of others, thereby enlarging their
self-awareness and ability to recognize composition
problems and revising them. The writer feels that the
author's work was especially significant in that he
developed a meeans to get students more involved in the
writing process, specifically in analysis and
evaluation of writing. Non-college preparatory
students sometimes have especially needed to learn to
evaluate on their own, to see mistakes, to improve and
add to their self-confidence. Having students actively

involved on this level of thinking and working would
enhance all that they did in high school and beyond.

Before Schwartz (1991) wrote of the importance of
student involvement in evaluation, Bonnie McAnerny
(1989) also placed emphasis on evaluation as she
incorporated evaluation in her "Super Assignment for
Seniors." Students in her senior level English
literature class had to teach a class, thereby
incorporating speaking, reading, writing, and listening
skills. Students were required to select and research
an English author from a provided list and give an oral
presentation on which the students assigned a short
composition project. The students then collected and
graded these compositions. While students daily
practiced skills of speaking, listening, writing, they
also had to devise a worthwhile and effective
composition assignment that they would then evaluate.
According to McAnerny, the students found the
evaluation to be the most difficult task. They
encountered the everyday problems of composition
teachers: illegible handwriting; errors in mechanics,
usage, and grammar; as well as errors in composition
skills. As with Schwartz (1991), McAnerny (1989)
required both a positive and a critical comment on
the peer evaluation. Student responses to the
assignment included "criticism from classmates really

helped my writing" and "the grading really made me realize how important proofreading is" (p. 61).

The implementation and results of this study further accentuated the importance of student involvement in self and peer evaluation. Students seemed to learn more readily and willingly from peer comments and self-realization than from teacher comments. The program has been adapted for other classes, and although results and comments were not included in the article, McAnerny commented that the program had found success in other classes. The writer feels this program might adapt well to eleventh grade non-college preparatory students. Assignments could be made in material on their academic level, thereby focusing on their need to develop and to enhance the communication skills--as well as the composition and evaluation skills--employed in this project.

After writing has been drafted and revised, it must be edited for errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics. Theresa M. Steinlage (1990) suggested using peer response groups to enable students to edit their revised drafts before publishing. She wanted to improve their use of conventions without having the students memorize and practice rules of conventions. Instead of using the school-provided "Grammar Trak" charts to track student errors, Ms. Steinlage gave the students the charts to enable them to record and

analyze error patterns. Students who were given a list of common errors and textbook reference pages also wrote in their daily journals why they felt they had made the errors. Ms. Steinlage equipped a section of the classroom to be used as an editing corner. Then each week the class revised drafts ready for publication with the drafts passing through each editing group, each group having a mix of students who were "expert" or "weak" in differing areas. The number of editing questions asked of the teacher were reduced through this process, allowing the students to accept more responsibility for their own editing.

Editing was a significant part of this writing process, and Ms. Steinlage seemingly found a method to make it student rather than teacher focused. No statistics were given to show that the number of editing mistakes was significantly reduced after implementation of this method. She mentioned one student who was a poor speller and improved when no spelling mistakes were counted against her. Although the method worked and might, in part, be implemented in any level, one might question its effectiveness with students working on the basic level.

In "Where Does the Teacher Intervene with Underachieving Writers" Belinda Shade Mc Guire (1990) also dealt with eleventh grade underachieving students. Her class of 21 students ranged widely in academic

abilities as well as home and racial backgrounds. Her
students had "anti-academic values and a basic distrust
of schools in general" (15). Characterization of them
as underachievers included primitive and underdeveloped
writing skills, problems with communication skills,
short attention spans, and simplistic thinking along
with resistance to new ideas. Mc Guire developed her
own Maslow-type hierarchy of writing needs beginning
with establishing a trusted environment, student
self-control, and willingness to try. Dialogue
journals covering almost any topic and demanding
personal and individual teacher response successfully
established these conditions and improved writing
skills. Through the dialogue in the journal, the
teacher asked the students for self-evaluation.
Writing happened every day; the attitudes toward
writing improved; and failures decreased.

Also concerned with the teacher's involvement was
Valerie Johnstone (1990), who discussed the teacher's
role in the students' revising and editing steps in the
writing process and editing steps in the writing
process. Her strategies, which were implemented in
reading and writing workshops conducted for eleventh
grade classes, were used in order to give writers the
specific feedback they needed in order to revise their
papers. Johnstone developed the process to aid
students who needed more specific feedback than

classtime allowed; she wrote back within 24 hours but did not grade the papers. Students chose from three options: "write back/respond, edit, answer a specific question about the piece" (p. 57). The students then revised papers according to the teacher's comments and/or questions.

Using the write-back/response option, Johnstone (1980) restated what she thought the student had said and asked questions about the piece. Students often used these ideas to clarify the assignment and their handling of it. The 24-hour limit maintained student ownership of the piece, and there was no limit to the number of times this option could be exercised. The edit option was concerned more with grammar, usage, and mechanics. Students who kept all copies, revisions, and comments, could use, modify, or ignore the revision comments of the teacher.

Considering the extreme importance of revision as a part of the writing process, teacher comments could be a very valuable part of that revision. While specific comments—not grades—from the teacher might have been an ideal way to encourage students to revise effectively, one might question the use of the teacher's time. The most work Johnstone ever took home was 15 papers; the writer questions if these were from one class exclusively, or would it be possible to have 15 papers from each of several classes? The author

gave no details as to how many classes in which this
method was implemented. If the time factor could be
managed so that already overloaded composition teachers
were not burdened even more, the write-back method
seemed to be an excellent way to communicate with and
enable students to revise their work in a more
beneficial manner.

Having graded and returned the written assignment,
the classroom teacher has witnessed a wide range of
student reactions to the graded assignments--from
checking the grade and tossing the paper into the waste
basket to intense perusal of the paper and its
comments. To complete the learning process involved
with a composition assignment and to transfer this
learning to the next writing assignment, the students
needed to seriously consider their performance in light
of the teacher comments on the returned paper. Gail
Reisin (1990) introduced cooperative learning
procedures into her class of at-risk seniors. She
observed that the students seemed very animated in
working with one another on group projects and group
tests. The cooperative methods "shifted emphasis from
the teacher's performance to the student's performance"
(p. 62). Reisin applied her methods of peer sharing to
an advanced placement English class wherein she
extended the procedures to the sharing of graded
papers. After returning graded papers, she discussed

general observations concerning the papers then
required students to read and respond to the graded
papers of their peers. Students signed declarations
that they had, indeed, read the three graded papers and
the teacher's comments. Reisin commented (1990) "that
a peer's paper which handled the material successfully
would show much more than I could explain" (p. 63).
She also felt those with excellent papers would be
interested in seeing comparable papers. At the end of
the year, 27 of 30 students offered positive comments
about the process. While Reisin found success
implementing this procedure in her AP English class,
she rhetorically questioned its adaptability to classes
with a wide range of abilities, but suggested that,
based on student feedback, the process might be
adapted.

Having watched many students hurriedly look at
their grades, thrust the paper into a book or tablet,
and then make exactly the same mistakes on the next
assignment, the writer was encouraged to discover a
procedure that might incite a second look at returned
papers. The author did not claim that this process
improved writing, but that it improved sharing among
class members. While this was fine for an AP class, or
perhaps any class, hopefully the procedure could be
used to cement within the writing process another
step--that of the student seriously perusing and

evaluating student performance and teacher comments on returned papers.

While peer response groups have been implemented, tested and researched, individual student responsibility for writing has, of course, remained ultimately with the student. With theme organization as a vital segment of this writing process, Thomas Nunnally (1991) discussed what he saw as a need to break away from the standrd five-paragraph (FPT) theme used in many English classes. He did not dispute the effectiveness of implementing the FPT in order to develop better structure and organization within student essays, but debated the issue of how the students view the FPT and how the teachers have helped to evolve that attitude. Nunnally and his colleagues standardized this procedure in their own junior college classes so that their students would be better prepared to pass the basic literacy test required by the University System of Georgia; they found success with the FPT as their students' scores placed them in the top five to seven of thirty schools.

Observing college freshmen over the last decade, Nunnally (1991) discovered "that the FPT is a national phenomenon" (p. 68). The problem, according to Nunnally, existed not in the FPT but in the students' perceptions of it; being bound by the structure of the FPT would suppress creativity and expansion of ideas

and would force formula writing. While he recognized the value of the FPT, Nunnally would like to see it used as a means, not an end, in teaching composition.

Expanding ideas beyond the three required in the FPT and developing creativity could be stifled by the structure of the five-paragraph theme. While strict enforcement of the FPT might possibly harm the expression of creativity of the expansion of ideas, the writer feels that its use at the high school level can not be over-emphasized. High school teachers have been overwhelmed with criticsm for not teaching effective composition skills. The FPT essay format had allowed English teachers to aid their students in developing necessary organizational skills--necessary for future college classes, for composition competency tests, for Ohio's Ninth Grade Proficiency Test, for effective communication in society and the business world, and for survival in today's world of proficiency, accountability, and testing.

A study of successful teachrs and their students conducted by Sarah W. Freedman (1987) provided a basis for Krest's (1990) emphasis on the importance and value of student ownership of writing. Freedman wanted to determine both the emphasis of successful writing teachers and the reactions of their students. Participants were selected on the basis of 560 teacher surveys, 715 students surveys, and recommendations from

116 site directors of the National Writing Project.
Results showed these successful teachers had students
write primarily to aid them in learning to think for
themselves, thereby feeling more personal interest and
ownership connected with their writing. They developed
and encouraged critical thinkers, who, through their
writing, could comment on personal experiences and
thoughts about what they were learning. The survey
showed that while the teachers de-emphasized grading
and placed more importance upon in-process response,
their students placed primary importance upon teacher
response to finished projects rather than in-process
writing. Both groups agreed that discussions of topics
and ideas were very helpful. In summary, the study saw
importance in the following: individualized
instruction, teachers as responders, discussion of
composition topics and ideas. The study also
recognized the constraints of the required grading and
lack of time within the normal school day.
Recommendations included use of student portfolios,
submission of work to contests, use of written work in
school publications, computer writing exchanges,
dialogue journals, and writing logs.

　　　Even with those who have been determined as
"successful" writing teachers, student perception of
the importance of writing, according to the author,
seemed to be based upon grades--not learning to think

and to write critically. Revision of the teaching of composition has been restricted by grading requirements and time constraints. Currently, the emphasis on student writing in Ohio revolves around passing writing components of standardized tests. Due to this emphasis the writer feels that critical thinking is not seen as important as following specific instructions on a specific test in order to rank students, teachers, and school systems. Unless the emphasis of standardized testing and student and school ranking is decreased or altered, programmed writing process will become of primary importance in Ohio school districts.

Research has shown the effectiveness not only of the writing process, but also of the use of peer groups within the writing process. While not all programs outlined in this research may be implemented in their entirety in all classrooms, certainly portions or modified versions of them can be. Teachers must be able to communicate to their students the methods and importance of this process in order for the students to develop critical thinking and writing skills that they can employ for the rest of their lives.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

Participants

The participants who will be affected by this
handbook are eleventh grade, non-college preparatory
students ranging from Learning Disabled students to
those taking this course as preparation for taking
college preparatory English the succeeding school year
and those taking other college preparatory classes but
not opting to take college preparatory English. In the
1991-1992 class there will be twelve boys and three
girls whose ages range from 16 to 18.

Procedure

The writer is currently in her nineteenth year of
teaching, having taught English for eighteen of those
years. A multitude of changes in the teaching of
English have occurred over that time span--the greatest
being the focus and emphasis upon the teaching of
composition. The genesis of this project lay with
struggling to find an organized means to teach students
how to write. Also contributing were the time spent
and experiences and knowledge gained while serving on
committees with other English teachers who were dealing
with the same problems. From 1984 until 1988 the
writer was a part of the Eastern Ohio Early English

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Composition Assessment Program (EECAP) which, under the auspices of the Ohio Board of Regents and in conjunction with Ohio University-Belmont and Belmont Technical College, united high school English teachers in a program designed to assess and improve composition in eastern Ohio schools. The group designed and implemented teaching strategies and then tested the results. Many ideas developed and learned here were transferred to the classroom and are currently a part of the handbook.

The writer also obtained ideas from working with a committee established by the Tuscarawas County Public Schools and also involving the Harrison Hills City District. The committee, which began work during the 1985-86 school year and is still working on competency testing, was established to develop a K-12 English curriculum which focused on composition. From that curriculum, pupil performance objectives and composition competency tests evolved. A pilot test was given and evaluated based upon specific procedures and an evaluation rubric designed by the committee. Each year both the test and the evaluation procedures have been evaluated and revised. Ideas and experience from this work have also been incorporated within the handbook.

During the 1989-90 school year the writer was asked to chair the textbok selection committee for

selecting new English textbooks for grades 7-12 in the Harrison Hills City School District. After evaluating examination copies from several different companies for both English composition/grammar and literature for grade levels 9-12, the writer found an overwhelming emphasis on composition in both the composition/grammar texts and the literature texts. Most of the books and their auxiliary materials also recommended the use of peer response groups. Research of these materials provided many ideas for the project.

Having garnered both information and experience from committee work with other English teachers and having examined a wide variety of textbooks, the writer decided to create a handbook that would organize this data and aid the teacher in instructing the students in a productive and organized manner. The writer was assigned the eleventh grade, non-college preparatory class in 1990 and found a need for particular teaching and implementation of both the writing process and the peer response groups.

Having decided to create the handbook within the Master's Project requirement, the writer made an appointment with the university librarian to conduct a computer search for research material. The ERIC search was conducted on the basis of English composition beginning with 1980 until the present. A study of references through the writer's use of the Reader's

Guide to Periodical Literature provided more research
materials. The English Journal was an especially rich
source of useable material. A search of the university
card catlogue provided names of handbooks that the
writer perused for additional information.

A step-by-step writing process handbook tailored
to meet the specific needs of the eleventh grade
non-college preparatory students was then developed on
the basis of this research and experience.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

THE WRITING PROCESS HANDBOOK

This writing handbook is specifically designed to
be used for an eleventh grade, non-college preparatory
class. Ability levels in this class have ranged from
mainstreamed D.H. and L.D. to those capable of college
preparatory work. The handbook revolves around the
implementation of two ideas--use of the writing process
and use of peer groups during some of the stages of the
writing process. Much research has shown the value and
effectiveness of implementing both a writing process
and peer response groups. The handbook is structured
around the following steps:

     I. Prewriting

    II. Writing (Drafting)

   III Editing/Evaluating

    IV. Revising

    V. Proofreading

   VI. Writing Final Draft/Final Proofreading

  VII. Postwriting

 I. PREWRITING

Before beginning the process, the teacher should,
after explaining the prewriting process and the use and
importance of peer response groups, assign peer groups,
telling students that peer groups will switch members

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throughout the school year. The purpose of the prewriting stage is to identify a purpose and an audience; to select a topic; to identify tone; and to gather, classify, and arrange imformation. Warriner (1988) lists four basic purposes for writing:

> Narrative writing relates a series of events.
> Expository writing gives information or explains.
> Descriptive writing describes a person, place, or
>   thing.
> Persuasive writing attempts to persuade or
>   convince. (p. 4)

To aid students in learning about purpose, the teacher should have them write two possible topics for each purpose. Students will then share and evaluate purposes within peer response groups before a class discussion of the material.

Along with writing for a specific purpose, students must also write to a specific audience. Audience will greatly affect how one writes and what one says. The students could be asked to consider how they would tell the story of their first date or a night out with friends to their parents, their best friend, a teacher. Then they could consider first individually then in peer response groups how they would handle the following topics and audiences.

1. A night spent Halloweening: parents, law officer, victims, friends.

2. A speeding ticket: parents, the judge, friends, drivers education class

3. A scary story written for differing age groups:

5-6 year-olds, 10-12 year-olds, 16-18
year-olds.

4. Why the drinking age should be lowered to 18:
18 year-olds, MADD, people who have lost loved
ones to teenage drunken drivers, bartenders
who have been caught serving minors.

5. Why smoking should be banned in all enclosed
public areas: American Tobacco Association,
people suffering from health problems due to
secondary smoke, heavy smokers.

Warriner (1988) asks students to consider the
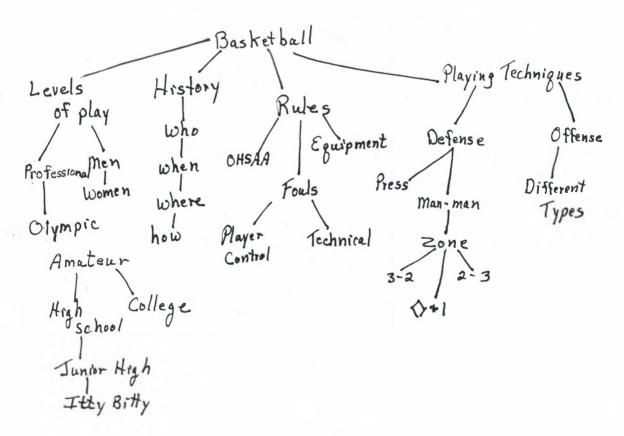following questions about their audience:

What does the audience already know about the
topic?
What background or technical imformation might
this audience need to understand the topic?
What language and style are most appropriate for
the audience: simple or complex words and
sentences, casual or formal presentation?
Does the audience have any bias (strong feelings
either for or against) toward the topic? If so,
what is the bias? (p. 7)

Unless the teacher assigns a topic to the
students, the next step in the prewriting process is
choosing and limiting a topic. Students often select
subjects on which complete books--if not volumes have
been written. Time and attention must be spent on
selection and limitation of appropriate topics. Due to
the often widely varying interests of this class, the
teacher's selection of examples must also vary in order
to respond to the differing interests of the students.

For example, the teacher may choose "basketball" as a subject and then have the students break it down into manageable topics such as history, rules, playing techniques, level of play, and then have students further limit the topics for paragraph and essay length compositions. After discussion of how to limit at least two topic examples, the teacher should assign students to select and limit five different topics. These will be done individually, then in peer groups, and then in whole class discussion. The form will follow this example:

Basketball

Levels of play — Professional, Men, Women, Olympic, Amateur, High School, College, Junior High, Itty Bitty

History — Who, when, where, how

Rules — OHSAA, Equipment, Fouls, Player Control, Technical

Playing Techniques — Defense, Press, Man-man, Zone, 3-2, 2-3, O+1, Offense, Different Types

Clouse (1986) suggests five techniques for students to try in order to find topics for writing.

1. Try some unfocused freewriting.
2. Browse through a dictionary.
3. Read your local and campus newspapers.
4. Keep an essay-subject notebook.
5. Fill in the blanks.
    I'll never forget the time I _____.
    _____ is the most _____ I know.
    After_____ I was never the same again.
    This world can certainly do without _____.
    What this world needs is _____.
    Life would be easier if only _____.
    (pp. 4-6)

Students then need to select or to be given the tone or attitude to be shown for the topic. Tone can be formal, informal, serious, humorous, satirical, angry, enthusiastic--whatever emotion or point of view the writer has toward the topic. Tone is especially shown in and affected by the language used in the writing.

Several methods may be employed to gather ideas and information once the topic has been selected and limited and the purpose and audience have been established. Elbow (1981) defines and explains "Freewriting" as a method for gathering ideas.

Freewriting is the easiest way to get words on paper and the best all-around practice in writing I know. To do a freewriting exercise, simply force yourself to write without stopping for ten minutes. Sometimes you will produce good writing, but that's not the goal. Sometimes you will produce garbage, but that's not the goal either. You may stay on one topic, you may flip repeatedly from one to another; it doesn't matter. Sometimes you will produce a good record of your stream of consciousness, but often you can't keep up. Speed is not the goal, though sometimes the process revs you up. If you can't think of anything to write, write about how that feels or repeat over and over "I have nothing to write" or "Nonsense" or "No." If you get stuck in the middle of a sentence or thought, just repeat the last word or phrase till
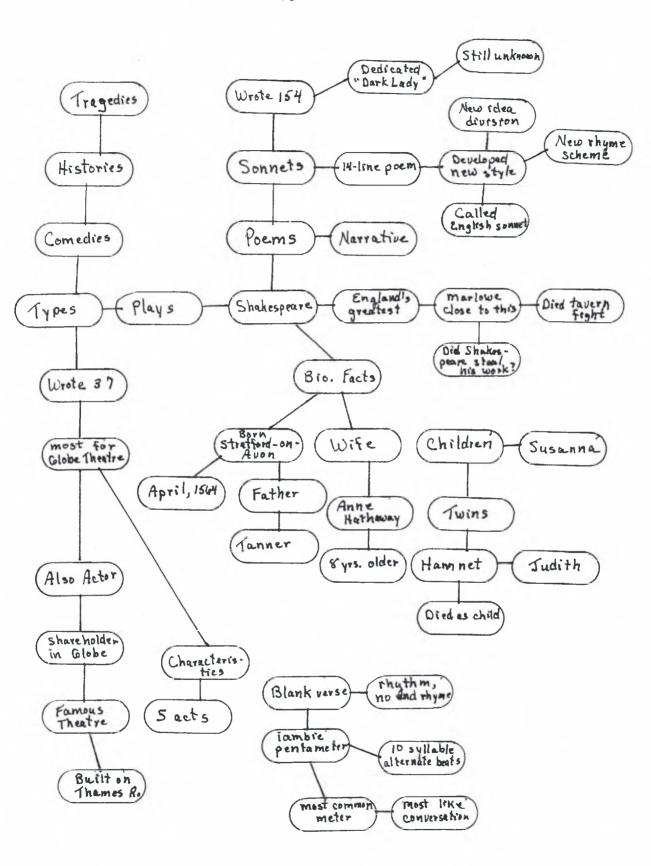
something comes along. The only point is to keep writing. (p. 2)

Forlini (1990) in the new <u>Prentice-Hall</u>

series offers a self-interview as a method for

generating ideas.

Interview yourself. Get into the habit of asking yourself questions like the ones in the following chart.
1. What do I enjoy?
2. What activities am I especially good at?
3. In what areas do I have more knowledge than most people?
4. What topics would I like to know more about? How can I get the information I need?
5. What experiences have I had that people would like to read about? (p. 375)

One of the simplest and most commonly used

generating procedures is Brainstorming, in which the

writer lists all ideas which come to mind and then,

when finished, peruses these ideas and selects those

that will apply to the writing topic. Closely related

to Brainstorming is Clustering which groups the related

ideas is a type of diagram instead of in a list. From

a central topic, related ideas branch out. Included is

a sample cluster diagram. It reflects the

possibilities the cluster diagram offers for generating

ideas. (See following page for example of a cluster

diagram.)

Tragedies

Histories

Comedies

Types — Plays — Shakespeare

Wrote 37

most for Globe Theatre

Also Actor

Shareholder in Globe

Famous Theatre

Built on Thames R.

Wrote 154 — Dedicated "Dark Lady" — Still unknown

Sonnets — 14-line poem — Developed new style — New idea diversion / New rhyme scheme / Called English sonnet

Poems — Narrative

England's greatest — marlowe close to this — Died tavern fight

Did Shakespeare steal his work?

Bio. Facts

Born Stratford-on-Avon

April, 1564

Father

Tanner

Wife

Anne Hathaway

8 yrs. older

Children — Susanna

Twins

Hamnet — Judith

Died as child

Characteristics

5 acts

Blank verse — rhythm, no end rhyme

iambic pentameter — 10 syllable alternate beats

most common meter — most like conversation

Forlini (1990) offers three ideas listed under the topic of Cueing. The first employs a journalist's questions: Who, What, When, Where, Why, and sometimes How to generate ideas and to answer questions about a topic. The other segments of Cueing involve the following:

> A second cueing device sets up the alphabet as a series of signals. Write your topic at the top of a blank page. Then, write at least one related beginning with each letter of the alphbet. The student writing about performing comedy, for example, might have a list that begins: acting classes, Allen (Woody), books on comedy, Carson (Johnny), creating jokes, choosing a style, coping with audience. (p. 377)

The final part of Forlini's cueing uses the senses--sight, sound, taste, touch, smell--to bring about detailed ideas, especially those pertaining closely to description. This method closely follows Wariner's (1988) suggestions for the use of Direct Observation. Closely related to this method is Indirect Observation which employs someone else's experiences that writer has listened to or has read.

Clouse (1986) also suggests using Letter Writing wherein the writer "writes a letter" to a friend about the assigned or selected topic. Since the student is writing to a friend, it is possible that the student will feel more relaxed, thereby stimulating thought and removing some of the barriers to more free thinking.

Brown, Kinkhead, Millett, Morgan, Vivion, Weldon, (1990) add Charting and Cubing to the list of

procedures for generating ideas. Charting is especially well-utilized with topics that can be divided into categories such as types of music and their characteristics or a description topic with details alluding to the five senses. Cubing, related to charting in the sense that it shows more facets of a topic, allows one six methods for searching for ideas for each topic: describe, compare, associate, apply, argue for or against.

Once students have studied and revised the varying procedures for gathering information, they will have the opportunity to employ these in their prewriting for future assignments. They will also practice each of them, keeping this information in their composition portfolios.

After ideas have been generated, they need to be Classified by grouping related items; for example, breeds of dogs could be classified under such headings as Sporting dogs, Working dogs, Toy dogs. The students will then arrange their ideas in a logical order. In continuing the dog example, the different breeds under the classifications would be arranged in a logical order. If desired by the teacher, this would be a good time to have the students put their ideas into outline form. Following are three outline forms that can be used for a variety of lengths and forms of writing.

Paragraph Outline

    Topic: _____

    Topic Sentence: _____

    _____

    Supporting Ideas:

                1. _____

                2. _____

                3. _____

                4. _____

                5. _____

                6. _____

                7. _____

                8. _____

Clincher Sentence: _____

    _____

Informal Essay Outline

Topic _____

Introduction: Details to get reader's interest

_____

_____

_____

Thesis: _____

_____

Paragraph # 1

Topic Sentence:_____

_____

Supporting Details:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

Clincher/Transitional Sentence: _____

_____

Paragraph # 2

Topic/Transitional Sentence: _____

_____

Supporting Details:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

Clincher/Transitional Sentence: _____

_____

Paragraph # 3

Topic/ Transitional Sentence: _____

_____

Supporting Details:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

Clincher/Transitional Sentence: _____

_____

Conclusion: _____

_____

_____

Model- Formal Topic Outline

Topic: _____

Purpose: _____

Audience: _____

Tone: _____

Thesis: _____

_____

Title:

I.
   A.
   B.
     1.
     2.
       a.
       b.
         (1)
         (2)
           (a)
           (b)

II. A.
   B.
     1.
     2.
       a.
       b.

This is a sample of the form the outline must follow;
one may not have this many entries or may have more.
There must be at least 2 entries at each level.
There can NEVER be 1 entry for a level, eg. an A and
not a B.
Entries must be written in parallel form.
Each topic must begin with a capital letter; topic
outline entries do not end with a period.
The terms: Introduction, Body, or Conclusion are never
 used in an outline.
All Main Topics and Subtopics should be indented so
they fall into a vertical line.

II. WRITING/DRAFTING

The prewriting process can be employed for writing assignments of both paragraph and essay length. The following sections can also be implemented with both, only with the paragraphs on a smaller scale (topic sentence and supporting details) and the essay on a larger scale (thesis statement and supporting details).

When the prewriting steps are completed, the students should be ready for the Writing or Drafting stage during which the rough draft will be written. The student needs to consider Content, Organization, Word Choice, Sentence Structure, Usage, Mechanics and Format.

Once ideas have been considered, classified, and arranged, the student writer needs to evaluate them and consider if there are sufficient details and content to thoroughly discuss the chosen topic. If possible, the student should use a creative, innovative writing style with which to convey these ideas. The term "if possible" is used here because often, simple creation and development of ideas fully taxes the abilities of the group for which this handbook is intended.

With Organization, the student must consider and must include in the compositions (paragraphs or essays)

Introduction, Topic Sentence/Thesis Statement,
Supportive Details/Paragraphs, Transitions, Clincher
Sentence/Conclusion. The Topic Sentence states the
main topic of a paragraph. It limits and controls the
Supporting Details used in a paragraph. Supporting
details give specific information that supports the
idea stated in the topic sentence. These details must
remain within the guidelines established by the topic
sentence. The writer should tie these sentences
together with effective Transitions leading to the
Clincher/Concluding Sentence that concludes or
summarizes or sums up the paragraph. Warriner (1988,
p. 38) states that the Clincher may "reemphasize the
main idea, summarize the information given, suggest a
course of action or reveal an insight."

The teacher can write student-suggested topic
sentences on the board, followed by supporting details
and a clincher sentence. Students will evaluate the
boardwork in their peer groups and then share their
evaluations in class discussion.

ASSIGNMENT: Students will select two ideas from
their bank of topics and ideas created in preceeding
exercises and write a topic sentence, supporting
details, and a clincher sentence. These will be shared
and evaluated within the Peer Response Group in the
next class before the assignment is handed in.

In writing the paragraphs, students need to consider both Unity and Coherence. Warriner (1988) refers to the necessity of Unity in a paragraph.

> Every sentence in a paragraph should directly relate to the main idea. A paragraph in which every sentence helps develop one main ideas has Unity. Any sentence that does not directly support the main idea should be removed. (p. 44)

Along with Unity effective paragraphs must also have Coherence according to Warriner.

> The ideas in a paragraph should be arranged in a logical order and clearly connected. A Coherent paragraph is one in which the ideas flow smoothly from one idea to the next and the relationships between the ideas are clear. (p. 45)

This Coherence is achieved through logical order: chronological, spatial, order of importance, and comparison/contrast, and through the use of transitional expressions. Chronological Order is used to relate events in the order they happened or to give steps in a process. Have Peer Groups develop a set of details for both a narrative and a process paragraph that will employ chronological order, and then follow with a group discussion of these. A chronologically developed paragraph may be assigned at this time or a later one; the entire writing process would be used for this assignment. It is up to the teacher if the chronological assignment is to be made at this time.

Spatial Order, according to Warriner (1988, p 47), "allows the reader to visualize where details are in relation to one another." This is a directional type

of order, moving, for example, from near to far, top to bottom, right to left, in an organized, consistent manner. Spatial Order is well employed in writing eescriptions or in giving directions.

ASSIGNMENT: Have each student write specific directions for getting from the high school to his home. After checking these directions, the students will trade papers with someone in the class who does not know where the student lives. Each must evaluate the directions, telling the writer what is clear or unclear about the directions. Once again, an assignment can be made at this time, remembering that spatial order is used particularly well with descriptive types of writing.

Order of Importance contributes especially well to the coherence of persuasive pieces of writing according to Warriner. Depending upon their views, students can arrange ideas in the order in which they see the ideas as important. The teacher can use class discussion to find ideas pertaining to school and/or social issues which the students think is right or wrong or needs to be changed, poll them for ideas supporting a position pertaining to these issues, and then order the ideas as they see them ranking in importance.

Comparison and Contrast is employed to show how two sets of information are alike or are different. Differing terms are sometimes used for the methods of

Comparison and Contrast. Students can use the
"point-by-point" or "alternating" method which
compares/contrasts each feature as it is mentioned or
the "block method" which presents all ideas about one
topic first, then compares/contrasts the ideas of the
second with those of the first

EXERCISE: WRITE A COMPARISON/CONTRAST PARAGRAPH
USING THIS INFORMATION. IDENTIFY WHICH METHOD IS USED.

FEATURES	H.S. X	H.S Y
Grade levels	9-12	7-12
Student body	480	280
Major sports	football, golf	cross country
	volleyball	volleyball
	cross country	basketball
	basketball	baseball
	wrestling	track
	baseball	
	softball	
	track	
Student/		
teacher ratio	1 to 27	1 to 20
Environment	small town	rural
Building	3-story	one story
	60 yrs. old	30 yrs. old

Also contributing to the Coherence of writing are
Transitions which include direct references to ideas,
words already mentioned in the writing and transitional
devices which are words such as coordinating and
subordinating conjunctions and conjunctive adverbs.
English textbooks will include lists of transitions and
the relationships they show.

Once information for how to write paragraphs has
been covered, the teacher may want to assign paragraphs
based upon the four purposes of Description, Narration,

Exposition, and Persuasion. Using the parameters of these purposes, the teacher may want to have the students compose paragraphs developed by Facts and Statistics, Examples, Cause and Effect, Definition, Process, Reasons, Concrete Details, and Incident.

The Writing Process for the essay will be much the same as that for the paragraph only on a more extensive scale--involving a Thesis Statement instead of a Topic Sentence and paragraphs for the Introduction, Supporting Details, and Conclusion. Clouse (1986) establishes the importance of an effective introduction.

> We don't always like to admit it, but first impressions are important. In addition to creating a first impression that can please or displease your reader, there is another purpose the introduction can serve. It can let your reader know what your essay is about by including a statement that reveals the topic. This statement is called a thesis. (p. 32)

The Thesis Statement is the "Topic Sentence" of the essay--the statement which guides all ideas in the essay, the statement that all ideas in the essay must support. The Thesis Statement provides a focus for the essay and serves as guide the writer. For the reader it states what will be discussed in the essay. Students affected by this handbook will be required to include a distinctive, recognizable Introduction in all essays. The Thesis Statement should be the last sentence in these introductory paragraphs thereby

leading both the writer and the reader into the supporting ideas of the essay. This requirement will give this class of students the extra guidelines and structure their writing often needs.

The authors of the MacMillen series: Ackley, Calabrese, Cavender, Collins-Kimball, Pohlman, Purvis, Rantu, Willis, (1988) state three improtant functions for the Thesis Statement.

1. It states the main point of your essay.
2. It indicates your attitude toward the topic.
3. It suggests the organization that the essay will follow. (p. 245)

ASSIGNMENT: Students will be asked to write thesis statements based upon topics from previous prewrites and/or from their writing portfolios. They will then evaluate these with their Peer Groups before they turn in the assigments.

The Body of the composition needs to contain adequate and relevant detail which is coherently arranged and which should follow the guidelines established by the Thesis Statement. Usually, each paragraph of the Body develops a main topic of the outline for a smaller essay. A paragraph in a longer essay may be used to develop the supporting details in the outline. Clouse (1986) offers suggestions for paragraph divisions not based upon discussion of new points.

1. Writers sometimes begin a new paragraph to give the reader's eyes a rest. (If paragraph is very long.)

    2. Sometimes a writer will begin a paragraph to
       emphasize a point.
    3. Writers sometimes place an extended example in
       its own paragraph. (p. 44)

To achieve Coherence, students must also employ Transitions between both sentences and paragraphs. These can be Direct References and Transitional Expressions as previously discussed and also transitional sentences between paragraphs taht will show a relationship between the preceding paragraph and the succeeding one.

Just as the first impression of the essay is imporant, so is the final one. Clouse (1986, p. 47) states, "The conclusion of an essay is important because it influences your reader's final impression-- the impression the reader leaves your writing with." Clouse also offers the following ways for handling the Conclusion.

    1. Leave the Reader with an Overall Reaction
       ...extracts the major points of the essay,
      some overriding impression, observation, or
      reaction.
    2. Summarize the Major Points of the Essay
       ...recaps the major ideas in the essay.
    3. Draw a Conclusion
      Frequently the ideas in the body of an essay
      lead to some significant conclusion.
    4. Restate the Thesis or Another Portion of the
       Introduction
    5. Use a Combination of Approaches (pp. 48-50)

This last part of the Writing/Drafting Process can be followed by showing a sample essay that contains all segments discussed. Then the teacher could assign an essay to be written employing these ideas and being

sure to caution students that they must also use proper grammar, usage, mechanics, and format in drafting their essays. Lessons on these points will follow at a later date, dependent upon necessity.

III. EVALUATING FIRST DRAFTS

Editing/Evaluating will be a two-part process involving both individual and peer editing of writing. Editing/Evaluation forms will be available for most types of writing and will be adaptable for both paragraph and essay length compositions. Students will first use the forms to do a self-evaluation and then will use the forms in the Peer Response Groups in order to evaluate one another. Peer editors, when using the forms will also emloy the Praise-Question-Polish technique of Neubert and McNelis (1986) wherein the peer editors have to write out what they find good, what they do not understand, and what they specifically suggest for improvements in the composition they are peer editing.

Peer editing forms have been developed to rate categories in Content, Organization/Development, and Usage/Mechanics which can be marked as Weak, Average, or Strong. Students must make specific comments, explaining their editing remarks and keeping in mind the PQP requirements. Peer editing forms follow this page.

PEER RESPONSE FORM- BASIC WRITING SCALE

	YES	NO
1. Sentences begin with a capital letter and end with a period.	___	___
2. Sentences are complete, no fragments.	___	___
3. There are no run-on sentences.	___	___
4. Paragraph is indented.	___	___
5. No slang is used.	___	___
6. Writer uses interesting word choice, vocabulary.	___	___
7. Main idea, purpose is clear.	___	___
8. Paragraph has a clear topic sentence.	___	___
9. Has details supporting topic sentence.	___	___
10. Paragraph has a clear clincher sentence.	___	___

COMMENTS: (Point out the single strongest area in this
            piece of writing and the one most in need of
            improvement.   Give reasons for above comments.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

PEER RESPONSE FORM- DESCRIPTION

Indicate if each entry is Weak- W, Average- A, or Strong- S.

CONTENT
1. Is focused on a specific topic.   ____

2. Includes topic sentence (intro. & thesis) that   ____
   clearly states what will be described.
3. Uses concrete, specific, sensory details to develop   ____
   the description.
4. Uses strong verbs and precise adjectives and nouns   ____
   to paint a vivid picture
5. Creates and maintains a consistent mood.   ____

6. Uses figurative language and literary devices   ____
   when appropriate.
7. Uses a clincher (concluding paragraph) to sum up   ____
   description and its effect on the writer.

DEVELOPMENT/ORGANIZATION
1. Includes topic sentence, supporting details, and   ____
   clincher (Recognizable intro., body, conclusion)
2. Ideas are limited and/or developed sufficiently for   ____
   paragraph (essay) length
3. Keeps audience and purpose in focus.   ____

4. No fragments, run-on sentences.   ____

5. Varies sentence structure, length, and beginnings.   ____

6. Uses transitions between sentences and paragraphs.   ____

7. Shows clear, logical organizationof ideas, uses   ____
   correct paragraphing.
8. Goes beyond basic vocabulary; uses vivid, precise   ____
   word choice appropriate for topic.

USAGE/MECHANICS
1. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in   ____
   spelling, correct word choice (homonyms)
2. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in verb   ____
   choice or tense.
3. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in verb/   ____
   subject or pronoun/antecedent agreement
4. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in   ____
   pronoun use
5. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in   ____
   punctuation or capitalization
6. Indents correctly.   ____

7. Written legibly with correct margins, according to   ____
   given rules. (Also applies to typed compositions)

PEER RESPONSE FORM- NARRATION

Indicate if each entry is Weak- W, Average- A, or Strong- S.

CONTENT
1. Gets reader's attention with effective and
   original introduction.   ___
2. Has a well-developed plot with definite beginning,   ___
   middle, and end.
3. Conclusion is believable/logical outcome of   ___
   situation author has created.
4. Creates and maintains a consistent mood.   ___

5. Uses concrete, specific, sensory details to create   ___
   definite setting and characters.
6. Uses vivid characterization and fully developed   ___
   characters.
7. Establishes and maintains consistent point of view.   ___

8. Shows, not just tells, about events through use   ___
   of effective description and/or dialogue

DEVELOPMENT/ORGANIZATION
1. Ideas are limited and/or developed sufficiently for   ___
   paragraph (essay) length
2. Keeps audience and purpose in focus.   ___

3. No fragments, run-on sentences.   ___

4. Varies sentence structure, length, and beginnings.   ___

5. Uses transitions between sentences and paragraphs.   ___

6. Shows clear, logical organization of ideas, uses   ___
   correct paragraphing.
8. Goes beyond basic vocabulary; uses vivid, precise   ___
   word choice appropriate for topic.

USAGE/MECHANICS
1. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in   ___
   spelling, correct word choice (homonyms).
2. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in verb   ___
   choice or tense.
3. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in verb/   ___
   subject or pronoun/antecedent agreement.
4. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in   ___
   pronoun use.
5. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in   ___
   punctuation or capitalization.
6. Indents correctly.   ___

7. Written legibly with correct margins, according to   ___
   given rules. (Also applies to typed compositions)

COMMENTS: (Use PQP Technique; point out strongest, weakest
           areas; comment on your evaluation.)

PEER RESPONSE FORM- EXPOSITORY

Indicate if each entry is Weak- W, Average- A, or Strong- S.

CONTENT
1. Is focused on an appropriately limited topic. ____

2. Includes topic sentence (intro. & thesis) that
   states main ideas of writing. ____
3. Develops topic sentence (thesis) with sufficient
   details. ____
4. Ideas are clearly stated. ____

5. Considers audience and purpose throughout writing. ____

6. States a clincher sentence (concluding paragraph)
   that summarizes the thesis and its support. ____

DEVELOPMENT/ORGANIZATION
1. Includes topic sentence, supporting details, and
   clincher (Recognizable intro., body, conclusion) ____
2. Ideas are limited and/or developed sufficiently for
   paragraph (essay) length ____
3. Keeps audience and purpose in focus. ____

4. No fragments, run-on sentences. ____

5. Varies sentence structure, length, and beginnings. ____

6. Uses transitions between sentences and paragraphs. ____

7. Shows clear, logical organizationof ideas, uses
   correct paragraphing. ____
8. Goes beyond basic vocabulary; uses vivid, precise
   word choice appropriate for topic. ____

USAGE/MECHANICS
1. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in
   spelling, correct word choice (homonyms) ____
2. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in verb
   choice or tense. ____
3. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in verb/
   subject or pronoun/antecedent agreement ____
4. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in
   pronoun use ____
5. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in
   punctuation or capitalization ____
6. Indents correctly. ____

7. Written legibly with correct margins, according to
   given rules. (Also applies to typed compositions) ____

COMMENTS: (Use PQP Technique; point out strongest, weakest
           areas; comment on your evaluation.)

PEER RESPONSE FORM- COMPARISON/CONTRAST

Indicate if each entry is Weak- W, Average- A, or Strong- S.

CONTENT
1. Includes topic sentence (intro. & thesis) that clear- ____
   ly states items or ideas being compared/contrasted.
2. Clearly explains why these items/ideas are being ____
   compared/contrasted.
3. Has sufficient items/ideas to compare/contrast. ____

4. Fully develops several similar or contrasting ____
   items or ideas.
5. States a clincher sentence (concluding paragraph) ____
   that summarizes the comparison/contrast.

DEVELOPMENT/ORGANIZATION
1. Includes topic sentence, supporting details, and ____
   clincher (Recognizable intro., body, conclusion)
2. Ideas are limited and/or developed sufficiently for ____
   paragraph (essay) length
3. Keeps audience and purpose in focus. ____

4. No fragments, run-on sentences. ____

5. Varies sentence structure, length, and beginnings. ____

6. Uses transitions between sentences and paragraphs. ____

7. Shows clear, logical organizationof ideas, uses ____
   correct paragraphing.
8. Goes beyond basic vocabulary; uses vivid, precise ____
   word choice appropriate for topic.

USAGE/MECHANICS
1. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in ____
   spelling, correct word choice (homonyms)
2. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in verb ____
   choice or tense.
3. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in verb/ ____
   subject or pronoun/antecedent agreement
4. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in ____
   pronoun use
5. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in ____
   punctuation or capitalization
6. Indents correctly. ____

7. Written legibly with correct margins, according to ____
   given rules. (Also applies to typed compositions)

COMMENTS: (Use PQP Technique; point out strongest, weakest
            areas; comment on your evaluation.)

PEER RESPONSE FORM- PERSUASION

Indicate if each entry is Weak- W, Average- A, or Strong- S.

CONTENT
1. Includes topic sentence (intro. & thesis) that   ____
   clearly gives a solid position statement.
2. Supports opinion with at least 2 or 3 clearly stated   ____
   reasons or facts.
3. Uses verifiable reasons or facts for support.   ____

4. Develops each reason with sufficient details.   ____

5. Is logical in its argument.   ____

6. Considers the opposing argument.   ____

7. States a clincher sentence (concluding paragraph)   ____
   that summarizes the argument.

DEVELOPMENT/ORGANIZATION
1. Includes topic sentence, supporting details, and   ____
   clincher (Recognizable intro., body, conclusion)
2. Ideas are limited and/or developed sufficiently for   ____
   paragraph (essay) length
3. Keeps audience and purpose in focus.   ____

4. No fragments, run-on sentences.   ____

5. Varies sentence structure, length, and beginnings.   ____

6. Uses transitions between sentences and paragraphs.   ____

7. Shows clear, logical organizationof ideas, uses   ____
   correct paragraphing.
8. Goes beyond basic vocabulary; uses vivid, precise   ____
   word choice appropriate for topic.

USAGE/MECHANICS
1. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in   ____
   spelling, correct word choice (homonyms)
2. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in verb   ____
   choice or tense.
3. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in verb/   ____
   subject or pronoun/antecedent agreement
4. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in   ____
   pronoun use
5. Contains no more than 2 or 3 minor errors in   ____
   punctuation or capitalization
6. Indents correctly.   ____

7. Written legibly with correct margins, according to   ____
   given rules. (Also applies to typed compositions)

IV. REVISING THE FIRST DRAFT

Using the self and peer evaluation forms, the
students will then revise compositions according to
those comments. Revision will take place both
individually and within the Peer Response Groups. Much
of the Revision will be done within the classroom so
that the students will have available Teacher Response
or Intervention, Peer Response, and Resources such as a
dictionary or Thesaurus.

This revision should concern first, errors in
Content and Organizatin and should correct and develop
stronger sentence structure and word choice, checking
specifically for fragments and/or run-ons, varying
sentence lengths and beginnings, as well as appropriate
vocabulary.

V. PROOFREADING

After the composition has been revised, it needs
to be proofread for errors in spelling, grammar, usage,
and mechanics. Proofreading should include checking
correct use of mechanics: capital letters and
punctuation, correct spelling (especially commonly
misspelled words, key words, and homonyms). This
procedure should also check for the following possible
Usage Problems: subject/verb agreement,
pronoun/antecedent agreement in person and number,
correct use of pronoun case, and correct and consistent
use of verb tenses and forms. Students should make

sure that all sentences are complete and that
paragraphs are properly indented. This stage of
Proofreading will be performed mostly on an individual
basis although it occasionally may be done with the
assistance of members of the Peer Response Groups.

VI. WRITING FINAL VERSION--FINAL PROOFREADING

The students will now write or type the final
version. Written copy is to be done on white notebook
or theme paper in blue or black ink only and written
only on one side of the paper. Words are not to be
divided at the end of a line. Errors should be neatly
corrected. Students should also write legibly and
neatly. If typing, students should use 1 1/2 inch
margin above the title on the first page with a 1 inch
top margin on all succeeding pages; 1 inch margins for
the bottom and right side and 1 1/2 inch margins for
the left side will be used on all pages. Typed papers
will all be double spaced, with neatly corrected
errors, no strike-overs. Students should be told to
proofread carefully for any mistakes before handing in
the composition.

VII. POSTWRITING

Some exercises will be conducted to take handing
back papers beyond glancing at the grade, crumpling up
the paper, and tossing it into the trash--or in the
face of teacher disapproval of this action, tucking the
graded paper into a textbook or writing folder, never

to emerge again. First, students will be required to keep a writing portfolio, in order to preserve prewrites, ideas, topics students have developed, as well as to keep graded essays so students may see what has been or needs to be improved.

One possible method of Postwriting will involve Reisin's (1990) use of sharing of graded papers. Considering the ability level of the class and the grades students sometimes receive, it will be up to the discretion of the teacher as to which assignments will be shared after they have been graded. Students will read the graded paper and the comments, and then will write a response to the grade and the teacher's comments. These will be shared within the Peer Response Groups, and the peer comments will be saved in the student's writing portfolio.

Individual responses to the writer's own work implemented by Latta (1991) in her In-Process and Retrospective Journals--using the following questions to guide student responses to their final work.

1. What do you like best about your piece of writing?
2. What still concerns you about this piece?
3. What processes or strategies or procedures were most effective for you as a writer as you worked on this piece?
4. Which new strategies did you try in this piece? How successful was this attempt with new techniques? How could you have been more successful?
5. What processes have you learned in connection with the writing of this piece that you think will be helpful with future pieces?
6. How helpful was your peer response group? What

> can the group do to give you even better
> feedback about your writing? (p. 64)

These questions can be adjusted to help in a

postgrading ealuation, asking the student to comment on

the grade received and the teacher comments written on

the paper. The student could write why and how he

agreed or disagreed with teacher comments and how these

comments will help him on future writing assignments,

or how the comment could be better written to help

more.

Another possible Postwriting method would involve

a teacher interview with the Peer Response Group and

well as with the individual students.

Following are lists of both composition topics and

prompts. They can be used or discarded as desired.

While some may be more appropriate for either a

paragraph or an essay length assignment, most could

probably be implemented with both types of assignments.

Covering a very wide variety of ideas and forms, they

are topics that have been and can be used in a variety

of ways.

COMPOSITION TOPICS

Some of the following composition topics are listed as topics while some of them are written as prompts. Many can be adapted to both paragraph and theme length compositions while some of them may be better suited to one style/length or the other. Use is, of course, up to the teacher's discretion.

DESCRIPTION

Describe your favorite place- use concrete, sensory details.

Describe your favorite person. Paint a picture with words that allows the reader both to see the person in detail and to know what his/her character is like.

Describe a beautiful scene in nature. Remember to use concrete, specific detail. Include sensory details; consider the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, feelings this scene produces.

Describe a walk through a beautiful autumn woods. Use specific concrete, sensory details. Make your reader see the woods, feel the weather that day, hear the sounds.

Describe a snowfall and/or a snow-covered scene. Use concrete, specific details. Establish your point of view; are you inside watching this scene, or are you outside in the snow? Make the reader see and feel what you do.

Describe a rainy day. Use concrete, specific, sensory details. What is the weather--cold, warm? What type of rainfall is it? Establish your point of view; are you inside watching the rain, driving in it, outside in it? Make the reader see and feel what you do.

Describe a bright summer afternoon. Use concrete, specific, sensory details. Make the reader feel just how hot and bright it is. Where are you--working in the sun, playing in the sun, watching the day from inside or from the shade?

Describe the following using concrete, specific, sensory details--not only painting a picture of the scene with your words but also showing the reader the emotions brought out by this scene. (These could be used together in one assignment to show a change in descriptive techniques or a change in point of view, or they can each be used as an individual composition assignment.)

    The scene the day after a tornado

    A vicious rainstorm

    A terrible blizzard

Describe your favorite childhood toy and then explain
why this was your favorite and why you remember it so
well. Use concrete, specific details that will allow
the reader to picture this toy and to either see the
changes in its appearance if it still exists today or
see it as it appeared the last time you saw it. Also
allow the reader to understand why it was your
favorite.

Describe your favorite possession. This must be a
material, inanimate object. Use specific, concrete
details to enable your reader to picture this object.
Let the reader see the shape, colors, size, and other
physical details of this object. Then explain why this
is your favorite possession.

Most of us have a hero. Since people vary greatly, so
do the people they see as heroes. Your hero may be a
real person involved in your personal life, a sports
star or a movie/television star, or a fictional
character. Describe, using concrete, specific detail,
what your hero looks like; then explain why this person
is your hero.

Describe a busy shopping mall. Find a spot in the mall
to "sit" and "watch" the people walk by. Using
concrete, specific details, describe what the mall
itself looks like from where you are "sitting" and then
describe some of the people who are walking by. Do

they have bags and packages to carry; are there families, couples, individuals, people of varying ages; are they casually walking, in a hurry, walking for exercise?

Describe Thanksgiving Dinner--this can be real and at your house or a family member's or friend's, or it can be imaginary. The goal of this assignment is to describe not only the people and the activity of the Thanksgiving Dinner but also to give a very specific, detailed, sensory description of the food--make the reader see, smell, taste the food being served and eaten.

Describe Christmas Eve or Christmas morning at your house or wherever you spend it. This should involve opening of packages, the tree, the family members. Use specific details that will picture the sights, sounds, tastes, smells, and feelings of this special holiday.

Describe a Fourth of July celebration. This may be a picnic, a beach party, a fireworks display. Use specific details to describe this.

Describe a picnic in park or a field. Use specific, concrete, sensory details to picture for the reader the surroundings, the people, the food, and the activity involved in this picnic.

Create a perfect place--a perfect world. This world can be anything you want it to be, in any time period. Then describe what this perfect world looks like; use concrete, specific, sensory details.

Describe the living room of your house. Use spatial organization to lead the reader in an organized description beginning with the wall to your right as you come into the room (choose the entrance you want if there are more than one to the room). Using specific and concrete details, describe the walls, floor, ceiling, and furnishings of the room. Then describe your fantasy living room. For this writing assignment you are over 21; money is no object; you can create whatever you want (be in good taste).

Lockers are a part of a student's life. Describe your locker and its contents in a way that will distinguish it from all the other lockers. Use specific, concrete details.

Describe your first grade teacher. Use concrete, specific detail to show what she/he looked like. Then explain what this person was like and how you felt about her/him.

Describe your favorite teacher in high school and then explain why this person is your favorite teacher. What

does this person do that sets him/her aside from other teachers?

Describe the community (city, town, rural area) in which you live. Through your words paint a picture that would allow someone who has never been there to visualize this place; consider both the place and the people.

Describe yourself as you see yourself; include both physical description and personality. Then describe how you think your best friend would describe you. Then write how you think your parent (teacher) would see you.

Like Rip Van Winkle you have been asleep for 20 years. Describe the world, using concrete and specific detail, to which you have awakened and what has happened to the people and places you knew when you fell asleep.

Describe a basketball game (or another athletic event of your choice). Use concrete descriptive and sensory that will allow the reader to truly see and experience. Let the reader see and hear the players, cheerleaders, fans--hear the sounds of the people, the squeak of shoes and the bounce of the ball on the court. Use details to involve all the senses; create the excitement of the game with your words.

NARRATION

The main purpose of narration is to relate an event in
a chronological manner from beginning to end. Some
topics may be more objective while others may be more
creative.

Describe an afternoon on the beach. Include a
description of the place and people as well as what
happened from the beginning (or before) until the end
of the afternoon.

Write about the scariest moment you can remember
experiencing. Include details about what happened, who
was involved, and why it was so scary.

Write about one of the happiest moments (days) in your
life. Include details about what happened, who was
involved, and why it was such a happy time.

Write about the proudest moment (day, event) in your
life so far. Include details about who was involved,
why you were so proud, and how others reacted to your
proud moment.

Write about the most embarrassing moment you have ever
had. Explain what happened, who was involved, and why

this event was so embarrassing. What will you do to ensure this will not happen again?

Describe the day in the life of a dog. You have just awakened and have discovered that you have become a dog. You can be your dog, a mutt, a registered dog; it is your choice, so are your owners, your surroundings, your fate. Give an idea as to how you think you may have become a dog; you can remain as a dog, or you can return to human form at the end of your story. You must follow ONE full day in the dog's life and must resolve the problem by the end of the story.

Put yourself in the place of an inanimate object, for example, a locker, a dollar bill, a baby's blanket, a tire. Describe a day in the life of this object. The story will be written from the "I" point of view. There is no explanation as to how you may have become this object; being this object has always been your existence.

Write a scary story about Halloween. Possible audiences for whom you will be writing: children aged 5-7 or children aged 10-12. The story and the events in it must be appropriate for that age group.

Write a Christmas story in which you show someone who learns the true meaning of Christmas because of the events of the story.

PERSUASION

High school sports are/are not overemphasized in this school.

The school should/should not have a dress code for students.

The coach of a sport does/does not have the right to set rules about a player's personal appearance regarding facial hair, hair length, earrings, clothing.

The drinking age (for beer) in Ohio should be lowered to age 18.

The death penalty should be abolished in all 50 states.

The death penalty should be consistently established in all 50 states.

Write a letter to the editor of the local newspaper. In this letter explain something in your community that you think should be changed and offer your proposal.

The minimum wage should/should not be raised.

Athletes should/should not be required to maintain a C average in order to play in the extra-curricular programs.

EXPOSITORY

Write a paragraph (an essay) that DEFINES the
following:

Success

Liberal

Conservative

Hero

Love

Hate

Freedom

Boredom

Friendship

Failure

Loneliness

Beauty

Selfishness

Bigotry

Ugliness

Team

Danger

Safety

Write a paragraph (an essay) that would describe how to carry out the following PROCESSES:

How to write a short program in BASIC.

How to tune a musical instrument

How to prepare a particular recipe

How to prepare an entire meal

How to jumpstart a car

How to play a particular game

How to shoot a basketball

How to get from the school to your house

How to pass your driver's test

How to fail your driver's test

How to shop for Christmas gifts

How to study for a test

How to take a test (essay, objective)

How to write an essay

How to revise an essay

How to drive your teacher "crazy"

How to overcome a certain fear

How to cope with peer pressure

How to survive "breaking up" with a girl/boyfriend

How to quit smoking (using smokeless tobacco)

How a person goes from being a boy/girl to a man/woman

How a person learns from failure

How a person goes from a "social drinker" to an
alcoholic

How a person becomes someone's friend

How to lose a friend

How to be a "team player"

How to be a success

How to ... (choose a hobby or interest of your own)

How to ... (choose a process from your future education
or occupation)

COMPARISON/CONTRAST: Using either the point-by-point
or the block method, write a paragraph (an essay)
comparing and/or contrasting the following:

The cafeteria during the lunch period and during a
studyhall period

Your personality and that of your best friend's

Your personality and that of your worst enemy

Yourself or a friend with a character you have seen on
television or in a movie

Yourself or a friend with a character you have read
about in a book

Two animals that have both similarities and
differences, for example, a crocodile and an alligator

Two teachers and their teaching methods

Two types of music

Two government leaders

Two friends

Two athletes (singers, actors, artists, musicians)

Two breeds of the same animal

Cassette tape and a compact disc

Hard drive and floppy disks

Two similar products/items you are considering buying

Two different models of the same type of vehicles or pieces of equipment

The gymnasium before, during, and after a basketball game

The team and the crowd at a basketball game after a loss and after a game

The emotions of the play cast and crew before and after the play performance

The first and the last days of a school year

Sports cars now and sports cars of the 1950's

Your life as a teenager now with that of a teenager 100 years ago, 40 years ago, 20 years ago, 20 years in the future

SOCIAL ISSUES

Imagine you have become the President of the United
States. What are 3 things that you think most need to
be changed and that you would change first. Also
explain how you would enact these changes. You must
have workable solutions to these problems you are going
to correct.

You can create the perfect (Utopian) world. Describe
what this world and the people living in it would be
like. How would this world differ from the one in
which you live? What problems in your real world today
would not exist in this perfect world?

You have somehow been given the power to solve 3 of the
world's (not just the U.S) greatest problems. What are
the 3 problems you would solve; how would you solve
them; and why did you choose these problems?

Think of something in your community (city, town, rural
area) that you think should be improved. Explain why
you think this should be improved and how this
improvement would be made.

Think about what it is like to live in your community
(city, town, rural area). Explain what it is like to

live there and then explain both the advantages and the disadvantages of living there.

Choose what you think is the most serious problem here at school. Explain what this problem is, why you think it is a serious problem, and what you suggest as a solution to this problem.

The world has become involved in a nuclear war. Would you want to survive this war? Explain why or why not. Explain what you think this world would be like.

The Homeless have become one of the greatest and most shameful problems America has. Explain how you think both our government and we, as citizens, can help solve this growing problem

Drug and alcohol use is extremely prevalent among your peers. Explain what solutions you can offer to deal with this growing problem.

PERSONAL

Think of something you would change in your past if you could. Explain what this would be and why you would change it.

Explain what it means to "set a good example" and how this idea has affected you. Maybe you are the person expected to "set" the good example; maybe you are the person expected to "follow" the good example. If this doesn't affect you personally, explain how you think it would affect you.

If you could change something about your personality or the way you behave, what would it be; how would you do it; and why would you change this?

Write an essay that explains how it feels to be the (youngest, oldest, middle, only, etc.) child in the family. Include both the advantages and the disadvantages of being in this order.

If you had the opportunity to return to a specific time in your childhood, write about what time this would be and why you chose this particular time.

You can step into a time machine and be sent to any time period and any place you desire--past or present. Choose a time period and place and explain what this

world is like, what you are doing in this world, and
why you chose this time and place.

Imagine it is 20 years from now; describe what your
life is like--include family, career, home, friends,
personal life.

Explain what your goals are for this school year.
Include academic, extra-curricular, and personal goals.
Also, explain how you are going to improve upon these
goals as compared to your performance in these areas
last year.

You have been made Principal for a Week. What changes
would you make and why and how would you make these
changes?

You have just won a $12,000,000 Lottery. Explain the
three most immmediate and important things you would do
with the money.

You have the opportunity to meet your idol. Explain
why this person is your idol and how you would react to
this meeting.

You can meet any great American historical figure.
Whom would you choose and why would choose this person?
What knowledge would you like to gain from this person
and how would you explain the changes the country has
gone through since this person was living?

Acting as one of your teachers, write a letter of recommendation for yourself, telling a potential employer what kind of student you are and what kind of employee you will make.

Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper. In this letter praise an event or a person in your community for the good it or he/she has done for the community.

If you were 18 and suddeny the U.S. forces had to return to the Gulf, would you sign up if you were guaranteed that you would immediately go into training and be sent there? Explain why or why not?

Imagine that a friend of yours has asked your advice aout getting an after-school job. Write an essay explaining the advantages and the disadvantages of having an after-school job.

Consider the three most important qualities you look for in a friend. Rank them in order of importance and explain what each is and why you feel it is an important quality of friendship.

OLD SAYINGS: Explain-intepret-apply these.

"Too many cooks spoil the broth."

"Neither a borrower nor a lender be."

"Honesty is the best policy."

'Haste makes waste."

"A rolling stone gathers no moss."

"Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy,
 wealthy, and wise."

"Three may keep a secret if two of them are dead."

"Haste makes waste."

"Necessity is the mother of invention."

"One rotten apple spoils the barrel."

"Look before you leap."

"Those who seek to please everybody please nobody."

"Pride goeth before the fall."

"Might makes right."

"Birds of a feather flock together."

"People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw
 stones."

NEWSPAPER WRITING

Answering the key questions of a reporter: Who, What,
Where, When, Why, and How, write the following types of
news stories. Facts and statistics will either be
given to you or gathering them will be part of the
assignment.

A straight news story about a person or organization in
the school (non-athletic)

A sports story about a recent sporting event

Time copy story on a topic interesting and applicable
to high school students

An advance, a spot news, and a folo story on the same
event

A continuing story with a news peg connecting it to the
previous story

A human interest story on a student

A human interest story on a teacher

A human interest story on a non-teaching staff member

An editorial

A letter to the editor

A "special column" story

REPORTS - BUSINESS

Using a trade or occupational magazine concerning the area of work or study you plan to go into in the future, choose an article concerning your interest, read it, summarize its information in one to two paragraphs and then explain how this information can apply to you.

Write (type) a letter of application for a job advertised in the Want Ads of the newspaper.

    Apply for a job you could handle now.

    Pretend you have completed your future job training and find a job for which you would qualify and write a letter applying for that position.

Write (type) a letter requesting information about information you wish to receive, for example, college catalogs, vacation information.

Write (type) a letter to a mail order company explaining that the product that you ordered, paid for, and received arrived damaged. Explain what happened and why you are returning the product and request a refund.

Write (type) a letter ordering at least 4 different products from a mail order company. Order forms are

not available, and you must include all ordering

information in your letter (quantity, product numbers

and names, prices, taxes, shipping, totals).

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Restatement of the Problem

Composition is a learned and a vital skill, The purpose of this project was to research and to develop a writing process handbook specifically designed for teachers of eleventh grade, non-college preparatory students.

Conclusions

According to Holdzkom, Reed, Porter, and Rubin (1986, p. 3), "If used effectively, writing can be a tool for thinking. The process of structuring a paper itself takes the students through several different levels of cognition." The purpose of the writing process contained within the handbook is to guide students through this thinking and writing process, to learn to help themselves, and to learn cooperatively with others. In the increasingly test saturated world of education, where the publication of test scores as mandated by government leaders will determine school rankings and courses of study, students need a writing process that will allow them to succeed on standardized tests while still gaining thinking and writing skills as well as insights that will remain with them throughout life.

Recommendations

     Although specifically designed by the writer for her own classroom, it is recommended that under research conditions this writing process handbook might be implemented by other English teachers with similarly composed eleventh grade English classes. After further use and then study of the educational results possibly due to the implementation of the handbook, the writer recommends that the handbook or a revised version of the handbook that will apply to other levels and grades of English students be implemented in other classrooms, to be used in conjunction with other English textbooks.

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