

1: How does writing affect learning? A review of the research

Writing Intended Learning Outcomes Learning outcomes can be defined as the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities that an instructor intends for students to learn or develop. Outcomes are more specific than learning goals, which take a 10,000-foot view of what an instructor desires for students to gain from a course.

A learning disability is when a person has extreme difficulty learning in a typical manner. This can be caused by one factor, or many. People who are learning disabled are clinically diagnosed by a professional, be it a pediatrician or a psychologist, and there are many different types of learning disabilities, or LDs. This blog post will discuss different strategies that teachers can use to help struggling students with writing. There will be three different articles from three different scholars who discuss writing strategies for students with disabilities. The different strategies discussed are for all teachers, not just special education teachers. Teachers need to make their classes inclusive for all students, even if they do not teach special education classes. Dunn believes that every student not just learning disabled students should have access to voice-to-text software. One medium in which voice-to-text is available is through a smartphone application. Voice-to-text software has so many advantages that not only help learning disabled students, but also help general education students. While there is some tweaking to be done for unusual words or names like Hauppauge, for example, the translation is pretty close to what was spoken. Dunn By using this technological marvel, it not only helps students who are learning disabled, but also general education students who struggle with spelling and grammar. Yet, these tools are expensive; and, of course, there are students who prefer handwriting or conservative word processing. Dunn Voice-to-text can even extend to those who write well: Dunn finishes off by saying that if schools do not already have voice-to-text technologies, they should make it available to all students, especially students with learning disabilities. Dunn It is essential to note that Hobson writes this article for all teachers of writing, not just special education teachers. Thus, he writes that his strategies can be used for all students, not just students with learning disabilities. Hobson believes that drawing is more productive than prewriting techniques that are found in textbooks. He experimented with this in a series of two meetings on writing-across-the-curriculum. During the first meeting, he sketched out his notes through drawing, and in the second meeting, he wrote down his notes using words. After the meetings had concluded, he and another colleague figured out that the first meeting was coherent and developed fairly well, but the second meeting was vague and not defined well at all. Hobson Thus, Hobson comes to the conclusion that: Drawing, not writing, had led us to a crucial insight about the structural shortcomings of the text we were developing; the drawing illustrated the incomplete relationship, in the second workshop, between ideas that seemed adequately linked when recorded in words. Nonverbal forms of communication and representation like drawing offer writers tools for discovery, planning, revision, and problem-solving. Hobson Therefore, drawing is not only well-suited for students with learning disabilities, but any writer as well. Drawing can help students with learning disabilities communicate effectively, and express meaning through drawing instead of words, especially for students who suffer from dysgraphia. Finally, drawing can help students write, organize, and revise their papers. For students who are learning disabled, writing is a complex task. Even when these students compose something, revision poses a much greater problem. They had just struggled composing something that they may either believe is perfect or unfixable. Thus, revising that piece is going to be a challenge for them. Like, voice-to-text as seen in Dr. Digital pens look like regular ballpoint pens and have the same functionality, except they digitize the pen strokes and transfer data to digital pages. Everything written with the pen words, notes, diagrams, etc. Other features may be available for certain pens. For example, some pens may include a feature that turns written words into typed words. Smartpens are the only digital pen that has audio recording, and it links written words to spoken words before it is translated to digital files. This helps students with learning disabilities because it can be used as an assistive technology AT to meet the literacy needs of students who have learning disabilities in terms of both reading and writing. The smartpen provides a method of accommodation and instructional support for students with learning disabilities in three areas: A Pulse Pen, which is one type of smartpen sold. Smartpens can be used to help students organize and

access their notes, as well as understand information. As the smartpen links both audio and written words, it can be used as an AT for students who find it difficult to access information through reading. It can also be used for students who have a hard time keeping up during the lessons. Students can also benefit from the input while they are studying. As such, the smartpen helps with notetaking: After class is over, students then can listen to the lecture and add any extra details to the written notes they took in class. This can help students who find it difficult to keep pace with the lesson. Another benefit would be that instead of taking notes in class, students can simply record the lecture, and just listen to the teacher. This will help students with learning disabilities who struggle to take down notes because they get stuck spelling a word, organizing their thoughts, or writing something the teacher said properly. One of the most important features of the pen is its ability to link the audio lecture from the class to what the student has written down. This allows students to be able to follow what they have written down with what the teacher was going over during the lecture. By linking the audio to what the student has written, the smartpen can also benefit students who have difficulty remembering and understanding what went on in class that day when it comes time to do homework or take an exam Patti and Garland While some of these strategies may not work for every student, there will always be one that will work. Teachers just need to keep experimenting. And, not just special education teachers who have students with IEPs in their classes, but all teachers as well. Classes need to be more inclusive for students because there may be students who do not need to be in special education classes, but are learning disabled. There also may be students who have not been properly diagnosed with a learning disability. As time moves forward, new strategies will be developed, each making the life of a learning-disabled student a little easier. Works Cited Childers, Pamela B. Hobson, and Joan A. Teaching Writing in a Visual World.

2: 'The Objective of Education Is Learning, Not Teaching' - Knowledge@Wharton

8 EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING WRITING The principal aim of this study was to analyse the teaching of writing and its impact on learners' competence and.

Introduce multi-genre writing in the context of community service. When Michael rode his bike without training wheels for the first time, this occasion provided a worthwhile topic to write about. We became a community. Establish an email dialogue between students from different schools who are reading the same book. When high school teacher Karen Murar and college instructor Elaine Ware, teacher-consultants with the Western Pennsylvania Writing Project, discovered students were scheduled to read the August Wilson play *Fences* at the same time, they set up email communication between students to allow some "teacherless talk" about the text. Rather than typical teacher-led discussion, the project fostered independent conversation between students. Formal classroom discussion of the play did not occur until students had completed all email correspondence. Though teachers were not involved in student online dialogues, the conversations evidenced the same reading strategies promoted in teacher-led discussion, including predication, clarification, interpretation, and others. Back to top 3. Use writing to improve relations among students. Diane Waff, co-director of the Philadelphia Writing Project, taught in an urban school where boys outnumbered girls four to one in her classroom. The situation left girls feeling overwhelmed, according to Waff, and their "voices faded into the background, overpowered by more aggressive male voices. She then introduced literature that considered relationships between the sexes, focusing on themes of romance, love, and marriage. In the beginning there was a great dissonance between male and female responses. According to Waff, "Girls focused on feelings; boys focused on sex, money, and the fleeting nature of romantic attachment. Help student writers draw rich chunks of writing from endless sprawl. Jan Matsuoka, a teacher-consultant with the Bay Area Writing Project California, describes a revision conference she held with a third grade English language learner named Sandee, who had written about a recent trip to Los Angeles. I made a small frame out of a piece of paper and placed it down on one of her drawings – a sketch she had made of a visit with her grandmother. Back to top 5. For each letter of the alphabet, the students find an appropriately descriptive word for themselves. Students elaborate on the word by writing sentences and creating an illustration. In the process, they make extensive use of the dictionary and thesaurus. One student describes her personality as sometimes "caustic," illustrating the word with a photograph of a burning car in a war zone. Her caption explains that she understands the hurt her "burning" sarcastic remarks can generate. Back to top 6. Help students analyze text by asking them to imagine dialogue between authors. John Levine, a teacher-consultant with the Bay Area Writing Project California, helps his college freshmen integrate the ideas of several writers into a single analytical essay by asking them to create a dialogue among those writers. He tells his students, for instance, "imagine you are the moderator of a panel discussion on the topic these writers are discussing. The essay follows from this preparation. Back to top 7. Spotlight language and use group brainstorming to help students create poetry. The following is a group poem created by second grade students of Michelle Fler, a teacher-consultant with the Dakota Writing Project South Dakota. Underwater Crabs crawl patiently along the ocean floor searching for prey. Fish soundlessly weave their way through slippery seaweed Whales whisper to others as they slide through the salty water. And silent waves wash into a dark cave where an octopus is sleeping. Fler helped her students get started by finding a familiar topic. In this case her students had been studying sea life. She asked them to brainstorm language related to the sea, allowing them time to list appropriate nouns, verbs, and adjectives. The students then used these words to create phrases and used the phrases to produce the poem itself. Back to top 8. Ask students to reflect on and write about their writing. Douglas James Joyce, a teacher-consultant with the Denver Writing Project, makes use of what he calls "metawriting" in his college writing classes. He sees metawriting writing about writing as a way to help students reduce errors in their academic prose. Joyce explains one metawriting strategy: He instructs the student to write a one page essay, comparing and contrasting three sources that provide guidance on the established use of that particular convention, making sure a variety of sources are available. Ease into writing

workshops by presenting yourself as a model. Glorianne Bradshaw, a teacher-consultant with the Red River Valley Writing Project North Dakota , decided to make use of experiences from her own life when teaching her first-graders how to write. For example, on an overhead transparency she shows a sketch of herself stirring cookie batter while on vacation. She writes the phrase "made cookies" under the sketch. Then she asks students to help her write a sentence about this. She writes the words who, where, and when. Using these words as prompts, she and the students construct the sentence, "I made cookies in the kitchen in the morning. Then she asks them, "Tell me more. Do the cookies have chocolate chips? Does the pizza have pepperoni? Rather than taking away creativity, Bradshaw believes this kind of structure gives students a helpful format for creativity. Back to top Get students to focus on their writing by holding off on grading. Stephanie Wilder found that the grades she gave her high school students were getting in the way of their progress. The weaker students stopped trying. Other students relied on grades as the only standard by which they judged their own work. She continued to comment on papers, encourage revision, and urge students to meet with her for conferences. But she waited to grade the papers. It took a while for students to stop leafing to the ends of their papers in search of a grade, and there was some grumbling from students who had always received excellent grades. But she believes that because she was less quick to judge their work, students were better able to evaluate their efforts themselves. Erin Pirnot Ciccone, teacher-consultant with the Pennsylvania Writing and Literature Project , found a way to make more productive the "Monday morning gab fest" she used as a warm-up with her fifth grade students. She conceived of "Headline News. The writers then told the stories behind their headlines. As each student had only three minutes to talk, they needed to make decisions about what was important and to clarify details as they proceeded. On Tuesday, students committed their stories to writing. Give students a chance to write to an audience for real purpose. Slagle, high school teacher and teacher-consultant with the Louisville Writing Project Kentucky , understands the difference between writing for a hypothetical purpose and writing to an audience for real purpose. She illustrates the difference by contrasting two assignments. Write a review of an imaginary production of the play we have just finished studying in class. They must adapt to a voice that is not theirs and pretend to have knowledge they do not have. Slagle developed a more effective alternative: Practice and play with revision techniques. Mark Farrington, college instructor and teacher-consultant with the Northern Virginia Writing Project , believes teaching revision sometimes means practicing techniques of revision. An exercise like "find a place other than the first sentence where this essay might begin" is valuable because it shows student writers the possibilities that exist in writing. In his college fiction writing class, Farrington asks students to choose a spot in the story where the main character does something that is crucial to the rest of the story. At that moment, Farrington says, they must make the character do the exact opposite. Bernadette Lambert, teacher-consultant with the Kennesaw Mountain Writing Project Georgia , wondered what would happen if she had her sixth-grade students pair with an adult family member to read a book. She asked the students about the kinds of books they wanted to read mysteries, adventure, ghost stories and the adults about the kinds of books they wanted to read with the young people character-building values, multiculturalism, no ghost stories. Using these suggestions for direction, Lambert developed a list of 30 books. From this list, each student-adult pair chose one. They committed themselves to read and discuss the book and write separate reviews. Most of the students, says Lambert, were proud to share a piece of writing done by their adult reading buddy. Several admitted that they had never before had this level of intellectual conversation with an adult family member. Teach "tension" to move students beyond fluency. One day, in front of the class, she demonstrated tension with a rubber band. Looped over her finger, the rubber band merely dangled. The initial prompt read, "Think of a friend who is special to you. Write about something your friend has done for you, you have done for your friend, or you have done together. Students talked about times they had let their friends down or times their friends had let them down, and how they had managed to stay friends in spite of their problems. In other words, we talked about some tense situations that found their way into their writing. Encourage descriptive writing by focusing on the sounds of words. Ray Skjelbred, middle school teacher at Marin Country Day School, wants his seventh grade students to listen to language. He wants to begin to train their ears by asking them to make lists of wonderful sounding words. They may use their own words, borrow from other

contributors, add other words as necessary, and change word forms.

3: Using Writing as a Learning Tool | Centre for Teaching Excellence | University of Waterloo

The Center for Writing, Learning, and Teaching promotes collaboration, curiosity, and critical thinking among peers. We support the campus community in the pursuit of their academic and pedagogic goals, fostering a thoughtful learning community in which people with different experiences, values, and perspectives can grow together.

What is a Philosophy of Teaching Statement? A philosophy of teaching statement is a narrative that includes: Faculty and graduate teaching assistants are increasingly being asked to state their philosophy of teaching. This request may be in conjunction with the submission of a teaching portfolio for seeking academic positions, or as a regular component of the portfolio or dossier for promotion and tenure. Philosophy of teaching statements are also requested of candidates for teaching awards or grant applications. Why do teachers need to articulate their philosophy of teaching? What purposes does a philosophy of teaching serve? It has been recognized by many teachers that the process of identifying a personal philosophy of teaching and continuously examining, testifying, and verifying this philosophy through teaching can lead to change of teaching behaviors and ultimately foster professional and personal growth. In his book *The Skillful Teacher*, Stephen Brookfield points out that the development of a teaching philosophy can be used for several purposes: Knowing clearly what kind of dent you want to make in the world means that you must continually ask yourself the most fundamental evaluative questions of all – “What effect am I having on students and on their learning? A clear vision of a teaching philosophy provides stability, continuity, and long-term guidance. A well-defined philosophy can help them remain focused on their teaching goals and to appreciate the personal and professional rewards of teaching. There is no right or wrong way to write a philosophy statement, which is why it is so challenging for most people to write one. It is generally 1–2 pages in length. For some purposes, an extended description is appropriate, but length should suit the context. Use present tense, in most cases. Writing in first-person is most common and is the easiest for your audience to read. Most statements avoid technical terms and favor language and concepts that can be broadly appreciated. A general rule is that the statement should be written with the audience in mind. It may be helpful to have someone from your field read your statement and give you some guidance on any discipline-specific jargon and issues to include or exclude. It is not possible in many cases for your reader to come to your class to actually watch you teach. By including very specific examples of teaching strategies, assignments, discussions, etc. Help them to visualize what you do in the classroom and the exchange between you and your students. For example, can your readers picture in their minds the learning environment you create for your students? Make it memorable and unique. If you are submitting this document as part of a job application, remember that your readers on the search committee are seeing many of these documents. What is going to set you apart? What about you are they going to remember? Even in your own experience, you make choices as to the best teaching methods for different courses and content: Examples The following samples are written by winners of the Graduate Associate Teaching Award at OSU, and are examples of various formats you may choose to use.

4: Teaching Statements | Center for Teaching | Vanderbilt University

The teaching and learning cycle is outlined in some detail in the section Teaching-Learning Cycle: Reading and Writing Connections.. On this page. Writing an information report on farm animals.

Further resources What is a Teaching Statement? At its best, a Teaching Statement gives a clear and unique portrait of the author as a teacher, avoiding generic or empty philosophical statements about teaching. What Purposes does the Teaching Statement Serve? The Teaching Statement can be used for personal, professional, or pedagogical purposes. While Teaching Statements are becoming an increasingly important part of the hiring and tenure processes, they are also effective exercises in helping one clearly and coherently conceptualize his or her approaches to and experiences of teaching and learning. Reviewing and revising former statements of teaching philosophy can help teachers to reflect on their growth and renew their dedication to the goals and values that they hold. A Teaching Statement can address any or all of the following: You want to include sufficient information for picturing not only you in the process of teaching, but also your class in the process of learning. While Teaching Statements are probably longer at the tenure level i. Use narrative, first-person approach. This allows the Teaching Statement to be both personal and reflective. Be sincere and unique. Make it specific rather than abstract. Ground your ideas in concrete examples, whether experienced or anticipated. This will help the reader to better visualize you in the classroom. Do not ignore your research. Explain how you advance your field through teaching. Avoid jargon and technical terms, as they can be off-putting to some readers. Try not to simply repeat what is in your CV. Teaching Statements are not exhaustive documents and should be used to complement other materials for the hiring or tenure processes. Mention students in an enthusiastic, not condescending way, and illustrate your willingness to learn from your students and colleagues. Teaching is an evolving, reflective process, and Teaching Statements can be adapted and changed as necessary. What should students expect of you as a teacher? What is a method of teaching you rely on frequently? What do you want students to learn? How do you know your goals for students are being met? What should your students be able to know or do as a result of taking your class? How can your teaching facilitate student learning? How do you as a teacher create an engaging or enriching learning environment? What specific activities or exercises do you use to engage your students? What do you want your students to learn from these activities? How has your thinking about teaching changed over time? No single Teaching Statement can contain the answers to all or most of these inquiries and activities. This website includes five effective exercises to help you begin the writing process Teaching Goals Inventory , by Thomas A. Patricia Cross and their book Classroom Assessment Techniques. This report includes a useful rubric for evaluating teaching philosophy statements. This site provides an in-depth guide to teaching statements, including the definition of and purposes for a teaching statement, general formatting suggestions, and a self-reflective guide to writing a teaching statement. This document looks at four major components of a teaching statement, which have been divided into questionsâ€”specifically, to what end? This website offers strategies for preparing and formatting your teaching statement. Articles about Teaching Statements Grundman, Helen

5: Teaching Writing to Students with Learning Disabilities

Teaching Writing is an ongoing process, which Time4Learning facilitates in a number of ways. Most people agree that writing skills are increasingly important and often not adequately taught. When writing is taught in schools, writing instruction often takes a backseat to phonics, handwriting skills, and reading comprehension.

Center on English Learning and Achievement How does writing affect learning? A review of the research Robert L. The process of writing, they argued, closely resembles processes of speaking, thinking, and learning. Writing also leaves a "residue," a document that can serve as a tool for reflection, discussion, and revision. Writing might facilitate learning if its processes and products were thoughtful, expressive, and integrated in classroom discourse. Over the last twenty years, researchers have tested the efficacy of writing-to-learn in numerous studies, but the results of these studies have been ambiguous. Though many showed improved academic achievement from writing, others reported detrimental effects. There are several reasons why the effect of writing on learning may vary. Writing also takes time from other learning activities that are more or less productive. Students with low confidence, interest, or skill in writing might find additional writing tasks distracting and burdensome. And writing tasks might be well or poorly aligned with classroom assessments. Using statistical procedures to analyze the previous research on writing-to-learn, we sought to identify conditions that might best enhance the learning effects of writing. We identified 45 studies that compared normal classroom instruction to writing-intensive instruction on the same content. These studies had been conducted in elementary grades through college and in all sorts of subjects. We coded each study on fifteen variables representing its publication history, the quality of its research design, the context of the learning activities, the intensity of the writing treatment, and the types of writing tasks required of students. We looked for relations between study features and study outcomes measured as effect sizes. Findings In three-fourths of the studies, writers outperformed conventional students, but the typical improvement was a small one. In twenty-four of the studies, students completed writing assignments in class, so researchers could record the time spent on the writing tasks. What appears to matter more than the amount of time given to an assignment is the nature of the writing task, the kind of thinking that gets done. One factor reliably enhanced the effect of writing-to-learn: When writing prompts urged students to reflect on their learning processes - the challenges they faced and the strategies they employed - the educative effects of writing were substantially improved. In general, these studies and other research suggest that writing can benefit learning, not so much because it allows personal expression about subject matter as because it scaffolds metacognitive reflection on learning processes. And the cost need not be great: Additional research and classroom investigation should further clarify how writing benefits learning. It involves four phases: For more information about this study, contact Robert Bangert-Drowns at rbangert@albany.

6: Learning Objectives - Eberly Center - Carnegie Mellon University

The Teaching and Learning Cycle (TLC) is a pedagogical framework for scaffolding academic writing through deep and critical thinking tasks, academic discussions, interactive reading, and language development.

Each genre can take different forms. For example, a narrative could be a: This principle also applies to other genres, although in school English and across the curriculum, the generic structure is often an expectation for particular tasks and for particular audiences. Building the context or field Begin with the reading of a narrative for pleasure. This might involve reading a novel like *The Twits* as a serial, chapter by chapter over a period of time, or a shorter picture story book in one sitting. Discussion of the text might be guided by questions such as: Who are the characters in the narrative? How are they portrayed through the words? How are they portrayed through the images? What are the relationships or connections between the characters? When and where does the narrative take place? Does the setting change at different points in the narrative? What is the problem or complication in the narrative? Is there more than one problem or complication? How is the problem resolved? Depending on the text or image, this might involve a focus on: Do they use terms of endearment? How do the characters speak about other characters? What does this tell you about them? Whatever the teaching focus, careful selection of text and image for teaching purposes is important. Guided practice or joint construction Having examined a text or image in some detail, the students can now be supported through a joint construction of a text where the teaching focus examined through modelling the text is featured. This might be a paragraph or paragraphs, a stage of the narrative or a complete narrative, dependent on the age of the students and the focus. Students assume more responsibility throughout the guided practice stage as the teacher directs, questions and highlights the focus as the text is constructed. Teaching about the processes of writing form an important part of guided practice as the teacher and students plan, discuss and revise the text. Writing conferences with individual or small groups of students provide a means for additional support to be given. Teaching language in context 2nd ed. Academic literacies in the Middle Years: A framework for enhancing teacher knowledge and student achievement. New York and London: Direct instruction fit for purpose: *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy*, 39 3 , Re-conceptualizing knowledge about language and image for school English.

7: 30 Ideas for Teaching Writing - National Writing Project

A philosophy of teaching statement is a narrative that includes: your conception of teaching and learning; Writing in first-person is most common and is the.

It incorrectly assumes that for every ounce of teaching there is an ounce of learning by those who are taught. However, most of what we learn before, during, and after attending schools is learned without its being taught to us. A child learns such fundamental things as how to walk, talk, eat, dress, and so on without being taught these things. Adults learn most of what they use at work or at leisure while at work or leisure. Most of what is taught in classroom settings is forgotten, and much of what is remembered is irrelevant. In most schools, memorization is mistaken for learning. Most of what is remembered is remembered only for a short time, but then is quickly forgotten. How many remember how to take a square root or ever have a need to? Furthermore, even young children are aware of the fact that most of what is expected of them in school can better be done by computers, recording machines, cameras, and so on. They are treated as poor surrogates for such machines and instruments. Why should children or adults, for that matter be asked to do something computers and related equipment can do much better than they can? Teaching enables the teacher to discover what one thinks about the subject being taught. Schools are upside down: Students should be teaching and faculty learning. After lecturing to undergraduates at a major university, I was accosted by a student who had attended the lecture. You mean to say that everything you have taught in more than 50 years was not taught to you; you had to learn on your own? Recall that in the one-room schoolhouse, students taught students.

Ways of Learning There are many different ways of learning; teaching is only one of them. We learn a great deal on our own, in independent study or play. We learn a great deal interacting with others informally sharing what we are learning with others and vice versa. We learn a great deal by doing, through trial and error. Long before there were schools as we know them, there was apprenticeship learning how to do something by trying it under the guidance of one who knows how. They do not have to learn different things the same way. The objective of education is learning, not teaching. There are two ways that teaching is a powerful tool of learning. One aspect of explaining something is getting yourself up to snuff on whatever it is that you are trying to explain. This is a problem we all face all the time, when we are expected to explain something. This is one sense in which the one who explains learns the most, because the person to whom the explanation is made can afford to forget the explanation promptly in most cases; but the explainers will find it sticking in their minds a lot longer, because they struggled to gain an understanding in the first place in a form clear enough to explain. The second aspect of explaining something that leaves the explainer more enriched, and with a much deeper understanding of the subject, is this: Without that skill, I can only learn from direct experience; with that skill, I can learn from the experience of the whole world. Thus, whenever I struggle to explain something to someone else, and succeed in doing so, I am advancing my ability to learn from others, too.

Learning through Explanation This aspect of learning through explanation has been overlooked by most commentators. And that is a shame, because both aspects of learning are what makes the age mixing that takes place in the world at large such a valuable educational tool. Younger kids are always seeking answers from older kids sometimes just slightly older kids the seven-year old tapping the presumed life wisdom of the so-much-more-experienced nine year old, often much older kids. The older kids love it, and their abilities are exercised mightily in these interactions. They have to figure out what it is that they understand about the question being raised, and they have to figure out how to make their understanding comprehensible to the younger kids. The same process occurs over and over again in the world at large; this is why it is so important to keep communities multi-aged, and why it is so destructive to learning, and to the development of culture in general, to segregate certain ages children, old people from others. What went on in the one-room schoolhouse is much like what I have been talking about. In fact, I am not sure that the adult teacher in the one-room schoolhouse was always viewed as the best authority on any given subject! Long ago, I had an experience that illustrates that point perfectly. When our oldest son was eight years old, he hung around and virtually worshiped a very brilliant year-old named Ernie, who loved science. Our son was curious about everything in

the world. He was greatly annoyed. One might wonder how on earth learning came to be seen primarily a result of teaching. Moses, Socrates, Aristotle, Jesus – these were people who had original insights, and people came from far and wide to find out what those insights were. No one in his right mind thought that the only way you could become a philosopher was by taking a course from one of those guys. On the contrary, you were expected to come up with your own original worldview if you aspired to the title of philosopher. This was true of any and every aspect of knowledge; you figured out how to learn it, and you exposed yourself to people who were willing to make their understanding public if you thought it could be a worthwhile part of your endeavor. That is the basis for the formation of universities in the Middle Ages – places where thinkers were willing to spend their time making their thoughts public. By the way, this attitude toward teaching has not disappeared. When quantum theory was being developed in the second quarter of the twentieth century, aspiring atomic physicists traveled to the various places where different theorists were developing their thoughts, often in radically different directions. What was true of physics was equally true of art, architecture – you name it. It is still true today. Schools should enable people to go where they want to go, not where others want them to. Malaise of Mass Education The trouble began when mass education was introduced. Every word – teacher, student, school, discipline, and so on – took on meanings diametrically opposed to what they had originally meant. Consider this one example from my recent experience. I attended a conference of school counselors, where the latest ideas in the realm of student counseling were being presented. I went to a session on the development of self-discipline and responsibility, wondering what these concepts mean to people embedded in traditional schooling. George Orwell was winking in the back of the room. Today, there are two worlds that use the word education with opposite meanings:

8: Center for Writing, Learning & Teaching - University of Puget Sound

The best way to approach this is to start by writing measurable, learning objectives. Effective learning objectives use action verbs to describe what you want your students to be able to do by the end of the course or unit.

We will continue to offer our regular programs and services from our temporary offices and workshop locations. Furthermore, good communication skills are valuable assets both in and out of the classroom. When instructors provide students with opportunities to organize ideas and improve their ability to articulate those ideas, they contribute to both the education and professional development of their students. Here are some examples of types of short writing activities to try out in class. They will most likely need to be customized to suit the needs of particular classes across campus. As well, instructors might want to consider various marking options to help ease the paper load. In addition, length guidelines vary with each exercise; for some, a paragraph might suffice, while others could require a few pages of writing. With planning and forethought, these exercises, which provide short, interesting ways to jump-start learning and engage students with material, can be incorporated into almost any university course. Writing to encourage active thinking and learning Critical thinking problems are designed to convert students from passive to active learners who use course concepts to confront problems, gather and analyze data, prepare hypotheses, and formulate arguments. Most writing activities aim to promote the use of active critical thinking strategies on the part of students. To best obtain this goal, try assigning short, focussed problems that require thorough and innovative approaches to course material. When designing these activities, you might find it useful to use terms like formulate, develop, defend, appraise, criticize, judge, argue, determine, evaluate. Sample activities An instructor has decided that over the course of the term his class will complete five short writing assignments. One student, who is familiar only with the traditional term paper, is unsure why or how the instructor expects her to submit five written assignments. Write a dialogue between the two that comes to a mutually-satisfying resolution. Support or refute the following argument: He is trying to decide whether he should assign several short writing exercises or one or two longer ones. Consider the material being covered in his class, class size and desired learning outcomes. What insights can you offer about which type of assignment would be more appropriate and why? Create your own version of a Centre for Teaching Excellence tips sheet that offers ten ways to incorporate writing exercises into a class of over students. Be sure to explain why these exercises would be efficient and effective learning and teaching tools. Writing to explore The main goals for exploratory writing exercises are to clarify thinking, explore ideas, ask questions, reflect on learning, and search for connections between theory and practice. These exercises are not meant to refine and polish writing skills at least, not directly. Rather, exploratory writing exercises value process over product. Make clear to students that issues of writing style and structure are secondary in these activities while evidence of in-depth and thoughtful engagement with course material is highly valued. When designing these activities, use terms like discuss, explore, imagine, propose, consider, contemplate, respond, reflect. Sample activities Write a one page "thought letter" to a colleague at another university who is unfamiliar with the notion that writing can be an effective learning tool. In the letter, you might wish to discuss points that you found particularly useful in the TRACE writing workshop along with any concerns or reservations you might have about integrating these exercises into your classroom. Divide a blank sheet of paper into two columns. In the next column, "My mental work and brain exercises," consider the thought processes involved in doing each exercise. What specific challenges did each activity pose and how did you meet these challenges? Imagine that you are the soon-to-be retired CEO of a multi-national corporation. You have decided to say a few words at your retirement dinner about the writing workshop you attended years ago as a graduate student. What insights into effective communication and critical thinking skills did the workshop offer? How have you put these skills to good use in your professional career? Writing to explain These activities encourage critical thinking while, at the same time, they promote a thorough understanding of concepts through review and analysis. Exercises like these ask students to take on the role of instructor, making them search for ways to present course concepts so that they are clear and accessible. Not only do writing to explain exercises make students aware of context and

audience concerns; they also require students to step outside the course material in order to see it more objectively. Fresh ideas and a deeper understanding often result from such distancing techniques. When designing these exercises, use terms like list, select, describe, define, tell, express, explain, reveal, summarize, identify. Sample activities Define for your students what "effective writing" means in your discipline. Think of a field of study that is completely different from your own. A colleague in your field is interested in learning more about using writing as an effective learning tool. Explain to this colleague how to run a writing exercise that you plan to use in your classroom.

9: Service-Learning in Writing Courses

Teaching is a major component of almost all faculty positions. Surprisingly, then, even an almost complete lack of experience and training-in teaching and student learning-will probably not prove to be a major obstacle to your obtaining a faculty position.

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