

Teaching Writing



BERMUTU

Better Education through Reformed Management
and Universal Teacher Upgrading

Ministry of National Education
Directorate General of Quality Improvement of Teachers and Education Personnel
CENTER FOR DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT OF
LANGUAGE TEACHERS AND EDUCATION PERSONNEL
2009

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PREFACE

Center for Development and Empowerment of Teachers and Education Personnel (CDELTEP) or Pusat Pengembangan dan Pemberdayaan Pendidik dan Tenaga Kependidikan (PPPPTK) Bahasa is in charge of promoting the quality of language teachers and school principal, school supervisor, and so forth. Hence, the Center takes part in the project of Better Education Through Reformed Management and Universal Teacher Upgrading (BERMUTU) in order to multiply their competencies and professionalism.

As a government institution that is professionally managed, PPPPTK Bahasa provides quality education services aligned with education reform and globalisation demand projected by Education for All (EFA). Likewise the institution develops Teacher Competency Standards inclusive teaching materials as a means of achieving the required competencies.

In the framework of the Minister National of Education Decree Number 14 year 2005 on Teacher and Lecturer, the Center, in an effort to generate competent and professional teachers, organizes various training activities to fulfill specific competency standards and certification programs. Therefore, the development of these learning materials are expected to be a useful resource for teachers.

Finally, constructive criticisms for further materials improvement are welcome and can be sent to PPPPTK Bahasa, Jalan Gardu, Srengseng Sawah, Jagakarsa, Jakarta 12640; Telephone (021) 7271034, Facsimile (021) 7271032, and email: admin@pppptkbahasa.net

Jakarta, September 2009
Center Director,

Muhammad Hatta, Ph.D.
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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Background

We have defined communication as the expression, interpretation and negotiation of meaning. This definition is applicable not only to oral language but to written language as well. We express ourselves in writing as well as speaking.

Most L2 learners might agree when we say that writing is the most difficult skills for them to master. The difficulty lies not only in generating and organizing ideas, but also in translating these ideas into readable text. The skills involved in writing are highly complex. L2 writers have to pay attention to higher level skills of planning and organizing as well as lower skills of spelling, punctuation, word choice and so on. The difficulty then becomes more pronounced if their language proficiency is weak.

Furthermore, the main activities of English teacher in teaching writing in EFL context involve conceptualizing, planning, and delivering course. At first sight, this seem to be mainly an application of practical professional knowledge gained through hands-on classroom experience. Teachers' classroom decisions are always informed by their theories and beliefs about what writing is and how people learn to write. Everything the teacher do in the classroom, the methods and the materials they adopt, the teaching style they assume, the task they assign, are guided by both practical and theoretical knowledge, and their decisions can be more effective if that knowledge is explicit. A familiarity with what is known about writing, and about teaching writing, can therefore help us to reflect on our assumption and enables as to approach current teaching methods with an informed and critical eye.

B. Objectives

This module is one of the supplementary modules which aims to assist English teachers who are joining BERMUTU program. It provides some learning materials related to teaching writing especially for students in Junior High School.

C. Indicators

After discussing the materials in this module, it is expected that the participants will be able to:

1. explain the concept of writing as means of communication
2. explain the reasons why we teach writing
3. mention and describe the principles of teaching writing
4. explain the process of writing
5. explain the types of written texts for students in Junior High School based on English syllabus

6. explain types of activities in writing
7. design various tasks for writing activities.

CHAPTER II TEACHING WRITING

A. Writing as means of communication

“...writing will be used as a generic term to refer to all the various activities that involves transferring thought through paper. Writing that focuses primarily on the conventions of language form , i.e. grammatical or lexical structures, will be termed transcription. The term composition will refers to the skills involved in effectively developing and communicating an idea or making a point.”
(Dvorak quoted in Lee & Vanpatten, 1995, p. 214)

What have you written in your language in the past week?

Maybe you have not written anything in the past week! It is true that we do not write very much these days. But possibly you have written a shopping list, a postcard, a birthday card, some emails, your diary, or maybe a story. If you are studying, perhaps you written an essay. All of these examples of written text types. You can see from this list that text types involve different kinds of writing, e.g. single words only, short sentences or long sentences, paragraphs, special layouts , etc that show different ways of ordering information. When we learn to write , we need to learn how to deal with these different features.

All written text types have two things in common. Firstly, they are written to communicate a particular message, and secondly, they are written to communicate to somebody. Our message and who we are writing to influence what we write and how we write. For example, if you write a note to yourself to remind yourself to do something, you may write in terrible handwriting and use note form or single words that other people would not understand. If you write a note for your friend to remind him/ her of something, your note will probably be clearer and a bit more polite.

Writing is transforming thoughts into language; it means that we need to think about the content of our writing first and then arrange the ideas using appropriate language (e.g. grammar and vocabulary). Consequently we must learn about organizational skills in writing.

Writing involves several sub-skills. Some of these are related to accuracy, i.e. using the correct forms of language. Writing accurately involves spelling correctly, forming letters correctly, writing legibly, punctuating correctly, using correct layouts, choosing the right vocabulary, using grammar correctly, joining sentences correctly and using paragraphs correctly.

However, writing is not just about accuracy. It is also about having a message and communicating it successfully to other people. To do this, we need to have enough ideas, organise them well and express them in an appropriate style.

B. Why we teach writing?

Harmer (1998, p. 79) describes that the reasons for teaching writing to students of English as a foreign language include reinforcement, language development, learning style and, most important, writing as a skill in its own right

1. Reinforcement

Some students acquire a language in a purely oral/ aural way, but others benefit greatly from seeing the language written down. The visual demonstration of language construction is invaluable for both their understanding of how it all fits together and as an aid to committing the new language shortly after they have studied it. In other words, writing reinforces the grammatical structures, idioms and vocabulary that students have learned.

2. Language development

The actual process of writing helps students in acquiring a language because the process demands them to think and choose the sentences as well as words that they will use to express the ideas. This mental activity that students go through in order to construct proper written texts is all part of ongoing learning experience. Thus, the relationship between writing and thinking makes writing a valuable part of any language courses

3. Learning style

Some students are good at picking up language just by looking and listening. Others need time to think and to produce a language in a slower way to reflect what they have learned

4. Writing as a skill

The most important reason for teaching writing is that it is a basic language skill, just as important as speaking, listening and reading. Students need to know how to write letters, how to put written reports together, they need to know some of writing's special conventions such as punctuation, paragraph construction, etc just as the need to know how to pronounce spoken English appropriately

It could be said that writing is an important language skill. It is a productive skill that shows how skillful the student is in writing and discovers the talented students in this field. In addition, writing is a way that a student can express his ideas or thoughts on the paper.

In conclusion, writing is an activity that supports students to analyze and synthesize their discrete knowledge about language items into a text that is acceptable in an English writing convention by using the appropriate paragraph structure. Hence to be able to write students must write

TASK 1

Now think about your own language learning experience. How much writing did you do? Work in pairs and answer the following questions about writing in general and about writing in second language (English) in particular, based on your experiences.

1. What do recipes, letters of complaint, a recount, and a biography have in common?
 - a. The same person who writes them is the one who has to read them
 - b. The writer and the reader are presumably different people
 - c. They really don't have much in common
2. How much and what kinds of writing did you do in the first two years you studied English?
 - a. Fill in the blank sentences and / or paragraphs
 - b. Letters
 - c. Diaries
 - d. Stories
 - e. Invitation
 - f. Composition
 - g. Other: _____
3. Which of the following describe your writing experiences in your English? Indicate all that apply.
 - a. I was alone at home
 - b. My biggest problem was finding a way to say what I wanted to say
 - c. I was worried about making sure my grammar was correct

C. Principles of teaching writing

Bryne (1988) suggests the principles for teaching writing with the following points:

1. Teach students to write
Classroom writing tasks need to be set up in ways that reflect the writing process in good writers. We need to encourage our students to go through a process of planning, organizing, composing, and revising
2. Provide adequate and relevant experience of the written language

Care is needed in the selection of text types for both reading and writing, always bearing in mind that students can usually read language that is more advanced than they can produce.

3. Show students how the written language function as a system of communication

When setting writing tasks, teachers need to vary the audience, identify who the readers are to be, and try to make every piece of writing fulfill some kind of communicative purpose, either real or simulated, when students understand the context they are much likely to write effectively

4. Teach students how to write texts

Unless you encourage the production of whole texts, you will not have the opportunity to teach all the important features that can help to make a text coherent.

5. Teach students different kinds of texts

Students need opportunities to practice various forms and functions in writing and within these to develop the different skills involved in producing written texts

6. Make writing tasks realistic and relevant

Classroom writing tasks should reflect the ultimate goal of enabling students to write whole texts which form connected, conceptualized, and appropriate pieces of communication

7. Integrate writing with other skills

It will be better if teachers design a task or activities in which we integrate writing with other skills. For example when we ask students to listen to an English song, we can provide a worksheet in which the students will try to complete the missing words.

8. Use a variety of techniques and practice formats

Teachers need to provide various writing activities from the controlled writing to the guided writing until free writing. Each activity will need different techniques and practice. Collaborative writing in the classroom generates discussions and activities which encourage an effective process of writing

9. Provide appropriate support

The process of marking, with its traditional focus on error-correction by the teacher needs review and modification into a range of activities involving students as well as teachers, thus making revision an integral part of the process of writing.

Students need time in the classroom for writing. The teacher's task is to select or design activities which support them through the process of producing a piece of writing.

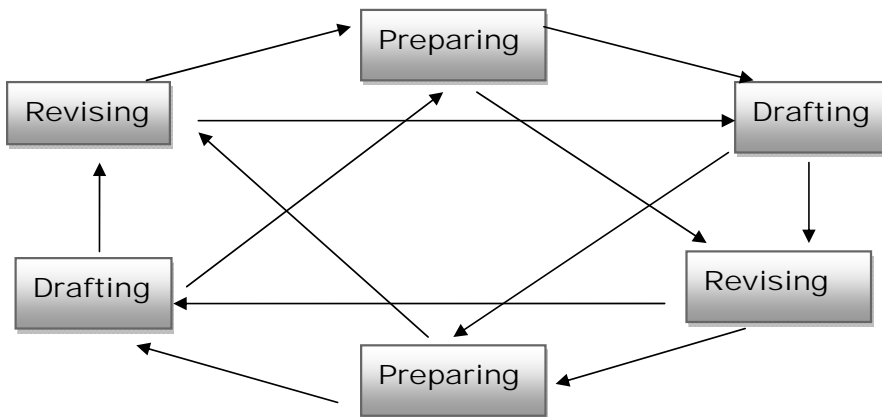
TASK 2

Work in group of four and discuss the following questions:

1. What are the most important things you want to learn from your teaching writing?
2. What kind of activities do you use?
3. Do you think an understanding of ideas about writing and teaching could help you to become a better teacher? Why or why not?

D. The Writing Process

In fact there are three main stages of the writing process : preparing to write, drafting and revising (Brown & Hood, 1998, p. 6). Then, in the practice, the process is often more like this:



and begin to organize it into a cohesive unit. There are a number of sub-processes entailed in this stage, among them: generating ideas, organizing ideas, and goal setting. In doing so, we usually need to use a brainstorming technique. Littlejohn (2005, p. 35 – 37) suggests five different brainstorming techniques:

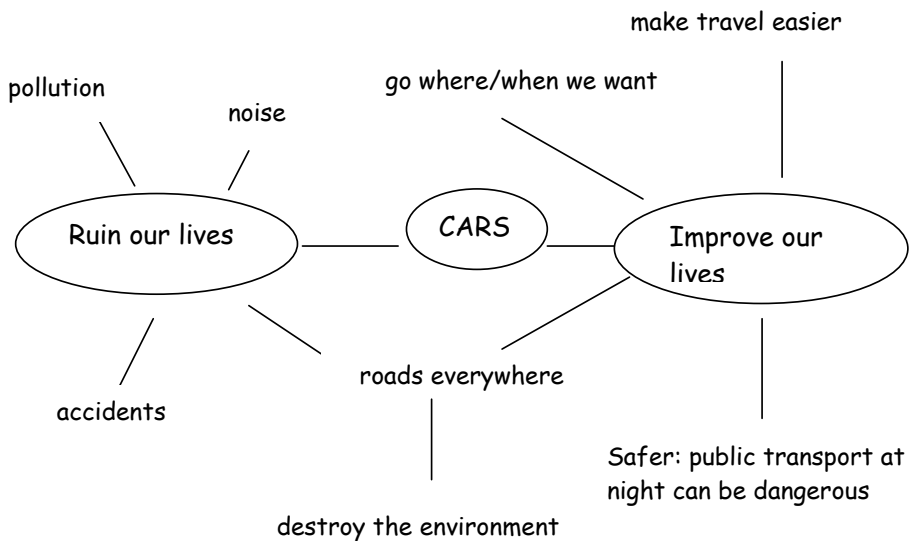
a. Free writing

With this technique, we just write, without stopping or correcting anything. We might begin with three dots and end with three dots and write whatever comes into our head in relation to the topic as we are writing. If we do not know the right words, spelling, grammar, etc, we just write it in our language or underline it or something. The most important thing is to keep writing to keep the ideas flowing.

b. Spidergrams

With this technique we think about the topic and note down the ideas as they occur to us. We can start by thinking first of main aspect and then points which derive from them. We might use different colored pen for each aspect and show link across aspects

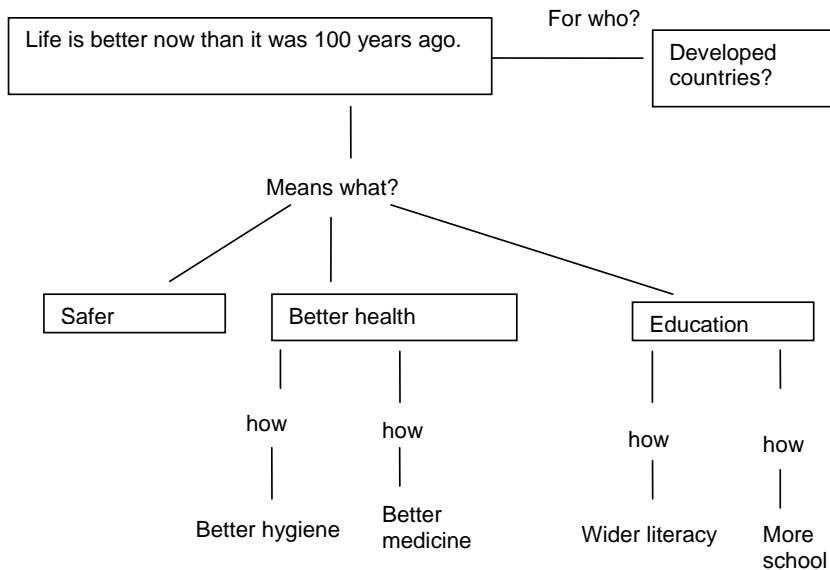
Example:



c. Tree diagram

This technique is similar to spidergrams, except that you give more thought to the connections between points. Particular questions run through your head as you write, helping you to build up ideas: *How...? What ...? Why...? When...? Where...? Who...? What does that mean? So what?*

Example:



d. Making lists

With listing, very little attempt is made to categorise our ideas as they appear, except perhaps some general headings. Connection between ideas are added after a lot of points have already been listed.

Example:

Being fat is a serious problem

- *heart works harder*
- *heart attack*
- *changing the amount of sugar in blood*
- *high blood pressure*

e. Scattered notes

Scattered notes involves writing ideas down as they comes into our mind. They are noted down not in any form of list or diagram but randomly around

the page so that our mind remain free to make connection, develop points or reject ideas afterwards.

Example:

<i>CPD</i>	<i>Planning Training How to Use Supplementary Module for BERMUTU Programs</i>
<i>Teachers' improvement</i>	<i>- The available modules only focus on CAR - Need materials about the subject matter - Ten supplementary modules are ready - training target : core teachers/ tutors</i>
<i>Maybe no need to discuss the whole modules</i>	
	<i>Provide the teaching or training scenario for IHT?</i>
<i>Modeling the activities in cluster might be important.</i>	

2. Drafting

It is the process or the stage in which writers render through into visible language , or we can call it as the physical act of writing. Here, the student transfers the information they have gathered and organized into a traditional format. This may take the shape of a simple paragraph, a one-page essay, or a multi-page report. Up until this stage, they may not be exactly certain which direction their ideas will go, but this stage allows them to settle on the course the paper will take. Teaching about writing can sometimes be as simple as evaluation good literature together, and exploring what makes the piece enjoyable or effective. It also involves helping a student choose topics for writing based on their personal interests. Modeling the writing process in front of our students also helps them see that even adults struggle for words and have to work at putting ideas together.

3. Revising

Revising or editing is usually the least favorite stage of the writing process, especially for beginning writers. Critiquing one's own writing can easily create tension and frustration. But as you support your young writers, remind them that even the most celebrated authors spend the majority of their time on this stage of the writing process. Revising can include adding, deleting, rearranging and substituting words, sentences, and even entire paragraphs to make their writing more accurately represent their ideas. It is often not a one-time event, but a

continual process as the paper progresses. When teaching revision, be sure to allow your child time to voice aloud the problems they see in their writing. This may be very difficult for some children, especially sensitive ones, so allow them to start with something small, such as replacing some passive verbs in their paper with more active ones.

TASK 3

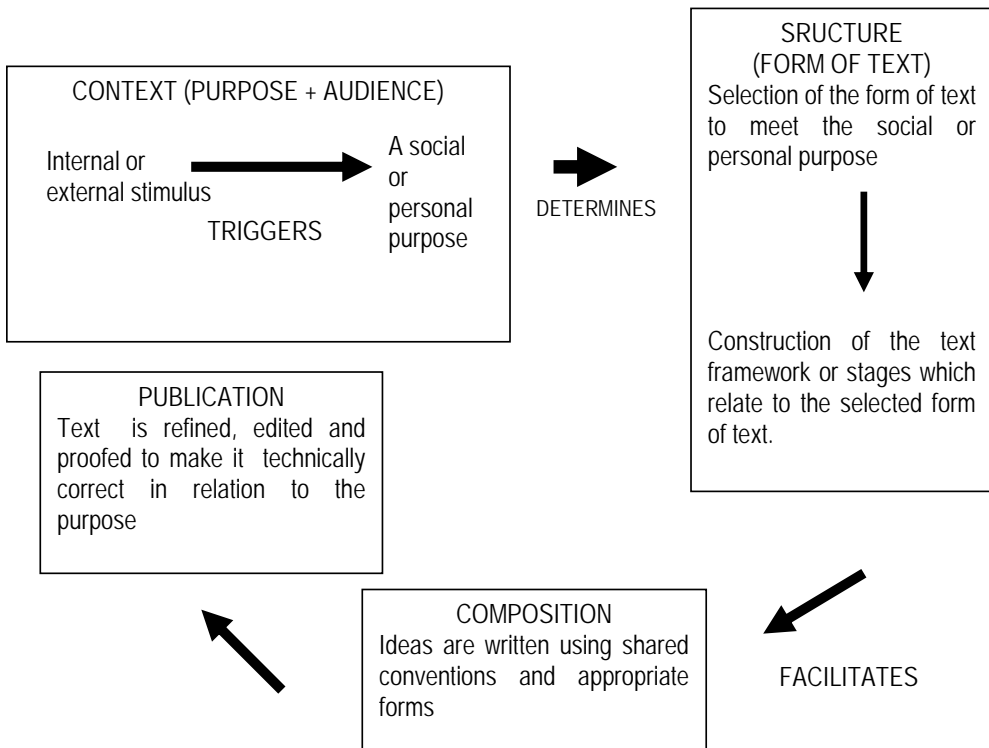
1. Work in pairs and discuss the five brainstorming techniques. Which one do you usually use or suggest to your students to use to help them in writing?
2. Choose one of the brainstorming techniques and try to note down the ideas about one of the following topics:
 - a. The importance of brainstorming for free writing activity.
 - b. Common difficulties in teaching writing for EFL students.

E. Teaching different written text types through various writing activities

1. Written text types

One of the principles of teaching writing mentions that teacher should expose students first to many kinds of English texts in order they have examples or ideas to the texts that they are expected to produce or write. Each text type has a different structure or organization of idea; each has different beginning, middle and end.

Raison et. al (2004, p. 13) suggest that in introducing various written text types in teaching writing, teachers need to show the students not only those preparing, drafting or revising stages but also the writing process in the following graphic:



Based on English syllabus for Junior High School, there are five written text types that the students need to learn in Junior High School: *procedure*, *descriptive*, *recount*, *narrative*, and *report*.

a. Procedure

PROCEDURE is a factual text designed to describe how something is accomplished through a sequence of actions or steps. The text structures consist of goal that followed by a series of steps oriented to achieving the goal.

Procedure	Text Structure
How to operate the washing machine	GOAL
a. Open the door, and load the machine with clothes b. Close the door securely, and put "Fizz" into the soap compartment. c. Select the washing temperature (hot or warm) d. Put a 50 piece into the slot on the right e. The clothes are ready.	SERIES OF STEPS

b. Descriptive

A description is a text type we use when we want to tell how something looks, smells, feels, acts, tastes, sounds, etc. We use descriptions to say what something or somebody like. A description is a picture painted with words. We can describe a person, other animals, plants, places, thought or feelings.

DESCRIPTION	STRUCTURE
<p>DESERT</p> <p>Desert are very dry and hot region where only few plant and animal can live.</p> <p>Desert in the world have several characteristics in common. First, they all have an annual rainfall or less than ten inches. Although there is no water on the surface of desert, there is much underground. Second, there are great difference between day and night temperatures. During the day, the temperature is very high, but at night it become very low. Finally, they are inhabited by plans and animals which have adapted to the lack of water and the changing temperatures.</p>	<p>IDENTIFICATION</p> <p>DESCRIPTION</p>

c. Recount

Journals, diaries, biographies, personal letter all share a familiar beginning, middle and end structure. Each of them begins with a brief introduction usually providing some background information to the writing (**orientation stage**). This is followed by a writing about recounting of different event , one after the other (**recount stages**). People use recount text to retell events for the purpose of informing or entertaining. The events are organized based on chronological or time order.

Recount	Text Structure
<p>Yesterday my family went to the zoo to see the elephant.</p> <p>When we got to the zoo, we went to the shop to buy some food to give to the animals. After getting the food we went to the nocturnal house where we saw some birds and reptiles which only come out at night. Before lunch we went for a ride on the elephant. It was a thrill to ride. Daddy nearly fell off when he let go of the rope. During lunch we fed some birds in the park. In the afternoon we saw the animal s being fed.</p> <p>When we returned home we were very tired but happy because we have so much fun.</p> <p>(Raison, et.al , 2004, p. 48)</p>	<p>Orientation: Introduces the time, place and situation</p> <p>Recounts: Series of events in the order they happened</p> <p>Reorientation: What resulted from the events</p>

d. Narrative

A story (or narrative) begins by introducing characters, places and circumstances. This is called the **orientation stage**. In the middle of the story different things happen to the characters, this is called the **complication stage**. At the end most of the problems are usually solved, this is called the **resolution stage**. Here is the example.

Story (narratives)	Text Structure
<p>THE FIRST BOOMERANG (by Jason P).</p> <p>One day, many years ago, there lived an aboriginal carpenter named Hesaw. He was well respected by his tribe and was noted for his creative sculptures. For many years he had carved creatures from the local jarrah trees.</p> <p>As he sat in the warm spring sunshine a sleepy snake slithered by. Hesaw decided to carve a snake. Slowly he got up to find the right piece of wood. When he was satisfied with his selection he</p>	<p>Orientation: Introduces the characters, the time and the place of the story.</p> <p>Complication: Describes different events</p>

REPORTS	STRUCTURE
<p>Whales</p> <p>Whales are sea-living mammals.</p> <p>They therefore breathe air but cannot survive on land. Some species are very large indeed and the blue whale, which can exceed 30m in length, is the largest animal to have lived on earth. Superficially, the whale looks rather like a fish, but there are important differences in its external structure: its tail consists of a pair of broad, flat, horizontal paddles (the tail of a fish is vertical) and it has a single nostril on top of its large, broad head. The skin is smooth and shiny and beneath it lies a layer of fat (blubber). This is up to 30cm in thickness and serves to conserve heat and body fluids.</p>	<p>Classification / definition</p> <p>Description of habit and habitat</p> <p>Description of physical features</p>

When teaching these different text types, teachers should:

- use them in the context of a particular subject or unit of work;
- provide various examples of the types being taught, for example, different kinds of stories,
- discuss the purpose of the text and the relationship between the writer and the reader;
- discuss the content of what is being written about and why the text is being written;
- look at how the text is organized, particularly at how information is organized in the beginning, middle and end stages of the text;
- look at how paragraphs and sentences are organized and the linking words and phrases used,
- explore the writer's choice of words and expressions

2. Various activities in writing

Doff (1988, p. 150 -154) suggests some writing activities that teachers can use in introducing or guiding the students to various written text types.

a. Controlled writing

The main importance of writing at this level is that it helps students to "learn". Writing new words and structure helps students to remember them and as writing is done more slowly and carefully than speaking, written practice helps to focus students attention on what they are learning. In doing so, the activities can be an integrated skill activity.

1) Gap filling

Listen to the teacher, then write out the complete sentence!

Paper.....wood. It.....the Chinese in

2) Reordering words

Write the sentences correctly . They are about a description of a nurse's working day.

We / six o' clock/ and / tea/ drink/ get up/at
Then/ the patients/ wake/ go/ and the wards/ we/ round
Sometimes/ medicine/ injections/ them/ we/ or /give

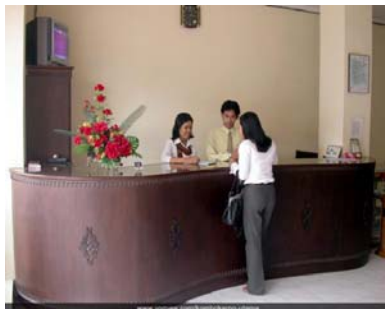
3) Substitution

Write a true sentences like this about yourself!

Joe enjoys playing football and reading adventure stories.

4) Correct the fact

Rewrite the sentences so that they match the pictures.



At the office, the staff are talking to the guest. The guest is sitting on the chair while listening to the woman's explaining about a form. The man brings her a cup of tea.

b. Guided writing

As soon as the students have mastered basic skills of sentence writing, students need to progress beyond very controlled writing to freer paragraph writing. However, students will make this transition more easily and learn more if we can guide their writing. There are two main ways of doing this (Doff, 1988, p. 153)

1) By giving a short text as a model

Students read a short text, and perhaps study particular features of it (e.g. the way sentences are joined, the use of verb tenses, the use of the passive). They then write a paragraph which is similar, but involves some changes.

Examples of texts that could be used: Students read a paragraph about a student's day, then write about their own day; students read a description of a car, then write descriptions of other cars; students read a description of a town, then write descriptions of their hometown or other cities that they might have visited.

2) By doing oral preparation for the writing

Another way of guiding paragraph writing is to do oral preparation beforehand with the whole class; the students make suggestions, and the teacher builds up an outline or a list of key expressions on the board. The students then use this as a basis for their writing. This approach has several advantages:

It is flexible: it can be done in different ways according to the interests and ability of the class.

Ideas about what to write come from the students themselves; this makes the activity much more interesting and involves the class more.

It does not require specially-prepared texts or other material.

c. Free writing

Students here are considered to be able to use the pattern they have developed to write a particular text type. Teachers can guide them to use various techniques of brainstorming to help them to write.

TASK 4

Work in pairs and choose one type of written text for students in Junior High School based on the syllabus and design the activities you can give to your students. Explain the steps how you will deliver those activities to your students.

CHAPTER III CLOSING REMARKS

This supplementary module has highlighted that writing is a part of language skills that have to be taught to the students, since it is as equally important to be developed as speaking. In discussing the importance of teaching writing, this module has pointed how writing involves in our daily communication and some reasons why we need to teach writing. They include the fact that writing is part of reinforcement, language development, learning style, and writing as a skill.

One of the principles of teaching writing states that a teacher should expose students first to many kinds of English texts in order they have examples or ideas to the texts that they are expected to produce or write. Each text type has a different structure or organization of idea; each has different beginning, middle and end. Based on the English syllabus in Indonesia, there are some types of written text that students in Junior High School should know such as descriptive, report, recount, procedure, and narrative. Teachers can help the students to learn how to write by providing different writing activities, started from the controlled one to the guided writing until students are considered to be ready to move to a free writing activity. Related to the writing process, teachers also need to show the students how to plan, to make draft, and to revise for their writing. In doing so, teachers need to call students' contribution for their own learning through collaborative activities in writing.

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ATTACHMENT 1

**TABLE FOR DETERMINING LEARNING PRIORITY OF THE SUPPLEMENTARY
MODUL**

NO.	ASPECT / TOPIC	PRIORITY		
		1	2	3
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				

1. First choice (1) : Teachers think that the material is understandable enough and does not need to be discussed in the cluster.
2. Second choice (2) : The material will be discussed only among teachers cluster considering it is not too difficult.
3. Third choice (3) : The material need to be guided by the key teachers and implemented at the cluster.

.....2009

Teacher

.....

ATTACHMENT 2

OBSERVATION SHEET OF TEACHING WRITING (Alternatif 1)

TEACHERS' NAME :
SUBJECT :
SCHOOL :
TEACHING AT CLASS :

NO.	ACTIVITIES	COMMENT ON STUDENTS' ACTIVITIES

.....2009
Observer

.....

ATTACHMENT 3

OBSERVATION SHEET OF TEACHING WRITING (Alternatif 2)

Teacher's name :
 Subject :
 Competence Standard :
 Basic Competence :
 Teaching at class :
 School :

NO	Aspect	Result				
		A	B	C	D	E
1.	The objective of teaching is formulated specifically.					
2.	The objective of teaching is achievable.					
3.	The indicators are in accordance with basic competence.					
4.	The pre writing can expose students to the coming writing.					
5.	The teacher gives clear instructions.					
6.	Teacher gives enough models how to write.					
7.	Teacher asks students some questions on the model.					
8.	The students are highly involved during writing session.					
9.	Media used supports the teaching					
10.	Students get enough time to produce their own writing.					
11.	The students can sum up how to write.					
12.	The teacher assists students who find problem.					

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ATTACHMENT 4

The Ideas of Teaching Writing

1. Use the shared events of students' lives to inspire writing.

Debbie Rotkow, a co-director of the Coastal Georgia Writing Project, makes use of the real-life circumstances of her first grade students to help them compose writing that, in Frank Smith's words, is "natural and purposeful."

When a child comes to school with a fresh haircut or a tattered book bag, these events can inspire a poem. When Michael rode his bike without training wheels for the first time, this occasion provided a worthwhile topic to write about. A new baby in a family, a lost tooth, and the death of one student's father were the playful or serious inspirations for student writing.

Says Rotkow: "Our classroom reverberated with the stories of our lives as we wrote, talked, and reflected about who we were, what we did, what we thought, and how we thought about it. We became a community."

ROTKOW, DEBBIE. 2003. "Two or Three Things I Know for Sure About Helping Students Write the Stories of Their Lives," *The Quarterly* (25) 4.

2. 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.

MURAR, KAREN, and ELAINE WARE. 1998. "Teacherless Talk: Impressions from Electronic Literacy Conversations." *The Quarterly* (20) 3.

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."

Determined not to ignore this unhealthy situation, Waff urged students to face the problem head-on, asking them to write about gender-based problems in their journals. She then introduced literature that considered relationships between the sexes, focusing on themes of romance, love, and marriage. Students wrote in response to works as diverse as de Maupassant's "The Necklace" and Dean Myers's *Motown and DiDi*.

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." But as the students continued to write about and discuss their honest feelings, they began to notice that they had similar ideas on many issues. "By confronting these gender-based problems directly," says Waff, "the effect was to improve the lives of individual students and the social well-being of the wider school community."

WAFF, DIANE. 1995. "Romance in the Classroom: Inviting Discourse on Gender and Power." *The Quarterly* (17) 2.

4. 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 told her I wanted her story to have more focus," writes Matsuoka. "I could tell she was confused so I made rough sketches representing the events of her trip. 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."

"Focus, I told her, means writing about the memorable details of the visit with your grandmother, not everything else you did on the trip."

"'Oh, I get it,' Sandee smiled, 'like just one cartoon, not a whole bunch.'"

Sandee's next draft was more deep than broad.

MATSUOKA, JAN. 1998. "Revising Revision: How My Students Transformed Writers' Workshop." *The Quarterly* (20) 1.

5. Work with words relevant to students' lives to help them build vocabulary.

Eileen Simmons, a teacher-consultant with the Oklahoma State University Writing Project, knows that the more relevant new words are to students' lives, the more likely they are to take hold.

In her high school classroom, she uses a form of the children's ABC book as a community-building project. 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.

SIMMONS, EILEEN. 2002. "Visualizing Vocabulary." *The Quarterly* (24) 3.

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. Consider the three writers and construct a dialogue among the four 'voices' (the three essayists plus you)."

Levine tells students to format the dialogue as though it were a script. The essay follows from this preparation.

LEVINE, JOHN. 2002. "Talking Texts: Writing Dialogue in the College Composition Classroom." *The Quarterly* (24) 2.

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 Flee, 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.*

Fleer 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.

As a group, students put together words in ways Fleer didn't believe many of them could have done if they were working on their own, and after creating several group poems, some students felt confident enough to work alone.

FLEER, MICHELLE. 2002. "Beyond 'Pink is a Rose.'" *The Quarterly* (24) 4.

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: After reading each essay, he selects one error that occurs frequently in a student's work and points out each instance in which the error is made. 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.

"I want the student to dig into the topic as deeply as necessary, to come away with a thorough understanding of the how and why of the usage, and to understand any debate that may surround the particular usage."

JOYCE, DOUGLAS JAMES. 2002. "On the Use of Metawriting to Learn Grammar and Mechanics." *The Quarterly* (24) 4.

9. 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."

Next, each student returns to the sketch he or she has made of a summer vacation activity and, with her help, answers the same questions answered for Bradshaw's drawing. Then she asks them, "Tell me more. Do the cookies have chocolate chips? Does the pizza have pepperoni?" These facts lead to other sentences.

Rather than taking away creativity, Bradshaw believes this kind of structure gives students a helpful format for creativity.

BRADSHAW, GLORIANNE. 2001. "Back to Square One: What to do When Writing Workshop Just Doesn't Work." *The Quarterly* (23) 1.

10. 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.

"I decided to postpone my grading until the portfolios, which contained a selection of student work, were complete," Wilder says. 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.

WILDER, STEPHANIE. 1997. "Pruning Too Early: The Thorny Issue of Grading Student Writing." *The Quarterly* (19) 4.

11. Use casual talk about students' lives to generate writing.

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." As students entered the classroom on Monday mornings, they wrote personal headlines about their weekends and posted them on the bulletin board. A headline might read "Fifth-Grader Stranded at Movie Theatre" or "Girl Takes on Responsibility as Mother's Helper."

After the headlines had been posted, students had a chance to guess the stories behind them. 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. They began to rely on suspense and "purposeful ambiguity" to hold listeners' interest.

On Tuesday, students committed their stories to writing. Because of the "Headline News" experience, Ciccone's students have been able to generate writing that is focused, detailed, and well ordered.

CICCONE, ERIN (PIRNOT). 2001. "A Place for Talk in Writers' Workshop." *The Quarterly* (23) 4.

12. Give students a chance to write to an audience for real purpose.

Patricia A. 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.

She began with: "Imagine you are the drama critic for your local newspaper. Write a review of an imaginary production of the play we have just finished studying in class." This prompt asks students to assume the contrived role of a professional writer and drama critic. 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: "Write a letter to the director of your local theater company in which you present arguments for producing the play that we have just finished studying in class." This prompt, Slagle says, allows the writer her own voice, building into her argument concrete references to personal experience. "Of course," adds Slagle, "this prompt would constitute authentic writing only for those students who, in fact, would like to see the play produced."

SLAGLE, PATRICIA A. 1997. "Getting Real: Authenticity in Writing Prompts." *The Quarterly* (19) 3.

13. 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.

For Farrington's students, practice can sometime turn to play with directions to:

- add five colors
- add four action verbs
- add one metaphor
- add five sensory details.

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.

"Playing at revision can lead to insightful surprises," Farrington says. "When they come, revision doesn't seem such hard work anymore."

FARRINGTON, MARK. 1999. "Four Principles Toward Teaching the Craft of Revision." *The Quarterly* (21) 2.

14. Pair students with adult reading/writing buddies.

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.

LAMBERT, BERNADETTE. 1999. "You and Me and a Book Makes Three." *The Quarterly* (21) 3.

15. Teach "tension" to move students beyond fluency.

Suzanne Linebarger, a co-director of the Northern California Writing Project, recognized that one element lacking from many of her students' stories was tension. One day, in front of the class, she demonstrated tension with a rubber band. Looped over her finger, the rubber band merely dangled. "However," she told the students, "when I stretch it out and point it (not at a student), the rubber band suddenly becomes more interesting. It's the tension, the potential energy, that rivets your attention. It's the same in writing."

Linebarger revised a generic writing prompt to add an element of tension. 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."

Linebarger didn't want responses that settled for "my best friend was really good to me," so "during the rewrite session we talked about how hard it is to stay friends when met with a challenge. 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."

LINEBARGER, SUZANNE. 2001. "Tensing Up: Moving From Fluency to Flair." *The Quarterly* (23) 3.

16. 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. "This is strictly a listening game," says Skjelbred. "They shouldn't write *lunch* just because they're hungry." When the collective list is assembled, Skjelbred asks students to make sentences from some of the words they've collected. They may use their own words, borrow from other contributors, add other words as necessary, and change word forms.

Among the words on one student's list: *tumble, detergent, sift, bubble, syllable, creep, erupt, and volcano*. The student writes:

A man loads his laundry into the tumbling washer, the detergent sifting through the bubbling water.

The syllables creep through her teeth.

The fog erupts like a volcano in the dust.

"Unexpected words can go together, creating amazing images," says Skjelbred.

SKJELBRED, RAY. 1997. "Sound and Sense: Grammar, Poetry, and Creative Language." *The Quarterly* (19) 4.

17. Require written response to peers' writing.

Kathleen O'Shaughnessy, co-director of the National Writing Project of Acadiana (Louisiana), asks her middle school students to respond to each others' writing on Post-it Notes. Students attach their comments to a piece of writing under consideration.

"I've found that when I require a written response on a Post-it instead of merely allowing students to respond verbally, the responders take their duties more seriously and, with practice, the quality of their remarks improves."

One student wrote:

While I was reading your piece, I felt like I was riding a roller coaster. It started out kinda slow, but you could tell there was something exciting coming up. But then it moved real fast and stopped all of a sudden. I almost needed to read it again the way you ride a roller coaster over again because it goes too fast.

Says O'Shaughnessy, "This response is certainly more useful to the writer than the usual 'I think you could, like, add some more details, you know?' that I often overheard in response meetings."

O'SHAUGHNESSY, KATHLEEN. 2001. "Everything I Know About Teaching Language Arts, I Learned at the Office Supply Store." *The Quarterly* (23) 2.

18. Make writing reflection tangible.

Anna Collins Trest, director of the South Mississippi Writing Project, finds she can lead upper elementary school students to better understand the concept of "reflection" if she anchors the discussion in the concrete and helps students establish categories for their reflective responses.

She decided to use mirrors to teach the reflective process. Each student had one. As the students gazed at their own reflections, she asked this question: "What can you think about while looking in the mirror at your own reflection?" As they answered, she categorized each response:

I think I'm a queen - pretending/imagining
I look at my cavities - examining/observing
I think I'm having a bad hair day - forming opinions
What will I look like when I am old? - questioning

My hair is parted in the middle - describing
I'm thinking about when I broke my nose - remembering
I think I look better than my brother - comparing
Everything on my face looks sad today - expressing emotion.

Trest talked with students about the categories and invited them to give personal examples of each. Then she asked them to look in the mirrors again, reflect on their images, and write.

"Elementary students are literal in their thinking," Trest says, "but that doesn't mean they can't be creative."

TREST, ANNA COLLINS. 1999. "I was a Journal Topic Junkie." *The Quarterly* (21) 4.

19. Make grammar instruction dynamic.

Philip Ireland, teacher-consultant with the San Marcos Writing Project (California), believes in active learning. One of his strategies has been to take his seventh-graders on a "preposition walk" around the school campus. Walking in pairs, they tell each other what they are doing:

I'm stepping off the grass.
I'm talking to my friend.

"Students soon discover that everything they do contains prepositional phrases. I walk among my students prompting answers," Ireland explains.

"I'm crawling *under the tennis net*," Amanda proclaims from her hands and knees. "The prepositional phrase is *under the net*."

"The preposition?" I ask.

"*Under*."

IRELAND, PHILIP. 2003. "It Seemed Like a Good Idea at the Time." *The Quarterly* (25) 3.

20. Ask students to experiment with sentence length.

Kim Stafford, director of the Oregon Writing Project at Lewis and Clark College, wants his students to discard old notions that sentences should be a certain length. He explains to his students that a writer's command of long and short

sentences makes for a "more pliable" writing repertoire. He describes the exercise he uses to help students experiment with sentence length.

"I invite writers to compose a sentence that goes on for at least a page - and no fair cheating with a semicolon. Just use 'and' when you have to, or a dash, or make a list, and keep it going." After years of being told not to, they take pleasure in writing the greatest run-on sentences they can.

"Then we shake out our writing hands, take a blank page, and write from the upper left to the lower right corner again, but this time letting no sentence be longer than four words, but every sentence must have a subject and a verb."

Stafford compares the first style of sentence construction to a river and the second to a drum. "Writers need both," he says. "Rivers have long rhythms. Drums roll."

STAFFORD, KIM. 2003. "Sentence as River and as Drum." *The Quarterly* (25) 3.

21. Help students ask questions about their writing.

Joni Chancer, teacher-consultant of the South Coast Writing Project (California), has paid a lot of attention to the type of questions she wants her upper elementary students to consider as they re-examine their writing, reflecting on pieces they may make part of their portfolios. Here are some of the questions:

*Why did I write this piece? Where did I get my ideas?
Who is the audience and how did it affect this piece?
What skills did I work on in this piece?
Was this piece easy or difficult to write? Why?
What parts did I rework? What were my revisions?
Did I try something new?
What skills did I work on in this piece?
What elements of writer's craft enhanced my story?
What might I change?
Did something I read influence my writing?
What did I learn or what did I expect the reader to learn?
Where will I go from here? Will I publish it? Share it?
Expand it? Toss it? File it?*

Chancer cautions that these questions should not be considered a "reflection checklist," rather they are questions that seem to be addressed frequently when writers tell the story of a particular piece.

CHANCER, JONI. 2001. "The Teacher's Role in Portfolio Assessment." *In The Whole Story: Teachers Talk About Portfolios*, edited by Mary Ann Smith and Jane Juska. Berkeley, California: National Writing Project.

22. Challenge students to find active verbs.

Nancy Lilly, co-director of the Greater New Orleans Writing Project, wanted her fourth and fifth grade students to breathe life into their nonfiction writing. She thought the student who wrote this paragraph could do better:

The jaguar is the biggest and strongest cat in the rainforest. The jaguar's jaw is strong enough to crush a turtle's shell. Jaguars also have very powerful legs for leaping from branch to branch to chase prey.

Building on an idea from Stephanie Harvey (*Nonfiction Matters*, Stenhouse, 1998) Lilly introduced the concept of "nouns as stuff" and verbs as "what stuff does."

In a brainstorming session related to the students' study of the rain forest, the class supplied the following assistance to the writer:

Stuff/Nouns : What Stuff Does/Verbs

jaguar : leaps, pounces

jaguar's : legs pump

jaguar's : teeth crush

jaguar's : mouth devours

This was just the help the writer needed to create the following revised paragraph:

As the sun disappears from the heart of the forest, the jaguar leaps through the underbrush, pumping its powerful legs. It spies a gharial gliding down the river. The jungle cat pounces, crushing the turtle with his teeth, devouring the reptile with pleasure.

LILLY, NANCY. "Dead or Alive: How will Students' Nonfiction Writing Arrive?" *The Quarterly* (25) 4.

23. Require students to make a persuasive written argument in support of a final grade.

For a final exam, Sarah Lorenz, a teacher-consultant with the Eastern Michigan Writing Project, asks her high school students to make a written argument for the grade they think they should receive. Drawing on work they have done over

the semester, students make a case for how much they have learned in the writing class.

"The key to convincing me," says Lorenz, "is the use of detail. They can't simply say they have improved as writers-they have to give examples and even quote their own writing...They can't just say something was helpful- they have to tell me why they thought it was important, how their thinking changed, or how they applied this learning to everyday life."

LORENZ, SARAH. 2001. "Beyond Rhetoric: A Reflective Persuasive Final Exam for the Writing Classroom." *The Quarterly* (23) 4.

24. Ground writing in social issues important to students.

Jean Hicks, director, and Tim Johnson, a co-director, both of the Louisville Writing Project (Kentucky), have developed a way to help high school students create brief, effective dramas about issues in their lives. The class, working in groups, decides on a theme such as jealousy, sibling rivalry, competition, or teen drinking. Each group develops a scene illustrating an aspect of this chosen theme.

Considering the theme of sibling rivalry, for instance, students identify possible scenes with topics such as "I Had It First" (competing for family resources) and "Calling in the Troops" (tattling). Students then set up the circumstances and characters.

Hicks and Johnson give each of the "characters" a different color packet of Post-it Notes. Each student develops and posts dialogue for his or her character. As the scene emerges, Post-its can be added, moved, and deleted. They remind students of the conventions of drama such as conflict and resolution. Scenes, when acted out, are limited to 10 minutes.

"It's not so much about the genre or the product as it is about creating a culture that supports the thinking and learning of writers," write Hicks and Johnson.

HICKS, JEAN and TIM JOHNSON. 2000. "Staging Learning: The Play's the Thing." *The Quarterly* (22) 3.

25. Encourage the "framing device" as an aid to cohesion in writing.

Romana Hillebrand, a teacher-consultant with the Northwest Inland Writing Project (Idaho), asks her university students to find a literary or historical reference or a personal narrative that can provide a fresh way into and out of their writing, surrounding it much like a window frame surrounds a glass pane.

Hillebrand provides this example:

A student in her research class wrote a paper on the relationship between humans and plants, beginning with a reference to the nursery rhyme, 'Ring around the rosy, a pocket full of posies...' She explained the rhymes as originating with the practice of masking the stench of death with flowers during the Black Plague. The student finished the paper with the sentence, "Without plants, life on Earth would cease to exist as we know it; ashes, ashes we all fall down."

Hillebrand concludes that linking the introduction and the conclusion helps unify a paper and satisfy the reader.

HILLEBRAND, ROMANA. 2001. "It's a Frame Up: Helping Students Devise Beginning and Endings." *The Quarterly* (23) 1.

26. Use real world examples to reinforce writing conventions.

Suzanne Cherry, director of the Swamp Fox Writing Project (South Carolina), has her own way of dramatizing the comma splice error. She brings to class two pieces of wire, the last inch of each exposed. She tells her college students "We need to join these pieces of wire together right now if we are to be able to watch our favorite TV show. What can we do? We could use some tape, but that would probably be a mistake as the puppy could easily eat through the connection. By splicing the wires in this way, we are creating a fire hazard."

A better connection, the students usually suggest, would be to use one of those electrical connectors that look like pen caps.

"Now," Cherry says (often to the accompaniment of multiple groans), "let's turn these wires into sentences. If we simply splice them together with a comma, the equivalent of a piece of tape, we create a weak connection, or a comma splice error. What then would be the grammatical equivalent of the electrical connector? Think conjunction - *and*, *but*, *or*. Or try a semicolon. All of these show relationships between sentences in a way that the comma, a device for taping clauses together in a slapdash manner, does not."

"I've been teaching writing for many years," Cherry says. "And I now realize the more able we are to relate the concepts of writing to 'real world' experience, the more successful we will be."

CHERRY, SUZANNE. "I Am the Comma Splice Queen," *The Voice* (9) 1.

27. Think like a football coach.

In addition to his work as a high school teacher of writing, Dan Holt, a co-director with the Third Coast Writing Project (Michigan), spent 20 years coaching football. While doing the latter, he learned quite a bit about doing the former. Here is some of what he found out:

The writing teacher can't stay on the sidelines. "When I modeled for my players, they knew what I wanted them to do." The same involvement, he says, is required to successfully teach writing.

Like the coach, the writing teacher should praise strong performance rather than focus on the negative. Statements such as "Wow, that was a killer block," or "That paragraph was tight" will turn "butterball" ninth-grade boys into varsity linemen and insecure adolescents into aspiring poets.

The writing teacher should apply the KISS theory: Keep it simple stupid. Holt explains for a freshman quarterback, audibles (on-field commands) are best used with care until a player has reached a higher skill level. In writing class, a student who has never written a poem needs to start with small verse forms such as a chinupin or haiku.

Practice and routine are important both for football players and for writing students, but football players and writers also need the "adrenaline rush" of the big game and the final draft.

HOLT, DAN. 1999. "What Coaching Football Taught Me about Teaching Writing." *The Voice* (4) 3.

28. Allow classroom writing to take a page from yearbook writing.

High school teacher Jon Appleby noticed that when yearbooks fell into students' hands "my curriculum got dropped in a heartbeat for spirited words scribbled over photos." Appleby wondered, "How can I make my classroom as fascinating and consuming as the yearbook?"

Here are some ideas that yearbook writing inspired:

Take pictures, put them on the bulletin boards, and have students write captions for them. Then design small descriptive writing assignments using the photographs of events such as the prom and homecoming. Afterwards, ask students to choose quotes from things they have read that represent what they feel and think and put them on the walls.

Check in about students' lives. Recognize achievements and individuals the way that yearbook writers direct attention to each other. Ask students to write

down memories and simply, joyfully share them. As yearbook writing usually does, insist on a sense of tomorrow.

APPLEBY, JON. 2001. "The School Yearbook: A Guide to Writing and Teaching." *The Voice* (6) 3.

29. Use home language on the road to Standard English.

Eileen Kennedy, special education teacher at Medger Evers College, works with native speakers of Caribbean Creole who are preparing to teach in New York City. Sometimes she encourages these students to draft writing in their native Creole. The additional challenge becomes to re-draft this writing, rendered in patois, into Standard English.

She finds that narratives involving immigrant Caribbean natives in unfamiliar situations - buying a refrigerator, for instance - lead to inspired writing. In addition, some students expressed their thoughts more proficiently in Standard English after drafting in their vernaculars.

KENNEDY, EILEEN. 2003. "Writing in Home Dialects: Choosing a Written Discourse in a Teacher Education Class." *The Quarterly* (25) 2.

30. Introduce multi-genre writing in the context of community service.

Jim Wilcox, teacher-consultant with the Oklahoma Writing Project, requires his college students to volunteer at a local facility that serves the community, any place from the Special Olympics to a burn unit. Over the course of their tenure with the organization, students write in a number of genres: an objective report that describes the appearance and activity of the facility, a personal interview/profile, an evaluation essay that requires students to set up criteria by which to assess this kind of organization, an investigative report that includes information from a second source, and a letter to the editor of a campus newspaper or other publication.

Wilcox says, "Besides improving their researching skills, students learn that their community is indeed full of problems and frustrations. They also learn that their own talents and time are valuable assets in solving some of the world's problems - one life at a time."

WILCOX, JIM. 2003. "The Spirit of Volunteerism in English Composition." *The Quarterly* (25) 2.



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