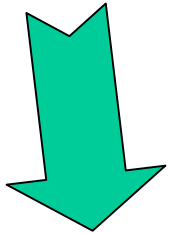


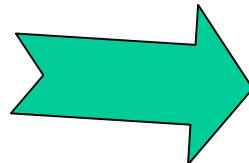
Curriculum: Writing Instruction

Stages of Writing

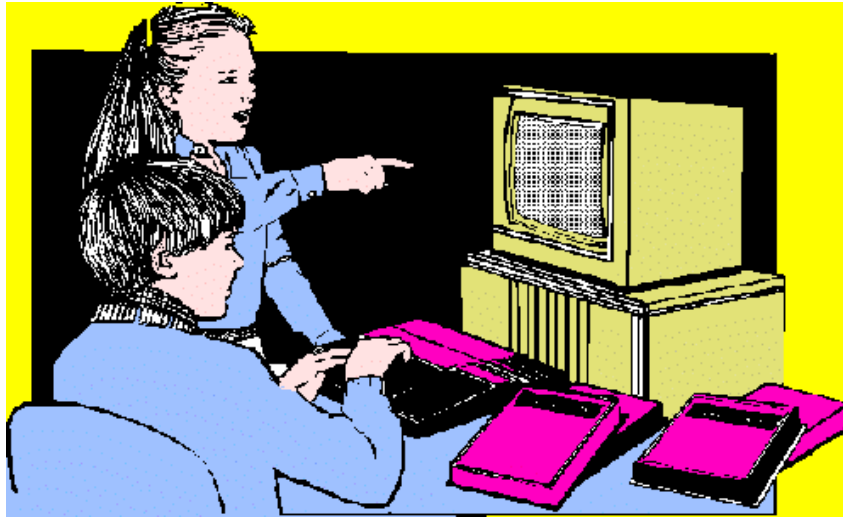
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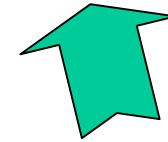
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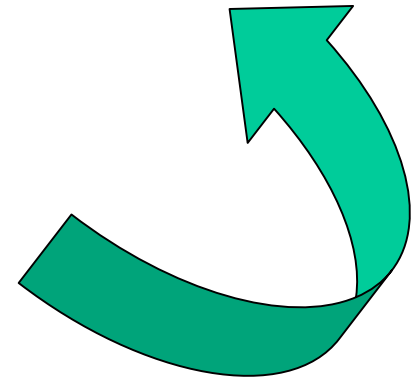
Revising



Cleaning
Up



Editing



Teachers Talk About Writing Strategies

Here is a list of what other teachers have named as a few of their favorite strategies.

Planning

- Literature themes, characters, plots
- Webbing
- Listing
- Journaling
- Drawing
- Three questions you want answered
- Reporter's formula
- Graphic organizers
- Other
 -
 -
 -

Drafting

- Timed writing
- Elaboration techniques
- Peer conferencing
- Other
 -
 -
 -

Revising

- Color coding (sentence starts, assertion/elaboration)
- Modeling through class revision
- Holding teacher conferences
- Holding peer conferences
- Showing good and poor examples
- Evaluating organization: listing; bracketing steps; position of parts

Editing

- Focus on one or two error types (e.g., selective scoring)
- Conduct mini-lessons
- Encourage student tracking of errors
- Implement single-focus peer editing
- Circle words that are possibly misspelled

Publishing

- Reading aloud
- Displaying student work
- Creating anthology of student work
- Entering contests, submitting to journals
- Composing letters to editor, famous person, congressman

(Adapted with permission from UTCRLA, 2003)

Techniques for Discovering a Topic

Part One: Effective Topic-Selection Techniques

1. Writing Territories:

Encourage students to develop "writing territories," that is, questions and topics we think about the most when we are alone or when we daydream, and to keep lists of questions related to these territories (Atwell, 1998; Murray, 1996).

2. Brainstorming:

Have students brainstorm by writing down everything that comes to mind about a writing territory or broad topic, such as "adolescence." After brainstorming for 5 to 15 minutes, model for the students how to search the list for "surprises" and/or "connections." Model how to draw lines between items, and group items in order to find a topic of interest to write about (Murray, 1996).

3. Mapping:

Have students place a general subject in the center of the page. They then draw lines branching off as related ideas are thought of. These branches are used to help search for fragments of related information. Before asking students to map, model how to use mapping to choose a topic (Murray, 1996).

4. Interview with Self:

The student asks himself or herself questions to determine what he or she might like to write about. Murray (1996) suggested the following as possible questions to ask:

- What has surprised me recently?
- How are things different from what they used to be?
- How will things be different in the future?
- What do I know that others need to know?
- Who would I like to get to know?
- What's not happening that should?
- What's happening that shouldn't?
- What process do I need to know?
- What makes me mad? Sad? Happy? Worried? Frightened

5. Large and Small Group Discussion or Partner Interview:

Group discussions can be used flexibly to identify a current event, a piece of literature, or a hot topic.

6. Memory Writing:

Memory writing is a technique that encourages writing about oneself. Have students capture four incidents from their pasts, as succinctly and realistically as possible. Have the students:

- go back in time 24 hours, remember an incident, and record it;
- go back in time 1 week, remember an event, and record it;
- go back 1 year and record an incident, concentrating on particular details;
- go back as far as possible and record their first clear memory (Kirby & Liner, 1988).

7. Making Lists:

Atwell (1998) suggested that students keep lists of past and potential purposes, audiences, topics, and genres, which they can access when seeking something to write about. Students can also keep lists of things that interest them, as well as lists of favorite things or accomplishments. Alternatively, the teacher can assign a general topic, such as "accidents," "courage," or "school." The teacher models, first listing one or two personal events that have to do with that topic. Students develop lists of their own experiences and share those lists. Sharing often helps trigger memories for those who are having difficulty. Teachers then need to model how to choose the best topic from the list (TEA, 1990).

8. Literature:

After students have read a story, novel, play, or poem, have them brainstorm possible themes of the piece and then plan an original piece of writing using the same theme. Alternatively, the student could write a story using one of the characters or a setting from the literature, or compare/contrast a character in one story with a character in another. Often, stories from literature can help trigger memories and promote personal applications (TEA, 1990).

Part Two: Barriers to and Solutions for Topic Selection

List three barriers that students face when they attempt to select a writing topic. Then, note any solutions you have identified for overcoming these barriers.

Barriers to Topic Selection	Recommendations for Overcoming Barriers
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(Adapted with permission from UTCRLA, 2003)

Techniques for Exploring a Topic and Determining What You Know

1. Free writing:

Write nonstop about your subject for 10 minutes, writing whatever comes to mind.

2. Clustering or webbing:

Use your subject as the nucleus word and create “clusters” of ideas related to your topic.

3. Pretend you are a reporter asking questions about the topic:

Answer questions beginning with *Who? What? Where? When? Why?* and *How?* about your topic.

4. Cubing:

Imagine that your topic is like a cube that can be explored from many different angles. Write down ideas about your topic as you explore it in each of the following ways:

Describe: What does it look like? What sounds, sights, smells, and tastes are associated with it?

Compare: What is it like? What is it different from?

Associate: What does it remind you of?

Analyze: What are the parts? How are the parts connected?

Apply: How can you use it?

Argue for or against: Choose an issue related to your topic and argue for or against it.

5. K-W-L chart:

This is a chart with three different columns. In the first column, students write down what they *know* about a topic. In the next column, students write what they *want to find out*. In the last column, students *list information* they learn as they explore.

6. Venn diagram:

This graphic organizer is appropriate for helping students prepare to compare/contrast two things or ideas.

(Adapted with permission from UTCRLA, 2003; Cowan & Cowan in Carroll & Wilson, 1993; Ogle, 1986)

Planning Conference Guide

Planning for Purpose:

- Explain your purpose for writing
- Answer any questions your partner asks
- Make a note of suggestions

Listening for Purpose:

- Decide if the writer has a clear purpose for writing
- Suggest a possible purpose and help the writer make changes if necessary

Planning for Audience:

- Describe your audience
- Answer any questions your partner asks
- Make a note of suggestions

Listening for Audience:

- Decide if the writer really understands the audience
- Suggest possible audiences and new audience characteristics

Planning for Content:

- Explain your main ideas to your partner
- Describe how you plan to elaborate on each main idea
- Make a note of suggestions

Listening for Content:

- Listen to the writer as you are told the ideas
- Decide if the ideas make sense
- Suggest new ways to elaborate

Planning for Form:

- Share your organization plan with your partner
- Answer any questions your partner asks
- Make a note of suggestions

Listening for Form:

- Look and listen as the writer describes the plan
- Decide if the form is clear and fits the writing purpose
- Suggest new ways to organize

(Adapted with permission from UTCRLA, 2003)