TURNING PROGRAM IMPROVING WRITING SKILLS

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Abstract: *Writing skills are the skills you use to write effectively and succinctly. A good writer is someone who can communicate their point to their audience without using too much fluff and in a way that the other person can understand. Writing skills don't just include the physical act of writing.*

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Introduction. Writing is one of the most important skills English as a second language learners must master, particularly for students and working professionals. That's because unlike in speaking exercises, when you write you leave a lasting record of your language. Mistakes in spelling, grammar and word choice are immediately evident. And while literacy skills are not a reflection of intelligence or knowledge, poor writing can cause a student to receive lower marks, even if they know a lot about the subject of the assignment. In a professional context, people may judge you as lazy or untrustworthy if you send poorly written emails full of mistakes. They are also likely to assume your spoken ability in English is quite low, though this may or may not be the case. That's why it is important to improve writing skills in English before they prevent you from reaching your full potential at school or in the workplace.

Discussions and results. Fortunately, the more often you write, the easier it will be to access the English you are looking for and express yourself accurately and fluently. Researchers know that if you are a strong writer in your first language, chances are you will also be a strong writer in English. That's because strategy use transfers. However, you can always learn to be more strategic as a writer and improve your skills by signing up for a class. A composition course, even one aimed at native speakers, will help you improve the way you react to different texts, organize your ideas and bring together vocabulary, grammar and tone to enhance your writing. Spelling and fluency, when it comes to the actual process of putting words on paper, can be improved by taking an online course. Keep in mind that you can't learn how to write overnight. It's a process and the more you write and receive feedback on your written work, the stronger you will become. The best writing enhancement software is Grammarly. This is one of the most widely-used writing solutions today, mainly because of its uncompromising efficiency. Easy to use and very affordable, this writing solution also offers excellent help in vocabulary and sentence-level writing. Skills like research, planning and outlining, editing, revising, spelling and grammar, and organization are critical components of the writing process. Microsoft Word remains the default word processor used by most writers today. It's a simple word processor, but it's still a useful book writing software, especially if it's an option you already have access to. One benefit of MS Word is that the user interface is very easy to use.

A code editor is also called an integrated development environment, or IDE. An IDE is a software application for formatting your code, checking syntax, as well as running and testing your code. Some IDEs can work with multiple programming languages, while some are very specific for only one language. Four core components of effective writing instruction constitute the foundation of any good writing program: Students should have meaningful writing experiences and be assigned

authentic writing tasks that promote personal and collective expression, reflection, inquiry, discovery, and social change. Improving your writing helps you to become a better communicator overall and it also improves your reading, which is another essential job skill. And your ability to write a well-crafted application, resume, and cover letter is the first step to getting a job.

How do you develop the skill of writing in your students?

1. Explain that writing is hard work. ...
2. Give students opportunities to talk about their writing. ...
3. Encourage students to revise their work. ...
4. Explain thesis statements. ...
5. Stress clarity and specificity. ...
6. Explain the importance of grammar and sentence structure, as well as content.

Reading is a receptive skill that requires an individual to make meaning from the language input to which they are exposed. In writing, learners must actually create meaning and produce their own language. That's why writing is so hard, even for native speakers. It begins with translating ideas into language and moving them around so the reader can follow your train of thought. Next, comes the process of revising to find the most precise and convincing wording that renders ideas clearly and concisely. Finally, you need to make sure there are no grammar, spelling or formatting errors which will distract the reader from what you are saying. you learn. Build your productive vocabulary. Most English language learners have a larger receptive vocabulary than a productive one.

This means you may understand a word when you see it but it won't necessarily show up in your writing. Purposefully using words you have recently learned is one way to increase your productive vocabulary. When you use a word in your writing, it makes it more likely it will be available the next time you sit down to compose a sentence. Another strategy is to use a thesaurus to look up alternatives to the words you have chosen. Just be sure you don't pepper your text with awkward word-choices that don't fit the context or your original phrasing. Spend more time reading in English. Good writers tend to be avid readers. The more you read in English, the more you are exposed to different ways of expressing ideas.

The grammatical structures and style of the writer will eventually start to show up in your own writing and you may learn some new vocabulary at the same time. Familiarize yourself with different text types. Not all writing assignments require the same kind of English. A factual article for the newspaper, an email to a potential employer and an essay for a literature class will all necessitate a unique format and different elements. You can improve your writing by familiarizing yourself with a diverse range of text types. For example, read the newspaper, look up sample essays and make your way through an English novel or two.

4 Tips for English teachers

Help students overcome their fear of a blank page by starting off your lesson with an activity that helps them generate language and ideas for their writing. This is a top down strategy that will allow them to activate prior knowledge and personal experiences that relate to the topic. Research shows that strategy use transfers from a learner's first to second language after they have reached a certain ability level. For those learners who are not strong writers in their first language, introduce and model writing strategies. Be on the lookout for learning difficulties. You may think spelling mistakes and poorly organized text are a result of lacking English skills but there may be another issue such dyslexia, dyspraxia or dysgraphia that is causing the problem. The earlier a learning difficulty is diagnosed, the sooner a student can learn strategies to overcome it. Go over the difference between written and spoken English. Every language learner eventually discovers that not everything we say in conversation is acceptable in written form. Beginner learners might need you to call their attention to some common examples (such as writing going to instead of gonna).

Looking for a fun way to practice and improve your English writing skills online? Tweet, use Facebook or blog in English. It's a great way to get practice writing and can help you to learn new idioms and expressions as you connect with other English speakers and learners online

How to Help Students Embrace Revision in the Writing Process

Searching online for "teach student writing" or any similar sentiment will produce countless headlines to the tune of "Improve Writing Skills Online" or "10 Tips to Help Your Students Become Better Writers" or "5 Clever Ways to Improve Student Writing." But any teacher who's been on the job for long knows the truth: you can't actually teach students to write. Despite all of the ways teachers can support students in their writing, students learn to write, first and foremost, by writing. Everything we do is ultimately to support them on their own journey to become better writers. This is especially, frustratingly true when it comes to revision in writing. And yet, revision is when so much of a student's learning, growth, and critical thinking happens.Revision often feels like the most difficult writing skill to teach and to learn. Students tend to misunderstand or resist revision, preferring to focus on proofreading and surface editing instead of true, deep revision. Here is where educators really can support students by clearly defining and reinforcing revision in the writing process.

Define Revision. The first roadblock to revision is a misunderstanding of the task and goal of revision. Students often mistake revision for proofreading or editing. It's helpful to walk through the writing process and define the three terms for students, setting forth the goals and differences of each. All are important components of writing, and as such, they are each separate steps in the process.

Explain to students that revision comes after drafting, but before editing and proofreading. Be sure to then clarify each terms' meaning. One helpful definition of revision comes from Erika Lindemann's A Rhetoric for Writing Teachers, "True revision involves reseeing, rethinking, and reshaping the piece, resolving a tension between what we intended to say and what the discourse actually says.

Practice Together. Sometimes, students need to see revision in action to understand how to apply it to their own work. Find an opportunity for an in-class revision, using a past student paper or writing something collaboratively, comparing drafts at different stages.If working on creative writing, use a known story, then change the point of view, to literally ask the students to "re-see" the story. For example, rewrite Little Red Riding Hood from the Wolf's point of view.When working on critical writing, collaborate on a given prompt to create a short outline. Then, have the students ask the following questions:

1.   Does the outline respond to the prompt?
2.   Does the outline have a clear and persuasive argument?
3.   Does the outline have a logical and thoughtful organization?

Have the students work together to revise the outline until the answers to all these questions are affirmative.

Peer Review. Create opportunities for peer review. Sometimes it can be easier for students' to see revision opportunities in their classmates' work than in their own. Have students use the same methods that they used during the in-class revision practice to revise each other's work. This can also help encourage revision individually as well, by creating multiple deadlines during the writing process.

Incentivize Revision. When structuring a writing assignment, especially something higher-stakes, like a term paper, add steps to incentivize student revision. Take the emphasis off of the final product and place it on the process itself. Set multiple deadlines in which students submit different drafts, with activities like peer review and self evaluation associated with each draft. Have students

submit all drafts along with their final work and assess the work based on the revision efforts, not just the end result.

Use Technology. Students can practice revision with Turnitin Draft Coach™, which offers three Similarity Checks per document. This allows students to revise and review their draft based on feedback, particularly focused on citation, paraphrasing, and other revision activities, all in the same document when using Turnitin Draft Coach™.Once they've revised on their own, students can submit to Turnitin Feedback Studio, which allows for multiple submissions of the same assignment by recognizing them as the original author and automatically eliminating previous submissions for potential similarity matches. This functionality is designed to support the revision process within the Similarity Report and helps educators facilitate student learning within the process.By creating a clear definition of what revision is (and is not), practicing and incentivizing the act of revision in writing assignments, and utilizing technology that emphasizes and enhances these aspects of the writing process, teachers can encourage students to grow as writers and help shepherd them towards stronger writing skills that will serve them for years to come. Comments on drafts should not be extensive; research shows that students are overwhelmed by voluminous comments and miss the main suggestions. Identify the strength of the piece, plus one or two ways for the writing to be improved, tying comments to evaluation criteria and specific requirements of the assignment.

Research shows that good assignments give students opportunities to receive early feedback on their work, encourage meaning-making, and clearly explain the instructor's expectations and purpose. A term paper should not be assigned as one big assignment due at the end of the semester. When this happens, all of the opportunities for learning are forsaken. Rather, when assigning a longer paper, ensure that students learn from this process by receiving feedback at least once during the process of writing it, and have a clear sense of the writing goals for the assignment.

REVISION: Build revision into your assignments by setting a draft due date a couple of weeks before a final due date. To ease the paper load, you might reduce the number of pages or papers due in the semester, thus focusing on a series of revisions. You can also emphasize the process of good writing by breaking longer, more complex assignments into their component parts, providing feedback along the way. For example, for a research paper, set a deadline for tentative research questions, an annotated bibliography, a draft, and a final revised version. To save time, you can respond to only the first page or two of each student's draft, suggesting one or two main ways it can be improved; in this way, you can also identify those students who need more help.

FEEDBACK AND RUBRICS: Professors value different aspects of learning, and this can become frustrating for students who face as many as five different professors each semester, each with his or her own grading emphases. To make your goals clear, and in doing so help your students focus on what you think is most important to learn, provide a clear road map by using a rubric. A rubric not only sets out the key learning goals of an assignment, but also defines scaled levels of achievement linked to appropriate standards. Rubrics can reduce the time spent grading by limiting uncertainty and by allowing instructors to refer to the rubric description associated with a score rather than having to write long comments. When rubrics are given to students with the assignment description, they can help students monitor and assess their progress as they work toward clearly indicated goals. When assignments are scored and returned with the rubric, students can more easily recognize the strengths and weaknesses of their work and direct their efforts accordingly. A quick Google search for "samples of college writing rubrics" or "examples of rubric for criminal justice essay" will yield multiple examples on which to base your own rubric.

Written critiques done as homework are likely to be more thoughtful, but critiques may also be done during the class period. Use read-around groups.

Read-around groups are a technique used with short assignments (two to four pages) which allows everyone to read everyone else's paper. Divide the class into groups no larger than four

students and divide the papers (coded for anonymity) into as many sets as there are groups. Give each group a set and ask the students to read each paper silently and decide on the best paper in the set. Each group should discuss their choices and come to a consensus on the best paper. The paper's code number is recorded by the group, and the same process is repeated with a new set of papers. After all the groups have read all the sets of papers, someone from each group writes on the board the code number from the best paper in each set.

Ask students to identify the characteristics of effective writing.

After completing the read-around activity, ask your students to reconsider those papers which were voted as excellent by the entire class and to write down features that made each paper outstanding. Write their comments on the board, asking for elaboration and probing vague generalities. In pairs, the students discuss the comments on the board and try to put them into categories such as organization, awareness of audience, thoroughness of detail, etc. You might need to help your students arrange the characteristics into meaningful categories.

Grammar: In a landmark study in 1963, Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, and Schoer concluded that teaching grammar does not improve writing: "In view of the widespread agreement of research studies based upon many types of students and teachers, the conclusion can be stated in strong and unqualified terms: the teaching of formal grammar has a negligible or, because it usually displaces some instruction and practice in composition, even harmful effect on the improvement of writing." A common mistake instructors make in writing comments on students papers is marking every grammatical error, as if editing the student's paper. This is not an effective use of your time; studies repeatedly show that students largely ignore such marks. Focus instead on clarity of thought, organization of ideas, and the ideas themselves.

Conclusion. When writing a conclusion, consider what you have written thus far, about the substance of each section, and summarize what it all means. The effective conclusion to an essay stimulates the reader to think more about the topic; a conclusion should not just reiterate the introduction.

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