WRITING TO LEARN ACROSS CONTENT AREAS PROJECT

by

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A capstone project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Education.

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Description of Project

In order to answer the question, *How can teachers across all content areas incorporate write to learn strategies in order to improve student learning?*, professional development for teachers has been prepared. This includes in person training and collections of resources for teachers to use.

Training has been prepared for one hour long session on writing to learn across content areas. The school district in which this training will occur has an established program of offerings for teachers that provide professional development and lane change hours. The training and resources can be used for teachers at all levels and in all content areas.

Before the training, teachers will be asked to complete a survey that will allow for the content to be more closely geared to their backgrounds and understanding of write to learn strategies. They will also receive links to articles about writing to learn, with the assignment to choose one to read before the class. The hour will comprise of the research behind writing as a tool for learning, first-hand experience with write to learn strategies, and an orientation of the resources available to try in the teachers’ classrooms. There will also be the explanation and possible arrangement of support for teachers through the assistance of instructional coaches to further implement these strategies in the classroom. Participants will also be asked to complete an evaluation form.

The resources available to teachers include two modules of strategies. A PDF document organizes all of the resources through links. There is a video to orientate
teachers to the resource and buttons that link to separate hyperdocs. The hyperdocs use the 5E Instructional Model (Duran & Duran, 2004) to lead teachers through a self-paced learning experience. The model begins with engagement, capturing attention to the content and setting the stage for the learning. Next is exploration where various resources have been curated to allow a teacher to decide what information will be most beneficial to them. After learning about a strategy, the teacher will move on to the explanation stage. If this was in a classroom, there would be interaction at this point, so a link to a web-based sticky note service has been added for teachers to share their understanding. The next stage, elaboration, builds on this understanding by asking teachers to brainstorm ways to utilize the strategy in the classroom. This time a link to Flipgrid takes them to a board to record their ideas and hear about the ideas of others. The model concludes with evaluation, linking the teacher to a Google form that asks for reflection and provides an opportunity for collaboration and/or coaching.
Links to Pre-Training Survey and Readings for Training

Participants who register for the training will be asked to complete the following survey prior to the class. [Pre-Class Survey for Writing to Learn: An Introduction](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1nOKHfvfn6HkGpV3ANZGWGVN9JM9LYkCdSyAZgPtNlIg/edit)

Participants will also receive the following link to articles with the instruction to read one prior to the class.


Describes strategies for using writing to learn and provides general prompts and content-specific prompts at the secondary level.


Describes adding writing to learn at the elementary level.

[http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/apr18/vol75/num07/Demystifying-Writing,-Transforming-Education.aspx](http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/apr18/vol75/num07/Demystifying-Writing,-Transforming-Education.aspx)

Describes the general need for more writing in classes and how it promotes thinking.

Retrieved from

https://www.nwp.org/cs/public/download/nwp_file/489/Writing_Across_the_Hidden_Curriculum.pdf?x-r=pcfile_d

Examines how students perceive writing in school and how writing to learn can change this. Includes specific examples of supporting various thinking processes.
Lesson Plan for Training

Lesson Plan for Writing to Learn Across Content Areas: An Introduction

Objectives:
Participants will be able to...
1. Teach their students why writing aids learning
2. Distinguish the difference between writing to learn and process writing
3. Access resources for specific strategies
4. Request one-on-one help collaboration and coaching

Essential Question:
● How does writing support learning in all content areas?

Ways to Assess Whether Objectives were Accomplished:
● Observation during small group discussion

Materials:
● Guided Notes for class. Guided notes will be used in order to model this form of note-taking. It will also be more time efficient since some information will already be provided for them without writing it down.
● Note Cards for “I’ll Take That One”
● Copies of articles in case they don’t have theirs with
● Pens/pencils/highlighters

Procedures/Instructional Technique:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated Time</th>
<th>Content/Key Points</th>
<th>Instructional Technique(s)</th>
<th>Slide(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Welcome, Learning targets, essential question</td>
<td>Establish purpose for lesson with learning targets and essential question</td>
<td>2-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 minutes</td>
<td>Explanation of guided notes as a form of note-taking</td>
<td>Guided notes</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>Duration</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Explanation of quickwrites as an easy way to add writing to any class</td>
<td>Guided notes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Quickwrite on essential question (2 minutes)</td>
<td>Quickwrite</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Discuss with partner (2 minutes) using Stand, Share, Sit routine</td>
<td>Stand, Share, Sit--Stand up, share your what you wrote, and when both have shared sit. This adds movement as well as an indication for the instructor of everyone finishing up</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Direct Instruction on the connection between writing and learning</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Purposes of Writing</td>
<td>Guided notes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Connect to own practice--What do you think your student would say is the purpose of writing?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Table talk</td>
<td>Guided notes--fill in key terms</td>
<td></td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>What is writing to learn?</td>
<td>Guided notes--pulling out what stands out to them</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How does it affect learning?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>● Cognitive processes</td>
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<td>○ Spontaneous</td>
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<td>○ Cognition</td>
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<td>○ Metacognition</td>
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<td>● Social Processes</td>
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<td>○ Social Setting</td>
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<td>○ Audience</td>
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<td>○ Collaboration</td>
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<td>10-12</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>10-2-2 strategy explanation and activity</td>
<td>Confer with partner and add to notes</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Collaborative Learning</td>
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<td>Process reading done on own</td>
<td>Responding to text</td>
<td>14-16</td>
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<td>Share others’ learning</td>
<td>I’ll take that one strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>Discuss what you learned Share out to large group</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>3 minutes</td>
<td>Reflect</td>
<td>Guided notes--summary and reflection</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Presentation Slides with Speaker Notes for Training

Link to Presentation
Welcome!

Melissa Bertsch
PPD Coach
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Learning Targets

- I can teach my students why writing aids learning.
- I can distinguish the difference between writing to learn and process writing.
- I can access resources for specific strategies.
- I can request one-on-one collaboration for planning and/or implementing strategies.
Essential Question

How does writing support learning in all content areas?

Have participants add essential question to guided notes sheet.
Guided Notes

Guided notes are “instructor-prepared handouts that provide all students with background information and standard cues with specific spaces to write key facts, concepts, and/or relationships”

(Howard, n.d., p. 1)

Heward--The Ohio State
Recommended for instructors at the college level
Reasons to use guided notes”
- Students are actively engaged with material
- Improves student note-taking
- Improves retention of material
- Helps to organize material (for students and instructors)
- Students are more likely to ask questions

(Howard, n.d.)

There will be the pencil icon in the bottom left-hand corner of a slide whenever they will be adding to guided notes.
The same icon appears on the guided notes sheet when there is something to add.

You can choose to use a variety of symbols when using guided notes with students.
Quick Write

2 minutes: answer the essential question in your guided notes.

How does writing support learning in all content areas?

A quick write is one of the easiest write to learn strategies to employ. I can be added at any point in a class. It is low-stakes writing—not graded or only graded for completion (PCG’s Center for Resource Management, 2007).

Warn when there are 30 seconds left.
Stand, Share, Sit

1. Stand up
2. Share what you wrote with your partner.
3. When both have shared, sit down.

This activity varies think-pair-share, incorporates a bit of movement, and lets the teacher know when everyone has finished sharing.
In the middle are functions of learning that Langer & Applebee observed in the writing that occurred in their 1987 study.

- To draw on relevant knowledge and experience in preparation for new activities
- 2. To consolidate and review new information and experiences
- 3. To reformulate and extend knowledge

They found that teachers used writing for these functions, sometimes with the purpose of learning content and sometimes with the purpose of assessing content.

(Langer & Applebee, 1987, p. 42)

In left hand column of guided notes: What do you think your student would say is the purpose of writing?

Share at tables.
“Writing to learn means “using writing as a tool of thinking.”

(Daniels, Zelelman, & Staineko, 2007, p. 2)

Basic definition of writing to learn.

This is what Langer and Applebee were talking about with the purpose “to foster new learning”

Participants fill-in-the blanks (tool, learning)
How does writing affect learning?

Psychological Processes  Social Processes
Psychological Processes

Spontaneous Cognition Metacognition

**Spontaneous psychological processes:**
- Britton, 1970s, writing naturally leads to learning, thoughts shaped at the point of utterance--simply expressing an idea made it clearer (Bazerman et al., 2005)

**Cognitive Processes.**
- Cognition includes the "skills to encode and recall information...and the processes of problem solving and critical thinking" writing makes thinking visible (Reynolds, Thaiss, Katkin, & Thompson, 2012, p. 22).
- When students write, they do this, but there’s more benefit when writing strategies are explicitly taught and practiced
  - Because these skills needed for writing are the same skills needed for cognition, learning increases and students gain strategies for learning. (Kiefst, M., Rijlaardsdam, G., & van den Bergh, H., 2006)
- Writing especially shown to improve reading comprehension: Choose information, find relationships in text, need to do more than copy passages--they need to be composing in their own words, able to review writing (Graham & Hebert, 2011)

**Metacognition.**
- commonly defined as “thinking about thinking” (Moulin, 2006), Akturk & Sahin (2011) produced the following definition, “individuals having information about their cognitive structure and being able to organize this
• structure" (Akturk & Sahin, 2011, p. 3732).
• Cognition involves learning something, and metacognition helps one do so more effectively.
• specific metacognitive prompts have a much more significant effect on learning, (Klein, 2015).
• Effective metacognition happens throughout learning: before (when a writer plans), during (when a writer monitors their writing), and after (when a writer evaluates their writing). (Akturk & Sahin, 2011, p. 3732).

What stands out to you about the connection between psychological processes and learning?
Social Processes

Social Setting

Audience

Collaboration

But learning does not just take place within a solitary person; the human brain is wired to socially make meaning (“Sociocultural Theory,” 2009). Sociocultural theory is used “to explain how individual mental functioning is related to cultural, institutional, and historical context; hence, the focus of the sociocultural perspective is on the roles that participation in social interactions and culturally organized activities play in influencing psychological development” (“Sociocultural Theory,” 2009, p. 851).

Social Setting
- School is a social setting

Audience
- always an audience—writers connect with readers through text, establishing a social relationship as they create an identity with whom they will share their writing. They will consider how to gain the audience’s attention and explain aspects so that another will understand (Beach, Newell, & VanDerHeide, 2015).

Collaboration
- from quick sharing of ideas, peer review, collaborative writing (Nykopp, Marttunen, & Laurinen, 2014).
10-2-2

Used to break up content delivery and process notes.

1. Compare notes with partner for 2 minutes.
2. Reflect on and add to your notes for two minutes.

10-2-2 Strategy
For every 10 minutes of content presentation/interaction, use 2 minutes to confer with another student, and 2 minutes to process notes individually (McKinney, Glazebrook, Sanders, & Shapiro, 2018).

What did you discover by comparing your notes to your partner's notes?
Responding to Text

1. Take 4 notecards
2. Write your name on the back of each one.
3. On the front, write one question, paraphrase, “aha!” or insight you gained from the reading (different response on each card).

Responding to Text/“I’ll Take That One” strategy (K. McMillan & D. Shapiro, personal communication, August 2, 2018)

Links to the readings were provided in pre-class communication. I will have extra copies ready in case someone forgot to bring theirs with.
“I’ll Take That One”

1. Share your cards with a partner.
2. Your partner chooses one of your cards to keep, saying, “I’ll take that one.”
3. Partner takes the card and adds their name to the back of the card.
4. Your partner shares cards with you.
5. Take one. Add name.
6. Repeat this with six partners.
7. Return to seat.

Responding to Text/“I’ll Take That One” strategy (K. McMillan & D. Shapiro, personal communication, August 2, 2018)

If we’re running short on time, I will have them return to seats even if they haven’t completed the activity with six different partners.
Discuss

Look at the backs of your cards.
Which one was most popular?
Share at your table the most popular idea.
Why did you choose that card?

Ask how they could see using a strategy like this in their class.
Resources to Continue Learning

These documents will be shared with participants. I will show them how these documents work, opening up a specific strategy hyperdoc.
Summary/Reflection

What are your takeaways from today?

What are your next steps?
References


References


Credits

Special thanks to all the people who made and released these awesome resources for free:

- Presentation template by SlidesCarnival
- Photographs by Unsplash
- Icons by Noun Project
Participant Guided Notes for Training

**Topic/Objective**

**Writing to Learn Across the Content Areas**

| Essential Question | How does writing support learning in all content areas? |

Quickwrite: How does writing support learning in all content areas?

What do you think your students would say is the purpose for writing?

There are two main purposes for writing according to Langer & Applebee (1987).

**Purposes of Writing**

- To draw on relevant knowledge and experience as preparation for new activities
- To consolidate and review ideas and experiences
- To reformulate and extend knowledge
- To evaluate knowledge and skills

Writing to learn means "using writing as a ________________ of ____________________________" (Daniels, Zemelman, & Steineke, 2007, p. 21)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What did you discover by comparing your notes to your partner’s notes?</th>
<th>How does writing affect learning?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Psychological Processes</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>✍️ What stands out to you about the connection between psychological processes and learning?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Processes</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✍️ What stands out to you about the connection between social processes and learning?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary/Reflection**

✍️
General Resources on Writing to Learn


Large collection of strategies with handouts broken down into pre writing, during writing and post writing.


Provides general advice for adding writing to content areas. Specifically references secondary classes in all content areas.


Many strategies to incorporate into any class, organized by length of time the strategy takes: short in-class writing, ongoing and/or more developed in-class writing, and extended, public writing.

https://www.edutopia.org/practice/low-stakes-writing-writing-learn-not-learning-write

Describes strategies for using writing to learn and provides general prompts and content-specific prompts at the secondary level.


http://www.readingrockets.org/article/range-writing-across-content-areas

Describes adding writing to learn at the elementary level.


Retrieved from

http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/feb17/vol74/num05/The-Writing-Journey.aspx

Gallagher describes how his school committed to writing in every class.

Gonzales, J. (2015, March 6). 7 easy ways to support student writing in any content area [Blog post]. Retrieved from

https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/content-area-literacy-writing/

29 minute podcast (or you can read the transcript) describing ways to add more writing. Also includes a “cheat sheet” with brief descriptions of the seven strategies.


Discusses the different types of thinking and writing emphasized in different disciplines and how basic writing strategies can be changed to reflect discipline-specific thinking.

Moje, E. (2010, April 6). Disciplinary literacy: Why is matters and what we should do about it [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Id4gKJ-wGzU

Moje argues for writing that is more specific to each discipline, rather than generic tools. This speech was given at the National Reading Initiative Conference in New Orleans, LA, on March 6, 2010, and was hosted by the National Writing Project.


Links to essays from writers of many disciplines.


Links to resources for discipline-specific writing.


This book covers the effect of embarrassment and shame on learning and includes a chapter on how this specifically affects writing. It helps to unearth some of the difficulties students have with writing and teachers have with teaching it.


http://www.teachingld.org/alerts#self-regulated-strategy-development

Concise explanation of SRSD with the use of a writing strategy and a list of other writing strategies.


http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/apr18/vol75/num07/Demystifying-Writing,-Transforming-Education.aspx

Describes the general need for more writing in classes and how it promotes thinking.


https://www.nwp.org/cs/public/download/nwp_file/489/Writing_Across_the_Hidden_Curriculum.pdf?x-r=pcfile_d

Examines how students perceive writing in school and how writing to learn can change this. Includes specific examples of supporting various thinking processes.

Teaching Channel. (n.d.). Writing to learn [Video file]. Retrieved from

https://www.teachingchannel.org/video/writing-to-learn

Two minute video of teacher explaining how and why she uses writing to learn.

Specific strategies to incorporate more process writing into content areas.

Strategies are very succinct and include some handouts for students. Each strategy also includes sections on why to use it, how to use it, and how to adapt it.


One of the earlier books on writing to learn. Zinsser traveled to different secondary and post-secondary schools to work with and learn from instructors who were starting to write across content areas. There are great anecdotes from math and science teachers about how they use and value writing in their classes.
Link to Evaluation Survey for Training

Participants will be asked to complete this evaluation after the class. It includes an option for requesting collaboration and/or coaching.

Evaluation for Writing to Learn: An Introduction
Five Essential Writing to Learn Strategies Module

This is the first of two modules created for teachers to independently learn more about writing to learn strategies. It begins with a PDF document that includes an introductory video explaining the resources included and how to get to them. I’ve included each of the linked hyperdocs.

Each of these hyperdocs includes a quote defining the strategy, and then uses the 5 Es lesson design (Duran & Duran, 2004). In the engage section, there is a quote or image along with a question to think about. Next, the teacher will explore links in order to learn about the strategy. After that the teacher explains their learning by responding to a prompt on lino, a web-based sticky note service. Each strategy has a different prompt to give teachers ideas for prompts they could use with students. Next they will elaborate on their understanding by sharing ways they see using the strategy with students. There is a link to Flipgrid where they will post a video and be able to see videos posted by others. Last, they fill out a Google form that asks them to evaluate the use of this strategy with students and gives them an opportunity to request collaboration and/or coaching.
Watch this short video introducing these write to learn strategies.

Then explore the hyperdocs linked on the right.

Five Essential Writing to Learn Strategies

This image is linked to the working PDF.
Presentation Slides and Script for Five Essential Writing to Learn Strategies Introduction

Video

[Link to video]

Welcome to this introduction to learning about five essential writing to learn strategies. I'm going to take you through the layout of the resource, explaining how to navigate it and what you'll find.
Welcome!

Melissa Bertsch
PPD Coach
mbertsch@bhmschools.org
763-682-2890

My name is Melissa Bertsch. I have been an instructional coach in the BHM school district since the 2017-2018 school year. Prior to that I was an English teacher, and I plan to return to the classroom for the 2019-2020 school year. Write to learn strategies have become a real priority to me as I’ve had the chance to observe in so many classes. It’s brought to my attention the lack of daily, low-stakes writing in all classes—including mine. I want to share some of what I’ve learned about these easy to implement strategies that any teacher can add to their class.
Five Essential Writing to Learn Strategies

This module focuses on five essential writing to learn strategies: quickwrites, note-taking, learning logs, annotations, and questioning. These are some of the easiest strategies to implement, and they really can be used with any content area and grade level.
The pdf document that has been shared with you contains links to five hyperdocs, one for each of the strategies. By clicking on one of the buttons with a strategy on it, you will be taken to that hyper doc. I'm going to open up that PDF document and illustrate how this works.
So you’ll notice the five different colored buttons along the right hand side. Each of these will open up a hyperdoc for that strategy. Let’s open up the Quickwrite hyperdoc to take a look.
Quickwrites

Quickwrites are a powerful instructional practice that can enhance student engagement and learning, as they allow students to reflect on their own thinking and learning in a vertical community. Connecting students with classmates learning in similar ways enables the sharing of ideas, strategies, and insights to maximize the benefits of collaborative learning. Quickwrites are a form of informal writing that encourages students to think critically about their learning experiences. By engaging with Quickwrites, students develop a deeper understanding of their own thought processes and enhance their critical thinking skills.

If you’re not familiar with hyperdocs, they are digital documents that gather all materials for a complete learning cycle. I start each hyperdoc with a general quote about the strategy taken from AVID Writing for Disciplinary Literacy, a text used in an AVID summer institute I attended in the summer of 2018. I spent three days learning about and using various write to learn strategies. If anyone would like to see this resource, it is available to all AVID schools.

After that general introduction to the strategy, I’ve used the 5E instructional model for organizing the hyperdoc. The 5E instructional model was originally developed by BSCS Science Learning in 1987 while creating a science and health curriculum for elementary students. (Bybee et al., 2006). It contains the entire learning cycle: engagement, exploration, explanation, elaboration, and evaluation. The engage portion gives you a visual prompt and question to think about. Then you’ll move on to the exploration portion where you can access different resources, directing your own learning.

At the explanation stage I’ve included a link to a lino board. This is a web-based sticky note service. This way, even though you are working through this on your own, you will be able to see the thoughts of others and how they explain their learning. You simply grab a note and write your ideas.
Likewise, during elaboration I've included a link to Flipgrid where you will be asked to share your ideas for incorporating the strategy into your classroom by creating a video (you don't have to show your face in the video). You will also be able to watch the videos that others have created to get more ideas.

While the link brings you directly to spot of adding a video, you can also follow this link to see all of the writing to learn grids I've made.
As you reach the evaluation stage, please follow the link to the Google form which will collect ideas about your understanding of the strategy and how you plan to use it. It will also give you the opportunity to request time for collaboration or coaching.
Once you’ve finished with one strategy, you can return to the PDF to explore additional ones. I hope you find the resources helpful as you explore ways to add more writing to learn in your class. Please contact me with any questions.
Credits

Special thanks to all the people who made and released these awesome resources for free:

- Presentation template by SlidesCarnival
- Photographs by Unsplash
- Icons by Noun Project
Quickwrites

“Quickwrites are a powerful instructional practice to embed into every grade level and content area, as they allow students to write about content at any point in time during the teaching and learning cycle in a low-stakes way. Combining quickwrites with collaborative learning structures deepens students’ understanding of the topic or content while providing rich opportunities for the use of academic language. Intentionally scaffolding the quickwrite process so every student can achieve the highest level of academic rigor makes this essential instructional practice appropriate for learning content in every discipline, grade level, and classroom” (McKinney, Glazebrook, Sanders, & Shapiro, 2018, p. 18).

What do you learn about your thinking when you write?

- Quickwrite How-To
- Research summary on Quickwrites
- A [short video](#) explaining quickwrites
- A [video](#) showing quickwrites in an ELL classroom (first two minutes show a quickwrite and then it moves to essential questions)
- [Article](#) and [infographic](#) about how a teachers uses quickwrites with ELL students. Specifically details multiple ways he uses them, the benefits, and mistakes he used to make with writing.
What have you learned about quickwrites? How are quickwrites different from other types of writing?

**Post a note on this lino**

How do you see using quickwrites with students? Share your ideas on Flipgrid where you can view comments from others on quickwrite and other writing to learn strategies.

**Go to Flipgrid**

Share your thoughts about how this strategy can benefit students, what your next steps are, and whether or not you are interested in collaboration or coaching.

**Fill out this Google Form**

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Note-taking

“Students are often asked and expected to take notes in and outside of class for a variety of reasons. In some instances, students take notes from a lecture, text, or video to stabilize the knowledge they will need during a test or other examination; at other times, students take notes to assist them in academic endeavors such as writing an essay, solving a mathematical equation, or comprehending a challenging text. Unfortunately, most schools provide learners little assistance in acquiring the expected note-taking skills” (McKinney, Glazebrook, Sanders, & Shapiro, 2018, p. 94).

How can note-taking be taught so that it aids and reinforces student learning?
Explore

- Guided Notes: Improving the Effectiveness of Your Lectures
- Improving Cornell Notes with Sketchnoting Techniques: video
- Note-taking: A Research Roundup: blog post and podcast
- Factors of Effective Note-taking: Application of Cognitive Load Theory
- Focused Note Taking: The Five Phases of Focused Note-taking
- Setting Up and Maintaining Interactive Notebooks in the Classroom

Explain

What have you learned about note-taking? Complete a Stop-Start-Continue. What might you stop doing, start doing, and continue doing in regards to note-taking?

Post a note on this lino

Elaborate

How do you see using note-taking with students? Share your ideas on Flipgrid where you can view comments from others on note-taking and other writing to learn strategies.

Go to Flipgrid

Evaluate/Extend

Share your thoughts about how this strategy can benefit students, what your next steps are, and whether or not you are interested in collaboration or coaching.

Fill out this Google Form

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interactive notebooks in the classroom. Retrieved from


Learning Logs

“Learning logs are a powerful tool for reflection. Their purpose is to aid students in processing information, thinking, and understanding content. Learning logs work well when the objective is for students to reflect on learning over time in a specific content area, while also reflecting on metacognition and the success of strategies used to attain new learning” (McKinney, Glazebrook, Sanders, & Shapiro, 2018, p. 38).

How do the students explain their learning over time?

- **Brief entry with two videos.** This comes from the New Zealand Ministry of Education’s site for English Language Learners. Both teachers and students speak in the videos about learning logs.
- **20 Types of Learning Journals That Help Students Think:** Brief descriptions different approaches.
- **“The Boss of My Brain”:** explains the importance of explicit teaching of metacognition.
- A set of **resources from a college workshop on reflection and metacognition**, questions more suited for k-12, and a **paper on metacognition** and its effect on learning.
- A study on **reflection in the workplace** and how it increased performance.
What have you learned about learning logs? Share your 3-2-1: 3 things you learned, 2 things you found interesting, and 1 question.

Post a note on this lino

How do you see using learning logs with students? Share your ideas on Flipgrid where you can view comments from others on learning logs and other writing to learn strategies.

Go to Flipgrid

Share your thoughts about how this strategy can benefit students, what your next steps are, and whether or not you are interested in collaboration or coaching.

Fill out this Google Form

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Annotations

“Annotation involves interaction with a text or diagram by isolating key information and recording notes of explanation, comments, or questions. Annotation is powerful because when students read with a pen or pencil in hand, they transform from passive to active readers” (McKinney, Glazebrook, Sanders, & Shapiro, 2018, p. 42).

How do your students interact with text?

- Lesson plan from readwritethink.org on teaching students to annotate
- Beyond the Yellow Highlighter: Teaching Annotation Skills to Improve Reading Comprehension. An article from English Journal.
- Teaching Channel video where you’ll see it in action. This teacher calls it thinking notes.
- Sadlier ELA blog post on annotating text strategies. Includes a downloadable practice sheet for grades 6-8 and a downloadable model for annotating in grades 2-5.
What have you learned about annotations? Try to summarize what you learned in exactly 10 words.

**Post a note on this lino**

How do you see using annotations with students? Share your ideas on Flipgrid where you can view comments from others on annotations and other writing to learn strategies.

**Go to Flipgrid**

Share your thoughts about how this strategy can benefit students, what your next steps are, and whether or not you are interested in collaboration or coaching.

**Fill out this Google Form**

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Questioning

“Questions serve many purposes in the classroom, such as prompting students to think, acquire content, and engage in the learning process. Questions help students find relationships between ideas and concepts, and organize and clarify their thoughts. As educators model questioning processes, they are teaching students how to use inquiry to deepen their understanding of content. Students engage in content-area courses through discipline-specific ways of thinking, questioning, and writing. For them to fully construct meaning from the content, they must develop discipline-specific skills” (McKinney, Glazebrook, Sanders, & Shapiro, 2018, p. 48).

How often do students in your class ask questions that guide their learning?

- Generating Effective Questions
- Effective Questioning and Classroom Talk: a 29 page document compiling an extensive array of ways to think about questioning.
- Tips From Teachers: Improving on the ‘Questioning’ Indicator
- Questioning Strategies
- The Right Questions: an overview of the Question Formulation Technique. Then head to The Right Question Institute to learn more.
- QFT in Action: a video
- Stirring Students to Ask Tougher Questions

([Untitled image of Einstein quote]. 2017)
What have you learned about questioning? Share a Head (an idea you have), Heart (a feeling you experienced), and Foot (an action to take) response.

Post a note on this lino

How do you see using questioning with students? Share your ideas on Flipgrid where you can view comments from others on questioning and other writing to learn strategies.

Go to Flipgrid

Share your thoughts about how this strategy can benefit students, what your next steps are, and whether or not you are interested in collaboration or coaching.

Fill out this Google Form

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Writing to Learn Strategies Based on Content Interaction Module

This is the second of two modules created for teachers to independently learn more about writing to learn strategies. It begins with a PDF document that includes an introductory video explaining the resources included and how to get to them. I’ve included each of the linked hyperdocs.

Each of these hyperdocs includes a quote defining the strategy, and then uses the 5 E’s lesson design (Duran & Duran, 2004). In the engage section, there is a quote or image along with a question to think about. Next, the teacher will explore links in order to learn about the strategy. After that the teacher explains their learning by responding to a prompt on lino, a web-based sticky note service. Each strategy has a different prompt to give teachers ideas for prompts they could use with students. Next they will elaborate on their understanding by sharing ways they see using the strategy with students. There is a link to Flipgrid where they will post a video and be able to see videos posted by others. Last, they fill out a Google form that asks them to evaluate the use of this strategy with students and gives them an opportunity to request collaboration and/or coaching.
Watch this short video introducing these write to learn strategies.

Then explore the hyperdocs linked on the right.

Writing to Learn Strategies Based on How Students Are Interacting With Content

This image is linked to the working PDF.
Presentation Slides and Script for Five Essential Writing to Learn Strategies Introduction

Video

[Link to video]

Welcome to this introduction to learning about writing to learn strategies based on how students are interacting with content. I'm going to take you through the layout of the resource, explaining how to navigate it and what you'll find.
Welcome!

Melissa Bertsch
PPD Coach
mbertsch@bhmschools.org
763-682-2890

My name is Melissa Bertsch. I have been an instructional coach in the BHM school district since the 2017-2018 school year. Prior to that I was an English teacher, and I plan to return to the classroom for the 2019-2020 school year. Write to learn strategies have become a real priority to me as I’ve had the chance to observe in so many classes. It’s brought to my attention the lack of daily, low-stakes writing in all classes—including mine. I want to share some of what I’ve learned about these easy to implement strategies that any teacher can add to their class.
Writing to Learn Strategies Based on How Students Are Interacting With Content

This module focuses on writing to learn strategies based on how students are interacting with content: exploring content, processing content, reinforcing and clarifying content, connecting to content, and summarizing content. You'll find two or more strategies within each of these interactions.
The pdf document that has been shared with you contains links to five hyperdocs, one for each of the types of interaction. By clicking on one of the buttons, you will be taken to that hyper doc. I’m going to open up that PDF document and illustrate how this works.
So you’ll notice the five different colored buttons along the right hand side. Each of these will open up a hyperdoc for that type of interaction. Let’s open up the Exploring hyperdoc to take a look.
If you’re not familiar with hyperdocs, they are digital documents that gather all materials for a complete learning cycle. I started each hyperdoc with a general quote about the strategy taken from AVID Writing for Disciplinary Literacy, a text used in an AVID summer institute I attended in the summer of 2018. I spent three days learning about and using various write to learn strategies. If anyone would like to see this resource, it is available to all AVID schools.

After that general introduction to the strategy, I’ve used the 5E instructional model for organizing the hyperdoc. The 5E instructional model was originally developed by BSCS Science Learning in 1987 while creating a science and health curriculum for elementary students. (Bybee et al., 2006). It contains the entire learning cycle: engagement, exploration, explanation, elaboration, and evaluation. The engage portion gives you a visual prompt and question to think about. Then you’ll move on to the exploration portion where you can access different resources, directing your own learning.

At the explanation stage I’ve included a link to a lino board. This is a web-based sticky note service. This way, even though you are working through this on your own, you will be able to see the thoughts of others and how they explain their learning. You simply grab a note and write your ideas.
Likewise, during elaboration I've included a link to Flipgrid where you will be asked to share your ideas for incorporating the strategy into your classroom by creating a video (you don't have to show your face in the video). You will also be able to watch the videos that others have created to get more ideas.

While the link brings you directly to spot of adding a video, you can also follow this link to see all of the writing to learn grids I've made.
As you reach the evaluation stage, please follow the link to the Google form which will collect ideas about your understanding of the strategies and how you plan to use it. It will also give you the opportunity to request time for collaboration or coaching.
Once you’ve finished with one strategy, you can return to the PDF to explore additional ones. I hope you find the resources helpful as you explore ways to add more writing to learn in your class. Please contact me with any questions.
Credits

Special thanks to all the people who made and released these awesome resources for free:

- Presentation template by SlidesCarnival
- Photographs by Unsplash
- Icons by Noun Project
Exploring

“Curiosity is born in the heart of every human. Unfortunately, circumstances like poverty, stress, trauma, and the frenetic pace of life can cause students not to carry curiosity to school. Learning-through-writing instructional practices focusing on exploring are designed to reignite the spark of curiosity within every student. Making space for curiosity, for wonder, for exploring content and the ideas behind the content in lesson design and delivery provides an avenue for students to practice learning through writing while practicing inquiry” (McKinney, Glazebrook, Sanders, & Shapiro, 2018, p. 56).

What effect does curiosity have on learning?

- **KWLA:** KWLA is a variation of a KWL chart. If you’re not familiar with KWL, [this site explains it](https://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lessons/12102-kwla_chart.jsp) and provides both an elementary and secondary video. The A stands for how you will apply what you learned. This site [explains and gives an example](https://www.readwritethink.org/). Here’s a picture of a [KWL chart in a 1st grade classroom](https://www.observeblog.com/2012/05/03/kwl-chart-knowledge-want-learning/). In addition, Lent (2017) provides ideas for creating [KWL charts that are content specific](https://www.readwritethink.org/lesson26460/).
- **Carousel Brainstorm:** [ReadWriteThink strategy guide](https://www.readwritethink.org/). Another set of [instructions and a video](https://www.readwritethink.org/). Here’s a brief [video that could be played to elementary students](https://www.readwritethink.org/).
What have you learned about exploring strategies? Complete a Stop-Start-Continue. What might you stop doing, start doing, and continue doing in regards to exploring content?

**Post a note on this lino**

How do you see using exploring strategies with students? Share your ideas on Flipgrid where you can view comments from others on these and other writing to learn strategies.

**Go to Flipgrid**

Share your thoughts about how these strategies can benefit students, what your next steps are, and whether or not you are interested in collaboration or coaching.

**Fill out this Google Form**

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http://www.andistix.com/carousel_brainstorming

Processing

“Thinking about information in a variety of ways is an integral part of learning. Academic success requires that students develop their abilities to think creatively, reason effectively, and evaluate evidence. The ability to collaborate with others to solve problems, organize understandings, and articulate findings is essential. For students to thrive in content areas, classrooms, and schools, educators must provide them with tools for processing information in a meaningful way (McKinney, Glazebrook, Sanders, & Shapiro, 2018, p. 62).

(Bartlett, 2014)

How do you make sense of your learning when you’re juggling too many pieces on information?

- **Nonlinguistic Representations**: [Brief article from Marzano. Presentation on using technology](https://example.com). Includes graphic organizers, physical models and manipulatives, mental images using sound, pictures and illustrations, and kinesthetics. A [brief video explanation](https://example.com) and a blog about [supporting students who are English language learners](https://example.com).
- **Graphic Organizers**: Here’s a [blog post (or listen to the podcast)](https://example.com) summarizing why graphic organizers work and different ways to use them, and a [video explaining](https://example.com).
background and different types. If you’re looking for some ready to use PDFs, check out this site, these Google drawing templates, or learn how to make custom graphic organizers in Google Drawings in this video.

What have you learned about processing strategies? Try to summarize what you learned in exactly 10 words.

Post a note on this lino

How do you see using processing strategies with students? Share your ideas on Flipgrid where you can view comments from others on these and other writing to learn strategies.

Go to Flipgrid

Share your thoughts about how these strategies can benefit students, what your next steps are, and whether or not you are interested in collaboration or coaching.

Fill out this Google Form

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Reinforcing and Clarifying

“As students think more deeply about content, they are moving past a superficial understanding and more fully developing their critical thinking skills by analyzing how information fits together. Learning-through-writing instructional practices for reinforcing and clarifying provide students with structures to reason effectively, evaluate evidence, and justify their understanding of concepts. Additionally, these strategies provide powerful formative assessment tools by making it quickly apparent how well students understand a concept or topic (McKinney, Glazebrook, Sanders, & Shapiro, 2018, p. 68).

Once students have learned content, how do you help them structure and reinforce their understanding?

- **Listicles:** This TED-Ed video explains the why listicles work, while this article explains its use in pedagogy, and this teacher describes how she uses it in place of a traditional literary analysis.
- **Key Word Outline:** Here is a description of using key word notes and then an explanation of how the teacher used them in class. Here is a more detailed description of the strategy. This includes a resource for using the strategy with reluctant writers, and here is a version at ReadWriteThink that calls it Power Notes.
What have you learned about reinforcing and clarifying strategies? Share a Head (an idea you have), Heart (a feeling you experienced), and Foot (an action to take) response.

**Post a note on this lino**

How do you see using reinforcing and clarifying strategies with students? Share your ideas on Flipgrid where you can view comments from others on these and other writing to learn strategies.

**Go to Flipgrid**

Share your thoughts about how these strategies can benefit students, what your next steps are, and whether or not you are interested in collaboration or coaching.

**Fill out this Google Form**

**References**


Connecting

“When asking students to synthesize information, the expectation is that students will be able to combine ideas, new and old, to form new learning or understanding. These connections might be personal, span content areas, or relate to a text or another source of information. This is a seemingly straightforward, and proven, strategy to help students retain information” (McKinney, Glazebrook, Sanders, & Shapiro, 2018, p. 73).

How do connections strengthen and deepen learning?

- **Text-to-Text, Text-to-Self, Text-to-World:** resource from Facing History and Ourselves that provides a student handout with sample prompts
- **Say, Mean, Matter:** pdf of slides explaining this strategy for connecting text to meaning. Here’s a handout with a few sentence stems to use this strategy. Here’s a another teacher’s explanation, plus how to turn it into a well-written paragraph. One more teacher who discusses scaffolding and later using this as part of a Socratic Seminar.
- **Synectics:** You can use synectics in a more complex ways as described in this video and explained in this post. There are more simplified ways to use synectics as described in this description of the strategy, in this use with learning vocabulary, this explanation that includes variations, or this approach to starting professional development.

“Text to text, text to self, text to world... Leave it to school to take the fun out of texting.”

(Anderson, n.d.)
What have you learned about connecting strategies? Explain your Muddy Moment--what frustrates or confuses you about these strategies?

**Post a note on this lino**

How do you see using connecting strategies with students? Share your ideas on Flipgrid where you can view comments from others on these and other writing to learn strategies.

**Go to Flipgrid**

Share your thoughts about how these strategies can benefit students, what your next steps are, and whether or not you are interested in collaboration or coaching.

**Fill out this Google Form**

References


Summarizing

“Simply stated, summarizing information is showing the ability to identify and comprehend the main idea of a source by paraphrasing or using different words. This particular set of instructional practices is highly effective when the learning goal is for students to determine the main idea of an informational text or the theme of a work of literature, but summarizing should not be limited to use only with texts. Students can use their own notes flexibly and creatively to show how to complete a math algorithm or describe a concept in science, or to summarize the most important learning of a lesson or unit” (McKinney, Glazebrook, Sanders, & Shapiro, 2018, p. 79).

What do your students have trouble understanding about summarizing?

- **Teaching Students to Summarize**: Quick reference guide; more resources found on Middle School Matters site.
- **GIST**: general explanation and various examples of sheets that could be used with students. ReadWriteThink lesson plan.
- **One-Pager**: A explanation of one-pagers with downloadable templates, a number of examples from ELA classes, an 8th grade science one-pager, a lesson plan in a human geography class, and a video from an elementary school.
What have you learned about summarizing? Share your 3-2-1: 3 things you learned, 2 things you found interesting, and 1 question.

Post a note on this lino

How do you see using summarizing with students? Share your ideas on Flipgrid where you can view comments from others on these and other writing to learn strategies.

Go to Flipgrid

Share your thoughts about how these strategies can benefit students, what your next steps are, and whether or not you are interested in collaboration or coaching.

Fill out this Google Form

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