

WHAT DO I DO MONDAY MORNING — TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY, FRIDAY?

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"What do I do Monday morning?" Faced with thirty or so wrigglers in a room, you may grow quickly impatient with theory. But good theory should serve as a blueprint for action so that you know what to do Monday and any other time. It should provide a basic framework that indicates what to do in any situation and why to do this rather than that. It does not guide, however, spelling out action as specifically as a musical score or a recipe. It gives you a comprehensive and integrated perspective within which all problems can be placed, a consistent way of thinking so that you can think what you do as you go. . . . Running a classroom cannot be like following a script. Panic comes from forgetting your lines and not being able to improvise. Trying to stick to a script causes more difficulty than playing by ear. But playing by ear works only when you have thought out well what you are about. If you understand deeply enough what you are doing, you don't need to keep asking, "What do I do Monday morning?"¹

Try to recollect your first day teaching in an elementary classroom. If you are like a great majority of teachers you were shown where your room was, possibly given some books to use, given thirty students and told to have a good year. The assumption was made that you already had all of the background you needed to handle this assignment with expertise and, of course, poise. Surprise! As we all know, little if any theory is actually taught in education methods classes at the college level. For you to be able to make wise decisions about appropriate methods for students of varying intellectual backgrounds, particularly in the area of writing, you had to experiment, read research if you had time, and cry a lot.

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Furthermore, all students in the classroom had different backgrounds in writing depending on which teachers they had in previous years. Some had been taught to write creatively, paying little or no attention to the conventions of language, while others had to have a perfect first draft. Some had done no writing at all. How do you overcome such diverse writing experience and anxiety? This is a question that all of us would like to have alleviated for students and teachers from one grade level to another. One way to accomplish this goal would be to have school corporations adopt a curriculum guide across the grade levels incorporating the process approach to writing. Give students a variety of strategies to sharpen their thinking processes, let them write, teach them how to revise and edit starting in kindergarten and continuing through the twelfth grade and beyond. Curricular continuity is extremely important to an intellectually growing child.

Educators must address four concerns if they are going to teach composition effectively throughout the schools. First, teachers can only develop curricular continuity in writing by examining the traditional and new composition paradigms for classroom effectiveness. Second, when developing an effective writing program, teachers must consider the cognitive, language, and physiological development of the young child. Third, educators must understand basic writing strategies for teaching composition; and, fourth, they must analyze what they are teaching: Does it really work?

I

At the present time most schools integrate the traditional paradigm for teaching composition into their writing curriculum. Traditional writing teachers focus on the written product rather than the writing process itself. Instructors describe the desired product but not the method of producing it. The "what" is stressed but not the "how." Grammar and the conventions of language are the primary focal points of instruction. The development and organization of a written composition receive little attention since the writing process is perceived by traditionalists as being linear rather than recursive: *editing is writing*. Traditionalists believe that students can *learn* to write through trial and error, but they cannot be taught to write. Using this type of rationale for teaching composition almost always produces anxiety for the

young writer. Children often come to avoid all writing tasks because of the fear of not producing the perfect product in the first draft. Or just as bad, children sacrifice meaning, idea, and communication in order to get their sentences and spelling right, which seldom happens. Since the majority of students today are being labeled as incompetent writers, teachers need to reexamine these traditional strategies and be aware of and open to optional approaches.

The new paradigm for teaching writing offers help for the reluctant, even fearful writer. It focuses on the writing process as instructors intervene in students' writing during the process. It teaches strategies for invention and discovery of ideas. It takes students through the entire writing process from the invention stage to the editing stage. Critical thinking skills are taught in relation to the development of the text, while audience and purpose are prominent concerns throughout the process in order to produce a reader-based composition. Based on research into the composing process, writing is seen as being a series of recursive acts rather than linear: writing is *constant* invention, development, revision, and editing.

The new paradigm stresses the removal of "writer's block" by offering thinking strategies which the students may adapt to their writing needs during the actual process. It is a map to follow enroute to a destination. Various routes may be chosen, the scenic or the more direct, but the writer will ultimately have the satisfaction of a safe arrival via critical decision-making. The traditional paradigm, in its best application, gives the writer his destination, but no map to follow. The feeling of being lost is exasperating and removes the adventuresome spirit from any explorer's soul.

Consider the possibilities for growth in communication skills if all teachers were to adopt the methodology of the new paradigm! Implementation of strategies would vary from teacher to teacher, but basically the continuity in approach would prevail for the students from year to year. The result of such a commitment would be many more literate, independent writers.

II

Why is the process-based paradigm the most appropriate means of directing students toward literate communicative written composition? First, the cognitive, language, and neurological development of the growing child

must be examined. Can the child look objectively at another person's point of view? Is the child able to assimilate what he sees and therefore analyze relationships, such as the sentence to the paragraph or the word to the message? What type of form are young writers capable of using in their compositions? What type of intellectual thought is the child physiologically capable of? How does the child see the world: as a whole entity or a collection of parts?

Since the traditionalists do not base their methods of teaching composition on cognitive, language, or physiological research, the practices which they employ do not correlate with the young child's learning processes. Elementary teachers must be aware of the young child's perception of the world to be able to choose appropriate teaching strategies that will provide long-lasting benefits for the student. For instance, young children view their surroundings as a whole rather than in parts since the right hemisphere of the brain is dominant until the age of ten. Because children do not acquire duality of brain functioning until they are approximately eleven years old, they, therefore, cannot easily comprehend the hypothetical or have complete generality of thought until that point. Young children are also very egocentric in nature; their reason is dominated by perception usually revolving around their self image. By using the new paradigm of teaching writing, teachers enhance this natural learning process by beginning with the whole idea and developing it. In this way small children can relate ideas to themselves and write expressively rather than trying to fit the pieces together. If teachers choose the new paradigm as a viable option to the teaching of writing, they must then look further into the findings of major theorists such as Jean Piaget, James Moffett, James Britton, and Gabrielle Rico.

For instance, Piaget states that humans are not born with an understanding of the world around them but rather that they assimilate what they learn and make adaptations to their environment in turn modifying their behavior. Piaget refers to this process as accommodation. He contends that when they can manage the equilibrium of this process they are exhibiting intelligent behavior. Piaget believes that the young child is quite different from the adult in methods of approaching reality, in the ensuing views of the world, and in the uses of language. He places major emphasis on the role of activity and process in intellectual

development, especially in children's early years. Children must physically do, and through manipulation of the doing they develop schemes relating to objects and activities. Manipulation adds to their repertoire of experiences, which bears some relevance to what they already know, and this synthesis of perception and experience facilitates interest and learning. Can the child look objectively at another person's point of view? In Piaget's stages of cognitive development, it is apparent that the thinking process changes from the preoperational stage (ages two to seven years), characterized by egocentric thought (thinking which does not extend beyond the first person point of view), to the formal operations stage (ages eleven to fifteen years) when the child maintains a complete generality of thought. It would therefore be very difficult for young children to consider *rationally* another person's point of view because they are so egocentric in nature.

While Piaget contends that cognitive development evolves through experience and growth, James Moffett, on the other hand, theorizes that "faculties of reason like classifying and inferring exist already in potential state in the fetus but are dormant pending the environmental exchanges that will activate them." Once outside the womb the mind must "organize the concepts and statements into which it is breaking thought down for matching it to material and social realities (analysis). The mind must synthesize parts into wholes at the same time it analyzes the whole into parts."²

Is the child able to assimilate what he sees and therefore analyze relationships, such as the sentence to the paragraph and the word to the message? We must analyze and synthesize when we communicate. Moffett contends that "communicating is overcoming a differential, some imbalance of knowledge between two parties whether the knowledge is public information or private feeling. The idea is to match minds — to share."³ Comprehending and composing evolve from trying to match private minds by means of a public code called language. Before students can code into any medium they must think the experience in some way, not consciously perhaps, not yet in words, but abstract it and organize it in some form in the mind. If this type of organization occurs in the mind, the transfer of idea to written manuscript could be enhanced by the invention stage of process-

based writing without formal instruction in sentence form and paragraph organization.

Moffett's stages of coding illustrate the need for teaching process-based writing in that during each stage of the coding process — from non-verbal conceptualization to written literacy — the child must *experience* the coding process, organize and abstract to build eventually a strong structure, rather than begin with the completed structure and analyze its parts.⁴

THE THREE LEVELS OF CODING

CODING		
(1)	CONCEPTUALIZATION	experience into thought NON-VERBAL
(2)	VERBALIZATION	thought into speech ORAL
(3)	LITERACY	speech into print WRITTEN

THE TWO LEVELS OF VERBAL CODING

	EN- CODING	DE- CODING	
VERBAL- IZATION (basic)	speaking—listening		ORAL
LITERACY (derived)	writing——reading		WRITTEN

Moffett believes that a “good theory of language arts should make it clear that composition and comprehension are equal and reciprocal.”⁵ By assuming the roles of receiver and sender, the student will more clearly be able to understand pragmatic purpose while reading or communicate purpose while writing.

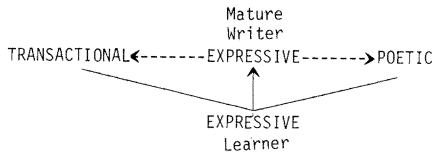
Will isolated language instruction dealing with conventions of language help students? Moffett contends that “no evidence exists, either practical or scientific, that learning generalization about language will improve speaking or writing. Experience shows that concepts and precepts fail to teach comprehension or composition. What students need is not formulations about how English has been and is used, much of which they observe for themselves if allowed to talk, read, and write enough. What they need is practice and awareness. The real problem is to think clearly and to say what one means. Plentiful discursive experience is what really teaches grammar, for it exercises judgment and provides language intake whereas formal grammar study has been proved irrelevant.”⁶

Moffett comes to the conclusion that through the natural process of coding, children learn to communicate. If students are allowed to discover ideas and develop them, they will apply their innate language skills in their writing, therefore attaining literacy. Children will not become better writers through the use of isolated grammar instruction, through fragmenting the writing and learning experience.

Concurring with Moffett, James Britton theorizes that as children become more familiar with different forms of the written language — forms adapted to different audiences and different purposes — they will draw increasingly upon these forms in their own writing.

What types of forms are young writers capable of using in their compositions? According to Britton, children begin communicating in the expressive form early in life and only later move to the poetic and transactional stages. Children necessarily move out of the expressive stage gradually as they develop a better understanding of the world around them.

Britton demonstrates in the following communicative flow chart that young writers are capable of expressive writing and that as they mature the ensuing transactional and poetic forms of writing will naturally surface in their writing.⁷ The traditional paradigm assumes that a writer of any age is capable of transactional writing. Developmentally, this notion is incongruous to the language development of the small child.



CONTRASTING THE EXTREMES: TRANSACTIONAL AND POETIC

It may be helpful to bear in mind the following pairs of contrasting characteristics:

<i>Transactional (Participant role)</i>	<i>Poetic (Spectator role)</i>
The writing is an immediate means to an end outside itself.	The writing is an immediate end in itself, and not a means: it is a verbal artifact, a construct.
The form it takes, the way it is organized, is dictated primarily by the desire to achieve that end efficiently.	The arrangement <i>is</i> the construct: the way items are formally disposed is an inseparable part of the meaning of the piece.
Attention to the forms of the language is incidental to understanding, and will often be minimal.	Attention to the forms of the language is an essential part of a reader's response.
The writer is concerned in his writing to enmesh with his reader's relevant knowledge, experience, interests; and the reader is at liberty to contextualize what he finds relevant, selectively. This 'piecemeal contextualization' we consider to be a part of the conventions governing transactional writing.	The writer is concerned to create relations internal to the work, and achieve a unity, a construct discrete from actuality. Thus he resists piecemeal contextualization: the conventions holding between writer and reader in poetic writing call for <i>global</i> contextualization.

The chart depicts the growth of the writer. Young writers begin writing in the expressive form and gradually progress to the transactional and poetic forms concurrently as they mature. Britton's belief that young writers write expressively coincides with Piaget's theory of young children relating to self during the preoperational stage. Expressive writing is derived mainly from self experience.

As a result of brain research by Dr. Joseph Bogen, Gabrielle Rico developed her own method of idea generation called "clustering" consisting of a nucleus word from which radiates all connecting ideas that come to mind.⁸ This in turn leads to a "trial web," the first awareness of a tentative vision, an idea of what the writer wants to say. Even though Rico may not be considered a theorist, her observations about brain duality in connection with language development are so substantial that they provide an interesting

point of reference worthy of consideration in developing a writing program.

What type of intellectual thought is the child physiologically capable of? How does the child see the world — as a whole entity or a collection of parts? The brain consists of two hemispheres: the right hemisphere or “Design Mind,” and the left hemisphere or “Sign Mind.” The differing characteristics of the two hemispheres are that the “Design Mind” can process a whole cluster of stimuli simultaneously, leading to a grasp of complex wholes. The “Sign Mind” can process only one stimulus at a time, but very quickly. This leads to an orderly sequence of thought and focus on parts. The left brain handles repetitive predictable aspects of our lives and is rule-governed while the right brain is superior at handling the unknown and attempting to make sense out of it by establishing potentially workable patterns.

The small child predominately uses the “Design Mind” and sees the whole of a face, house, or an idea. The “Sign Mind” begins to develop rapidly during the early years of her schooling (to the detriment of the “Design Mind”) because the child is faced with a rule-governed learning schema. These two hemispheres develop as relatively separate entities until the age of eleven or twelve when the myelin sheath covering nerve fibers in the corpus callosum allows electrical impulses from one hemisphere to transfer to the other hemisphere. When hemispheric cooperation occurs, each brain contributes complementary capacities to the writing process at appropriate times. It is important to note, however, that in the young child, when the left hemisphere is called upon to dominate, the right hemisphere can only idle. Consequently, teachers who minimize the composing process in favor of a rule-governed learning approach are paralyzing “Design Mind” input: creative ideas fail to materialize.

The consequences of Rico’s findings are that young children do not have duality of brain functioning, therefore disallowing reciprocal hemispheric functioning. Physiologically small children are often unable to comprehend isolated grammar rules (“Sign Mind” activity) and the idea formations of the written manuscript (“Design Mind” activity) at the same time. Since the “Design Mind” maintains an idling rhythm while the “Sign Mind” is working, the editing stage (a left brain function) should always be a separate and final step within the writing process.

All four of these experts contend that cognitive de-

velopment should be considered when teachers affect the language of the growing child. They believe learning is a continuous process of building rather than a linear development of isolated segments. They all contend that experience is critical to the learning process. Piaget and Rico pinpoint the age of eleven as the critical point in a child's development. Then the child begins to have the facilities for producing complete generality of thought as a result of the onset of consistent interplay between the two hemispheres of the brain. Moffett and Britton agree that reading and writing go hand in hand and that the isolated teaching of grammar is irrelevant — let them write, revise, and edit.

As early as 1906 F. S. Hoyt made nearly the same observation about the irrelevance of isolated grammar instruction. Why then do teachers continue to use work book grammar and spelling memorization as the sole means to teach written composition? One reason is because it's easy to evaluate worksheets. Secondly, without the background in cognitive and language development teachers have no basis for establishing a writing program. Lastly, and probably the most important, is fear of the unknown. We teach what we know, and we were fairly well schooled in the traditional writing paradigm. It's time to look at student-oriented learning rather than teacher-oriented teaching! This will lead to a lower frustration level for both student and teacher.

III

How do we relate the ramifications of this theory to the writing process? The Model of the Writing Process on the next page presents one overview of the writing process.⁹ This model was developed as a visual framework for the teacher. The process, however, is always recursive; therefore, the linear appearance of the model may be somewhat misleading.

MODEL OF WRITING PROCESS



PREDRAFTING	DRAFTING	REDRAFTING	REVISION	POST DRAFTING
1. Timed Writing	1. Talk Writing with Students	1. Use Response as Aid in Revision	1. Spelling/Punctuation	
2. Looping	2. Be Aware of "Comfort Zone" in Classroom	2. Outline Product to Find Relationships	2. Usage	
3. Cubing	3. Teach Sentence Combining	3. Fulfill Needs of Audience and Purpose		
4. Brainstorming	4. Teach Shapes of Discourse	4. Polish Sentences		
5. 5 W's + H	a. Essay	a. Passive to Active		
6. Listing	b. Business/Personal Letters	b. Past Tense to Present Tense		
7. Journals	c. Editorials	5. Use Checklist as Guide		
8. QAD	d. Feature Story			
9. Critical Thinking Skills	e. Reports			
10. Vocabulary Building	f. Book Reviews/ Reports			
	g. Paragraphs			

- PUBLISHING
1. BULLETIN BOARDS
 2. CLASS BOOKLETS
 3. CLASS/SCHOOL NEWSPAPER
 4. SUBMIT FOR PUBLICATION IN MAGAZINES

The teaching of writing encompasses many varied aspects of language and learning. In the past, teachers overlooked the importance of the *process* of learning while teaching written language. Writing, however, entails all forms of language: thought, speech, and the written word. The process begins with impressions and progresses through many stages until literacy is attained. The writing process, as has been explained, is carried out in much the same manner. Writers begin with random, disconnected thoughts during the pre-drafting stages, and later, sometimes significantly later, they culminate their efforts with the editing or post-drafting stage after which they have a communicative piece of written copy. The "Model of Writing Process" was developed to help teachers identify strategies which may be incorporated into the teaching of process-based writing throughout the curriculum. Even though teachers may teach a heuristic to students in isolation of the rest of the process, it is important to note that the main purpose for the model is to provide a variety of strategies for each of the four main stages of the process. The teacher or the student chooses the most appropriate strategies to unify the complex process of encoding. The purpose of process-based writing is to provide continuity for students with a variety of means to develop independence in their own writing, whether they are writing poetry or prose, fiction or non-fiction.

Most young and inexperienced writers have one question on their minds when asked to write a story: How do I begin? Teachers have the same question first and foremost in their minds! The most important aspect of beginning to teach writing effectively is to make the students feel comfortable about writing: establish the "comfort zone."

Literature can add an important dimension to any language arts program. Discuss the professional author's purpose. Discuss the author's intent in relationship to his audience. Does the text make sense? Is the material well organized? Is enough detail provided for clarity? When students begin to look critically at other writers' manuscripts, they will feel more *comfortable* about their own writing. They can then begin to see the importance of their audience in relationship to their writing. The result of this increased awareness is reader-based rather than writer-based writing on their own papers. Continue with the same type of question-asking by applying it to professional authors' works. Discuss

authors, illustrators, fiction and non-fiction. Roald Dahl has composed books for children which most often integrate reality and fantasy. *James and the Giant Peach* and *Fantastic Mr. Fox* take children's imaginations on a vivid journey through a fictional world. The "mind pictures" created in each child's head provide an opportunity for them to see the importance of description, detail, organization, and sequence as they apply to a completed manuscript. Children can draw pictures of segments of each story, sequence them, and retell the story to their own audience. They will be using their "mind pictures" for comprehension while listening and for a form of composition in retelling the story.

Children can also benefit from the aid of an "interest list" to avoid any anxious moments while choosing a topic for a writing assignment. Interests may be added to the list at any time and kept in a folder for easy access.

Parents can serve as aides during the onset of the year to encourage an interest in writing by acting as an audience for storytelling. They can take dictation or help students transcribe stories that have been recorded on tape.

The "comfort zone" is not merely a means to an end. It is an atmosphere which pervades the teaching environment. Lines of communication are opened between student and teacher as are those between writer, actor, musician, and audience. The teacher is no longer the evaluator but the objective participant. The student is not working toward the teacher's expectations. The result is reduced frustration on both parts. Establishing a "comfort zone" is an integral part of process-based writing and should not be overlooked. It is an ongoing process offering many rewards in the overall learning schema.

Give students the opportunity to generate their own ideas and most importantly ways to facilitate the invention stage of writing. By learning how to adapt a variety of heuristics to their writing needs, they will be able to make independent decisions as mature writers, decisions concerning which heuristic best fits a particular writing mode (refer to "Model of Writing Process:" Predrafting).

Heuristics and invention strategies may be taught in isolation of the writing process initially to familiarize students with the mastering of timed writing, looping, clustering, and, for instance, cubing. The meaning of heuristic is "to find," "to invent"; therefore, students must make use of the heuristic to find the ideas about which they will be writing.

Teachers can't expect students to intuit this most difficult writing stage. More than one heuristic may be used for a writing assignment, and the beauty of a heuristic is that it can be carried from one writing task to another, unlike the gimmicks and strategies of, let's say, story starters and product descriptions. Heuristics may be used in conjunction with one another such as brainstorming and timed writing, or if one heuristic fails to produce any fruitful results, another may be chosen. The important point to remember is that there is no rule assigning a heuristic to a particular type of writing assignment. After becoming familiar with the different heuristics, the students will be able to make decisions about which heuristic works best for them in different types of writing tasks. Independent student writing will be forthcoming if the teacher uses heuristics in conjunction with the entire writing process rather than as isolated, teacher-initiated exercises. Heuristics throughout the invention stage give students a common language to think about the writing process and to make decisions about future drafting. Heuristics provide a way for students to control and hence to facilitate their own writing processes.

The following heuristics can be used in any elementary classroom. Heuristics should be introduced to children as a creative experience, a way to discover ideas. When isolating one heuristic to familiarize students with its use and its link to a final version of a written product, teachers should present it in a large group setting so the students will feel relaxed and can have fun with it. Remind them that the use of invented spellings is the rule rather than the exception. Idea, not form, is the intent. Discuss the ideas which have surfaced and the possibilities for using those ideas. Point out that different students come up with different ideas and that the possibilities for different types of writing do exist for each of those students. Differences occur, and that is what makes writing such an exciting experience. It would be dull if everyone had the same idea about a given subject. Ask any college instructor of composition about the dull, almost conditioned responses on students' essays. Unlimited idea possibilities help to firmly establish the "comfort zone." Young writers have a reservoir of "storying" ready to be tapped, and it's nice for them to know that what they have to say is OK; there are no right or wrong ideas in the invention stage of writing. Young children love the heuristics of the writing process. Rather than simply demanding that

reluctant students think, you will, at times, want a button to turn them off!

Timed writing or free writing consists of having the students write constantly for a period of three to five minutes. They may write about any topic of their choice, but they may not pause during this time. If they run out of ideas, have them write the last word which they have written several times or write "I can't think of anything to say." Students are not to be concerned here with surface structure, only the deeper structure of idea and meaning. Timed writing not only tones the muscles of the arm used while writing, but also forces the student to think about a chosen topic constantly for a limited time. When the students are finished, they may select one idea or sentence which they particularly like and expand upon it.

Cubing is a heuristic which causes students to expand their thinking repertoire by considering different aspects of one topic.¹⁰ There are six conceptual patterns associated with the six sides of the cube. Students should write for three to five minutes for each of the consecutive patterns. Little or no time should lapse between the writing of each of the segments. Choose a topic such as swimming or better yet, let students isolate a topic from their previous timed writing and then send it through the following instructions of the cube:

1. *Describe* it.
2. *Compare* it to something.
3. *Associate* it — What does it make you think about?
4. *Analyze* it — What are its parts?
5. *Apply* it — What do you do with it or what would you like to do with it?
6. *Argue* for or against it.

Cubing may be used in the predrafting stage to choose rhetorical direction, for instance, *comparing* swimming to other sports; or it may be used as a heuristic, after students have composed the first draft, to dislodge further ideas and concrete details that may have surfaced during the initial writing. The writers may then incorporate several perspectives in their manuscript or choose to narrow the topic based on one significant aspect of the cubing. Thus, cubing sometimes bridges invention and arrangement, generating more substantive detail and mapping direction, order, and purpose.

The following is a cubing exercise which was done by a second grader. The class cubed "pine cone." Each student had a pine cone to observe during the cubing. Notice the ability with which the average eight-year-old can adapt to different thinking patterns quickly. Imagine how adept students could become in their thinking strategies if allowed to participate in activities such as cubing within the writing process from year to year!

1. *Describe*

It's brown with a tan color on the ends. It has white spots. It has a corved stim. The sinter of it is black. Some of the sticks are cavered down.

2. *Compare*

A hotdog redy for me to eat. and a cracrbox. a trelr and a come on a cob. the corne is yellow and the pine coams is brown.

3. *Associate*

a dogs tale wenter fall ded lefs corn pecul zcubers a stech and a tree. a brown crayon a white crayon. ded grass.

4. *Analyze*

their are many levs on the pinecone it has six sids it is roand it has a stim it has alot of sap.

5. *Application*

make a truck out of it. make a tree out of it. make a duck out of it. make big trick out of it.

6. *Argue*

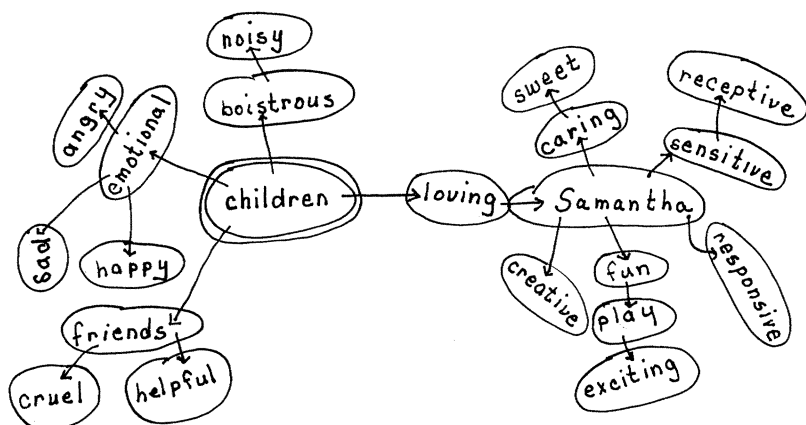
I do not wat thes pine kone bekos it can get all wet and bust then it will get all over the flor and then you wod haft to clen it up and it is not fun geting down on your nese in the water and then your pans are wet

Used in many classrooms as — unfortunately — the sole heuristic, brainstorming is an activity which may involve the entire class. It is just one more strategy that students may add to their writing process repertoire. Choose a topic such as video games and ask the students to raise their hands and tell you the first thing they thought of when they heard you mention video games. Make a list of the words or short phrases on the board. When all suggestions have been recorded the students may select those of particular interest to them and do a timed writing or begin the first draft using their selections as a springboard for their ideas. They may also cluster like ideas, binding again invention and arrangement, subject matter and rhetorical direction.

Listing is the same type of activity as brainstorming in that words or phrases are recorded; however, listing is done individually. The students list their own ideas on paper. The application of listing is used in the same manner as that of the brainstorming.

Clustering is very similar to listing, but allows significantly more "Design Mind" input. A nucleus word is the focal point from which other ideas radiate outward. The mapping is different, but the results are similar.

The following example of clustering illustrates the ideas which randomly radiated from the nucleus word children. During the clustering process a trial-web shift occurred at the point of Samantha. Samantha became the focus and a sense of direction was established. The moment between randomness and sense of direction is the trial-web shift.



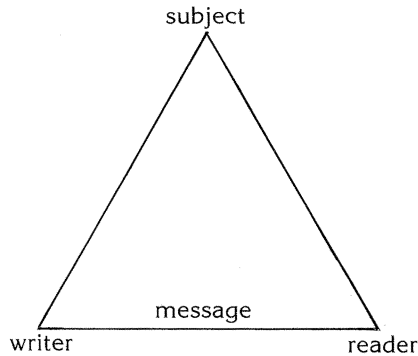
The clustering may be used to write a short vignette or essay, and appeals to the information-processing style of the "Design Mind." It tends to block the critical censorship of the "Sign Mind," dispelling tension and anxiety from the "Comfort Zone" and allowing the student to be receptive to new ideas.

Daily journal keeping can improve fluency and can be used to provide interesting topics for other writing projects. Entries must be about feelings, interests, and impressions rather than a mindless chronicling of daily activities. A journal entry easily leads to timed writing, to cubing or brainstorming, or to listing or clustering activity. The 5W's + H (Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How?) may also

be used in question-asking when discussing specific journal entries with students. By asking themselves questions such as "Why did I feel unhappy?" or "How did my friend make me feel unhappy?," young writers extend their thinking capabilities beyond a previously conceived idea. Journal entries are excellent lead-ins to other forms of writing while allowing the students to make independent choices concerning the topic. Journals are, perhaps, the most appropriate starting place for writing process instruction.

Having conceived the idea or ideas through the use of heuristics or invention strategies, writers are ready to begin drafting. Just as the means by which writers formulate their ideas may vary, so does the writing climate vary for each individual. Some students require an isolated area in which to write while others need to work within a group setting where they are able to converse with others, share ideas, and get the response of an audience. The teacher can provide a variety of options within the regular classroom to enhance the writing climate. A "writing room" or "writing center" complete with markers, crayons, pencils, scissors, glue, paper clips, staples, construction paper, lined paper, etc., is inviting to even the reluctant writer. Any small area within the classroom could be set up as a "listening center" allowing students to tape and listen to stories. A "library center" where students place stories or books that they have written for others to read not only is a means of publication within the classroom, but also serves as an incentive for all students to write and to read. The importance of these options is to provide a studio atmosphere within the writing classroom, therefore contributing to the physical aspect of the "comfort zone." Even though the physical aspect of the comfort zone is probably the least important, it acts as a motivator with young children and helps them approach writing in a relaxed state.

During the drafting and redrafting stages authors must be aware of their purposes for writing and the audiences for whom they are writing. The "communications triangle" illustrates the relationships of writer, subject, and reader to the message of the topic or subject.



The critical points which the young writer must address are the following:

1. What do I know about my subject? (writer-subject relationship)
2. Who is my audience? (writer-reader relationship)
3. What does my audience need to know to understand the subject? (reader-subject relationship).¹¹

The students may realize in the initial stages of drafting that they know very little about their subject matter and must therefore get more information before continuing. Cubing may help to expand and reinforce the foundation of ideas already present while offering the possibility of new insights.

Who is the audience? How does the student, particularly the young child, pinpoint an audience? If, in the "Comfort Zone," questioning about professional authors' intents in relationship to their audience were addressed, the children will already have an established notion of audience and of its importance to the authorial purpose. Through the discussions of other authors' manuscripts, the students have been active participants in an audience, critically observing various aspects of the writing process from the vantage point of a reader. The students' understanding of audience can now be transferred to their own realm of conceptualization as they decide who their audience is and make critical decisions about what their audience may need to know to understand the subject.

It is important for students to be aware of the fact that the purpose of writing may change when the audience

changes. A seven-year-old girl writes a letter to her best friend about ruining her brand new pair of Nikes while she made mudpies at the beach. The message conveyed to her friend will be filled with humorous details and will be quite entertaining. If, however, she were to write a letter to her mother about the same topic, it may contain certain feelings of remorse packaged in an apologetic tone while trying to convince mom that it was an accident. Audience awareness is a critical factor in producing reader-based writing.

Peer evaluation can aid in the student's conceptualization of the "communication triangle." Peer evaluation is a non-threatening means of evaluating during the revision stage of the writing process, and young writers make excellent peer evaluators and collaborative learners. Questioning and comments by students concerning organization, detail, unity, and clarity are abundant. It is difficult for young children to look objectively at their own writing because they are, as Piaget tells us, so egocentric in nature. They are also extremely influenced by their peers. But reader-based comments — such as "It doesn't make sense to me, I need to know why the astronauts are afraid." — are going to have a dramatic effect on students being evaluated. They will be able to see the problem in communication, transpose their "mind pictures" to print, and ultimately satisfy their audience's needs by providing sufficient detail for clarification through revision. When children are reevaluated, they will receive the added incentive of praise from their peers for following through in the explanation toward reader-based writing. Consequently, through peer evaluation writers are able to go full circle through the "communication triangle" and see the relationships between writer-subject, writer-reader and reader-subject as they relate to their own manuscripts.

The post drafting or editing stage is the time to attend to correct usage and the conventions of language. Up to this point elementary students should be using invented spellings and paying no attention to proper capitalization or punctuation. The prewriting and drafting stages should be devoted to the development of ideas: "Design Mind" functions of the right hemisphere of the brain. The editing stage should be reserved for the logical functions of linear thinking (usage and language conventions), the "Sign Mind" functions of the brain's left hemisphere. The young child more readily perceives the *whole* rather than parts or sequences. Therefore, teachers must work within the whole rather than

asking the child to put the pieces together like a puzzle until they fit. When the "Sign Mind" begins finally orchestrating itself in correlation with the "Design Mind," then the student will begin to manipulate at will the pieces of the puzzle within the whole. The logistics of the editing stage of the writing process may be adapted to young children's writing as an extension of their spoken language. Children read their stories in sentences and can auditorily distinguish complete sentences from phrases or fragments. Have the children use this as the basis for capitalization and punctuation. They have innate language patterning and phrasing skills as a result of constant mental and verbal communication. Help the children to adapt those mental and verbal skills to their writing by listening to the sounds and rhythms of the speech and the completeness of the thought. Abstract and isolated rules of usage and language conventions are not easily adapted to their own written products by the majority of average older students and hardly ever by young children. For these students a linear learning approach to language is usually futile. It can be an extremely harrowing experience for the student because of the pedagogy's obsession with "Sign Mind" emphasis. Even though young writers may not intrinsically understand the nature of editing, by working within the whole composition and the written context of words, students will be able to see the purpose for editing: a polished reader-based text, and when older be able to incorporate the aspects of editing into the composition with a total sense of understanding of the writing process.

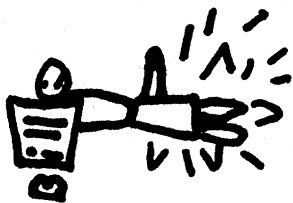
IV

Does process-based writing produce results in the classroom? Tyler, a first grader, who approached writing at the beginning of the year as a reluctant writer, may offer the answer to this question through his writing.

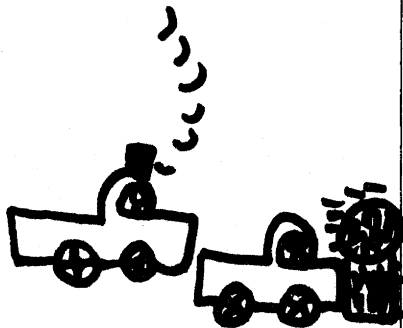
The first writing sample was composed during the month of October. The assignment was to tell a scary Halloween story. The class brainstormed using "Halloween" as the focal point. Tyler wasn't reluctant to put pencil to paper, but he felt that he had nothing to say. He felt his ideas weren't as important as some of the other students' ideas were. After discussing his ideas in relationship to some of the ideas presented during the brainstorming activity, he was more relaxed. His story, composed through the use of

pictures and one word, "Bill," does display the sense of "storying" innate to all youngsters.

TYLer



1



2



3



4

The next composition was written in preparation for the Young Authors Conference. Students had to choose their own topic, make decisions about which heuristics they would use in the invention stage of the process, and continue with the process through the editing stage, using peer evaluation during the redrafting and revision stages of the writing. The students chose brainstorming in small groups for students having similar topics, listing on an individual basis following the brainstorming, and timed writing to explore the ideas generated by the previous two heuristics.

Tyler's Listing

Tom and Jerry
moon mars
creech
rokit sun
black hole
mists
spasefitrs
spasecunpyootr
cripton
HBO

Tyler's Timed Writing

Tom and Jerrey wrwr chawling throo spase and thay sol the moon and wy thay wr going throo the moon a creechr atact and it wus shacing the ship — the End

Tyler's Second Discovery Draft

One day two youg astrnos wus geting rety to get inside the rokit. Then thay cowtid 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, then — blastoff. the astrnos wus in spase in no time. Wen thay wus going throo spase thay sow mars. Tom one of the astrnos said WOW! then insied the rokit Jerry fowd a T.V. Jerry whacht the noos. then tom fond out that the T.V. had HBO. Tom wocht star worse in the morning. Tom toid Jerry he likte the part wen Luke Skywalker said, "I thot this thing could go a lot faster." then hon solo said, "Watch your mouth kid or you are going to be floting back home." Jerry stardid to crack up. Then Jerry said tom on tv the plies are invinting a nuctae gan. tom and Jerry stade up wochin a moovy it was cold the spase fitrse. Then it was time to go to bed.

In the morning Jerry tode tom to wac up it's mornin. Then Jerry said I can see the earth in are telascope it is very byootyfl from up here your rite it is byootyfl fum up here. Then wiye thay travling throo space thay saw mars tom said wow. Then it stardid to get darck. Then Tom lockt out the wino then tom said the blach hoe Then Jerry lookt out the Windo and he saw the moon. Jerry tode tom to let the rokit down so tom let the rokit down tom wus the first one to get out. Then tom saw a creechr Jerry brug the langweg bouk. Jerry red the book. then the creechr noo wot he wus saing. tom fond a toob mising then the crechr fund a toob then thay went back home Jerr and tom got a reeword for being a corpril.

Tyler's Final Draft Astronauts in Outer Space

One day two young astronauts were getting ready to get inside the rocket ship. They counted 5,4,3,2,1 then — blastoff. The astronauts were in outer space in no time. When they were going through space they saw the moon. Tom one of the astronauts said, "WOW"! Inside the rocket Jerry found a T.V. He watched the news. Then Tom found out that the T.V. had H.B.O. Tom stayed up watching Star Wars. In the morning Tom was telling Jerry his favorite part. His favorite part was when the Sand Peyppe attached Luke Skywhacer. Luke Skywhacer said, "I thought this thing could go a lot faster." Then Hon Solo said, "Watch your mouth kid or you are going to be floating back home." Jerry started to crack up! Then it started to get dark. Tom looked out the window. He said, "The black hole!" After that Jerry saw Mars. Tom and Jerry stayed up watching a moovy. It was called the space fiters. Then it was time to go to bed. In the morning Jerry said, "Tom let the rocket down. Tom did. Tom was the first one to get out. Then Tom saw a creature. Jerry brought the language book. Jerry read the book. Then the creature knew what he was saying. Tom found a tube missing on the rocket. The creature found a tube and they went back home. Tom and Jerry were on T.V. and got a reward for being corporals.

Obviously, Tyler is no longer a reluctant writer. In four months Tyler has come a long way in the development of his communication skills. He has confidence in his ability to relate to his audience. His peers were just as excited about his story as he. Tyler, an average student, has gained a great deal of insight into the composing process through process-based writing. It does work!

This article is a capsulized version of theory in the areas of cognition and language development as it relates to the process approach to writing. Hopefully, it may serve as an incentive to elementary teachers to overcome their fear of the unknown and attempt to integrate the new paradigm for teaching composition into their own writing curricula. The rewards for the teacher are great. There is nothing like watching children revel in their own creation after working independently through the thinking processes and knowing that they are producing reader-based manuscripts on their own. It compares only to watching the delight in children's eyes when they realize for the first time that they can read! Through the use of the process approach we are able to reach the majority of our students rather than the select few we are now reaching through the traditional approach.

The only drawback is that we, as teachers professing the benefits of process-based writing, are few and far between. We, therefore, cannot ensure the continuity of the

process from year to year for our students. It is disheartening to think that Tyler's creative abilities may soon be stymied by grammar worksheets, by teachers who no longer look at the organizational and developmental aspects of his writing, but rather only the mechanical, grammatical and spelling errors which he makes. It is troublesome to consider he may develop a distaste and fear for writing. He now enjoys writing so much.

Our students are in dire need of help. We constantly read that Johnny and Jane can't write. As teachers, we should remember the words of Dorothea Brande and adapt their inspiration to our writing pedagogy:

The author of genius does keep till his last breath the spontaneity, the ready sensitiveness of a child, the innocence of eye that means so much to the painter, the ability to respond freshly and quickly to new scenes, and to old scenes as though they were new; to see traits and characteristics as though each were new-minted from the hand of God instead of sorting them quickly into dusty categories and pigeonholing them without wonder or surprise; to feel situations so immediately and keenly that the word "trite" has hardly any meaning for him; and always to see the correspondences between things of which Aristotle spoke two thousand years ago.¹²

Notes

¹James Moffett and Betty Jane Wagner, *Student-Centered Language Arts and Reading, K-18* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976), p. 2.

²Moffett and Wagner, p. 5.

³Moffett and Wagner, p. 9.

⁴Moffett and Wagner, pp. 10-11.

⁵Moffett and Wagner, p. 15.

⁶Moffett and Wagner, p. 21.

⁷James Britton, Tony Burgess, Nancy Martin, Alex McLeod, and Harold Rose, *The Development of Writing Abilities*, (11-18) (London: Macmillan Education, 1975), pp. 93-94.

⁸Gabriele Rico, *Writing the Natural Way* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1983).

⁹This model of the writing process was developed by Jan Strahl, Helen Hollingsworth, and Joanne Frye. It was adapted from another model presented by Jim Davis of the Iowa Writing Institute.

¹⁰Gregory and Elizabeth Cowan, *Writing* (Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman, 1980), p. 21.

¹¹Erika Lindeman, *A Rhetoric For Writing Teachers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 12.

¹²Rico, p. 59. See Dorothea Brande, *Becoming a Writer* (Los Angeles: Tarcher, 1934).