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Improving writing skills: Portfolios and Journals

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Improving writing skills: Portfolios and journals

“Speaking is to walking
as Writing is to swimming”

(Brown, 2000)

Improving writing skills: Portfolios and journals

I. Writing as a thinking process

II. Metacognition concept

A. Why metacognition

III. Metacognitive strategies

IV. How metacognitive strategies are applied

A. Portfolios

B. Journals

Improving writing skills: Portfolios and journals

- Writing as a thinking process:
 - “Writing is the most important and hardest form of communication... It requires thought and organization” (Kelly, 1999)
 - “The discourse barrier is the most difficult one second language learners must break” (Brown, 2000)
 - Oral discourse: go back and for
 - Written discourse: the writer is not present

Improving writing skills: Portfolios and journals

- Written words leave behind a record of what was said
 - Unclear messages cause terrible damage
- Written messages are becoming the primary source of communication
 - Text-messages, e-mails, chatting
- Writing should be considered of the utmost importance
 - To reach good writing good tools and techniques should be provided
 - Portfolios
 - Journals

Improving writing skills: Portfolios and journals

- Teaching the writing process:
 - Successful writing results from successful planning and revising.
 - For students: changing words and fixing errors
 - What to do?
 - Help them to adapt and use a process for writing.
 - Encouraging them to revise their thinking.
 - It amounts to a giving them a revelation.

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- Multiple writing processes enter into the overall process of writing
 - These various process vary from student to student
 - From context to context (Bedford, 45)

Improving writing skills: Portfolios and journals

- Teaching the writing process:
 - In its general sense, the writing process includes loosely sequential and recursive phases of:
 - Planning and Preparation (often called Prewriting)
 - Drafting
 - Revising
 - Editing and Proofing.
- Let's see this in details [WRITING STEPS.doc](#)
 - Going through all these stages of writing they're going through a metacognitive process

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- Metacognition concept
 - “Awareness of one's own cognitive processes...the use of that self awareness in controlling and improving cognitive processes” (Biggs & Moore, p 527, 1993).
 - It provides writing students with the ability to describe how and what they have learned about their writing processes.
 - But how?

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- By doing the following:
- *planning*, deciding what their goals are and what
- *strategies* to use to get there; decide what further
- *knowledge* or resources they need;
- *monitoring* progress along the way; am I going in the right direction;
- *evaluating* when I have arrived;
- *terminating* when the goals have been met
(Biggs & Moore, 1993, p.307).

Improving writing skills: Portfolios and journals

- The basic metacognitive strategies:
 - Plan, monitor, and evaluate thinking processes.
(Jacobs, 2004)
- How metacognitive strategies can be applied to writing skills:
 - Portfolios
 - Journals

Improving writing skills: Portfolios and journals

○ Portfolios

- They consist of the collection of the entire papers students write along the semester.
- They are asked to be completed in groups of three.
- Portfolios, when finished, are the basis for the final project (Journal).
- In the portfolio students include clean, corrected versions of their papers, as well as a copy of all their writings.
 - This way all the adequate corrections made can be checked by the end of the semester.

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- Portoflios stages
 - First, students discuss with the teacher their drafts.
 - Better options to write their ideas are given.
 - Example:

FIRST DRAFT

Shopping in a supermarket can be a very aggravating experience. When I was at the local A&P recently, you couldn't walk down the cereal aisle because the kid who was restocking the shelves had blocked the aisle with a lot of large cartons. I asked him to move a couple of them so I could pass. He made a nasty remark and went right on doing his work. Just as I entered the store, this woman banged her cart right into my side. She didn't even bother to apologize. Also, I had to wait on a long line at the check out counter because the supermarket didn't have enough cashiers. This shopping trip convinced me that the supermarket environment seems to bring out the worst in some people.

Supermarkets seem to be a breeding ground

~~Shopping in a supermarket can be a very
for rude behavior.~~

~~aggravating experience~~ When I was at the local

~~A&P~~ recently, you couldn't walk down the cereal aisle because the kid who was restocking the shelves had blocked the aisle with a lot of large cartons. I asked him to move a couple of them so I could pass. He *snapped "Hold your horses!"* ~~made a nasty remark~~ and went

right on doing his work. (Just as I entered the *local*

A+P recently

~~store,~~ this woman banged her cart right into my side. She didn't even bother to apologize. Also,

I had to wait on a long line at the check out

These are only a couple of the many

~~counter because the supermarket didn't have enough
experiences that have~~

~~cashiers. This shopping trip convinced me that the~~

supermarket environment seems to bring out the

worst in some people.

Off the topic

Not logical

I need another incident

Improving writing skills: Portfolios and journals

- Portoflios stages
 - Second, suggestions regarding grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc rather than style and organization are given.
 - Example:

Supermarkets seem to be a breeding ground for rude behavior. Just as I entered the local A&P recently, this woman banged her cart right into my side. She didn't even bother to apologize. You couldn't walk down the cereal aisle because the kid who was restocking the shelves had blocked the aisle with a lot of large cartons. I asked him to move a couple of them so I could pass. He snapped "Hold your horses!" and went right on doing his work. These incidents were annoying, but they were nothing compared to what once happened while I was on the express check out line at a Grand Union Supermarket. The cashier pointed out to this guy in front of me that he was well over the ten item limit for that line. Well, he exploded with a steady stream of filthy language. The manager eventually came over and threw him out of the store. These are only a couple of the many experiences that have convinced me that the supermarket environment seems to bring out the worst in some people.

REVISED SECOND DRAFT

Supermarkets seem to be a breeding ground for
rude behavior. ^{For example} Just as I entered the local A&P
recently, ^a ~~this~~ woman banged her cart right into my
^{and did not} side, ~~she didn't~~ even bother to apologize. ^{Then} You
^{not} couldn't walk down the cereal aisle because the
^{fellow} kid who was restocking the shelves had blocked the
^{way} aisle with ~~a lot of~~ ^{several} large cartons. ^{When} I asked him to
^{few} move a ~~couple~~ of them so I could pass. He snapped
"Hold your horses! and went right on doing his
^{Although} work. ^{These} incidents were annoying, but they were
^{minor} ~~nothing~~ compared to what once happened while I was

on the express check out line at a Grand Union
Supermarket. ^{When} The cashier pointed out to ^{the man} ~~this~~ guy
in front of me that he was well over the ten item
limit for that line. ~~Well~~, he exploded with a
^{that continued until} steady stream of filthy language. The manager
eventually came over and ^{insisted that he leave} threw him out of the
^{few} store. These are only a ~~couple~~ of the many
experiences that have convinced me that the
supermarket environment seems to bring out the
worst in some people.

Improving writing skills: Portfolios and journals

- Portoflios stages
 - Third, students receive just certain comments. They are asked to solve the problems presented by themselves.
 - Example:

(Title?)

My first day of school was both good and bad. One of T.S. is a fact.

the good (things) was my teacher Mrs. Grant. She was very (nice.)

(Why?)

Another good part of that day was when Mrs. Grant had us all be quiet and listen to the sound of the crayons while we were coloring. I was surprised that it was such a loud noise.

The last good memory that I have of that day is finding the chocolate kiss in my lunch bag. It made me remember that my

(Be more specific)

mom loved me. There were bad (things), too. The worst was

that my mom was sick and couldn't take me to school. I didn't want to leave her alone, but my dad insisted that we go to school. One boy there kept pulling my hair. Then, my dad was

transition?

late picking me up, and I cried. I'm glad I don't have to

CONJUNCTION

relieve that day)

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- Portoflios stages
 - Then, the students receive only correction symbols.
 - [SUGGESTED CORRECTION SYMBOLS.doc](#)
 - Example:
 - [DRAFT.doc](#)

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- Portoflios stages
 - Finally, students receive hints (underlining, circles, arrows). They must try to figure out what is needed to be done.
 - [DRAFT 2.doc](#)

FINAL DRAFT

Supermarkets seem to be a breeding ground for rude behavior. For example, just as I entered the local A&P recently, a woman banged her cart into my side and did not even bother to apologize. Then I could not walk down the cereal aisle because the fellow who was restocking the shelves had blocked the way with several large cartons. When I asked him to move a few of them so that I could pass, he snapped, "Hold your horses!" and went right on doing his work. Although these incidents were annoying, they were minor compared to what once happened while I was on the express checkout line at a Grand Union Supermarket. When the cashier pointed out to the man in front of me that he was well over the ten-item limit for that line, he exploded with a steady stream of filthy language that continued until the manager eventually came over and insisted that he leave the store. These are only a few of the many experiences that have convinced me that the supermarket environment seems to bring out the worst in some people.

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- Portoflios stages
 - As the course goes on, the students start sharing opinions about their works (cooperative learning).
 - They provide self-assesment
 - [PARAGRAPH CHECK LIST.doc](#)
 - [PEER HELP WORKSHEET.doc](#)

Improving writing skills: Portfolios and journals

- Journals
 - Reflective writing
 - Writing about writing
- Journals are extended, self-reflective logs of thought and meta-thought that students write during or at the end of a term.
- Reflective essays and journals can be powerful metacognitive exercises for writers as they develop their writing and learn why their writing is developing.
 - [My Journal.doc](#)

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○ Summary

- Metacognitive activities (portfolios and journals) include understanding concepts about the writing process:
 - They refer to a writer's knowledge of the way she/he writes or how she/he learns.
 - Learners become aware of their learning process.
 - They focus on "knowing about knowing and thinking about thinking."
 - They encourage problem solving skills.
 - They encourage cooperative learning.

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- Conclusion
 - Portfolios and journals, as metacognitive strategies, provide writing students with:
 - The ability to describe how and what they have learned about their writing process.
 - The ability to generalize and apply the process to their future writing situations.
 - The ability of being strategic and perform better than those who are not.
 - The ability of being aware of their thinking and the strategies they are using.

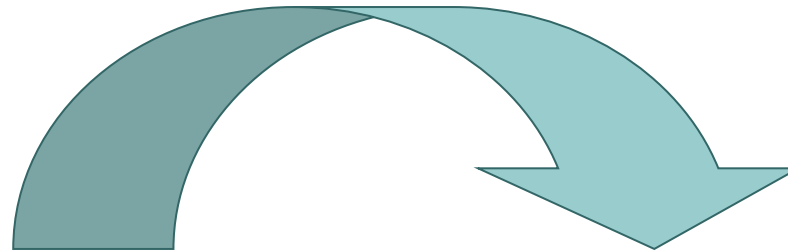
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Invitation

- Ask your students to write, to read their writings, and write about them.
- Guide them to solve their own writing problems.
- Have them to go through these six steps:
 1. Assessing the assignment
 2. Generating ideas
 3. Organizing ideas
 4. Writing a draft
 5. Revising
 6. Editing

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- Ask them to carefully revise the Editing step:



If they hardly write, they hardly read → they hardly process information



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Thank you very much!!!

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