

Developing writing capabilities: The process writing approach

Grabe and Kaplan (1996) offer a number of dominant traits of a process-oriented approach to writing. These include:

- Being concerned with the “hows” of writing
- Teaching students the strategies of invention and discovery
- Teaching students how to connect ideas
- Acknowledging the individuality of students in terms of their needs, abilities, cognitive styles, rates of learning and learning styles
- Recognizing the recursiveness of the writing process, and that writing processes overlap and do not occur in an orderly fashion
- Viewing errors as useful indicators of process
- Being student-centred
- Being communicative in nature
- Emphasizing writing for different audiences
- Emphasizing the discovery of meaning while writing
- Viewing writing as a cognitive and intellectual process and one of the most complex human activities
- Contextualizing writing and viewing it as a goal-directed activity
- Linking writing activities to the generation of new ideas
- Acknowledging that skilled writers’ processes are different from the processes of unskilled writers.

(Al-Mahrooqi & Denman, 2015, pp. 79-80)

PROCESS

1. Planning and writing the first draft (Draft 1) based on one of three topics provided by the instructor (at this stage, the instructor checks if the students are on topic and also identifies any plagiarism issues in the essays using the Turn-it-in software embedded in the course management system).
2. Providing and receiving peer feedback on Draft 1 using a peer-review checklist (See Appendix A) in class.
3. Revising Draft 1 within a week based on the peer feedback and/or through self-review and writing Draft 2.
4. Receiving feedback on Draft 2 from SEU (YourTutor, Learning Adviser, etc.)
5. Revising Draft 2 within a week based on feedback and writing Draft 3 (final draft).
6. Submitting the writing assignment in an online folder (student submits all three drafts along with two peer review and tutor verification forms to the instructor).
7. Receiving instructor feedback and grade (the instructor grades the essay package using a rubric (see Appendix C) and provides written feedback using EAP Editing Symbols (see Appendix D) as well as oral feedback⁴).
8. Optional revision (student is provided with an optional revision opportunity. If the student chooses to revise and resubmit, the original essay score and the score on the revised draft

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(Draft 4) are averaged. Students are also given opportunities to discuss their final draft with the instructor outside the class).

(Dikli, Jernigan, Bleye, 2015, p. 57)

APPENDIX A: EAP ESSAY PEER-REVIEW CHECKLIST

Your Name (Essay Reviewer) _____

Partner's Name (Essay Author) _____

Directions: Read your partner's essay and answer the following questions:

INTRODUCTION

1. Does the essay have a hook? Is it effective?
2. Is there background information that leads from the hook to the thesis? Is it clear and logical?
3. What is the writer's thesis? What is the controlling idea of the thesis statement? Are they effective?
4. Do you have any suggestions for improving the introduction?

BODY

5. How many body paragraphs are there? Are they logically ordered?
6. Does each body paragraph have a clear topic sentence? Is there unity in the essay (i.e. do all topic sentences support the thesis)?
7. Does each paragraph develop the point presented in the topic sentence with strong support? Is the support convincing and substantial?
8. Do the points overlap in any of the paragraphs? If so, where?
9. Is there coherence in each paragraph (i.e. do all of the ideas fit together in a logical flow)?
10. Do you have any other suggestions for improving the body paragraphs?

CONCLUSION

11. Is the conclusion complete? Does it reaffirm/restate the thesis and controlling ideas?
12. Does it add a concluding idea (advice, warning, prediction, question, or a new insight)?
13. Do you have any other suggestions for improving the conclusion?

OVERALL

14. Is the essay on-topic?
15. What does the writer do especially well?
16. Make three suggestions to the writer on how to improve the essay.

(Adapted from Leonhard, B. H. (2002). Discoveries in academic writing. Boston, MA. Heinle & Heinle.)

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Table 4. EAP essay scoring rubric (EAP 0091/in-class). Name _____ Score: _____/24

Score	Development (x2)	Focus (x1)	Organization (x2)	Accuracy (x3)
3	topic is well-developed; sound reasons are supported by specific examples and details; evidence of critical thinking and consideration of other viewpoints- 6 pts.	sharp focus on the main idea is maintained throughout - 3 pts	clear introduction; may have a brief but clear conclusion; good supporting details; logical progression of ideas in the essay; transitions used appropriately - 6 pts.	consistent facility in language use; demonstrates syntactic variety and appropriate word choice; maybe some minor lexical or grammatical errors - 9 pts.
2.5	topic is developed with support from some specific examples and details; some evidence of critical thinking - 5 pts.	focus on the main idea is largely maintained; few, if any, digressions - 2.5 pts.	parts of the essay (particularly the introduction) and supporting details can be identified; demonstrates logical sequencing of ideas; transitions generally used appropriately - 5 pts.	facility in language use; some variety in syntax and word choice; minor lexical and grammatical errors do not interfere with communication of ideas - 7.5 pts.
2	topic is developed with support from a few relevant examples and details; critical thinking may not be as clear or evident - 4 pts.	focus is generally maintained; minor digressions lead back to the main topic - 2 pts.	parts of the essay (particularly the introduction) may be unclear; little evidence of sequencing of ideas, but overall organization is present; transitions may be ineffective - 4 pts.	inconsistent facility in language use; lexical and grammatical errors sometimes obscure meaning or require more careful reading to understand - 6 pts.
1.5	topic is somewhat developed using very few examples or details, which may be general or repetitious, but still basically relevant - 3 pts.	focus is somewhat maintained; digressions usually lead back to the main topic - 1.5 pts.	unclear introduction, body, or conclusion; somewhat disorganized overall; simplistic or ineffective transitions - 3 pts.	inconsistent facility in language use; obvious lexical and grammatical errors obscure meaning and require more careful reading to understand - 4.5 pts.
1	development is limited; supporting details are repetitive, simplistic, or not clearly related to the topic - 2 pts.	focus is not maintained; digressions do not lead back to the main topic - 1 pt.	essay shows little understanding of organization; little or no evidence of essay structure or supporting details; ineffective or missing transitions - 2 pts.	little facility in language use; serious, frequent errors make the essay difficult to understand - 3 pts.
0.5	development is severely limited; paragraph may be partially unrelated to topic - 1 pt.	essay too brief or incoherent to evaluate focus- .5 pts.	little or no organization is apparent - 1 pt.	essay is basically incoherent or written in a foreign language - 1.5 pts.

Adapted from *Score Scale for ESL e-Write* (ACT COMPASS testing) and *iBT/Next Generation TOEL Test Independent Writing Rubrics/ Scoring Standards* (ETS).

(Source: Teaching critical thinking and academic writing skills to Japanese university EFL learners)