Community Building
Through the Production of a School Newspaper

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Abstract

The focus of this paper is the teaching of writing skills for ESL or EFL students within the context of a learning community. References are cited from the literature on team building within business contexts and from the literature on a process approach to the teaching of writing. This literature as well as the author's beliefs and commitment to experimental education led to the development of a course in writing that used the production of a student newspaper as an organizing principle for the course. The author presents multiple levels of input into the course design and classroom management for such a course. Samples of student writing are also included to illustrate student progress within certain types of writing. Finally, recommendations are suggested for teachers who are interested in experimenting with a similar course design.

ERIC Descriptors

English (Second language)
Second Language Instruction
Community Building
Journalistic Peer Correction

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Chapter One
Wh-Questions

The WHY behind the WHAT

Most schools with second or foreign language programs offer writing classes; however, it is important to evaluate what type of teaching and learning environment is being developed in these classes. Since witnessing, as well as teaching, many classes in which the teacher-student relationship is linear, I have come to the conclusion: student-to-student dialogue is a more effective way to encourage communication and enhance learning within the writing classroom environment. By evaluating the linear teaching style, I reached the conclusion that this method of teaching often contributes to student and teacher burnout. Having spent many evenings correcting grammar for and returning papers to disinterested students, I decided to implement journalism as a writing class model with a very high degree of student to student dialogue.

Upon instituting a curriculum that incorporated publishing as the main focus, I immediately found new motivation within. The students in my class also demonstrated this increase in motivation. In addition, the community-building aspect of publishing increases the students' interest in language development—elevating them to a higher plane. The students embrace the team concept, rather than acting as a single entity with a singular idea. When students develop the required skills to function as a team, "team" unity becomes the strongest motivator in the classroom.

Classroom motivation is built upon the same principles as motivation in the workplace. Modern motivational theory was initiated in the 1930's (Hanson and Batten, 1995). Companies began to evaluate the workers as well as their work output. Prior to this time, production theorists believed that the best way to improve productivity was to improve techniques and methods. This was managed by enforcing production criteria and quotas.

In 1924 the Western Electric Company (WEC) in Hawthorne, Illinois challenged the production theory. This occurred completely by accident. WEC was performing a comparison study on the influence factory lighting had on the workers' productivity. Different lighting standards were placed throughout the factory. What they found was astonishing. Not only did production improve for the group with the brighter lightning, but also productivity increased for the rest of the work force (Hanson and Batten, p.xxv). The question posed was: *WHY?* The answer given: *because everyone felt important!* The workers were asked "how they felt," and they were given longer work breaks. This increased their self-worth since they sensed they were part of the experiment and, therefore, part of the team. In short: they were given a voice.

When one evaluates a standard writing class, breaking it down into its individual components, there are comparable elements with the 1900's workplace. During this evaluation, it becomes evident that a student's productivity is based on specific guidelines. Instructors often set standards based on the student's content errors, grammatical errors, and production levels based on a set number of pages. These criteria take into consideration the product output--not the worker behind the product. When human relations becomes the teacher's primary goal, the student's productivity will also

improve. Students (people) who feel important will consistently produce eighty-to-ninety percent of their ability (Pfeffer et al. pp. 313-321).

By adopting this theory, teachers will become the students' mentors. By identifying the students' strengths and weaknesses, enhancing the required skills, the students' confidence will, in turn, increase. When the teacher embraces the role of observer and motivator, the following processes can be implemented: "Directing, Coaching, Supporting, and Delegating." The intent of this paper is to introduce a format that demonstrates why these four skills are important within any classroom environment. The implementation of this process will develop a team concept, where all members are affiliated to one another through the subject of writing.

The WHEN behind the WHAT

When is the optimum level reached? It is reached when the students have achieved a certain language level. This level is the paragraph stage of language acquisition. There are several reasons to initiate publishing at this time. First, the student's ability should attain a certain level of communication, a level where written and verbal expression is possible. If publishing is implemented too early, the students may be frustrated with their inability to express their feelings on paper as well as orally. It is important to recognize the following: publications or Newspapers that students' produce will be viewed by their peers, causing a high level of anxiety. When students feel comfortable with their command of the written language, they feel comfortable with others reading their work.

Therefore, I have found that students whose linguistic skills are strongly developed at the paragraph level and above are prime candidates for this type of teaching environment. This principle it is the cornerstone for developing the students' confidence.

The second reason for choosing journalism is the community-building aspect of this model. Students demonstrate a strong sense of responsibility with this part of the curriculum. Students are the main drivers of production. A certain standard of verbal skills is required to negotiate ideas in an open setting. The students' opinions are taken into account from contemplation to completion. Thus, they must first have the verbal dexterity to communicate what they want to do as well as the ability to identify how they would like to do it.

The WHERE behind the WHAT

The classroom atmosphere is a crucial aspect of community building. It is counterproductive to this program if the teacher dominates and controls the classroom. The setting should be conducive to student empowerment. When a level of confidence is instilled through positive re-enforcement, the students will inherently create something for themselves. This is the driving force behind the concept of community learning. Student relationships will become a living thing, breathing fresh air into the classroom atmosphere. As a result, the students will want the entire class to succeed.

It is important to help them help each other. They may come to class not knowing how to ask each other questions. I have implemented mentoring techniques from Leadership and the One-Minute Manager (Blanchard et al., 1985) which basically states

"the more we nourish our students' potential, the more they will assume additional responsibilities. By working in a community environment, including the skills of "Directing, Coaching, Supporting, and Delegating. This will be accomplished. (ibid, p. 46-51). Upon initiation of this process, the majority of the students will identify and choose a role to support production. Consequently, if the teacher, as well as their peers, recognize them for this initiative, the students will want to assume additional responsibilities. This is the time and place for community. Community supports the learning process, encouraging learners to excel, not only for themselves but also for each other. The students are motivated by other factors, which take the place of a carrot from the teacher.

The WHO behind the WHAT

A primary goal of this model for a writing class is to address different personality types encountered in a classroom, along with ways to better serve each student's needs. Every student has extrinsic and intrinsic potential. Teachers, wear many hats, hats that delegate when a student has confidence and ability, coach when a student has competence without commitment, and direct when a student is unsure. Teachers also provide support for their students since they need praise and a pat-on-the-back to build confidence. Students also look for direction; and teachers are required to provide this as well.

The potential exists for every student to take responsibility for a specific area of publishing. Not all students exhibit confidence, nor will they be committed to the class. Nevertheless, there is one certainty: the students are usually required to attend. Then

when the teacher assesses the needs of each student, he will know when and with whom to delegate, coach, and direct. This dynamic can change the confidence and commitment of both individuals and groups within a class.

The HOW behind the WHAT

This paper will deal with the theory behind class organization from initiation to publication, as well as the practical considerations as to how to implement this approach. The process consists of step-by-step identification of each aspect of the publication curriculum.

First, we will look at different techniques such as brainstorming/mind mapping. We will explore various methods to activate the students' background knowledge, promoting a framework for the collaborative knowledge of the group. Next, we will look at the different ways the students are encouraged to work in community. During this phase of the class, students have the opportunity to develop their interpersonal skills. We will explore various models that I have created to assist with this area of classroom management.

Finally, we will explore the different aspects of writing and publishing. The most important step is to ensure that student success is built into the curriculum. There are many different ways to write and publish student-created material.
We will look at the traditional, as well as the more abstract, ways that encourage students to develop the required confidence level. Once this confidence level has been reached,

they will be comfortable sharing their written work with others—inside and outside the classroom environment.

The WHAT

Yes, primarily it is a writing class. First and foremost, the goal is for all students to complete this class, acquiring the necessary skills to express themselves in the written language. This paper will address techniques that the students can use to improve their writing and editing skills. There will also be an exploration of the theory behind writing, including how to put it into practice. Finally, an evaluation of the work of various students will be presented in order to illustrate the main objective of this model: community building through the production of a school newspaper.

Chapter Two

Come Together

The commencement of each course is always an interesting experience. The classroom is comprised of many diverse minds, containing varied experiences and history, grouped into one physical space. Each student has particular expectations, goals, and fears. Interestingly by sharing ideas, very similar expectations, goals, and fears are identified. It is from this point of reference that community building starts. If teachers instill a sense of sharing and commonality with the students, they will delve inside themselves to find the skills necessary to build relationships.

When focus is placed upon the subject, the spotlight is removed from the teacher and students—putting the subject matter in the proper perspective. As the class identifies which publishing interests the students have in common, they gain insight into their classmates' minds, interests, and backgrounds. One technique for sharing ideas that has proven successful is the use of Graphic Organizers (Bromely, Irwin-De Vitis, and Moldo 1995).

The premise around Graphic Organizers is to encourage the flow of creative ideas. They are also very useful in implementing familiarization between the classmates by introducing different ideas and mutual interests.
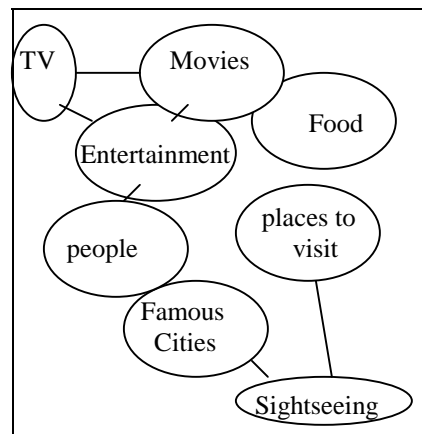
Conceptual Organizer (diagram 1)

The first Graphic Organizer I will introduce is mind mapping/brainstorming, known by the formal term of "Conceptual Organizer." (ibid. p.10) This type of organizer is an excellent icebreaker. The basic premise is for learners to call out all ideas they wish to share about publishing. As momentum builds, so then does the schema behind publishing. Everyone initiates ideas, becoming the generator behind topics that interest them. The teacher writes the students' ideas on the board, supporting all thoughts that are initiated. It is important to write down all ideas generated. This will encourage everyone's participation without fear of judgment by the teacher or classmates.

Finally, success is imminent. When the students look at this wonderful array of ideas splashed upon the board, it becomes obvious that they have created something together. The by-product of this activity is that the students are no longer thinking as separate entities. They have started working as a team from day one. Through these processes, they will have gleaned new facts about each other, identified common and diverse areas of interest, understood the teacher's role, and, most importantly, learned that everyone is a major contributor to the class.

Next, I will introduce several effective approaches that may be used when Graphic Organizers are implemented in the classroom. One process would be to assemble many different visual aides, such as newspapers, movies, magazines, or perhaps a TV guide. Ask the students to choose a topic that interests them, asking them to share "why."

Another possibility is to ask the students to write about three or four areas of interest and why they find them interesting. This activity should be completed prior to class attendance. By approaching this activity as homework, it is less intimidating for those students who lack confidence.
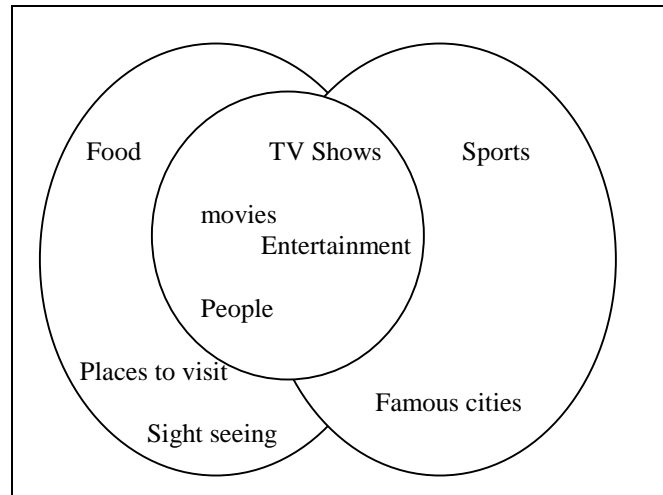
By allowing them time to identify what they wish to introduce into the classroom, it enables them to share certain ideas initially, saving other topics for a later date.

One more approach would be to team students in pairs, asking them to share their interests. This has been found to be less stressful for some groups than calling out ideas in front of a large assemblage that has just met for the first time. After they have completed this task and a certain comfort level has been reached, the groups can be increased to four or more participants. The students are then encouraged to share the outcome of their individual sessions with the whole class. This puts the focus on the entire group and not on a single individual.

Consideration should be given to the composition of the class. The initial goal is to demonstrate to the students that working together is fun, that teamwork is creative and productive. At the conclusion of the class, if all students shared a topic of interest or discussed a feeling or idea, then everyone had a good day. The entire groups' comfort level improved because they gained more information about each other. Moreover, the students appreciate it when others demonstrate an interest by actively listening. The development of trust in the group has now begun.

Once everyone's ideas are identified on the board, the next step is to find the common threads of interest. I suggest what is known as the "Venn Diagram" (ibid, p.63).

This diagram is used to identify the common denominator of all ideas

Food   TV Shows   Sports

movies
Entertainment

People

Places to visit

Sight seeing   Famous cities

Venn Diagram (diagram 2)

generated by the class. The Venn Diagram's focal point should be what the entire class had in common.

The students are encouraged to search for similarities. This will enable the class to visualize the interrelationship of their interests. This initiates the next experience of success by developing a classroom environment that invites flexibility and freedom because it permits the students to discover the answers themselves. However, it is counterproductive to uncover the commonalties too quickly. Decision-making skills are a valuable aspect of the class. Encouraging freedom in the classroom by permitting each student to choose his own topic will change the focus from teacher-assigned work to student-preferred work.

Techniques, such as brain storming and the Venn Diagram, are beneficial when used from the beginning of term. These techniques are beneficial because they build on the students' background, as well as the teacher's knowledge of the students. A key point to remember is that the teacher and students play a vital role in this process. The following suggestions may be applied to encourage a productive classroom environment.

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They are rephrased from information presented on the Internet in: (briefings.com, Volume XVIII No. III) If these ideas are initiated from the beginning, the stage will be set for student sharing.

Running a Brainstorming Session

1. **Do not compete** with the students. Give their ideas precedence over yours.
2. **Listen to everyone.** Paraphrase, but do not judge.
3. **Do not put anyone on the defensive.** Assume that everyone's ideas are of value and no idea is too weak to write on the board.
4. **Control** the dominating people without alienating them. **Support** the passive students without putting the spotlight directly on them.
5. **Keep all students up to speed.** Whatever is written, be sure that it is visible by all members and is understood by them before moving on to the next idea.
6. **Realize** that the teacher's energy, alertness, and interest in the subject are contagious.
7. **Give others a turn at running the meeting.** At appropriate points in time, students will be able to manage the sessions.

By implementing these seven community-building tools, the atmosphere of the class will be supportive. Moreover, students are given a chance to control the curriculum. Their self-confidence will improve since they feel important and valued.

Chapter Three

Working in Community

This part of the curriculum contains the forum where students, as well as the teacher, get the opportunity to enhance their interpersonal skills. During this phase, the key word is *"Delegation."*
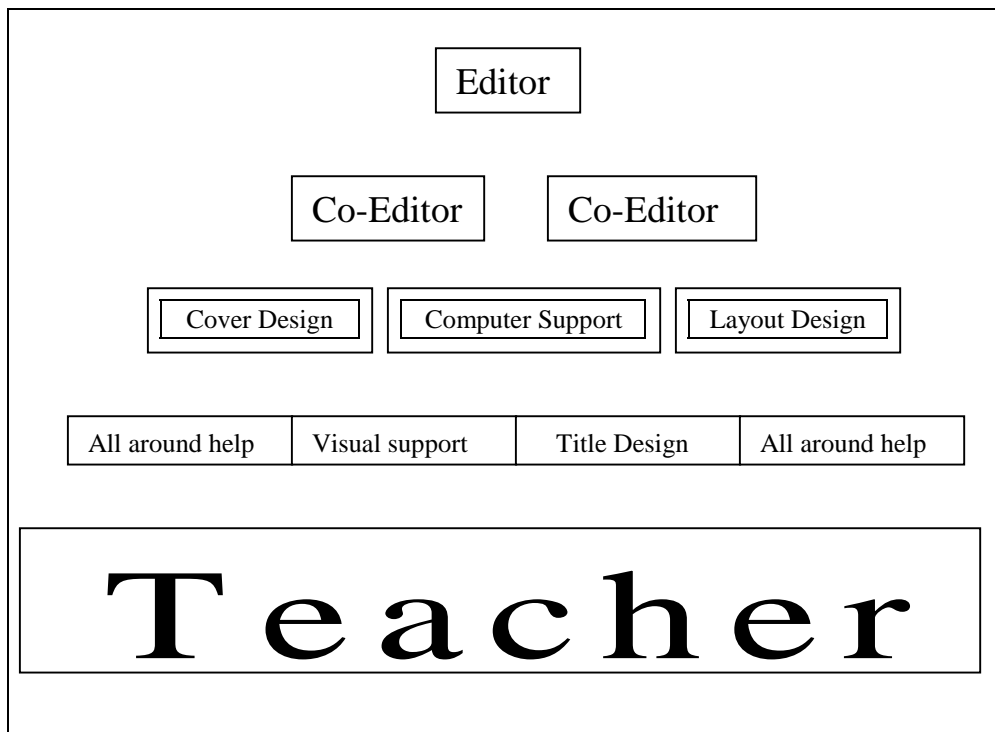
Teachers may resist this tool for several reasons. Researcher Jeffrey Pfeffer has identified one of the main reasons behind this lack of delegation. He calls this *self-enhancement bias* (Pfeffer, p.313-321). This theory states that as managers (teachers), feel that they must supervise the work themselves in order for it to be acceptable. The study shows that ninety per cent of all managers and workers rate their own performance as superior to their peers. Therefore, the more one is involved, the better the work must be. If there is any truth to this research, then, the more control and involvement the teacher has, the more positively she or he evaluates the progress of the students since they are also evaluating themselves.

With this in mind, when we remove ourselves from the primary role of manager, delegation needs to be implemented. As teachers, we are continually enhancing our teaching skills, such as active listening, problem solving and creating. By implementing the concept of community, we give our students the opportunity to do the same. Furthermore, when we embrace the *self-enhancement bias* theory, we support the statistic that ninety per cent of the work force believes their performance is superior. However, by using the art of delegation, all students will want to be a part of this organizational process in order to have the best publication possible.

The system I have devised ensures that all students have equal opportunity to control or manage a part of the curriculum. This system is called The Hierarchy of Responsibilities. (see diagram 3 below)

As identified in this diagram, there is room for all students to work on a section of the publication. This model is extremely useful for instituting delegation.   It not only offers a varied range of positions for all students to take part in the creative process, but it also provides a framework for empowering students to take charge of the learning process.

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+--------------------------------------------------------------+
|                                                              |
|                      +-----------------+                     |
|                      |     Editor      |                     |
|                      +-----------------+                     |
|                                                              |
|            +-------------+      +-------------+               |
|            |  Co-Editor  |      |  Co-Editor  |               |
|            +-------------+      +-------------+               |
|                                                              |
|      +---------------+ +-----------------+ +---------------+  |
|      | Cover Design  | |Computer Support | | Layout Design |  |
|      +---------------+ +-----------------+ +---------------+  |
|                                                              |
|  +----------------+-------------+-------------+------------+  |
|  | All around help |Visual support| Title Design|All around help|
|  +----------------+-------------+-------------+------------+  |
|                                                              |
|  +--------------------------------------------------------+  |
|  |                                                        |  |
|  |           T e a c h e r                                |  |
|  |                                                        |  |
|  +--------------------------------------------------------+  |
|                                                              |
+--------------------------------------------------------------+
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Hierarchy of Responsibilities (diagram 3)

Explanations of each category follow on the next two pages. Brief descriptions of the required tasks and responsibilities are also included.

Level 1

Producer/Editor/Class Leader: The student designated for this position should have a high level of confidence, demonstrating dedication and commitment to the published piece. The person should have the initiative to institute tasks, completing them with minimal supervision. Another key requirement is the internal motivation to carry out every task well. For the first published piece, I have found that a returnee student, or someone, who has spent time in the target-language culture and is comfortable expressing themselves, effectively manages this leadership role. This student will want to embrace the leadership model, facing and fulfilling the challenges that he/she will encounter.

Level 2

Two *Co-producers/Co-editors/Co-leaders*: The students who undertake the responsibilities of assistant managers are class leaders in training. They should also have a high confidence level in the focus language area. These students are either new class entrants, and have not yet identified what is expected of them, or have minimum management skills. As they observe the class leader, these students will have the opportunity to enhance their own management skills, preparing them for class leadership. It is important to remember that the students who take on the role of assistant managers also need to be self-motivated. They will be excellent class managers when their commitment to and understanding of the published piece grows.

Level 3

Layout Editor/Design Team Member/Computer Support: The principal differences between the skills of these students and the class managers are: confidence, task commitment, and competence. They are willing to tackle minimal challenges; however, they are not one hundred per cent committed to the idea of publishing, the team concept, or the classroom style. However, if they have achieved a certain confidence level in areas where they have background knowledge, they will be able to complete the assigned task. In order to reach this confidence level, they require support and encouragement. How they are supported will determine how willing they are to commit more time and energy to the class.

Level 4

Title Design/Visual Support/Core Member: The students who accept this role lack competence in the previously identified areas. These students require the most direction. Yet, what is wonderful about these students is that they are fresh and new to language learning. Therefore, they will be highly motivated. Their high commitment comes from an inherent need to learn something new. They will be confident, giving one hundred per cent of themselves to all tasks assigned. This can, however, become dangerous territory since the teacher/supporter's challenge is to keep these tasks to a level where success is always achievable. This will help students maintain confidence and build skills at a pace that will not overwhelm them.

Within these four levels of responsibilities, there should be a position on the publishing team for everyone. While doing any one of the jobs identified, apart from English course work, students will develop speaking, active listening, and inter-cultural/personal skills. When the class begins to overcome obstacles together, they will work as a team and support each other. As trust builds, so does production. The teacher is still connected to all parts of the process and is an ever-present source of team support and direction. This, however, poses the following: When to support? When to direct?

Situational Observation

As discussed in Blanchard and Zigarmi, Many different types of people co-exist and work together in the work place (pp. 46-51). Therefore, as a manager/teacher our management style can be tailored to meet each of our workers/students' needs. This management style is called "Situational Leadership"(ibid, p.27). However, I am taking the liberty of changing this title to "Situational Observation" for the context of this paper. The reason for this change is that as a *situational observer* the teacher will choose when to "Direct, Coach, Support, or Delegate." (ibid. p.69). Upon assuming the role of situational observer, the teacher has the flexibility to make the required teaching adjustments.

Directing is required for those students who lack competence, yet are enthusiastic and committed to the project. Initially, they need direction and supervision.

Coaching is designed for those students who have a certain level of competence but lack commitment. They still require direction and supervision since they are still relatively inexperienced.

More importantly, they need praise in order to build self-esteem. Including them in the

decision-making process is also crucial since it establishes their class commitment.

Supporting is necessary for those students who have the competence but lack

confidence or motivation. They need minimal direction due to their acquired skills;

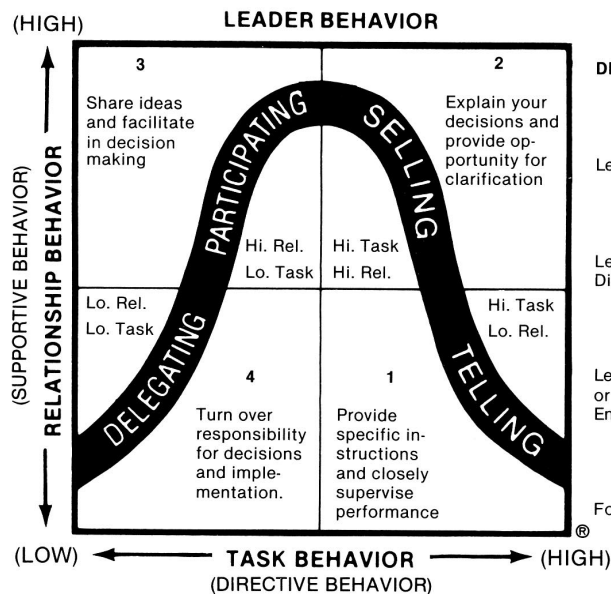however, support is necessary to build confidence and motivation.

Delegating is employed with those students who have both competence and

commitment. They are able, willing, and ready to work on any project assigned.

TASK BEHAVIOR — the extent to which the leader engages in defining roles telling what, how, when, where, and if more than one person, who's to do what in:
• Goal-Setting
• Organizing
• Establishing Time Lines
• Directing
• Controlling

RELATIONSHIP BEHAVIOR — the extent to which a leader engages in two-way (or multi-way) communication, listening, facilitating behaviors, socio-emotional support:
• Giving Support
• Communicating
• Facilitating Interactions
• Active Listening
• Providing Feedback

LEADER BEHAVIOR

(HIGH)

(SUPPORTIVE BEHAVIOR)
RELATIONSHIP BEHAVIOR

3
Share ideas and facilitate in decision making

PARTICIPATING

Hi. Rel.
Lo. Task

Lo. Rel.
Lo. Task

DELEGATING

4
Turn over responsibility for decisions and implementation.

SELLING

2
Explain your decisions and provide opportunity for clarification

Hi. Task
Hi. Rel.

Hi. Task
Lo. Rel.

TELLING

1
Provide specific instructions and closely supervise performance

®

(LOW) ◄——— **TASK BEHAVIOR** ———► (HIGH)
(DIRECTIVE BEHAVIOR)

DECISION STYLES

1
Leader-Made Decision

2
Leader-Made Decision with Dialogue and/or Explanation

3
Leader/Follower-Made Decision or Follower-Made Decision with Encouragement from Leader

4
Follower-Made Decision

FOLLOWER READINESS

HIGH	MODERATE		LOW
R4	R3	R2	R1
Able & Willing or Confident	Able but Unwilling or Insecure	Unable but Willing or Confident	Unable & Unwilling or Insecure

FOLLOWER DIRECTED   LEADER DIRECTED

ABILITY: has the necessary knowledge, experience and skill

WILLINGNESS: has the necessary confidence, commitment, motivation

Situational Leadership (Diagram 4)

(ibid, p. 56)

This diagram can be used as a quick guide to identify the students' competence and motivation at the task level. All   students show varied levels of development, depending upon the task they are completing at any point in time.

For example, a student with strong verbal and management skills may choose to be co-editor, or even class leader, on every publication. This creates a comfortable teaching environment for both teacher and student. The student's leadership style is self-sufficient, and, after situational observation, the teacher will choose *Delegating* as the way to interact with that student. The student will choose a task, always striving to do his best. In contrast, however, when the student is assigned the task of computer support, having only acquired basic computer skills, he will now require *Coaching or Directing*. The student will need the teacher's direction and support until he masters this skill. When the teacher uses situational observation, implementing the skills of directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating, the students' confidence, self-esteem, and skill level are certain to blossom. The students will also want to assume additional responsibilities since the learning environment has become a safe place to do so.

In conclusion, developmental levels are task or goal specific. It is important to make all tasks clear to the students. Everyone is required to understand how each task is interrelated and how it connects to their published piece. Therefore, the expectations need to be clearly defined as they relate to each task. An excellent tool to use is a job-description sheet, thereby clearly defining each task. The job description sheet can be used as a continuous reference, as well as a guide, for choosing which jobs interest them. By focusing on the goal of student independence, The teacher will also increase the student's competence and confidence.

This, however, can only be accomplished if the students have a clear view of the challenges they wish to conquer. If the choice is theirs, they will be more effective with the skill of task management. This approach encourages commitment, and when the teacher utilizes the skills of *Coaching, Directing, Supporting and Delegating,* student competence will soon follow.

Upon assuming the role of situational observer--choosing the subsequent action required--you may want to keep this quote in mind: *"leaders [teachers] need to do what the people they supervise/instruct cannot do for themselves at the present moment."* (ibid, p.69).

The following steps are listed to assist with the process of "Situational Observation" as implemented in the classroom:

✧ **Step one:** *Inform the students of what you expect*. When the teacher communicates clearly and concisely what responsibilities and expectations are required, a structured environment is created for the class.

✧ **Step two:** *Show the students some examples of what they can do.* Role-play each required task in the classroom prior to student assignment. Another method is to demonstrate, using a video, the way a successful team works together to complete their assignment. When the students identify the path to task accomplishment and effective teamwork, they will understand the expected performance standards.

✧ **Step three:** *Let the students try it on their own.* Once the goals and expectations are clear, let the students choose their own assignments listed on The Hierarchy Chart. Encourage each student to choose a role he is comfortable with; however, the teacher's role is to ensure the student chooses something—even if a comfort level has

not been reached. The ultimate goal is to urge the students to take on attainable challenges, which develops a high success rate. This will build confidence, as well as commitment, for the next publication.

✧ ***Step four:*** *Actively observe and offer feedback on every student's progress.* Unless the teacher is sure that each student is both motivated and competent, it is important for him to demonstrate that he is actively concerned with each one's progress. Students should not commit to the publication prior to their having made the decision to be part of the team. Enthusiasm is contagious; the teacher's direction and feedback will inspire the students to strive for excellence. They will work together, as a team, towards the common goal of a finished product.

✧ ***Step five:*** *Support and praise progress.* The teacher is the member of the class who notices the accomplishments of every member of the team. It will inspire them to take on additional challenges as their self-confidence and self-esteem will increase. Positive feedback is the students' stepping stone, providing the foundation needed to move through the various development stages. As the teacher praises the accomplishments of all students, irrespective of their placement on the development scale, classroom unity develops.

As the students' dependence upon the team increases, so will their achievements, accomplishment and abilities. The teacher's role will change from director to supporter. Furthermore, when the teacher moves toward the **Supporting** style, students assume the roles of **Director, Coach,** and **Delegator** with one another**.** They will begin to mentor each other, providing resources and support. This is when they begin to write and edit their publication.

Chapter Four

Making a Case for Process Writing and Publishing

The primary concern of teachers of writing is to enrich and support the student's development as writers. Many ESL and EFL teachers see their jobs as teachers of writing in light of the amount of correct English that their students produce. But it is clear from the literature on process writing that learning to write even in one's native language requires more than simply correct grammatical structures. Interesting writing is about putting original ideas on paper. Original ideas require stimulation of a person's creative thinking faculties. Peter Elbow and many other teachers of writing to first language speakers and writers believe that our original thought, ideas that have not been censored by apprehensions concerning grammar rules, structures, and spelling is the best way for a writer to be creative and original.

The "red pen" is the death of imagination, fluency, and freedom. It sows the seeds of writing block. As children, we are creative in a variety of ways. We write stories and draw pictures to hang on the refrigerator. Creativity is an intrinsic part of our nature. The red pen of "NO" has not been introduced. Creativity, imagination, and originality are inherent in children. Then school begins. Children learn that their ideas are flawed and they must be more careful when they write. Mistakes are now counted against them and their ideas must fit the teacher's expectations. These examples demonstrate some important considerations for the teacher as he/she approaches the writing class.

It is therefore, important to identify the reasons why a change is necessary--why a teacher should break away from a linear teaching style and move toward process writing. By using process writing, students will undertake a procedure that taps their creativity. When first drafts are shared with their peers, that is when the students' work is viewed. This encourages motivation. When I initiated the process writing and the publishing model in my classroom, the students' motivation and concentration increased, enabling the students to be very creative as well as productive.

Furthermore, because the responsibility for the writing effort is borne by the entire class, the final product is a reflection of their combined efforts. When the published piece is viewed as the work of the class, the students are aware that this is a team effort--no one wants to let the team down; everyone wants to be a productive part of the group.

Finally, it comes down to simple pride. The students are proud of their efforts. They have created something together. The product is a part of them and it is for everyone to see. They have given something back. They have created a document in a second language. What an achievement! This is the driving force behind the students' motivation, providing the stimulus to improve their work with each publication. This enables the students to spread their wings and fly. Their focus has changed from the prior standards of predefined criteria, grades, and teacher approval to teamwork, creativity and self-confidence. The teacher now becomes a source of knowledge and guidance, supporting and encouraging the students' development.

The previous examples reflect some of the main reasons why I have found a process writing and publishing approach to be an excellent alternative to the traditional writing class.

Having made a case for process writing, I will now identify how to implement it. Writing techniques presented in the next chapter, remove the teacher from the spotlight, transfer some of the responsibilities for the process to the class, and help second and foreign language learners develop into independent original, and confident writers.

Chapter Five

Process Writing

       The following presents the steps in the sequence of process writing as developed for students of second and foreign languages. The teacher becomes guide and coach; a role that is key to the success of this approach to teaching writing. (Cassidy, 1999) Additionally, for this approach to be most effective, each step should be modeled prior to the students' task fulfillment, so that students are clear about what they are doing on their own.

Step 1, Part A: Brainstorming Topics

       The goal of this step in the process is to create a list of topics that relate to the identified class topic. The teacher mentors each student, offering support and suggestions, guiding the students through this phase of the process. The students should be encouraged to list as many topics as possible since this will increase their publishing options. Initially, the list may be difficult for the students' to create; however, as their confidence increases, so will their ability to brainstorm independently. All ideas should be used during these sessions since this is the creative part of the process. It is important for the teacher to be flexible, assisting each student with idea placement, finding the correct category for each idea. My experience with this process has shown that most topics can be published around the class topic.

By providing positive reinforcement during the brainstorming process, the teacher bolsters the students' self-confidence—building the foundation for future activities.

Step 1, Part B: Sharing--Writers Partner Up

The next step of the process encourages team partnership. Students read their lists aloud to their teammates, using the following format:

The partner asks:

"Which topic would you like to write about, and why?"

The writer answers:

"I want to write about this topic because…"

The other team member then takes his turn, repeating the process. The "why" is important during this step since it enables the students to focus on the reasons for their particular choice. This activity creates the foundation for building a schema for the subject they have chosen.

Step 2, Part A: Brainstorming Details

The students now take part in another brainstorming session. The purpose of this activity is to include additional information about their chosen topics. They should be instructed to provide as much detail as possible, using both L1 and L2. At this point, the students' tap into their background knowledge relative to their subject. Since they may not have achieved adequate command of the English language to feel comfortable with

the written word, it is important to encourage them to write down everything in any way they can--even to draw pictures. This opens the creative pathways of the brain. To further enhance this process, the class should be given homework assignments to further enhance their vocabulary. When students use a dictionary for word definition, a vocabulary foundation is built and the creative process reinforced.

Step 2, Part B: Sharing

The same partners are teamed together to share their findings. The process previously identified under "Sharing—Writers Partner up" is now repeated. The partners ask each other:

"Which details tell the reader what you want to express?"

This process encourages each writer to identify what pertinent details support his or her opinions. If the teacher finds it necessary to provide additional support, adequate class time should be provided. It may also be helpful to write the "new" words on the board, encouraging the class to explore their meaning together. This supports teamwork and builds the foundation for class unity and interdependence. The teacher , as facilitator, supports the students as they find the answers themselves. This develops a student-to-student relationship—the backbone of the process writing approach.

Step 3: Discovery Draft

The students should be given time in class to write a rough draft. Also, this part of the process may be assigned as homework. Everyone should understand that this assignment is a "discovery draft" only. The intention is to capture all thoughts, writing them down without thought to final content. In order for this procedure to be effective, the teacher should not critique this draft. Even if the students request that their work be edited, it is not advisable. To do so fosters teacher dependence, inhibiting student independence.

During this activity, the same teams regroup: the "listener" asks the "writer" two very important questions:

"What do YOU think about your own paper?"

"What other details does the reader need to know?"

The writer is now responsible for critiquing his or her own paper. This process invites self-expression by asking the student for his opinion. If the teacher had previously corrected the student's draft copy, editing it according to the teacher's writing style, the student would have changed the content to please the teacher. This discourages the student's individuality. To foster self-confidence, the writer must be comfortable with expressing his own opinion. This step is crucial for the development of self-awareness and creative freedom. The teacher supports this process by encouraging the writer to state his opinion, which fosters internal reliance.

Only when the writer has finished presenting his opinion does the partner (listener) comment. The writer evaluates his partner's comments and then the writer chooses the input that seems most suitable.

Step 4, Part A: Draft Review

The next step in the publishing process requires the students to review their drafts. When students are assigned this task, they often find it difficult to accomplish. The reason for this difficulty lies with their assumption that revising is editing for grammar or rewriting their draft. In order to avoid this problem, the teacher should inform the students that grammar correction is accomplished later in the process. The purpose of this step is to provide the students with an opportunity to rework their draft—to identify improvements in their initial offering. The teacher can assist the students with this process by encouraging them to apply the following six steps:

✧ **1. Lead:** Does it draw the reader into the piece?

✧ **2. Adding Details:** Are the details clear and vivid? Do they support points of interest throughout the paper?

✧ **3. Subtracting Details:** Every detail should be connected solidly to the piece. If it is a detail on it's own, it is extra and might be distracting?

✧ **4. Sequencing:** Are the words, sentences, paragraphs, and events in sequence? Does the piece follow a clear line of information from introduction to conclusion?

✧ **5. Transitions:** Can the reader go from paragraph to paragraph cleanly?

✧ **6. Ending:** Does the ending state the intention of the paper? Does the reader get a sense of finality or does he/she expect more?

(ibid, p.3)

When the teacher facilitates this process by demonstrating why all of these steps are important, the students will be more confident when revising their work. If the students rely on the teacher for their draft corrections, they will be less likely to change their paper. It is important for the teacher to help the students understand that change is good and expected during this part of the writing process.

Step 4, Part B: Sharing

Again the same pairs ask each other the following question:

"How is this revision different from the first version, and why?"

The author points out areas that have been changed and the reasoning behind that change.   There should a substantial amount of change from discovery to revision. Students often consider correcting grammar as change. If the teacher restates that, at this point, the changes are made only in the area of expression, the students will understand what is required. Next, the partners change roles and the process repeated.

Step 5, Part A: Editing

This step is critical to the learning process. Unfortunately, this section of the curriculum often causes the teacher difficulty. The temptation to edit is very strong. As previously stated: when the students rely upon the teacher to correct their work, it is a detriment to student independence. If a student asks; "Would you please go over this?" What they are saying is: "Will you please fix my mistakes and make it perfect?"

If this process were effective, then students would not continue to make the same mistakes on future compositions. A far better approach is to teach students to be their own editors. This can be accomplished by using the following activities:

✧ **1.   Look Closely:** Do not skim your paper. Read every word out loud and listen to yourself.

✧ **2.   Look at Each Part:** Go through the paper and look at only the verbs, prepositions, subject, and object. Do they agree with one another?

✧ **3. Check the Spelling:** The dictionary is your friend. Look up those difficult words and make sure they are spelled correctly.

✧ **4.   Be the Teacher:** Picture yourself as a teacher. What things would you mark wrong for your student to change?

✧ **5. Look to Each Other:** Read a sentence to a classmate to check its clarity. If someone in class has a strong vocabulary, they can help you add synonyms to words that are not as strong.

(ibid, p.4)

Step 5, Part B: Publishing

This is the last step. This is what the class has been working toward. There are many ways in which to publish. The key is for students to feel comfortable with whatever form of publishing they choose. If it is a spoken piece, such as a video or a presentation, they need ample time to practice. One way to accomplish this is to take the following graduated approach:

1. The students do a presentation for their partners;

2. Next, they present to groups of four.

3. Finally, they present the finished piece to the class.

If the focus is a school newspaper as I did, the class will require adequate time to choose pictures to support their writing. Creativity now plays another vital part. This is the students' opportunity to embellish their work; demonstrating artistic and literary talent.

It is time to celebrate! They have reached their goal! This is the teacher's opportunity to identify improvements and praise, praise, praise. By acknowledging their accomplishments, the class will be motivated to work harder on their next publication and they will continue building the community through writing.

Chapter Six

More on the Editing Process

As a complement to the process writing approach, presented in the previous chapter, I have found the need for a further elaborated procedure within step five, the editing step. If I use what is presented below, the editing process works better for my students. In this chapter, I will first review the process approach to writing in light of the theory of first and second order thinking. Then I will present a more detailed process for editing so that students have clear guidelines at this important step in the process writing approach.

Peter Elbow (1996) believes that first order thinking is intuitive and creative. We explore ideas without censoring our thoughts. Second order thinking, on the other hand, is conscious, directed, and controlled. It is the accurate and logical side of our brain. It keeps us focused and is known as "critical thinking."

I support Elbow's theory and agree that both orders of thinking are useful and necessary when learning and teaching writing. We offer students the opportunity to explore all ideas that come to mind through free writing. To be most effective, the teacher should not critique the free writing exercise. When the teacher assures the class that there will be an opportunity for second order thinking--a time to correct and improve their thoughts--creativity begins. This also deters the students' critical side from editing during the first part of the exercise. Students are encouraged to trust the free writing process, expressing themselves without boundaries.

Next, the teacher asks the students to evaluate their own work. They are to identify which section they would like to explore further. Now is the time for second order thinking. The students edit their free writing, making the corrections necessary to enhance the creative side of their work.

From this baseline, the students will continue to develop their thoughts. The class is asked to repeat the free-writing process. However, the focus is now on their main topic. This step is more structured and therefore, second order thinking might emerge. When the teacher encourages the students to relax and let their ideas flow, it will support first order thinking and minimize the students' need to edit as they write.

When the students have completed this exercise, the teacher asks them what sections of the free writing exercise support their main idea. When everyone has explored their answers, the class will be prepared to complete the next and final stage.

They are now ready to organize their thoughts. By completing the previous exercises, everyone should have created many writing samples with ideas on their particular topic. Second order thinking is now used to organize the final work: what goes where, in which order, what syntax, etc. The students control their work output, and they have a lot of writing and ideas to choose from. They cut and paste their written document, placing the ideas in the order they prefer.

A key part of the process, the editing step, now takes place. The students become readers of one another's work, evaluating it, and editing it, for clarity and content. By reading one another's work, a constructive dialogue is created between the reader and the writer. The reader is simultaneously reading and commenting on the document. Every sentence, or line, should contain a comment.

This interaction demonstrates the reader's understanding of the writer's document. The reading should be thoughtful and constructive. By using this technique, teamwork is promoted between the students, supporting a community of learners in the classroom.

Below I present a further procedure to be applied to the editing step. The following steps summarizes how this is accomplished:

- **First: Arrange the words in "order:"** It is a time to activate the students' critical side of the brain. They are requested to evaluate their ideas and give them structure—to edit for spelling, grammar, and syntax. They strive for clarity and understanding. When the teacher informs the students that it is time to reveal their work to the rest of the class, it motivates everyone to do their best. There should be no surprises. Everyone should be aware of what is expected and be comfortable with the process.. Once this comfort level is reached, the students are ready for the next step.

- **Second: Reading the document.** Each student finds a partner. The goal is to read and comment on each other's work, striving for document clarity. In the margin, or under each line, the reader is free to comment on the author's content. The reader is responsible to support, comment, question, or correct the written document, always striving for document clarity. Positive interaction between the partners is critical to this process. The goal is to improve the document, not to criticize the writer.   By relating all comments to the document, writing them on the document itself, interaction between reader and writer remains positive. When the reader completes his comments, the author will review his partner's remarks, discussing and asking for clarification where needed.

If there is not enough space on the document to complete the correction, the author can do a rewrite, using all corrections and comments he or she wishes to include.

✧ **Third: Prepare to publish.** The author chooses a new reader and repeats the previous process. The written document should be ready for publishing at this point.

When this procedure is implemented in the classroom, it develops not only thoughtful writers but also thoughtful readers.

With the process writing model, the students are encouraged to, and will, assume most of the responsibility for the writing process. As they walk through the various steps, they learn that writing is not just grammar, spelling, and vocabulary—it is the pathway to expression and understanding. By sharing the written word in the classroom, the students will gain insight into each other's thoughts, beliefs, dreams, and fears. It is a powerful tool indeed when students search for meaning in their classmates' work instead of looking for their mistakes.

The students' purpose for writing changes. Their goal is not only to learn English but also to learn how to express themselves through writing. When they receive positive feedback from the reader, they develop confidence in their writing ability. This confidence prepares them for the stage when others will read their work. Comments are now welcome from their peers. The level of comfort created by process writing and careful preparation for editing step one prepares them for the final stage of publishing.

Chapter Seven

Time to Show-Off

All performers (actors, ballet dancers, etc.) know that opening night initiates a feeling beyond description. The efforts to produce a final production—previous days of practice, sweat, and headaches—culminate in this one night. It is time for everyone to shine. The final publishing product can be compared to the performers' opening night. It mirrors this night since everyone in the class prepares for and participates the final production.

Publishing can be accomplished in a variety of ways. However, the common thread is that the students always work as a team, cooperating together to produce their final work. The final product may be revealed both inside and outside the classroom. The students have learned the art of sharing their thoughts because the classroom has become a place of teamwork and support. When a teacher plans to show the students' work outside the secure environment of the classroom, the loss of this security is an important consideration. Therefore, the type of publishing method chosen is essential to the students' success.

As previously stated in this paper, one of the goals of publishing is to bring awareness to the class, an awareness of the purpose of writing and the value of the content of what they have written. Their writing should be meaningful, written for an audience to read. A school newspaper meets these criteria since this writing model can develop the students into journalists.

The journalism model instills within each student a sense of responsibility. This sense of responsibility increases with the students' self-confidence. When the teacher assists this growth through encouragement and support, the students reach a higher level of learning than with standard writing assignments. There is an intrinsic part of learning brought forth by the journalism model—the part that motivates achievement. When we view our students as journalists, they too will see themselves as professionals. This identity encourages them to create meaningful and thoughtful work through the creation of a newspaper.

In addition, a newspaper is structured, yet it encourages the students to express a wide diversity of ideas. When we read a newspaper, there are many different areas of interest: local and world news, sports, business, entertainment, politics, etc. Also, the newspaper is a wonderful tool to initiate the class' brainstorming activity. The schema is there. The students have read a newspaper and, therefore, can identify with one or more kind of articles. The basic design of a newspaper is familiar and offers a variety of options for writing. The bonus of this focus is that creating a newspaper encourages an intrinsic need for teamwork. The common goal is to take the individual articles and combine them into one newspaper with one title. The three factors--common interest, flexibility of choice and background knowledge—all support a successful publishing experience.

When all students take part in choosing the newspaper's title, common interest is established. It is important to remember that this is the students' responsibility. Since it is important to develop a focal point for the newspaper, the title is chosen during the first brainstorming stage of the publishing process.

This is one of the most important stages of the publishing process since it establishes ownership. When the students choose their own topics, along with the newspaper's title, they assume ownership. As they begin each publication with an extensive brainstorming session, the students identify with the chosen topics, forming the baseline for their publishing effort. This fosters an even greater level of independence and creativity as they take responsibility for the newspaper's production.

Flexibility is the freedom to write about any topic related to the newspaper's title. However, an important part of the learning process is the ability to identify, as well as write about, a topic that supports this title. They will decide as a unit whether the subject chosen supports the overall content of the paper. This develops team unity and the ability to work together.

The last consideration is the students' background knowledge. By relying on their background knowledge the student writers gain confidence and inspiration. Most students will choose a topic in which they have this background knowledge. When there is prior knowledge about a subject, the students' writing is based upon a foundation of understanding. The challenge, however, is to express this knowledge in the focus language. The brainstorming process develops with this skill.

Once the topic is chosen, the class proceeds with writing and community building. They now work together to improve their language knowledge. To reiterate, the students will ultimately read each other's papers. A dialogue between reader and writer is key to the project's success. By working together, they ensure that the document's meaning is clear—that what is actually written reflects the writer's intent. When the document is read and positive feedback given, the outcome is constructive and beneficial.

Student expectation is high at this point. After the students write, check, re-write, and edit their final draft, the final output reflects their current writing level. If, after completing all these steps, the students are still uncomfortable with others viewing their work, they may ask the teacher to critique their paper. This is the teacher's opportunity to not only provide constructive feedback but also to identify the students current writing ability.

The following identifies the importance of the publishing model and how I initiated it during a four-month writing course. This class met twice a week for ninety minutes. Their goal: to publish one paper each month.

✧ *First paper:* The students followed all of the process steps previously identified: brainstorming, writing, and editing. My role was that of coach. By employing the methods of directing, supporting and delegating, I was able to support them through each of the publishing phases. In addition, if the students requested, I edited their final work. This not only gave me the chance to edit but at the final point also to provide positive feedback. Since I found building student confidence to be my greatest challenge, this opportunity to provide positive feedback was key to the entire process. When I gave their work the final inspection, correcting where necessary, they felt comfortable showing their paper to others.

✧ *Second paper:* The students and I used the same process identified in the first paper; however, when asked to edit their final draft, I underlined the areas that required changing instead of providing the corrections directly. The students were then grouped into teams of four and asked to make these corrections independently.

♦ **_Third paper:_** The same steps were taken up to the point of the final editing. At this

   stage, I asked the students to review their own papers. They were to underline all

   sentences they thought needed improvement, yet were unable to correct themselves.

   Next, they formed teams of four and worked together to make the necessary

   corrections. If further assistance was required, they could ask the rest of the class for

   assistance. By writing the unclear sentences on the board, the class edited together.

♦ **_Fourth paper:_** Again the same process was used, except for the final editing. This

   time the class was instructed to choose three people to read their paper, striving for

   clarity and grammar.   Everyone worked together to complete the required

   corrections. Neither the group question session nor the teacher's input was required

   for this final paper.

   As they completed these assignments, the students gained confidence in their own

ability. They also learned to trust each other. When the students formed groups, they

grew as a team. I became their coach and mentor, mainly assisting with computer

problems, layout design, and task clarification. Upon production of the final paper

everyone was working together to identify the corrections necessary to clarify their work.

When the class presented their final product as a complete package, they had achieved

self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-pride. From conception to completion, the class

worked together to create the final product. When the teacher uses this model, along with

the skills of directing, coaching, and delegating, he supports this learning process. The

students learn to depend upon themselves, enlisting the support of their classmates.

Chapter Eight

Guidelines for Layout and Location,

The preparation of the final product should follow an established process. The format should match that of a newspaper, magazine, or book—that is, bound, identified by topic, and have a look of completion. The first challenge is to put the pages together. This may seem easy to accomplish; nevertheless, the class often finds this task difficult when they first attempt it. With teacher assistance, the students are able to assemble the pages correctly, thus preparing them for later productions.

The pages must be divisible by four since there will be blank pages if this formula is not used. The following chart identifies the basic layout:

Face down		Face down		
P.1	P.20	P.3	P.18	
P.2	P.19	P.4	P.17	and so on.
Face up		Face up		
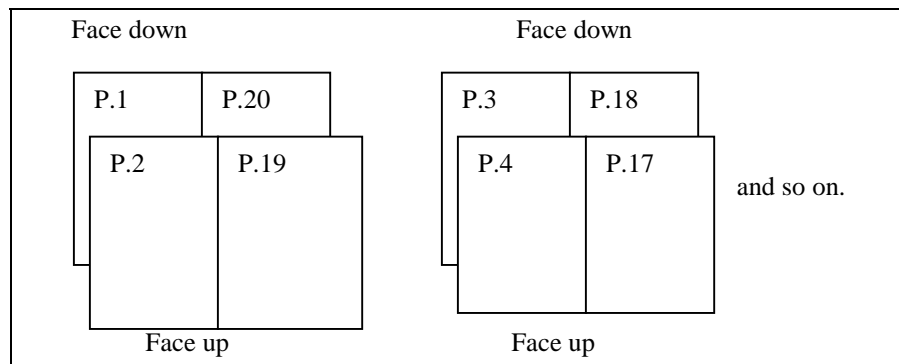
Layout Design (diagram 5)

The first page is attached to the last page. These pages are then placed face down.

Next, the second page is attached to the second-to-last page. These pages are attached to the first and last pages, face up. This completes a set of four. Now, repeat the process with the other pages.

After they learn this process, the students will be able to assume this responsibility for future publications. Now the students are ready to copy their document. If your school has adequate funding for off-site copying, this is the easiest way for the students to finalize their work. If your school does not provide funding for copying, this task can be accomplished by using the school's copy machine.   Although this effort is time consuming, requiring the entire class to participate, it is fun and also continues to build community.

However, if your school does not provide the funding for outside printing, nor does it have a copy machine available, there is a solution: News Boards. Choose a public place at your school and post the students' work for everyone to read. This is a wonderful opportunity, not only for the students who created the work but also for the students who read it. News Boards bring publishing to the entire school, which, in turn, supports a positive teaching atmosphere.

Irrespective of the choice that is made—to use an outside copying service, copy in-house, or make News Boards--community building enters into each equation. Each process requires student-to-student interaction. The students share their thoughts, hopes and dreams with one another and with an outside audience. When the teacher dedicates a substantial part of the classroom time to student interaction, it builds teamwork, respect for one another's opinions, and trust in themselves and their fellow classmates. Students develop self-confidence and self-esteem—integral aspects of the learning process. The students gain confidence in the focus language, utilizing each other's skills to enhance their own learning. Their confidence in the focus language develops under the mantle of group safety and support.

Chapter Nine

Case Studies and Samples of Student Articles

Prior to this point, I have identified the theory behind the journalism model and why it was successful for me and my students. The process of publishing when used to produce a classroom paper instills in each student a sense of dedication and responsibility. I found this method to be more effective than a more linear teaching style. By demonstrating the methods of brainstorming, community building, writing, editing, and publishing, I have explained why student-to-student dialogue is preferred over the teacher-to-student style. The student-to-student model develops the individual student's self-confidence, as well as improving his or her command of the focus language--a prerequisite for success. The following examples offer further support for the use of a journalism model when teaching a writing course.

The first case study demonstrates how the publishing model develops leadership in some students.

Khaled Al-Jonaid, a student from Saudi-Arabia, began my Journalism Class with little or no interest in group writing or group work. He was quite competent when using computers, only exhibiting motivation when surfing the net. Because of this comfort with computers, the position he chose for the first paper was computer support. When he was assigned certain tasks relative to this position, he took full responsibility, completing each task effectively. He also assisted all students who requested his help; even though, he did not initiate this assistance.

For the second paper, I asked him to assume the role of assistant editor. With this position, he demonstrated increased initiative, giving one hundred percent to each task. Although quite shy, the title of assistant editor, along with his satisfactory completion of all assigned tasks, increased his self-confidence. He was now able to initiate assistance, as well as to provide assistance when asked.

By the third paper, he had developed the skills to become editor. When the class asked him to take this position, he was able to do so. After outlining to Khaled what was expected, he required minimal direction. As he attained self-confidence, I was able to delegate all tasks. Khaled took full responsibility for their completion. He demonstrated initiative by working with his classmates, both inside and outside of the classroom, to identify which role fit for each of them. Khaled demonstrated his leadership ability when he took charge of the brainstorming sessions, encouraging his co-editors to assume some of the tasks. He initiated this process in order to train the co-editors for the future position of editor. Khaled was careful, however, to clear with me beforehand all of his ideas regarding classroom management. His leadership ability continued to impress me. The following further documents his ability:

For the final paper, the class again asked him to assume the role of editor. He declined, encouraging his co-editor, Yoko, to take this position. When Khaled was asked to choose his role, he chose the position of core member (the all-around person). Since this position was the least challenging, it gave him the opportunity to support his classmates with their roles and assignments.

During the development of the final paper, I was prepared to initiate the brainstorming session; however, the class had a different plan. They requested that I

leave the room and not observe the session. Even though this was an unusual request, I gave the class sufficient time to complete the exercise on their own. Upon my return, however, the students were all sitting quietly. They had not identified a topic, nor had they written anything on the board. When asked about this, they told me the topic was a secret and they planned to complete the entire assignment independently. Even though I was always available, the students continued to exhibit this independence throughout the end of the semester. When it was time for the final printing, I expected to assist with this task. However, the class had taken the initiative to also complete this assignment, requesting assistance from the school director. On graduation day, I was given the final product to read. The students wished to demonstrate their independence, proving to everyone the success of publishing within a journalism model. This success, however, was due, in part, to Khaled's leadership. He encouraged the students to work together, enabling them to fulfill their assignments effectively--developing a self-reliant class.. Khaled graduated that term; however, the remainder of the class asked the director of the institute to continue the Journalism Class even though they had fulfilled their requirement in writing. The following is a testimonial that the group of students gave to me, and to the rest of the school, as part of their final publication.

Endless Love to Our Journalism Class

Now, I really think it was good experience to take this class, Journalism!! In Journalism class, we learned a lot, such as the importance of teamwork. I think everyone must think there're glad to take this class even if there were much pressure. I also think everyone did a really good job. I appreciate all of my classmates and our teacher, David. Here are my classmates' messages about this class.

AKIYO "Thank you for helping each other. Under too much pressure, we can find a treasure. Did you know that? Not so bad to have too much pressure sometimes!! I enjoyed this class."

CARRIE "In this class, I feel that we are like a big family. Also I learn a lot of thing from here. I'm so glad that I have taken this class."

EMILY "Thank you for helping me to finish journalism! I learned a lot from this class! For example, how to cooperation and editing a magazine!"

KHALED "I learned many things from this class. We all worked like a group. It was fun and interesting. I hope our magazines interest you all. Thanks to David and everything he did us. Thank you all for reading our magazines."

RYO "I appreciate this class! This class was kind of tough for me and everyone else. We had a lot of work we had to do, but we have done with our cooperation. We should be proud of ourselves! Thank you very much everybody!!"

SHALIK "I really enjoyed with this class with my wonderful classmates and wonder wonderful teacher DAVID! I wish to join all the time as a same group and teacher, but time is not our slave. We are slaves of time. We have to follow where time takes us. I would like to thank to David who taught us very well. I also would like to thank our readers."

WENNIE "I enjoy taking in class because I have some lovely classmates and lovely teacher, David. I wanna say thanks to everyone!

YOSHIAKI "We learned a lot in this class and I had very good time taking this class."

Thank you very much to everyone!! I'll keep our magazine forever as one of my good souvenirs.

Yoko Furuichi

Endless Love (diagram 6)

These are some of the quotes from this class, demonstrating what the students learned during those four months. . As we review these comments, it is clear by the repetitive use of the words "help, learn a lot, group, enjoy, and wonderful classmates" how the students feel about this method of teaching. By choosing these words, the students describe their successes: with publishing, with me, as their teacher; and, most importantly, with each other. The following student comment supports this:

" I learned many things from this class. We all worked like a group. It was fun and interesting. I hope our magazine interests you all. Thanks to David and everything he did (for) us. Thank you all for reading our magazines."

Author: Khaled Al- Jonaid

This quote demonstrates Khaled's ability to identify the importance of teamwork. By working toward a common goal, the class improved their writing skills sufficiently enough to share their work product outside the classroom. It is clear that Khaled understood the final aim was to deliver work, in the form of a magazine, written for everyone's enjoyment. By taking part in this learning experience, Khaled understood the importance of grammar and document clarity, By developing the required skills, the class was able to share their work with everyone.

The second case study is equally inspiring. This example demonstrates how the journalism model improved a student's writing ability through audience acceptance. This student, whose name was Penbe Ozgergan, came from Turkey. Penbe was assessed as a low intermediate student when she requested admittance to my Journalism Class. She was having difficulty with most of her classes. There were major problems with her grammar and writing skills. Although Penbe's verbal skills were low intermediate, her writing skills were classified as beginner.

When the class was initially given the task of identifying a topic to write about, they chose "an open topic." This gave the students the opportunity to write about something special to them. Penbe chose to write about her cat. The following article demonstrates Penbe's initial writing ability:

My Lovely Cat

By Penbe Ozgurgen

My name is Penbe Ozgurgen. I am Textile Designer. I decided to go to U.S.A because of their high technology. I arrived last September. I want to learn how to speak English very well. English is important for my job because many Textile companies use English for business. I am a student in E.S.L Institute now.

This school found an American family for me. When I lived there, my host mother didn't want me to feel lonely, so she gave me a cat as a gift. My host mother named a cat "TUNA". When I heard his name, I laughed because "TUNA" is a fish name, but I liked the name. Also my host family has a cat, too. His name is "Miki" He is very slow and old cat. Tuna and Miki always fight because Tuna eats Miki's food. We sleep together. He is very pretty. He always comes home very late every night. I think he has a girlfriend. He is rascal but he is a good boy. He had an operation. This operation is very important for cats. My host mother said, "the operation is a rule. When we went to pats hospital, they said,"we need your signature for operation. That meant this operation was dangerous, so I cried. Fortunately, it was succeeded.

American children like different kind animals. These are snakes, turtles, frogs, mice, and spiders. My host family has twin daughters. The girls have a mouse. The mouse's name is Elisabeth. My cat killed their mouse two months ago. They had a funeral for the mouse. They cried. After funeral they watched TV and laughed. Because they are children so they are very easy to get over. I hate mice, but when my cat killed my host family's mouse. I felt really sad. I like my American sister, and my cat, Tuna.

He is my lovely cat, I will take him with me wenn I go back to Turkey and love him forever.

Although Penbe completed the article, taking part in the processes of brainstorming, checking, editing, etc., her rewrites did not improve. Despite the fact that I corrected her grammar and writing content on numerous occasions, she continued to make the same mistakes. However, when I realized that my corrections were above her level of comprehension, I realized that she needed peer correction at her level. Although Penbe needed direction throughout each step of this process, the final outcome was extremely exciting. After three months of work, this is Penbe's final paper:

A Pink Dream

by Penbe Ozgurgen

The encyclopedia states, Dreaming is a form of mental activity a different form thought that occurs during sleep. This is a real meaning of the dream. There is another type of a dream. This is about the future. People in this world, for example, hope for an expensive car, a beautiful house, or to become a president. Some people want to be a movie star or very a famous singer etc. There are some future dreams that are impossible to come true. For example, a person wants to become a famous pop singer but the person has not talent. This person never will become a singer. The person is very talented but not a famous pop singer. The person needs to have an experience and to have luck.

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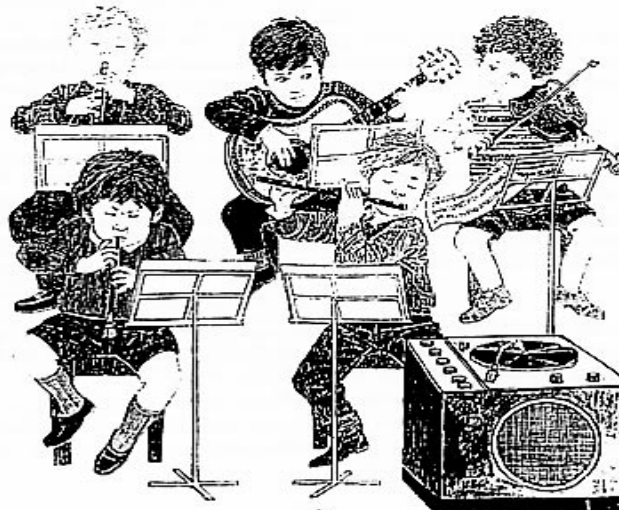
There is one thing every one knows, many famous people always want a quiet life. If you get a lot of money, you will get a lot of dreams immediately! Some people are playing the lottery because they want to become rich soon. But if they win huge money they could lose their life and happiness. It may be called a Black Dream. The black dream means a bad life. Maybe you can win bad force of habit. You can become an irresponsible person. Most important thing is for people to succeed with little money.

My dream is to be the best Textile designer in the whole while world. As soon as I learn to speak English. I will go back to Turkey and open a Textile factory than sale very exclusive textile material become famous. This dream is really a pink color for me because a pink color expresses soft, and symbol of beauty and happiness.

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This paper supports Penbe's improved grammar, writing style, and document layout. The students' papers were written without the benefit of teacher edits since the assignment was to complete their final paper without teacher advice or corrections.

How did Penbe achieve this success? Audience impact played a key role. From the first publication, it was obvious that Penbe's writing level was far below that of her classmates. More importantly, it was obvious to her as well. Even though Penbe was able to identify her writing deficiencies, she would not take the effort necessary to correct her mistakes.

After the first publication, Penbe came to me and asked why I allowed her mistakes to be published. She said that another teacher had pointed out her errors, and she was embarrassed. I explained to Penbe that the published document is open to the public and, consequently, open to criticism. I reviewed her previous papers, identifying the corrections that she had failed to rectify on her final draft. As long as her paper remained confidential, Penbe was not motivated to make improvements. When, however, her work was viewed by others, she took the initiative to improve both her grammar and writing style.

This example stresses the following premise: students do not understand the magnitude and responsibility of publishing until the first paper is published and provided to the rest of the school. Some students will react as Penbe did. They are embarrassed when their peers view their writing errors, motivating them to initiate improvements. Other students, like Khaled, solicit their classmates' feedback, thriving on this opportunity to improve their work prior to wide publication.. This process, however, ensures that the students strive for improvements in the second publication. They understand that the audience supplies the required motivation to improve their writing skills.

These examples emphasize how the journalism model adds a new dimension to the writing class. Khaled initially lacked commitment. However, when he took part in the publishing process, he found it fun, challenging, and, most of all, interesting. Penbe also improved her writing skills when she realized how important her writing content was to the audience. She worked diligently to improve her writing skills, making sure that she was understood in the English language.

In sum, these two examples show the journalism model is an effective teaching process for a writing class. Since this model supports student-to-student dialogue, rather than the linear, teacher-to-student style, student interaction is promoted. This interaction, as well as the audience's reaction, promotes motivation. Student motivation leads to improved grammar and writing skills, which builds self-confidence and self-esteem. In the next and final chapter, I will review the essential elements to a successful journalism class.

Chapter Ten

Final Recommendations

There are set procedures and steps that will assist in the establishment of a community in a writing class. I will review and expand upon some of the key areas previously mentioned throughout this paper.

First I will examine the introduction to the course. During the Brainstorming sessions it is clear that sharing ideas is the main point. It is also important to give the students a clear understanding of the final goal of the class. Clear expectations will give the class a focus and stability within this open setting. These expectations need to come from the teacher at the beginning of the term and the may be delegated to the Editor at a later date. Defining where the group wishes to go is the keystone to building the rest of the publication. The expectations do not need to include boundaries or strict details but they should establish clear objectives, titles, and overall basic content of the newspaper.

Just as clear expectations are important during brainstorming, a clear outline of jobs in the Hierarchy of Responsibilities is a must. All jobs that pertain to the learning environment must be well explained and clear to all students. It is extremely useful to distribute a document that explains in writing the requirements, expectations, and purpose of each job. When student have a clear view of the tasks they will be doing, the chance for success is greatly enhanced. This will give confidence and security to take on more challenges in the future. Once students have taken on these responsibilities they will need mentoring. To insure success, the teacher needs to schedule training time for every section of the class.

From Editor to all around help, there will be moments where the teacher's expertise will be needed and welcomed. Ultimately, the teacher is class leader and needs to model continuous and confident instruction. This will serve as a guide for the rest of the class to follow. They will need to learn the skill of confident instruction in order to help one another during the writing and editing phase. As the students write, the key is to foster security without treating them as if they cannot do the job themselves. It is important to expect the best from them, to provide them with constant support in their learning without doing the work for them and to offer praise on accomplishments as they observe their own errors and help to edit their classmates papers.

As the students are writing, editing, and working together, it is helpful to notice the strengths of all students. I found it useful to point out immediately when I saw students cooperating, to empower others to help and to match students together who complimented one another's strengths and weaknesses. Finally, I had to keep an open mind and remember that not all things go as planned. I also found that consistent feedback on progress dictated the pace of the class.

In the final phase of publishing, students need to keep their aim on the ultimate goal. By constantly reiterating thing like, "We did it" or "What an accomplishment" or "you did a great job," the teacher helps the students identify with the success of their goal of publication. The sense of group usually grows with each publication.

Feedback from group to the group is also crucial to the process. Feedback needs to be a two-way process. Team members can be asked for their perceptions of how the class went during each step of mindmapping, working in community, writing, and publishing.

Specific feedback questions can be provided for to each specific area that was successful, as well as specific areas that needed improvement. It is useful to ask the group if they felt that all pre-determined objectives were met? If not, where can improvements be made?

Next, feedback can be structured for reviewing each team member's performance. This can be done both by the teacher and among peers in the team. Communication between peers goes a long way to building relationships. A "Thank You" letter to a student sent by the teacher or a fellow student may help him or her to overcome some weakness. As students build more confidence, the feedback can include both positive and critical elements.

Finally, it is important to incorporate this feedback into goal setting for the next publication. As mentioned earlier, goal setting is the keystone. After the class identifies areas in which they had difficulty, they will be prepared to choose tasks that help them work on their weak areas. It may be necessary at this time to demonstrate appropriate ways in which to accomplish their goals.

On the following page, I hope to demonstrate the circular nature of the learning process by reviewing the sequence.

1. Defining: Purpose, goal, and objectives are discussed and laid out in clear concise order. So all students are aware of the vision of the class.

(Teacher provides a positive model on what is expected)

2. Planning: Jobs, Actions, and individual responsibilities outside of writing to create a newspaper. Written, explained and understood by all students.

(Teacher provides suggestions based on suspected strengths and weaknesses in conjunction with ongoing feedback and training)

3. Process Writing: individual expression with group support through editing, reading, and commenting.

(Teacher to advise where to seek help and guidance from classmates and other resources)

4. Publishing: The individuals as one. Each piece as important as the next and every job as valuable parts of a machine for the finished product.

(Teacher assists in any areas not keeping with the schedule. Helping to adjust the schedule to meet the needs of the team)

5. Feedback: Identify personal accomplishment as well as group growth. Relating feedback to specific goals, which the team wished to accomplish.

(Teacher asks, listens, and hears positive as well as critical feedback offered by the group about the process, instruction, and individual members.)

1. Defining: Class sets new goals with the feedback in mind.

(Teacher keeps group focused on the feedback and areas in need of improvement for the next publication.)

As the class follows this sequence they will build a learning community and help to disperse the responsibility throughout the class. As a teacher I have had great success with this model. I feel that once given the chance to take responsibility for their learning most students enjoy working in community. If the standards are high and the process is inclusive of all students wants, needs, and dreams, then each student will feel important and needed.

As a result of the development of a secure learning community, the level of performance on the part of the students is limitless on all levels, linguistic, intrapersonal, and interpersonal. I have observed extra ordinary examples of individual and whole group success in learning to write through the use of the process writing approach and the journalism model. It is my hope that other teachers who read this paper and use some ideas contained within will experience the same kinds of successes.

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