

SESSION 3 LANGUAGE PROCESSES 1 - FOCUS ON WRITING

GROUP REFLECTION ON SESSION 2

Purpose The purpose of this time is:
¥ to share participants' experiences of the Between Session Instructional Strategy and the insights they gained from the Between Session Reading.

groups 3-4

Ask participants to share their experiences using the Instructional Strategy in their classrooms. Encourage participants to show any samples of work from their students and if possible display these for all to view.

After 15 minutes remind participants that they need to discuss the Between Session Reading. Use OH2:2 as a discussion starter if necessary

INTRODUCTION TO SESSION 3

whole group In the previous session we explored the nature of language and the role it plays in learning. We examined the language demands made on language users in different settings. We discussed the relationship between audience, purpose and the type of language used in a certain setting. And we examined the relationship between reading, writing, talking and listening. In this session we are going to focus on language processes and in particular on writing. We will examine the decisions writers make, and the processes they go through in order to compose a variety of texts and discuss the knowledge, skills and attitudes that a writer requires to do this. We will also examine how different demands are made on a writer when the audience, purpose and/or subject area for that writing change. Finally we will consider various genres of writing.

WORKSHOP: HOW WRITING WORKS

70 minutes

5 of 70mins

Introduction This workshop is designed so that we can examine the language decisions we as writers make and the processes we utilize when composing meaning into text. We will highlight the knowledge, skills and attitudes writers need in order to be proficient writers of a variety of genres. The writing activities we will do will demonstrate the roles that the purpose, audience and subject play in shaping our writing by determining the linguistic choices we have to make in order to achieve the appropriate genre.

Purpose The purposes of this Workshop are:
¥ to examine the language decisions that we as proficient writers make and the processes we go through in order to compose written text

¥ to identify the knowledge, skills and attitudes we have as proficient writers
¥ to examine the roles that audience and purpose play in the shaping of different genres of writing we need to use.

5 mins of 65

Procedure Inform participants that in order for them to consider the whole group writing decisions they make, the process they go through as well as the skills, knowledge and attitudes they will need to write in two different genres. The writing will not be shared but used as 'data' for reflection.

(##SCRIPT)

In order to better understand writing and how it works we need to be conscious of the language decisions we make as we go through the process of writing. In particular we need to examine the roles that purpose and audience play in shaping our writing by determining the linguistic choices we can make in order to achieve the appropriate genre. So for the next 20 minutes we are going to write. You are asked to write two pieces of writing for different audiences and purposes. You will not have time to finish each piece but try to write enough on each so as you have sufficient 'data' to use for reflection in the follow-up activity. In this activity you will be asked to reflect on the language decisions you needed to make as a writer and in particular the different linguistic choices you need to make to achieve the different genres of writing. You may choose to write alone or collaboratively. Remember you will not be reading or sharing your writing with others - the writing you do is for you to have some immediate experiences in writing so that you can reflect on these in the next workshop.

groups 3-4 Hand out the writing tasks to participants. Tell them that they are to choose either Activity 1 or 2. Point out that they are free to change the focus of the tasks if they wish. That is, if they choose to write the two letters (Activity 1), they can choose some other 'cause' to write about other than 'rainforests'. If they choose the 'story' and 'report' (Activity 2) they can write about some other small animal if they prefer.

20 of 60mins

Tell participants that you will remind them of the time factor. Refer them to pages ** in their Notebook.

Activity 1 (write for 10 minutes on each of the following)

The world's rainforests are being depleted by the world's need for resources. The ramifications of this depletion are only now beginning to emerge and are causing a great deal of concern among both conservationists and the general public. With this in mind you decide to write two letters.

Letter 1 Write to your local Senator to invite him/her to a Save Our Rainforests Rally.

Letter 2 Write to a close friend who is a fellow conservationist discussing the movement, and informing him/her of the rally to be held in your town to draw attention to the Save Our Rainforests movement.

NOTE: Activity 1 attempts to hold the purpose and content of the writing constant. The audience changes.

Activity 2 (write for 10 minutes on each of the following)

Task 1 Write a story for any grade level of your choosing. Your story may take the form (genre) of a narrative, a fable, a fairy tale. The main characters in the story are mice.

Task 2 The same grade level as you have chosen above are studying small animals in Science. You cant find a suitable piece for them to read so you decide to write it. Write a brief science report for the grade on 'Mice.'

NOTE: Activity 2 attempts to hold the content of, and audience for, the writing constant. It is the purpose for the writing that changes.

whole group Call groups to a halt at the end of 20 minutes.

5 of 40mins

Ask participants to reflect on the writing tasks generally.

Ask: Was one task easier than the other? If so, why?

Did you enjoy the writing? Why? Why not?

Refer participants to page ** in their Notebook and to the Reflection Questions.

Reflection Questions

1 What major decisions did you need to make about your writing before you began to write and during the writing?

2 Consider the role that audience and purpose played in the choice of genres you used. What were the two genres chosen? What were their purposes? Why did you choose these?

3 Consider the background knowledge (semantic system) you needed to know and the words/vocabulary and phrases you chose to use in each piece. What choices did you make? How did these differ for the two pieces? Why?

4 Consider the way you chose to structure the writing in each piece, including the use of grammar and the general format. (syntactic system). What choices did you make? How did these differ for the two pieces? Why?

5 Consider the choices you made in spelling and the use of punctuation. What choices did you make? Were they different in each piece? Why?

20 of 35mins

same small group Ask participants to move back into their small groups and consider these questions in their groups. Ask them to list their responses to Reflection Questions on chart paper using the grid format on page ** in the Notebook. ##SEE COPY 3A

Show OH3:1

Reflection Grid ##SEE COPY 3A

Suggest one or two examples that you might write in the grid.

Note: This activity forces participants to go 'inside' their heads to identify what they did and what they knew with respect to their own writing. It will be necessary for you to help them understand that there are no right or wrong answers; that the questions overlap and thus some points they might feel need to be in more than one category; that they shouldn't get too 'bogged down'. You will need to move around the groups and help them move forward; prompt them with questions such as:

What were the major decisions you needed to make before you began writing?

How did the different audiences shape your choice of genre before you even began?

What background information did you need to write a letter to the Senator? If you knew your Senator and his or her views on the matter, how did that impact on what you wrote and how you wrote it?

Did you choose particular words, or terminology in the letter to the Senator, to your friend; in the narrative, in the report? What were these and why did you choose such words?

What grammar devices did you use in the story? Did you write in the present/past tense in the story, in the report? Did you write in the first person? Third person? What reference pronouns did you use? Why?

What about punctuation? Did you use certain punctuation in the letter to the Senator; the narrative? Did you use different punctuation in the letter to your friend, in the report? Why?

What function does the punctuation play in these pieces of writing?

What about spelling? Was conventional spelling necessary for both pieces? Why? Why not?

whole group Share each group's chart briefly.

10 of 15mins

5 of 5mins Highlight, with reference to their charts, the many decisions writers make about the choice of words, the use of grammar and the conventions of language in order to compose text to achieve a particular purpose for a particular audience. However, whatever the writing task is, the overall process that we go through as writers appears to be similar.

Recap by stating that it was clear in our reflections on our writing that:

##NOTE THIS IS A NEW OVERHEAD - SEE COPY 3B

Show OH3:2

Purpose and audience shape our writing by determining the different linguistic choices we make in order to achieve the different genres of writing.

Show OH3:4 Walshe's Model of Writing Process

Refer participants to Walshe's model of the Writing Process on page ** in their Notebook. Point out that participants will be asked to read an article that Walshe wrote describing this model as a Between Session Reading.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

¥ during the act of writing participants were:

- drawing on their linguistic data pools of language of the particular genre in which they were writing.
- reading their writing from the perspective of a writer to see if it made sense to them, but also from the perspective of the audience (the reader) to see if it read as it was intended
- using their semantic, syntactic and graphophonic systems to write.

Show the Cueing System OH 2:5 if necessary

¥ writers seek models (other written texts) of the genre they need to write

- they 'read like a writer' (Smith 1983) searching for ways to structure their writing, for ideas, for leads, for format and so on.

¥ proficient writers use these procedures intuitively. We need to make these procedures explicit for our students in order to support their learning as writers.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EVALUATION

¥ teachers need to evaluate their students' understanding of the processes of writing as well as evaluating the finished product, including

- can the student find a topic, research the topic, select appropriate information to suit the purpose and the audience of the writing?
- can the writer use the appropriate genre to achieve the purpose of the writing for the intended audience?
- can the student draft writing and use the strategies which can be used to assist in the editing process and finally how to proofread the writing?

¥ teachers need to demonstrate for their students their criteria for a 'good' narrative, a 'good' report and so on. Teachers use these criteria to judge the students' writing so it is an important feature of the writing curriculum for students to know these criteria also. How can we do this in our classrooms so that there is a shared meaning and language between teachers and students?

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Ask participants to reflect in their journals. Remind them to focus their reflections on what they have learned in the session and how this might relate to their role as a teacher of writing.

Show OH1:8 to guide the reflections.

What do you think you learned in this session?

What might this mean for teaching in YOUR classroom?

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE CLASSROOM: MODELED WRITING

Modeled Writing is an Instructional Strategy which can teach students a variety of knowledge about the nature of writing and the processes writers go through in order to compose meaning

into text. The writer (usually the teacher) 'thinks aloud' as he or she writes in front of the students, making explicit the many decisions and the linguistic choices that are going on inside her or his head. It is a powerful strategy for teaching how to write in a new genre, how to draft, edit and proofread as well as how to spell. It also helps students understand the reading-writing connections.

Refer participants to the instructional strategy, Modeled Writing, on page ** in their Theory into Practice and ask them to skim through it.

Tell participants that you are going to demonstrate modeled writing and write in front of them, demonstrating how you go about the process of writing.

NOTE: Refer to your Session 3 Background Notes on Modeled Writing.

Demonstrate Modeled Writing for a few minutes.

Point out to participants that they can demonstrate whatever it is they want to teach about writing and the writing process through Modeled Writing.

Link back to Walshe's model of writing, pointing out that they will read more about both Modeled Writing and Walshe's article for next session.

Seek participants' reflections on watching and listening to you Model Write.

Sum up by highlighting that the purposes of Modeled Writing in the classroom are:

- ¥ to demonstrate how this Strategy can teach students about the process of writing
- ¥ to demonstrate the features of a particular genre of writing.

FOR THE NEXT SESSION

SUBHEAD Between Session Activities

BSIA 3:1 Instructional Strategy: Modeled Writing

Ask participants to read about Modeled Writing in their Theory into Practice pp** and to try it with their class during the next week.

SUBHEAD Between Session Reading

BSR 3:1

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