



ESOL Writing Strategies Across the Stages of Proficiency

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Dialogue Journals (DJ)

Dialogue journals are written conversations between a student and teacher (or other writing partner). Students write as much as they choose on a wide range of topics and in a variety of genres and styles. The teacher writes back regularly, responding to questions and comments, introducing new topics, or asking questions. Dialogue Journals are ideal for beginning ELLs, as well as for more proficient ELLs who need opportunities for developing written fluency. DJs can also be used across grade levels, as well as across content areas.

The link to the article below provides more detailed information regarding Dialogue Journals.

http://www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/Dialogue_Journals.html

Shared Writing

Shared writing is an instructional approach to teach writing to students by writing with them. The idea is to teach writing through writing. The process of writing is demonstrated by the teacher through a 'write aloud' process. The teacher controls the pen but invites students to contribute ideas as she writes. Below is a link to an article about shared writing, followed by a link to a video clip of a terrific teacher using shared writing in her classroom.

<https://twowritingteachers.org/2013/12/07/shared-writing-101-a-crash-course-in-writing-together/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b6QJ5z3OBQM>

Interactive Writing

Interactive writing has been described by Swartz as "a teaching method in which children and teacher negotiate what they are going to write and then share the pen to construct the message." The teacher and students share the pen while co-creating and co-writing. Below is a link to an article about interactive writing. The second link is of another terrific teacher implementing interactive writing in her classroom. The third link shares information about interactive writing in the secondary classroom.

<http://www.readingrockets.org/article/interactive-writing>

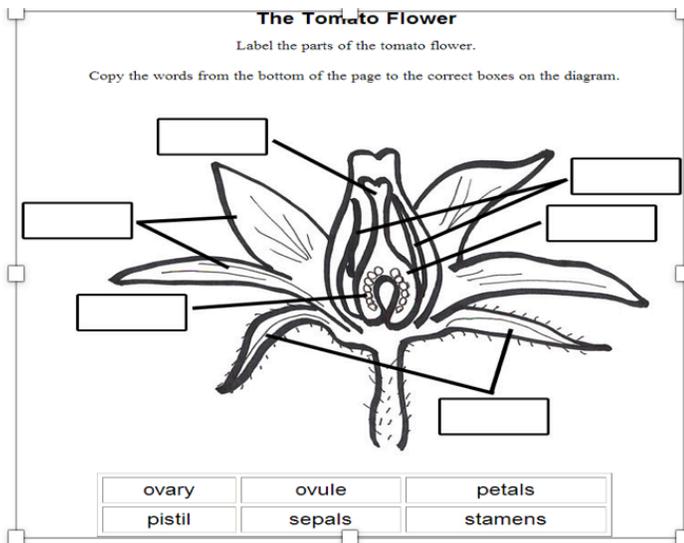
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0zH6iodRJG4>

<http://www.uft.org/teacher-teacher/interactive-writing-high-school-classroom> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

ELL Writing Accommodations

*Allow literate ELLs to write in L1; make list of words from their text they want to know in English

*Label pictures, graphs, photos and maps



*Provide word bank with key vocabulary words when assigning writing. Look at the example below.

How do volcanoes form?

Word Bank: lava, erupt, mountain, molten rock, ash, gas

*Talk, Talk Talk! Have ELLs talk about their topic before writing

*If an ELL draws pictures to tell story, have student label the pictures

*Encourage ELLs to use cross-language strategies (i.e., code switching-the practice of moving back and forth between two languages or between two dialects or registers) when writing.

*Modify length of writing task depending on level of proficiency

*Use Graphic Organizers to organize ideas; Model filling one out with your own ideas; allow ELL to talk about topic before filling in the GO

*Provide Basic Paragraph Frames:

Basic Paragraph Structure

Sequencing

Descriptive Text

Comparison and Contrast

Problem and Solution

Cause and Effect

Framed Paragraphs (Continued)
Framed Paragraph Activity: Paragraph Organizer

Directions: Use the paragraph organizer below to organize ideas before writing framed paragraphs.

TOPIC FOCUS (MY TITLE): _____

(Topic Sentence Introduction): _____

Supporting Detail #1

Supporting Detail #2

Supporting Detail #3

Supporting Detail #4

(Restate topic sentence)

(Concluding Sentence)

Framed Paragraph Activities and Organizers (Continued on next page)

See link below for a packet of paragraph frames

<https://www.palmbeachschools.org/multicultural/wpcontent/uploads/sites/70/2016/04/FramedParagraphs.pdf>

Grading ELL Writing

- Focus on either content or language but not both
- It is not advisable to assign two grades to one piece of writing, one for content and another for language. This is essentially asking an ELL to focus on everything at once.
- It is advisable to grade both process and product, however. For example, give one grade for utilizing the steps of the writing process and a second grade for the final product.
- When the focus is on language, select one or two types of errors rather than identifying every error in the piece, particularly in the early stages of learning to write in a second language. The more proficient an ELL is, the more you can focus on in terms of editing.
- Select grammar that has been previously taught. Do not assume an ELL has received instruction on a specific grammar function. If a particular grammatical point has not been previously taught, be sure to review the rule with the student.
- When focus is on content, look for communicative gaps in the writing. It's not the time to look at spelling errors, or capitalization errors or even grammatical errors. That can be done when the focus is on language.

For more information, see Project STELLAR <https://education.ufl.edu/stellar/>