

Technical Education Division, Richland College, Dallas, Texas

USING WRITING TO ENHANCE ADULT LEARNING

By

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TEAL MODULE IS
FUNDED BY A GRANT FROM THE
TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION
COORDINATING BOARD

TEAL COMPENDIUM

Authorizing Agency: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
Community and Technical Colleges Division
7745 Chevy Chase Drive
Austin, TX 79752

Act Under Which Funded: Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act
P.L. 98-524

Grantee: Technical Education Division
Richland College
12800 Abrams Road
Dallas, TX 75243

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TEAL LEARNING MODULES

The Techniques to Enhance Adult Learning (TEAL Compendium) modules were developed for college faculty by Richland College in Dallas, Texas. The TEAL learning modules were written as a response to the concern that many college instructors have their masters' degrees and/or substantial experience in their teaching fields, but few institutions of higher learning require these faculty to also have preparation in teaching strategies/techniques. So it is not unusual to find instructors who are subject-matter experts simply lecturing to their students instead of using a variety of activities. Thus these modules were created to provide an easy-to-use, self-paced format for faculty to learn strategies that enhance the learning process resulting in significant outcomes.

While the TEAL modules can be used to test what faculty knows after they complete the readings (cognitive domain), the modules can also affect their values (affective domain) regarding choices of teaching strategies/techniques. To persuade faculty to try new methods, the writers of these modules have included information on the many benefits of using their suggested activities.

The four modules are:

- Utilizing Active Learning Techniques
- Implementing SCANS Using Cooperative Learning
- Integrating Internet Technology in the Classroom
- Using Writing to Enhance Adult Learning

Authors of the modules addressed the materials to the community college faculty. However, these materials have not been tested for appropriate audience or validity. The modules are not subject-matter specific, so they could be adapted to any curriculum.

Included with these materials is an evaluation form. Please duplicate and complete this form for each module you use or review. Your valuable feedback is greatly appreciated. Please send your evaluations to:

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Learning Experience #1	2
Self-Check Activity # 1.....	8
Self-Check Activity #2.....	10
Self-Check Activity #3.....	12
Self-Check Activity #4.....	14
Learning Experience #2	15
Self-Check Activity #5	21
Self-Check Activity #6.....	23
Self-Check Activity #7.....	25
Self-Check Activity #8.....	27
Do/Don't List	29
Works Cited	31

INTRODUCTION

CONTENT GOAL:	Upon successful completion of this module faculty will be able to demonstrate how to use writing to enhance adult learning.
LEARNING RATIONALE:	(Cognitive Domain Synthesis Level)
	The ability to write is valued by employers, and it is also an active way of learning and retaining information. In this module instructors will learn about the many benefits of using writing activities in a variety of content areas, and they will read about easy-to-use writing activities that can be applied to their own courses.
ESTIMATED COMPLETION TIME:	
	This is a self-paced module designed to be completed in an average amount of time. The specific time required for completion will vary from instructor to instructor due to individual reading skills and learning environment. <i>As an average this module takes 2-3 hours to complete, not including enrichment activities.</i>
INSTRUCTIONS:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. This is a self-contained module that includes all materials needed to complete all related exercises. No additional materials are required.B. Feel free to complete the enrichment activities if they would help you further understand the concepts covered in this module.C. Please read all associated materials prior to completing each exercise.D. After completing each self-check exercise, compare your answers with those provided on the page that follows the exercise.E. If you miss any of the questions, please review the related material to ensure you fully understand the concept.
ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES:	
	The enrichment activities are supplemental and provide for further study if so desired. <i>Please note these activities are not required to complete this module.</i>

LEARNING EXPERIENCE # 1

Performance Objective # 1: After reading Selection #1, you are to check for recall of important information on why writing is not used by faculty across the curriculum, the benefits of using writing to enhance learning, and general strategies for incorporating writing across a variety of content areas. Complete Self-Check Activity #1 without referring to any materials. Aim for 80% accuracy in your answers. If you don't reach 80%, reread the entire Selection #1.

Performance Objective #2: After successfully completing Self-Check Activity #1, you will complete Self-Check Activity #2 (True/False). You will not be allowed to refer to any materials. Aim for 90% accuracy in your answers. If you can't reach 90%, reread Selection #1 and highlight the statements that you feel were the basis for the five questions.

Performance Objective #3: After successfully completing Self-Check Activity #2, you will complete Self-Check Activity #3 (Matching). You will not be allowed to refer to any materials. Aim for 100% accuracy in your answers. If you can't reach 100%, search the reading selection for the definitions of the words used in the activity. Then write these definitions on a separate sheet of paper.

Performance Objective #4: After successfully completing Self-Check Activity #3, you will complete Self-Check Activity #4 (Application). Because this activity asks you to apply the information you read to your own classes, feel free to refer to Reading Selection #1. When you finish the activity, tear out the sheet and put it with your lesson plans as a reminder to try the strategies.

LEARNING ACTIVITY #1	ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY
<p>Read Reading Selection # 1</p> <p>SELF-CHECK ACTIVITIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking for Recall • True/False • Matching • Application 	<p>READ John Bean's <i>Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in The Classroom</i> (Jossey-Bass, 1996)</p>

Reading Selection #1

Understanding Why Writing Enhances Learning and How Faculty Can Use It

Why Some Faculty Don't Use Writing

Many faculty know writing is an important skill for student success in college as well as later in business, and most professors would agree that the skills taught in English classes need to be reinforced in other content areas too. But often instructors still shy away from incorporating writing assignments into their curriculum if they don't have a strong writing background or teach a writing course. Sometimes it is due to not knowing how to effectively grade writings and images of lengthy term papers. Or it may be from not understanding the wonderful benefits of incorporating writing assignments. But most of the time, it stems from professors who feel that their subject area should be the focus of precious classroom time and that writing will only detract from their primary goal. So keeping these issues in mind, this module explains the benefits of using writing to enhance student learning in a variety of content areas. Then easy-to-use strategies and activities are provided to weave among existing lesson plans.

The Benefits of Writing

In general, people don't change or try new things without having good reasons. So it is important to first stop and look at how instructors and their students can benefit from using the activities and strategies that are suggested in this module.

- The Maricopa Writing Project, a summer faculty development program that encouraged community college instructors to use writing in a variety of content areas, explained their premise as:

... writing is a way of learning that students achieve more when their classroom activities and homework assignments include writing. They learn more, as writing demands their active involvement in finding meaning in content material and gives them a greater understanding of it; they retain their learning better, as writing imprints it more thoroughly in their minds; and they learn it differently, as they gain a personal connection to what they are learning and make their own sense of it in ways that go beyond recognition or recall of facts and into application and creativity (Bertch 9).

- Well-known author and educator, Patricia Cross, echoes these sentiments by writing, "Students need time to talk, write, reflect, and otherwise engage in activities that make the material their own" (11).
- When the U.S. Department of Labor published the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) Executive Summary in 1992, it included writing as a "foundation skill" necessary for "competent workers in the high-performance workplace" (3). Thus students who learn the skill of communicating their thoughts in written form are acquiring a prized business skill.

General Strategies

First of all, instructors who want to encourage writing activities but feel they must have a prior writing background will be relieved to know that research has shown that this is not true. In her book, *Tools for Teaching*, Barbara Davis states, “Stress the importance of clear, thoughtful writing. As Elbow (1987) has noted, you can require competent writing without knowing how to teach composition” (qtd. in Davis 205). Although incorporating writing into lessons does not require writing skills, it does require certain strategies to be successful.

- One strategy is assigning writing in a variety of ways. Writing can be incorporated into essay questions on exams, in-class writings, and a variety of short activities. (Reading Selection #2 discusses easy-to-use activities.) So typical research paper assignments are not necessary if they don’t enhance the curriculum.
- Next is the issue of grading every piece of writing. Barbara Davis addresses this subject when she writes, “Don’t feel as though you have to read and grade every piece of your students’ writing. Since students are writing primarily to learn a subject, it is better to have them write than not write, even if you cannot evaluate each piece of writing” (qtd. in Davis 206). Instead of grading every time, Davis suggests three alternatives. One way is to simply have students write only for their own purposes without any feedback to learn that writing can clarify their thinking. She also suggests simply skimming papers. Last of all, Davis mentions a popular idea called peer review (qtd. in Davis 206).
- Peer review is a collaborative learning strategy that many instructors (including English and developmental writing) use to provide feedback on students’ writings by having them critique each other. Some instructors form small groups and hand out critique sheets that explain what to look for during the group work. Then each student in the small group is given a copy of all of the members’ writings. Students take turns receiving feedback. Other professors prefer to display each writing on an overhead projector and have the entire class make comments. Donald Murray also suggests the idea of having students read their papers aloud while students look at copies (191).

Murray also provides an unusual process to follow that prevents students from becoming overwhelmed by peer review criticism. He says to first have the writer of the paper comment on his/her draft. Next the reviewers read or hear the draft. Then the group responds to the earlier comments of the writer. Last of all, the writer responds to the groups' responses (Murray 193).

Regardless of the peer review's format, its benefits are undeniable. The obvious benefit to the writer is that he/she gets to find out what readers like and don't like. Teachers get a break from grading. And readers get an often-overlooked benefit. Rebecca Rule explains, "... it becomes clear that no one stands alone in this struggle to communicate" (Newkirk 60).

- When professors do intend to grade students' papers, using the strategy of multiple drafts is important. This concept simply means having students turn in a first draft of their papers for feedback before the final draft is due/graded. The rationale is explained by McKeachie in *Teaching Tips*:

Encourage students to submit a draft for feedback before submitting the paper for a grade. (The problem with the final version of papers is that, once a grade has been given, students sometimes ignore all other feedback.) Having a chance to try out ideas without risk helps free up students to be more thoughtful and creative. Hillocks (1982) found that focused teacher comments facilitate learning, but their effect is twice as great if students have a chance to revise their papers (qtd. in McKeachie 138).

McKeachie credits the "writing across the curriculum" (WAC) movement for strategies such as multiple drafts (132). And if professors do any further research on writing strategies, they will see this phrase quite often. So a brief explanation is helpful. Martha Townsend, an expert on the subject, describes WAC as, "a significant educational movement" that believes writing should be "an integral part of the learning process"(2:1299). Although the formats of WAC programs vary from campus to campus, WAC programs typically include the common ideas of multiple drafts, peer review, and "low-stakes writing"(McKeachie 133).

- Low-stakes writing is another great strategy to use in any class. It is simply writing that is not graded or writing that counts only as a small percentage of the overall grade. Some professors use low-stakes writing to assess students' understanding of a subject with techniques such as the "Minute Paper." (This method will be explored further in Reading Selection #2.) Others prefer a strategy called journaling. Journaling is asking students to keep a log of their thoughts and feelings regarding a specific topic or about any aspect of the course.

Some teachers ask students to write a certain amount of pages per week about the course; others ask that students write for a certain amount of time per week. John Bean describes journaling:

Sometimes called ‘learning logs,’ such journals leave students free to write about the course in any number of ways. Students might choose to summarize lectures, to explain why a textbook is difficult to understand, to disagree with a point made by someone in class, to raise questions, to apply some aspect of the course to personal experience, to make connections between different strands of the course, to express excitement at seeing new ideas, or for any other purpose (106).

Since journals are considered low-stakes writing, grammar and punctuation are often ignored in the grading. Usually an instructor simply grades by a combination of quantity of pages and quality of thoughts.

- Another useful strategy is to, “Explain that writing is hard work”(Davis 207). Instructors need to acknowledge that writing can be difficult, and make it easier when they assign longer or more difficult writings by:
 - * explaining that writing is a process with steps like brainstorming ideas, generating a thesis, outlining the supporting details, writing a first draft, getting feedback on the draft, and revising;
 - * providing samples of well-written papers from past classes;
 - * pointing out tutoring services available on campus; and
 - * explaining specific criteria that will be used for grading.
- When instructors do choose to grade longer papers, there is a strategy that can help. First of all, instructors should get a “feel” for how the whole class wrote by reading all of the papers before grading any of them. This practice helps to eliminate unrealistic expectations of better papers or overestimating an average paper (qtd. in Davis 222).

Understanding the benefits of using writing across a variety of content areas and knowing writing strategies that can apply to courses other than English are two important steps for faculty to incorporate writing successfully. In Reading Selection #2 specific, easy-to-use activities will be explained so those instructors who complete this module will know many ways to enhance adult learning with writing.

SELF-CHECK ACTIVITY #1

Checking for Recall of Important Points

1. Explain why many professors don't use writing as a strategy for student learning in courses other than English.
2. Describe three important benefits that students in your classes could receive from writing strategies.
3. Name four of the general writing strategies discussed in Reading Selection #1.

ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK ACTIVITY #1

1. Possible answers include:

- Instructors don't have experience in teaching writing or a degree in English and think it is necessary.
- Faculty don't know how to grade writing assignments.
- They don't understand the benefits of using writing as a strategy.
- Many feel time in class should only be spent on their subject area.

2. Possible answers include:

- Writing is a way of learning the subject.
- Writing demands active learning, so students can achieve more.
- Students retain more information when they write about the topic.
- Students make a personal connection to what they learn.
- Writing is an important work skill.

3. Possible answers include:

- Assign writing in a variety of ways
- Don't grade every piece
- Skim papers
- Peer review
- Multiple drafts
- Journaling or other low-stakes writing
- Explain it is hard work
- When grading, first look at all the papers

SELF-CHECK ACTIVITY #2

TRUE/FALSE

If you read a statement and it is true, mark it with a T. If the statement is false, mark it with an F.

1. Instructors who don't have prior experience teaching writing should not attempt using writing strategies in their courses. _____
2. A term paper is the best way to incorporate writing into a course. _____
3. Students must receive a grade on each piece of writing to benefit from it. _____
4. The SCANS Executive Summary of 1992 concluded that writing was an important foundation skill for success at work. _____
5. The WAC movement is credited for strategies such as multiple drafts. _____

ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK ACTIVITY # 2

1. False
2. False
3. False
4. True
5. True

SELF-CHECK ACTIVITY # 3

MATCHING

Read the description in Section I. Then find the word or phrase that it matches in Section II and write the letter as the answer.

Section I

1. An educational movement that stresses writing as an important part of the learning process is ____.
2. This activity is an example of low-stakes writing. ____
3. Instructors form small groups that consist of other students who read and critique each other's papers, and this activity is referred to as ____.
4. This strategy asks students to submit rough drafts of their writings for feedback before final grades are assigned. ____
5. This method helps instructors avoid having to grade every piece of writing. ____

Section II

- A. Peer review
- B. Multiple drafts
- C. Writing across the curriculum (WAC)
- D. Skim papers
- E. Journaling

ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK ACTIVITY # 3

1. C
2. E
3. A
4. B
5. D

SELF-CHECK ACTIVITY #4

APPLICATION

Think about a class you teach and then answer the following questions.

1. Of all of the possible benefits of using writing strategies across the curriculum, which one seems most important to you?
2. After reading about the general writing strategies, which ones appeal to you?
3. Choose one strategy for incorporating writing into your class. Then answer the questions below. When you are finished, tear off the information and put it with your lesson plans to serve as a reminder.

Lesson Plan Notes Regarding Writing Strategies

- The writing strategy you plan to use is _____.
- The class it will be used in is _____.
- Your plans for incorporating it are _____.

LEARNING EXPERIENCE # 2

Performance Objective #1: After reading Selection #, you are to complete Self-Check Activity #5 (True/False). You will not be allowed to refer to any materials. Aim for 80% accuracy in your answers. If you can't reach 80%, reread the entire Selection #2

Performance Objective #2: After successfully completing Self-Check Activity #5, you will complete Self-Check Activity #6 (Matching). You will not be allowed to refer to any materials. Aim for 90% accuracy in your answers. If you can't reach 90%, search the reading selection for the definitions of the words used in the activity. Then write these definitions on a separate sheet of paper.

Performance Objective #3: After successfully completing Self-Check Activity #6, you will complete Self-Check Activity #7 (Application). Because this activity asks you to apply the information you read to your own classes, feel free to refer to Reading Selection #2. When you finish, insert your answers into your lesson plans to serve as a reminder

Performance Objective #4: After you finish Self-Check Activity #7, you will complete Self-Check Activity #8 (Checking for Recall of Important Points). Aim for 100% accuracy in your answers. If you can't reach 100%, refer back to Reading Selection #1 and #2 and highlight all the answers you find.

Performance Objective #5: Upon successful completion of Self-Check Activity #8, complete the Do/Don't List without referring to any readings. If your answers are not 100% accurate, review the reading selections to determine the appropriate behaviors.

LEARNING ACTIVITY #2	ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY
<p>READ Reading Selection #2</p> <p>SELF-CHECK ACTIVITIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • True/False • Matching • Application • Checking for Recall • Do/Don't List 	<p>READ Thomas Angelo's and Patricia Cross's <i>Classroom Assessment Techniques</i> (Jossey-Bass, 1993)</p> <p>COMPLETE Self-Check Activity #7 first. Then ask other instructors in your division if they want to complete this module so you could all share and compare answers to #7.</p>

Reading Selection #2

Easy-to-use Writing Activities

The Benefits of Easy-to-use Writing Activities

Even short, simple writing activities can engage students in actively learning any subject. The importance of active learning was researched by the Study Group on the Conditions of Excellence in American Higher Education, and their findings suggest that college students need to be actively involved in the learning process (qtd. in Angelo and Cross 255). In *Classroom Assessment Techniques*, the authors quote the group's 1984 report that found students who were active in the learning process had greater satisfaction with their education and were more likely to continue their learning (qtd. in Angelo and Cross 255).

In addition to active learning, faculty who use the activities in this module will discover that there is no writing experience needed and little time is required compared to the typical term paper. Professors can use this module's activities to:

- assess what students know prior to teaching a topic and thus build upon prior knowledge and avoid boredom,
- explore or reinforce topics and concepts they are teaching in stimulating, creative ways versus traditional lecture, and
- check on how well their students are learning important points to be able to adjust their teaching as needed.

Writing Activities

I. The following activities assess what students know prior to teaching a topic.

• BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE PROBE

For this activity, an instructor focuses on specific information or concepts that students will need to know throughout the semester. Then the instructor prepares a few open-ended questions and some multiple-choice questions that will explore students' existing knowledge of the topic/concept that is going to be taught. It is important for faculty to take into account that most students will have only partial (or even incorrect) knowledge of new subjects; so questions should start with a point that many students will be familiar with and then lead into more unknown points. It is also a good idea for instructors to explain that this activity is not a quiz and to share the results at the next class.

The purpose of the Background Knowledge Probe is to help faculty determine the best starting place for teaching a new subject. For students, this activity also provides a preview of future class topics as well as a chance to review what they already know.¹

- **ASK STUDENTS TO WRITE WHAT THEY KNOW ABOUT A TOPIC BEFORE IT IS TAUGHT**

This activity is similar to the last one except there are no prepared questions. Instructors simply ask students to write about a subject that is going to be taught. Students should be told to briefly write about what they know on the topic and/or what their opinions are on the topic.

The purpose is not to grade the students' papers; instead, it is to focus the students' attention on the topic or concept.²

II. The following activities explore or reinforce topics and concepts in stimulating, creative ways.

- **CONTEMPORARY ISSUES JOURNAL**

Although the typical method for journaling was explained in Reading Selection #1, there are other fun ways to have students benefit from writing in journals. One activity is to have students write about contemporary issues and problems that are related to the course. To do this activity, faculty should ask students to read newspapers and to write about how the course's topics apply to current events.

The purpose is to create student interest/enthusiasm by relating the class materials to real occurrences in life (Bean 109).

- **EXAM PREPARATION JOURNAL**

For this writing activity, at the beginning of the semester professors give out a list of essay questions that are based upon their future midterm and final exams. Students are instructed to keep a journal with a section for each question. Then students write the answers to the questions in their journals as the semester progresses and the various topics are covered.

The purpose is to provide a motivation for exploratory writing by using exams. Some faculty may also allow students to use their journals during exams as a reward for their writing efforts (Bean 109).

¹ Although this is quoted from Angelo and Cross' *Classroom Assessment Techniques* 125, the original source is Roxbury Community College. *Teaching from Strengths Conference*. Boston: Roxbury Community College, 1986.

² Although this is quoted from Davis' *Tools for Teaching* 209, the original source is Tollefson, S.K. *Encouraging Student Writing*. Berkley: office of Educational Development, University of California, 1988.

- **ASK STUDENTS TO WRITE FROM A PRO OR CON POSITION**

Faculty who present a topic in class that evokes different points of view can use this activity. Instructors simply ask students to stop any discussion and write their reasons for supporting one side versus the other. Then the students' papers can be used as a part of a discussion.

The obvious purpose is to cool heated debates, but this activity also promotes critical thinking related to argumentation.³

- **LETTER OF CRITIQUE TO THE AUTHOR OF THE TEXTBOOK**

For this activity, faculty ask students to write a letter to the author of their course's textbook that will only be used for class purposes and not mailed. The letters should focus on the book's strengths and weaknesses. An alternative approach is to have students write their letters at the end of a chapter or an important concept or topic.

The purpose is to provide an alternative to typical term paper assignments; yet this activity can provide a great review of major points covered in a book.⁴

- **WRITING DIALOGUES**

Instructors who use this activity ask their students to write imaginary dialogue between people with different views on an assigned topic. For example, students could write what might be said if Dr. Spock, B.F. Skinner, and their grandmothers had a conversation on child discipline. To make this a group activity, faculty assign small teams to write the dialogue together.

The purpose is to promote creative thinking about a subject through the use of exploratory writing (Bean 110).

III. The following activities check on how well students are learning important points.

- **MINUTE PAPER**

One of the most popular activities that utilize writing is the Minute Paper, which is often called the One-Minute Paper. To use this activity, an instructor simply leaves a few minutes at the end of a class and asks students to write an answer to one of two questions that ask, "What was the most important thing you learned today?" or "What important question was not answered?"

³ Although this is quoted from Davis' *Tools for Teaching* 210, the original source is Walvoord, B.F. *Helping Students Write Well: A Guide for Teachers in All Disciplines*. New York: Modern Language Association, 1986.

⁴ Although this is quoted from Davis' *Tools for Teaching* 218, the original source is "Simple Ways to Incorporate More Writing into your Courses". [UC Ideas](#). Irving: Instructional Development Service, University of California, Jan. 1990.

The purpose of this activity is to quickly let faculty check for how well students are learning what they are teaching. The second question (regarding what was not answered) allows students to tell faculty what needs to be covered before moving on.⁵

- **STUDENT-GENERATED TEST QUESTIONS**

Instructors think about an upcoming test and decide on the kinds of questions and specific topics they want to cover to begin this activity. Then they ask their students to generate possible test questions. Faculty explain to their students that writing the questions will help prepare them for the test.

This activity accomplishes several purposes. It lets instructors see what the students feel is important, and it signals instructors when students have unrealistic test expectations. If faculty provide feedback to the students on their questions, it also helps students prepare for the test by showing what they already know as well as what they need to study (Angelo and Cross 240).

- **FOCUSED LISTING**

To do this activity, instructors simply ask students to focus on a single, important subject. Then students list several, related ideas/terms that they think are important in understanding the assigned subject. The instructor gives students a specified time, which is usually just a few minutes.

The purpose is to check for recall of important information on a given topic. It allows faculty to adjust their teaching as necessary (Angelo and Cross 126).

Faculty who use the ideas/techniques presented in this module will discover that writing truly can enhance adult learning without a great deal of prior knowledge or preparation time. The reward for instructors who are willing to risk using these new ideas will be actively involved students who participate more in class and who learn more effectively.

⁵ Although this is quoted in Angelo and Cross' *Classroom Assessment Techniques* 153, the original source is Wilson, R.C., and Gaff, J.G. *College Professors and Their Impact on Students*. New York: Wiley, 1975.

SELF-CHECK ACTIVITY #5

TRUE/FALSE

If you read a statement and it is true, mark it with a T. If the statement is false, mark it with an F.

1. The Background Knowledge Probe asks students to list all of the college-level courses they have ever taken. _____
2. The Contemporary Issues Journal allows students to write about current issues/problems that are related to the course. _____
3. The Minute Paper asks students to brainstorm ideas on an assigned topic for one minute. _____
4. The Writing Dialogue allows students to write an imaginary conversation between people with different points of view. _____
5. Even easy-to-use writing activities can engage students in actively learning a subject. _____

ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK ACTIVITY #5

1. False
2. True
3. False
4. True
5. True

SELF-CHECK ACTIVITY #6

MATCHING

Read the description in Section I. Then find the word or phrase that it matches in Section II and write the letter as the answer.

Section I

1. For this writing activity, professors give out a list of essay questions that are based upon future exams, and students keep a journal on the answers. ____
2. When instructors ask students to stop a discussion and write about their reasons for supporting one side or the other, it is referred to as ____.
3. To accomplish this activity, students write possible test questions. ____
4. This writing activity focuses on a letter to a textbook author. ____
5. Instructors may choose to have students think about a topic and list related ideas/terms that are important in understanding the topic. ____

Section II

- A. Student-Generated Test Questions
- B. Exam Preparation Journal
- C. Focused Listing
- D. Ask Students to Write From a Pro or Con Position
- E. Letter of Critique to the Author of the Textbook

ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK ACTIVITY #6

1. B
2. D
3. A
4. E
5. C

SELF-CHECK ACTIVITY #7

APPLICATION

First read the following example. It describes how even a hands-on course like Microsoft Access can incorporate the activities described in Reading Selection #2. Then choose a class you teach and answer the questions that follow the example by referring back to Reading Selection #2.

If you choose to do the optional Enrichment Activity, start by making sure the other faculty in your department/division have access to this module. Then have everyone complete this activity. Follow up with a time to compare and share your answers for a wonderful variety of ideas.

Example

Name of course: *Microsoft Access*

1. Describe how you could use one of the activities that assesses what students know prior to teaching a topic.

At the beginning of the semester, I will ask my students to write 2 or 3 paragraphs on what they already know regarding the Access database functions and what they already know how to do.

2. Name a way to incorporate a writing activity that explores or reinforces a topic you plan to teach.

I can ask my students to keep an Exam Preparation Journal for all the terms/definitions that I'll teach before the mid-term exam.

3. Explain how you could use one of the activities that checks on how well your students are learning important points.

If my students encounter problems with the software, I'll use Focused Listing to help them troubleshoot by discussing what is important after they make their lists.

Activity

Name of course:

1. Describe how you could use one of the activities that assesses what students know prior to teaching a topic.
2. Name a way to incorporate a writing activity that explores or reinforces a topic a topic you plan to teach.
3. Explain how you could use one of the activities that checks on how well your students are learning important points.

SELF-CHECK ACTIVITY #8

Checking for Recall of Important Points

Imagine that you are about to use a suggested writing activity for the first time in a course. Name three reasons/benefits that you could tell your students to explain the importance of using writing activities in a variety of content areas. Know that it is important for your students to also understand the benefits that were explained in Reading Selection #1 and #2 so they appreciate the value of the writing activity.

ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK ACTIVITY #8

Possible answers include:

Writing activities that are incorporated into a variety of subject areas benefit students in the following ways:

- Writing is a skill that is prized in business.
- Writing is a way of learning.
- Research shows that writing aids in retention of materials.
- Writing activities help students make a personal connection to what they learn so that the new information can be applied.
- It is an active learning technique, and research shows this provides students with a greater level of satisfaction with their education.

DO/DON'T LIST

Listed below are behaviors that either do or don't describe an instructor's behaviors when he/she is using writing activities to enhance adult learning. Without referring to any previous materials, indicate in each blank an answer of either DO or DON'T.

1. ___ Explain the importance of writing activities to students prior to using them
2. ___ Use easy-to-use writing activities to incorporate active learning and collaborative learning strategies
3. ___ Explain to students that writing is easy if they are smart enough
4. ___ Grade all writing activities
5. ___ Use multiple drafts if papers will be graded
6. ___ Incorporate low-stakes writing
7. ___ Feel free to guess (not assess) what students know prior to teaching a topic because he/she is the instructor
8. ___ Use Student-Generated Test Questions to discover if students have unrealistic test expectations
9. ___ Shy away from writing activities unless he/she has a degree in English
10. ___ Feel that lengthy research papers are the only method of incorporating writing into his/her course

ANSWERS TO DO/DON'T LIST

1. Do
2. Do
3. Don't
4. Don't
5. Do
6. Do
7. Don't
8. Do
9. Don't
10. Don't

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