

Consolidating Learning through Fluency Writing

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[free lesson/project ideas]

Today's Session & Handout

1. What is Guided Fluency Writing?
2. How can it fit into your courses?
3. Benefits & Limitations & Strategies
4. Getting Started
5. Designing Fluency Writing Prompts
6. Fluency Writing and Lesson Planning
7. Examples of Fluency Writing Prompts

ELL Comments

The writing a journal with a help of the topics/questions makes this assignment concrete. It helps to develop the ideas. ... Writing this journal direct improve my ability in English writing. Russian male

I am very enjoy it because I can improve my writing skill and I can write down my thought about some topic. Taiwanese Female

I learned many new things because I had to think about many topics, vocabulary and so on. Korean Male

These topics have meanings. I used dictionary and connect internet for getting information. I was very interested in writing. Korean male.

Comments from a PRC male English language teacher

A prompt and to the point response to every entry gives the student much encouragement and positive assessment. Only if students know themselves very well can they learn better. This writing is a relaxation and dialogue with your soul rather than assignment or homework. I like it!

Materials for this session are based on materials from:

Penner, J.G.T. & Barnes, H.A. (2005). *Think First, Then Write: 101 Writing Topics to Photocopy/on CD Rom*. Vancouver, BC: AACE [Winner of the 2007 TESOL Mary Finocchario Award for Excellence in the Development of Pedagogical Materials/ Non-published materials]

Fluency Writing/ Free writing?

A **contrast** to proficiency writing which is “reflected in characteristics such as accuracy, grammatical and lexical complexity, and appropriateness” Chenoweth, N. A. & Hayes, J. R. (2001). Fluency in writing: Generating text in L1 and L2. *Written Communication*, 18 (1), 80-98.

Your Experiences with Fluency Writing

ELLs: Benefits	Limitations → Strategies to address them
Teachers: Benefits	Limitations → Strategies to address them

Getting Started

- Start early! FW can be used as a pre-writing stage or an end in itself.
- Initial topics can encourage ELLs to introduce themselves to you.

Examples:

- I suggest that you have them experience at least one writing prompt in class.
Why?
- Quotes from previous ELLs' experiences will help them accept the concept of fluency writing.

When I did homework, I imagined many things. When I go back home, I will do the tasks in Korean language. These topics are good for not only my English, but also my mind.

Korean Male

Example of Initial Guidelines

- Every week, I will give you a new topic.
- Most of the topics are about you and your opinion – you are the expert!
- You might need to use your dictionary – great!
- After you hand in the fluency writing booklet, I will read all your pages. I will keep your information **confidential**.
- I will write comments and maybe ask you questions.
- While you are writing these topics, don't worry about grammar and spelling.
- Because this is a "fun" first draft writing for you, I will not correct your errors. (I do a lot of correcting/marking with your other homework!)
- Focus on FLUENCY and MEANING – think about the topics and write what you want.
- If you have problems, be sure to let me know!

This is your book. You can add drawing, stickers, and pictures, etc. However, I still expect you to write a lot of English. I am looking forward to reading your pages.

Logistics

Provide standard notebooks -Stapled is best - Hilroy, 32 pages. 8.5x11

If you let students use computers, have them save hard copies in a duotang.

Give one topic at a time or give several copies with a due date.

If you have a large class, rotate the due dates (example, take 4 notebooks each day of the week). --- The due date can stay the same (for example, Monday's date)

Designing Fluency Writing Prompts

Audience

Include the audience in the prompt (landlord? Another parent? Teacher?)

Topics that work well

Personal	Learning Process
Cultural	Related to classroom activities/experiences
Current events	Themselves (they are their own experts)

Various Formats

Lists	Collages with words	Responding to a quote
Charts	Writing questions	Timelines
Sentences	Writing imperative (suggestions)	Narratives

Focused Vocabulary Practice

Encourage students to use vocabulary they have been learning

Examples: Practicing the Academic Word List Sublist 1 words

- If you give ELLs prompts, they are able to write their ideas using AWL words.
- What's the biggest problem in your home country?

Environment issue has become a hot debate all over the world. Nowadays, it's **estimated** that 80% countries are **involved** this **issue**. The South of China has floods. The **source** of the disaster is cutting forests. I think the government should play a **significant role** in **establishing** related **legislation** to restrict cutting woods and improving **individual's** awareness of **environment** protection. It's a long term goal. It **requires** us to **consistent** commit and make efforts.

In Brazil people couldn't obtain a job so we have massive unemployment and bad physical **labour** conditions. Some leaders have used a new **method** to **respond to** this crisis. They promoting the **export** of raw materials to other countries and attracting companies to **legally** invest in a **specific sector** for example manufacturing. With more **legal** companies, more job opportunities will be **available**, as a result, companies will **distribute** more **benefits** and increase their **income**. More money will be **distributed** to invest in technology to improve manufacturing **procedures**.

The main reason of hiring **illegal** workers is that the usual **methods** for **distribution** and **export** of their products have more cost so they don't have enough **benefit**.

- What did you learn from your job?

On the first day of working in Superstore, I **assumed** that every role is easy. Unfortunately, I was wrong. My supervisor told me the **method** of working there, such as how to tidy the deli **section** and how to **distribution** the goods. I learned some **specific technique** so I thought that was **benefit** for me very much. My supervisor has **available** many opportunities for me. Now I know **vary procedures** about the store and I can do the work **individually**.

Remember, fluency writing is intended to be their FIRST DRAFT. 😊

Check <http://AACE-English.com> → Academic Word List → Handouts

For more info on what the AWL is & for conference handouts re: AWL sessions

Using Fluency Writing “products” for Lesson Planning

Production, fluency, and proficiency can be easily monitored by the instructor while reading student fluency samples.

Be very sure to delete/ change any personally identifying info

Example 1:

Problems with Expressing Ideas in Fluency Writing

- These sentences are taken from your letters to me.
 - Work with a partner to correct the sentences.
 - Be careful not to change the meaning.
1. I enjoyed to do task 3 and 4.
 2. I don't have time enough to do my other homeworks.
 3. I have ever been abroad to China and Mexico.
 4. I'm sorry I afraid to mistake.
 5. They gave me consciousness and courage to come the dream true.
 6. I wrote it down my opinion and thinking honestly.
 7. Consulting with a dictionary made my world wider and spreader.
 8. With the tasks, I knew myself which I have forgotten. Furthermore, was convinced of myself which I have known. [hint: Is this a proverb from someone's culture?]
 9. I thought the writing homework was rather useful than the journal.
 10. In this homework, there are things I have not done since now.

Example 2: **Problems with Questions from Twenty Cultural Questions**

Questions about another culture

- These questions were taken from your fluency writing.
 - You were asked to write 20 questions about another culture/ country.
 - Work with a partner and correct the questions without changing the meaning.
1. Am I going to change or I will keep my culture?
 2. Will be the same life as here?
 3. Where I can go to consult if I have problems that I need help?
 4. Is there dangerous?
 5. Is it difficult to get a job to foreigners?
 6. Can I get use with the food there?
 7. Does it have a lot of rain or fine?
 8. When is usual hours for going to bad there?
 9. What kind of topics not allow to talk with people?
 10. I want to know in which lifestyle I can fit in life expense?

Examples of Fluency Writing Prompts From *Think First, Then Write* (Penner & Barnes, 2005)

- **All About Me**

[intro -ABOUT SELF]

Think First

What makes you unique? How are you different from others in the class and I your family? What makes you special?

Then Write

On two pages, write 20 things which describe you. You can write words or short phrases, but do not use sentences. You can use pictures, and sketches, etc.

- **What it means to be a citizen of _____**

[intro - ABOUT SELF]

Think First

What makes your culture unique or different than other cultures? What are some symbols of your culture? What makes your culture part of your identity (who you are)?

Then Write

Show 15 things/ideas which explain what it means to be a citizen of your country. You can use pictures and sketches to support the English words that you have.

- **A Promise to Myself**

[LEARNING]

Think First

How are you doing? What do you think of this class so far? What are your goals for this time we will have together? How will you reach your goals?

Then Write

Write a letter to yourself – a promise of how you will manage your time and reach your goals.

Then Seal

Put the letter in the envelope I have given you. Seal it and give it to me. I will not read it.

[Teacher: keep it and return it to the ELL at the end of the course/ level, etc.]

- **World Language**

[GLOBAL ISSUES]

Think First

Should everyone in the world just learn one language?

Then Write

Make a chart with 2 columns. On one side, make a list of the benefits of having one world language. On the other side, list all the disadvantages of having one world language.

- **Making Mistakes**

[LEARNING]

Think First

In your culture, is it “okay” for students to make mistakes? How do you feel when you make an English mistake? Do you want someone to correct you? (When? Who?) Do you have any examples of “good mistakes”?

Then Write

Use the questions above to help you write about making mistakes as you learn.

- **Home Rules**

[FAMILY]

Think First

When you lived with your family, were there rules you had to follow?

For example: “Go to bed at 8:30.” “Turn down the heat before going to bed,” etc.

Did you think the rules were fair? Do you still follow some of those rules now?

Then Write

Write 10 rules that you had as a child. Then, write 10 rules you would want to have if you were sharing an apartment with a friend. You can use the imperative form (like the examples given above, with no subject)

- **One True Love**

[BELIEFS/VALUES]

Think First

Do you believe there is a concept of true love? What is true love? Do you believe there is only one true partner for you in your lifetime?

Then Write Agree or disagree with the following statement. Give reasons and examples to support your point of view.

“You only fall into true love once in a lifetime.”

- **Kindred Spirits**

[FRIENDSHIP]

Think First

A kindred spirit is similar to a “true friend.” This friend can be a family member or someone that is not related to you. How would you describe a true friend? How is s/he more special than other people you know?

Then Write

Make a collage of pictures, symbols and words to show what true friendship means to you. If possible, include a picture of your own kindred spirit.

Teacher's Role

Determine goals of the process/ product
-grammar review? Vocab use? End product?

Determine Steps of the process



Assign pre-writing

- Usually in class, so students can consult each other for ideas.



(Option) Check their outlines –
for focus, logic, etc



(option) Peer- editing

Things for Ss to look for:
Content – not grammar (that's our job!)

(option) Teacher looks for content and gives suggestions for development
Don't check grammar until next draft



Read Draft 2 – give editing codes and comments
(I prefer to ask questions as well)



(option) Make grammar task from their drafts
-change identifying content (personal info)
- develop a character/ story line for these tasks



Check Final Draft. Insert corrections for the parts they still didn't get right.

Process Writing

Student's Role

Complete Pre-writing



Organize ideas

 into an outline

Determine topic sentence; supporting points, conclusion

- They can present their outline orally to classmates; in writing to teacher; etc



Write Draft 1



Complete Peer editing

 - ONE paper at a time!

- Student 1 READS paragraph OUT LOUD while student 2 reads along
- Give comments about specific items the teacher has told them to edit for.



Write Draft 2 based on peer / teacher comments on content & hopefully noticing more of their own errors



Complete Final Draft

- Using editing codes and comments from teacher

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