

## INSTRUCTIONAL SCAFFOLDING

Instructional scaffolding

involves the following:

- **CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS:** Going through the task instructions and gaining an understanding of what you are required to do
- **RUBRIC:** Understanding the rubric or marking scheme, is a powerful tool. You need to understand not only what to do but HOW you are being marked and what you are being marked on.
- **EXEMPLAR:** It is important to examine a range of similar tasks and see what these pieces look like this should include matching the exemplar with the rubric.
- **STRUCTURE:** This entails gaining a full understanding of the structure of the writing including concise hypothesis, clear introduction, well structured paragraphs and a cohesive and well structured conclusion.
- **LANGUAGE:** This includes examining the vocabulary, expert language, literary terminology, imagery and descriptive language.
- **CONTENT:** You need to make sure you have a clear and detailed understanding of what knowledge you require to write an effective piece.

effectively for revising there are several steps which make revising effective and worthwhile.

There are eight types of revising that are useful when teachers revise (Soven, 1999). This includes:

- **HOLISTIC REVISION** (changes are so large that a new product is produced)
- **INFORMATIONAL** (content is added or deleted)
- **ORGANIZATIONAL** (parts of the piece are revised or reordered)
- **TRANSITIONAL** (short transitional sections are added, changed, or deleted)
- **CONTINUATIONAL** (the piece is extended by adding to the end of it)
- **STYLISTIC** (words, phrases, or sentences are changed to achieve greater clarity, emphasis or a higher level of fluency)
- **GRAMMATICAL** (changes made to grammatical conventions)
- **MECHANICAL** (changes in spelling, punctuation, underlining, or capitalisation).

**“All students should be encouraged to seek help when revising their work”**

## Publishing

Refers to the time when writing is either submitted for grading or read by the targeted audience. It is a very powerful and useful technique to get to publish your work to a wider audience., this may be a specific audience outside the school (such as a member of the school board, visitors to a website, judges of a writing contest, family members).

However, students can also

Publish student writing by simply making it “public”: by putting it up in the classroom, being part of a

school publication or magazine or publishing it for a local newspaper, or parent teacher night.

Although publication is not required for every writing activity, it can be a powerful learning experience when students receive feedback from a real audience about their writing. It can also serve as an incentive for students to polish their work and enhance their writing skills.



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## A Guide to Producing Excellent Texts in Senior

“WRITING IS EXCITING BECAUSE IT’S PRODUCTIVE AND CREATIVE; IT’S WHERE THE RUBBER HITS THE ROAD. YOU CAN’T WRITE AND NOT THINK. THERE ARE NO CLIFF NOTES FOR WRITING. WRITTEN EXPRESSION IS ONE OF OUR PRIMARY MEANS OF REFLECTING ON WHAT WE THINK AND WHAT WE KNOW.” JIM

BURKE, teacher and author



# Producing Excellent Texts



## Prewriting

Prewriting refers to class work and activities done prior to or during early drafting which engage you in thinking about and gathering ideas.

You can benefit from “free association” techniques (such as brainstorming, listing, clustering, visualization, or freewriting) as well as more structured techniques (such as the use of graphic organizers, outlining, or questioning).

You will also benefit from activities that engage you authentically in an experience (such as a seminar discussion of ideas, a lab experience, an artistic process, a sensory activity) which leads into an opportunity to write about the experience or the issues that it raised.

Soven (1999) recommends that you use the following steps when prewriting:

- Explore and discover the purpose of the technique being used
- Find a model of the technique

- Experiment with the technique
- Discuss how it felt to use the technique.

Soven also recommends that students understand that not all techniques work for all writers or for all writing situations and that while prewriting activities may take time, they can help make the actual writing of the paper much more productive. These are often seen as practice prior to the drafting process.

## Drafting

Drafting refers to the process of composing during writing. Drafting is not easy, this is where you most often struggle to start. Drafting is not just about writing, it is also about connecting knowledge and understandings of a topic with your own writing skill. Teachers are really important during this process and you should feel free to ask for help figuring out how to say what you want to say, finding a form for your writing, or

getting past being “stuck”. Zemelman & Daniels (1988) suggests that you can get help during the drafting stage in the following ways:

- teacher-student conferences—remember to ask specific questions. The phrase “I need help with everything” usually doesn’t get you a very helpful response. Be specific and you will directed and specific help.

“If you spend all your time talking...the work you can produce decreases”

Using in-class time for writing in a productive way. If you spend all your time talking and not working then the quality of the work you can produce decreases and so does your grade!

- Understand the writing process. This means take the time to look at not just the content, but also the style of writing you are expected to do. What are the key stylistic features that MUST be in your writing? What are some of the academically styled words you need to use? Is their expert language you are expected to use?

- Finding ways to get “unstuck” (such as focused freewriting or temporarily changing the audience for the writing). This is a really difficult one to master. Sometimes it is helpful to discuss the difficulty and your thinking with a friend, parent or your teacher. Thinking through the problem will allow you to see past the problem and hopefully see your way to the solution. So that you can continue writing.
- Give yourself the mental space to complete the task. Don’t allow yourself to become

distracted by others or your technology. Focus on the task and you will be successful. Also do not try to rush through the editing and evaluating of the task as often you end up missing important things you need to do. Although the drafting phase is individual it is always helpful to have study buddies and peers to discuss issues, look through your work and help you to overcome difficulties. This can be used for brainstorming, Editing work, thinking and talking through your ideas and tidying messy ideas and writing.

## Revising

Refers to changes made in the content and structure of writing to achieve a particular purpose. Students often avoid revising because it is hard work; it can be painful to read your own writing and many don’t know what to actually think about or “do” when they revise other than correct mistakes; and they sometimes think that they have to do it all on their own without any collaboration or support (Soven, 1999).

All students should be encouraged to seek help revising their work. Class time needs to be used

## TYPES OF WRITING

There are many types of writing used in the senior years and it is essential that students understand each of the types and how they connect to their specific areas of study.

While each subject may have specific styles, expert language and content each type still follows a set of rules and it is these rules that students need to know and understand.

1. EXPRESSIVE is the most personal in nature as the writer explores and shares personal experiences or insights.
2. INFORMATIONAL/ EXPLANATORY involves a writer giving information to explain situations or ideas as a way of teaching.

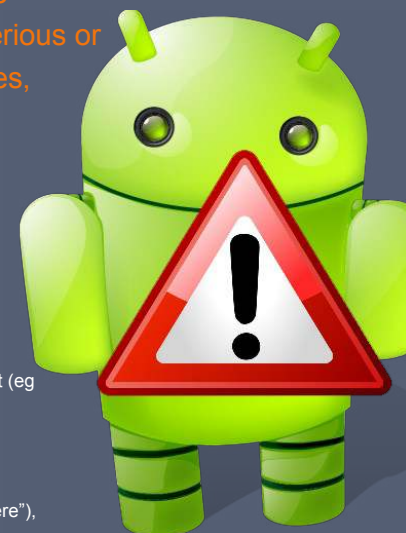
3. ARGUMENTATIVE involves defining issues and proposing reasonable solutions.

4. CRITICAL involves interpreting, proposing, and judging.

## ERRORS THAT PEOPLE HATE

The following errors are considered the most serious or off putting by businesses, universities and professional people:

- nonstandard verb forms in past tense or past participle (eg “brung” instead of “brought”),
- lack of subject-verb agreement (eg “we was” instead of “we were”),
- double negatives (eg “there has never been no one here”),



- objective pronoun as subject (eg “him and Richard”)
- sentence fragments (eg “In Japan, during the last war and just before the armistice”)
- run-on sentences (eg “This next chapter has a lot of difficult information in it, you should start studying right away”)
- Non capitalization of proper nouns (eg “When Michelle came to darwin she went to the mindil beach markets”)
- lack of subject-verb agreement (eg “ A large part of my life goals have been to go to law school”)