

Supporting Students in Critical Reading and Writing: A Research-based Approach

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Workshop presented at the annual conference of the National Organization for Student Success,
NOSS, March 6, 2020.

The goal of the Supporting Strategic Writers approach is to support writers in developing the knowledge and motivation to use reading and writing strategies independently. Students learn strategies for critical reading of sources, planning, and revision based on rhetorical analysis and genre. In addition, student success is supported through integrated metacognitive strategies for goal-setting, task management, progress monitoring, and reflection.

Following two years of collaborative design studies, we conducted two experimental studies involving four colleges. Both studies found large effects on overall quality of writing over a semester compared to control classes using typical instruction; positive effects were also found on motivational factors like self-efficacy, mastery motivation, and affect. Our recent research has focused on critical reading of sources, writing summary-response papers, and writing essays with sources. Semester-long experimental studies at two colleges found large positive effects on essays with sources. In addition, we conducted an experimental study of an accelerated, four-week version of the course; analysis is underway. Full results of these studies will be available at the conference.

The session will begin with a brief presentation of the theoretical principles and instructional design features followed by a summary of research findings. Most of the session will be devoted to explanation, demonstration, hands-on activities, and discussion of the key instructional components. We will model the instructional strategies, engage participants in collaborative writing, and discuss the importance of the metacognitive strategies. Materials will summarize the curriculum and outline opportunities for further work for interested faculty and administrators.

Summary

The Supporting Strategic Writers approach supports writers in developing strategies for critical reading, planning, and revision integrated with metacognitive strategies for goal-setting, task management, and reflection. Research at six colleges has found large effects on writing quality and motivation. The session includes modeling, writing activities, and discussion of key components.

Supporting Strategic Writers: An Evidence-Based Approach

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Many entering community college students are required to take non-credit developmental courses in reading and/or writing, but only a minority complete these courses and pass a first-year composition course. Active efforts are addressing this problem with structural reforms to placement procedures, integration of reading and writing, and accelerated courses. But little research has focused on pedagogical methods for teaching writing and reading. Since 2010, our research group, with funding from the US Department of Education, has been developing and evaluating instructional approaches for developmental writing and reading based on self-regulated strategy instruction. Research over ten years has consistently found strong effects on writing quality and motivation.

The goals of the Supporting Strategic Writers (SSW) approach are widely shared – that students will develop knowledge of academic writing genres; strategies for critical reading, planning and revising; and the motivational beliefs that support continued critical reading and writing in the future (Rose, 1989; CWPA, 2011). The SSW instructional approach is based on strategy instruction (Harris & Graham, 2009; MacArthur, 2011) integrated with practices common in college composition. Students learn genre-based strategies based on the rhetorical purposes, text structures, and linguistic features of genres. Genre features integrate the strategies for planning and revising, as well as critical reading and note-taking. The strategies provide an initial map for students unsure about how to engage in the writing process. Equally important, students learn metacognitive strategies for goal-setting, task management, progress monitoring, and reflection. Journaling and class discussions engage students in reflecting on how they can take control of their own learning through setting goals, selecting strategies, and monitoring progress. Self-evaluation and reflection on one's progress are critical to developing a growth mindset (Yeager & Dweck, 2012) that learning is possible with effort and strategic choices. Pedagogical methods include discussion of model essays, think-aloud modeling of strategies, collaborative writing, peer review and self-evaluation, and reflective journaling.

Research Support

Development stages (2010-13). The design research included three cycles of design, implementation, evaluation, and revision over 2 years (MacArthur & Philippakos, 2012; 2013).

Quasi-experiment (2012). This study involved 2 colleges, 13 instructors (16 classes), and 276 students (48% minority, 10% non-native English speakers). The treatment was compared to control classes that received typical instruction for a full semester. The SSW curriculum had a large effect on quality of argumentative writing ($ES = 1.22$) though no significant effect on

grammar. It also had a large effect on self-efficacy (confidence) and a moderate effect on mastery motivation. (MacArthur, Philippakos, & Lanetta, 2015).

Efficacy study (2016-17). A rigorous experimental study was conducted at 2 community colleges with 19 instructors randomly assigned to treatment and control and 207 students (62% female; 57% minority, 12% non-native English speakers). The SSW approach had a very large effect on quality of writing (ES=1.75, equivalent to the average treatment student being at the 90th percentile of the control group). It also had positive effects on a standardized writing assessment (NAEP) (ES=0.67) and on self-efficacy for writing. (MacArthur, Philippakos, May, & Compello, 2019).

Efficacy study (2018-19). A recent study investigated a version of the curriculum with a focus on writing using sources and, thus, more emphasis on integrating critical reading with writing. At two community colleges, 23 instructors were randomly assigned to treatment and control; 243 students participated. The primary outcome measure was an argumentative essay using two source articles. A substantial effect was found on quality of those essays (ES=.58, $p < .001$).

Study of an Accelerated Course (2018-19). This quasi-experimental study evaluated an adapted version of the course that met 4 days a week for 4 weeks at the start of the semester, leaving time for an 11-week credit composition class. Five instructors (2 T, 3 C) and 65 students participated. The SSW approach had a large effect on the quality of argumentative essays with sources (ES = 0.97). The study was the doctoral dissertation of Eric Nefferdorf, one of the instructor-collaborators at the beginning of our research in 2010.

Comments from Student Journals

“I didn’t think this class was going to help me do anything else in college, but I was wrong. I used the same writing steps to complete an essay for my philosophy class, and it became easy to write.”

“The strategy that I had the most trouble understanding was the goal setting strategy. I found it a bit confusing because when asked what my goals for my writing would be, naturally I would think it’s to get a passing grade. But as I learned more about the strategy, I learned that it wasn’t asking me that, instead it was asking what I want others to get from my writing.”

Contacts and an Invitation

We are interested in collaboration with institutions or individuals who would like to try out our instructional approaches and adapt it to their settings or courses, including developmental writing courses, integrated reading and writing, co-requisite courses, or first-year composition. For more information you can contact us by email:

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Supporting Strategic Writers

Most college writing instructors want their students to learn strategies for critical reading, planning, and revising. The challenge is to teach reading and writing strategies in a way that provides the knowledge and motivation for students to use them independently on a variety of writing tasks in future classes. For the past nine years, our research team has been developing and evaluating instructional approaches for developmental writing that integrate instruction in reading and writing strategies with metacognitive strategies for managing the organizational and motivational challenges of writing.

Supporting Strategic Writers (SSW) is an instructional program for developmental writing that integrates the goals of college writing (Council of Writing Program Administrators, 2014) with research on self-regulated strategy instruction (Harris & Graham, 2009; MacArthur, 2011). Students learn genre-based strategies for reading and writing. The strategies use knowledge about the rhetorical purposes, text structures, and linguistic features of genres (e.g., argument, causal explanation) to guide planning and revising, as well as critical reading and note-taking. Equally important, students learn metacognitive, self-regulation strategies for goal-setting, task management, progress monitoring, and reflection. Journaling and class discussions engage students in reflecting on how they can take control of their own learning through setting goals, selecting strategies, and monitoring progress. Self-evaluation and reflection on one's progress are critical to developing a growth mindset (Yeager & Dweck, 2012) that learning is possible with effort and strategic choices. Pedagogical methods include discussion of model essays, think-aloud modeling of strategies, collaborative writing, peer review and self-evaluation, and reflective journaling.

The curriculum was developed in collaboration with community college faculty in a three-year project funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Based on the positive results of that study, a five-year study was funded to provide rigorous research on the SSW program. Two experimental studies (MacArthur, Philippakos, & Ianetta, 2015; MacArthur, Traga-Philippakos, May, & Compello, 2019), together involving four colleges, 32 instructors, and 482 students, found strong effects on the quality of student writing and motivation compared to typical instruction. In both studies, on the post-test measure of writing quality, the average student in the treatment group performed above the 90th percentile of the control group. Students in treatment classes also made greater gains in motivation.

Our most recent study focused on the challenges of using sources effectively. Synthesizing information from source materials into an essay is a challenging task for most students (van Ockenburg, van Weijen, & Rijlaarsdam, 2019) but especially for basic writers who may have problems with reading comprehension as well as writing. To deal with both reading and writing, students learn strategies for critical reading of sources based on analysis of authors' purposes and text structure; using notes from that reading, they write summary-response papers that demand comprehension of main ideas and critical responses. An important part of this critical analysis is evaluation of the credibility of online sources based on investigating authors and sponsoring organizations. Students also learn how to integrate ideas from multiple sources into their own essays. Preliminary analysis of the quality of final exam essays that required students to use two source articles found a statistically significant effect ($p < .001$; $ES = .58$).

Further information on the instructional methods and research results will be presented at the NOSS conference in Nashville in March 2020.

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A Research-
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Supporting
strategic writers

- Charles A. MacArthur
- Zoi Traga Philippakos
- Eric Nefferdorf
- NOSS Conference, Nashville, TN 2020

• Research reported in this article was supported by the Institute for Education Science, U.S. Department of Education, grant R305A160242. The opinions expressed are those of the authors.

Today's
presentation:

Supporting Strategic Writers



SSW: An Evidence-Based Approach



Overview of core principles and
instructional features



Explanation/Modeling of key writing and
reading strategies



Invitation to collaborate

Project history

- Design research – 2010-13
 - Collaborative work with community college faculty
 - 3 cycles of design, implementation, and revision
 - Large pre to post gains in writing and motivation
- Quasi-experimental study – 2012
 - 2 colleges, 13 instructors, 276 students – 48% minority, 10% non-native English speakers.
 - Large effects on overall writing quality and motivation
- Rigorous experimental study – 2016-17
 - 2 colleges, 19 instructors, 207 students – 57% minority, 12% non-native English speakers.
 - Large effects on overall writing quality and motivation

Project history (cont.)

Writing with Sources

- Design research – 2017
 - 2 colleges
- Experimental study - writing with sources – 2018-19
 - 2 colleges, 23 instructors, 243 students
 - Moderate to strong effect on quality of essays with sources.
 - Effects on motivation ***
- Accelerated course – 4 weeks, followed by 11-week FYC, Eric Nefferdorf
 - Large positive effect on writing essay using sources

Key ideas



Strategies for writing and reading based on rhetorical analysis and genres.



Metacognitive strategies to support self-regulation and motivation.



Critical pedagogical approaches.

Genre- based Strategies

- **Writing and reading strategies integrate rhetorical knowledge of genres with processes.**
 - **Planning strategies** – Use genre knowledge to set goals, generate content, and organize
 - **Evaluating/revising strategies** – Use genre-specific evaluation criteria
 - **Reading comprehension** – Use genre knowledge to identify key ideas
- Units focused on genres
 - E.g., personal narrative based on NPR *This I Believe* series
 - E.g., argumentative essay with counterargument

STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1

Goal Setting

What are my long-term goals?

What specific goals do I have for this assignment?



2

Task Management

How can I manage my work to get it done?

What strategies can I use?

How can I motivate myself to do my best?



3

Checking Progress

Am I using the strategies?

Are they helping me to get the task done?

Shall I consider other strategies?



4

Reflection

How did I do on the task?

How did the goals and strategies work?

What worked well and what did not?

What strategies will I try next time?

What goals will I set next time?



Developing metacognition

- Journals are dedicated to writing reflection on the self-regulation strategies.
- Class discussion of the journal reflections adds to student understanding of the value of the strategies.
- Instructors model the metacognitive strategies as part of writing.
- Example:
 - Write about a time when you might be asked to make an argument. Why is it important to consider the opposing position when you make an argument? Considering your own goals for improvement on argumentative writing, in what ways do you think IROC can support you in developing stronger arguments?

Key
instructional
methods

- Introduction to the Genre and Evaluation of Strong and Weak Examples
- Think-aloud Modeling – Making the Invisible Visible
- Collaborative Practice
- Peer Review – Developing Self-Evaluation
- Supporting Self-Regulation

CRITICAL READING: SUMMARY-RESPONSE STRATEGY

- **Summary**
 - First reading: Rhetorical preview -- TAAPO
 - Second reading:
 - Highlight the genre elements (e.g., position, reasons, counterarguments)
 - Take notes in your own words using the graphic organizer (GO)
 - Evaluate the ideas; comment on the GO
 - Summarize using the GO & sentence frames
- **Response**
 - Comment on author and source credibility
 - Evaluate the author's arguments
 - Add your own ideas, if you wish

TAKING NOTES

TAAPO and Graphic Organizer (GO)

Taking Notes to Write a Summary-Response Paper

Analyze Using TAAPO:

Topic:

Author and source:

Audience:

Purpose:

Organization (elements):

Citation:			
Issue/Problem:			
Author's position (or central idea)			
Reasons (or main points)	Key evidence (or supporting details)	Comments for response	
Opposing position (if present)			
Opposing Reasons	Support/evidence	Rebuttal	Comments for response

ELEMENTS OF A SUMMARY-RESPONSE

- **Introductory sentence**
 - Author & source: Does it mention the author and source?
 - Position/thesis: Does it state the author's position?
- **Main ideas**
 - Reasons: Are the main ideas accurately stated?
 - Evidence: Does it include **only** the most important evidence?
 - Are opposing reasons and rebuttals stated clearly and accurately?
- **Summary Features**
 - Is it written in the summarizer's own words?
 - Attributions: Are the ideas clearly attributed to the author?
 - Citations: Does it include an appropriate reference?
- **Response**
 - Credibility: Does it comment on the credibility of the author and source?
 - Evaluation: Does it evaluate specific strengths and weaknesses of the argument?
 - Does it comment on what ideas might be used in writing an essay?
 - Optional: Does it give an opinion on the issue?

Elements of Argumentative Writing (IROC)

I Introduction

- Issue: What is the issue? Why is it important?
- Position/Thesis: What is your position?

R Reasons and Evidence

- Clear reasons: Give reasons for your position
- Supporting Evidence: Support your reasons with facts, examples, and explanations.

O Opposing Position

- Opposing reason(s): What does the other side have to say?
- Evidence for opposing reason: Give facts, examples, or explanations.
- Rebuttal: Say why you disagree. Give your reasons.

C Conclusion

- Re-state position: Tell what your position is again.
- Finish with a strong point: Leave the reader with something to think about.

Remember: transition words guide the reader through the essay

Setting Goals Using TAPFOR

T
Topic
A
Audience
P
Purpose
F
Form
O
Organization (Elements)
R
Requirements

Brainstorm	
For:	Against:

Graphic Organizer for Argumentative Writing (IROC)

Issue:				
Position [I say]:		Opposing Position [What others say]:		
Reasons [Why I say what I say]	Evidence	Reasons [Why they say what they say]	Evidence	Rebuttal [Why they are wrong]

Evaluation Rubric: Argumentative Writing (IROC)

Writer's Name: _____ Peer-Reviewer's Name: _____ Date: _____ Rubric Score: 0 = missing 1 = needs work 2 = good				
INTRODUCTION	Score			
<i>Issue:</i> Does the writer say why the issue is important?				
<i>Position:</i> Is the writer's position on the issue clear?				
REASONS and EVIDENCE (Paragraphs 2-4)	R1	R2	R3	R4
<i>Clear REASON:</i> Does each topic sentence provide a clear/accurate reason?				
<i>Supporting EVIDENCE:</i> Is each reason supported with facts, examples, or explanations?				
OPPOSING POSITION				
<i>Opposing Reason(s):</i> Did writer state the opposing position and provide reason(s)?				
<i>Evidence for opposing reason:</i> Is each opposing reason(s) supported with facts, examples, or explanations?				
<i>Rebuttal:</i> Does it argue against the specific reasons/evidence in the opposing position?				
CONCLUSION				
<i>Restate position:</i> Is the position stated in new words?				
<i>Strong point:</i> Does it leave the reader something to think about?				
Other				
Are transition words used effectively?				
Were all assignment requirements met?				
PEER FEEDBACK:				
What was done well?	Suggestions for improvement:			
Writer's Goal: What will I change?				

Summary-Response Strategy

To read rhetorically means to think about 1) what the author said, and 2) what the author wants the writing to do – the purpose. Remember that you are reading to gather ideas for your own argumentative essay. You need to think critically about the author’s purpose, understand the main ideas, take notes in your own words, and later use those notes to write an effective argument. If the article is an argument, you are trying to understand the reasons and evidence on both sides and evaluate them. If it is not an argument, you are reading to find information that you could use as reasons and evidence. The strategy guides the reader to read through the article twice and write both a summary paragraph and a response paragraph:

First reading. Analyze the article rhetorically using **Topic, Author and Source, Audience, Purpose, and Organization (TAAPO)**:

- **Topic.** What do you know about the topic? What is the issue, problem, or question addressed?
- **Author and source.** Who is the author? What organization published it? Is it credible?
- **Audience.** For whom is the author writing?
- **Purpose.** What is the author’s purpose for writing? Persuade, inform, share experience?
- **Organization.** How is it organized to meet the purpose? Argument with position/reasons/evidence? Discussion of arguments on both sides? Or another organization?

Second (closer) reading. Read the article again to identify main ideas and take notes on the Graphic Organizer (GO).

- Read a paragraph or chunk at a time.
- Look for the argument elements (or other main ideas); underline and label them.
- Check your understanding of important vocabulary (circle key terms).
- Take notes on the GO. Use your own words as if you were telling someone what you read.
- Evaluate the ideas. Think what you might use in your essay. Comment on the GO.

Summary. Now, use the GO and Sentence Frames to write a one paragraph summary.

- Put the text aside and write a summary using your GO.
- Remember to present the *author’s ideas* in your own words, not your ideas.
- Use the sentence frames.

Response. Then, write a one paragraph response, to evaluate and give your thoughts.

- Comment on the credibility of the author and source.
- Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the author’s argument. Are reasons supported with evidence? Are opposing positions considered?
- Discuss the ideas you could use in your essay.
- In the response, you can also include *your own ideas* and opinions on the issue.

Fake News is Still a Problem. Is AI the Solution?

Human fact-checkers can't keep up with the flood of fraudulent stories, images, and videos.

by David Cox, NBC News

Feb. 15, 2018

Fake news is fueled in part by advances in technology — from bots that automatically fabricate headlines and entire stories to computer software that synthesizes Donald Trump's voice and makes him read tweets to a new video editing app that makes it possible to create authentic-looking videos in which one person's face is stitched onto another person's body.

But technology, in the form of artificial intelligence, may also be the key to solving the fake news problem — which has rocked the American political system and led some to doubt the veracity even of reports from long-trusted media outlets.

Experts say AI systems would help fill the gaps left by Snopes, Truth or Fiction, and other online fact-checking outlets, whose human fact-checkers lack the bandwidth to evaluate every article that appears online. These systems could also work with various fake news alert plugins available from Google's web store, such as the browser extension This is Fake, which uses a red banner to flag debunked news stories on your Facebook newsfeed.

"All of the current systems for tracking fake news are manual, and this is something we need to change as the earlier you can highlight that a story is fake, the easier it is to prevent it going viral," says Delip Rao, founder of the San Francisco-based AI research company Joostware and organizer of the Fake News Challenge, a competition set up within the AI community to foster development of tools that can reliably spot fake content.

FIGHTING THE FAKERS

At last month's World Economic Summit in Davos, Switzerland, Google and Facebook announced plans to develop AI systems that would notify users about dubious content. Google has floated the idea of a "misinformation detector" browser extension that would alert users if they land on a link deemed untrustworthy.

But while these plans have yet to be put into action, an Israeli startup company called AdVerif.ai has already begun fighting back against the fakers.

"There are reports which are predicting that within three to four years, people in advanced economies will consume more false content than true content, which is really mind-blowing," says company founder Or Levi. "But because a lot of this content is recycled and repeated in different ways, we believe we can use AI to pinpoint trends which detect it as being fake."

In November, AdVerif.ai launched an AI-based algorithm that the company claims can identify fraudulent stories with an accuracy approaching 90 percent. The algorithm's development has been bankrolled by advertising networks across the U.S. and Europe, with major brands like Adidas and Nike keen to avoid being associated with fake news.

The company intends to launch a browser plug-in that would display a pop-up warning if you landed on a suspect story.

To develop its algorithm, AdVerif.ai fed it thousands of news stories, legitimate as well as fraudulent. Fraudulent stories tend to differ in subtle ways, including their heavy use of adverbs and adjectives as well as slang, simple sentence structures, and relatively few commas and quotations. The algorithm was trained to spot these psycholinguistic cues and render a judgment: fake or real.

But Levi says the algorithm isn't foolproof because it lacks the ability to assess the accuracy of purported facts within articles.

"Right now, a story could say that New York is the capital of Uganda and the algorithm may not flag it because it doesn't have a database of common facts," Levi says. "Current forms of AI can look at the style of the language, and the topic that the text is discussing, but it can't figure out the meaning behind statements."

This could change soon. The next version of AdVerif.ai will use natural language processing to verify assertions made in articles against trusted online content, like that published by Wikipedia and the World Bank eLibrary.

Levi acknowledges that Wikipedia isn't 100 percent reliable but says it's "accurate enough that it can have practical applications."

FAKE-VS.-REAL WARFARE

Even with AI systems that can check purported facts, fake news stories could slip by without being flagged. That's true in particular for stories that include opinions and other statements that defy easy assessment.

"Right now machines cannot evaluate more complicated statements, ones which you cannot quantify," Rao says. "Statements like 'Trump is the best U.S. president' can't easily be measured, so it's very hard for AI to compute whether they're true or false."

The latest breed of image and video manipulation tools further complicates the task facing AI researchers.

"The problem we have is that the same AI tools which are allowing us to fight fake news are also allowing the fakers to create content which is ever more difficult to separate from reality," Rao says.

Levi thinks cyberspace will soon become a battleground of competing intelligent systems — some creating fake media and others searching for the subtle cues that mark it as such.

AI experts are grappling with ways to identify fake photos, and identifying fake videos is even more challenging. "These latest apps have left the AI community playing catch-up," Levi says of the tools used by the creators of fraudulent images and videos.

Ultimately, Levi believes artificial intelligence may effectively neutralize the threat posed by fake news. But he's unsure when that day will come.

"It's an information arms race, and AI will definitely provide us with some tools to help," he says. "But at the end of the day, the onus will probably always be on humans to use their own intuition to decide whether something is true or not."

A Sample of a Pretest and Posttest from One Student

2012155-Pretest

In the year 2012 almost every college student has a cell phone. Cell phones have become part of our culture and way of communication. Many college professors have decided to ban the use of cell phones because it disrupts their class. I disagree with statement; it seems as if cell phones have become a necessity and assist during learning. I also believe a cell phone can be helpful during a emergency. Overall cell phones should be allowed in class.

One may ask, why has the cell phone become a necessity? The reason is that we use our cell phones when we are in trouble. Lets just say you are in class and your essay due that day is in your dorm. You can call your roommate to bring it to you. This solves the problem in a matter of seconds. Also one may use there phone to find a friend after class. Without cell phones our lives will be much harder. Also did you know that the government has a cell phone company? The US government provides phones to those who need them. Everyone knows that the government only provides necessary items.

In addition a cell phone can assist during learning. Nowadays almost everyone has a smart phone. Many apps have textbooks on them and other information that may help them. Also many people like myself use there phones as a planner. A cell phone can be helpful when one may need to do research. You can use a smart phone to go online and to look up information in a matter of seconds. My high school teachers let me use my cell phone. When I had to do research for my senior paper. Lastly, a cell phone can be used when taking notes and can be helpful to the student.

Online Classes: A student's problem or a solution?

Many colleges and universities across the United States are offering writing courses online. A lot of students like the option to take classes online because it can help manage a student's time better. These classes give students the opportunity to take the class whenever they want at any time of day. In addition many of the students who take these classes never meet face to face with their professor. Some students may prefer to take the writing class online whereas others oppose the idea. I believe that students should not be allowed to take writing courses online.

Many students who take writing courses online fail to have human interaction in an academic setting. I think human interaction is important especially in an educational setting. Meeting in person with a professor two or three times a week can be valuable to a student. Many students may need to ask questions about a paper coming up, and having your professor right in front of you is more convenient than having to email them about a question. In addition to a student asking questions, it is important to see the questions that other students may have as well. Interaction in academic setting is beneficial to a student.

My professors always tell me that "there is no such thing as a stupid question, and chances are another person in the room has the same exact one". If a student takes a class online they may not have the opportunity to ask questions and see what other student's questions are. I also believe that taking a class online is lacking interaction with fellow students in terms of the course. This semester during my writing class I had the opportunity to do four peer reviews for all of my papers in the course. This gave me the opportunity to get one on one feedback from a fellow student, and it helped me get better ideas for my paper. In all having human interaction in academic settings is beneficial to students.

The second reason why I believe writing courses should not be taught online is because; students may lose time management skills that they get by simply attending classes. I believe that one of the hardest things to do in college is to show up to class. Showing up to class can be very challenging especially if your course is at 8 A.M; however, I believe that attending classes in person can teach students responsibility. In the real world people need to wake very early to go to work. If a person shows up or simply does not go to work at all they will get in trouble by their boss. I believe the same thing with attending college classes. Waking up in the morning to attend a class can teach a student how to be responsible, and it will prepare them for the real world. Taking writing courses online fails to do this because students can take the course whenever they want, and they may lose important time management skills that are needed to succeed in the real world.

The third reason writing courses should not be taught online is the fact that online classes offer a poor quality education. Throughout my academic career I have had to do many assignments online, one of them being this semester in my college English class. The program that we used was called My Writing Lab. The way the program worked is that students were required to watch a video and do activities on a given grammar topic. At the end of each activity we were required to take a post test. Each student was required to complete thirty activities at the end of the semester. I had a difficult time with the program, and I was more focused on passing each test than learning the material. I believe that taking class's online puts a student in setting were they may receive a poor education. My experience in My Writing Lab has showed me that

education can only occur in one place, and that is a classroom. Students who take classes online may be more focused on completing the class than learning the material.

Some people may argue that taking a course online helps a student manage their time better. They argue that students can take the course whenever they want, and they can focus on attending other courses. I disagree simply attending a course can help a student manage their time. I believe that college is all about managing ones time, and attending class everyday can show a great deal of time management. A lot of students may need to balance their class schedule with everything else. Some students may even need to take night classes. I think that taking classes online fails to show that it can help a student manage their time. Students who take course online can choose to take them whenever they want. That means that a student can wake up at any point of the day, and simply take their course. I believe that waking at 1:00 P.M and taking a course may show laziness instead of time management. It is important for college students to work around their schedules to attend a class.

In conclusion, all writing courses should be taught in a classroom. It has been said that writing is the most important class a student will take in college. Many students are required to write important papers for other courses within their major. I think that the skills a student gains in writing class can be beneficial throughout a student's college career. Writing classes being online will not give a student human interaction with their professor and fellow students. This may cause students to not gain the same skills as a student who took the course in a classroom. In addition I believe that attending classes gives students a sense of responsibility that is needed throughout college and life. Furthermore, it is important for a student to take class in person and not online.

Selected Entries from Student Journals on Self-Regulation and Strategies

“All my teachers did [in high school] was go over the same material and the same rules over and over *without any regards to how my mind is processing this information.*” [emphasis added]

“This writing strategy helped reduce the stress I feel when I write. When I started writing without the strategy, I feel rushed to get my ideas onto the page, and when I go back, my paper’s topic wouldn’t be clear.”

“Now that I have a strategy before writing, I feel a lot more confident in my papers, and I am expecting my grade to reflect this new feeling that I have.”

“I found it [the graphic organizer] difficult for me because I was trying to figure out what main ideas to put in my essay and then I had to figure out how to make them all connect. So it was a little difficult. Once I finished making it though, I found that it really helped me into writing my paper.”

“Once you have your tasks and your plan or strategy set, you will be more likely to stay focused on completing your tasks, and follow your plan. This is because it’s your strategy, and you know what tasks need to be done, and how to do them.”

“If you use a strategy, you will notice a difference in your daily routine. You will begin to become more energized and motivated to get more things completed, your grades will increase, and as a whole the outcome of using a strategy will improve your success greatly.”

“Previous to the graphic organizer, I thought this was going to be another paper that I had no idea how to write and just another average grade [sic]. For the first time in my college career, *I felt inspired and motivated to write a paper.* [emphasis added] I was excited to write this paper because I knew what I was talking about from brainstorming and organizing.”

“Without using the strategy I realized that I would not be able to manage my tasks and check my progress on an assignment. *This could cause confusion and allowed me to easily give up on what I was trying to achieve... just like it did to me prior to college.*” [emphasis added]

“...I will carry this [use of a strategy] with me for the rest of my life.”