

Writing Instruction Portfolio

Proposal

As a faculty our school needs to move away from standardized writing assessments and utilize alternatives such as conferencing, self-assessment, and progress monitoring. The usage of standardized rubrics limits the creativity of students and does not improve their overall writing ability. “By accepting the standardized responses inherent in rubrics, we undermine the power of the experiences of reading and writing. In the end, assessment must be a conversation—just as writing exists for the purpose of conversation” (Wilson, p. 66). My proposal for the 2019-2020 school is to use alternative assessment protocols with writing instruction in order to improve student writing ability and engagement.

Conferencing, self-assessment, and progress monitoring are alternatives to the standardized writing rubrics. While academic standards will continue to be kept in consideration when assessing student achievement, standards will not be the end all for a student's grade. The reasoning behind grading a student or assessing them is to determine if the student is comprehending content. By using conferencing, self-assessments, and progress monitoring, a teacher is able to do just that without undermining a child's work.

Conferencing

Conferencing or meeting with a student about their writing allows for a student to express the brilliance of their work. As part of our international baccalaureate curriculum, we encourage our students to be risk-takers but with rubrics we are limiting this, “learning requires risk taking, and students who are used to As do not risk not making As. Students with lower

grades do not risk being even more wrong” (Bomer. p.153). As educators we are inhibiting risk-taking by using writing rubrics. Our students will strive only as far the rubric goes, prohibiting creativity and academic risk-taking. By conferencing instead of using a rubric, students are able to take their writing in a variety of directions that is unique as their own experiences. With conferencing students are able to explain where they would like to see their go and where they feel they need assistance. Having a conversation with students about their work builds relationships and builds confidence. “Comments on a rubric don’t help good writers become better, since even the most carefully chosen complimentary comments don’t create conversation about the author’s intent and the words’ effect” (Wilson, p.65.)

Self-assessment

In addition to conferencing with students, self-assessment allows students to be responsible for their own learning. As an I.B. school, we encourage our students to strive towards becoming independent and reflective learners. Using self-assessments in writing enables students to reflect on where improvement is needed, strengths, and if they met criteria. “Blurring the distinction between instruction and assessment through the use of criteria- referenced self-assessment can have powerful effects on learning. The effect can be both short- term, as when self-assessment influences student performance on a particular assignment, as well as long-term, as students become more self- regulated in their learning” (Andrade & Valtcheva, p.17). Moving towards self-assessments will improve student independence and responsibility as they learn to monitor their own learning with the assistance of the teacher. “The primary purposes of engaging students in careful self-assessment are to boost learning and achievement, and to promote academic self-regulation, or the tendency to monitor and manage one’s own learning” (Pntrich, 2000; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2004). Students will self-assess their

writing by filling out an assessment form where they note strengths and where they need help. These forms will then be turned into designated self-assessment trays that state to the teacher where the student feels they are at. The trays state “I understand and can help others”, “I understand but need practice”, and “I need to be retaught”. Students will place self-assessment form upside down in the tray of their choice. The teacher will then review the self-assessments and conference with students.

Progress Monitoring

Through the use of conferencing and self-assessment, the teacher will monitor student progress through a monitoring form that explicitly states standards. Progress monitoring allows teachers to track student progress and determine when intervention is needed. Rather than determine a student grade based off an end result, using progress monitoring allows the teacher to measure growth which is of more value than a letter grade. Seeing where a student is in need of further assistance and then helping in that area creates better writers.

Conclusion

As a faculty our school needs to move away from standardized writing assessments and utilize alternatives such as conferencing, self-assessment, and progress monitoring. Our I.B. curriculum encourages us to educate students to be inquiries, risk-takers, and responsible learners. Forgoing rubrics allows students the opportunity to achieve this through creativity and individuality. By conferencing teacher and student are able to discuss the brilliance of their writing. “Unmediated by the rubric, our response gives students the power to think through what effect they want their words to have rather than how their words measure up to the categories on a rubric” (Wilson, p.65). As a magnet school, we

often encounter students that are solely letter grade driven, by using alternative assessments we encourage students to move beyond the domains of As or Bs and to reach towards creativity and understanding. "It is critical, then, that a grade not be the goal of our assessment process. The goal of our assessments should simply be to help students discover and express their intention through language in more satisfying, effective ways" (Wilson and miemczyk, p.37).

International Baccalaureate Unit - Transdisciplinary Theme: How we express ourselves

Writing: Narrative genre instruction

Mentor Texts:

- *Jabari Jumps* by Gaia Cornwall
- *Blackout* by John Rocco
- *A Different Pond* by Bao Phi
- *Owl Moon* by Jane Yolen

Standards:

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences. [W.3.3]

a. Establish a situation and introduce a narrator, characters, or both; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally. [W.3.3a]

b. Use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations. [W.3.3b]

c. Use temporal words and phrases to signal event order. [W.3.3c]

d. Provide a sense of closure. [W.3.3d]

Classroom Norms:

Self monitoring turn-in trays: Students turn in work upside into trays they feel they fit into at the moment.

Red Tray: "I need to be retaught"

Yellow Tray: "I understand but need more practice"

Green Tray: "I understand and can help others"

Lesson 1: Exploration of Narratives - 3rd Grade

Standards:

3.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences

3.W.4 With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

Mentor Text: *Jabari Jumps* by Gaia Cornwall

I can statements:

- I can brainstorm ideas for a personal narrative.
- I can collaborate with group members to discuss personal narrative experiences in our community.

Lesson:

- Explain to students we will be learning about personal narratives. A personal narrative is a small story about something that happened to 'you'. Explain that the current I.B. unit is how we express ourselves. Through writing personal narratives we are able to express ourselves through our experiences.
- Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AxInWagSaA0>
 - Discuss that brainstorming means thinking of ideas to write about. Think about your day or week to consider story ideas.
 - Create a brainstorming board like in the video to organize ideas
- Teacher: Walk around to tables as students discuss ideas to write about. Conference with students about ideas. Help brainstorm with struggling students.
- Share brainstorm boards - if student is willing to share openly. *Some personal narratives will not want to be shared with the entire class due to the personal aspect.
- Read mentor text: *Jabari Jumps* by Gaia Cornwall
 - Discuss the personal narrative of Jabari.
 - What experience did he describe?
 - Has anyone experienced something similar?
 - Point out the small part of Jabari's day/life that was described in the story.
 - Discuss the community in the text.
- On chart paper: brainstorm as a class about personal experiences someone might have in Tuscaloosa and our community.
 - Going to football games

- Swimming at the university pool
- Running the Mercedes half marathon
- Etc.
- Wrap up:
 - This unit you will be expressing ourselves through personal narratives. We've brainstormed ideas, read about Jabari's personal narrative and thought of our community. People express themselves in many ways, in writing we will express ourselves through personal narratives.
- Assessment:
 - Students will self assess their progress on their narrative writing. Use the self-assessment chart. Conference with students on their chart responses.
 - Teacher: Monitor student progress via student assessment form
 - Have students turn in self-assessment form via self monitoring trays.

Brainstorm Board - Personal Narrative

Bus ride to school



Racing on the playground with Andre



Hitting a home run at baseball



Singing in the church's children's choir



Picking up Granddad at the airport



Baking cookies with Grandma



Lesson 2: Planning and Rehearsing - 3rd Grade

Standards:

3.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences

3.W.4 With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

Mentor Text: *Blackout* by John Rocco

I can statements:

- I can plan and rehearse my personal narrative draft.
- I can collaborate with group members to discuss my personal narrative.
- I can give constructive feedback to group members on their personal narrative plans.

Lesson:

- Recap previous lessons on brainstorming personal narratives.
 - Explain today we will be planning and rehearsing our narratives. In musicals or plays people rehearse as a way to practice. Students will be practicing what they want to say before writing it down on paper.
- Before rehearsing watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nBQ8dU0KPtg>
 - Explain this video is about planning our narrative across pages, coming up with ideas and details about what we are going to write.
- Read mentor text: *Blackout* by John Rocco
 - Sequence story with narrative writing map as a class on board
 - Verbally rehearse story with students.
- Have students create a writing map of their chosen personal narrative. In each box sequence the narrative from beginning to end. Tell students they will use this map to guide their writing and verbal rehearsal.
- Share with a partner writing map
 - Give constructive feedback to partner
 - Verbally tell story of narrative to partner
- Write in writing journal personal narrative draft
 - *Teacher walk around and conference with students as they write
 - *Allow for students to discuss with peers during writing time
- Assessment: Check-in with students via self-assessment form
 - Teacher: Monitor student progress via student assessment form
 - Have students turn in self-assessment form via self monitoring trays.

Personal Narrative Writing Map

First...	Then..	Next...	Last...
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Lesson 3: Constructing Narratives - 3rd Grade

Standards:

3.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences

3.W.4 With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

Mentor Text: *A Different Pond* by Bao Phi

I can statements:

- I can write a personal narrative.
- I can sequence a personal narrative.
- I can use feeling words and descriptions in my writing.

Lesson:

- Explain to students that today they will be constructing their personal narratives. In previous lessons narratives were drafted by sequencing and verbal rehearsal, today they will be put onto paper.
- Explain how descriptive words make writing seem more real and you can imagine what is happening in your head from the authors words.
 - Have students look for descriptive words as you read the mentor text.
- Read *A Different Pond* by Bao Phi
 - Stop to point out descriptive words.
 - Verbally sequence the story at the end.
 - Write descriptive words on a sticky note and paste on board.
- Brainstorm other descriptive words writers can use when they write their draft.
 - Write words on whiteboard
- Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M2H29fRVqf8>
 - Discuss writing an interesting introduction to our narratives.
- Write: Give students time to write the introduction to their narratives
 - Allow for student discussions
- Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Y_fxQ_52pk
 - Remind students of using descriptive words
- Write: Give students time to write drafts
 - Move around the room to conference with students
- Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJMQWNd1TT8>
 - Discuss writing strong endings
 - Wrapping up storylines.
- Assessment: Give students self-assessment form for the lesson and have them turn in it in the self monitoring trays.

- Note where each student placed themselves
- Conference first the students who put their papers in the red tray.

Lesson 4: Sharing the Experiences - 3rd Grade

Standards:

3.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences

3.W.4 With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

Mentor Text: *Owl Moon* by Jane Yolen



I can statements:

- I can revise my personal narrative.
- I can give constructive feedback to others writing.

Lesson:

- Recap previous lessons and process of writing personal narratives.
- Read *Owl Moon* by Jane Yolen
 - Prior to reading have students pay attention to descriptive words and sequencing.
- Explain how when editing papers we will be looking for:
 - Does the story make sense?
 - Does the author include descriptive words?
 - Is the story a personal narrative?
 - Any spelling or punctuation help?
- Pass out peer review sheets
 - Students will read to partners their personal narrative
 - Fill out review sheet for partner as they read aloud their story
 - Then partners will read the story themselves.
 - Teacher rotate around room to listen and conference with students
- Open the floor for students to share personal narratives
- Assessment:
 - Have students turn in personal narratives into self-assessment trays
 - Use assessment form to monitor student progress and determine if intervention is needed.

Peer Review Sheet

Name: Partner's name:	Date:
Something I liked about my partner's narrative:	Something that could be revised:
The story was sequenced correctly: 	The story had descriptive words: 

Self Assessment Form for students

SELF ASSESSMENT – WRITING		name:
		DATE:
I NEED HELP WITH:	WHAT I DID WELL:	
CONFERENCE NOTES:	WHERE I WANT MY WRITING TO GO:	

Teacher assessment form

Student Name: Date: Teacher:	"I need to be retaught"	"I understand but need some practice"	"I understand and can help others"
W.3.3 - Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.	Non narrative storyline. No descriptive details or clear event sequence.	Narrative storyline with some descriptive details.	Narrative storyline with clear and descriptive details of event or experience.
W.3.3a - Establish a situation and introduce a narrator, characters, or both; organize an event sequence that <u>unfolds</u> naturally.	Non personal narrative situation. No characters or realistic events. Unnatural even sequence.	Personal narrative storyline that needs to be more focused on one event. Sequence of events.	Personal narrative storyline that is focused on a small moment. Organized story sequence.
W.3.3b - Use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations	No feeling words or dialogue.	Use of some feeling words and dialogue.	Use of feeling words, thoughts, and actions in story. Demonstrations character response to situations.
W. 3.3c - Use temporal words and phrases to signal event order.	No temporal words or phrases	Some temporal words or phrases	Use of temporal words or phrases correctly

Resources

Andrade, H. & Valtcheva, A. (2009). Promoting Learning and Achievement through Self-Assessment. *Theory Into Practice*, 48(1). 12-19.

Bomer, K. (2010). *Hidden Gems: Naming and Teaching From the Brilliance in Every Student's Writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Graham, S., MacArthur, C, A., & Fitzgerald J. (2013). *Best practices in Writing Instruction*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Pintrich, P. (2000). The role of goal orientation in self-regulated learning. In M. Boekaerts, P. Pintrich, & M. Zeidner (Eds.), *Handbook of self-regulation* (pp. 452-502). San Diego, CA: Academic Press

Puhr, K., & Workman, G. (1992). Monitoring Student Progress through a Conferenced Writing Program. *English Journal*, 81(2), 49-50.

Wilson, M. (2007). Why I Won't Be Using Rubrics to Respond to Students' Writing. *English Journal*, 96(4), 62-66.

Wilson, M. & Niemczyk, M. (2008). Moving to the center: Disorientation and intention. *English Journal*, 97(5). 34-39.

Zimmerman, B., & Schunk, D. (2004). Self-regulating intellectual processes and outcomes: A social cognitive perspective. In D. Dai & R. Sternberg (Eds.), *Motivation, emotion, and cognition: Integrative perspectives on intellectual functioning and development* (pp. 323-349). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

TE 848
SHARING AND RESPONDING TO WRITING

Provide a brief description of the piece you are sharing with your group:

My proposal is for my faculty and is about not using traditional writing rubrics to grade students. Instead I suggest using conferencing, self-assessment, and progress monitoring as means of assessment student achievement.

Author: Highlight the ways you'd like feedback from your responder.

Responder: Complete one or more sentences within the highlighted boxes.

No responding	Sharing	No responding at all. The goal is for writers to give and for listeners to receive.
Descriptive Responding	Sayback -So what you're saying in this piece is. . . -The writing says to me that. . . -I get the feeling that something you are trying to tell the reader is. . .	The author reads and the listener "says back" what he or she hears: what he or she hears the writer is "getting at." The listener might say, "So what you're trying to say is. . . is that correct?" Sayback helps the writer think about what he/she hasn't yet said.

	<p>Pointing -I like how you. . . -It really works that you did. . . -This part reminds me of _____(another author)</p>	<p>The listener tells which words, phrases, or features of the writing he or she found most memorable or ones he or she liked the best.</p>
	<p>Relating -This reminds me of. . . -This made me think of. . .</p>	<p>The listener tells any memories or something the writing reminds him/her of</p>
	<p>Structure -You organized the piece by. . . -What is working/isn't working about how the piece is organized? -This piece is structured like _____(another author)</p>	<p>The listener comments on how the piece is organized.</p>
	<p>Voice -The voice reminded me of. . .</p>	<p>The listener describes the voice he/she hears.</p>
<p>Analytic Responding</p>	<p>Reaction -I was confused when. . .</p>	<p>The listener openly shares where he/she got lost in the genre, or where he/she did not understand the author's writing.</p>

	<p>Suggestion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Maybe you could experiment with. . .-Perhaps you could try. . .-One suggestion would be. . .	<p>The listener offers a suggestion, ideally based on an issue that arose from descriptive responding.</p>
	<p>Please help me think through:</p> <p>*Adding more to progress monitoring section. Adding sources in.</p> <p>I'm at just 3 ¼ pages so I know I need to think through explain more and adding more sources.</p>	