



WINGS

A NEWSLETTER FOR USERS OF THE DAEDALUS® INTEGRATED WRITING ENVIRONMENT

FALL/SPRING 1997-8 **VOLUME 5, NUMBER 2**

TEN YEARS BACK, TEN YEARS FORWARD

**Wayne Butler, COO & Director of Daedalus Services
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I'm always puzzled by a stock question one hears in job interviews: "Where do you see yourself five years from now?" Early in my career I attempted to answer the question earnestly, but when I look back over where I've been for the last ten years, I know where I am today has little to do with my various "Five Year Plans."

Today, I am back — back full-time with The Daedalus Group as Chief Operations Officer and Director of Daedalus Services helping to implement the course plotted out by Fred Kemp (see Wings v. 4, nos. 1 and 2) in 1996 while he was on sabbatical from his academic position at Texas Tech University. Now that Fred is back in the classroom, I am pleased to step in and help build on the foundation he laid.

Over a decade ago I met at a small, regional conference for English educators in Corpus Christi, Texas the core

of teachers, researchers, and scholars who would change my life in ways I would could never had predicted. This collecton of professors and graduate students were to become The Daedalus Group. People like Hugh Burns, Locke Carter, Fred Kemp, Nancy Peterson, John Slatin, and Paul Taylor, all classroom teachers dedicated not so much to computer technology but to finding the most effective tools and methods to teach students how to become active learners, critical thinkers, and effective writers.

At that time, we were drawn together by a set of questions about our own teaching practices and interests. What are the best approaches for teaching writing? How can we make collaborative learning more effective? How can we use emerging personal computing technology to aid the writing process and collaborative learning? What are the implications of local area networks for writing instruction. Ten years ago, the answers to those questions evolved into the Daedalus Integrated Writing Environment.

Ten years, a dissertation, a five-year stint teaching at the University of Michigan's English Composition Board (ECB), and scores of conferences and workshops later, I'm back at the beginning. The technology has changed,

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 7]

IN THIS ISSUE...

- **WAYNE BUTLER**1
TEN YEARS BACK, TEN YEARS FORWARD
- **BARB SOLBERG & HER FALL '97 FRESHMAN ENGLISH CLASS**4
USING DIWE AS A COLLABORATION TOOL
- **JEFFRY SCHANTZ**.....5
INTERCHANGE AS AN AID TO DISCUSSING ARGUMENT
- **WILL HOCHMAN**.....7
TRANSACTIONAL DYNAMICS OF PAIRED FICTION WRITING
- **ANDY CURTIS**.....16
HONG KONG STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE USEFULNESS OF INTERCHANGE

DAEDALUS NEWS...

- **BEST OF TEACH, FALL/WINTER 1997**
MY FAVORITE WRITING ACTIVITY.....2
- **DAEDALUS HORIZON: NEW SOFTWARE, NEW PUBLICATIONS, NEW SERVICES**.....6
- **DAEDALUS T-SHIRT:**
"10.AMAZING.YEARS@DAEDALUS.COM"10
- **DAEDALUS SUMMER98 TRAINING INSTITUTE:**
INFORMATION & REGISTRATION FORM17-18

THE BEST OF TEACH, FALL 1997: DESCRIBE YOUR SPACE



ideas, and gather resources to help improve teaching with computers at their schools.

DQs have sparked discussions about a variety of topics, including plagiarism, technophobia, netiquette, and computer classroom descriptions. But since many of you may be preparing for another term, we've chosen to spotlight responses to the DQ asking teachers to contribute their favorite assignment.

Discussion Question for the week of November 10, 1997

Everyone has a favorite paper assignment or in-class exercise — that sure-fire discussion question, essay assignment, or prewriting or revision exercise. It's the one you turn to when all else fails, the one that always works, the one that's fun and successful.

What's yours? Describe what you do and why it's your favorite. (If it's an assignment/exercise you can post in your e-mail message and you want to share it, please do).

Date: Tue, 11 Nov 1997

From: Vinnie Linares <Vinnie.Linares@mccada.mauiccc.Hawaii.Edu>

One of my first assignments which students seems to love is a mini-research project wherein they locate the major news/sports stories from the day they were born and those from their tenth birthday. They select the most interesting stories, place them in some type of priority and present the info to the class and speak to its significance in their lives and to present day affairs. Since I have students from 18-60 and from many cultures and nationalities — a lively, informative forum is normally created. This assignment involves library work, net surfing and for most students, the first attempt at some type of research. Then in the middle of the semester I have them write a 1500-2000 word mini-research paper either written present to future or future to past, outlining and presenting what they have/

In September, Daedalus introduced a new feature on TEACH, a weekly discussion question, or "DQ," designed to help educators using Daedalus software share their teaching strategies, cross-pollinate fertile

are going to be in terms of lifestyle, education and work. It's call the "millenium project" Got the idea from a friend at DeAnza. It's a sort of full-circle route from the first assignment and involves lots of web surfing, thoughts as to personal goals and objectives, as well as use of numerous rhetorical styles. A minimum of 7 citations are required from a variety of sources, especially the materials from a literature reader used in class

Because of so many positive comments in my yearly course evaluations about these two related assignments, I continue to use them with slight alterations.....

Vincent Ryan Linares
Maui Community College

Date: Tue, 11 Nov 1997

From: Will Hochman <hochman@uscolo.edu>

My favorite in class activity for all writing classes I teach is "Paired Fiction Writing." I have an academic write up the lesson so if anyone wants a full, hard copy description, send me your snail mail with paired fiction int the subject header...

PFW is simple — I put students into pairs and require a sense of free writing, fun, and silence to stress all transactions happend on the screen or page. I ask students to begin by describing a setting — some place they'd like to be, anywhere they can imagine, just some setting...then they switch puters or papers with their partners and I ask them to insert a character...more freewriting (5-10 minute writing times are apropos for each challenge) then switch and I ask students to develop a conflict...more freewriting (I don't permit talking but do allow for laughing out loud!)...swtich w/ partner again and more freewriting and more twisting of the conflicts...switch and resolve, swtich and read, read outloud.

No, this isn't a creative writing lesson, it's a lesson in how we can write and read into each other's texts, how we can enjoy our writing, have fun with it, and build a sense of writing community. Students are skeptical about writing



stories but since most tales have the components I challenged students to create with freewriting and since most of think in stories to begin with, the stories are often quite entertaining...but beyond enjoying a whole class of writing together, the texts seem seamless — when students realize how powerfully they can collaborate, peer review is improved

Will Hochman
University of Southern Colorado

Date: Tue, 11 Nov 1997
From: Frances Heller <NRHELLF@nr.cc.va.us>

When I teach description as a writing strategy, I do an in-class assignment that accomplishes a number of objectives. To un-teach the idea that some students have that description is just a list of specific, driver's license details that really don't need a focus and to further demonstrate how main ideas or foci are arrived at, I have students take about 10-12 minutes of class time and describe a classmate in such a way as to support an impression they have arrived at through association with that person in class. The only limitations are that they cannot, of course, name the person nor can they use details that are so specific that they'd be a dead giveaway. Then I have volunteers share their writing with the rest of the class, and the guessing ensues. It continues to amaze me how quickly the

subjects are identified; how focused and stylistically pleasing these short pieces can be; how in most classes one or two people are the subjects of choice; and how the writers almost always share the same impression of the people they write about. The class is usually surprised, too, and the situation works as a very effective springboard for a discussion of the relationship between concrete detail and main idea as inference. It usually provides a good opportunity for discussing the difference between what I call showing and telling and identifying means of achieving an effective balance between the two. Although I use the assignment with description as a part of biographical writing, it seems to help crystalize some of the broad concepts that are cornerstones of public writing. When I make the assignment, I usually get groans and moans and "I'll need more time," but at the end of the discussion, I hear more of "That's neat."

Frances Heller
New River Community College

Date: Tue, 11 Nov 1997
From: Kate Coffield <kate@aucegypt.edu>

My favorite assignment happened by accident last semester when my students rebelled against a novel I'd assigned. Taking advantage of a special library/visual arts event entitled "Read a Good Film Lately?", I created (on-the-fly) a project in which students saw 4 films, selected one corresponding novel to read, and did a series of writing assignments based on the story they chose. Writing activities included summary/reviews, DIWE InterChange discussions, peer collaboration, comparison/contrasts of book vs. film, and finally a research essay based on a focus of their choice, and incorporating both print and online sources. Although it was about 3x the work that would have been required had they followed my original plan, their evaluations of the exercise were extremely positive, and this semester's students have also voted to do it. The process covers about 5 weeks but encompasses all the skills we are supposed to cover in the last half of the syllabus.

Kate Coffield
American University in Cairo

Date: Tue, 11 Nov 1997
From: Cindy Wambeam <cwambeam@NMSU.Edu>

Well...I thought I'd throw in one of my favorite Technical Communication exercises (have to balance out the essays and research papers, right?).

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 8]

JOIN US ON TEACH

To join TEACH, send the following e-mail message to listproc@daedalus.com with the subject line SUB:

Subscribe TEACH <first-name> <last-name>

After subscribing, you can participate by sending messages to teach@daedalus.com

To temporarily suspend or reactivate your subscription, send either of the following messages to listproc@daedalus.com with the subject line SET:

Set TEACH inactive

Set TEACH active

TEACH discussions are archived by month, and are available on the web at

<http://www.daedalus.com/teacharchives/teachtoc.html>

TEACHER TALK

USING DIWE AS A COLLABORATIVE TOOL

**Barbara Solberg &
Her Fall 1997 Freshman English Class
Minot State University
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(AUTHOR'S NOTE: During the last stages of writing the following article, I wanted a colleague to respond to it prior to my submitting it. Since this colleague is a DIWE "newbie," I decided to use DIWE Respond as the vehicle for his review. I used "Turn in Document" to make the article available to him, and wrote him instructions on how to use Respond to offer feedback on this document. Later that day, my colleague read and responded to the article in DIWE saving his responses in Respond.

Interestingly, my office building on campus was damaged by fire and smoke that evening. The phone lines and electrical wiring experienced "melt down." Our computers and disks were victims of the smoke and soot, and thus are non-functional until they have been cleaned. In the midst of all the confusion of a chain-locked building, no phone, no personal computer, no classroom, I was able to continue on the article. My turned-in document was not harmed by the smoke because it's "home" was on the server in a lab in another building. While others scurried around feeling homeless, I went "home" to DIWE, accessed the responses of my DIWE colleague, and continued my work.

I have collaborated with other faculty members on articles in the past: we have attached documents in email and used brackets for revision suggestions. However, the revision and response suggestions produced by the DIWE Respond module were much richer responses than I've received previously. I even used them as examples for my students to point them in a good direction for the suggestions they will give to fellow students on the next papers they write and "turn in."

When I collaborate with a faculty member on future articles, I will certainly use DIWE as the vehicle.)

Virtually everything I've read about DIWE focuses on InterChange as a good module for brainstorming and idea generating. I began my use of InterChange with that in mind, and have experienced the fantastic feeling of having 100% student participation and of knowing that students are "engaged" in reading, thinking, and writing. These experiences have also shown me that I

cannot create time-on-task exercises in a face-to-face (f2f) classroom comparable to those I can create in InterChange. I like to mention to my department chair and some of my colleagues the beauty of "reading, thinking, writing, and collaborating" in Daedalus.

TEACH Listserv Topic

This Fall, DIWE instructors who were having difficulty getting appropriate and thought-provoking dialogue in InterChange circulated messages on the Daedalus listserv "TEACH." Listserv "talkers" shared several ideas, but one that particularly caught my attention was the recommendation to inform students of the InterChange topic during the preceding class period. Knowing the topic ahead of time together with the time lapse between this knowledge and the actual "sending" of one's ideas has the capability of pushing student thinking — a prewriting type of approach. "Here's the topic that we'll be InterChanging about during the next class period. You think about this topic and come prepared to share your ideas."

This strategy sounded pretty good to me, so when I linked my Freshman English class assignments on our web site for the following week, I assigned Mike Rose's "Writing Around the Rules." Rose offered vignettes on three college-level writers — Liz, Tyrell, and Gary — highlighting specific writing problems for each of the three. "What would Rose write about you and your writing problems?" was the question students would address in the following class period in the computer lab.

Classroom Lab Exercise in InterChange

When the class met again, we spent the first twenty five minutes in Write: students wrote privately about themselves as they would have been featured in the Rose piece. This metacognitive exercise helped students reflect on themselves as writers. When students felt comfortable with what they had written, they copied and pasted into an InterChange message and sent it for the class to read. We then had our own class version of "Writing Around the Rules." This exercise was the beginning of the most comprehensive and best "writing process" assignment I have tried. I had just discovered for myself that we could use InterChange as a writing collaboration tool.

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 11]

INTERCHANGE AS AN AID TO DISCUSSING ARGUMENT

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Teaching the elements of argument is not particularly difficult; the concepts aren't very mystifying. However, presenting the information in a way that students find interesting can be a more difficult task. Recently, I have turned to Daedalus's InterChange to breathe new life into my instruction of argument. I have found that students' interest and comprehension have both increased as a result of the chat sessions. Additionally, their argumentative essays are stronger. This article offers a brief description of how I implement InterChange into my composition courses and details the aspects of instruction which the program enhances.

Rather than beginning my composition course's section on argument with a lecture on claim, support, and warrant, or with an analysis of a "classic" argument, I take students to the computer lab for an on-line chat session. I begin the session by posting an open-ended prompt that is simply designed to generate "discussion." I might, for example, post the following: "Recently, there has been talk of reevaluating elderly drivers every two years. How do you feel about such a program?" (You will know when you have a good prompt by the flurry of keyboard strokes that follow the initial post. Current problems at your institution—such as the bookstore's buy-back policy or campus parking issues—often elicit quite lively discussions.)

For the first five or so minutes, I will simply monitor the chat, letting it meander according to the students' whims. As the discussion progresses, however, I may steer it in a particular direction by reiterating an insightful comment or by raising an objection that students are overlooking. Steering is often helpful when there is a lull in the chat. (A word of caution though: Don't be afraid to let the discussion die down for a short time. Students' more insightful comments often follow a period of on-line silence. When a student eventually posts a new thought-provoking point, the typing frenzy will begin anew.) After a given time — I suggest 15-20 minutes — I call the discussion to a halt and post a new prompt. In this way, a 50-minute class can accommodate three rich discussions, yielding between 80 and 120 postings per topic.

In the next class, we use the printed InterChange transcripts as the basis for constructing formal structured arguments. After introducing the notion of the "claim," I divide the students into small groups and give each group a transcript of one discussion. The groups are then asked to construct a clear claim based on their transcript. Once a claim is established, students are instructed to review the transcript for points of support or objections to their claim; students generally identify 5 - 10 points of support and a comparable number of objections. I then ask them to construct an outline for an argumentative paper. In the final step — generally reserved for a third class session — students compose an argumentative essay from their outline.

The beauty of InterChange, then, is that it allows a hands-on exploration of the entire process a writer should work through in order to construct an effective argument.

Employing InterChange in this way offers several benefits. First, by recognizing the various objections offered in the transcripts, students see the value of acknowledging and attacking readers' objections as a method of strengthening support. Second, because they are working from the transcript of a "real" discussion, students are forced to confront some of the rather absurd — in some cases blatantly racist or sexist — comments that have been posted in response to a prompt. In one chat session a student commented that marijuana should be legalized "because everyone does it." Such statements offer a perfect opportunity to introduce students to the various logical fallacies. Most importantly, however, the on-line discussion and the review of the transcript cause students to recognize the dialogic nature of argument — that is, they help them to understand that any successful argument is based upon an imagined dialog between author and intended reader.

The beauty of InterChange, then, is that it allows a hands-on exploration of the entire process a writer should work through in order to construct an effective argument. InterChange does not eliminate the need to discuss the elements of argument, nor does it replace the study of classic arguments — it's not meant to. What it provides is a means of introducing and reinforcing the instruction of argument, in a way that students actually enjoy. The ultimate proof of its worth, however, is in the stronger argumentative essays students create.



THE DAEDALUS HORIZON

NEW SOFTWARE



BIBLIOCITE® PRO

Daedalus is currently developing a variety of new software products based on components of DIWE. The first of these new products is BiblioCite® Pro. This standalone tool for research and writing is now available for Macintosh®, and we will release a Windows™ version in summer 1998.

Like the BiblioCite component of DIWE, BiblioCite Pro maintains a database of bibliographic resources, and automatically formats bibliographies. The new program, however, offers these additional features:

- prompts users for bibliographic information, and automatically formats Works Cited or References pages in the latest MLA or APA styles
- includes an Annotation Assistant with nearly 30 prompt series to help students conduct research, evaluate sources, take notes, and develop writing assignments including reports, evaluations, analyses, news stories, and research papers
- creates a searchable database of citations, and helps writers manage their research
- works seamlessly with Microsoft® Word to import Works Cited pages with or without annotations
- can be used on computers in classrooms, libraries, learning centers, and homes regardless of whether they're running any other Daedalus software

Visit the BiblioCite Pro website

<http://bib.daedalus.com/>

to download a demo version and learn how you and your students might benefit from this new tool.

Individual copies of BiblioCite Pro are only \$28, and can be ordered online at <http://bib.daedalus.com/>

You can also email bib-sales@daedalus.com or phone (800) 879-2144 to order one or more copies. Volume discounts are available for school purchases.

NEW PUBLICATIONS



Daedalus is pleased to announce the first release from its new press, Labyrinth Publications :

Language Learning Online: Theory and Practice in the ESL and L2 Computer Classroom

Janet Swaffar, Susan Romano, Katherine Arens, and Phillip Markley, editors

The book is available in a softbound version for \$29, in a searchable/printable PDF version on diskette for \$9, or in a book/disk bundle for \$34.

Order online at the Labyrinth website

<http://labyrinth.daedalus.com/llo/>

You can also email labyrinth@daedalus.com or phone (800) 879-2144 to order one or more copies. Volume discounts are available.

NEW SERVICES



WriteWell

Daedalus recognizes that without effective training and resources, the best software can fall short of educators' goals. To support teachers, students, and the institutions that serve them, Daedalus' Services Division has developed an online writing center, "WriteWell." Open to all writers, this site will be especially valuable to distance learning programs that need to provide writers with expert assistance from writing instructors.

Whether your school needs a virtual supplement to an existing Online Writing Lab (OWL, or you have a few students who need extra help with their writing assignments, Daedalus' new OWL "WriteWell" can help. This fee-based web environment offers expert help from Writing Consultants, forums to exchange ideas and drafts, and links to some of the most popular writing resources. Visit and take advantage of WriteWell at

<http://WriteWell.daedalus.com>

or call (800) 879-2144 x.26 to discuss a district contract.

TRANSACTIONAL DYNAMICS OF PAIRED FICTION WRITING

Will Hochman
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Paired fiction writing is an in-class activity that can enable students to transform some basic acts of writing and reading into narrative fun. It requires some class space where students are simply playing at being writers and readers of some pretty sudden and admittedly contrived stories. However, this playing may directly establish students' trust and respect for each other, and each other's texts. It is intended to improve the "writing space" of a newly formed writing community.

The goal of paired fiction writing is to establish relationships among writers and readers, and to introduce the writing class to an environment of close, textual focussing. One of the best indicators of attaining a better sense of writing community is that students will often laugh when writing and reading their texts. Students (at all grade levels) who participate in paired fiction writing often claim that they have lost their sense of time because they were so absorbed in their stories. In other words, class time speeds up because the fun and focus of paired fiction writing removes participants from their daily routines. Paired fiction writing allows students to creatively explore some important elements of their writing community.

An electronic benefit to this writing activity is that it dramatizes the way filesharing and interchanges weave our texts together. Many teachers know how Daedalus type programs help to create very interactive text exchanges, but we may need to show students and even coax them into understanding the shift of text interactivity likely to occur in a computerized writing class. Paired fiction writing offers an objective first step into networked learning and it helps illustrate the kind of dynamics possible with increased collaboration.

Beyond creating a positive class climate, paired fiction writing can also be understood as an exercise where critical reading and writing strategies begin. Most writing teachers would probably agree that students need to learn to read and criticize other's work; this is a process that is integral to learning to write. Peer criticism helps students grow as both generators and receivers of thinking about writing. Paired fiction writing can help to achieve both a cooperative class spirit and a sense of textual intimacy which will clearly enable future, critical dialogues about texts. If students first learn to playfully and creatively move in and out of

each other's texts, then when they learn to criticize each other, their critiques are more likely to be candid, constructive and helpful.

Paired fiction writing should be done early in a term because it allows teachers and students to be in each other's writing without feeling threatened or being too critical. Not only is paired fiction writing a confidence builder among students, but it helps beginning writers and class communities establish themselves. The writing is spontaneous, but unlike freewriting, paired fiction writing is channeled into a form and content produced by a series of timed prompts. With only a few simple constraints, most students are able to write fairly fluid, collaborative stories. Students will also learn to begin to feel comfortable with writing pressure, especially when they see that their writing partners accept their ideas and further them with the spontaneous writing responses which result from paired fiction writing.

How To Do Paired Fiction Writing

A typical "paired fiction" writing class begins with students being paired. Instructors should participate as writers whenever possible, but primarily instructors will lead students through some basic story writing steps. The instructor's initial instruction lets students know that in this particular class they will write short stories, and that each writer will be writing and reading two texts. The instructor should then let the students know that what they will write need not be great fiction, but that it should just make sense — that each sentence follow the preceding one. The instructor is simply trying to encourage causality and imagination in the writing activity, and should employ the following freewriting guidelines: the writing will be ungraded, everyone should keep their pens writing as much and as fast as possible, and no talking (but laughing is permitted).

Each pair writes two co-authored stories by switching texts (text switching can be as basic as switching paper or computer stations, or easily work within small Interchange conferences) with his or her partner, back and forth at the instructor's prompting. The writing and reading time is divided with prompts designed toward writing "parts" of a story. The instructor's prompts, in effect, structure the students' stylization of possible narratives. Instructors will want to emphasize playful writing attitudes and the freedom to employ wild creativity, as well as the fact that the texts are forms of communication and need to demonstrate clear writing quickly.

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 9]

BEST OF TEACH, CONT'D FROM PG. 3

Paper Airplane/Snowflakes/Doll Instructions Assignment

This works equally well with any of the above — of course, with paper airplanes, you eventually end up with a lot of airplanes flying around the room.

As a precursor to more extended papers on instructions and/or process descriptions, I have an in-class exercise that walks the students through both the writing and testing of instructions. I break the class into groups, and give each group a pair of scissors (they have their own paper).

Task 1: Write instructions detailing how to make a paper airplane. They have a time limit (usually about 20 minutes) and when they are done, the group passes their instructions on to another group.

Task 2: (again, there is a time limit — about 10 minutes) The group reviews the instructions, purposely trying to make every possible mistake by following the instructions literally (as if they had no idea how to make a paper airplane). They then write up comments on where they made miss or had problems. They pass these comments, along with the paper airplane they created with the instructions, back to the original group.

Task 3: The group reviews their instructions and, if time permits, they rewrite the instructions.

I haven't used this with Daedalus (haven't taught tech comm in a few semesters, and we just purchased DIWE recently), but I think that the comments and instructions could be nicely adapted to the software — and would provide a written record of the process (that students could then print out).

Anyway, in addition to being a fun assignment, the students learn about the process of writing instructions (along with the necessity of graphics and details and step-by-step organization).

BTW, this is really a great exercise if you have any International students in your course. Paper Airplanes and Snowflakes are a very American thing, and the International students can provide true test-readers. They enjoy learning something new, and the other students appreciate the insight provided by them. (it's actually been quite an icebreaker in my classes)

Cindy Wambeam
New Mexico State University

Date: Tue, 11 Nov 1997
From: Barbara S. Langdon <bslangdo@sccm.cc.ne.us>

I sometimes do this to illustrate writing descriptions and expanding ideas. I send students out of the classroom and ask them to find a space no larger than two by two feet and to write a full page describing it, but not saying what it is. They come back to the lab and on interchange write a description of the space. The description should be written so that others will recognize it. The rest of the class reads the descriptions and tries to guess what is being described. They find it challenging to write so much about such a small space and to describe it so well that others can recognize it. They learn to add more detail and to create clear images. Best of all they think we are goofing around and that they didn't have to "learn" anything that day.

Barb Langdon
Southeast Community College

Date: Tue, 11 Nov 1997
From: Susan Dauer <sdauer@uts.cc.utexas.edu>

My favorite activity is related to a unit in American Literature I which includes readings by Jacobs, Equiano and Douglass. I post the following as a "seed" prompt for InterChange:

You have two children, aged three and seven. You are recognizable on sight as a runaway slave. You have no money, no weapon, and no car. You can trust no one. How would you get to Canada?

Since we are in Texas, they have a long way to go. Each student takes a few minutes to work out a preliminary answer, and then they post them to the InterChange. For the remainder of the class, the students comment and debate, reading each other answers, working out the flaws, recognizing the almost impossible task before them. It gives them an enhanced sense of the trials overcome by the authors about whom they are reading, and encourages them to think (and write) logically and quickly.

Side note: The first time I tried this, one of the female student realized that every male student's answer involved the abandonment of the two children. It added an extra element to the discussion.

Susan Jaye Dauer
Austin Community College

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 12]

One of the most effective structures for paired fiction writing is to suggest switching at the five classic elements of narrative structure; 1) creating settings, 2) creating characters 3) creating incidents and complications, 4) bringing story elements to a crisis, and 5) bringing story elements to a resolution. Or, more character-centered narratives could be created with prompts like; setting, main character(s), character dialog, complications, villains, unexpected twists, and resolution. Narrative elements can also be developed by prompting students to write with particular points of view, tones, or even using specific words. Utilizing themes already discussed in previous classes can easily tap a wealth of background data in each student writer and can be set up as part of the stories' preconditions. The most important thing to keep in mind is that the actual structure and texture of the story construction can be customized to achieve a variety of classroom and literacy goals.

Typically, students write between five and ten minutes before switching texts; however, the timing for writing and reading through the prompts can easily be adjusted to available class time. The instructor is also the timekeeper and will need to give warnings when the writing time for the particular prompt is running out. In the last few seconds before the next switch and prompt, the instructor should request that each student finish the sentence he or she is writing and stop.

The fact that story creating is a flexible process, allows K-16 instructors to create a sense of community in their particular classes by developing their own imaginative and powerful prompts. For example, one instructor who is experiencing a class of students who aren't certain they want to be in school might prompt students to create a school setting that they wish they could really have, describe a principal, teacher or professor as a hero (or villain), describe teachers and students who would be part of this imagined "school," suggest a fair alternative to going to school, develop a learning situation in or out of school, and resolve the learning situation.

Another instructor might want to set up a reading or discussion of *Lord of the Flies* by using paired fiction writing with such customized prompts as describe an island, introduce yourself and some other classmates as the island's only inhabitants, explain what it's like to live without adults, imagine what possible conflicts arise, imagine a particular crisis, and imagine a possible resolution to your island situation.

Instructors and students don't have to be experts in fiction writing. Building on such basic elements of fiction writing as setting, character, conflict, crisis and resolution will guarantee the success of this in-class activity because story telling is a form of thinking most people learn to understand and practice at a very young age. Most writers have innate narrative skills since so much our discourse uses stories to make sense of our worlds.

The divided writing parts can be created from an endless variety of prompts and time constraints, and can be focused on particular learning goals. For example, students can practice cohesion and coherence by being prompted to switch after each sentence or paragraph. With sentence switching, students will learn to concentrate on each sentence and anticipate what may come next. With paragraph switching, students will learn to think about linking ideas with possible transitions. There are an incredible amount of learning possibilities for writers of paired fiction because students' innate sense of narrative almost always makes this writing and reading activity feel natural and easy.

Learning Benefits

The results of this activity are surprising. Students understand that there is no time for writer's block, and usually write quickly without being told that they must write. Writing in pairs makes students want to participate with their own ideas, and then to "answer" their partner's "answer" to the writing challenge. In addition to the increased confidence, trust and fun in the writing atmosphere, the stories produced are rarely without interest and amusement. If there is enough class time, each pair can usually be coaxed into reading at least one of their texts out loud. Most students in a paired fiction writing class really enjoy listening to each other's stories and often laugh and clap. Because students know the stories were produced under artificial and sudden conditions, their expectations of what they write are usually surpassed by the actual results. In many cases the stories sound as if they were written by one writer, not two.

Students also experience "writing beyond the assignment" during paired fiction writing. Usually, the Instructor's prompts are fairly general and can not be fully actualized unless student writers freely and creatively answer the writing challenge — and because students sense the fun of the writing activity creativity and freedom become "natural" elements of the writing space. When students experience a thinking and writing process that encourages them to go beyond the

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 10]

direction of their instructor, they begin to learn that each writer must independently follow his or her own thinking to make writing work. Fiction writing challenges have such a broad variety of possible answers that most students will find something unprompted and unexpectedly good in their work

Few pairs fail to complete a story because one partner is almost always able to seek and build a story from the other student's writing. A typical student comment after paired fiction writing is: "When I began I didn't know what I was doing, but when my partner entered the story, it took form and substance and I knew where to go with it." One thing most students agree on is that their sense of time passing is removed. They can't avoid concentrating on their writing and amazingly complain that the class is over far too quickly. Most efforts in this class do yield writing that can be considered works-in-progress fiction and can be the foundation for a collaborative writing assignment, but the real point of the activity is that learning space for writing and reading acts has been established in a fashion that is easy and fun. Making writing feel playful is a key progression toward enabling students to gain confidence as academic writers and readers.

Fundamental to all K-16 literacy is that students trust that their writing will be read, appreciated and responded to. Paired fiction writing is an immediate way to make students feel confident that they can trust other readers and that they can produce writing that will amuse and interest their peers.

Theoretical Links

An underlying assumption that insures active and enthusiastic student participation can be explained by Nelson Goodman in *Ways Of Worldmaking*. In his discussion on "The Significance of Style," he says, "What we find, or succeed in making, is heavily dependent on how and what we seek" (39) and concludes the chapter by saying:

The less accessible a style is to our own approach and the more adjustment we are forced to make, the more insight we gain and the more our powers of discovery are developed. The discernment of style is an integral aspect of the understanding of works of art and the worlds they present. (40)

In paired fiction writing, "seeking" combines with another person's reading and writing. The writing becomes seamless because the two participants seem to easily guess or imagine each other's "seeking" by constructing it in the next narrative step. At the end of a paired fiction writing class, the two writers in the pair often describe their amazement at being able to follow and even anticipate what each partner thought was the other's intention, though there is also a good deal of laughter about the confusion and twists which their writing "dialogue" creates. Nonetheless, real communication is focused in their writing and reading acts.

An important value of this activity is that it requires a student to share his or her own text and participate in

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 15]

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One of my beliefs about student writing is that students don't have a concept of the writing process. So my class talked about the process, about how in writing we "gather, sort, organize, write, revise, edit, layout/design, print, proofread." We also discussed the non-linear aspects of that process, understanding that the steps are involved but aren't generally sequential. We focused on our writing strengths and weakness with the hopes of improving the weaknesses while building the strengths.

When we reread our collaborative InterChange, we knew that our "gathering" had come from the Rose article and ourselves. But, we all agreed that much of what students had sent was repetitive. We noted that several students shared similar characteristics. We needed to sort the information we had gathered. Grouping students with similar characteristics became our sorting method. After all, we assumed Rose had created three typical students and we could, therefore, combine students with similar characteristics to create one vignette for each type of student writing problem. So, we put the procrastinators in one group and did the same with the unfocused, mental processors, traditionalists, and chronic editors. Each group then sorted again what they had written about their particular writing problem and then organized that information into just one character. Our goal was to create five or six student examples typical of writing problems as they existed in our class.

We worked f2f for the sorting and organizing, but we sent our newly written and revised character vignettes through InterChange. I then compacted the InterChange session so we could focus on the next stage of the project: revision.

Using Respond to Teach Revision

I felt a bit insecure about the pedagogy of using Respond to teach revision strategies, but perhaps naivete laced with bravery allowed me to forge ahead! Some sentences just needed to be rewritten, some sentences contained clutter, some word choices needed improvement, and sometimes readers just didn't understand what the writer meant. These basic revision strategies were also covered in our textbook in articles by Don Murray and William Zinsser.

For our next lab class, I used poorly written sentences from our second and now "sorted" InterChange for Respond prompts and asked students to rework the sentences, offering up to four other sentences that would be better. This was not a time-consuming process for

me; using the PromptManager tool, I simply cut and pasted those sentences from the InterChange transcript into the Respond prompt boxes, and then added some explanation to help students in the revision process. One specific Respond prompt using a poorly written sentence read like this: "After putting all thoughts down on paper, the revising process eventually narrows down the topic." My explanation read: "Think first about the words that are not necessary for this sentence to have meaning. Zinsser says to 'strip each sentence to its cleanest component.'" Respond revision led to this sentence: "After Jake puts all his thoughts on paper, the revision process eventually narrows the topic." Suddenly students were rewriting sentences — their own and others. Some said aloud, "But I don't even know what this sentence means." Students obviously discovered a sentence that needed to be made clearer. We were revising our own work and feeling good about working toward a collaborative goal.

We had several examples of more precisely written sentences and so we followed this revision process in a f2f environment working together to replace structural writing problems with well-written, tightly structured vignettes of our typical college writers. At this point writing as a collaborative process unfolded before our eyes. InterChange made the collaboration easier, and Respond allowed us to rewrite what wasn't working.

Our Class as a Rose Piece

Here are the writer vignettes the students developed:

1. **Taylor**, a freshman English student, has a difficult time focusing when she writes. The difficult part for Taylor is getting information from her head to her paper. While everyone else is working, she sits back and stares blankly at the paper. Her imagination wanders and a topic to write about is difficult for her to find. She can be creative in some ways, but when it comes to writing her papers, her creativity disappears.

Once ideas do come together, Taylor's papers evolve piece by piece. Thoughts float into her head and into the paper whether they are relevant or not. The paper becomes choppy and disorganized. If Taylor had planned, she would have noticed that some points weren't necessary and should have been deleted. When the first draft is done, revisions should be made. After Taylor rereads her paper, she makes few changes. As a result, her first draft is her final draft.

Instructor-generated Daedalus Respond prompts have helped Taylor write. The prompts have given direction to her thoughts, and she can see that her mind now has less time to wander since the prompts help with focus.

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 14]

BEST OF TEACH, CONT'D FROM PG. 8

Date: Wed, 12 Nov 1997

From: Mary Massirer <Mary_Massirer@BAYLOR.EDU>

This is not really my favorite assignment, but the students and I have been happy with it. Late in the term, I divide the class into groups of 3, based on their grades at the time. I use Micrograde, which ranks students automatically. I have had much better results grouping strong students with other strong students. The weak ones have only themselves to rely on. Anyway, each group chooses 3 web sites to evaluate, compare, and contrast. I leave the choice of sites open, reminding them that the sites must have some common tie as well as some differences. They analyze the sites, write a report of 6-8 pages, and present their findings to the rest of the class. Since we meet in a computer classroom with very good presentation facilities, the oral presentation usually displays the sites or uses PowerPoint or both. The students also use a set of homemade Invent prompts to evaluate the group aspect of their work, telling me who did what and whether all members of the group worked well. The project gives them additional practice in evaluation and more experience working with a group.

Mary Massirer
Baylor University

Date: Wed, 12 Nov 1997

From: traci@daedalus.com (Traci Gardner)

In tech and business writing classes, we always worked on resumes and application letters after the "big report" had been submitted — so they were tired puppies and needed a break. As a quiz/exercise sort of grade, I asked students to write a resume or letter of application (or both) for their favorite cartoon character or storybook character. You really don't need much more for the assignment than that...I usually showed some examples from previous years, and that was all it took. They knew that they had to read the resume/job app info in their text, and apply it to the character they chose. It's a very low-prep assignment for the teacher.

Sometimes I got resumes which basically worked with the character as is from the cartoon. For instance, I have resumes on file for Wile Coyote with the career objective of "To catch and eat the Road Runner" and two for Robin Hood — one with the objective "To obtain a challenging position as a financial consultant to the underprivileged" and another with the object of "Full-time position in the security department." Then there were the creative objectives... Speedy Gonzales applies

to be "pizza boy in New York City's largest cat neighborhood" and one for the Roadrunner with the goal: "To coach minor roadrunners in tactical, high speed coyote escape." They were even more creative in job, experience and skills descriptions. That Roadrunner resume claims that our hero is a member of the "National ACME Sabatoge Club," Chair of the "Flatten the Coyote Committee," member of the "All Pro Dynamite Tricks Team" and an "Outstanding Anvil Target Marksman." And I have one for Elmer Fudd, applying to be "an assassin for da mob" which lists the following section:

Expewience

- o Hunted dat wascally wabbit Bugs Bunny for years
- o Twacked Bugs Bunny for miles at a time
- o Hunted dat duck Daffy for a whole season
- o Had extensive twaining with a wifile
- o Wobbed and pillwaged Western towns with Yosemite Sam

The exercise worked well for several reasons: they thought it was a hoot, and a much needed break after those reports — they got engaged and wanted to write. But also they all tended to know the cartoon characters involved, so it was easy to chime in and help other writers — when you're looking at a thin resume for bugs bunny, it's much easier to offer very concrete suggestions for beefing things up than it is when you're looking at the resume for a classmate whose background you don't know. Further, it helped them to think outside the traditional "resume" slots — they often had to look for experience outside the cartoon character's "job."

Once the resumes were written, we shared them by turning them in or using Mail. I never had to require them to read them because they all wanted to read each other's work on this particular assignment. Their audience of readers was very present on this assignment — they wanted to be read; they wanted to write impressive resumes; they wanted to hear their readers laughing that day the resumes were posted in class.

On some levels, it could seem like a very silly assignment, but they liked it and they always understood how it related to their very real task (the one where the grade mattered). When time came to write their own resumes, I told them there were no excuses — they just wrote completely reasonable resumes for Daffy Duck and Elmer Fudd; they could certainly write resumes for themselves.

Traci Gardner
The Daedalus Group, Inc.
(formerly Virginia Tech)



but the questions have remained the same. At first, the stand-alone PC with a word processor eased the invention, composing, and revision stages of the writing process. Then those PCs linked together on a local area network allowed students to interact with one another in the networked classroom. Today, the PC connected to the Internet permits learners and writers to tap into the vast storehouse of information and communicate with an individual on the other side of the globe or publish to a potential audience of millions of cybersnauts. Despite, and in some cases as a result of, these technological leaps, we're still asking the same questions: Given the tools available today, what are the best ways to teach writing and to help students become active learners, critical thinkers, and effective writers?

I'm reminded of a symposium I attended in 1995 at the original Border's Book Store in Ann Arbor, Michigan while I was teaching the first version of a web-based writing course I developed and eventually co-taught with then ECB colleague Dr. Rebecca Rickly. The bookstore had gathered some of the most noted writers about the Internet — Ed Kroll, John December, and others. Already feeling anxious about the torrid pace of technological change, I was hoping to get the inside track on leading edge technology. I asked the panel a question: "Over the last several years we have witnessed a proliferation of new applications and acronyms — FTP, WAIS, WWW, HTML, MOO. What do you predict will be the next big advance." Ed Kroll responded, "People."

What he meant, of course, was that we had crossed a technological threshold in the sense the Internet and the array of applications to use it already permitted computer-mediated communication and data sharing through the World Wide Web. The technological infrastructure of the knowledge matrix is already in place. Of course, with ever increasing bandwidth and more transparent applications, using the Internet will be faster, easier, and less expensive than it is today. But the next big "innovation" will be how people use it to share information, to interact, and to construct knowledge.

Within the education field, it is teachers who have an important, if not the most important, role in using technology well. We believe, as we always have, that dollars spent merely on technology and software are wasted if the technology is not integrated effectively into sound educational processes. As educators ourselves, we continue to believe that any attempts to integrate technology into education must begin at the center of the educational process. As *The Wall Street*

Journal announced in its November 17, 1997 technology supplement, "If technology is going to transform our schools, the place to start is with teachers."

As The Daedalus Group approaches the end of its first decade, we have prepared ourselves to address not only the technological needs of educators in the 21st Century but their knowledge, information, and professional development needs as well. The new Daedalus Services division was officially announced in the Spring 1996 edition of *Wings* when Fred Kemp wrote in this space that Daedalus Services "will seek to provide guidance to teachers and administrators as they step gingerly into the spinning world of cyberspace and computer interactivity." Since that announcement, we have expanded our professional development offerings in a number of ways. We have provided on-campus training on the use of the Daedalus Integrated Writing Environment at dozens of schools, colleges, and universities. We have led several Daedalus Seminars and Institutes, events that focus less on DIWE application training and more on general issues of education, particularly literacy education, in the information age. And, in 1998, we will expand our offerings and services in a number of exciting ways.

On January 9th and 10th, 1998, we will lead a Daedalus Winter Institute in Bethesda, Maryland. We are in the early stages of planning similar events in several major metropolitan areas including Chicago and New York. And, our DIWE Training calendar is already filling rapidly for early '98.

Also in 1998, we will introduce our first on-line education offering called WriteWell. WriteWell is a fee-based, on-line writing and learning center, and it grew out of the experiences of several of our Daedalus Associates who have worked over the last couple of years developing on-line writing labs (OWLS) at academic institutions. All of us have seen the use of these virtual writing centers grow, and we were impressed by the growing number of people not affiliated with our academic institutions contacting the academic OWLs for help. Of course, since our academic budgets allowed us to serve only tuition-paying students, we were not permitted to offer on-line writing help to those who requested it.

Our experiences with OWLs helped us understand that in order for a school or department to develop, staff, and maintain an effective on-line writing lab, the institution needs three distinct resources: the technological infrastructure (a mail server, a world wide web server, etc.), human resources (technological and pedagogical expertise; a team of experienced and trained on-line

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2. **Kurt** is a laborer. He creates his rough draft as though it were his final copy. He revises and edits his paper as he goes, editing each sentence for ideas, word choice, and punctuation before he moves on.

He does not use the computer to write his papers because it takes him a long time to express his ideas. If Kurt sat at a computer, most of his time would be wasted by staring blankly at the screen. It is less time consuming for him to compose on paper.

Kurt's main problem is lack of confidence in his writing. He checks spelling, punctuation, and word choice along the way. It is difficult for him to begin a new paragraph without checking for errors in the previous one. After the first draft is done, little or no revision is left. Now the only task that remains is typing it on the computer.

Kurt is learning to deal with his problem by free writing. The three Invent prompts in Daedalus provide that environment for Kurt. Free writing allows him to write whatever is in his head and let spelling, punctuation, and mechanics slide.

3. **Barb** is in her first year of college. She has entered a writing class and is not too sure if she will do well. High school papers were always difficult for her.

Barb's biggest writing problem is getting herself together to actually write. She has every excuse for not doing something. She allows distractions like television, pets and friends to control her decisions. She makes her life more difficult than necessary.

Once she begins, she immediately gets stuck. She can't seem to gather the right information. She can't seem to get organized. All this frustration leads her back to her original problem of not wanting to do the paper. Therefore, she puts it off.

4. **Sally** likes to take a couple of days to think about what she wants to write. She often spends hours just thinking of what content she will include and how she will arrange this content. She thinks at the oddest times, for example, when she is playing volleyball. Once she has created this "mental" draft of her paper, she turns to paper and pencil and writes an outline. Then she researches the library and internet for information. She notes in her outline where this information will add to her paper.

When she writes, she is constantly thinking of earlier ideas plus new ideas. She begins with the introduction and then moves smoothly to the body and finally to the conclusion. Once she begins to write, she does not like to stop because she loses her train of thought.

Sally hand writes her essay and then types it. While she is typing, she makes corrections and may add a little here and there. When she has made sure that everything is right, she prints her essay and hands it in praying for an A.

5. **Jake's** way of writing seems unorthodox. He has a system of gathering information and organizing it to get his point across. He is skilled at using resources; however, his indecisiveness makes beginning the paper difficult.

After Jake puts all his thoughts on paper, the revising process eventually narrows the topic. Frequently in his writing, he decides to scrap his initial idea and begin a new paper. This revising process transforms his paper from a mediocre pulp to a powerful masterpiece.

All in all, Jake creates incredible works of art but isn't an artist. He is an efficient engineer, following well-defined processes and outlines to create strong and structured writings.

6. **Jodi and Lori** are in their freshman year in college. They have led interesting lives and are able to draw on these life experiences. They both find writing assignments time consuming because they struggle with rules that accompany writing. They feel that the written word should be no different than the spoken word. They lack the mechanical skills necessary for

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HANDS-ON DIWE WORKSHOPS FOR YOUR SITE



Check the Daedalus Services website at
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to learn how you can bring an Authorized Daedalus Trainer to your campus. One-, two-, and three-day workshops can address your needs whether you're new to DIWE, have been teaching with just a few components, or want to develop a complete curriculum plan to expand its use.

HOCHMAN, CONT'D FROM PG. 10

another writer's text. This type of dialogue is a universal writing goal. Fiction writing lends itself to writing concentration because it isn't typically about the work of school so much as the pleasure of life. Students sense this environmental shift. All writers and readers have intuitive sensibilities (what Wolfgang Iser describes in *The Act of Reading* as "horizons of expectations") which easily allow stories to surface. The stimulation of a playful environment, of close reading, of general writing prompts, and of only a limited amount of time to answer the specific writing and reading tasks produces an atmosphere that is charged with rhetorical consciousness. Not only do students learn to concentrate their thinking on another person's writing, but they also learn to see where their own thinking can lead others.

Concentration is easily induced because students experience immediate responses and create immediate responses to their texts. This interaction helps students learn to trust their readers, whether their anticipated ideas are realized or new horizons of possibilities occur. They learn how to be playful with each other's thinking while actually experiencing transactional writing and reading structures.

Most of the claims about paired fiction writing are based on observing the process and results of the activity for more than fifteen years of teaching. However, the rationale for paired fiction writing is based on Louise M. Rosenblatt's transactional theory.

Thus the transactional view, freeing us from the old separation between the human creature and the world, reveals the individual consciousness as a continuing

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SOLBERG, CONTINUED

good writing. Proper punctuation and good grammar are a challenge and they find writing difficult when they are unsure of where the comma goes or when to end a sentence. They need the confidence they lacked in high school.

Jodi and Lori both feel that a good writer provides many details. A vivid imagination creates some problems for them since overused descriptiveness can cause the reader to lose interest. By condensing their information, they quickly get to the point. In addition, having a limited vocabulary causes them to use the same words repeatedly. A thesaurus will promote increased detail without additional clutter.

With the aid of a computer and a word processing program, their roles as writers have been greatly blessed. They can eliminate the scribbled sheets of paper that were common place in the writing process. Revisions and proof readings then become a matter of sorting, cutting and pasting, editing, and refining. Having completed these tasks, Jodi and Lori will be

7. pleased with their final draft.

Mary, a traditionalist, can write with ease. She has no problems generating ideas or getting started. After completing her paper, she revises finding it difficult to organize, to keep the flow or unity in her paper, and to word her sentences properly. To correct this, she must analyze her paper to determine where each paragraph should be placed. She tries different combinations, one piece building on the other until her paper fits together like a puzzle. Mary feels confident enough to hand in her paper.

Interesting By-Products of the Assignment

Students assessed their own writing problems, wrote about those problems, and read about the writing problems of their peers. This in itself was a reflective and revealing metacognitive exercise. However, when they were grouped with similar students to create one unified vignette, interesting discussions occurred. First, students were pleased to know that there were others in the class who shared the same problems, and the groups seemed to bond quickly. Second, the groups "acted" the way they had described themselves and we could observe this in class. The procrastinators couldn't get started. One commented that the rest of the class was working on the assignment, which revealed to him his own tendency to procrastinate. Someone in the unfocused group was overheard to say, "We have to decide what we are going to include." The mental processors discussed before they wrote, and the chronic editors were still working when the rest were ready to hand their work in.

This was a good exercise for my classes. They seemed to gel as a class, become more social with each other, and share more verbally and in DIWE. Because we worked on the writing process as a group and students experienced every level of that process (gathering, sorting, organizing, writing, revising, and editing), they seem to have a better grasp of what is involved. I would even say that they did a good job of revising their work, typically a difficult step in the writing process. At this point I cannot assess whether their writing has improved or whether they have adopted more effective strategies when they work alone. However, I intend to use this metacognitive exercise later in the term as students assess their progress in the class.



HONG KONG STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE USEFULNESS OF INTERCHANGE

Andy Curtis
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Background

Recently Tim Roskams and I taught a 13-15 week "Introduction to Academic Writing" (IAW) course at the Chi-

nese University of Hong Kong. The IAW course aims to develop informative and persuasive writing skills in English based on library research, and includes topics such as audience analysis, summary and paraphrase writing, and library methods. Two-thirds of our IAW courses were taught in a writing lab consisting of 23 networked computers running DIWE.

The major course tasks for students were to revise successive drafts of essays, based on peer and teacher feedback. Students submitted a piece of writing every week, usually a summary of an article or a draft of an academic essay based on relevant reference material. The students

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 19]

HOCHMAN, CONT'D FROM PG. 15

self-ordering, self-creating process, shaped by and shaping a network of interrelationships with its environing social and natural matrix. Out of such transactions flowers the author's text, an utterance awaiting the readers whose participation will consummate the speech act. By means of texts, we say, the individual may share in the funded knowledge and wisdom of our culture. For the individual reader, each text is a new situation, a new challenge. (172-73)

Paired fiction writing is able to create a positive learning transaction within the community of the class not only because the participants can easily perform the necessary tasks, but also because it allows students to immediately experience their writing and reading acts as enjoyable events. The event or learning transaction that occurs during paired fiction writing is, in Rosenblatt's words, a "transaction with the environment precisely because it permits such self-aware acts of consciousness" (173). Classrooms use networks to create community — paired fiction writing is one writing node that can help students become more conscious of how to build trust, freedom and creativity in their writing lives.

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BUTLER, CONTINUED FROM PG. 13

writing consultants), and capital to pay for everything. Of course, many technologically-rich institutions already have everything in place to develop and support their own OWLs. We believe there exists, however, a significant number of individual writers and teachers, as well as a number of institutions — offering traditional and distance education options — who desire the kinds of services an on-line writing center can provide but lack the time, the expertise, or the technological infrastructure to develop an OWL in a timely fashion. This is the educational need WriteWell is intended to fill. WriteWell will use the power of the Internet to connect writers — academic, professional, or otherwise — with highly experienced and trained writing consultants who through the World Wide Web and electronic conferencing will answer questions, evaluate drafts, and offer feedback on any stage of the writing process.

We here at Daedalus are excited by the fact the general public, as evidenced by *The Wall Street Journal* announcement, is finally coming around to what those of us who have been teaching with technology for years have always known—education, with or without technology, is about people. It is teachers, with their years of experience with their content matter and their knowledge about students, who make a difference. It is students, with their curiosities, ambitions, and hopes for the future, who make a difference. When software was the issue, The Daedalus Group was prepared to provide technological solutions. While we will continue developing leading-edge software solutions, we embark on our second decade through the Daedalus Services division, to help teachers and writers make sense of the technology and help them get the most out of the dollars spent on hardware and software.



DAEDALUS TRAINING & INFORMATION SERVICES ANNOUNCES

THE DAEDALUS SUMMER '98 INSTITUTE

**AUGUST 12-14, 1998
AUSTIN, TEXAS**

**HTTP://WWW.DAEDALUS.COM/SERVICES/SUMMER98.HTML
(800) 879-2144 INSTITUTE@DAEDALUS.COM**

The Daedalus Summer '98 Institute, scheduled for August 12-14, 1998, in Austin, Texas, will offer educators from all skill levels one, two, or three days of hands-on training on Daedalus software and computer-based writing theory. The Institute will be led by members of The Daedalus Group, pioneers in the field of technology and education and developers of the award-winning Daedalus Integrated Writing Environment.

SCHEDULE

	WED. 8/12	THURS. 8/13	FRI. 8/14
9:00-12:00	I. Writing with DIWE, AM	II. Teaching with DIWE, AM	III. Integrating DIWE into Your Curriculum, AM
	II. Teaching with DIWE, AM	III. Integrating DIWE into Your Curriculum, AM	IV. DIWE Site Leader Training, AM
12:00-1:00	LUNCH (on your own)	LUNCH (on your own)	LUNCH (on your own)
1:00-4:00	I. Writing with DIWE, PM	II. Teaching with DIWE, PM	III. Integrating DIWE into Your Curriculum, PM
	II. Teaching with DIWE, PM	III. Integrating DIWE into Your Curriculum, PM	IV. DIWE Site Leader Training, PM
4:00-6:00	Open Lab (for one-on-one help from trainers)	Open Lab (for one-on-one help from trainers)	Optional social hour after final workshop
7:00-9:00		Reception and Dinner (included in fee)	

See Institute benefits and what's included in registration fee:
<http://www.daedalus.com/services/summer98.html>

FEES

REGISTER:	By 5:00 pm CST, Friday, 17 July	After 17 July
1 DAY	\$350	\$400
2 DAYS	\$600	\$700
3 DAYS	\$750	\$900

Registration is NOT guaranteed until 21 days before the event. Please do not make non-refundable travel reservations until you receive official confirmation.

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This "train-the-trainer" course for DIWE power users certifies participants to be DIWE site leaders on their campuses, and authorizes them to use copyrighted and field-tested Daedalus training materials to train their school colleagues. Participants seeking certification *must* register for all three days of training regardless of their DIWE experience, or may register only for Workshops III and IV if they have completed Workshops I and II within the past 12 months.

See complete workshop prerequisites and descriptions:
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TO REGISTER ONLINE:

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used InterChange to provide feedback on drafts of other students, and also to exchange ideas for assignments (e.g. working titles and tentative thesis statements) with the other students and the teacher.

We were especially interested in the students' perceptions of the usefulness of using InterChange, and students were surveyed in the penultimate week of the term using a questionnaire based on a six-point Likert scale and open comments. We received a total of 64 responses from the 74 students (86% return rate); simple descriptive statistics and bi-variate correlations for the numerical values from the Likert scores were calculated, and student comments collated and analyzed.

Results

The question we asked was: How useful was using InterChange for improving your academic writing in English? Please give reasons for your assessment of its usefulness.

The students' ratings of the usefulness of InterChange for improving their written academic English were (n = 64):

- Of Little or No Use (1 or 2): 15.6%
- Moderately Useful (3 or 4): 62.5%
- Very Useful (5 or 6): 21.9%

As the results show, approximately 85% of the students felt that the Interchange sessions were either moderately useful or very useful. Although this, in itself, was encouraging, we wanted to know *why* the students found it very, moderately or not useful.

The majority of students, 57 out of the 64 (89%), answered this question with responses we grouped under five headings, as comments which referred to:

- Collaborative Learning (CL)
- Time (T)
- Thinking Skills (TS)
- Interesting or Boring (I/B)
- General Comments about Writing (W)

Some comments were somewhat contradictory, for example, "Actually very few response from others. Still quite useful as I can read others' writing and learn from that." Others fell into two different groups, for example, "My partners can give me comments immediately", which refers to collaboration as well as time. However, classification of most of the responses, in terms of one or more of the five areas and as either 'positive' or negative', was relatively straightforward.

Examples of Students' Answers and Their Classification

Collaborative Learning (CL)

- Positive:* I can learn from other students
Other classmates can give me suggestions
- Negative:* Actually very few responses from others
We seldom use it to comment on others' answers

Time (T)

- Positive:* My partners can give me comments immediately
We can discuss with different members at the same time
- Negative:* Sometimes it is too time-consuming
Sometimes there is not enough time

Thinking Skills (TS)

- Positive:* It can stimulate our thinking
Can force us to think in English
- Negative:* (none)

Interesting or Boring (I/B)

- Positive:* Using Interchange can also make the lessons more interesting
More interesting with computers
- Negative:* Students are not very interested in it
Sometimes boring

General Comments about Writing (W)

- Positive:* Practices my written English
We write more and practice more
- Negative:* (none)

STUDENTS' ANSWERS GROUPED BY TYPE OF REASON GIVEN FOR USEFULNESS

Type of Comment	Positive % (n = 67)	Negative % (n=67)
CL	37.3	7.5
T	10.4	17.9
TS	6.0	0
I/B	4.5	7.5
W	9.0	0

By far the largest group of comments was made up of positive comments about the benefits of collaborative learning/writing in networked labs. To some extent, this is perhaps to be expected, but the large number of positive CL comments in relation to the relatively small number of negative CL comments is encouraging, as it shows that, in general, and with respect to this aspect at least, the students' views of the benefits of working in such an environment do match the teachers'.

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CURTIS, CONTINUED FROM PG. 19

We were interested to see that Time was the second largest group, with nearly 30% of the comments being either positive or negative references to time. As the two negative examples show, this group could be further divided, roughly equally, into comments expressing the feeling that too much time was being spent on or required to complete certain activities, or that too little time was available. Although these two points of view are similar, they are not exactly the same, as the former is more related to the nature of the task, whereas the latter is more to do with how time in the lab is apportioned and managed. The fact that there were so many more negative time comments, and that this group was by far the largest of the negative groups of responses, have important implications for the teachers in terms of how they manage the time in the lab and how such sessions are scheduled.

The largest of the six smaller groups of comments (TS, I/B, W, positive and negative) were positive comments about writing. These comments generally focused on speed, e.g., "We can 'write' faster"; volume, e.g. "We can write more"; or practice, e.g., "Practices my writing" and "Giving comments in the form of writing is practice of writing at the same time." All of these are important aspects in developing writing skills.

The connection between thinking and writing has been stressed by a number of writing researchers, so it is encouraging to see students again making the same connection that their teachers and researchers have been making, and that the students see the technology as enhancing that processes of both thinking and writing.

Responses which give the reasons for a positive response as "interesting" or a negative response as "boring" are of limited use without a further clarification of *why* the respondents felt it to be so, and if we were to repeat the exercise, we would try and arrange follow-up interviews with student after the questionnaire results have been analyzed.

