Energizing Interaction Through Writing with Digital Tools

Abstract

Combining writing with effective digital tools energizes learning across disciplines. Writing fosters critical thinking and interaction with subject matter. Writing fosters discovery of deeper insights. Writing is a powerful learning tool when writers receive quality feedback—feedback encouraging and facilitating interaction with content. A means for providing such feedback is found in technology. One source of technology that enhances learning through writing is selected features of several software suites (e.g., Microsoft Office, Star Office, Word Perfect Office). Though not created for writing instruction, features such as inserting comments, highlighting, tracking changes, saving versions, the outline view, and text boxes can be turned into tools for enhancing learning through writing.

Objectives

1. Participants will learn how writing fosters learning.
2. Participants will learn of several techniques for using writing to foster learning.
3. Participants will review the process approach to writing within a writing across the disciplines setting.
4. Participants will learn of several ways of using writing and the process approach to foster learning.

Outline

A. Writing and Learning Theory
B. Writing and Learning Instructional Strategies: Fostering Engagement and Collaboration
C. Writing Process Theory
D. Writing Process and Learning
E. Writing Process Strategies and Techniques: Fostering Engagement and Collaboration
F. Digital Tools for Writing Instruction in Word Processing Programs
G. Applications of Word Processing Tools to Writing and Learning

Audience

This topic is appropriate for teachers of every level, from middle school through college. While the content may resonate most fully with teachers working in a writing across the disciplines setting, it offers valuable instructional techniques to all teachers in any discipline who want to explore how to enhance learning through writing and digital tools.
Qualifications

Dr. Gene Baer
Associate Professor, Academic Technology Leader, Mount Mary College
Dr. Gene Baer serves as Academic Technology Leader at Mount Mary College. His duties include helping faculty identify and utilize technology to enhance pedagogy. Previously, as an Associate Professor in the English-Professional Writing program at Mount Mary College, Dr. Baer taught courses in journalism, business writing, and publishing of print materials—all in computer labs. Dr. Baer also served as the technology trainer for the English department, assisting faculty in utilizing appropriate hardware, software, and Internet resources in their writing and literature courses. Dr. Baer began teaching writing with computers and other digital tools in the mid-1980s. He has also developed and administered writing centers and writing across the curriculum programs. Dr. Baer holds a doctorate from Illinois State University in English studies with emphases in writing theory and pedagogy.

Dr. Martin Moldenhauer
Associate Professor of English, English Department, Wisconsin Lutheran College
Dr. Martin Moldenhauer is an Associate Professor of English at Wisconsin Lutheran College in Milwaukee. Dr. Moldenhauer teaches various literature courses in the department as well as the traditional ENG101 composition course in a computer lab. Active in the National Council of Teachers of English, Moldenhauer has served as the president of the Doctoral Student Assembly, as well as president of the Lutheran High School Teachers Conference. Together with Dr. Baer, Dr. Moldenhauer has delivered dozens of writing workshops and presentations to college faculties throughout the country. Dr. Moldenhauer's dissertation is entitled "Teaching Concepts of Textuality Through Engagement with Authors' Manuscripts." His doctorate was awarded from Illinois State University.

Comments

In lieu of paper handouts, each participant will receive a CD containing an extensive description of how to use digital tools to enhance learning.

URL for sample content: depts.alverno.edu/educator/resources.html. Then, click "Digital Tools and Writing"