CURRICULUM GUIDE

ESL 100

EXPOSITORY WRITING: A GUIDED APPROACH

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CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Expository Writing: A Guided Approach (3). Extensive practice in writing expository essays; linguistic devices which make an essay effective. (Fulfills composition requirement for nonnative speakers of English only.)

PLACEMENT

Students are assigned to ESL 100 on the basis of their test scores on a 40-minute writing sample, and/or their scores on the written portion of TOEFL. (Normally, both the writing sample score and the TOEFL score are taken into consideration when making placements. TOEFL alone is used for late arrivals, special cases, etc. For those students lacking TOEFL scores, the writing sample score alone is used as the basis for placement.) In addition to those students placed by their writing sample score, a second group of students taking ESL 100 is those who have completed ELI 73 with a grade of Credit. Students assigned to ESL 100 have the option of taking ENG 100 offered by the Department of English.

STUDENT POPULATION

The majority of the students in ESL 100 are native speakers of Asian and Pacific languages. On occasion there are speakers of Spanish, French, and other European languages.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONCERNS

Initial Placement

As noted above (PLACEMENT), students are initially placed in ESL 100 on the basis of their test scores, or they are promoted from ELI 73. ESL 100 (or its equivalent ENG 100) must be taken within the first five semesters of an undergraduate's program. Thus, ESL 100 is not a mandatory course in the same sense that ELI courses are. The student has the option of postponing it with the understanding that it must be satisfactorily completed within the first five semesters.

Performance Reports

Instructors prepare a Performance Report for each ESL 100 student at the end of the semester. One copy of the report is kept in the student's individual file in the departmental office, the other is sent to the student's academic advisor. The purpose of the Performance Report is to provide background information to academic advisors concerning the student's academic progress in ESL 100. (Inasmuch as students do not take any further courses in the English Language Institute after completing ESL 100, the purpose and uses of the Performance Report are slightly different from those in the other ELI courses.)
courses.)

Attendance

The ELI regards class attendance seriously. Therefore, it is the policy of the ELI to permit no more than five (5) unexcused absences. Students must be informed of this policy at the beginning of the semester. Students who have in excess of the permitted five absences are automatically given a grade of F and are required to repeat the course.

AIMS AND PURPOSES OF THE COURSE

The ultimate goal of ESL 100 is the same as any other freshman composition course; that is, training in writing which will prepare the students to meet their writing assignments throughout the rest of their academic careers. This includes expository writing (e.g., report writing, essay writing), and term paper writing.

Fluency

While students enrolled in ESL 100 are considerably more fluent in their writing than those assigned to other ELI courses, there is still need to foster increased written output. Accordingly, students in ESL 100 will be expected to do a considerable amount of writing during the course.

Report writing

Students in certain disciplines are required to write rather extensive reports. ESL 100 is the logical place to provide instruction in report writing.

Library orientation

Most students will need additional instruction in how to exploit the facilities of the library. In this connection, the library does provide orientation programs.

Term paper writing

Students should be able to write a satisfactory term paper upon completion of the course.

PEDAGOGY

We want writing instructors to have the freedom to experiment with a variety of pedagogical practices, practices which have evolved from their experience, but at the same time we have a responsibility to our students to provide them with as solid a foundation as possible based on what is currently known about teaching the craft of writing. Especially in the beginning weeks of the course when the students are new to this culture, they should sense that the course has a specific direction and
particular aims. After the students have become settled into the routine of the class, there is then time to experiment with innovative teaching practices. Another reason for some type of regulated syllabus (for at least the first few weeks of the semester) is that the individuals who teach the writing classes come from a variety of backgrounds with differing amounts of experience. Our intent is not to have writing instructors 'toe the mark' but rather it is to start everyone off together more or less in step. In this way the less confident and experienced teachers have something to guide them in their teaching, and the more experienced teachers can try out, criticize and evaluate what has been detailed herein for eventual feedback to the ELI Curriculum Specialist and the ELI Curriculum Committee.

SYLLABUS

Program Components

There are two components to the ESL 100 writing course: the first is the writing activities as outlined in the materials developed by Nancy Cramer (WORKBOOK FOR WRITING); the second is the writing of a term paper. If students have term paper assignments from other courses, then one of these can form the basis for the term paper requirement of this course. Otherwise, the instructor in concert with the student can establish an appropriate term paper topic.

Allotment of Instructional Time

Instructional time is allotted among the following: quick writes, use of peer discussion groups, rough draft writing, final draft writing. Each of the foregoing is explained in detail below.

Unstructured Writing

Quick writes

Quick writes are 10-minute individual brainstorming sessions in which the students write on a topic announced by the instructor. During this 10-minute period the student must write continuously. In those cases where a student feels that he/she has nothing to say, i.e., is "blocking" for one reason or another, it is appropriate for the student to write, "I don't know what to write" over and over until something comes to mind. It should be stressed to the students that quick writing is writing for writing's sake. It is also the time for the student to get something--anything--on the topic written down regardless of the form. This type of writing may be viewed as getting thoughts on paper with no attention being paid to careful organization. (Attention to organization comes later in the writing process.) Students will need time to become adjusted to this activity because it will undoubtedly be a novel experience for most of them. Thus, it will take a certain amount of time before the students are completely comfortable with the idea and
practice of quick writing.

**Peer discussion groups**

At the conclusion of the quick write, the students form groups to discuss the topic on which the quick writes have been done, and to share ideas with one another. Some teachers have found that three is a good number for each group; however, the dynamics of different sections will not be the same. Ideas generated in the groups should result in a tentative thesis—main point, main idea, etc.—and a list of details which may be used to support that thesis. One of the most important functions of the groups is to provide an audience of what might be termed near-peers, but certainly an audience that is closer to the students than that of their instructor. The groups are used not only for a discussion of the points which have emerged from the quick writes, but also as "judges" of the final products which will result from the quick writes, the discussions and the ultimate writing of the essays. Moreover, students can help each other in finding and correcting grammatical and rhetorical errors. The teacher's role during peer discussion work is one of providing support, encouraging group participation, commenting when necessary, answering questions, and otherwise facilitating the group process.

**Rough draft writing**

Following the quick writes and the small group discussions of what has been generated during the quick writes, the students proceed to the writing of rough drafts. This phase of the writing will normally be done as homework, the students returning to the next class period with their rough drafts in hand. Once more small groups will be employed for a discussion of the drafts, thus each student is required to bring three copies of his/her work. Prior to the writing of the rough drafts at home, the teacher may wish to have a class discussion on certain rhetorical features of writing, something which the teacher feels will guide the students in the writing of their drafts. Such a presentation may be a simple reminder that writing has some kind of an introduction, a body, and a conclusion, to something considerably more elaborate on rhetoric. The basic function of the group work is to have the student read each other's work and discuss it. It is in these intimate surroundings that student writers can learn whether their message has been clearly presented or not. Once the students have finished with their comments on each other's papers, with the teacher working with all groups as the need arises, the students begin work on their final drafts.

**Final draft writing**

Final drafts are normally written at home, but work can be done on them in class, time permitting. Final drafts are collected by the teacher for comment. (See Evaluation, below.) These papers become "data" for the teacher to use in a
variety of ways. For example, the teacher can select individual papers for reproduction and distribution to all members of the class. The teacher can then draw attention to the particular merits of a given paper, and react to student comments and criticisms. It is a good idea to use a paper from each student during the course and not restrict discussion to only the better papers. In all discussion, the focus should be on organization and argumentation rather than fine points of grammar. However, if students raise questions about grammaticality, they should be answered. (For final drafts, students purchase ditto masters at the bookstore and write their essays on them. The teacher then collects them and duplicates enough copies for all members of the class.)

Evaluation

Providing feedback to the students on their writing assignments is important. What should the form of that feedback be? Because the students most probably have become accustomed to a flood of red ink (negative comments) of their written work--unless they have experienced the type of feedback given in ELI 73--and because we want to encourage our students to develop healthy attitudes towards writing, teachers should strive for a generous offering of positive comments. Thus, the teacher should stress the noteworthy aspects of a paper's overall content, coherence, and organization. Particularly good use of language should also receive praise. (However, students do need to know when they are in error. Much of the error is undoubtedly due to inadequate proofreading on the part of the students. Therefore, writing teachers should devote some time to training students in proofreading by showing them the kinds of errors which they should be able to find for themselves. Such things as pluralization, subject-verb agreement, and proper anaphoric reference come to mind as likely candidates for discussion. For example, the instructor could return papers with notations like the following: "There are four instances of nouns in their singular form which should be pluralized; there are three instances of error in subject-verb agreement; and five cases where pronouns do not agree with their antecedents. Please find these and correct them." Other serious grammatical errors might be underlined with the notation: "There is something that needs fixing here. See if you, or those in your group, can find what it is. If you can't, please see me."

Students generally welcome constructive criticism of their work; accordingly, teachers should provide such criticism, being careful to see that it is done in an encouraging way. Such practices as writing the word "awkward" in the margin probably do little to advance the cause of proficient writing.

Continuing the cycle

Once the quick write, group discussions, rough draft writing, group feedback/teacher discussion, and final draft writing cycle have been completed, the process begins anew.
Obviously, different teachers will want to embellish on their presentations so as to fit their own teaching styles, but should endeavor to engage students in the basic activities outlined here.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In addition to the lecture on "Twelve Steps to Writing,"

It is recommended that teachers of ESL 100 consult the Curriculum Guide for ELI 73 (especially the attachments) for additional ideas on the teaching of writing.
SYLLABUS

Program Components

There are two components to the ESL 100 writing course: the first is the writing activities as outlined in the materials developed by Nancy Cramer (Twenty Group Projects for Writing Students); the second is the writing of a term paper. If students have term paper assignments from other courses, then one of these can form the basis for the term paper requirement of this course. Otherwise, the instructor in concert with the student can establish an appropriate term paper topic.

The following is general information concerning the use of Twenty Group Projects for Writing Students in ESL 100. For more detailed instructions see the preface of the workbook.

Allotment of Instructional Time

Instructional time is allotted among the following: quick writes, use of peer discussion groups, rough draft writing, peer feedback, teacher feedback, and polished draft writing. Each of the foregoing is explained in detail below.

Unstructured Writing

Quick Writing

Quick writes are individual brainstorming sessions in which the students write on a topic, or an aspect of a topic, for a designated amount of time ranging from 5 to 25 minutes. During this designated time period the student must write continuously. In those cases where a student feels that he/she has nothing to say, i.e., is "blocking" for one reason or another, it is appropriate for the student to write, "I don't know what to write" over and over until something comes to mind.
It should be stressed to the students that quick writing is writing for writing's sake. It is allowing the words one writes to lead the writer on to new ideas rather than writing only what one has already thought about and decided to write. It is the time for the student to allow his or her thoughts to explore the topic, and get something—anything—on the topic written down regardless of the form. The focus is on idea development at this stage and attention should not be on form in any way. The student should feel free of worrying about grammar, spelling, organization, or even how the words he/she writes might "sound" to the reader. Attention to audience awareness and form comes later in the writing process.

Students will need time to become adjusted to this activity because it will undoubtedly be a novel experience for most of them unless they have taken ELI 73. Thus, it will take a certain amount of time before the students are completely comfortable with the process. It may be necessary therefore, to quick write in class in the beginning. One way to familiarize the students with quick writing is for the teacher to model quick writing by quick writing her/himself either on the blackboard or on the overhead projector while the students are quick writing at their seats. Once the students feel comfortable with quick writing, most of it can be done outside of class. Usually quick writing is done first just after the students have started a new topic and before they have begun their individual task. At this time quick writing serves the purpose of getting the students thinking about the topic. A 10 minute quick write is beneficial at this
time. It can be done again after they have done their individual task and the group work in the "Putting Ideas Together" section of the materials. This quick write can be longer, and serves the purpose of developing ideas for the rough drafts. Therefore, this quick write should be slightly more focussed than the original one. It may be useful to have the students bracket particularly interesting ideas from this quick write, and then draw arrows from one to another linking ideas that they feel "go together". They then can discuss them with other students or with the teacher, if so desired. The teacher may find that occasionally he or she might want to vary the routine by doing this quick write in class for 25 minutes. This quick write would be like writing a first draft, in a sense. Quick writing can also be used before redrafting by having the students write, in a quick write fashion, all the revisions he or she wants to make, as well as the suggestions from her/his peers and the teacher concerning possible revisions.

Quick writing serves three major purposes. Firstly, it helps students with writing fluency as they are trying to write as much as they can in a limited amount of time. Secondly, quick writing facilitates the idea development aspect of writing by giving the students the opportunity to brainstorm on paper rather than viewing writing as something they do only once their ideas are already completely developed. Lastly, students tend to feel more comfortable with writing when they don't have to concern themselves with the mechanical aspects of writing which often cause them so much trouble. Working with ideas is generally found to be inherently more pleasing than working with such
things as grammar for second language students.

**Peer Discussion Groups**

The students get into groups to discuss the topic they have chosen after doing the individual task. This section of the materials is the “Putting Ideas Together” section. The groups are given a task or a set of questions to work with. These questions, or this task should not be viewed as the content of the paper the students will write, but rather as another vehicle for the gathering of ideas. However, the ideas generated in the groups should result in a tentative thesis — main idea — and a possible “list” of supporting details from which to begin writing a rough draft. It should be stressed to the students that they should view this activity as a time when they are looking for the idea they would like to further explore, or the aspect of the topic they want to focus on, in their own papers. The teacher’s role during peer discussion work is one of providing support, encouraging group participation, commenting when necessary, answering questions, and otherwise facilitating the group process. It should be stressed, however, that it has been found that the less involved the teacher is with the students at this stage, the more active or a role the students play.

**Rough Draft Writing and Peer Feedback**

Following the “Putting Ideas Together” section of the materials and the subsequent quick write the students write their rough draft. This will normally be done outside of class, the students returning to the next class period with their rough
drafts in hand. Once more, small groups, or pairs will be employed for a discussion of the drafts, thus, each student must bring either 2 or 3 copies of his/her draft. This is called peer feedback. Students use a peer feedback guideline to help them with the activity. A guideline is provided in the materials. At times teachers may feel they want to direct certain students' attention to certain aspects of writing. If so they may want to add points to the guideline. For more information on this see the ELI 73 teacher's notes on peer feedback.

Students who have been in ELI 73 will be quite comfortable with peer feedback. However, for students new to the ELI this experience will probably be new. Often students initially feel that they can only be helped by the teacher. It should be stressed to the students that one of the important functions of peer feedback is to teach them to evaluate writing, which is one of the main goals of the class. Learning to evaluate one's own writing is generally more difficult than learning to evaluate others' writing. Therefore, by evaluating each other's writing and seeing how others evaluate their own writing, the process of learning to self-evaluate is facilitated. In addition, peer feedback is particularly useful for becoming more aware of the reader. It is in peer feedback that students learn whether their message has been clearly presented or not, or how others understand what they have written.

It may be useful to have students who are new to the ELI work with students who are familiar with the process, initially, or to give the students new to peer feedback special attention at the beginning, until they feel comfortable with the process.
Once the students have finished with their comments on each other's papers, with the teacher working with groups only if the need should arise, the students can either redraft their papers, begin working on a polished draft, or start a new unit. If the paper is being revised again before a polished draft is written, the teacher may want to have the students do peer feedback on the revised draft, focussing perhaps more on organization at this time rather than on the ideas that the first peer feedback session should focus on. Additionally, the teacher may want to give the students teacher feedback on this draft, as well, either orally or written. Before the students write their polished draft they can do the editing activities in the workbook.

Polished Draft Writing

Polished drafts are normally written at home, but work can be done on them in class, time permitting. Polished drafts are collected by the teacher for comment. (See Evaluation section below.) These papers become "data" for the teacher to use in a variety of ways. For example, the teacher can select individual papers for reproduction and distribution to all members of the class. The teacher can then draw attention to the particular merits of a given paper, and react to student comments and criticisms. If the teacher choses to do this it is a good idea to have the students write their polished drafts on ditto masters.

Evaluation

Providing feedback to the students on their writing assignments is important. What should the form of that
feedback be? Because the students most probably have become accustomed to a flood of red ink (negative comments) on their written work - unless they have experienced the type of feedback given in ELI 73 - and because we want to encourage the students to develop healthy attitudes towards writing, teachers should strive for a generous offering of positive comments. Thus, the teacher should stress the noteworthy aspects of a paper's overall content, coherence, and organization. Particularly good use of language should also receive praise. Students generally welcome constructive criticism of their work; accordingly, teachers should provide such criticism, being careful to see that it is done in an encouraging way. Suggestions for change are a particularly useful way of giving criticism.

**Continuing the Cycle**

Once the quick write, individual task, group work, rough draft writing, redrafting, peer feedback/teacher feedback, polished draft writing, and teacher discussion have been completed, the process begins anew.

Obviously, different teachers will want to embellish on their presentations so as to fit their own teaching styles, but should endeavor to engage students in the basic activities outlined here.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

In addition to the preface of the materials, it is recommended that teachers of ESL 100 consult the *Curriculum Guide* for ELI 73 for additional ideas on the teaching of writing. Although ELI 73 and ESL 100 follow a similar format, there are some differences which should be pointed out. Basically the ESL
100 students are given more independence and responsibility in their writing. They choose their own topics rather than having them chosen for them by the teacher. In addition, if the teacher chooses to have the students produce a class "magazine" then the students can choose what they feel are their best papers and work further on them at their own pace. The fact that much of the quick writing is done outside of class requires the students to take the responsibility of simulating an appropriate atmosphere of a limited time period in which to do "forced" writing. It is hoped that in ESL 100, less time will be spent on peer feedback than it is in ELI 73, as the students should be beginning to internalize the process and in so doing be more able to self-evaluate their own papers. A further difference is that some of the units require the students to gather data from outside the class before they do the "Putting Ideas Together" section. Teachers who feel this is a particularly useful thing to do can easily supplement the materials by asking the students to find an article on the subject they are working on in the library, or poll other people from outside the classroom on their topic, or some such activity. Finally, the students are not given guided approaches to write their papers from as they are in ELI 73, and thus, write without that type of assistance. For ESL 100 classes that have many students who have completed ELI 72, it might be helpful to point out some of these differences, particularly the idea of the students having more independence and responsibility, and doing more self evaluation. This, as always, would depend on the teacher and the particular
students in the class.