POWERING UP THE WRITING PROCESS

ENGL101-011:

Introduction to College Writing with Support

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The problem: students don't use the writing process effectively

- Most ENGL101-011 students are in their first semester of college
- Skill levels and needs vary widely
- Most students have not used a writing process in the past (I asked)
- Students think their writing is weak
 because they are bad writers, when in fact
 they have a bad writing process
- Bad process = bad essay grades
- Bad essay grades = bad consequences

The strategy: Present writing as a problem the writing process helps solve.

What we did: small-group work

- Group problem-solving games to introduce composition concepts for each formal essay
- Documentation and discussion of the group's process

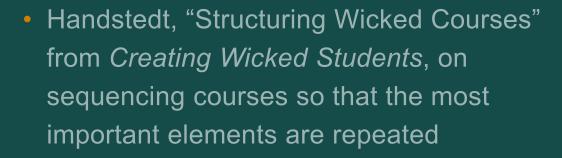
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What we did: individual work

- Required documentation of a writing process for essays to be accepted
- Peer comparisons of process at various stages of essay composition

- Self-assessment of process for each essay
- Comparison of writing process at the start vs. the end of the semester

Texts that influenced my strategy



- Bowen, Teaching Change, on Dweck's ideas about mindset interventions
- Barkley and Major, Student Engagement
 Techniques, on Believing and Doubting as
 a critical reading strategy

Results: process is power

FALL 2022, ENGL101-011

COLLEGE READING AND WRITING WITH SUPPORT

- Section 1:
 - 10 of 18 with a C or above
 - 55% pass rate
- Section 2:
 - 15 of 22 with a C or above
 - 68% pass rate

FALL 2023, ENGL101-011 COLLEGE READING AND WRITING WITH SUPPORT

- Section 1:
 - 18 of 20 continued attending
 - 15 of 18 with a C or above
 - 83% pass rate (75% of enrolled)
- Section 2:
 - 13 of 18 continued attending (2 withdrew and 3 elected not to withdraw despite being advised to drop before the 20% date)
 - 11 of 13 with a C or above
 - 84.6% pass rate (69% of those on the roster)

In the words of one student repeating the course...

I was not adept at a lot of things for the creation of my essays. I struggled with outlining, revising, and when taking feedback from others. The first essay is where I had a tough time understanding what to do...I was not thrilled when it came to reading the feedback from either teacher or peer review partner, I felt inept and was worried that I could not improve. However, now I grasp the value of planning, revising my essays for mistakes, and learning from others advice on how to improve my essays. I learned a lot from [peer review feedback]. When I found it hard to express what I was trying to say in my essay, they wrote sweet things in their peer review... They made me feel I was understood. After reading their comments I was more willing to listen to their advice.

THANK YOU, JOAN AND COLLEAGUES!