

1. The Setup

1. SETUP

Preparing your quick write paper, setting your expectations, and giving clear instructions will make quick writes go much easier.

Set the goal of 100 words in 5 minutes by the end of the year. The average person can write 100 words in five minutes in their native language. When the class average hits 100 words, drop the time by 30 seconds. Keep track of each student's word count, but **NOT FOR A GRADE!**

Make copies of Quick Write paper. Student writes one word per dashed line. Words are easily counted with this special paper. Students write the number of the quick write (1st, 2nd, 32nd, etc) and the number of minutes on the top. After writing, they write the total number of words and circle it somewhere on the paper. **Proper names MUST fit on only one dashed line (they can only count for one word).**

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Spiel to students.

"Each week we will be writing a quick write. Do your best each week. The goal is to write 100 words in the time given, but don't worry if you don't reach that goal each week. Focus on writing the best language you know how. At random, I will grade at least 2 per grading period. You will not know which ones I'll be grading in advance. You'll need to do your best each week. When I do grade them, I will not be nit-picky. Although spelling and grammar are important, they're not as important as your ideas. I grade on two factors: comprehensibility - how easily can a native person understand what you wrote, and complexity - how complex are your sentences? If you're comprehensible and you have a ton of short and choppy sentences, you'll earn a C. If you're comprehensible and you have a lot of longer sentences, often with ands, buts, and ors, you'll earn a B. If you're comprehensible and you have a lot of even longer sentences, often with because, since, and therefore, you'll earn an A."

Writing topics?

- student's choice
- use specific set of vocabulary
- random topic
- use a particular grammatical structure
- what happened before a story you did in class.
- write a new ending to a story you did in class.
- what do you think will happen next in the story/novel/reading?

2. SUCCESS

Writing makes students anxious. Writing in a foreign language makes students break out in a sweat. We need to be cognoscente of this fact and give students the tools to be successful.

Practice first. Write a class story together. As you write, project on a screen using a computer or document projector. Students copy as you write. Ask leading questions to co-create a story with your students. Point out each step of the story creation process:

1. Introduce characters.
2. Set up problem.
3. Attempt to solve problem, but fail.
4. Solve problem.

Writing in a foreign language makes students break out in a sweat.

Remind students that this is how sitcoms like Family Guy and Sponge Bob are created. Also use this time to point out any MAJOR grammar points. This is NOT time for grammar explanations. Keep information to less than 30 seconds. Focus on meaning.

Ex. "The S on the end of the verb makes it mean YOU do it."

Ex. "Notice how the adjectives come AFTER the nouns in Spanish?"

Ex. "Why does the verb end in -mos?"

Set students up for success. Give clear instructions. Tell them the rules and boundaries. Set your expectations. Explain to them the four parts of writing a story.

I can't write 100 words in another language! Suggestions:

- Take your time to describe the characters and the places they're in.
- Include dialogue.
- Add secondary characters.

What if I get stuck? Add a new character or move them to a new location.

Gamify! I like to encourage healthy competition amongst my classes. I have a scoreboard showing the current time for each period and how many words on average for the past few quick writes. The first class to average 100 words at five minutes gets a pizza party on Profe.

3. Assessment

3. ASSESSMENT

Assessing writing has always been tedious, time-consuming, and an ink-filled mess. But it doesn't have to be.

Studies have shown negligible gains between corrected essays, singularly-corrected essays (those essays which are corrected only for a single common error), and merely writing a positive comment.

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Of the three, the positive comments got the best results, even if only by a hair.

On average, it takes me 30-45 minutes to read a class set of papers. **Whaaat?** That's write. 30-45 minutes per class. How do I do it?

- I don't mark up papers.
- I grade using a rubric.
- I limit my comments to one positive comment and one improvement comment.

My rubric only looks at two things: comprehensibility and complexity. If it's comprehensible by a native speaker it's at least a C. If the sample is mainly short and choppy sentences, it will earn a C. If it has a lot of longer sentences with ands, buts, and ors, it will be a B. If it is full of even longer sentences with because, since, and therefore, it's an A.

On average, it takes me 30-45 minutes to grade a class set of papers.

What about the kid who likes their paper all marked up? As we've already discussed, this does not have a marked improvement. However, I'd rather do it for a student who wants it, than for a class that doesn't. Invite the student to see you before or after school (not during lunch) and ask them to bring their paper with them. Sit down with them and go over the paper sentence by sentence. They may or may not benefit from it, but it makes them feel more in control of their writing.

That's it folks. There's nothing more to the assessment piece.

SECRET BONUS TIP?

You'll have to watch the webinar for that!

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard

| Time | Period | #13 | #14 | #15 |
|-------|--------|-----|-----|-----|
| 10:00 | 1 | 67 | 78 | 93 |
| 8:30 | 2 | 101 | 108 | 123 |
| 9:30 | 3 | 78 | 99 | 101 |
| 6:00 | 4 | 110 | 116 | 103 |
| 7:30 | 5 | 89 | 72 | 110 |

This is the scoreboard that I use to gamify quick writes in my classroom.

Writing Rubric

| | | |
|----------|--------------------|--|
| F | No Evidence | STUDENT DEMONSTRATES INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO EVALUATE. <input type="checkbox"/> I'm unable to write about the topic, and/or <input type="checkbox"/> I didn't address the task/topic, and/or <input type="checkbox"/> I didn't provide enough of a sample to evaluate. |
| D | Limited | STUDENT DEMONSTRATES A LIMITED SKILL SET BELOW INSTRUCTION LEVEL. Complexity: <input type="checkbox"/> My sentences are often incomplete. <input type="checkbox"/> My ideas aren't organized. <input type="checkbox"/> I have trouble communicating my ideas because I lack key vocabulary. Comprehensibility: <input type="checkbox"/> I'm difficult to understand because I make a lot of mistakes. |
| C | Basic | STUDENT DEMONSTRATES BASIC SKILLS JUST BELOW INSTRUCTION LEVEL. Complexity: <input type="checkbox"/> I often use short, choppy sentences. <input type="checkbox"/> My ideas are mostly organized. <input type="checkbox"/> I can communicate most of my ideas with basic vocabulary. Comprehensibility: <input type="checkbox"/> I'm often understandable, but I often make errors. |
| B | Proficient | STUDENT CONSISTENTLY WRITES AT INSTRUCTION LEVEL. Complexity: <input type="checkbox"/> I use longer sentences, often linked together with ANDs, BUTs, and/or ORs. <input type="checkbox"/> My ideas are organized, but lack development. <input type="checkbox"/> I can communicate my ideas easily with a good working vocabulary. Comprehensibility: <input type="checkbox"/> I'm understandable even though I make some errors. |
| A | Advanced | STUDENT CONSISTENTLY WRITES ABOVE INSTRUCTION LEVEL. Complexity: <input type="checkbox"/> I use long sentences, often linked together with BECAUSEs, SINCEs, and/or THEREFOREs. <input type="checkbox"/> My ideas are organized and fully developed. <input type="checkbox"/> I can easily communicate my ideas, often using more advanced vocabulary. Comprehensibility: <input type="checkbox"/> I'm easily understood because I make few errors. |

One thing I did well...

One thing I need to work on next time...

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| ✓ longer sentences | ✓ add details | ✓ add dialogue | ✓ organize ideas |
| ✓ increase vocabulary | ✓ verb tense | ✓ no English | |
| ✓ other: _____ | | | |

Name _____

Date _____

Number _____ at _____ minutes.

Quick Write

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