# Enhancing The Writing Skills of Deaf Students

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#### Overview

- Writing in the target academic language is often a frustrating and intimidating task for many Deaf students.
- Low performance in the "input" area of reading is often mirrored in the "output" domain of writing.
- Fluency is sign communication does not ensure fluency in a written modality.
- Level of access and mode of language fluency from parents at an early age can be a factor.
- Cultural barriers

# Considerations for Course Development

- Assess entry language skills heterogeneous aspect of social, personal and academic backgrounds
- Determine exit criteria of each level of target language instruction
- Consider the need for student motivation

#### Considerations (continued)

• Consider Instructional Needs of Students:

understanding the assignment

learning and choosing invention strategies

safe environment to experiment with ideas

understanding the recursive nature of writing

#### Considerations (contnued)

• Consider students' need for varying levels of feedback holistic summary feedback

concepts, logic, rhetorical mode(s), audience, thesis, paragraph level concerns

electronic (Word Insert) feedback

vocabulary, organization, sentence structure concerns, interfering grammar, support/development of ideas

one-on-one feedback

more detailed grammar, sentence structure, cohesiveness, coherence, editorial concerns

#### The Process of Writing

Writing is a Process of Discovering What You Want to Say

- Demonstrate the recursive nature of writing
- Admit/accept that writing is hard work
- Pre-writing

   list thoughts
   organize thoughts
   develop and expand thoughts
   establish focus and purpose
   consider audience

#### Writing Process (continued)

• First Draft

transformation of pre-writing introduction, body, conclusion/summary sentence transitions

Second Draft

 clarity of thought
 expansion
 transpositions
 sentence/paragraph transitions
 word choice

### Writing Process (continued)

- Third Draft
  - sentence variety
  - grammar surface mechanics proofreading/editing
- Final Copy

#### **Recommended Categories of Instruction**

- Isolated and blended rhetorical modes
- Topic, Purpose, Audience
- Thesis
- Organization
- Development of thought
- Support for ideas
- Clarity
- Coherence

#### Categories of Information (continued)

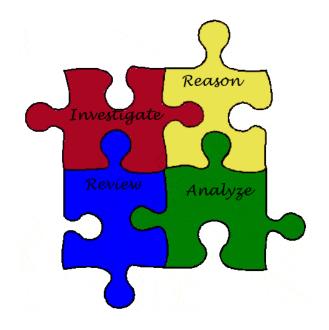
- Importance of drafting
- Importance of editing
- Importance of proofreading

#### **Evaluation Criteria**

- Provide listing of standards and grading criteria
- Provide grading rubric
- Provide samples/models of good writing
- Discuss/Analyze with class what makes these models of writing good examples

# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Writing Competencies

- Ability to
  - determine information needed
  - determine appropriate research mediums
  - critically review information retrieved: analyze and evaluate



# Writing Competencies (continued)

- Ability to -
  - synthesize information
  - understand the perspectives of others
  - appeal to appropriate audiences
  - apply information learned across academic disciplines and to future careers



#### **Future Directions**

• "Through enhanced composing opportunities, our students can become the citizen writers of the world and future"

Kathleen Blake Yancey, NCTE Past President

- Call to develop writing curricular that support all forms of 21<sup>st</sup> century literacies inside and outside of school
- Call to move beyond a pyramid-like sequential model of literary development
- Call to acknowledge multiple models of composing operating simultaneously

