

# THE GOAL IS COMMUNICATION

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Adult ESL Writing for the Goal of  
Communication

Presented by Staci Johnson

# Writing in the Adult ESL Classroom

1. Do you integrate writing into instruction or do you teach separate writing lessons?
2. How do you integrate writing into instruction?
3. What do you consider to be “writing skills”?
1. What preparation do you give your students before they write?

“As humans we seem to have a genetic disposition to write as well as to speak; and, if we meet an enabling environment, one that possesses certain characteristics and presents us with certain opportunities, we learn.”

*Noam Chomsky, 1972*

# Enabling Environments

An enabling environment is....

- learner-centered
- confidence building
- safe (mistakes are accepted)
- community building (with plenty of cooperation)
- practical and efficient
- FUN

# What is the goal?

COMMUNICATION

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# What is writing?

## MICRO SKILLS

- printing / handwriting
- spelling
- relationship between letters and sounds
- punctuation
- structures
- vocabulary
- written vs. spoken form

# Different Forms of Writing

Academic Forms (formal)	Survival Forms (formal/informal)	
Words Word lists	Words Word Lists (shopping, errands, etc.)	<p><b>Dependent</b></p>  <p><b>Independent</b></p>
Sentences and phrases	Filling out forms	
Paragraphs by combination and substitution (model)	Personal letters (with model) Postcards Notes	
Independent paragraphs	Personal notes	
Essays or multiple paragraphs Creative writing Note taking	Personal letters Stories Paragraph about personal preferences	
Rhetorical modes	Letters to complain or persuade (to editors, to landlords, cover letters)	

# Typical ESL Curricula

<b>LEVEL</b>	<b>SAMPLE DESIRED OUTCOMES</b>
<b>Literacy</b>	Filling out forms
<b>Beginning Low</b>	Writing 1-2 simple sentences
<b>Beginning High</b>	Writing 2-3 simple sentences
<b>Intermediate Low</b>	Writing a paragraph
<b>Intermediate High</b>	Writing a formal paragraph with a main idea (topic sentence), 2-3 supporting ideas and a conclusion
<b>Advanced</b>	Writing 2-3 paragraphs that describe a main idea



# Mission Statement

Give students  
challenging opportunities  
to be  
successful  
in their language-learning  
experience so they develop  
confidence and become  
independent, lifelong learners.

Ultimate Goal: **COMMUNICATION**

# The Writing Process

- Establish a Context (life-skill activity)
- Reading (life-skills, vocabulary, grammar)
- Pre-Writing (brainstorming, gathering ideas)
- Writing
- Editing
- Publishing

# Establish a Context



Who is Kenji talking to?  
Where is she?

# Establish a Context

## Chicago Community College District Student Survey

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

**Student Name:** Kenji Nakamura

**Date of Birth:** 1/10/1998

**Nationality:** Japanese

**Age:** 18

**Address:** 8825 South Hampton, Los Angeles, CA 90002

### FAMILY

**Marital Status:**  Single  Married  Divorced  Widow(er)

**Do you live with your parents?** yes

**How many brothers and sisters do you have?** 3

**Do you have children?** no

**How many children do you have?** 0

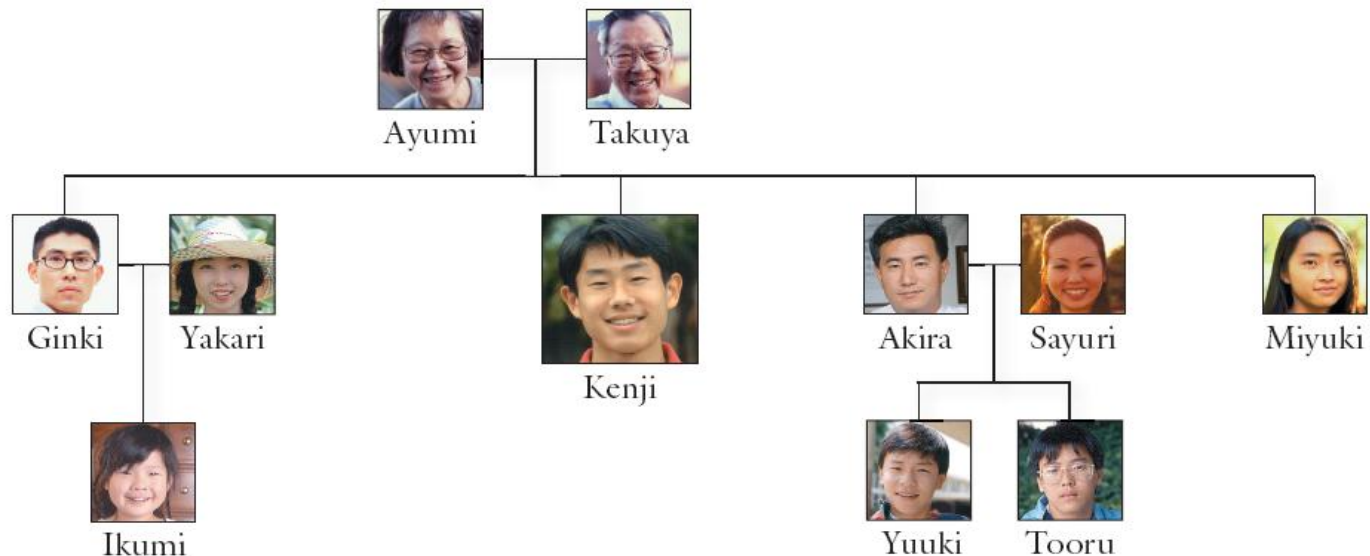
**Family members living in the U.S. but not in your home** *uncles and aunts*

**Family members living outside the U.S.** *grandparents*

# Establish a Context/Reading

(Life-skills, Vocabulary, Grammar)

*My name is Kenji Nakamura. I have a wonderful family. We live in the United States. I have one sister and two brothers. I also have uncles and an aunt here. My father has two brothers and no sisters. My mother has one brother and one sister. My grandparents are in Japan. I'm sad because they are not here with my family.*



# Reading

(model)



My name is Staci Johnson. I am from Long Beach, California. I am married and I have three children. My husband's name is Eric. My oldest daughter is Kate. She is 6 years old. Courtney is my second daughter. She is 4 years old. Ryland is my son. He is 2 years old. My husband and I are very busy!



# Reading

(model)



My name is Gilberto. I am from Mexico. I am single. I have three brothers and no sisters. I also have two uncles and two aunts. They live here. My parents live in Puebla, Mexico. My brothers live here in the United States. I love my family.

# Pre-Writing

<b>ME</b>
My Name
My Spouse
My Children:

<b>My Parents</b>
Father
Mother
Children:

<b>My Grandparents</b>
Grandfather
Grandmother
Children:

<b>My Grandparents</b>
Grandfather
Grandmother
Children:



# Pre-Writing

Complete the sentences about yourself.

1. I am from \_\_\_\_\_
2. I live in \_\_\_\_\_
3. I am \_\_\_\_\_ (married, single, divorced, etc.)
4. I have \_\_\_\_\_ brothers and \_\_\_\_\_ sisters.
5. My brothers and sisters live \_\_\_\_\_
6. My parents live \_\_\_\_\_
7. I have \_\_\_\_\_ children.
8. I have \_\_\_\_\_ daughters.
9. I have \_\_\_\_\_ sons.

# Writing

Using the model paragraphs  
and your pre-writing,  
write a paragraph about  
you and your family.

## Edit (for Content and Organization)

- The paragraph is about the writer.
- The paragraph is about specific family members.

Then...

## Edit (for Structure)

- All sentences start with capital letters.
- All sentences end in periods.
- All names start with capital letters.
- Use *live* for “I” and “they” and *lives* for “he” and “she”.

# PLANNING (pre-writing)

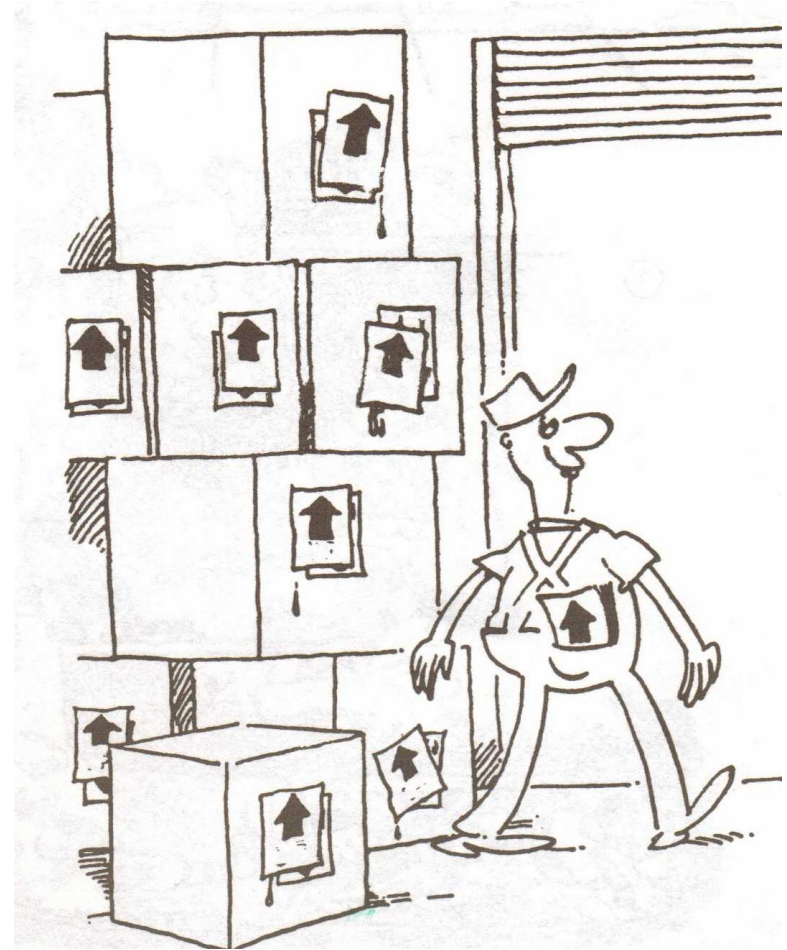
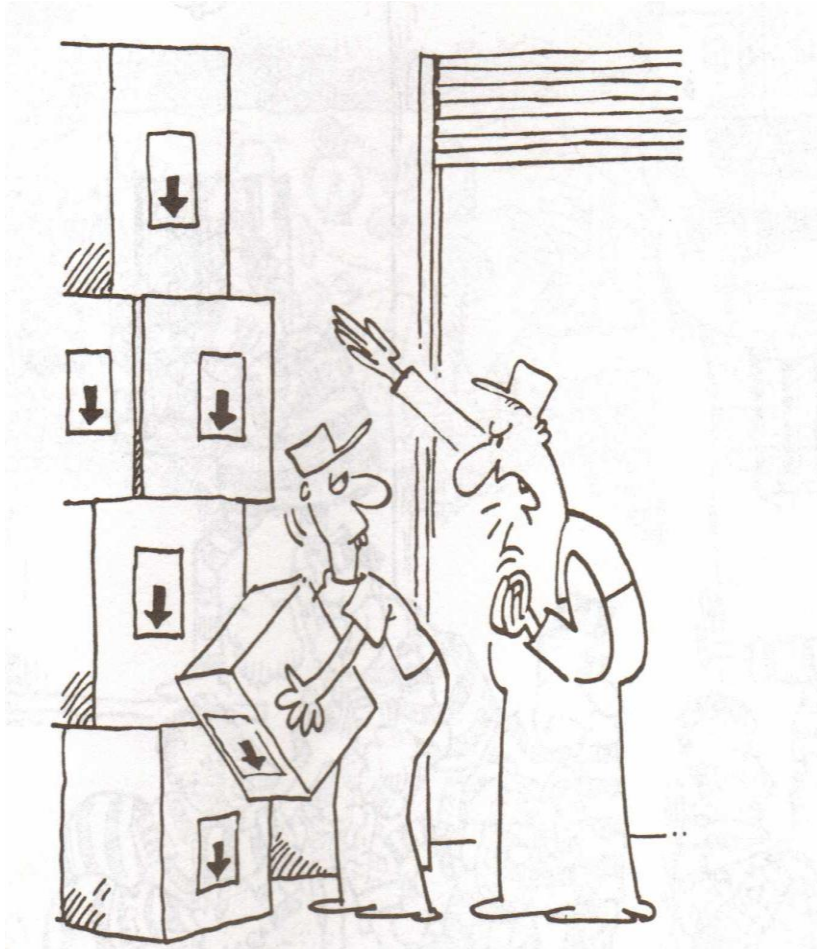
Current research in Community Colleges suggests that students don't use strategies to write. Specifically, they don't plan.

- Clusters / Mind maps
- Outlines
- Discussing topics with others
- Charts
- VENN Diagrams
- Classifying
- Organizing Paragraphs

# Writing Activities

- Picture Stories
- Round Robin
- Biopoems
- Quick Writes
- Journaling
- Summarizing
- Story in a bag
- Finish the story

# Picture Stories



More Comics and Conversations  
Jag Publications - 1991

# Round Robin

(a group writing where each person in a group contributes to the writing)

On the way to the presentation today, I saw something very strange. There was a man standing on the side of the road. *He waved at me as if he knew me.* Then he turned and ran away. In my rearview mirror, I saw him jumping up and down, waving at another car. *The car stopped.* The man got in the car.

# Biopoem

(a poem that describes a person in 11 lines)

## BIOPOEM FORMULA

(First name)

(Four adjectives that describe the person)

Son or Daughter of (parents' names)

Lover of (three different things that the person loves)

Who feels (three different feelings **and** when or where they are felt)

Who gives (three different things the person gives)

Who fears (three different fears the person has)

Who would like to see (three different things the person would like to see)

Who lives (a brief description of where the person lives)

(Last name)



# CONTACT

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