

Developing Motivation to Write Through Journalling

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What was observed...



- Writing is often an activity carried out without much anticipation nor enthusiasm.
- Young writers in Primary 1 to 3 had negative attitudes towards writing

Presentation in 3 parts:



- **Literature Review** on why this Differentiated Approach to Journalling
- How **motivation** is developed
- Educational **Implications** from the research findings



Part One

Literature Review



The importance of the prewriting process needs a structure:

- Lack of scaffolding
- Lack of clarity

negatively impacts the teaching of purposeful writing

(Don Murray, America's greatest writing teacher)

3 stages in the Writing Process



- Prewriting
- Writing
- Rewriting

These need guidance and preparation

(The Essential Don Murray: Lessons from America's greatest writing teacher, pg. 2)

Emotional Aspects of Writers

Bruner and Horn (2000)



Four clusters of conditions identified as key to this development:

1. **nurturing functional beliefs** about writing,
2. fostering engagement using **authentic writing** tasks,
3. providing a supportive **context** for writing
4. creating a **positive emotional environment** supports what the team has discovered.

Bandura (1994)



- beliefs on writing depend on how we think, behave and feel
- affects motivation to write

Applebee, Langer and Mullis, (1986)

- Being engaged deeply with **choice** over their writing and the need for **authentic writing** are crucial.



Journaling is defined here as...



the **voice** coming through an **experience**,
of **authentic thoughts** and **feelings**.

(Don Murray, pg. 136)

Differentiated Approach



- 85% Prewriting experience centred on topic choices, a prescribed methodology
- Motivation in writing is developmental
- Teacher-modelling in the writing process



Part Two

Motivation developed...



- Write a sentence or two
- Sentences make paragraphs
- Paragraphs come together to form continuous writing

Teacher models and writes with them...



- Starter-sentence frames help
- We write so that readers can experience the way we do, to “feel”, “see”, “smell”, “taste” and “touch”
- Teacher comments on the writer in the student

Starter- sentence frames:



- I love the June holidays because...
- I want to say...as I think...
- I felt the pain when I...

Examples of Starter-sentence fram



- Three things I wish to say to you about me are...
- I think the haze problem has to stop as it has...
- I feel that the school can be a better place if we have...

Six Traits of Writing



Voice

Ideas

Sentence Fluency

Conventions

Word Choice

Organisation



"Voice"

driven by purpose

"Word Choice"

driven by this need to **authentically**
convey to an audience

Teacher's comments on kids' journal entries



- Analysis of the "writer"
- Feedback is specific to this
- Reflective probes in the form of questions so that the emergent writer can further expand on his "ideas"

Teacher comments on journal entries:



- The words you chose made me feel so sad I cried when I read it.
- You clearly showed me what you were thinking of when you wrote this paragraph. I liked it!
- I love the thoughtshots (flashbacks) you used at the introduction of the story.



Reflective probes to develop the writer:

- Would you end the story in a different way if the character had not escaped?
- I am wondering if you were thinking of setting things right when you wrote this.
- Would a dialogue help communicate his/ her feelings better to readers?

The Writing Process



Source: <http://faculty.uoit.ca/hughes/Writing/WritingProcess.html>

9 Journal topics delivered within a prescribed structure



Lesson Plan 1: 3 Things I did in the June Holidays

Lesson Plan 2: Leaf 2 Activity

Lesson Plan 3: Three things / persons / events that make me happy.

Lesson Plan 4: "The five things I would like you to know about me."

Lesson Plan 5: "Write three reasons why you love Singapore"

Lesson Plan 6: "Three goals I have set for myself"

Lesson Plan 7: "How I celebrate SG 50 Singapore 50th National Day."

Lesson Plan 8: "How has the haze problem in Singapore affected me?"

Lesson Plan 9: "What are the things we like and do not like about our school? What are the things



Part Three

Results after 9 lessons show:



- Action research study support the literature on how students' **thought processes, feelings** and **ideas** on their writing can be shaped
- **Purposeful writing** can impact the whole writing process
- **Positive prewriting experiences** impacts self-efficacy beliefs in writing
- Reluctant writers have shown an increase in word length
- Survey shows a shift in perceptions towards writing

Survey on Primary Ones



Name	Post Survey						Pre Survey					
	Enjoy	Love	Feel	Help	I need	I feel	Enjoy	Love	Feel	Help	I need	I feel
P1_1	YES	YES	HAPPY	SOMETIMES	MORE HELP	CONFIDENT AND HAPPY	YES	NO	HAPPY	SOMETIMES	MORE HELP	STRESSED AND ANXIOUS
P1_2	YES	YES	HAPPY	SOMETIMES	LESS	CONFIDENT AND HAPPY	NO	NO	STRESSED	SOMETIMES	LESS	STRESSED AND ANXIOUS
P1_3	SOMETIMES	YES	HAPPY	NEVER	MORE HELP	STRESSED AND ANXIOUS	YES	YES	HAPPY	SOMETIMES	MORE HELP	CONFIDENT AND HAPPY
P1_4	YES	SOMETIMES	HAPPY	SOMETIMES	LESS	CONFIDENT AND HAPPY	YES	YES	HAPPY	SOMETIMES	LESS	CONFIDENT AND HAPPY
P1_5	YES	YES	HAPPY	NEVER	LESS	CONFIDENT AND HAPPY	YES	YES	STRESSED	SOMETIMES	LESS	CONFIDENT AND HAPPY
P1_6	YES	YES	HAPPY	SOMETIMES	LESS	CONFIDENT AND HAPPY	NO	SOMETIMES	STRESSED	NEVER	BLANK	FRUSTRATED AND LOST
P1_7	SOMETIMES	SOMETIMES	STRESSED	SOMETIMES	MORE HELP	FRUSTRATED AND LOST	YES	YES	HAPPY	SOMETIMES	LESS	CONFIDENT AND HAPPY
P1_8	NO	NO	HAPPY	ALWAYS	MORE HELP	STRESSED AND ANXIOUS	SOMETIMES	YES	STRESSED	SOMETIMES	BLANK	CONFIDENT AND HAPPY
P1_9	YES	SOMETIMES	STRESSED	NEVER	LESS	STRESSED AND ANXIOUS	SOMETIMES	SOMETIMES	STRESSED	SOMETIMES	LESS	CONFIDENT AND HAPPY
P1_10	YES	YES	HAPPY	NEVER	LESS	CONFIDENT AND HAPPY	NO	NO	STRESSED	NEVER	LESS	STRESSED AND ANXIOUS
P1_11	SOMETIMES	YES	HAPPY	NEVER	LESS	CONFIDENT AND HAPPY	NO	YES	HAPPY	NEVER	LESS	CONFIDENT AND HAPPY
P1_12	YES	SOMETIMES	HAPPY	SOMETIMES	LESS	CONFIDENT AND HAPPY	SOMETIMES	NO	STRESSED	SOMETIMES	LESS	CONFIDENT AND HAPPY
P1_13	YES	YES	HAPPY	SOMETIMES	MORE HELP	CONFIDENT AND HAPPY	SOMETIMES	SOMETIMES	HAPPY	SOMETIMES	MORE HELP	FRUSTRATED AND LOST

- an increase in word count on the preferred topics
- a positive change in response towards writing (special needs still need more support)

Data of averages of the Primary One candidates showing increase in word length in journal entries



Primary 1	Average Word Count	Average Word Count	
Pupil	9 Sessions	Before	Increase/Decrease
P1_1	27	22	5
P1_2	39	12	28
P1_3	25	13	12
P1_4	16	18	-2
P1_5	37	14	24
P1_6	36	31	5
P1_7	22	8	15
P1_8	25	10	16
P1_9	43	20	24
P1_10	54	20	34
P1_11	20	24	-5
P1_12	33	16	17
P1_13	17	15	3

Survey on Primary Twos



	Post Survey						Pre Survey					
	Enjoy	Love	Feel	Help	I need ...	I feel	Enjoy	Love	Feel	Help	I need...	I feel
P2_1	YES	SOME-TIMES	HAPPY	SOME-TIMES	LESS HELP	CONFIDENT AND HAPPY	SOME-TIMES	SOME-TIMES	STRESSED	NEVER	LESS HELP	STRESSED AND ANXIOUS
P2_2	NO	SOME-TIMES	STRESSED	SOME-TIMES	LESS HELP	CONFIDENT AND HAPPY	YES	SOME-TIMES	STRESSED	SOME-TIMES	LESS HELP	STRESSED AND ANXIOUS
P2_3	YES	YES	HAPPY	SOME-TIMES	LESS HELP	CONFIDENT AND HAPPY	SOME-TIMES	SOME-TIMES	HAPPY	SOME-TIMES	LESS HELP	STRESSED AND ANXIOUS
P2_4	SOME-TIMES	SOME-TIMES	STRESSED	ALWAYS	MORE HELP	STRESSED AND ANXIOUS	SOME-TIMES	SOME-TIMES	STRESSED	SOME-TIMES	MORE HELP	FRUSTRATED AND LOST
P2_5	SOME-TIMES	yes	STRESSED	SOME-TIMES	LESS HELP	STRESSED AND ANXIOUS	SOME-TIMES	YES	STRESSED	SOME-TIMES	LESS HELP	STRESSED AND ANXIOUS
P2_6	NO	NO	STRESSED	SOME-TIMES	LESS HELP	STRESSED AND ANXIOUS	NO	SOME-TIMES	SAD	SOME-TIMES	MORE HELP	FRUSTRATED AND LOST
P2_7	SOME-TIMES	SOME-TIMES	HAPPY	SOME-TIMES	MORE HELP	CONFIDENT AND HAPPY	SOME-TIMES	NO	STRESSED	SOME-TIMES	MORE HELP	FRUSTRATED AND LOST
P2_8	NO	NO	SAD	ALWAYS	MORE HELP	FRUSTRATED AND LOST	NO	NO	STRESSED	NEVER	MORE HELP	FRUSTRATED AND LOST

- 6 out of the 8 participants indicated a positive change in emotional response towards writing
- 7 out of 8 participants students had increase in the word count for the preferred topics

Data of averages of Primary 2 candidate showing increase in word length in journal entries



Primary 2	Average Word Count	Average Word Count	
Pupil	9 Sessions	Before	Increase/Decrease
P2_1	103	46	57
P2_2	47	30	17
P2_3	79	86	-7
P2_4	39	31	8
P2_5	109	74	35
P2_6	82	29	54
P2_7	62	30	32
P2_8	39	32	7

Survey on Primary Threes



Name	Post						Pre					
	Enjoy	Love	Feel	Help	I need...	I am ___ when I write	Enjoy	Love	Feel	Help	I need...	I am ___ when I write
P3_1	YES	SOME-TIMES	happy	never	Less help	Confident & Happy	SOME-TIMES	SOME-TIMES	Happy	Some-times	More help	Frustrated & lost
P3_2	SOME-TIMES	SOME-TIMES	happy	Some-times	More help	Stressed & anxious	SOME-TIMES	YES	sad	Some-times	Less help	Stressed & anxious
P3_3	SOME-TIMES	YES	happy	Some-times	More help	Stressed & anxious	SOME-TIMES	YES	happy	Some-times	More help	Stressed & anxious
P3_4	SOME-TIMES	SOME-TIMES	happy	Some-times	More help	Stressed & anxious	SOME-TIMES	SOME-TIMES	stressed	Some-times	More help	Frustrated & lost
P3_5	YES	YES	happy	Some-times	Less help	Confident & Happy	SOME-TIMES	SOME-TIMES	happy	Some-times	More help	Stressed & anxious
P3_6	YES	SOME-TIMES	happy	Some-times	More help	Confident & happy	SOME-TIMES	SOME-TIMES	happy/sad	Some-times	More help	Frustrated & lost
P3_7	NO	SOME-TIMES	stressed	always	Less help	Stressed & anxious	SOME-TIMES	NO	stressed	Some-times	More help	Frustrated & lost
P3_8	YES	NO	stressed	Some-times	Less help	Stressed & anxious	SOME-TIMES	NO	stressed	never	Less help	Stressed & anxious
P3_9	SOME-TIMES	SOME-TIMES	stressed	always	More help	Stressed & anxious	YES	NO	happy	never	Less help	Frustrated & lost
P3_10	SOME-TIMES	SOME-TIMES	happy	always	More help	Confident & happy	NO	NO	sad	Some-times	Less help	Stressed & anxious
P3_11	NO	SOME-TIMES	stressed	Some-times	Less help	Frustrated & lost	SOME-TIMES	SOME-TIMES	stressed	Some-times	More help	Frustrated & lost

- a significant increase in the word count for the preferred topics
- 7 out of the 11 participants indicated a positive change in emotional response towards writing

Data of averages of the Primary 3 candidates showing increase in word length in journal entries



Primary 3	Average Word Count	Average Word Count	
Pupil	9 Sessions	Before	Increase/Decrease
P3_1	170	38	132
P3_2	105	43	62
P3_3	96	42	54
P3_4	52	21	31
P3_5	83	37	46
P3_6	65	34	31
P3_7	96	41	55
P3_8	84	53	31
P3_9	71	22	49
P3_10	86	46	40
P3_11	86	48	38

The essence of this differentiated approach



- Proposes a real look at **meaningful** and **impactful experiences**
- Written for an **audience**
- Within the given **situation**

Educational implications



- This study is not about the teaching of writing but about reaching the writer.
- To activate the writer in the pupil, there is a need to create a positive emotional response to the written form.
- The young writer is allowed to discover their love for writing.
- Teachers need to break writing tasks into manageable parts. This helps the young writer process, experience and progress towards a complex task.

Acknowledgement



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