Designing and Teaching an Integrated Reading and Writing Course

By
Mitchel T. Burchfield, Ed.D.
Southwest Texas Junior College

Developmental Reading and Writing: A Winning Combination

Webinar Sponsored by Cengage Learning
February 23, 2012
Overview

- Purpose of this Webinar
  - Share Current Activities
- Key Concepts
  - Synergy
  - Affective Domain
- Rationale for Reading and Writing
- Example of How to Combine Instruction
  - Journal Assignments
  - Reading and Writing Assignments
Key Concepts

Definition of “Synergy”

The term “synergy” is derived from the Greek word “syn-ergos” or working together. For today let us say “synergy” happens when two or more things function together to produce a result which cannot be produced independently.
Key Concepts

Affective Domain

- Definition - This domain includes the manner in which we deal with things emotionally, such as feelings, values, appreciation, enthusiasms, motivations, and attitudes.

- When this domain is purposefully addressed in the instructional design, the phenomenon of “synergy” is facilitated.
Rationale

- Similar student learning outcomes
- Time savings for students
- Better utilization of resources
- Frequency, intensity, and duration
- Whole language approach
- Should lead to better completion and retention rates in “gatekeeper” courses.
Rationale:
Comparing Student Learning Objectives (SLO)

Reading SLO’s
- Identify purpose and tone.
- Recognize stated and implied main idea.
- Find and identify supporting details.
- Identify organizational patterns and signal words.
- Question, compare and evaluate reading material.
- Evaluate arguments; and employing critical reading skills.

Writing SLO’s
- Write essays that demonstrate awareness of the purpose and audience.
- Write essays that exhibit unity and focus.
- Use techniques to develop an essay topic with appropriate examples and logical support.
- The student writes essays that demonstrate effective organization.
- Use standard edited American English usage to revise and edit essays.
Rationale
SLO’s that are not as easy to match

Reading SLO’s

- Understand reading rate and techniques to improve his or her rate.
- Understand and interpret graphics.
- Build vocabulary through understanding context clues, structural analysis, and dictionary use.

Writing SLO’s

- Use effective sentence structure, including simple, compound, and complex sentences.
- Demonstrate understanding of the writing process by producing an essay that conforms to the THEA writing objectives in response to a writing prompt in a timed setting.
The challenge is to “think outside the box” for ways to combine the goals for specific courses to create the combined course.

This example shown addresses the highest level developmental education reading and writing courses at one college.

A similar method can be used to develop a combined reading and writing course for a lower level course.
Examples of concurrent sessions being offered in Texas.

- **Presentation #1** “The Integration of Reading and Writing in Developmental English” Hilda Barrow, Past President of NADE, Pitt Community College, North Carolina

- **Presentation #2** “Modeling Proficiency: Creating Effective Reading and Writing Undergraduate Courses” Leta Deithloff, Ph.D., The University of Texas – Austin

- **Presentation #3** “Two-for-One: Successfully Launching a Combined Reading/Writing Course” Dr. Lana Myers from Lone Star College - Montgomery
Group Activity #1

- During the next five minutes list the names of the three domains of learning (Bloom’s Taxonomy) and any levels of learning associated with each domain.

- [http://www.stedwards.edu/cte/content/category/13/27/51/#levels](http://www.stedwards.edu/cte/content/category/13/27/51/#levels)
Cognitive Domain

- Evaluation
- Synthesis
- Analysis
- Application
- Comprehension or Understanding
- Knowledge
Affective Domain

The five major categories list the simplest behavior to the most complex:

- **Receiving Phenomena**: Awareness, willingness to hear, selected attention.

- **Responding to Phenomena**: Active participation on the part of the learners.

- **Valuing**: The worth or value a person attaches to a particular object, phenomenon, or behavior.
Affective Domain

- **Organization**: Organizes values into priorities by contrasting different values, resolving conflicts between them, and creating an unique value system.

- **Internalizing values** (characterization): Has a value system that controls their behavior.
Example of How to Combine Reading and Writing

- Fluency to Clarity to Correctness
- Select readings that will address the affective domain
- Move from inward to outward with thematic units
  - Self
  - Family
  - Groups outside the family
  - Regional, national and world wide concerns
Example of How to Combine Reading and Writing

- The readings we choose for students, especially early in the semester, provide information about a subject or serve as models of effective essays. We provide readings that help students reinforce within themselves a sense of integrity, both personally and as part of a family.
As the semester progresses, one can introduce various themes reflected in a group of readings. Part IV of *Insightful Writing* contains readings grouped for:

- “Cultural Identities”
- “Work”
- “Consumerism”
- “Environment”
Example of How to Combine Reading and Writing

- Table of Contents of Insightful Writing
  - Introduction: addresses the student through articles on learning styles, a learning style inventory, and multiple intelligences.
  - Chapters 1-3 continue to focus on the student and the reading and writing process. Readings center on self discovery...e.g. article on Carlos Santana.
  - Chapter 4 focuses on the family. Readings focus on the family...e.g. Virginia Satir “Peoplemaking”
Group Activity #2

- During the next five minutes list some of the best journal assignments you have used with students.
Journal Assignments

- Reflect on your own life and write about some turning points or watersheds, that is, times when you have done one or more of the following with positive results:
  - 1) Assume responsibility for yourself.
  - 2) Make tough choices.
  - 3) Seek relationships that enrich your life.
  - 4) Affirm self-worth.
- Now write about the times when you have not done these things when you probably should have. (Note: In this and all writing and discussion activities for this class, you should never feel pressured to reveal anything about yourself that you would prefer to keep private.)
Reading Assignment

- Pre-reading Activity
- Reading (choose one or more):
  - David Sabrio, “Learning Styles”
  - David Sabrio and Mitchel Burchfield, “Multiple Intelligences”
  - Student Essay: Ricky Varela “My Hobby”
- Post-reading Activity
  - Optional quiz and vocabulary
  - Critical thinking opportunities
Writing Assignment

(from Chapter 1 of *Insightful Writing*)

- Write an essay in which you discuss some major failures and major successes when you attempted to learn something. Reflect back on your life and think of one or two instances in which you were very unsuccessful in learning something in school.
  - Also, think of one or two instances in which you were very unsuccessful in learning something not associated with school. What do these instances have in common?
  - Now think of some instances—both in school and out of school—in which you were very successful in learning something. What do these instances have in common? What is your PURPOSE for writing? Who will your READERS or AUDIENCE be?
Here is an example of a journal writing assignment based on a quote (Chapter 2 *Insightful Writing*).

“There is an Indian belief that everyone is a house of four rooms: a physical, a mental, an emotional and a spiritual room. Most of us tend to live in one room most of the time, but unless we go into every room every day, even if only to keep it aired, we are not complete.”

Rumer Godden, *House of Four Rooms*
Journal Writing Activity

In the quotation at the beginning of this chapter, Godden mentions four “rooms” that make up the “house” of one’s personality.

Write a few sentences describing the four rooms of your personality: the physical, the mental, the emotional, and the spiritual. In which “room” do you spend most time? Why? What people and experiences have influenced you in each of these four rooms? How have you changed over the years in terms of spending time in each room? In other words, do you spend less or more time in one or more rooms now than you used to? Why?
Reading Assignment

- Pre-reading Activity

- Reading (choose one or more):
  - Dianne Hales, "Getting Yourself Back on Track"
  - Ben Fong-Torres, “He Wails for the World”
  - Student Essay: Michael Verderber “An Alienated Asian”

- Post-reading Activity
  - Optional quiz and vocabulary
  - Critical thinking opportunities
Write an essay in which you discuss two or three major turning points in your life. What were they? When did they happen? How did you go about making any decisions that had to be made? In what positive or negative ways did these turning points affect you? Your audience or readers are your classmates and instructor, who would like to know more about you as a person. Your purpose is to give your readers some idea of the kinds of experiences that have helped to shape you into who you are. A secondary purpose may also be to help you understand yourself better.
Journal Assignments

- What are your short-term and long-term goals for yourself? How do you see your college work fitting into these goals? What major obstacles stand in the way of your reaching your goals?

- When you are not working or attending classes, what kinds of activities do you enjoy doing as hobbies or pastimes? Why do you enjoy these activities? How did you become interested in these activities?

- How do you feel about being in this particular writing class? What have you heard from students and teachers about this course? How do you think this course will or will not help you in your other courses?
During the last 100 years there have been cyclical educational movements involving holistic and reductionist theorizing.

- Should academic disciplines be so specialized?
- Is it better to teach the “whole” or the “parts” of a subject first?
- This debate is actually ancient. Starting with Aristotle and continuing to this day.
Conclusion

- They don’t care what you know but they need to know that you care.
- What are the “underlying principles” in this presentation?