Empower Students to be Creative through Motivation Activities

Kosimova Surayyo Salokhitdinovna

Teacher, The department of "Languages", Tashkent State Agrarian University

Abstract: Giving students the opportunity to be creative, through activities such as revising a story or changing its ending, can be a lot of fun, especially with students who have vivid imaginations. At the same time, the change in the routine from writing assignments individually to writing as a group can be very motivating for students who dislike writing in the first place. Furthermore, collaborative writing can be achieved using relatively simple techniques like the activity described in this article.

Motivation and enthusiasm also increase when students experience having their individual contribution and ideas accepted by the group and incorporated in the written product. Ede (2001) points out those student writers are likely to continue to use collaborative outside the classroom in their future jobs. Many professionals, such as engineers, chemists or psychologists, to mention a few, often write collaboratively, especially for projects require teamwork and group analysis. Students should be aware of this real life practice of collaborative writing so they will not see is classroom activity as merely school work but rather as something they will apply in ice their future careers. To effectively implement collaborative writing in the classroom, we must first consider the students' concerns about writing.

LI and L2 writers often face the same difficulties and doubts when trying to compose a piece. Therefore, we should provide our students with ample opportunity to interact in groups to share their ideas and concerns and to help each other deal with specific problems such as outlining, essay patterns, word c, or syntax. Having this network of fellow writers with similar problems and concerns can create a more sttess-free environment and thereby make any composition task less frustrating and more enjoyable. While writing collaboratively student writers will see their own written work as reading material for an intended audience. Raimes emphasized the importance of audience as a means of giving a sense of purpose to the task, so in expanding the audience from teacher to peers, the writing task becomes more purposeful and meaningful. Writing as an isolated activity, as has been the procedure in the traditional classroom, provides limited and delayed feedback to the writer. Widdowson points out that the writer in this case has to be both the initiator and the recipient of the discourse and consequently does not receive the necessary feedback and support. Collaborative writing, or the other hand, provides feedback and support right away, and the writer can know if the intended meaning is actually being communicated to the reader. First, poetry works as a medium to spark emotions when used in recitation and literary analysis.

Second, the poem is a relatively short form, as opposed to most prose forms, and a very effective one for a single class-hour exercise such as the one described in this article. Third, poetry allows students to free their emotions creatively. For these reasons, the work with this particular genre has been very successful with my composition class. Then on the board we did some clustering of ideas on the topic of anger. I asked them to recall how they expressed their anger when they

were little children. There was a wide range of responses, from some very serious ones to some more humorous ones such as, "I used to take off my clothes when I felt angry". These ideas and comments created a pleasant atmosphere in which to begin working together.

Keeping this in mind, I am always looking for good teaching techniques to stimulate creativity, motivation, and collaboration in my composition class. One of these techniques came from a workshop called "Tips for Teaching a Text "at the 2004 Panama TESOL Summer Seminar. The presenter demonstrated some useful techniques that integrate listen ing, speaking, reading and writing activities based on various motivating texts such as fables, songs and poems. He emphasized the importance of choosing texts appropriate for the age, level and interests of the students. The workshop participants had so much fur working with a poem about feelings that I decided to try a similar exercise with my university students. They also very much enjoyed the activity and produced some extraordinary writing samples. I decided to work with the poetry genre for the collaborative writing for a number of reasonsThe technology users reported positive attitudes toward collaborative writing, high levels of collaborative learning, and a favourable perception of Google Docs as a learning tool. Additionally, students who used Google Docs achieved higher levels of achievement on their writing assessments on average compared to controls. Collaborative poems can be created after reading any piece of fiction and even after reading a piece of nonfiction. With fiction, students will write from the point of view of a character. With nonfiction, the point of view students take on will depend on the text and its topic; it might be a historical figure, an animal, a building, a place, or an event. To get students started, you can either assign students to different characters or offer students a choice of characters.

Students who are assigned or choose the same character will be in a group together. Collaborative writing presents not only a highly motivating learning experience for EFL/ESL students but also a creative pedagogical tool for teachers. This type of activity can yield multiple positive results, including peer cooperation and increased motivation. When students work together on a writing assignment, they learn from each other and edit each others mistakes. First of all, what is collaborative writing? In essence, it means that the student teams up with one or more peers to go through the writing process of brainstorming, organizing, outlining, dating drafts, and agreeing on the final product. It sounds simple, but it requires careful planning to promote effective interpersonal communication, a key aspect in successful group work. In my country, the idea of collaborative writing is somewhat foreign to most students, so this different way of writing requires some initial training and practice. However, my Freshman Composition students at a U.S. university's branch campus in Panama, a group composed of a mixture of native and near-native speakers of English, were quick to adopt and benefit from the activity. It has also been interesting to see how collaboration brings personal satisfaction and boosts self-confidence for those students who feel a little overwhelmed by their writing tasks.

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