![SCAN — Student-Centered Assessment Network — Focused on Formative Assessment](logo)

Student-Centered Formative Assessment Change Routine

[Writing into the Day; Finding Our Writing Identities, English and 10th Grade]

Based on the work of Anne Barnhart (Westerly High School) as part of the Student-Centered Assessment Network (SCAN) with funding from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation https://www.scanetwork.org/

Problem of Practice

Students are more focused on completing a writing task than seeing themselves grow as writers. This change idea was an attempt to get students to think about writing and their relationship with it differently, to begin to grow their identities as *writers*. The idea aimed at leveraging individual goal setting, and eventually collective goal setting, to increase individual student confidence in their own writing and shift perception of their writing identities. Please note that this specific change idea occurred throughout an academic year, with two different iterations (individual and then collective goal setting) occurring over multiple PDSA cycles. The rationale is that students benefit from practicing individual goal setting and reflection, which better equips them to engage in collective goal setting with peers.

Measures

The students were given self-assessment tools to track the evolution of their writing identities. The teacher began with paper and shifted to Google forms for easier data analysis. Links below.

Individual Goal Setting-Paper Version
Writing Into the Day Group Goal Setting
End of Semester Reflection (Individual re: Group Goal Setting)

Procedure

Individual Goal Setting:

1. Set up a place/system (virtual or physical) for learners--including yourself!--to write everyday. This should be in a one-stop-spot for ease of access.
2. Teacher identifies this daily routine as "Writing Into the Day," so students associate this phrase with a low stakes exercise of writing daily for the purpose of growing their identities as writers.
3. Students fill out **Individual Goal Setting-Paper Version** or transfer this version onto a Google Form for ease of data collection.

4. Choose a writing skill focus (i.e. grammar, syntax, structure, etc) you-as-instructor would like to introduce to your students in a low-stakes way--for example *Harry Noden's Image Grammar "brushstrokes"*.
5. Teacher provides a writing prompt daily (can be a specific detailed prompt or more open-ended). The latter seemed easier for students to respond to and was a better match to help students grow as writers.
6. Students engage in multiple cycles with a mid- and end-of-year reflection as well.

Group Goal Setting:

7. Have student groups/tables/etc of 4-5 select one way they'd like to improve their writing and help them design a collective goal as a challenge--for example "use two brush strokes" or "write eight sentences" or "incorporate three specific pieces of evidence that build not list." In this case group assignments were random, and according to where students were seated geographically (already clustered in small groups).
8. Have students complete the **[Writing Into the Day Group Goal Setting](#)** form.
9. Hold the integrity of "Writing Into the Day" each and every class. Give students the task focus (i.e. use a semicolon or integrate one adjective phrase) AND encourage them to work to support each other in reaching the group's goal focus. Provide time for discussing in groups and as a whole group different strategies that are working/not working and help one another troubleshoot.
10. Distribute a jar per group. Have student groups put marbles into a jar if they meet their goals.
11. Have students reflect along the way in the margins, verbally, etc. to encourage focus on writing identity.

12.   Midway teacher shares whole class data to see how the class is doing in accomplishing their goals.
13.   Students set new group goals, and fill out the **Writing Into the Day Group Goal Setting** every cycle (5-classes) to make sure the goal setting process does not grow stale or lose momentum.
14.   At the end of the semester students fill out the **End of Semester Reflection (Individual re: Group Goal Setting)** form.
15.   Teacher shares relevant data with students from the end of semester reflection form.

Options: Students can have a once-a-cycle "bye" if they just need to write to process life. This is an important offering to be responsive to where students are and to hold true to the goal of increasing agency. Similarly, if a student is not feeling one of the prompts that day, they can free write--they are always welcome to free write, as long as they are also working to meet their collectively agreed-upon goal.

Note: This is absolutely not graded--this routine is designed to support low stakes opportunities to be playful, to draft, to grow capacity for play (as well as skill) in writing as a process, not only product. Additionally, overly academic prompts are often unsuccessful as students who do not identify as writers may shut down. Using images or music, crowdsourcing students for ideas, etc., helps keep it student-centered. Feel free to poll them often about what is working and what is not--they are always honest.

Key Resources

Individual Goal Setting:

Harry Noden's Image Grammar "brushstrokes"

Individual Goal Setting-Paper Version

Writing Into the Day End of Quarter Reflection (individual)

Group Goal Setting:

Writing Into the Day Group Goal Setting

End of Semester Reflection (Individual re: Group Goal Setting)

Variations

Stay tuned for future developments