Can Power Writing Help Sustain Writing Fluency and Stamina?

“[E]verything we write is fluent to us. The challenge is to know how comprehensible a piece of writing is for the reader. This is difficult because it’s nearly impossible for you, the writer, to know what it is like for your reader to not know something you know.” <http://bigthink.com/insights-of-genius/why-writing-fluently-is-hard>

**Objectives**

* Participants will learn about Power Writing
* Discussion about extensions for Power Writing
* Consider student examples

**Standards**

7.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

7.W.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

**Background**

Power Writing is a strategy that I have used with my 7th and 8th grade students for the past four years. I began using it when I was pursuing an earlier inquiry related to Power Writing and executive skill development. I found it a useful tool for task initiation with my students, and now I am interested to see if I can further expand its and discover if it will also enable me to help my students not only increase their writing fluency and stamina, but if it will sustain them when they truly need to write for an extended period of time.

**Lesson**

This lesson will familiarize the group with the Power Writing strategy. I will teach it by modeling and provide time for practice. We will write in this manner two separate times: once to practice, and once to evaluate.

* After I give a brief background of Power Writing, I will model how I use it in my class. The participants in the room will follow my example and do their own practice Power Write in their writer’s notebooks.
* Power Write Process:
  + Open to the next blank page in your writer’s notebook. Put the date at the top and copy down the two words I’m putting on the board.
  + Write: Pickles and Chocolate
  + When I say GO, you will circle the word you want to write about and then begin writing--quickly and put down everything that comes to mind when you think about that word. You will have 2 minutes to do this.
  + When time is up, you may finish your word, but stop and count your words and put that number in the margin.
  + A variety of extensions can be used here, or it can be a sharing time with a partner or with the class.
* After we have completed the 2 minutes, we will share with neighbor and notice the difference between what you and your partner have written.
* We will briefly recognize the noticings.
* I will give a short list of ways I have used this strategy; we will brainstorm and come up with a short list of other uses for Power Writing.
* The second writing will be used as an assessment.
  + Proceed as above with Power Write
  + Write: Reading and Writing on the board
  + When finished explain that everyone will continue to write for an additional 4 minutes
  + Notice: Was there a difference between starting with the first part of this and when you did the additional writing? Were you able to write more words? Was your writing more purposeful and clear? How can this help you when you need to create a long piece of writing?
* Show student examples of Power Writing

**Resources**

• Anderson, Jeff. 10 Things Every Writer Needs to Know.

• Fletcher, Ralph. Craft Lessons.

• Tensing Up: Moving from Fluency to Flair <http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource/190>

• School-wide Strategies for Managing Writing <http://www.interventioncentral.org/academic-interventions/writing/school-wide-strategies-managing-writing>

• Why Writing Fluently is so Hard <http://bigthink.com/insights-of-genius/why-writing-fluently-is-hard>

• The Write Way: Building Fluency with Students

<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/writing-fluency-classroom-elena-aguilar>

• Writing Fluency: A Key to Success on Next Generation Assessments

<https://www.teachingchannel.org/blog/2014/03/31/writing-fluency/>

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