

Class: Language Arts Tutorials

Topic: All about the writing process

Date: Tuesday (8:00 am - 9:30 am) EST

Writing Process and Skills for Writing Well are complementary courses designed to introduce you to some of the most useful, practical, and encouraging ideas and strategies for writing that we at the THM Sadaqa Group know about. We've gathered together the material for these courses for teaching adults and young adults, from research into writing practice, and from our own experience as writers.

Writing Process asks the question: *What steps do effective writers follow in going from a first draft to a finished paper?* The course lays out a basic process for prewriting, planning, and writing that you can adapt to fit your individual creative style.

Skills for Writing Well provides instruction and practice in communicating your ideas clearly and arranging the words you use in meaningful ways. Writing well is using language effectively – this is the purpose of the course.

What do you want these two courses to do for you?

If you were part of a planning team putting together ideas for the courses on writing process, what would you say must be included?

If others asked you how you feel about writing, what would you tell them?

Think about those questions for a few minutes. On a piece of paper, jot down any thoughts that come to mind. We'll come back to them soon in the first assignment of this course inshaAllah.

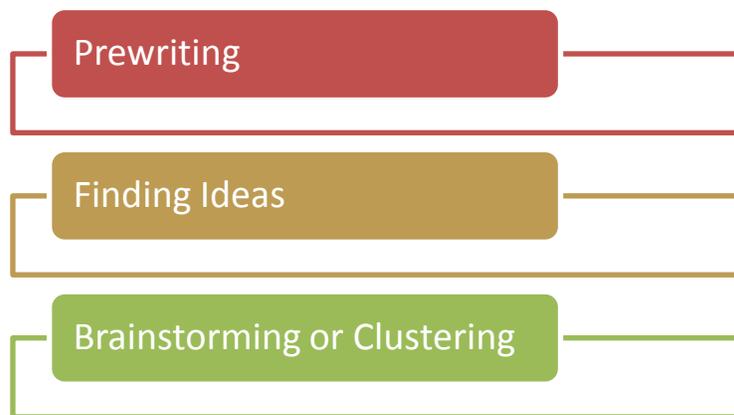
Our basic goal for the course is pretty simple -- we want to get you started on the path to writing well. To be a successful writer, you need to:

- Have something to say, something you want someone else to know about
- Know your audience, that is, who you're writing for and what they expect from you
- Practice and use a process for writing that works for you
- Arrange your ideas into patterns that are acceptable: in sentences, paragraphs, and essays and into academic forms such as summaries, analyses, explanations, and comparisons
- Pay attention to key elements of good writing, such as voice, purpose, focus, coherence and correctness
- Write with enthusiasm and personality!

This course focuses on **process**, on the steps a good writer goes through in putting together a paper, theme, or composition. The process involves **generating ideas** -- so that you have something to start working with -- and **planning the content and structure** -- so that you accomplish your writing purpose. In this course, we examine some common misunderstandings about writing. We pay attention to the relationship between writing and thinking, and reinforce the idea that the purpose of writing is to communicate meaning to another person or persons.

You may find this course different from other learning experiences with writing. For one thing, no papers will be handed back to you with red pencil corrections or without any teacher comments. You won't have to go to the front of a classroom to read something you've written! You won't be bombarded with a lot of rules or recipes for "correct" writing. We know that everyone has something to say and therefore our job as writing teachers is to help you discover your ideas and put them into words. Your teacher is a coach who will be your guide along the path to good writing, providing you with suggestions, fresh ways of looking at an issue or topic, and questions to spur your thinking. There is no such thing as a "failing" paper in the THM Sadaqa Group Online Homeschool Assistance program; there's only writing practice - learning to write through writing.

THM Sadaqa Group teachers will give your assignments their undivided attention. They will lead you through a series of revisions to a final product that demonstrates you've learned what a section or a portion of a section is teaching. You will have grown in both skills and understandings and have met the assignment's requirements.



Writing is a skill that can be developed and improved through instruction and practice. This course introduces a process that you can use in preparing any written assignment in homeschool, from brief summaries to longer reports. You will learn strategies that help you discover, explore, and arrange ideas before you ever start writing a paper. We think you'll find the writing ideas described in this course very useful and practical.

Writing is an important part of any student's school program. Knowing how to approach a writing assignment -- how to go from a first draft to a final paper -- will be one of your greatest assets for Academic success.

Your THM Sadaqa Group Language Arts Instructor will be your private writing coach, giving suggestions that she has developed just for you.



Course Outcomes

In Writing Process, you will demonstrate growth in areas such as:

Inventing ideas about a topic
Adapting ideas to fit your audience and your purpose for writing
Developing a strong focus in your writing
Finding your own voice
Organizing ideas into meaningful patterns
Developing a writing plan
Drafting your paper
Revising to a final version

Each writer should:

- establish focus
- develop content
- provide patterns of organization
- convey a sense of style
- demonstrate control of the conventions of standard written English

What to expect in this course

- **One** -- *Writing Your Way to Good Communication*-- asks you to tell a little about your background with writing. You'll read a very short story by Ernest Hemingway that illustrates the need for clear communication. And you'll be reminded of the powerful relationship between writing and thinking.
- **Two** -- *Prewriting, Invention Strategies That Work* -- introduces three techniques for collecting ideas and gives you a chance to try them out.
- **Three** -- *Planning the First Draft* -- explores some important things to think about when you're writing such as what your reason for writing is, what "focus" and "voice" are. You'll read several short pieces that are examples of these writing elements.
- **Four** -- *Writing a First Draft* -- gives you a basic plan to use in organizing your ideas and describe the three main parts of most writing assignments: the beginning, middle, and ending. You'll write a first draft of an essay in which you describe someone who is or has been important in your life.
- **Five** -- *Rewriting Your Way to a Final Version* -- describes the revision process. Your teacher will guide you through revision of your first draft. You'll finish the course with a final version of your paper inshaAllah.



Initially Drafting and Prewriting can be done in Pencil!

Writing and thinking, writing and learning

“Writing is mind traveling, destination unknown.”

Writing usually works out best when you let your mind go free, free to recall memories, to follow the thread of an idea where it wants to take you, to let the connections between ideas sizzle with the excitement of new meanings. You won't know exactly where you'll end up when you allow your mind to travel but you will discover a great deal about what you want to say in your writing.

Free Writing

 <p>This is a "fractal" image. The designer let his mind "go free" just as we want to do when we write.</p>	<p>What does this mean for you as a student? Can you really afford to "let your mind go free?" Don't you have to stick to the topic the teacher assigns? Don't you have to have all your ideas in place before you start writing? Well, yes and no! For classroom work or homework you'll need to write within the boundaries of the assignments; you'll want to focus on the topic and bring your ideas to a meaningful conclusion. But the point here is that as you write you'll want to keep yourself open to all the new thoughts and insights that will come to you. Because they will come! This is why writing is called a creative process. As you think and write - and then rewrite and rewrite - ideas will flow into your mind unexpectedly and you'll discover things about yourself and your subject that you didn't know when you started.</p>
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Thinking and writing are interdependent processes; they depend upon each other.

We think to write and we write to think.

Through writing we learn. This is such an important fact to recognize. Students sometimes think that by listening to a teacher and reading the textbook they will have accomplished the necessary learning. While these are both important ways of learning, which you will use continuously in class work, writing enables you to strengthen critical thinking skills - sometimes called *cognitive* skills - in unique and remarkable ways.

Writing calls for you to use cognitive skills of *interpretation, application, analysis, evaluation* and others in a very direct way.

Assignment 1.2: A writing biography

There are **two** versions of this assignment -- one for native speakers of English and one for speakers from countries other than the United States. Please choose the one that fits for you.

Read through all the questions before you start writing. Then answer each one, giving as much information as you can. Use the assignment form for your work. If you're not sure how to find the form, ask your teacher.

Assignment Version One: A writing biography for speakers from other countries

1. What is your earliest memory of learning to write in your own language? (We mean learning to write something like a letter or a note -- not learning how to print or write cursively.) About how old were you? Where did this happen?
2. What is your earliest memory of learning to write in English? About how old were you? Where did this happen?
3. What kinds of writing did you do in school in your own country? How did you feel about writing in these classes? What did your teachers' do that helped or did not help you learn to write?
4. Have you taken any writing classes here in this country? Tell what you learned, what helped you the most, how you felt about the classes.
5. Do you write letters, poems, stories or other forms of writing for fun? What kind of writing do you most like to do?
6. How do you feel about writing today?
7. What is the easiest part of writing for you?
8. What is the hardest part of writing for you?
9. What do you want to learn from this writing course? What do you want it to include?

Send your paragraphs to your teacher with the title: Section 1, Assignment 1.2. Your teacher will respond to what you've written. Don't wait for her response now, however. Keep moving ahead in the section.

Homework_1@thmteach.org

Assignment Version Two: A writing biography for native speakers of English

1. What is your earliest memory of learning to write? (We mean writing something like a letter or a note, not learning how to print or write cursively.) About how old were you? Where did this happen? What do you remember about the experience?

2. What do you remember about writing in school? What kinds of writing did you do? How did you feel about writing in those classes? What did your teachers' do that helped or did not help you learn to write?

3. Do you write letters, poems, a journal for pleasure?

4. What kind of writing do you most like to do?

5. How do you feel about writing today?

6. What is the easiest part of writing for you?

7. What is the hardest part of writing for you?

8. What do you want to learn from this writing course? What do you want it to include?

Send your paragraphs to your teacher with the title: Section 1, Assignment 1.2. Your teacher will respond to what you've written. Don't wait for her response now, however. Keep moving ahead in the section.

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