

Learning as Teaching: Engaging Students through Collaborative Publishing

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Presenters:

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University students create notes, essays, presentations, and other useful materials to fulfill course requirements. Most of these materials are discarded at the end of the semester or at the end of the degree; there is no perceived value in the work created. Our goal is to harness this development effort. The project is designed to engage past students in dialogue with peers currently in university programs by using their learning objects in the classroom after their completion of the course or program.

Boud, Cohen, and Sampson 2001 reciprocal peer learning:

“Peer teaching involves students learning from and with each other in ways which are mutually beneficial and involve sharing knowledge, ideas, and experience between participants. The emphasis is on the learning process, including the emotional support that students offer each other.”

Assignments:

Life altering event (250 – 300 words)
Letter to the editor (300 – 400 words)
Journalistic article (400 – 600 words)
Original short story (500 – 1000 words)
Research paper (1500 – 200 words)

+ Writing journal (18 entries about 200 words each)

Steps in Each Assignment:

1. Select topic based on criteria outlined for the assignment
2. Review sample works from previous students as models and inspirations
3. Discuss topics with peers – 10 minute to present topic to groups; group discusses topic in relation to project outline; peer interaction to mold the content, structure, and approach to the creation of the text
4. Write draft 1 – focus on content; no negative consequences; no grades at this point; unhindered creativity
5. Peer grammar corrections – students examine peer work and analyze them sentence by sentence, actively discussion areas they felt need to be corrected: subject/verb agreement; correct use of tenses; sentence structure; selection of appropriate vocabulary; justify changes. Professor walks about the room.

6. Peer review for content: meaning as intended; development of ideas; logical presentation; consistency in creative works; analyzing writing style.
7. Revisions and draft 2 incorporating peer revisions and corrections
8. Peer commentary to be sure the content met the requirements of the assignment.
9. Write final version and turn in to professor, along with the other two drafts.

Outcomes:

1. Student increased motivation
2. Student improved understanding of grammar
3. Student increased engagement in learning process
4. Student improved critical skills
5. Student and teacher were “on the same side”
6. Students were teachers and learners
7. Student work was creative, imaginative, and interesting
8. Students were less concerned about grades
9. Students were able to articulate and apply grammatical rules

Permission released by students for use in future classes and to be published on the web.

Student essays turned into learning objects (lessons, exams, learning aids)

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