

1.1 The Writing Process

Writing is a complex cognitive process that requires several stages to be accomplished accurately and successfully. One cannot just write something and have it be perfect on the first try.

The writing process (Graves 1983) gives learners a clear and structured framework for completing their writing through stages that allow them to plan, review, and develop work through discussions, sharing ideas, as well as feedback from peers or the teacher.

Recent studies have identified a set of foundations that must be taken into account while teaching writing:

- Taking into account the interests of learners (motivation to write and self-confidence to express more easily)
- Building both oral expression and written expression language abilities
- Giving **clear and detailed instructions** before independent writing to clarify expectations, including:
 - specific and clear prompts
 - the length of the text
 - the time in which the task is expected to be finished
 - the characteristics of the specific genre (if applicable)
- Establishing a rubric or checklist as a tool for formative assessment in partnership with learners (self-assessment)
- Providing a safe environment where writers can freely express without shyness or fear of making mistakes



The five steps of process writing are (Graves, 1983):

1. Pre-Writing or Brainstorming

During this primary stage, learners think about the topic at hand and jot down ideas. They write them in any order without much care about form or spelling. At this stage, the teacher helps learners tap into their prior knowledge and asks students to collect all the ideas they want to include in their writing before they start Step 2, which is drafting.

Steps for Implementation:

1. Learners brainstorm or generate ideas about a topic chosen by the teacher or selected by them based on the teacher's suggestions.
2. Learners try to organize their initial thoughts through drawings, maps, lists, or in any other random order that they like.
3. Learners refer to their prior knowledge and to information provided in the instructions or acquired from related reading to write the outline of the text according to the genre, the audience, and other factors.

2. Drafting

During this stage, learners do the actual writing. They develop and expand the ideas they have brainstormed, put them in order, and present them in a well-structured manner. This includes investing the acquired vocabulary, making connections to real-life experiences, and organizing ideas in a logical sequence that conveys meaning.

While drafting, the writers do not need to pay attention to correct spelling and grammatical errors. That will come at a later stage when they craft the story or text they want to produce.

3. Revising

Revising involves reviewing and altering the content and organization of ideas in a text to improve its overall **clarity, coherence, and structure**. The purpose of revising is to refine the paper's **ideas, arguments, and organization** to ensure that the writing effectively achieves its intended purpose to the audience. During the revision phase, writers focus on the "big picture" aspects of their work, by:

- adding, removing, or rearranging information to ensure that the text covers all necessary points and is well-organized.
- making sure the ideas are expressed clearly and are easy to understand.
- ensuring that the text flows logically from one idea to the next and that there is a clear connection between paragraphs and sections.
- expanding on ideas or arguments to provide more detailed explanations and support.

This step can be done by the students themselves, their peers, or a teacher using a rubric/checklist.

4. Editing

Editing is the process of reviewing and correcting the **technical aspects** (language and conventions) of writing, such as **grammar, punctuation, spelling, and formatting (capitalization, handwriting, etc.)**. The purpose of editing is to polish the text and eliminate any errors that could distract the reader or detract from the writing's overall quality. During the editing phase, writers focus on the "**small picture**" details, by:

- correcting sentence structure, verb tense, subject-verb agreement, and other grammatical issues.
- ensuring proper use of commas, periods, quotation marks, and other punctuation marks.
- identifying and correcting spelling errors.
- making sure the text adheres to any specific formatting guidelines, such as handwriting.

To facilitate the review process, the teacher might encourage learners to write down additions or improvements in a different color or on sticky notes in order to easily spot them when writing the second draft.

Writers at this stage are encouraged to self-assess relying on a checklist that includes elements related to conventions and language rules that they have learned so far and are expected to apply to their writing. The checklist might be displayed in the form of a poster for the whole class, or a copy could be provided by the teacher to each student for individual use.

Learners then write the final corrected version in preparation for the publication phase.

5. Publishing

After passing through the product- "polishing" stage, writers choose the method through which they seek to publish the text, it may be published electronically through one of the school websites, or a paper book. If the product is a story, the learner distributes the sentences over several pages in the form of a small book. The student is encouraged here to write in clear and neat handwriting. The book can then be added to the classroom or school library to be enjoyed during independent reading or lent out to other sections or classes. If it is a poster or advertisement, it can be displayed on the bulletin board inside or outside the classroom.