

Rachel Bennett
Candace Blankenship
English 574
Dr. Jonathan Bush
September 21, 2004

How does grammar fit into the writing process?

Grammar can fit into all parts of the writing process as a means of helping students form ideas through each stage of the process. During prewriting, teachers can teach grammar by incorporating mini-lessons into brainstorming activities (brush strokes). During drafting, grammar can be taught as a way to express the students' true feelings and emotions. During the final revision process, grammar polishes sentence structures and allows each sentence to flow to the next.

Grammar is most often considered a “polishing” technique that can only be incorporated at the end of the whole writing process. This, however, is not always the case. Grammar should be used and taught throughout the entire writing process. It is simply another way to make a student’s writing flourish and become a final production that they can truly be proud of.

Initially, students should be encouraged to get all of their ideas out. This means not worrying about how things actually look on the paper. During this brainstorming process, students can be encouraged to use effective grammar techniques. Some of these examples include having the students brainstorm by only writing down certain parts of speech such as nouns, adjectives, verbs, etc... As the students are writing, teachers can then have them write out a pre-draft, focusing on putting their simple parts of speech into sentences, complete with punctuation and subject/verb agreement.

For the next draft, students can be encouraged to use different grammar techniques to help their writing flow naturally such as using appositives, and making sure they are using modifiers correctly. Then, as students continue to peer edit and revise, teachers can have the students watch and make sure that certain grammatical issues which have been developed in class are being used correctly. The final product should be a fine-tuning of student pieces that has been worked on thoroughly. The piece should flow well with smooth transitions.

It is important to remember that these grammar sessions should only last around 15 minutes. Any lesson longer than that can cause the students to not pay attention, and would therefore be a waste of valuable class time. Each grammar lesson should be presented before the students work on their own writing so they can take away ideas from the lesson and then use them in their writing. Teachers should keep examples real, using ideas from student’s work or from real life sources such as the newspaper, magazine or school publication. Students will remember the concepts better when they are not coming from a dry and out of date textbook. Students will respond better to this method of teaching grammar and the writing process and the teacher will successfully be able to conquer two English issues at the same time, thus alleviating multiple lesson plans on each topic.

