

# **LANGUAGE IN INDIA**

**Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow**

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**Writing Across the Curriculum-  
Deaf Education  
English Class  
(Useful for the Hearing Children As Well)**

**Michelle Pandian, M.S.**

# WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM FOR DEAF EDUCATION - ENGLISH CLASS (Useful for the Hearing Children As Well!)

Michelle Pandian

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## **The Days of Dull and Boring English Class Are Over!**

There are many ways in which writing can be incorporated in interesting and engaging ways in English class. When most people my age think about writing in English class, we tend to drudge up old memories of diagramming sentences, writing sentences for our vocabulary words, and writing that one, boring, term paper about a subject assigned by the teacher which we worked on individually. Fortunately, at least method-wise, the days of the dull and boring English class are over.

## **Innovative Ways Are Now In!**

Today English teachers have literally hundreds of innovative ways to choose from for incorporating fun writing exercises in the English curriculum. For teaching literature in English class, several of these strategies include responding individually to the reading in a variety of written ways, making grammar and writing mini-lessons from the reading, and creating transcripts for a debate or a newscast based on the events or a conflict in the literature.

## **Responding to Literature**

If students are going to respond individually to the literature, it is a good idea for them to have a list of ways to respond and a journal in which to do their writing. Several ways to respond to literature include writing a letter to one of the characters, making a prediction as to what will happen next, writing an alternate conclusion, making a diary entry from the perspective of one of the characters, writing a note to the author based on something the student liked or disliked in the story with support for their opinion, explaining an aspect of the story that made them sad or emotional, giving their opinion about a character's actions, or even comparing the story to another story, real-life incident, or movie they have seen.

Writing such as these should be incorporated into class time after reading the excerpt, and students should have an opportunity to share their writing with partners or with the whole class.

### **Grammar and Writing Mini-lessons**

For grammar and writing mini-lessons, the students would first have to take a chapter from a book, act from a play, or stanza from a poem and pick out all the examples of a particular part of speech (like proper nouns, adjectives, adverbs, etc).

The students then make a list of all these words with a partner, try to double the list by adding words they can think of on their own in the same category, and then create a new short story, poem or act of a play using at least half those words.

### **Share the Stories With One Another**

Then, once the students had their stories written they could share them with another set of students. The two pairs would exchange stories and provide constructive feedback on the excerpts, after which the pairs would revise their original work.

### **Display the Work**

A section of the classroom can be designated where the students can display their revised and edited work as they continue working with that particular piece of literature. Or the class can construct a laminated “anthology” of stories from the class for each part of speech, for example, “The Bodacious Book of Colorful and Creative Student Adjective Stories,” or “Stories on the Move – Action Verb Stories.” These could be displayed on a table at the front of the classroom or even in the school library for a week.

### **Creating Materials With or Without Affective Nature**

When students create transcripts for a newscast or debate, it enables them to get directly involved with the material or ideas presented in the literature, as well as giving them practice writing dialogue – a writing style that troubles many people (hearing or deaf) with quotation marks and the placement of punctuation. It also gives them experience writing both with and without affective involvement.

Debates by nature involve an affective quality as the student has to “take sides” based upon their personal values regarding the subject. Newscasts, on the other hand, should be written from a completely objective point of view, presenting only the facts. Both of these types of writing can help students understand the affective component of writing as well as when and where it is appropriate.

### **These Help Integration of Skills**

These three examples, responding individually to literature in a variety of ways, creating part-of-speech stories, and writing newscasts or debates based upon the literature students are reading, all provide ways for students to interact with literature, increase

comprehension of the reading and topics involved, and provide avenues to incorporate writing in a painless and more enjoyable way in English class.

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