

Some techniques in teaching independent writing

The diversity of stories offers an interesting range of language choices. Hence it may help students use every piece of literature both as a resource and a guide for independent writing.

The first step in such an approach is teacher's annotations. They may be done through questions or commentaries concerning language patterns, story structure, literary style or art ideas. In such a way a teacher hints about the ways of framing sentences. It means to show the students that every story is a storehouse of useful sentence patterns that they can learn to take apart and reshape to fit their writing needs.

Then come such techniques as rearranging, transforming and expanding sentences. For example, while rearranging sentences students become aware of the concept of movable parts within a sentence while such linguistic activity as transforming a sentence helps students understand the function of each word. Then students gain even more flexibility in their use of language while expanding sentences. Thus they take another step in development of a personal style in writing.

As a rule these techniques are used by teachers for formation either lexical or grammatical habits but when students are proposed to write some composition they are forgotten and students are given a topic, a text-model and some plan with word combinations. However, such an approach is only the first stage in writing which lacks creative opportunities. We believe that a teacher is to go further and remember that writing is an extension of one's personality. So, once students get the notion of how to use selected sentences as language models, they can truly be on their way in writing and teachers will be amazed both by the quality and the quantity of their writing.