

Daniel J. Walton

Eng 513: Theories of Writing

Dr. Joyce Rain Anderson

Final Paper

A Three-layered approach to revision in the high school English Classroom

ABSTRACT: This paper grew out of a need to compromise covering requirements in a high school English classroom and the need to have students revise continuously. In eleven years of teaching high school English, I have found that the most significant way that students improve their writing is by working with their writing that already exists. They are forced to look closely at their mistakes and omissions, and they have to confront the reasons why they make those mistakes. It is only then that we can really talk about how to improve their writing. While researching revision techniques of experienced and beginning writers, I found that students should write one draft to find and argument, the next draft to organize and add to the argument, and a final draft where they work on style. I experimented with this layered approach with a group of sophomores. They wrote three versions of their own fairy tale, and they focused on different aspects of their writing in each version. I give examples of how each revision exercise affected two specific students throughout the revision process. My conclusion is that the final drafts are much more complex and stylistic than the original versions. The layered approach to revision allows students to create papers that are good in a number of different aspects because they focus on individual aspects of writing in each draft.

Teachers avoid having students revise their writing for a number of reasons: there is not enough time in the school year for correcting and re-writing; second and third drafts look conspicuously like first drafts; teachers don't know where to begin because it seems as if there are so many things for students to correct. I have found through research and experience that students need to revise in stages. Let me provide a metaphor for the revising process I am going to describe. I used to be fascinated by my mother's

college Biology textbook (probably *Grey's Anatomy*) because of the clear plastic pages that illustrated different systems of the human body. The skeletal system was the foundation; a clear overlay showed the muscular system; the next overlay showed the nervous system. When each clear page was on top of the next one, all systems were shown together and the human body, with all its systems, was complete. Revision is like that. A final draft is where different levels of revision come together, like those overlays, to form a complete piece of writing. When students revise in stages – with each stage focusing on a different aspect of writing – they can end up with a paper that strong in many facets of writing. If they try to revise all at once, it is difficult for them to focus on everything, and they tend to focus on nothing.

Although there are time constraints on our teaching, the benefits of revision, if it is done correctly, make the teaching of revision well-worth it. If we feel the need to move on the next unit, novel, or writing assignment without having students work closely with their writing, then their writing often remains stagnant. By working with students on different aspects of their writing in isolation, we can teach those aspects dramatically and with focus; all of those aspects will eventually converge to enhance their writing. Time restraints do exist, though, so three layers of revision will greatly benefit the students while allowing us to move on confidently to new novels and writing assignments. The first draft of an essay is where the students do not have to worry about organization, grammar, or style. Or, they can experiment with style and voice because they do not have to worry about how they sound – they will only keep what works by the final essay. The first draft is where the students find their arguments, a scheme for organization, and some content that works. Anne Lomott dramatizes this point in her

book Bird By Bird when she writes, “There may be something in the very last line of the very last paragraph on page six that you just love...but there was no way to get to this without first getting through the first five and a half pages” (23). The second draft is where students can build on the argument and organizational scheme that they discovered in the first draft. During the second draft, students add examples and discussion to strengthen their argument. The third draft is where students can focus on the style of their writing – their word choice, sentence structure, and their conciseness. Of course, in this draft, they can add to their content along the way to revising their style. Teachers can decide how much they want to correct or conference students in each step of the revision process. I will offer an example of how one of my classes went through the revision process. My class, a group of high school sophomores, wrote and revised fairy tales after they finished a unit in which they analyzed the importance of fairy tale. Obviously the revision process is different in some ways when students are writing literary analysis as opposed to creative writing, but the basic ideas of the three stages remain. Because the students were able to focus on one facet of their writing in each stage, the final products were much stronger than past classes that tried to do everything all at once.

Students can begin by outlining where they want to go with an essay or a story, but eventually they must begin writing, and many times they realize that the plans they made are not as successful as they looked in the planning stage. Students need to know that this is to be expected. If they expect every sentence they write to be perfect, then they might never begin the first sentence. However, if they feel the freedom just to write and then see what they can salvage from the initial draft, that freedom will allow them to

experiment with style and at least let their thoughts out onto the page. I gave my students Anne Lamott's essay called "Shitty First Drafts" so that they could see the freedom that comes with not worrying about the first draft. Nancy Sommers, in "Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Adult Writers," shows that experienced writers use their first draft to simply write themselves into an argument. She interviewed a number of experienced writers and they all seemed to say the same thing about first drafts. They "describe their primary objective when revising as finding the form or shape of their argument... Their first drafts are usually scattered attempts to define their territory" (50). For the first draft of the fairy tales that my students wrote, they had to follow a set of "focus correction areas." These areas were to develop an interesting plot; use seven archetypes found in fairy tales; and use dialogue where it is needed in the story. They were all able to use the archetypes, such as a forest, a river, a cave, or a princess. They struggled with the plot and the dialogue in many cases, but they were able to generate ideas that they could develop in the next revision. I made comments only about the plot; I gave recommendations as to where things didn't make sense or where some plot elements could come together or be magnified. The difficulty was to lead them somewhere without giving them the plot. I also gave them an example of dialogue and action from a Sherman Alexi book to show them the technical side of writing dialogue and also the ways that it can be used to develop characters. After looking at the Alexi piece, they chose a section of their story and added dialogue and action. The students began to find ways to develop their stories, or, in some cases, they scrapped the story and took only a few elements to branch off of to create a whole new story.

When I graded the first drafts, I felt free from circling spelling and grammar mistakes because the focus was the content and structure. In Sondra Perl's paper entitled "The Composing Process of Unskilled College Writers," she examines the things that cause unskilled writers to lack fluency in their writing. In discussing one of her case studies, she comments that, "While editing fit into his overall recursive pattern, it simultaneously interrupted the composing rhythm he had just initiated" (26). The same writer, when writing in the "reflexive mode," which is more personal, opinion-based writing, he "produced more words with less planning and generally less time...suggesting that his greater fluency lay in this mode" (27). If the students see comments about content mixed with spelling corrections, they could be distracted from what should be their focus – the overall story. Pearl comments that "their lack of proficiency may be attributable to the way in which premature and rigid attempts to correct and edit their work truncate the flow of composing" (31). I did not want students to worry about the minutia as they were writing, so they could be free to write creatively. Grammar and spelling were not focus areas in the first draft, nor were they a focus in the second draft. I did not want those things, which can "truncate the flow of composing" for high school students, to stop their freedom to focus on the content of their writing.

The second draft is where the students look at the first draft and see what argument they have begun to make or at least to get inspiration for the arguments they want to make. They can also pick points that they made in their first draft and reorganize them in their second draft. They should arrive at an organizational scheme during this stage, and it is actually here that an outline becomes more useful because they are putting together their argument and organization. As Perl says, "writing led to planning which

led to clarifying which led to more writing” (32). Here she is commenting on beginning writers who were doing this as they wrote their first drafts, which stunted their first drafts; instead, this process is useful when looking back at their first drafts in which they wrote with little concern for planning. She says that she learned that “Seeing ideas on paper enables students to reflect upon, change and develop those ideas further” (32). I hoped that when the students looked at their stories after a week, they would generate new, creative ideas with some recommendations from me. They still wouldn’t worry about editing; instead they would focus on the plot and the dialogue.

In working with their first drafts, I wanted students to look at their writing in new ways, and use what worked but throw away what did not. Nancy Sommers quotes one of the experienced writers in her study as saying that he needed, “a first draft to figure out what to say. A second draft to see a structure of an argument buried beneath the surface” (52). Many students found a basic structure of their fairy tale, but they changed main characters who were animals or friends on the football team to archetypal characters from fairy tales. In an essay on “Radical Revision” Juanita Willingham describes how one revision technique that can be used for creative writing worked for her. She describes how Travis Cearley, a teacher at the Missouri Writing Project, taught her to “take apart a piece of writing and then come at the same subject from a different direction” (1). Students can take a story they wrote and change the point of view, change the order of events, or even write about the same subject but in a different genre. She says that “Meaning often transcends genre or even subject. Students need to be taught that revision can mean starting something new” (1). I had my students take a piece of their fairy tales and write it from a first person point of view of one of the characters. In a few

cases, the different point of view resulted in a “cracked fairy tale” where the writer creates empathy for the witch or the wolf while exploiting the stereotypical archetypes of the princess and prince. In other cases, it caused them to change the entire story to the first person, and even if they did not do that, they found that there were many details about the characters that they could explore – characters’ feelings and thoughts. The technique was very effective in getting students to think deeper about their stories. Lori Ozvold, in “Helping Students Add Voice to Their Writing,” writes about a similar technique in teaching voice to her students. For a non-fiction writing assignments, her students wrote the same essay, but for different audiences. This freedom made the students aware that there is actually such thing as voice, and that they should focus on who their audience is and how they should revise their writing for that audience.

I will use two student examples to show how isolating specific facets of writing, such as dialogue and action can help students to revise their writing. These students also listened to some of my advice, not about specific plot points, but about general concerns such as where to add dialogue and where the story should be more complex. Ruby wrote one of the most limited stories for her first draft. It was a little more than half of a page in length, it contained three lines of dialogue, and it had a simple and completely unfulfilling plot. It was about squirrels. Three squirrels wanted to marry the princess squirrel, so they went on a quest to find valuable acorns. The one who found a golden acorn was given the princess’s hand in marriage, but the princess decided that she wanted to find her own prince, so the squirrels went away unhappy. The end. During class, Ruby added dialogue to the beginning in order to show the thoughts of the characters, and at home she used the same technique to add dialogue throughout the story. She also

improved her dialogue technique by breaking it out of the paragraphs and by punctuating correctly. The dialogue greatly expanded the characters and made the story move at a storytelling pace in which the reader became interested in the characters and the plot. She also used the basic premise for her story, but she made the squirrels into humans, and they had to find specific items for the king. She turned the items from acorns to a diamond dagger, a silver sword, and a golden arrow. Through dialogue, one of the men reveals his love for the princess, and she heard him because she was following them. The princess gets captured by a beast, and two of the brothers refuse to use their valuable weapons, but the third shoots his arrow and kills the beast. The king does not accept him because he lost the arrow, but the princess demands that she choose, and they live happily ever after. It was apparent from Ruby's limited first version that she wanted to allow her princess to choose her prince; she wanted to give her autonomy and strength which fairy princesses normally lack. This was her message, whether she knew it or not. She was able to keep that message but use it so that it fit seamlessly within the plot. She found her argument in her first draft, and then she added content and substance during revision.

Another student, Emily, wrote a story in which three daughters travel to a ball, but they are warned about the frozen pond. The oldest takes a long way around the pond; the middle sister skirts the edges of the pond where it is most frozen, and the youngest tries to cross the middle. The youngest arrives first, but she is soaking wet and cannot dance with the eligible bachelor; the oldest arrives very late and cannot dance with him; but the middle sister arrives early but dry, so she gets him for her prize. Again, the message is clear – be wise and make careful decisions, but do not be too cautious. This is a nice lesson, but it is a story with absolutely no tension. Emily added a great amount of

internal thoughts to show what each character was thinking. This was effective because it allowed her to show the older daughter wandering off the path chasing animals in the woods because she could not focus on her task. It also allowed Emily to add tension during an action scene that she added to the story. When the youngest daughter falls through the ice, she is captured by a beast that lives under the ice, and he traps her until she can say a magic word. The middle daughter comes to the rescue, and they work together to escape. The words she says to the monster direct the sister to a branch she can use, and other words divert the beast so she can hit him over the head. Emily was able to add action to a boring story while maintaining her basic lesson. She was also able to add the element of sibling communication to her story. The exercise where she wrote a piece in the first person helped her to add internal dialogue, which added a texture to a story that was flat.

Once students have an organized their thoughts and supported their argument with examples and details, they can finally concentrate on style without taking away from their content. Students need to read their drafts aloud in order to begin hearing where they need to fix the clarity of their sentences. Many of the writers in Perl's study "consistently voiced complete sentences when composing aloud but only transcribed partial sentences" (29). When my students came in with their second version, the first thing they did was to read it aloud to themselves and correct awkward sentences or other things like spelling and punctuation. In "Style Matters," Richard Leahy states that "Style is distinct from correctness because it is concerned not with observing the conventions of the language, but with choosing among alternate sentence structures and word choices that are equally correct to produce graceful, clear writing" (1). He recommends using examples of how

authors affect the meaning of their writing by using different stylistic strategies. He gives a perfect example from Joan Didion's satirical essay about the California governor's mansion. In the essay Didion uses repetition of beginning words and phrases (basically parallel structure) to make his point that the mansion is a waste of money. He then lists advice on how to revise for style. His primary focus is sentence length, which is a concept that high school writers can understand and revise for in their writing. Varying sentence structure and length is, for Leahy, a key to developing a clear and effective style. Of course, you must teach students how to create compound and complex sentence structures, but "Once you know the types, what do you do with them?" (4). He offers an exercise that can help student focus on sentence length. Students should write a passage with sentences of no more than eighteen words, and each sentence must be at least four words longer or shorter than the previous one. He says, "Varied length is powerful, especially if the short sentences carry the most important statements. It is sometimes effective to have two long or two short sentences in a row – as long as the others around them are of different length" (5).

After my students read their second drafts aloud and fixed obvious mistakes, I had them think about style. I showed them different styles in painting, music, and literature. I then showed them student examples of different styles, and I told them that content comes first, but style is a way to separate themselves from the maddening crowd of high school writers. The first exercise they did was to look for adjectives in their writing describe with verbs instead. This, of course was only successful if they had used adjectives in their writing, so I changed in mid lesson and had them add adjectives to one piece of description. Then I had them take some of the adjectives and say the same thing

but with colorful verbs. In Emily's reflection she wrote, "I used the computer thesaurus to get a variety of words to choose from. Some examples of verbs I added include: embarked, shimmered, illuminated, announced, abandoned, glared, and mumbled." Her use of the word "abandoned" in place of "left" to describe the oldest sister shows how one word can change the feeling of a story. She actively betrayed the two youngest sisters. In Ruby's writing, she changes "the three young men were relaxing" to "lazily lounging," which shows them as uncaring and self-absorbed rather than just calm. Instead of the sun being "hot", it was "steaming," and instead of Jackson loving Clarissa, he "couldn't stand another minute of seeing her in despair." This exercise was moderately effective throughout the class, but in many cases, the students began thinking about verb driven writing, and it added an element of energy to their writing.

I then tried Leahy's exercise with varying sentence length. I had students take a paragraph of description and action and re-write so that the lines were four words shorter or longer than the previous sentence. I also had them use one very long compound sentence with a conjunctive adverb; additionally, I had them find a spot to use two short sentences back-to-back for dramatic effect. While the students focused a little too much on counting words, the exercise caused them to deal closely with their sentences, and the majority of them were able to use the two short sentences in a row to add some emphasis. At one point in Emily's paper she changed "She still walked at a normal pace, and felt no sense of urgency," to "She still walked at a normal pace. She felt no sense of urgency." This was nice because the short sentences show a lack of urgency in the writing which reflects the thoughts of the character. Ruby commented on her realization that she need to look at her sentences and add to them or break them apart to affect the flow of her

writing. At one point she writes, “The princess’ name was Clarissa, and she also wanted someone to love, but her father the king would never allow that.” She revised it to be, “The princess’ name was Clarissa. She wanted someone to love. Her father the king would never allow that.” While the third short sentence adds chopiness to the writing, the first two make the reader focus on the princess’s primary desire for love, which of course runs the whole story. There are a number of style exercises to use with students, but these specific ones helped them to focus on the flow of their sentences and the power of their verbs. For sophomore, just showing them that revising is more than spelling and punctuation opens up new avenues of thinking about writing.

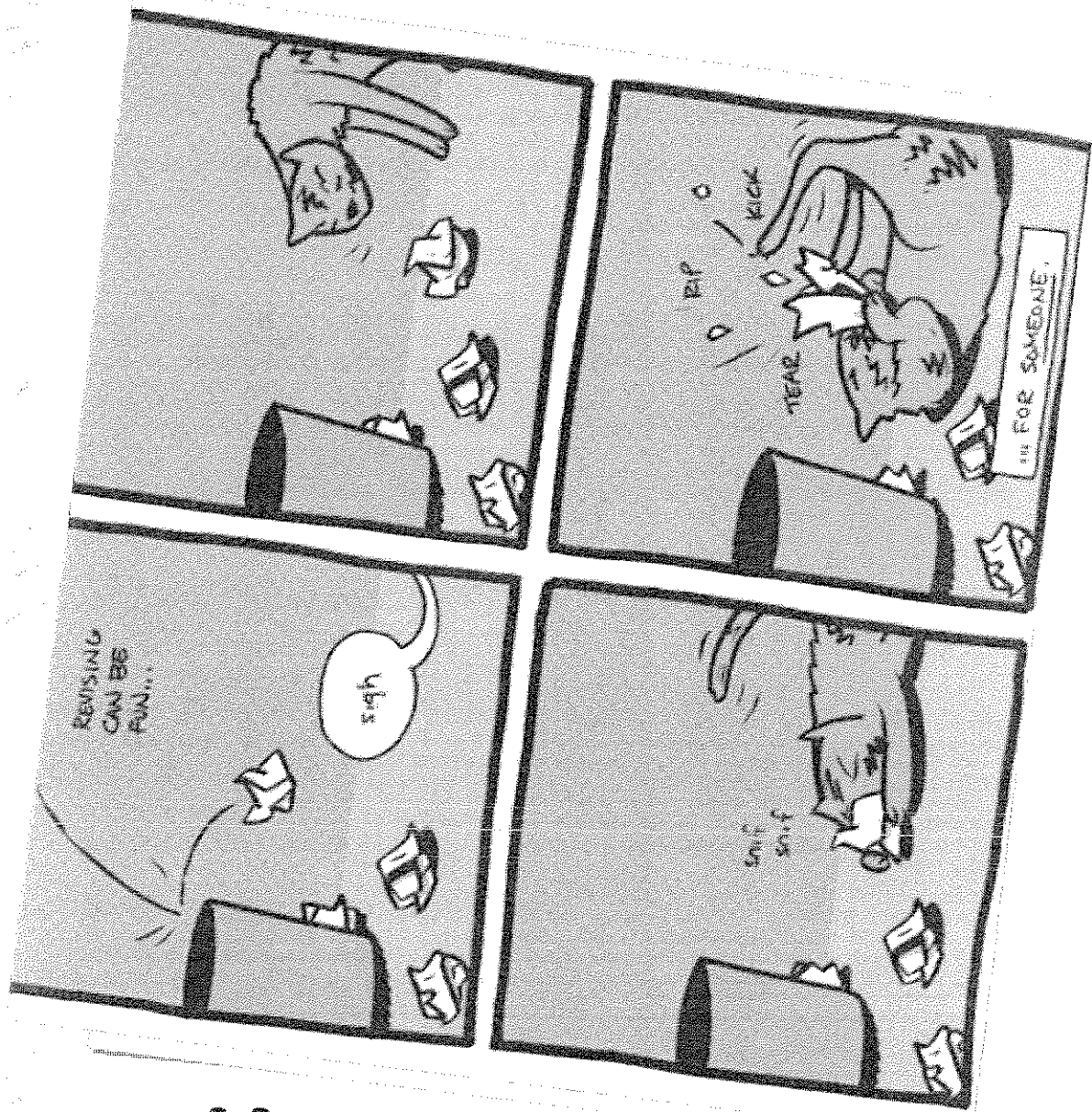
In “The Best Way to Teach Good Writing is One Step at a Time,” Randy Koch gives examples of the layered approach to revision, but he takes writers through a great number of steps such as revising for specifics, revising weak verbs, revising for sensory details, revising for sentence length, and more. But what he does say is that “I’ve committed myself to teaching writing one step at a time rather than overwhelming students with several things at once” (2). When we grade student writing we tend to correct spelling, organization, grammar, and details all at once, and the students feel overloaded with what to focus on. If we layer the revision process, students can isolate things they want to correct, and the process will be very effective. Many of my students, in reflecting on what they’ve learned about their revision process, said that two drafts is enough for them. Emily said, “When I revise a first time, I try to cover both areas of content and style.” Students can find what revision techniques work best for them, but by teaching the layered approach, we are showing them what to revise for, whether they

revise over many drafts or all at once. In the end, at least they realize, as Ruby wrote, “I think my tale is written well, but just like everything, it could be better.”

Works Cited

- Koch, Randy. "The Best Way to Teach Good Writing is One Step at a Time." *The Quarterly*. 26 (2004).
- Lamott, Anne. *Bird by bird* Doubleday: New York (1994).
- Leahy, Richard. "Style Matters." *College Teaching*. 43 (1995) 7-13.
- Ozvold, Lori. "Helping Students Add Voice to Their Writing." *Teaching and Change*. 4 (1997): 312-324.
- Perl, Sondra. "The Composing Process of Unskilled College Writers." *Cross Talk in Comp Theory: A Reader* Ed. Victor Villanueva. Urbana: NCTE (2003) 17-42.
- Schauster, Edgar H. "Sentence Comparison: An Activity for Teaching Style." *English Journal*. 94 (2005): 94-98.
- Sommers, Nancy. "Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced adult Writers." *Cross Talk in Comp Theory: A Reader* Ed. Victor Villanueva. Urbana: NCTE (2003) 43-54.
- Willingham, Juanita. "Radical Revision: My Road from Fairy Tale to Catharsis." *The Quarterly*. 26 (2004).

Revision: A Three- layered Approach

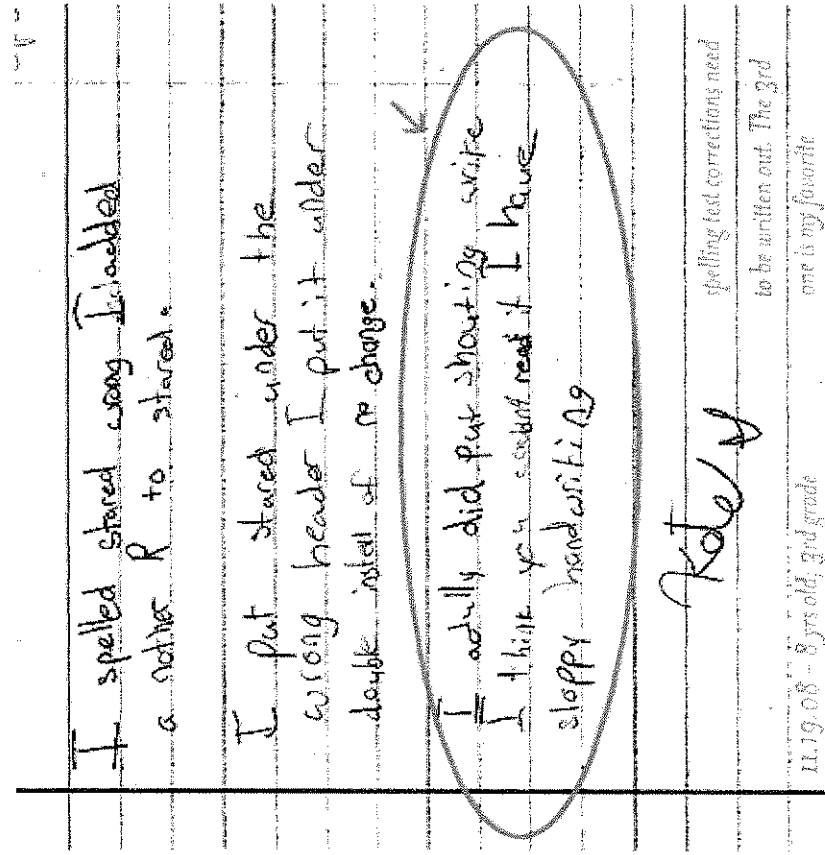


REVISION: Step One

- The first draft is where the students find their arguments, a scheme for organization, and some content that works. Anne Lomott dramatizes this point in her book Bird By Bird when she writes, “There may be something in the very last line of the very last paragraph on page six that you just love...but there was no way to get to this without first getting through the first five and a half pages” (23).

Focus only on content

- Pearl comments that “their lack of proficiency may be attributable to the way in which premature and rigid attempts to correct and edit their work truncate the flow of composing” (31). I did not want students to worry about the minutia as they were writing, so they could be free to write creatively. Grammar and spelling were not focus areas in the first draft, nor were they a focus in the second draft



Finding the shape

- Nancy Sommers, in “Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Adult Writers,” shows that experienced writers use their first draft to simply write themselves into an argument.
- They “describe their primary objective when revising as finding the form or shape of their argument... Their first drafts are usually scattered attempts to define their territory” (50). My students worked on writing creative fairy tales after we completed a unit in which they analyzed the metaphorical meaning of fairy tales. For the first draft they had to follow a set of “focus correction areas.” These areas were to develop an interesting plot; use seven archetypes found in fairy tales; and use dialogue where it is needed in the story.

Step two: re-organizing / adding content

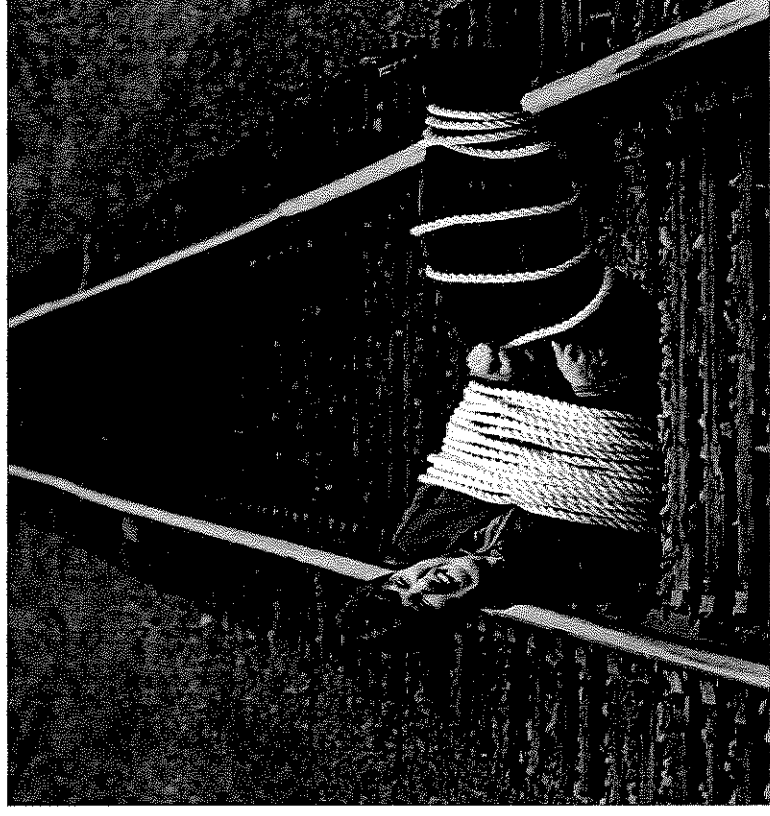
- The second draft is where the students look at the first draft and see what argument they have begun to make or at least to get inspiration for the arguments they want to make. They can also pick points that they made in their first draft and reorganize them in their second draft. They should arrive at an organizational scheme during this stage, and it is actually here that an outline becomes more useful because they are putting together their argument and organization. As Perl says, “writing led to planning which led to clarifying which led to more writing” (32).
- In an essay on “Radical Revision” Juanita Willingham describes how Travis Cearley, a teacher at the Missouri Writing Project, taught her to “take apart a piece of writing and then come at the same subject from a different direction” (1). Students can take a story they wrote and change the point of view, change the order of events, or even write about the same subject but in a different genre. She says that “Meaning often transcends genre or even subject. Students need to be taught that revision can mean starting something new” (1).

A boring but useful 1st draft:

- The exercise where Emily wrote a piece in the first person helped her to add internal dialogue, which added a texture to a story that was flat.
- She wrote a story in which three daughters travel to a ball, but they are warned about the frozen pond. The oldest takes a long way around the pond; the middle sister skirts the edges of the pond where it is most frozen, and the youngest tries to cross the middle. The youngest arrives first, but she is soaking wet and cannot dance with the eligible bachelor; the oldest arrives very late and cannot dance with him; but the middle sister arrives early but dry, so she gets him for her prize.
- The message is clear – be wise and make careful decisions, but do not be too cautious. This is a nice lesson, but it is a story with absolutely no tension.
- Emily added a great amount of internal thoughts to show what each character was thinking. This was effective because it allowed her to show the older daughter wandering off the path chasing animals in the woods because she could not focus on her task. It also allowed Emily to add tension during an action scene that she added to the story.
- She also added a monster who lived under the ice. The middle sister had to work with the youngest to free her, so sibling teamwork became a theme.

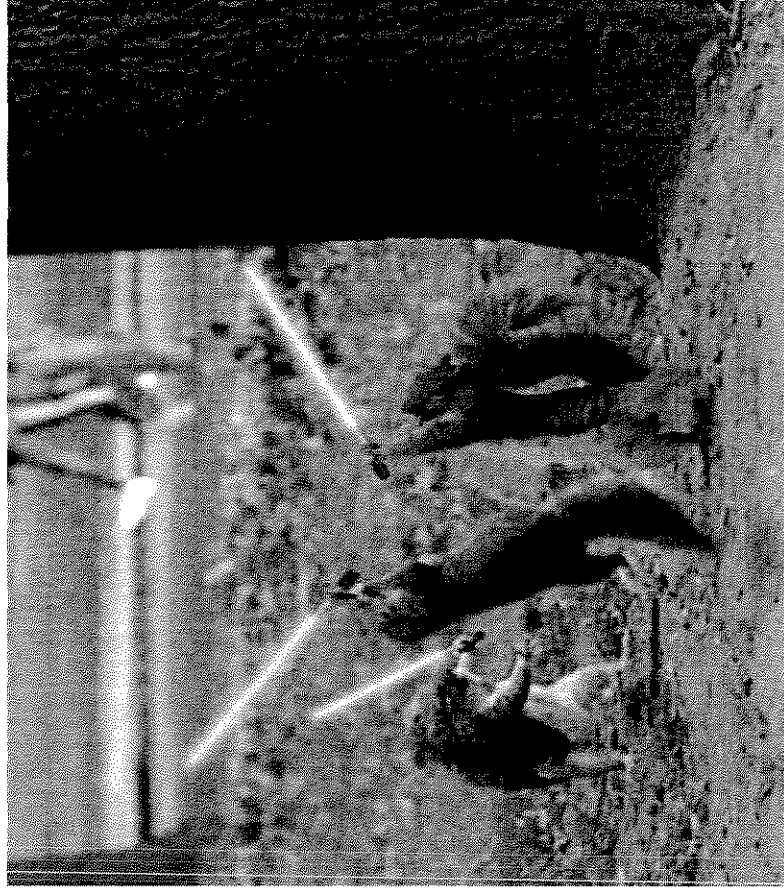
Providing examples

- I gave them an example of dialogue and action from a Sherman Alexi book to show them the technical side of writing dialogue and also the ways that it can be used to develop characters. After looking at the Alexi piece, they chose a section of their story and added dialogue and action. The students began to find ways to develop their stories, or, in some cases, they scrapped the story and took only a few elements to branch off of to create a whole new story.



Finding the argument

- Ruby wrote one of the most limited stories for her first draft. It was a little more than half of a page in length, it contained three lines of dialogue, and it had a simple and completely unfulfilling plot. It was about squirrels. Three squirrels wanted to marry the princess squirrel, so they went on a quest to find valuable acorns. The one who found a golden acorn was given the princess's hand in marriage, but the princess decided that she wanted to find her own prince, so the squirrels went away unhappy. The end.



She made the squirrels into humans, and they had to find specific items for the king.

- She turned the items from acorns to a diamond dagger, a silver sword, and a golden arrow.
- Through dialogue, one of the men reveals his love for the princess, and she heard him because she was following them.
- The princess gets captured by a beast, and two of the brothers refuse to use their valuable weapons, but the third shoots his arrow and kills the beast.
- The king does not accept him because he lost the arrow, but the princess demands that she choose, and they live happily ever after.
- It was apparent from Ruby's limited first version that she wanted to allow her princess to choose her prince; she wanted to give her autonomy and strength which fairy princesses normally lack. This was her message, whether she knew it or not. She was able to keep that message but use it so that it fit seamlessly within the plot. She found her argument in her first draft, and then she added content and substance during revision.

Step three: Style

- Once students have an organized their thoughts and supported their argument with examples and details, they can finally concentrate on style without taking away from their content. Winston weathers said that to better interest students in style, a teacher should “say that style is the proof of a human being’s individuality...a gesture of personal freedom against inflexible states of mind.” .



STYLE: Colorful Verbs

I tell students that style is a way to separate themselves from the maddening crowd of high school writers. The first exercise they did was to look for adjectives in their writing describe with verbs instead. This, of course was only successful if they had used adjectives in their writing, so I changed in mid lesson and had them add adjectives to one piece of description. Then I had them take some of the adjectives and say the same thing but with colorful verbs.

Verbs: Student examples

- In Emily's reflection she wrote, "I used the computer thesaurus to get a variety of words to choose from. Some examples of verbs I added include: embarked, shimmered, illuminated, announced, abandoned, glared, and mumbled." Her use of the word "abandoned" in place of "left" to describe the oldest sister shows how one word can change the feeling of a story.
- In Ruby's writing, she changes "the three young men were relaxing" to "lazily lounging," which shows them as uncaring and self-absorbed rather than just calm. Instead of the sun being "hot", it was "steaming," and instead of Jackson loving Clarissa, he "couldn't stand another minute of seeing her in despair."

Style: sentence structure

- In “Style Matters,” Richard Leahy states that varying sentence structure and length is a key to developing a clear and effective style. Of course, you must teach students how to create compound and complex sentence structures, but “Once you know the types, what do you do with them?” (4).
- He offers an exercise that can help student focus on sentence length. Students should write a passage with sentences of no more than eighteen words, and each sentence must be at least four words longer or shorter than the previous one. He says, “Varied length is powerful, especially if the short sentences carry the most important statements. It is sometimes effective to have two long or two short sentences in a row – as long as the others around them are of different length” (5).

Sentence Structure: Student examples

- At one point in Emily's paper she changed "She still walked at a normal pace, and felt no sense of urgency," to "She still walked at a normal pace. She felt no sense of urgency." This was nice because the short sentences show a lack of urgency in the writing which reflects the thoughts of the character.
- At one point, Ruby wrote, "The princess' name was Clarissa, and she also wanted someone to love, but her father the king would never allow that."
- She changed it to read, "The princess' name was Clarissa. She wanted someone to love. Her father the king would never allow that."

Results:

- In “The Best Way to Teach Good Writing is One Step at a Time,” Randy Koch says “I’ve committed myself to teaching writing one step at a time rather than overwhelming students with several things at once” (2).
- When we grade student writing we tend to correct spelling, organization, grammar, and details all at once, and the students feel overloaded with what to focus on. If we layer the revision process, students can isolate things they want to correct, and the process will be very effective.
- Many of my students, in reflecting on what they’ve learned about their revision process, said that two drafts is enough for them. Emily said, “When I revise a first time, I try to cover both areas of content and style.” Students can find what revision techniques work best for them, but by teaching the layered approach, we are showing them what to revise for, whether they revise over many drafts or all at once.
- In the end, at least they realize, as Ruby wrote, “I think my tale is written well, but just like everything, it could be better.”