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Reflecting

WHY do you teach "writing"?

- a. I love writing myself, am enthusiastic, and convey that feeling to the student who in turn responds to my teaching and produces flowing written communication.
- b. I teach "language arts" and it is a component of the curriculum.
- c. The school says I should.
- d. The region says I have to.
- e. The state mandates it.
- f. It's in the textbook I use.
- g. I don't know why.

Why do **YOU** teach "writing"?

- a. I believe that no matter what subject and which children I teach, all need to be able to communicate their knowledge and feelings competently through written and verbal forms.
- b. I teach language arts and it's part of my assigned responsibilities.
- c. I don't know.

Why do you **TEACH** "writing"?

- a. The vast majority of people do not know a process for generating ideas, organizing the ideas, and creating flowing communication.
- b. I don't. I teach science.
- c. I don't. I teach social studies.
- d. I don't. I teach maths.
- e. I don't. I teach music.
- f. I don't. I teach art.
- g. I don't. I'm an administrator.

Why do you teach "**WRITING**"?

- a. To promote effective communication between and among people.
- b. It is part of my curriculum in the fourth unit after parts of speech.
- c. Because the textbook made it a lesson in every chapter.
- d. I don't. I teach science.
- e. I don't. I teach social studies.
- f. I don't. I teach maths.
- g. I don't. I teach music.
- h. I don't. I teach art.
- i. I don't. I'm an administrator.



A Framework

FOR IDEA TRANSFER AND MANIPULATION

MINDMAPPING

We do not lack ideas; they can be multiplied through the deliberate interplay of the right and left hemispheres. We have a process for tapping that richness: brainstorming. **MindMapping presents a right hemisphere visual framework for those ideas from which to produce the written product.** The framework allows fantasy and imagination, language rhythms, patterns, associations and metaphors to emerge into an **organizational framework** to then be explained, elaborated upon, connected, clarified, edited, refined, revised and applied by the left hemisphere.

*** And how does mindMapping occur?**

MindMapping is a vital and dynamic component of the communication process. It is the stage of the writing process between idea generating and written product.

Although the left hemisphere may initially resist the process and path of the mindMap, with practice, **this technique can be used for technical writing and speaking, administrative program planning, teacher organization of interdisciplinary programs, activities and products, and provision for unique learning styles.**

MindMapping begins with simple **brainstorming** techniques. Many of the **creativity components** (fluency, flexibility, elaboration, originality and risk taking) can then be used in the written framework. SCAMPER techniques (substitution, combination, adaptation, modification, putting to other usage, elaboration, and rearrangement) are utilized, even for technical products.

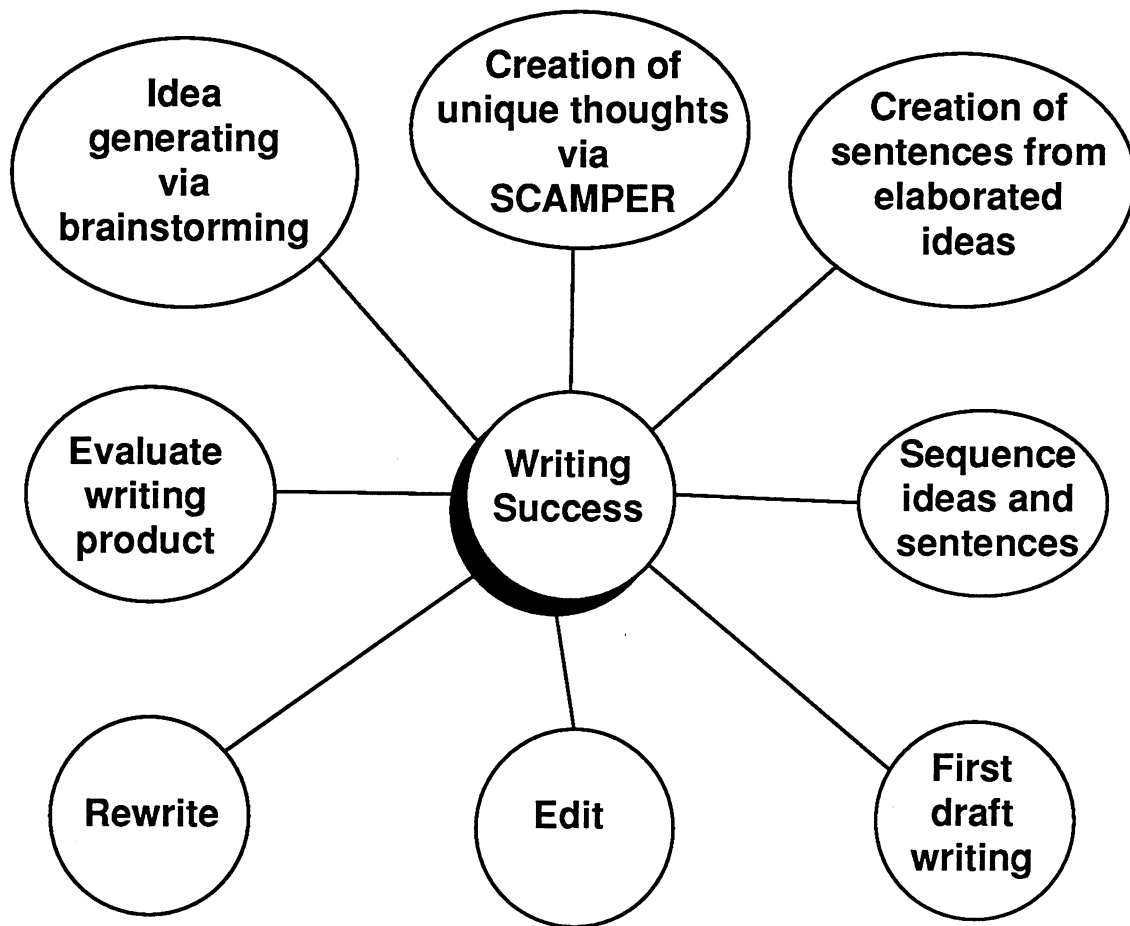
At some point in the brainstorming process while ideas are being placed on the mindMap framework, the right hemisphere experiences an "aha", **a topic for writing becomes clear to the writer. A purposeful direction** of thought is taken over by the left hemisphere.

Part of the mindMap may be left or discarded. A new mindMap may emerge using the chosen topic as the new centre or focus.



The learner is then led to **elaborating, sequencing and connecting** ideas, moves to **sentence structuring**, and ends in **paragraph formation**. Informal research shows **spelling, grammatical errors and poor usage lessen** when using this technique because the student becomes more involved in the whole than in each of its technical parts. Research also tells us **the more students write, the better their reading, writing and spelling will become**.

MindMap of Writing Success



The process of mindMapping ideas stimulates the flow of thoughts to produce a written, verbal, abstract or concrete product. Organizing concepts in this manner is a viable alternative to outlining. Right brain dominant learners are surely benefactors of the mindMapping process.





MindMapping Experiences

“DEALING WITH FEELINGS”

● Lesson One Listing and Brainstorming

Ask students to think about things that smell, have special textures, have a distinct taste, are recognizable sounds, are easily identifiable when seen, and elicit strong emotions. Discuss both good and bad things involving the senses. Brainstorm a class list or share in small groups. Then have students make individual choices by making a **list** of "Yums" and "Yuks". These items must involve the senses directly. To help students:

Find magazine pictures of those things students do and do **not** like that involve the senses. Students may want to bring items to share with classmates.

Have students draw things involving the senses. Let other students guess what is happening in the picture and what sense is involved.

● Lesson Two Listing and Brainstorming in a Framework

Make an overhead transparency of "*Dealing with Feelings*". This will allow students to learn the mindMapping format as you show them the **focus** (Things I (*Don't*) Like) and the **links** (to see, to smell, to touch, to hear, to taste). Fill in your own mindMap as the students watch where, how, and why — What do you think of when you think of (**focus**) or (**link**)? — circles are filled in.

Distribute the student page "*Dealing with Feelings*". Let students choose *likes* or *dislikes* for the focus and have them complete the mindMap.

● Lesson Three Listing and Brainstorming

Ask students to pick one of the topics (**link**) that involves the senses. Have them **list** all the reasons they like or do not like the link. Have them think about how they would explain their feelings to someone else. Follow-up with a written assignment entitled "I Feel".

