

# Using Models in the Second-Language Writing Classroom

**A**t a conference I attended, dedicated to the topic of teaching writing to second-language writers, a debate raged as to whether writing models should be provided for students. On the one hand, many conference attendees (the majority of whom were writing instructors) agreed that models help students understand how to produce a piece of writing in a specific genre. On the other hand, some attendees argued that students simply copy the models they are given—seeing the models as an ideal to replicate rather than as a guide for producing their own original texts. One attendee gave the example of a student who, when asked to write his own resume on an exam, copied word-for-word information from a model resume and turned it in as his own—that is, the educational background and work history he provided were taken straight from the model resume.

As an instructor at a university in the same country, I was warned not to give writing models to students because the students would just copy them. However, without any writing models and scaffolding, students in this context had no idea how to produce a piece of writing—precisely because most of their previous writing education had rewarded them (in assignments and on exams) for reproducing model texts exactly or almost exactly as they were in the original. Those students had not learned how to compose or to use models as a tool. We must be sensitive to our learners' previous educational experiences and teach accordingly, but to suggest that we teach writing without models is the polar opposite of principles based on an educational system that has relied on and rewarded students for having memorized full blocks of text. It also runs contrary to primary pedagogical principles: "The whole edifice of education is premised on the idea that the knowledge and skills required for particular tasks can

be identified, analyzed, and taught before engaging in those tasks" (Hyland 2004, 3).

We do not want our students to copy models, but it would be a mistake to ask our students to produce genre-specific writing without them (Harmer 2004). Hyland (2004, 1) defines *genres* as "resources for getting things done using language: they represent a repertoire of responses that we can call on to engage in recurring situations." Common genres in the writing classroom are the essay (expository, narrative, persuasive, etc.), summary writing, and the research paper. While we aim to produce original pieces of writing, most of us rely on writing models to guide us. If we need to write a master's thesis, we first read completed master's theses related to our field of study. Could we imagine writing a grant proposal without seeing a few models? Wallace and Wray (2011) suggest that reading journal articles is an important part of learning how to write them.

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Even an assignment of freewriting might be better understood through models for those not familiar with the concept. When I recently assigned journal writing to a group of teachers in a teacher-training program, some asked to see models. It was not enough for them to be told that they could write freely on any topic. In researching this article, I was able to find arguments that an overemphasis on models—and analysis of models—might be overly prescriptive (Dudley-Evans 1997; Dudley-Evans and St. John 1998; Harmer 2004) and that use of models too early in the writing process could inhibit creativity (Kroll 2003; Raimes 1983; Spack 1984; Watson 1982). However, I was unable to find any literature that argued for an absolute abstinence approach of teaching writing without models, and I have yet to find any writing textbook devoid of models.

The problem is not the writing models themselves, but how we use models for teaching writing. It is not enough to simply give students models and expect them to produce their own original pieces of writing (Gallagher 2015). So, then, how can we work with models in the writing classroom in a way that helps students see models as instruments to guide their writing? The purpose of this article is to answer that question. By the end of the article, the reader will understand what makes a model text appropriate for students, the features of writing that can be analyzed in a model text, when to introduce models in the writing process, and different ways to use models.

### INTERCULTURAL RHETORIC

An important argument for the use of models is that nonnative English speakers might be expected to write in a rhetorical mode different from that of their native cultures. Students will typically use the writing conventions they are accustomed to; however,

these traditions might not always transfer across cultures (Panetta 2001). For instance, while Western writers typically favor a linear style in which the main idea is introduced early on and then followed with support, some cultures prefer to state the main idea at the end (Ryan 2000), while other cultures might only imply a thesis statement or main idea without ever stating it directly. In one context I worked in, lengthy introductions on applications for jobs and scholarships were expected and admired, but the Americans who read these applications were sometimes frustrated that these writers did not get to the point sooner. Without any clear models demonstrating the expected rhetorical mode, though, it was difficult, if not impossible, for the applicants to know what they were expected to produce.

Students might also find it difficult to write in a particular genre not because they are incapable of doing so but because they lack experience reading and writing in that genre. Some students, for example, have difficulty writing the personal essay for university applications. If the essays they wrote in high school were expository essays in which they explained issues, then writing about their personal experiences and perspectives might be new for them. In this case, it is important not only to discuss the expected features of a personal statement but to also provide numerous models.

### WHAT CAN WE ANALYZE IN A MODEL? NOT JUST THE WHOLE, BUT ALSO THE PARTS

We can analyze both macrolevel (overall organization as well as content) and microlevel (sentences and paragraphs) elements of a text. Scrivener (2011, 242) specifically mentions “the layout, the overall message, how the items are organized, specific phrases and sentences, distinctive grammatical features, the style and

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tone, the effect on the reader.” For the most part, we want to use models holistically to show how all aspects of writing work together to make a comprehensive text, at both the macrolevel and the microlevel (Hyland 2004).

For instance, in a teacher-training course I taught, I was responsible for preparing learners to take an English-language test produced by the British Council. For the writing portion, trainees were required to write formal and informal emails. Therefore, the models I gave had to relate to the parameters of a well-written email, according to the test’s examiners. The requirements included responding to the prompt by introducing a problem and offering a solution using the appropriate levels of politeness (for both a formal and an informal exchange), correct language (grammar and vocabulary), and fixed phrases common in emails (“I look forward to hearing from you soon,” “Thank you in advance,” etc.). While it is important to show our students models with whole pieces of writing to illustrate how all the parts work together, we also sometimes need models to illustrate one or two writing features, such as proper punctuation or sentence variety, especially for microlevel problem areas we become aware of during the writing process.

### **APPROPRIATE MODELS**

#### **The model must fit the task**

Before choosing or creating models, we need to consider carefully the purpose of and the

context in which we are assigning a particular piece of writing. It can be confusing, for instance, if we ask students to respond to a text they have read without giving them a model of the genre we expect them to write in. Is the purpose of the assignment to teach students how to write a response, a journal entry, a persuasive essay, or something else? Once we are clear about the goals and purposes of a particular writing task, we can choose or create appropriate models.

#### **Source, target, or international culture?**

Cortazzi and Jin (1999) identify three kinds of cultural information that can be used in language-teaching materials: source, target, and international. In English-language teaching, source-culture materials relate to the learners’ own culture; target-culture materials are from countries where English is a first language; and international-culture materials pertain to a variety of cultures in English-speaking and non-English-speaking countries. For example, in the context of Korea, a paragraph about a local holiday, such as Chuseok (Harvest Moon Festival), would be source-culture material, a paragraph about American Independence Day would be target-culture material, and paragraphs written about aspects of culture in different countries would be international-culture material.

Whether the models we use come from the source, target, or international culture depends on the writing task in particular and the course

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in general. If we want our students to write a poem in the style that is common in the local context, then we want to use models from the local context; if we are helping students write personal essays for a university application for a North American university, then we need models of successful university-application essays for the North American context. If we want our students to write paragraphs about cultural artifacts from their country, then we might choose models of student writing from various countries (international) or examples from the source culture—or both. There is a valid argument that target-culture materials might be irrelevant and hence demotivating to students in cultures far removed from the target culture (McKay 2002). For example, a Bangladeshi student might find it difficult to relate to a sample paragraph about Halloween; likewise, a Korean student might not fully understand a sample paragraph about a garage sale. In such cases, it might be better to give learners models with content they can relate to culturally.

**Level-appropriate models**

Students need models written at or near the level they will be able to produce. One of the most common but egregious errors I have seen in this regard is presenting students with models far beyond their composition and linguistic abilities. For one course I taught, we were required to use a textbook with model essays written by professional writers. The gap between the model essays and the essays the students were able to produce was enormous. On an affective level, this obvious gap led to

disappointment on the part of the students. On a practical level, these models failed to give students any realistic guidelines to follow for their own compositions.

**Models from other students**

One effective way of making models culturally relevant and level- and situation-appropriate is to use good models from students in previous courses (Gallagher 2015; Harmer 2004; Hyland 2003). Writing samples from peers can be highly motivating, as the content is often close to a student's own life experiences. Barkley (2010) recommends having students make a booklet by choosing one or more of their pieces of writing throughout the semester and, as a class, compiling the pieces in a collection that can be passed on to students in future classes. If you do use student models, however, make sure to get permission. While most students are flattered to have their writing used as a model for other students, some might not want their writing to be distributed to others. Students who agree to let you use their text as a model should be informed of how their text will be used, who the readers will be, and how the text will be distributed (Anderson and McKee 2010). When you seek permission, ask whether students are comfortable with their names on the writing or whether they would prefer to be anonymous.

It is also important that models from students be carefully edited so that students learning from them are not inadvertently mistaking

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errors for correct forms. When I want to use models that illustrate writing issues that students need to work on, I avoid directly using any student’s writing, which could be a cause of embarrassment and, potentially, severe demotivation. Instead, I typically craft models or find them in textbooks based on common writing issues I see when reviewing drafts. This practice allows students to see some of their common challenges without any student feeling singled out for criticism.

### **Authentic models versus specially written models**

Before deciding whether to use authentic models or specially written ones, we must first consider our learners, their proficiency levels, and the purpose and goals of a particular writing assignment. Although specially written models might be contrived and unnatural, authentic models might be inaccessible due to the level of difficulty, especially for beginning-level students (Watson 1982). Even when the level is appropriate, not all authentic materials are equally useful for second-language writing students, and choosing the best authentic models requires careful selection. The fact that a piece of writing has been published does not necessarily make it a good model for student writers. At a university where I taught, we were required to use certain articles from local newspapers, and while the topics were relevant to the local context, the articles often contained errors and questionable organization, which made them difficult to use as instructional materials and caused

confusion, especially when there was a mismatch between the model and the writing task.

### **POINTS OF INTRODUCTION: WHEN SHOULD WE USE MODELS?**

Models can be useful tools at different stages in the writing process—even after a piece of writing has been completed. Depending on our aims for a particular assignment, we may provide models at all stages in the writing process or only at some stages. Gallagher (2015) believes that to maximize benefits from models, they should be used at all points in the writing process, as “students benefit when they pay close attention to models before they begin drafting, they benefit when they pay close attention to models while they are drafting, and they benefit when they pay close attention to models as they begin moving their drafts into revision” (130).

### **Before drafting**

Working with models before writing might be the most common approach, but many writing experts caution that when students are given models before they start writing, they might see the models as a sort of template—an ideal—believing that in order to correctly complete the assignment, they simply need to replace some of the features of the model text with their own information (Raimes 1983; Scrivener 2011; Watson 1982). To prevent students from following models too closely, these experts suggest introducing

### **Topic: My Favorite Season**

Summer is my favorite season three important reasons.  
First of all, during the summer, I can escape the stress of the school year.  
I can wake up late every day during the summer.

**Table 1. Sample student “paragraphs” with one sentence written on each line**

model texts later in the writing process, such as following a prewriting activity (Raimes 1983; Scrivener 2011; Watson 1982).

In some instances, it is wise to delay the introduction of models before drafting, but when you decide, consider your students, your teaching context, and the writing task. There are occasions when it is prudent to present and analyze models before allowing students to start drafting. For instance, in my first semester of teaching in one particular context, I asked a class of university freshmen to draft their first paragraph assignment. To my dismay and confusion, many students wrote their paragraphs one sentence per line, as in Table 1.

In this context, the incidental learning students received from previously reading paragraphs in English had not been enough; that is, they did not automatically use standard paragraph format. Students needed to be given models with proper paragraph format and have their attention drawn to paragraph features before drafting. In subsequent semesters, I provided students with models of correct paragraph format before asking them to draft their first paragraph. Giving

students the correct format at the beginning and creating awareness of the proper format helped them understand and succeed at adopting proper paragraph format from the start of the writing course. When a student went astray, I could simply suggest referencing the models of paragraph format.

### ***In medias res***

*In medias res* is a literary term from Latin that means “in the middle of the action.” To a great degree, we learn to write by writing, and no matter how much preliminary work is done, both teachers and students might be unaware of which writing issues will come up until the writing process has started. For example, after reading first drafts of a writing assignment I had given, I realized that my students had difficulty with text cohesion—specifically with the overuse of pronouns and a lack of repetition of the key noun. I gave them the two model paragraphs shown in Table 2 and asked students to decide which one was better and to explain why. By comparing the two paragraphs, students were able to realize that there were too many pronouns in the second paragraph and, as a result, it was easy for readers to become lost.

#### **Cats (Model Paragraph 1)**

Cats make good pets for three important reasons. First of all, cats are easy to take care of. They don't need to be bathed because they stay clean by grooming themselves. As for exercise, it is enough for owners to toss balls and toy mice for cats to chase. In addition, cats are independent. Cats are usually fine with being left alone for long periods of time. They can entertain themselves and do not need human company all the time. Furthermore, cats are inexpensive pets. They don't need much beyond food and water and a few toys. Even the adoption fee for a cat is quite reasonable. Cats are an excellent choice if you want a pet that is easy to take care of, is independent, and doesn't cost much.

#### **Cats (Model Paragraph 2)**

Cats make good pets for three important reasons. First of all, they are easy to take care of. They don't need to be bathed because they stay clean by grooming themselves. As for exercise, it is enough for owners to toss balls and toy mice for them to chase. In addition, they are independent. They are usually fine with being left alone for long periods of time. They can entertain themselves and do not need human company all the time. Furthermore, they are inexpensive pets. They don't need much beyond food and water and a few toys. Even the adoption fee for them is quite reasonable. They are an excellent choice if you want a pet that is easy to take care of, is independent, and doesn't cost much.

**Table 2. Two model paragraphs**

On another occasion, when reading first drafts of an essay assignment, I noticed that many students wrote paragraphs with a lot of simple sentences even though we had already worked on sentence combining. I showed the class the following paragraph (which I had created to mirror the choppy-sentence syndrome):

Last week, I went camping with a friend.  
We took a tent, sleeping bags, and food.  
It rained at our campsite. We got wet.  
We couldn't make a fire. We couldn't eat.  
We were hungry. We were miserable. We decided to return home. It was a bad trip.

When students read the paragraph aloud, they were able to see the problem of faulty rhythm created by too many short sentences. We then worked together to revise the paragraph. Subsequently, we did more practice exercises on sentence combining and on writing paragraphs with a variety of sentence types. The students then worked to create effective sentence variety in their drafts before they submitted their revised essays.

### **Post-writing**

Even after students have completed a writing assignment, models can be helpful. In fact, giving student writing some kind of new life after the writing has been submitted and evaluated can be highly motivating for students. Finished pieces of writing can be published on the Internet, copied and handed out, put together in a booklet, or printed and hung up around the classroom. Presentation of completed student pieces does not have to be limited to the written form. Models can also be presented orally in some way—either with or without the printed version. Spoken presentation can be formal or informal. Students might simply read their writing to group members or present it formally in front of the class. By seeing how their peers have completed a writing task, students gain insight for future writing assignments.

### **THE GENRE TRAP—AND HOW TO AVOID IT**

The genre trap occurs when students believe that there is only one particular way to write

a piece within a certain genre—for example, that there is only one formula for writing a narrative essay. To avoid having students fall into the genre trap, teachers need to give students a number of models in the same genre and have them analyze the models for similarities and differences. Giving several models can help students see that while examples of a particular genre have certain features in common, there is more than one way to complete the task. It also helps students view models for what they are—models—rather than as templates to plug information into (Harmer 2004; Hyland 2004; Scrivener 2011).

### **APPROACHES: WAYS OF WORKING WITH MODELS**

In some cases, we might present guidelines first and then give models; in other cases, we present the models and then the guidelines. The decision depends on the task and the students. If you are introducing your students to something entirely new, it is likely that you need to introduce the guidelines first. If, on the other hand, you are trying to get your students to identify a certain issue in their writing, you might want to present the models before the guidelines and then try to get your students to see what needs to be improved and why.

Note that the approaches for analyzing models described below can be mixed according to what is best in a given context. For example, you could use “the good, the bad, and the ugly approach” with a checklist or questions rather than in a discussion. Though not shown in every example, the approaches and tools suggested below assume that a variety of models will be used.

#### **The good, the bad, and the ugly approach**

This approach presents learners with models of different gradations, such as a good example, a mediocre example, and a poor example. This does not strictly mean, however, that three models are always presented. Depending on the assignment, you decide how many models to use. You also must decide what would be good, mediocre, and poor writing examples according to your

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learners and your teaching context—not based on professional writing or other high-level texts.

In order to help my students understand what kinds of journal entries I expected, I gave them the four models for analysis in Table 3.

I asked the students which model they thought most closely reflected what I expected from a journal entry and to explain why. I also asked for explanations of the models that were representations of unsatisfactory entries. I based these models on what I had seen in student journals the

<b>Journal Entry 1: White Lies</b>
Most people say that honesty is one of the most important qualities. However, most people lie. Many of these lies are not serious; they are what we call white lies. Many people tell white lies to avoid hurting someone else. For example, a husband might lie and say that his wife’s new recipe is great even though he doesn’t really like it, or your friend might tell you she likes your new hairstyle when, actually, she thinks it’s terrible. In some cases, it is better to tell a white lie than to hurt someone with the truth. We need to be careful, though, to make sure that the white lies we tell aren’t really hurting anyone.
<b>Journal Entry 2: Favorite Game</b>
I am always fond of games and sports. Football is my favorite game. It is a very common and popular game in my country. It is not an expensive and time killing game. The game is played between two teams. Each group has eleven players. I play football in my school field with my friends in the afternoon. Football is a game of great interest and enjoyment. It keeps the players fit and active. It teaches us discipline and unity. It is a game full of thrills and exciting to both the players and the spectators. So it is my favorite game. (Paragraph adapted from <a href="https://gulapkhan.wordpress.com/paragraph-for-jcssschsc-examination/">https://gulapkhan.wordpress.com/paragraph-for-jcssschsc-examination/</a> )
<b>Journal Entry 3: Being on Time</b>
Being on time is very difficult for me and for other students, to. Everyone know that the traffic here is just terrible. You can leave your house early but still arrive very late. I know my instructors get angry when I am late for class. But I think that they should be more understanding. I mean, given the situation here, where there are so many traffic jams. Sometiems you can not no when you will reach your destination. The government is trying to do what they can. Well, I think they are, anyway, but still we have this big problem of traffic. Why are the instructors so strict? This bothers me. One time, last year, I was late by only ten miniuts, and my teacher marked me absent. That was really unfair. I talked to the teacher, but there was nothing I could do to change her mind.
<b>Journal Entry 4</b>
I did a lot of homework yesterday. Now I am tired. I just want to go home and sleep. Okay, finished!

**Table 3. Four journal entries of varying quality**



previous semester (so, in fact, I needed time to understand what models would be most useful for the students after seeing the kind of writing they produced).

For the first sample journal entry, I wanted my students to understand that I did not want them to write their entries in paragraph or essay form, which is what many of them had done because that had been expected of them in previous courses. The second sample entry was a piece of plagiarized writing that was often circulated in the given context and was frequently used for homework and assignments. The fourth entry reflected little or no effort. The third sample, though, was representative of the kind of writing I expected from a journal entry—freewriting about a given topic. (Note that errors in this sample have not been corrected.)

Following our discussion of the sample journal entries, I gave these rules:

1. Journal entries should be at least 150 words.
2. Journal entries should not be copied from another source.

3. Journal entries do not need to be written perfectly—mistakes are okay.

4. Journal entries should not follow paragraph or essay form.

#### Analysis with a checklist

Models can be analyzed with a checklist because checklists give specific points to focus on (Kim 2012). All points on a checklist, however, must be comprehensible to learners. If, for example, learners have not yet been introduced to “appropriate end punctuation,” then putting that term in a checklist creates confusion rather than clarity. Checklists, therefore, should be adapted to each particular assignment and correspond with what has been covered in class. Table 4 depicts a sample checklist adapted from Oshima and Hogue (2006, 317) that can be used to analyze a model.

#### Analysis with questions

Another way to analyze models is through questions. Like checklists, the questions should be adapted to each particular assignment and correspond with what has been covered in class. For example, consider the model paragraph and associated analysis questions in Table 5.

<b>Format</b>		
The paragraph has a title.	_____ Yes	_____ No
The title is centered.	_____ Yes	_____ No
The first line is indented.	_____ Yes	_____ No
The paragraph is double-spaced.	_____ Yes	_____ No
<b>Mechanics</b>		
Each sentence has appropriate end punctuation.	_____ Yes	_____ No
Capital letters are used appropriately.	_____ Yes	_____ No
<b>Content and Organization</b>		
The paragraph fits the assignment.	_____ Yes	_____ No
The paragraph has a topic sentence.	_____ Yes	_____ No
The paragraph contains several specific and factual supporting sentences, including at least one example.	_____ Yes	_____ No
The paragraph ends with an appropriate concluding sentence.	_____ Yes	_____ No
All sentences are directly related to the topic.	_____ Yes	_____ No

**Table 4. Sample checklist to analyze a model** (adapted from Oshima and Hogue 2006, 317)

### **Model Paragraph: How to Choose a University**

Because there are so many options, choosing the right university can be a difficult task. However, following these steps can help you narrow down the possibilities. First of all, look for universities that offer the academic programs you are interested in. The main reason to attend university is to study, so academics must be your prime focus. Second, look into other opportunities related to your chosen field of study. Does the university have internships or other opportunities to gain work experience? Does it offer chances to conduct research with professors? Does the university have extracurricular activities that tie into your academic interests? Third, think about the size of the school. You might be intrigued by a university with a large student population and numerous course offerings, or you might prefer a cozy liberal arts college with fewer students and more individual attention. Finally, take into account the location. Do you want to be in a city or town? What kind of climate do you like? Your university years can be an opportunity to discover a completely new environment. Although choosing a university can be a difficult process, by following these steps, you are on the way to finding the right one for you.

#### **Analysis Questions**

- 1.** Who is the intended audience of this paragraph?
- 2.** What is the writer's purpose?
- 3.** Does the writer explain each step clearly?
- 4.** Do you feel that the writer offers good advice?
- 5.** Do you have any suggestions for revision?

**Table 5. Model paragraph and analysis questions**

#### **Paragraph A—Least to Most Important**

There are several reasons I want to study abroad. The main reason is that I want to improve my language skills. Studying for a year in an English-speaking country will help me achieve my language goals. In addition, I want to meet a diverse range of people. Studying abroad will give me the chance to meet students in my host country as well as students from other countries. I will learn about customs and traditions different from my own. Furthermore, studying-abroad experience will look good on future applications. Graduate schools and employers are impressed by students who have studied abroad because they often have appealing characteristics, such as flexibility and independence. For all these reasons, I plan to make study abroad a part of my university experience.

#### **Paragraph B—Most to Least Important**

There are several reasons I want to study abroad. First of all, studying-abroad experience will look good on future applications. Graduate schools and employers are impressed by students who have studied abroad because they often have appealing characteristics, such as flexibility and independence. In addition, I want to meet a diverse range of people. Studying abroad will give me the chance to meet students in my host country as well as students from other countries. I will learn about customs and traditions different from my own. The main reason, however, is that I want to improve my language skills. For all these reasons, I plan to make study abroad a part of my university experience.

**Table 6. Model paragraphs demonstrating different ways of ordering reasons**

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## Models can show different ways of approaching a writing task.

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### AN APPROACH FOR IN-CLASS DRAFTING WITH MODELS

After analyzing models of a given genre with your students and making sure they understand key features, have them put the models away where they cannot be accessed during drafting. Immediately following the analysis phase, students write drafts in class with no further reference to the models. This approach can help you see how well students retained an understanding of the models' features and incorporated the features in their writing. The approach can also help students get used to using models as guides rather than as ideals to be copied or slightly altered; it works best with shorter pieces of writing, such as emails, paragraphs, and reaction pieces—that is, assignments that can be completed in a class period.

#### Comparison does not have to be evaluative

Models can show different ways of approaching a writing task. Table 6 shows two paragraphs. In Paragraph A, the reasons are ordered from least to most important, and in Paragraph B, the reasons move from most to least important. The paragraphs are different, but one is not necessarily “better” than the other.

#### The diagram

Another type of model is the diagram (see Table 7 for an example), which is useful for demonstrating organization. The diagram

is typically best when used together with a full-text model and is often effective when presented just before students begin drafting, as a reminder of the structure for a particular writing task.

### KEY POINTS FOR WORKING WITH MODELS IN THE WRITING CLASSROOM

Following is a summary of points to follow when working with models in the writing classroom:

1. Students need guidance in developing analysis skills to understand the key features of the genres they are expected to write in.
2. Models should be appropriate. They need to fit the task, the level, and the context.
3. Exemplar models from other students are typically context- and level-appropriate.
4. When used as models, authentic texts should be carefully selected for level-, content-, and task-appropriateness.
5. Models can be used at any point in the writing process.
6. Multiple models for a given assignment can help students see models as

#### Sample Paragraph Organization

- I. Topic sentence
  1. Support sentence(s)
    - a. explanation or reason
  2. Support sentence(s)
    - b. explanation or reason
  3. Support sentence(s)
    - c. explanation or reason
- II. Concluding sentence

**Table 7. Model of a diagram showing one possible paragraph organization**

possibilities rather than as templates that must be adhered to.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

The use of writing models with nonnative English speakers has received a certain amount of criticism—especially from teachers whose students copy models in their entirety or follow them too closely. The misuse of models has brought some teachers to the point where they believe that the best kind of pedagogy is to abandon writing models altogether. However, appropriate models are valuable teaching tools in the writing classroom. If we use models to help students understand what is expected within a genre, different ways of approaching a task, and what is considered a good piece of writing within that genre, students will be less likely to simply imitate writing models. The responsibility for helping our students see a model as a “resource rather than an ideal” (Watson 1982, 12) and understand how to use a writing model lies with us, the writing instructors. Working with models is not limited to what is suggested here. The salient point is that we as writing teachers find ways of working with models so that our students can successfully craft their own texts and develop their writing skills.

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