A Critical and Creative Approach to Enhancing Student Writing

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A CRITICAL AND CREATIVE APPROACH TO
ENHANCING STUDENT WRITING

A Thesis Presented
by
WILLIAM E. PORTER

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research of
the University of Massachusetts at Boston in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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Critical and Creative Thinking Program
A CRITICAL AND CREATIVE APPROACH TO
ENHANCING STUDENT WRITING

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ABSTRACT

A CRITICAL AND CREATIVE APPROACH TO
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Teachers are always looking for ways to enhance their students' writing abilities. The approach of this thesis is to expose students directly to current theory on process writing while also discussing a piece of metafiction, a novel which acknowledges its awareness of its own status as fiction. Process writing theory is infused with a unit on Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five* in order to connect theory and practice in writing. This immersion in the theory, creative practice and critical evaluation of writing is designed to expand students' awareness of their innate language-making abilities.

A curriculum was implemented in a 12th grade, heterogeneously grouped English class. Four types of writing were employed: 1) two essays of the student's own process were written, one before the unit and the
other after the unit; 2) a freewriting journal on student reading throughout the unit was kept; 3) a daily summary of in-class activities was written; and 4) a creative reaction to the unit was developed. Three students were followed after exposure to the unit, and their writing was evaluated in order to see the impact of this immersion. Evidence of their metacognition, creative development and motivation was then observed. The results of the project were positive; the essays in particular showed a clear improvement in metacognition and motivation.

The implications beyond this curriculum are important. Students who view themselves as writers and who share the variety of roles of the writer find the freedom to discover themselves more fully. When writing is seen as a process in which all learners are involved, attitudes clearly change. The teacher who shares power within the classroom and allows students more ownership over their ideas has a better opportunity to influence student attitudes about making-meaning. The direct knowledge of writing theory proved beneficial in the practice of writing.
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INTRODUCTION

In the first chapter of Slaughterhouse-Five, Kurt Vonnegut writes,

I would hate to tell you what this lousy little book cost me in money and anxiety and time. When I got home from the Second World War twenty years ago, I thought it would be easy for me to write about the destruction of Dresden, since all I would have to do is report what I had seen. And I thought, too, that it would be a masterpiece or at least make me a lot of money, since the subject was so big. But not many words about Dresden came from my mind then - not enough of them to make a book, anyway. And not many words come now, either, when I have become an old fart with his memories and Pall Malls, with his sons full grown (p.2).

This quote pinpoints a common student writing dilemma; not many words come from the students' minds on a variety of issues about which they should have plenty to say. Where do the words come from? We sit in front of a piece of paper, hesitate, exasperate, stumble and delay. And not many words come. Not the right ones, anyway. The concept for my thesis springs from this dilemma.

The purpose of this thesis is to create a teaching unit to help students figure out better ways to make the words come, to enhance the writing processes which they possess, and to change the ways in which they think about writing. My approach is
designed to help students discover their writing processes through three particular strategies:

1. Thinking and writing critically about current theories on writing, students will read four selections on the theory of process writing and react to them convergently in Journal reactions.

2. Closely observing a novelist in the process of making meaning, students will read Vonnegut’s novel in four parts and connect each to process theory, to themselves as writers and also to themselves as readers, taking both a convergent and a divergent position on the literature.

3. Recording observations of their own processes in journals on their experiences while reading and writing in the unit, students will be asked to take a metacognitive stance in looking at their theory journals and the journals they wrote on the novel. They will, in other words, become immersed in the theory, creative practice, and critical evaluation of writing. Their written reactions about theory in conjunction with their written reactions to life and literature will allow them to see both sides of the writing coin.

Students will be encouraged to think about how they do what they do, or do metacognition on their writing process, in order to improve it. They will create writing, enjoy reacting to fiction, read
theoretical analyses of process, and critically analyze themselves, their peers, and professional writers of fiction and non-fiction. The focus is broad for a specific reason; everyone creates his own process and everyone has his own voice. This fundamental idea is a liberating one, in my opinion. It seems reasonable to contend that students, motivated by a writer they enjoy reflecting on his inability to write, will connect directly to their own experiences.

The primary subject matter of this unit will be the novel Slaughterhouse-Five. The reason for choosing this particular book is the unique opportunity Vonnegut creates for studying a writer in the process of writing. The novel is a piece of metafiction; the novelist talks to his audience about the process of creating his story while writing it. He discusses directly his motivation to write and his difficulties along the way in the first chapter, then fashions a way to make meaning of the holocaust in which he was involved in a powerfully creative novel. In a sense he models the behavior this project is attempting to enhance. We get a clear look at a writer observing himself as he writes. The central motivator for Vonnegut's writing this book is his personal tragedy in World War II, but the students will have the freedom to search their own lives for opportunities to make meaning while watching themselves as well.
Another central reason for using this novel in conjunction with writing theory comes from my agreement with Ann Berthoff's belief that reading and writing should always be taught together (1982). This book is an excellent vehicle because the analysis of Vonnegut's text will naturally lead to direct thinking about the students' own writing processes. They will be encouraged to find, in their own experiences, topics about which they feel compelled to write. They should also be comforted by Vonnegut's honesty as he struggles to portray the events that changed his life. His confrontation with his inability to put his own perceptions of reality into words parallels many a student's writing woes.

Along with this novel four selections from theorists of process writing will be taught directly. Those of Peter Elbow, James Moffett, Ann Berthoff and Donald Murray will be read and analyzed. Their direct commentary on the various aspects of writing will be viewed against the backdrop of the novelist in action. Theories on narrative stances, freewriting, a theory of composing and an overview of the process approach to writing will serve to both analyze Vonnegut's work and enhance the students' processes.

It is my belief that this intensive month of immersion into the theory, practice and applications of writing will change the students' perceptions of
putting pen to paper. The students' experiences as critics, practitioners and evaluators will create new understanding of the multiple facets of writing. Their exposure to fiction, theory and their sharing of their own writing will enhance their processes and help them show themselves that they have much to say. They will have the opportunity to experience the multiple roles of fiction writer, theorist and evaluator as well as to analyze these roles as reader and writer.

The last aspect central to process writing included herein is the role of the teacher as learner, modelling the behaviors being taught in the unit. The teacher freewrites with the class and keeps a journal, and he shares his perceptions as a part of class discussion. Since writing is being used as a discovery tool, not as a problem to be overcome, the teacher does not act as the mediator of the theory, but as another learner approaching a difficult subject matter.

**Critical Thinking**

This project employs some of the fundamental strategies currently predominant in the field of critical thinking today. The definition of critical thinking and the approach to its development being used here are those of Swartz and Perkins (1989). They
"...interpret critical thinking to concern the critical examination and evaluation - actual and potential - of beliefs and courses of action (p.37)."

Rather than simply teaching the framework of process writing, a critical thinking skill important in a student's academic advancement, these ideas are infused into the study of a novel that lends itself to that concept because, "It is insufficient merely to help students become aware of the classification of their types of thinking (p.180)." Students will be encouraged to apply the thinking skills they have been taught to a variety of contexts in order to promote the transfer of these skills.

The planning of this unit has been guided by Swartz and Perkins' "Three Questions for the Teacher to Ask Him/Herself in Restructuring for Infusion":

1. What are the details of the kind of thinking I want to help my students learn?

2. Where, in what I already teach, is there content that can be used for this type of thinking?

3. How will I organize lessons in which I teach for this sort of thinking? (p. 74)

For example, one kind of thinking in the rehearsal stage of writing is the concept of "mapping" or "webbing", a visual way of discovering and outlining material so a writer can see the relationships present in it. In Chapter One of the novel Slaughterhouse-Five Vonnegut states, "The best outline I ever made (for
this novel) was on the back of a roll of wallpaper in crayon (p. 5)." From this comment can come a discussion of "webbing" as a form of framworking ideas in the rehearsal stage of writing. Along with teaching a visual way of outlining ideas directly, the example of an author using the concept reinforces this skill.

When Vonnegut comments that he had written thousands of pages, thrown them away, and despairs about ever finishing his book (p.15), two stages of writing, rehearsal and revision, can be inferred from these comments. Students can empathize with a writer who feels that what he has done isn't very good and observe the end results of his perseverance as well. Through the strategy of keeping a journal on student reading and encouraging students to observe the novelist's comments about writing directly, they will structure their own theories on the process of writing as well as gaining experience in the practice of these theories.

**Metacognition**

Metacognition is a term normally seen in the realm of cognitive psychology, but my attempt is to apply the principle of deliberately and consciously manipulating cognitive skills in a process based,
discovery mode. By being aware of the rehearsal, drafting and revising stages while processing language, can student performances be enhanced? True process writing encourages thinking about thinking in some very helpful ways.

For the purposes of this project a specific definition of types of metacognition is necessary. Three types of metacognition in writing will be observed. 'Declarative' metacognition is knowing that writing includes prewriting, considering audience and purpose, drafting, revising, and editing. 'Procedural' metacognition is knowing how to use the above strategies. 'Conditional' metacognition is knowing when and why to use them (Raphael, Englert & Kirschner, 1989). Students will discover the principles of process, how to use these principles and when and why they are applicable to their writing processes. These self-regulatory mechanisms will be drawn from the four process theorists around whom this unit is structured.

The approaches to be used in introducing Metacognition Instruction come from Swartz and Perkins:  

1. Prompting Aware Uses of Thinking Skills. (Using thinking terms to mark the presence of thinking activities.)

2. Prompting Strategic Uses of Thinking Skills. (Providing a list of components or a series of steps for students to follow in doing a certain type of thinking.)

3. Prompting Reflective Uses of Thinking Skills. (Helping students monitor their thinking by describing
At the outset students will be prompted to be aware of the uses of the particular thinking skill under scrutiny. For example, Chapter One of Vonnegut's novel and Peter Elbow's piece on freewriting will be matched up to show similarities in the ways in which both the novelist and the theorist seem to use the freewriting strategy to generate ideas. Each of the four theorists to be read in this project will be used to present an important central concept about writing.

Strategic uses of the specific thinking skills of process writing will be reinforced with Donald Murray's concepts that writing involves rehearsal, drafting and revision in a recursive way. Students will learn the strategies Murray suggests directly and have the opportunity to use these strategies in three formal writing assignments. In submitting each assignment all the steps of the process of their creation will also be submitted. Rehearsals, drafts and revisions will show the students the effectiveness of his approach to creating writing.

Reflective uses of the thinking skill of writing will be enhanced by student freewriting journals; these will focus on students' retrospective descriptions of how they wrote what they did and prescriptive self instructions about what they have left to write about.
assignments yet to be completed. Students will be encouraged to analyze their current writing strategies and to learn about themselves as writers in their second entry journal responses. By re-reading early journal entries and commenting again on their first perceptions they will observe themselves immersed in the process of making meaning with language. They will be encouraged throughout this project to develop a metacognitive approach to writing.

**Creative Thinking**

Writing seems by definition to be a creative act, the evolution of something from nothing. A writer stares at a blank page and language starts to stream forth from nowhere. However, more than just the mystery of where the words came from is at the heart of this endeavor. In this project an important element is the empathy necessary to spark student inquiry. Delores Gallo wrote that, "There is a long tradition in both philosophy and psychology that distinguishes thought from feeling (p.99)." While I agree with this premise it seems to me that in writing, these two must naturally meld. Behind each word an author chooses lies a bit of feeling, a smattering of the author's voice, struggling to make itself heard. In the best of
modern discourse in any realm lies passion and conviction as well as logic and reason.

I agree with Gallo’s contention that, “the specific emotions, often called the altruistic emotions or empathy, may actually have a positive effect on reasoned judgment in a variety of contexts (Gallo, p. 99).” The fundamental engine of this project is the attempt to catch the students’ hearts by putting them in the same position in which Vonnegut found himself in his masterpiece. They will have been exposed to a great deal of information over the course of a month. In a sense they are trying to make meaning out of the chaos of one novelist and four theorists. At the same time, however, they must use their minds to construct meaning out of these experiences.

The final project in my unit asks students to fashion a creative written reaction based on their experiences with Vonnegut’s novel as well as with the writing theorists to whom they have been exposed. Students are asked to put themselves in his spot as they open up after a month of immersion in a variety of aspects of the writing process. Vonnegut wrote, "I thought that it (Slaughterhouse-Five) ... would be a masterpiece or at least make me a lot of money, because the subject was so big. But not many words about Dresden came to my mind then - not enough of them to make a book, anyway (p. 2)." I did not expect my
students to write a book after this project, but the writing that they produced at the end did capture some moments of their lives that were "beautiful and surprising and deep (p.88)."

In her conclusion to her autobiography One Writer's Beginnings, Eudora Welty writes,

It is our inward journey that leads us through time - forward or back, seldom in a straight line, most often spiraling. As we discover, we remember; remembering, we discover; and most intensely do we experience this when our separate journeys converge (p.102).

She calls this 'confluence' and states that "the greatest confluence of all is that which makes up the human memory (p.104)." I view critical and creative thinking in a similar way; this project is an attempt at a confluence of ideas and approaches to help students understand their own writing processes more fully. In this understanding they will also come to view themselves differently as well; they will come to see themselves as writers and thinkers somewhere on the road to making sense and meaning of the world. It is an inward journey worth taking.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter will discuss the domain of writing theory in five distinct sections. The question central in the field today will be addressed first. Is writing a process which we possess or a problem we must solve? Next the modern debate about theories of composition will be observed. Thirdly the origins of modern writing theory will be reviewed. An overview of the modern philosophical debate will come next. Finally will come the theoretical support for this project, and it will be divided into four parts, focusing on the four theorists on whom this project is based.

Writing: Process or Problem?

It is an oversimplification to split modern theory on writing into two camps, but it is helpful to begin in this way. Writing is seen as problem solving by some and as process by others. There is no question that writing can be a problem to be solved in many
situations, and the mentality that there are strategies to attack this problem is attractive. On the other side are theorists who see writing as a fluctuating continuum; writers rehearse, draft and revise in a somewhat circular progression. Recently there have been attempts to blend the 'writing as problem' approaches with process writing theories, but there seems to remain a fundamental divergence in philosophy between the two camps.

There is mixed research that suggests the advantages of the process approach to writing as well as some evidence that implies the problem solving approach has merit. George Hillocks did a meta-analysis of the empirical research in the field of composition theory in 1986 and drew some tentative conclusions. He began with over 6,000 pieces of research but had to limit his analysis to 2,000 studies because of the inconsistencies in the ways in which many of the studies were conducted. His conclusions are interesting but, by his own admission, limited.

To conclude, in composition theory presently there is no definitive decision about what works best in the teaching of writing. The field is amazingly split in its opinions. Empirical research of a consistent nature is hard to come by and therefore some discussion involves a way to put a standardized type of research tool in place. This idea flies in the face of those
who see writing as a type of self-expression and as art. Clearly more work needs to be done in coming to solid conclusions of how writing is best taught.

The Modern Debate

The only attempt at a comprehensive study of research on writing has been done by George Hillocks. In his meta-analysis Hillocks categorized current writing instruction in three ways. These are his categories and his conclusions follow.

Presentational Mode.
1. This approach has relatively clear and specific objectives.
2. The class consists of lecture and teacher led discussion of concepts to be learned and applied.
3. The class studies models to explain and illustrate concepts.
4. Specific assignments are given imitating a pattern or following rules that have been discussed.
5. Feedback for student writing comes primarily from teachers (pp. 116-117).

Natural Process Mode.
1. This approach has generalized objectives (for example, to increase fluency and skill in writing).
2. Freewriting about student interests, either in a Journal or as a way of exploring a subject, is an important device.
3. Students write primarily for an audience of their peers.
4. Feedback from peers is generally positive.
5. Students have opportunities to revise and rework writing.
6. There is a high level of interaction between students (p.119).
Environmental Mode.

1. This approach has clear and specific objectives (for example, to increase the use of figurative language and specific detail in writing).
2. Materials and problems are selected to engage students with each other in specifiable processes important to some aspect of writing.
3. Activities such as small group, problem centered discussions, conducive to high levels of peer interaction concerning specific tasks, are utilized (p.122).

In his conclusion Hillocks stated that the presentational mode, or what would be called the traditional way of teaching writing (with the teacher lecturing students about proper grammar, structure and content) was proven ineffective by his research. The second category, natural process mode, he found to be superior to the traditional approach but inferior to his next category. He saw the 'environmental mode' as best. Small group directed instruction seemed to produce the best writing in his opinion. This mode shares the peer conferencing element with the process mode, but the groups are not left to find their own topics, hence the directed instruction. He concluded, "Environmental instruction moves beyond process without abandoning it (p.248)."

Shortly after the publication of this research controversy arose. Critics saw the categories Hillocks established to be overly general and the types of research he was reporting on to be flawed. Robert Schwegler, in an article in College English entitled, "Review : Conflicting methods in composition research,"
argued that the four modes of instruction are constructs "only partly validated by a single study conducted by the author (1988, p.451)." Schwegler agrees that Hillocks' work was a noble attempt to oversee the empirical research of a tremendously disparate field, but more work needs to be done. Also, Hillocks' study, by its design, only chose empirical studies that fit his research criteria. This is understandable given the magnitude of his task, but it leaves the door open for further investigations.

The Origins of Modern Writing Theory

The division of opinion on composition theory is a fairly recent phenomenon. In fact, prior to 1963 no overview on research in the composition field had been attempted. There were few alternatives provided to the teachers of English beyond the traditional or presentational mode of instruction.

James Moffett, in his seminal work Teaching the Universe of Discourse, criticized English teachers for ignoring the reality of teaching writing. He reasons that English is a symbol system which is not primarily about itself. "The most natural assumption about teaching any symbol system should be that the student employ his time using that system in every realistic
way it can be used, not that he analyze it or study it as an object (1968, p.7)." He continues, "Once we acknowledge that English is not properly about itself, then a lot of phoney assignments and much of the teacher's confusion can go out the window (p.7-8)."

Donald Murray states it this way, "In teaching the process we have to look, not at what the students need to know, but what they need to experience (1980, p.13)."

An early problem solving approach to writing was presented in a brief article in *College English* by Janice Lauer (1970) and it included a bibliography of relevant psychological articles she felt would help open up the field of composition study and make it more scientific. Ann Berthoff's response (1971) and the ensuing debate about process versus problem stems from that time. Berthoff held that empirical studies leave out many factors with which English teachers should be concerned. In her latest book, *The Sense of Learning*, she writes, "A positivist conception of language as a 'communications medium,' as a set of muffin tins into which the batter of thought is poured, leads to question-begging representations and models of the composing process (1990, p.12)."

Process writing implies writing to learn more about ourselves and the world; writing as problem solving seems to argue that we need to learn specific
strategies in order to write. It recollects the debates between Plato and the sophists. Can we put a structure on top of any argument to make it succeed or is there a truth we are trying to convey? In a review of Linda Flower's book, *Problem Solving Strategies for Writing*, Anthony Petrosky felt Flower's approach, "...puts writing in a vacuum (p.234)." Cognitive psychologists try to come up with practical, concrete strategies for students to apply whereas process theorists ask writers to discover their purpose or path through writing.

**An Overview**

The field of composition theory is an extremely divided one presently. The types of studies being conducted vary from natural inquiry, using a case study method, to experimental research, which relies on the scientific method. There is not much agreement on what should be studied in the first place; how should we define 'good writing'? The terminology varies from piece to piece; process writing becomes the 'natural process mode' and then is referred to as 'expressivist theory'. Writing as problem solving is called the 'cognitive school' in one article then the 'positivist conception of language' elsewhere. Recently a third school, social constructionist theory, has arisen in
composition studies. This is also referred to as 'new pragmatism' or 'dialogism'. This theory "...is based on the assumption that writing is primarily a social act...writing re-externalizes the language of internalized conversation (Bruffee, 1986, pp.784-785)."

Lester Faigley's article, "Competing theories of process: a critique and a proposal," (1986) looks at what he feels are the weaknesses of each of the three views. He believes the expressivist view is too focused on the personal domain. He argues that the cognitive view is too value free. Finally he says the social view is yet unformed and ignores what cannot be discussed in writing. He concludes that "...social and historical forces shape the teaching of writing," (p. 537) and ..."writing processes take place as part of a structure of power (p.538)."

A helpful way of seeing the conflict between process theorists and cognitive theorists can be found in Elizabeth and William House's article, "Problem solving: the debates in composition and psychology (1987)." They see the argument in terms of internal validity versus external validity. "The cognitive view is searching for theoretical or experimental consistency, control, and narrowness, or internal validity. The process view seeks external validity, addressing wholes rather than parts of experience, seeking to solve practical human problems (p. 73)."
Lester Faigley sums it up well, "Expressivist theorists validate personal experience in school systems that often deny it (1986, p.537)." This approach is most conducive to the unit to be created in this thesis.

Theoretical Support for this Project

One of my standards for judging theorists for this project is to evaluate the ways in which they write about theory. Linda Flower and Robert Hayes are probably the predominant names in the 'writing as problem-solving' field today, and their prose is extremely dense and awkward. In contrast, process writing theorists Peter Elbow and Donald Murray are lucid and enjoyable to read. Since a key point in this project is allowing students to read theory themselves, readability is an important concern.

Also, both Elbow and Murray are writers by profession, indicating some concrete proof of the effectiveness of their methods. Murray won a Pulitzer Prize in 1954 for his reporting and continues to write a column in the Boston Globe. Elbow has published widely outside of the field of writing theory and his most recent book, *What is English?* (1990) develops a number of issues in which any English teacher should be interested.
The larger issue, however, is that writing is more than one specific skill; there are a number of different types of writing. Writing can reveal self, help discover the world, editorialize or report scientific results. It is my contention that the rudiments of process writing can span all categories of writing, but it is understandable that many people do want a set of steps to follow. For some teachers the control of a student's learning is their primary job. In this era of accountability student writers have lost some of the power they had recently gained. It is my belief that instruction in writing must be student centered; writing, after all, is the ultimate in individual expression.

In this project I am primarily treating writing as a learning and discovery tool, and not as an obstacle to be overcome. For that reason I am using process writing theorists as my theoretical foundation. Furthermore, if students perceive writing as a problem to be solved, it distances them more from their inherent ability to make meaning. In a nutshell, my attempt here is to address the enhancement of student writing in a more "organic" way.

Since the concept of this project requires students to directly read theory on process writing, in particular four selections from four process theorists,
I will discuss the writers and the pieces to be taught next.

Donald Murray

The most succinct and readable article I have come across explaining process writing is a piece written by Donald Murray entitled "Writing as Process: How Writing Finds Its Own Meaning (pp. 3-19)." This will be the most thorough piece of process theory to which my students will be exposed. Murray calls the process of evolving meaning "a constant revolt against intent (p. 3)." He continues to explain that, in writing, "the symbols of language assume a purpose of their own and instruct the reader during the composing process (p. 3)."

In an sense, as we write we tell ourselves what we think. Paralleling Ann Berthoff's concepts of "feedback" and "feedforward", which will be considered later, Murray coins the terms "readwrite" and "writeread". We look at what we've put on the page and then extend it. As the pen finishes its movement we hasten to view where we have just gone. These minute and larger processes occur again and again as we move from rehearsal, to drafting, to revising and back again. It is impossible to completely understand this process by looking backward at the printed page. Murray
argues, because, "Process can not be inferred from product any more than a pig can be inferred from a sausage (p.3)."

Murray sees writing as a movement from rehearsal, where the writer prepares for writing without being sure that anything will follow, through drafting, where the writer attempts to allow the writing to find its own meaning, into revising, where the writing stands apart from the writer and the writer interacts with it. These stages, in Murray's opinion, are not distinct.

Early drafts are almost total exploration; the writer is searching for topics and approaches to them. Later drafts deal almost entirely with clarification; the fine tuning of developed ideas is the goal. However, the processes of rehearsal, drafting and revising go on over and over again at every step, from freewriting to final editing of an article for publication.

Minute by minute, perhaps second by second - or less at certain stages of the process - the writer may be rehearsing, drafting and revising, looking back and looking forward, and acting upon what is seen and heard during the backward sensing and forward sensing (p.7).

The conclusion of Murray's article deals with how best to teach writing. Echoing Ann Berthoff's sentiments, Murray feels that we have to look, "not at what students need to know, but what they need to experience (p.13)." Moffett made similar observations in his work as well, as did Peter Elbow. All four
theorists feel the writing process is taught primarily through experience with writing.

Ann Berhoff

A more theoretical piece on writing to which students will be exposed is from the introduction of Ann Berhoff’s book, Forming, Thinking, Writing (pp.1-12). She begins with the philosophy underlying her approach to the process of writing. She feels that "making sense of the world is composing (p.11)," and composing she simply defines as putting things together.

In constructing our own realities, we make meaning from the chaos of our senses. This act we perform is, in her opinion, a basic, natural tendency of an active mind. She connects this natural tendency directly to the writing process. As we generalize and abstract from our sense experiences, so do we organize our thoughts as we write. She differentiates between conscious, deliberate generalizing in writing and the natural, random generalizing done in dealing with reality, but feels the similarities are more important than the differences. She writes, "We teach our students how to form by teaching them that they form (p.2)." Her belief in a natural meaning making
capacity within each student is central to this project on student writing.

Berthoff defines her concept of thinking as "seeing relationships". Meanings are relationships: "I see" is both a physical act and an expression of understanding. We find meanings, she feels, in the process of working and playing with what language provides, the raw material of words. "Making meanings with language is like making sense of the world (p.45)." This interdependence of language and thought is what she refers to as the dialectic necessary in writing and in making sense of the world. Against this backdrop she paints her picture of the process of writing.

Writing begins with observing, and Berthoff feels the best way to see the interdependence of language and thought is to write every day about what you are looking at. She quotes Kant, "Percepts without concepts are empty; concepts without percepts are blind." Observation provides the material with which to build thought using language. She structures a number of ways of seeing relationships through a series of selections from sensory knowing to thinking about thinking. These varied excerpts exemplify the levels of observation necessary for facets of thinking.

She explains that form finds form; "The way meanings are put together by means of language matches
our experience of how things are related in time and space and the way causes and effects control one another (p.45)." She uses the terms "feedback", guidance from where we have been, and "feedforward", formulating where we will go, to clarify the concept of form finding form. Writing seems to be the process of looking everywhere at once, but it's actually a switching back and forth. This leads to her discussion of a method of composing.

In composing the difficult thing is keeping everything tentative; the writer puts together parts as if he knew what the whole was going to be, but he needs to figure out what the whole will be to select the appropriate parts. Berthoff argues that listing is central in this process. "Listing is the composing process in a nutshell... - naming, grouping, classifying, sequencing, ordering, and revising (p.63)." Each of these processes feeds into one another.

She continues this dialectical intermeshing when she writes, "Learning to use statements to form concepts and concepts to direct the revision and sequence of statements is learning to compose (p.111)." In one diagram she depicts concept formation as a circle, generalizing from particular instances to a universal concept, then interpreting the universal concept to apply to other instances. She feels that
determining the degree of generality is central to the composing process. This shifting and balance, looking ahead and glancing behind, captures the writing process well.

Peter Elbow

While Murray's article best expresses the entirety of process writing theory, and Berthoff's piece captures a theory of composing well, Peter Elbow's book, *Writing Without Teachers* (1973) is the best practical writing guide I have encountered. His first chapter explaining the concept of freewriting is part of this project (pp.3 - 11).

He begins with the fundamental connection between speaking and writing. Think about the average conversation in which we engage. As we weave our words together we seldom think of them as specific words. How many words do we consciously choose and how many words seem to present themselves to us in a normal conversation? Where do the words come from? We have ideas but as we try to convey them in speech we automatically provide the language to flesh them out. We know what we're trying to say but we don't specifically choose the components of meaning that pour forth. This automatic process of making meaning as we
speak is the central element in the freewriting concept which is the heart of Elbow's approach. Berthoff connects her theory to the ways in which we perceive the world while Elbow connects freewriting to how we talk about it.

Elbow feels the villain of our inability to write is our editing process. As Murray points out, as we readwrite and writered we're engaging in second by second shifts in attention. Freewriting separates editing from producing intentionally. We are directed to write non-stop in five minute bursts in order to get going. After the writing is finished we go back and see what our writing has to tell us. The non-stop feeling of capturing words as they appear to us is fascinating.

This type of writing is not always efficient. We do generate garbage at times, but often interesting ideas and cohesive passages appear out of thin air. The enthusiasm for writing grows as we realize we have so much to pour forth. We can return later to proof read and edit, but it is always easier to throw out excess material after much writing has been generated. When exposed to their natural language capacities students blossom, Elbow feels. Where Berthoff encourages students to closely observe the external world in developing their processes, Elbow suggests they look inside and capture themselves thinking.
Another value to freewriting for students is that it encourages them to take chances and then revise. When a student slaves over a work in a slow, painful way, that student is loath to change or throw out hard fought gains. When the same student pours forth language with some ease and even joy, then revision comes much more simply. In order to clarify his feelings about the freewriting process Elbow uses the metaphors of growing and cooking to explain two ways in which freewriting works. By approaching a topic a number of times in freewriting, the writing 'grows' and develops. If that process fails he encourages writers to 'cook' ideas by seeking oppositions and challenging points of view, a more focussed kind of freewriting.

James Moffett

James Moffett is an important voice in modern writing studies, but he was more than that two decades ago. One of the first believers in process writing, Moffett broke the ground for the current generation of process writing theorists. His important work, *Teaching the Universe of Discourse*, is essential reading for the teacher of writing. A part of this work on narrative stances in writing (pp.32 - 47) is used in this project as well.
Moffett begins his work with a thought provoking discussion of English as it is taught in high school. He argues that the structure for English study has been lifted from psychology, sociology, history and other "content" based subjects. His point is that language is a symbol system which is not primarily about itself. The student needs to develop experience in using the system, not absorb a body of knowledge encoded in the system. Moffett fundamentally disagrees, then, with traditional English classes that teach some literature, some grammar, public speaking, essay writing, and some more literature. English, in his opinion, should assist students in acquiring our symbol system in a variety of ways, all of which center on discourse.

He breaks discourse into three parts. He calls them first, second, and third persons, or in more traditional terms, speaker, audience, and subject matter. All English should concern itself with providing students the opportunity to involve themselves in this discourse, and by involvement he means direct immersion. He encourages the use of drama in the English classroom because he sees drama as basic communication between first and second persons.

An intriguing side note on his use of "persons" in explaining discourse is the separation he sees between second and third person. Third person falls into the category of subject in his scheme. Therefore, base
line communication must be between first and second persons. Real communication begins with a personal speaker and his direct audience, hence Moffett argues drama must be employed in initial stages of discourse development.

In Moffett’s words, "...for teaching language generally, a dramatic pedagogy is superior to an expository one; it seems terribly misguided to me to tell about something to students when they are using that something every day of their lives (p.118)." A similar argument can be made for peer editing groups. The immediacy of the feedback more closely parallels normal human interaction and creates dialogue between the first and second persons.

Later in his work Moffett addresses narrative in connection to discourse. All literature is connected to observing interpersonal conflicts, problems, or, simply, communication. He feels teachers can capitalize on this idea in linking drama and narrative forms. Fiction, in other words, is simply an abstraction of drama. When he approaches writing, it is from the same "dramatic" stance. He believes writing is best perfected by writing. His method employs student centered discussion groups to assist developing writers as editorial boards. Peer group involvement and exposure to many opinions produces the feedback a developing writer needs. Again, using
language, not reading about language, is central to Moffett's theory.

Moffett develops the idea of abstraction, moving from the object to the symbol for the object, as central to understanding approaches in writing. He feels students need to be aware of this fundamental process in order to use language more powerfully. Selecting and ignoring are at the heart of moving from one level of abstraction to another. For example, when we use a metaphor, we are paralleling some qualities two things have in common, but not all qualities. He also comments that as the distance between speaker and audience grows greater, we must become more abstract in order to communicate to a broader group.

He sums up his position in this way.

Speaking, writing, and reading in forms of discourse that are successively more abstract make it possible for the learner to understand better what is entailed at each stage of the hierarchy, to relate one stage to another, and thus become aware of how he and others create information and ideas (p. 25).

We naturally abstract from the time we begin to use language, but being more aware of this fact is essential in using this natural talent better.

Moffett argues for bringing "basics" back to discourse teaching; students need thinking, speaking, listening, reading and writing. He uses the term discourse rather than English because he feels all education deals with some aspect of human symbolization. In his conclusion he suggests a
complete reorganization of the educational process, a dropping of the barriers between subjects and a recognition that, in the end, we formulate our own knowledge structures.

One final issue must be addressed in presenting Moffett's position. He states, "Since discourse is ultimately social in origin and function, it seems a shame to fight those forces (natural language abilities) that could be put to such excellent use in teaching the subject (p.119)." He feels dialogue teaches learners sentence elaboration, effect on audience, and the importance of clarity. This tool is central to his plan in *Teaching the Universe of Discourse*. Let me end with his overview on the spectrum of discourse.

What is happening- Interior Dialogue, Socialized Speech, Reporting, and Drama.


What may happen- Science, Metaphysics.

(Poetry spans all four categories of "Happening").

(p.47)
Conclusion

In conclusion, these four theorists were chosen for their readability and their beliefs in writing as process. The Unit is based on the direct interaction of students and theorists. Each student, it is hoped, will take from the Unit what he needs to improve. The attempt is to teach theory directly while involved in writing about it. Students will also be encouraged to make their own connections between these theorists. Obviously all four are not in total agreement about the writing act, but by pulling out the similarities and differences students will be formulating their own philosophies of writing as well. They will also be reading a novelist who indirectly shows his process at work in fictionalizing a real life experience, a firestorm at the end of a World War.

There is ample research to show that writing to learn is a solid approach to teaching any subject matter. When students write frequently they seem to grasp concepts more easily. "Writing is an essential skill for self expression and the means by which critical thinking will be taught (Boyer, 1983, p.176)." What better subject area in which to employ the writing to learn strategy than the area of writing theory? My
students' attempts to write about these theorists will cause them to internalize the process about which they will be learning.
What follows is a plan to teach writing theory directly in conjunction with the study of a piece of metafiction, Kurt Vonnegut’s *Slaughterhouse-Five*. The primary idea is to teach process writing theory directly by writing about it. Students will formulate their thinking about writing while immersed in it, become involved in small group discussions on writing, and react to a novel that shows the writer doing the same thing, reflecting on his writing as he does it.

The Unit plan matches four pieces of writing theory with a novel. The order of the unit could be changed according to a teacher’s predisposition but I have organized it along the lines with which I feel most comfortable. The central idea is to encourage students to see connections between the theory discussed and the literature as it is enjoyed. Having used this plan several times in developing the Unit, I realize the breadth of possibilities for students’ reactions and the differences in their feelings for the fiction and the theory.

Before detailing the specific plan for this Unit, a discussion of the types of writing to be employed is necessary.
The first constant writing tool to be used in this unit is the freewrite, a concept espoused by Peter Elbow in his book, *Writing Without Teachers*. The idea is easy to understand; the student is asked to write non-stop in five to ten minute bursts. The only rule of the freewrite is that the pen keeps moving. Two types of freewrites will be encouraged. One freewrite format is open ended; whatever pops to mind is to be captured. Each Friday class will begin with this type of freewrite, the ‘Friday Freewrite’.

The second type is the focussed freewrite; a topic is kept in mind while writing. Student journals on their reading will be of this type, as will be some rehearsal stage writing for their final paper. After reading the assignment students will be asked to capture their thinking immediately.

Both types of freewrites are primarily divergent, following the writing wherever it takes the writer, however journal freewrites will tend to be more focussed because they are to be written immediately after reading assignments are completed. This type of writing is rehearsal stage primarily, although some freewrites find their way untouched through the whole writing process. Sometimes ideas flow out perfectly the first time they are conceived.
The second daily writing tool will be the class summary. The time allotted is the same as for a freewrite, five minutes, but the function of the writing is entirely different. Class discussion ends with five minutes left in each period and the students are asked to summarize the discussion. The goal is to pull the class together, abstracting the most important issues covered in the student's opinion. This summary will be the second entry in the student's double entry journal. On one page he will have his own open ended reaction to his reading, and facing it he will capture his group's or the class' reactions on the same materials.

This is an exercise in convergent thought primarily; the student is being asked to think critically in abstracting the salient elements of the day's class activity or discussion. In a sense, the summary is a list of the important issues developed in class and it organizes the class for the student after the fact. It also gives the student the opportunity to match his original perceptions with those garnered after listening to others' reactions.
The third type of writing will be two assigned essays on the students' own writing processes. The first will be assigned before the unit begins to assess the students' own feelings about what they do when they write. The second will be assigned after the unit has been experienced, and it will evaluate the students' opinions on their processes after exposure to four process writing theorists.

These products are artificial in that they are assigned, but they encourage declarative, procedural and conditional metacognition, and for that purpose are valuable here. The assignments are about what students think they do when they write; there should be a clear difference before exposure to this project and how they feel about their process afterwards. I hope the inherent interest in introspection overcomes the curse of the assigned essay. Having assigned these works in the course of implementing this plan I have found that students enjoy discussing something they ordinarily do automatically.

The last piece of writing will be an open ended writing response based on what students have found in
their journals, freewrites, and summaries; they will
tell themselves what they want to pursue and turn into
a longer work. This creative reaction to the unit
allows complete freedom in terms of subject matter,
although it does parallel, in a sense, the experience
Vonnegut had in writing his novel. A novel and four
pieces of writing theory have been read; where will any
(or all) of these ideas lead in the students’ writing?
The broad topic for this piece asks the students to
discover something worthy of their writing in the
course of the unit. In a way, this is the most
important piece of writing produced. It is the result
in concrete terms of the teaching and growing done in
this unit.

The Unit

This Unit will be broken into six parts, each
lasting three to four days. When small group
discussion and large group discussion are involved, the
time can vary depending upon student interest. The
consistent factor in the Unit is that each class will
end with a summary of the day’s activities and that
each reading assignment is followed by a journal
reaction. Time for completing assignments may also
vary, depending upon weekends, holidays and school
scheduling anomalies. Each part of the Unit will include the writing assignments, reading assignments and the class discussion the material should generate.

Part I

Pre-Unit Essay. The unit begins with the assignment of a piece of writing on writing. The students are asked this question: what is the process you use in producing a formal piece of writing for submission on an academic subject? More simply put, they are asked to explain their process when writing a paper for school. The directions are intentionally general; they will define their writing process for themselves. The goal is to give each student the opportunity to view his process clearly at the outset of the unit. They are given two days to produce this piece without further directions, but they are told that this will not be critically evaluated and grammar is of no concern, although clarity is important. In the end they will discuss the same issue after instruction in order to tell themselves if they now view their writing processes differently.

Reading Assignment One. For homework students are asked to read chapter one of Slaughterhouse-five and
begin to keep a nightly Journal on their reading. Journal reactions are open ended. Students are asked to write for five minutes after finishing the reading assignment with an eye to material they found interesting, provocative or troublesome. Journals are not to summarize the reading but to react to it.

The second part of their reading assignment is Chapter One of *Writing Without Teachers* by Peter Elbow (pp.3-11). Both Vonnegut and Elbow express directly the problems inherent in writing, but Elbow gives concrete advice in overcoming the problem of writer's block with his device of freewriting. Students enter their reactions to this piece in their Journals as well. The goal is to connect Vonnegut's problem with Elbow's solution and to their own comments on their personal writing processes.

**Class Discussion.** The first day of discussion of each reading assignment will be in small groups. Class will be broken into five groups of five and their process papers will be read within the groups as well as their journals on Vonnegut's Chapter One and Elbow's Chapter One. Students will report back to the class from their summaries on each group's discussion on the second day. Groups will be used for handling each large piece of writing theory on the day after an
assignment, with the second day for whole class discussion.

In Chapter One, Vonnegut explicitly states the problems he had in creating this work. Given his horrifying experiences in World War II he thought he had the material for a great book, but he can't seem to write it. Using a blend of sarcasm and honesty he concludes by calling this book a failure because, similar to Lot's wife in the Bible, he is looking back at a holocaust. The book had to be a failure, he says, because it was written by "a pillar of salt". This chapter is autobiographical; it is an odd beginning to a piece of fiction. Vonnegut's voice is direct in that he drops his mask as storyteller and confides his problems in the reader.

Journal reactions will reflect students' connections of their processes with Vonnegut's struggle as well as comment on the quick movement in Chapter One from idea to idea. Vonnegut also introduces the major themes of his novel in this chapter, so journal commentary on the nature of time, the reason for a lack of villains herein and why it is pointless to write an anti-war book all may come up. Class discussion will develop from students and teacher reading journals aloud.

In groups specific comments on Vonnegut's writing 'problem' will emerge, focus on his writing process and
themes will also start to surface, and the students will comment on their own processes as well. In small group work each student has the opportunity to express opinion whereas large class discussion will focus on fewer journal readings in more depth.

Class will also focus on freewriting as a technique for opening up the writing process. After reading a variety of student journals reacting to Elbow's piece, class will begin a five minute freewriting exercise employing his technique. Topics could connect to the novel, the theory, or how much the student wants to go to lunch, but the tenor of this first freewrite tends to be playful. The freedom to follow one's freewriting wherever it goes is exhilarating to students who have generally written only within the confines of assigned work.

Finally class will begin with analysis of Elbow and Vonnegut. Students will be encouraged to make connections between the theorist and the novelist, and to read their freewrites to each other in order to foster discussion. Each group will report back with the major connections it found. From this point onward Friday classes will always begin with a 'Friday Freewrite.'
Part II

Creative Reaction to the Novel. The large reaction paper will be assigned in this part. Students will be given the freedom to develop their own ideas; from journals, freewrites, reactions to text and observations, they will create a personal reaction to the writing to which they were exposed.

One structured reaction could come from their personal experiences, viewing the best or worst situation they have gone through and paralleling Vonnegut’s experience in Dresden or Billy Pilgrim’s fantasy on Tralfamadore. They could extend an entry from a journal or an in class freewrite or a specific reaction they had to the theorists they have encountered in the unit.

The topic of this paper is left entirely to the discretion of the student but it is assumed that the material in which they were immersed will affect what they create. Students will have until the end of the Unit to complete this assignment.

Reading Assignment Two. Homework will be to read Murray’s article, “Writing as Process: How Writing Finds Its Own Meaning” (pp.3-19). The goal is to see the stages of the writing process from three perspectives. Murray also offers insight into the
numerous revisions Vonnegut alluded to in his first chapter. Students will also notice the connection between Murray's concept of the rehearsal stage of writing and Elbow's freewriting idea.

The second part of their reading assignment is Chapters Two and Three of *Slaughterhouse-Five* (pp. 23-71). Students will be encouraged to see how Vonnegut connects the disparate elements of his life and how his writing finds its own meaning. The second chapter begins with a synopsis of the main character's life, then he becomes unstuck in time.

**Class Discussion.** Journals will be read on Murray's piece and small group discussion will tend to clarify some of the concepts Murray puts forth. Elbow's simplicity will be contrasted with Murray's complexity, with some parallels about process emerging as well. Murray views writing as having three interconnected phases: rehearsal, drafting, and revision. Freewriting seems to fall into Murray's rehearsal phase, but upon closer scrutiny students should come to see that new insights occur all throughout the process, and some clear ideas captured in freewrite form can survive all the way to the final revision phase.

Vonnegut's approach seems to echo Elbow when he comments, in his first chapter, "I must have written
five thousand pages by now, and thrown them all away (p.15)." His continuous writing eventually told Vonnegut what he wanted to say, but Murray's idea of early stage writing as exploration and later stage writing as clarification also can connect to Vonnegut's process.

At this point in the Unit the students will have observed four positions on writing process: their own piece, Vonnegut's introduction, Elbow's philosophy, and Murray's complete view. A general personal opinion should have begun to evolve. Watching Vonnegut making meaning and attempting to see the process behind his writing should allow students to connect to the theorists as well as the novelist.

Part III

Reading Assignment Three. Homework will be to read a selection from Ann Berthoff's book Forming, Thinking, Writing (P.1-12) and react to it in journals. In her introduction Berthoff explains her philosophy of writing. When she writes, "Discovering how to work is contingent on exploring what is to be done: a method of composing should continually ensure that the 'how' and the 'what' and the 'why' are seen and experienced in a dialectical relationship (p.4),"
students can connect to Vonnegut's struggle to make meaning of the firebombing of Dresden. Vonnegut never understood why this massacre took place, and therefore had trouble with how to write and what exactly to write about.

The second part of the reading assignment is Chapters Four and Five of the novel (pp. 73-137). The main character is unstuck in time and moves from a prisoner of war camp to his daughter's wedding day to a spaceship on the way to Tralfamadore. On his journey he confronts the philosophical question of time and free will. He is closing in on answering the question of why Dresden occurred.

**Class Discussion.** In viewing this piece of writing theory the idea is to connect Vonnegut and Berthoff in terms of their making of meaning. In particular, her ideas of discovering one's own process by teaching oneself and the connection she draws about the 'what' and 'how' in writing being integrally connected explain the approach Vonnegut fashioned in making meaning of Dresden. I can think of no other book where form and content are in closer relationship. As Vonnegut writes, "It (the book) is so short and jumbled and Jangled Sam because there is nothing intelligent to say about a massacre (p.19)."
Vonnegut embodies Berthoff's guiding philosophical principle, "We teach students how to form by showing them that they form (p.2)." Vonnegut's bizarre structure was necessary to distance himself from the horror he experienced in Dresden. Because of his trauma, surviving the slaughter of 135,000 people, Vonnegut needed to devise a new way to capture reality. Only by becoming unstuck in time could Billy Pilgrim escape. Students will be encouraged to find their own form and substance in writing their final paper on this project. Class time for freewriting on the progress of the final paper will be allotted. Students will inform themselves about how much they have left to rehearse, draft or revise on their project.

Connections will also be encouraged between Berthoff and the other two theorists. Her working definition of thinking as seeing relationships parallels Murray's comments on writing being a process of collecting and connecting. Her comment that what you really learn is what you discover echoes the discovery inherent in Elbow's freewriting.

Part IV

Reading Assignment Four. Homework will be to read Chapters Six, Seven and Eight in the novel
The main character finally returns to confront Dresden at the end of this section, and the novel's climax is disappointing. Billy Pilgrim tells the story of the firebombing rather than reliving it, and the tone is very flat and unemotional. By this time Billy understands the Tralfamadorian idea about time and he realizes that there is no why, there simply is. He must come to terms with that fact that the firebombing occurred because the moment was structured that way.

**Class Discussion.** The issues of free will versus determinism, the nature of time, attitudes about modern war and the nature of the self are all themes this novel develops. The entire structure of the novel will cause comment, since there is no real chronological plot structure because the main character is unstuck in time. At the point in the novel when Vonnegut finally describes Dresden the students will be puzzled. Why did he spend all this time leading up to this point, then tell of the destruction in such a flat manner?

It is here that the reader can recall again Vonnegut's earlier admonition, "there is nothing intelligent to say about a massacre (p.19)." He lets the reader down because he does not want to glamorize the horror. His final look back at Dresden is dispassionate. Nothing can be done so we must look
ahead. Students will also freewrite in class about their final papers, reflecting on what stage of the writing process they are involved in primarily.

**Part V**

**Reading Assignment Five.** Homework will be to read an excerpt from Moffett’s chapter on narrative stances (pp.32-47) and write a journal reaction to it. This discussion is the most difficult the students will have to read. Moffett’s point about the distance between the speaker and his audience is simple enough, but by combining it with the concept of the levels of verbal abstraction students can get lost in this piece. Because of its difficulty students will be asked to write a broad outline of his central ideas.

The second part of this reading assignment is to read the final two chapters of *Slaughterhouse-Five* (pp.192-215). Included therein are three excerpts, one from Truman’s speech after the bombing of Hiroshima and two commentaries by military leaders about the firebombing of Dresden. The connection between Moffett and Vonnegut here is in terms of narrative distance. Students can hear the differences as the speakers change, leading to a discussion of voice in writing.
Class Discussion. Since Moffett is the most difficult theorist thus far attempted, discussion in small groups will be assisted by the teacher. An outline was assigned to more closely delineate Moffett’s specific discussion of the relationships possible in discourse between the speaker and his audience. Each group will read reactions to Moffett, compare outlines and begin to think about Vonnegut’s novel in terms of voice.

Voice will be defined as the author’s choice of narrator or the position from which he views the events described. The goal is to gain insight into forming one’s own voice, a similar but not identical concept. Moffett’s clear explanation of distance between speaker and audience can be seen as Vonnegut shifts from first to third person between chapters one and two and then back to first person at the end of the novel. In groups students should also begin to hear their individual voices as they read their journals to each other in discussion.

Outlines will be used to focus on an exploration of the range of voices available to the writer. Students will be asked to note as well the variety of voices in the body of Vonnegut’s novel.

Narration plays a large part in telling the story and five external voices also inhabit Vonnegut’s book. A fictional monograph from an American collaborator, a
Truman speech on the use of atomic weapons, an English and an American commentary on the firebombing of Dresden and a notebook commentary on world population provide the reader with opportunities to hear other viewpoints on some of Vonnegut's themes. Class discussion will focus on the narration, structure and central themes of this novel.

The last day of this part of the Unit will center on a class wide discussion of the book. Reactions from small groups as well as individual journal reactions will deal with the students' thoughts after completion of the novel. The similarity of narrative viewpoint in Chapter One and the final chapter will also be viewed as Vonnegut once again enters his novel and addresses the reader directly. Another freewrite progress report will be written; they will inform themselves again as to what remains to be done for the final project.

Part VI

Post-Unit Essay. Students will again be asked to write a paper explaining their process of writing a paper for school. After their experience with the theorists they will be expected to view their own processes differently, but no instructions will be given to that end. The assignment is identical to the
first one and the same amount of time is to be allotted, two days.

**Class Work.** The last three or four days will be an in class writing workshop where group discussion, freewriting, drafting and review will be used in helping to continue to develop the final paper of the unit. The paper on personal writing process will not be a part of this workshop. As well as working on the final reaction to the unit here, brief conferences will be held with each student on his topic. The unit will end with three days of writing primarily because writing was so central to the unit itself.

A great deal of material was covered in this unit, but the basic plan is a simple one. Students read a novel and four theorists, then formed their own opinions on the subject matter and their writing processes. The elements of the theory were intermingled with the practice of writing in order to effect a basic change in the way these students thought about their processes.

In this last workshop the opportunity to employ groups, conferences and the strategies of the theorists will be provided. The final paper will allow students to make their own meaning and follow their ideas wherever they lead. The post-unit essay is due the day after the Unit ends. The final paper will be submitted a week later.
CHAPTER IV

EVALUATION OF STUDENT WRITING - THREE CASE STUDIES

The Students

This chapter will evaluate the writing of three students engaged in the unit previously described. Sam, Peter and Matt (pseudonyms) were chosen from a class of 25 heterogeneously grouped seniors in an all male catholic high school. In our school, students are tracked for their first three years in three ability levels. As seniors they elect courses based on their interests and the classes end up as mixed groups. Therefore, I chose one student from each level to represent his group.

Sam’s English SAT was 390 and he was in the bottom ability level for his first three years of high school. Peter’s English SAT was 510 and he was grouped in the middle ability level until this senior elective course. Matt’s English SAT was 650 and he was in the honors level until he elected my class. Although the SATs are more indicative of reading ability than writing ability, there is clearly some correlation between the two. The groups in which these students were placed for their first three years are also indicative of
their writing skill as well; in this case college board scores did parallel the students' placements in their respective levels.

This class would be the first time that these three levels of students were mixed in an English class in their high school careers. This heterogeneous grouping may account for increased performance on the part of the two lower levels of students, a value inherent in mixed grouping. Since they did elect this class they had some interest in the subject matter in advance, and therefore motivation may have been increased for this reason as well. Each student I chose was representative of his group. The class itself, however, had a small group of honors students (5), a large number of middle ability students (16), and a small number of bottom level students (4).

**Writing Assignments**

There were four types of writing assignments in this unit:

1. There were two expository essays on the students' own writing processes, one written at the beginning of the unit and one at the end.
2. A daily freewrite journal was kept, which contains the students' reactions to the novel and the writing theory which they were assigned to read.

3. A second entry journal reaction, called a summary, was written after class or group discussion on each reading assignment.

4. A creative, free choice paper concluded the unit; this piece was drawn in part from their prior writing within the unit, and all rehearsal, drafting and edited revisions were included.

**Areas of Evaluation**

Four areas were viewed in evaluating change in student writing over the course of one month.

1. The student's voice, defined as narrative ownership and confidence in writing, was contrasted.

2. Student motivation, the desire to express ideas and to elaborate upon them, was measured.

3. Creativity, the uniqueness of subjects chosen and connections made, was viewed.

4. Metacognition, the knowledge of and introspection into their processes as they write, was measured in its declarative, procedural and conditional aspects.
Because each of the four types of assignment differs, the areas of evaluation to be applied to each type will differ. For example, the daily summary is a record of important class events; creativity as defined above is not an essential component of summarizing class discussion, although some unique connections may occur therein. The final assignment, however, will be viewed in all four categories.

**Evaluation of Assignments**

1. The two pieces on the students' own writing processes will be evaluated in terms of voice, motivation and declarative, procedural and conditional metacognition. Since the assigned topic for these pieces asked the students a metacognitive question, evidence of some type of metacognition should be found.

2. Summaries will be viewed for motivation and declarative metacognition (the knowledge of the stages of process writing), since these are basically convergent writing exercises. When class involves process writing theory, this type of metacognition should be apparent.

3. Journal freewrites will be looked at in terms of voice and creativity. Freewrites can be convergent or divergent and allow for student development of his
voice due to the freedom they afford. They also allow for open ended reaction and encourage creativity.

4. The creative connective assignment will be seen in all four categories.

Voice and motivation fall into the area of attitudes and dispositions about a student's own writing; creativity is seen as the quality of the student's process; metacognition will be judged as another main product of the unit.

Pre-Unit and Post-Unit Essays - Writing about Writing

The first pieces evaluated are the pre and post unit papers on the students' own writing processes. These two formal assignments are by nature metacognitive; they concern the students' direct comment on their approaches to writing. Since the first piece was written before exposure to writing theory it gives a baseline look at the student's attitudes and beliefs about his writing and how he produces it before instruction. The second assignment asks the student to assess his writing process again; in light of the theories to which he was exposed clear changes in the three types of metacognition were anticipated as well as an improvement in his motivation to discuss his writing.
Sam's Pre-Unit Essay. Sam's first paper was 155 words, in one paragraph. He began in this way, "When I write a paper, especially one when I have to pick a topic, I start by thinking about ideas in my head." He said that he thinks for a few days, writes some notes, then a draft, after which, "I try to make sense of all this information." He concluded, "I then write my final draft and read it out loud to someone to make sure it sounds right. If I need to make corrections I go back and fix them."

Sam shows a fundamental knowledge of the stages of process writing in his paper. He makes no comment about his confidence in his process but does recognize four stages - thinking, writing notes, drafting and writing a final copy. His writing was direct and specific in reacting to the topic of explaining his writing process. He is very concrete and expresses no emotion about his writing. Writing is a job to be done. He also sees these stages as distinct and linear. Once he stops thinking ahead he writes notes. The notes are then used for a draft. The draft is revised to become a final copy. He does evaluate his writing at the end to make sure it sounds "right."

His declarative and conditional metacognition seem solid but incomplete. By viewing his process in a linear fashion he shows ignorance of writing's recursive nature. He also does not seem to know why
these stages are employed; his procedural metacognition appears deficient.

Post-Unit Essay. His second piece was 505 words in five paragraphs. He began much differently this time. "I've noticed that when I write a paper, although a basic process is usually followed, the way I go about it is often different." He then complained about assigned papers. "When I am given something to write about I sometimes feel trapped, like I have to stay focused on that certain subject. It's difficult to explore and discover when I am trapped like that." His first paragraph ends with this statement, "I usually feel like I am proving something when I'm given a specific topic."

Sam saw his writing "finding its own meaning," a direct quote from the article we used authored by Donald Murray. He feels the best part of his writing is the exploring. He now searches through his freewrites, journals, drafts and polishes his final copy without much concern for his audience. When he comments, "I've just noticed that when I write a paper, although a basic process is usually followed, the way I go about it is often different," he is beginning to evolve some insight or conditional metacognition.

He rails against narrow, assigned topics because he feels trapped by them. This is evidence of a common
weakness in the traditional approaches to writing where a teacher always assigns and students have less freedom of choice. He quotes Murray again when he says, "Collecting, writing, reading and connecting...are constantly interacting inside my head as I write." He feels he must write with himself as the primary audience because, "I think if I thought about who the audience was my voice would not be honest and my opinion might be altered due to the fear of what my audience would think." His concluding line qualifies his complaint, "I do realize the importance of audience, however," alluding to the piece we read on narration and audience by James Moffett.

Again, this piece is more than triple the length of his first one, and he seems much more excited about his process after the unit is over. He says, "I don't fear a reader's opinion when I write how I feel." His metacognition and voice are clearly improved after this unit, and his motivation, the desire to express and elaborate on his ideas, was evident by the length and structure of his piece.

**Peter's Pre-Unit Essay.** Peter's first paper was 284 words long, in one paragraph, and described his writing process as letting ideas flow into his head with the radio on, "because it relaxes me and in turn allows me to think a lot easier and much freely (sic)."
He then jotted down ideas, created a draft, then a final copy which continued to change from the rough draft, indicating a four step procedure similar to Sam's.

I find myself moving the old ideas around to make room for new ones which come to me as I am writing. I don't think this is a bad idea at all....some of it is spontaneous which makes me feel better about my paper. I feel very comfortable with the way my papers come about.

Unlike Sam, Peter shows not only declarative and procedural metacognition, but he also has some grasp of conditional metacognition. He feels better about his paper by including new ideas in later stage writing. There were reasons for being flexible and non-linear here. His voice is also more emotional and enthusiastic about his process than was Sam's.

Post-Unit Essay. Peter's final piece was 959 words in six paragraphs. He used many of the concepts from the theory to which he was exposed to show what he thought he did while writing. He saw his process as "a constant revolt against intent" (Murray). He felt a "center of gravity emerged" as he wrote a succession of drafts (Elbow). His second reflection on how he wrote was powerfully introspective; he wrote,

I agree with Murray's definition of writing being 'a significant kind of thinking in which the symbols of language assume a purpose of their own and instruct the writer during the composing process'... I find it
fascinating to think I am doing that at this very instant.

As for Elbow's ideas on freewriting, Peter states, "I have used it for creating topics and keeping a diary...and for both these purposes have found success and satisfaction in what I've created." He liked Moffett's cafeteria analogy about the way a story changes as the audience becomes broader, but found Elbow and Murray more closely connected and more helpful in enhancing his process.

After this unit Peter felt more confident in discussing his writing, although he began from a higher confidence level than did Sam. His enthusiasm for writing was evident in the pre-unit piece but overflowing in the post-unit piece, in which he was more enthralled with the wonder of the process. His second piece was more than three times longer than his first, clearly indicating greater motivation to elaborate as well as a broader base of metacognitive information with which to work. His confidence and ability to be introspective grew, although he did feel good about his process at the beginning of the unit. Much of the theory seemed to confirm what he instinctively felt about his writing and the magic of its spontaneity.
Matt's Pre-Unit Essay. Matt's first paper was 294 words long in one paragraph. He said he thinks first, gets his ideas paragraph by paragraph, edits each sentence as it is produced, rearranges paragraphs as he goes, and he describes his process as lengthy. He comments, "I plan my sentences in my head and edit them before I ever put pen to paper." For longer assignments he will make an outline first, and for each part of the outline he plans out the supporting details in advance. His concluding sentence is, "Although this makes it a lengthy process, I find writing to be rewarding so it does not really bother me."

As an honor student and an academically successful writer, Matt's voice is confident and he finds writing to be rewarding at the beginning of this unit. His concept of process, however, is less distinct than either Sam's or Peter's. He has collapsed the rehearsal, drafting and revising stages into two pieces, think then write. He is aware, however, of the concepts of main idea and supporting details, and when he states that his is an "edit-as-you-write" style he is not correct. He does plan before he begins. Rather than drafting a rough work first he revises again and again as he goes. He finds this tedious but also rewarding. His conditional metacognition is excellent; he understands why and when to adjust his ideas and he
f{}llows a clear plan in reacting to academic assignments.

**Post-Unit Essay.** Matt’s second response was 648 words long, in five paragraphs. He now feels freer in writing without so much early editing. He feels Elbow helped him relax and open up. He sees Murray’s ideas of writing as “collecting, connecting, reading, writing in a recursive manner” in his own writing but he directly states that knowing this does not strike him as helpful. Of all the ideas presented by the theorists, he feels freewriting was the one he needed to know. He concludes, “I have gained knowledge in both of its forms (theoretical and practical) concerning my writing process.”

Matt was an honors student at the beginning of this unit and his writing was the most sophisticated at the start. His second piece was more than twice the length of his first but he seemed to feel that knowledge of the theory was not carried over to his actual process. He had already internalized a powerful process but he felt understanding it was irrelevant. He did comment that the freewriting idea of Elbow had become a new part of his writing process, however, and he enjoyed keeping the double entry journal as a way of watching the evolution of his thought. His declarative and procedural metacognition grew considerably as
evidenced by the increased length of response, but he implied he would seldom use "new" conditional metacognition because he liked his process as it was.

**General Conclusions on Writing about Writing.** All three students saw their processes more completely after this unit. They were much more analytical and metacognitive about their own work as they saw themselves differently at the end.

Peter focussed on the wonder of watching his words instruct him. He felt at the start that there was a spontaneous quality to his process, but at the end he stated he understood and appreciated his process more.

Sam centered on the ownership element most fully. He saw the process theory as validating his feelings about freedom of expression and rejected the idea about writing for an audience other than himself.

Matt, the Honors level writer and class salutatorian, felt that he became freer by studying process theorists, although he stated that knowing how he wrote theoretically, while it was logical to him, was of no assistance in the actual writing itself.

In a way, each student took from the theorists that which they needed to advance as writers. Sam and Peter enhanced their processes and wrote more deeply. Matt became a bit more playful but, in the end, seemed least affected by his study of process theory.
All three students felt Elbow's ideas on freewriting helped them become more fluent and all complimented Murray on his ideas about writing as process, but all three felt Moffett's comments on discourse were less helpful. They each commented on Berthoff's idea that they learned how to "form" their writing by realizing that they do "form" it.

They seemed empowered by this unit but were more concerned with themselves as audience rather than thinking about external audiences, hence their lack of connection to Moffett. Given that these students were from a traditional Catholic school background, the largest piece each took from this unit was the opening up concepts of Elbow and Murray. It may also be that high school seniors are at a stage where they are ready for the liberation that college will bring, therefore they related to the openness of these theorists.

(The pre and post unit essays will be included in Appendix A.)

Daily Summaries

Fifteen summaries were written over the course of the unit. I chose two from each of the students to include in their entirety, to show an early and late
class reaction. The summaries are of the same two classes for all three students.

Summaries are formal paragraphs which are concerned with significant events in class. They are convergent in nature and ask students to abstract from class discussion. In viewing summary writing I centered upon students’ voice and motivation. In all three cases summaries improved in the flow of voice but length was consistent over the course of the unit. The amount of writing done seemed to create a smoother flow when a student was asked to summarize a class at its end. The students also became more selective in what they included in summaries; their confidence in picking the salient pieces of class discussion improved. The coherence of the paragraphs also improved.

9am. 9/17/90 At the beginning of class we discussed areas that we’ve read about in s-h-5. Some of them were war (children’s crusade), time, nature of reality, nature of writing, death, and philosophy. The class discussion went off track when we were asked if there is anything intelligent about a massacre. Some students thought there was nothing intelligent about a massacre. But many times a massacre involves intelligence. You have to scheme out a plan in order to have things run smoother.

10/7/90 We heard a couple of reactions on the end of the novel and I still felt that some people had a sense of confusion about it. Vonnegut sometimes narrows in on one particular event in exact detail and then steps back and looks at it from a higher point of view where he knows more about a situation. There are many major ideas in this book about the effect of war on people and the discussion of free will, but I was a little confused by the ending.
Again, the second summary is of similar length but the style and flow of the piece are better in the second work. This student also stops trying to cram an entire class in and is honest in his confusion about Vonnegut's untraditional conclusion. In his first summary he simply lists topics whereas in his second he provides some support for his main idea. He also feels confident enough to admit his confusion. He alludes to Vonnegut's narrative stance in the second summary by interestingly describing how he narrows in on an event then steps back from it, indirectly exhibiting procedural metacognition of Vonnegut's technique. This class also mentioned Moffett's piece on narrative stance, and while Sam ignored mentioning Moffett he seems to employ some of the concept about which Moffett wrote.

Peter. 9/17/90 Today in class we discussed an overview of what we discussed all last week. First we discussed the process of readwrite and writeread which didn't make much sense in the way it was described. Next we listed some of last weeks topics. It began with war then the nature of reality, nature of writing, death, and philosophy. We went back to connect the children's crusade which we saw in sl.h.5 and in the article of the soldiers burden. From this we eventually jumped into the topic of Pearl Harbor.

10/7/90 Today in class we read our journal reactions to the book as a whole. Some interesting points were brought up. One example was the irony of Vonnegut using Reagan as a joke. Vonnegut, in a humorous moment, refers to an ex-actor and governor of a sad state becoming president. How was he to know in 1967 that in 1980 Reagan would be elected? I found this
amazing and entertaining in itself. My own interpretation was that Vonnegut could see the future!

Both summaries are about the same length, but the second seems tighter and more controlled. Rather than trying to jam all the facts from the class into the brief work he touches on one event that captures his interest. There is some declarative metacognition in the first summary when he uses Murray’s terms of ‘readwrite’ and ‘writeread’, but none in the second. Where Sam was confused at the ending of the novel Peter focusses on the coincidence of Vonnegut placing a ‘Reagan for President’ bumper sticker on the back of Billy Pilgrim’s car. Peter follows an idea at some length in his second summary and is more cohesive. He focusses on an interesting point and writes about it well.

Matt, 9/17/90 Today we discussed more about writing style and this lead into a conversation about morality. Originally, nobody wanted to read their journals from Friday, so Mr. Porter read us a portion of his journal about freewriting versus the composed writing of an edited paper. Somehow we got talking about the morality of a surprise attack. I think this stemmed from a brief outline of Chapter One of Slaughterhouse Five. We talked about Pearl Harbor and the use of a sucker-punch in fighting.

10/7/90 Today’s class was mostly dedicated to the last few chapters of SH5. To begin with, we finished our conversation on Moffett’s piece. Most people felt it wasn’t worth their time to write a reaction to. This led to a discussion of the assignment for the journal. Some people felt it was difficult while others felt it was boring because the subject matter was a hardly
Interesting one. Later we read concluding journals to S15. The final two chapters were a good conclusion.

In Matt's case I think both summaries are excellent. He was a solid logical writer at the beginning of this unit and he remained consistent. He also is the only one to comment on the Moffett piece. He spends his second summary on the problem the class had with Moffett and only briefly mentions the novel. His focus was on the problem rather than on the fun in class. Both summaries trace the ideas of the class in a more connected fashion than did Sam or Peter. Matt can understand more clearly where the class was going, and this ability has obviously helped him in achieving his academic success.

**General Conclusions on Summaries.** All three students improved in their ability to capture a class in summation at its end. Motivation stayed the same in terms of length of response, but the elaboration became tighter as the month wore on and the ability to synthesize a class quickly improved. When small group or class discussion focused specifically on process writing theory students showed some declarative and procedural metacognition.

The attempt to analyze class and to write logically about it in a five minute summary is a difficult activity. The value of having closure after
discussion is important, however. The summary technique is an idea that any class could implement and it forces a student to put a free flow of ideas into coherent form.

**Journals and Freewrites**

As opposed to summaries, which ask students to convergently reflect on class discussion of literature and writing theory, freewrites and journal reactions are divergent. The nature of following the train of words streaming out without stopping forces the student to break down the normal composing process through intentionally non-edited writing. The interior monologue created often sets up a breakthrough or surprise based on circumstances in the reading or in a student’s writing.

For each student there is included his journal freewrite from his first reaction to the novel and a freewrite on the last chapters as well.

*Sam. 9/9/90  Ch. 1 - So far this seems very strange Vonnegut jumps around to different ideas but he doesn’t really connect them. It is hard to follow what’s going on. He was talking allot about war experiences but they didn’t seem to make much sense. Why does he make weird phone calls late at night? This story so far seems like a freewrite by Vonnegut. If this is a good book then I could write one too just by recording my thoughts on paper as they go through my mind. It seems like that’s what he did. It is kind of*
interesting though, he makes me wonder what the hell he's talking about.

10/4/90 Ch. 9+10- The last two chapters were confusing at times. When I was reading I felt like I had already read some of this before. I could have sworn I heard the name of Rumfoord in another book. I think Sirens of Titan. I don't remember if the characters are the same but if they're not why wouldn't Vonnegut think of a new name. I thought it was interesting that Billy cried when he saw the condition of the two horses, but he hadn't cried about anything else in the war. I was trying to see the connection Vonnegut was making when he said the tones of people speaking (after Dresden) might have been those used by friends of Jesus when they took His body down from the cross. The end of the book seemed to make alot of connections to Jesus as if Billy was some sort of Christ figure.

All of Sam's freewriting shows a willingness to make connections. His first one sees a connection between Vonnegut's style and the concept of freewriting and admits that the reading was kind of interesting. His second freewrite shows his attempt to connect Billy to Christ at the end of the novel. Voice is more confident at the end of the unit but both freewrites show creative leaps from the novel to larger issues. He sees Elbow in Vonnegut's writing in the first journal and he connects Billy and Christ in the second.

Peter. 9/9/90 Ch.1 - This is my second time through and I have enjoyed it greatly both times. Vonn's style and thoughts make me think and keep my attention. I must say I am very happy to have read this book. It is an exceptional work and one of the few anti-war stories around. Mrs. O'Hare is right, as is Harrison Starr. Well I really don't know what to say. Maybe I will last this whole five minutes writing, "If the accident will." I like that. I like some of his phrases like and so on even though I haven't figured that out and if the accident will. I know what to expect but don't feel it will bore me the second
time around I think that says something about his writing to me. You always find something new and interesting from it. Harrison Starr is right, wars are like glaciers, and that is what I feel this story is about.

10/5/90 Ch. 9+10 I found this book to be quite interesting on a whole. Vonnegut's style and techniques keep the reader thinking and guessing. He did this for me. Vonnegut pulls everything together in the last two chapters. He pulls together everything he said in this book and brings it all into his main point. His point is that war is the worst experience someone can face. The worst he has faced at least. And we know this when he ties in his experiences in the war. Particularly his return to Dresden with O'Hare. I think this is why his point hits home. We know and are affected by his involvement in the war. I can see why he wanted to write a humorous book after S.L.H.F. After finishing these last two chapters I am ready to go out and read *Breakfast of Champions* again it would be a refreshing change. Maybe that is what it meant to Vonnegut.

Peter's freewriting is more extended than Sam's and he admits to having read this novel before in his first freewrite. Both reactions are confident and positive in voice and both think at length about the material read. Peter stays closer to the subject matter than did Sam and he only extends beyond the reading at the end when he thinks about *Breakfast of Champions*, the novel Vonnegut wrote immediately after *Slaughterhouse-Five*. He remembers it as a humorous book and he projects that Vonnegut wrote it as a refreshing change from the gloom of this novel.

Matt. 9/9/90 Ch.1 - The first chapter of *Slaughterhouse-Five* acts as more of an introduction than a chapter of the book. Vonnegut really comes through as a human being trying to write about a confusing and painful experience. I think the broken
style helps the reader because it isn’t just a book, it’s also a looking glass into Vonnegut’s mind and feelings. The way he falls to describe what happened and how he feels reveals how he feels and how serious the whole affair is. My father was in Dresden a few years ago, and there are still craters and ruins from the war. Forty years after the fact the city is still rebuilding. That says a lot about the level of destruction. Vonnegut clearly speaks out against war. While I don’t agree with war or violence as a means of solving disputes, I realize that it is the human condition, as he explains.

10/5/90 Ch. 9+10 Slaughterhouse-Five seemed to me to be the kind of book that you could keep on reading for some time w/o getting really bored. Vonnegut had so much to say about everything and the way the book is written held my attention throughout. The final two chapters were a good conclusion though. Instead of Vonnegut just ending the book, he slowly centralizes the subject onto what has been the core plotline throughout – the war. The way Vonnegut interjects his own life at the end gives the reader one big reality slap – that the horror of war depicted in the book actually happened to a human being.

Both of Matt’s journal reactions are interesting and creative. He sees Vonnegut’s style as a looking glass into his mind in the first entry, and understands the reason Vonnegut interjects his life into the novel again at the end. His voice was strong in both pieces and he was the most sophisticated in thinking about the chapters he read. Matt is a very gifted student and it is obvious from both the summaries and freewrites contained herein.

General Conclusions on Journals and Freewrites.
These open ended reflections were fun to read; these students were trying to connect and muse about their reading and thinking from beginning to end. Their
confidence in their writing grew as did the honesty in their voices. By the end they were feeling free to criticize or draw any parallel to themselves and their world. Their second entry journals indicated that they felt they improved as they went along. They saw themselves opening up and becoming more able to comment on the connections they saw between the theory and the novel. Both voice and the ability to draw creative connections improved as they recorded their feelings about the Unit in which they were engaged.

**Creative Reaction to the Novel**

When we began this unit students were told they would be required to produce one large piece of work of their own choice, and they were encouraged to pursue any idea that interested them. All three came up with ideas that intrigued them in their journals, drafted them over several weeks and finally produced some excellent although very divergent papers.

The final piece is a self selected creative reaction connected to the unit. This proved to be the most interesting piece produced by each student. Matt wrote a free form philosophical reaction to the novel about the nature of thought, free will, determinism and time. Peter connected to the novel’s concept of violence and death with a personal essay on a close
friend's murder. Sam reflected upon time in a
beautiful reminiscence about his childhood. I will
trace each work from its inception to its finish here.

Sam. His paper began in a journal complaining
about his lack of time. He connected this to some
later thoughts about growing up but feeling things rush
by him too quickly. He addressed this subject in six
journals over two weeks, then wrote a beautiful paper,
using two drafts, about his summer vacations on the
ocean as a child. In looking back he feels everything
has changed, but concludes,

I wonder if everything really did change, or was
it just me who changed and now sees things from a
different perspective. Is life, growing up, a gradual
downfall? My favorite thing is still sitting on the
sea wall watching the sun go down. It's the only thing
I have left about my summers, besides my memories.

Sam changed his ideas the most as he ruminated
about this assignment. His first comment on Time in
Journal format concludes, "Everything I say about
growing up and time flying by has probably all been
said many times before but I have never given it much
thought before." From this beginning he writes a
personal account of a summer vacation spot from his
reminiscences over his own experience as a 7 year old
then a 17 year old. He exhibited no metacognition in
this paper, but his voice was excellent in its longing
for childhood again. He was motivated to do a great
Job here and his creativity in using Vonnegut's idea of time to return to his youth was very clever.

Peter. His paper began with a connection to Vonnegut's helplessness about the horrors of war in a journal the first week of class. He connected an issue discussed in his social justice course about poverty in the city to this violence in a second entry journal and ended up with a personal reflection about a friend of his who was murdered in Boston. He concludes this powerful piece with this thought,

Just as war cannot be justified, the situation we face, which is gradually destroying our country, is that people are needlessly dying in the streets. It is a war in itself. So it goes.

This writing I felt to be a very creative blending of a number of problems this student was confronting. The war with Iraq was in its embryonic stage, Vonnegut's novel was shaking loose some ideas of how it feels to see a city physically destroyed, and a personal tragedy linked these concepts as he kept a journal about his ideas. He used his journal as a springboard and came back to the idea in two drafts of his paper. His personal horror of losing a friend found some development in Vonnegut's story, and his conclusion is the same as Vonnegut's, 'So it goes.' He can accept what he cannot change, but his essay argues
Job here and his creativity in using Vonnegut's idea of time to return to his youth was very clever.

Peter. His paper began with a connection to Vonnegut's helplessness about the horrors of war in a journal the first week of class. He connected an issue discussed in his social justice course about poverty in the city to this violence in a second entry journal and ended up with a personal reflection about a friend of his who was murdered in Boston. He concludes this powerful piece with this thought,

Just as war cannot be justified, the situation we face, which is gradually destroying our country, is that people are needlessly dying in the streets. It is a war in itself. So it goes.

This writing I felt to be a very creative blending of a number of problems this student was confronting. The war with Iraq was in its embryonic stage, Vonnegut's novel was shaking loose some ideas of how it feels to see a city physically destroyed, and a personal tragedy linked these concepts as he kept a journal about his ideas. He used his journal as a springboard and came back to the idea in two drafts of his paper. His personal horror of losing a friend found some development in Vonnegut's story, and his conclusion is the same as Vonnegut's, "So it goes." He can accept what he cannot change, but his essay argues
for some assistance for inner city kids to avoid future horrors.

Peter used the journal to generate a topic, some notes from his Social Justice class for support, the novel's ideas about senseless death as a connector and wrote two drafts and a substantially revised final copy. He used the unit's process approach in creating a riveting personal reflection. I particularly liked his going to a religion class for information, then the leap to connecting senseless violence to a murder of a friend. His writing lead him to address his own horror, his own experience with senseless death, much like Vonnegut's writing of Slaughterhouse-Five. He exhibits no metacognition in the paper but voice, motivation and creativity were excellent.

Matt. He wrote four freewrites and a brainstorm which basically told him what he did not want to write about. Finally he wrote a wandering essay which began with an internal pep talk about knowing what he would say but realizing it would change along the way. He begins ruminating about writing, then thinking, free will, determinism, war, Martin Luther King's comments on violence, and concludes with his feelings on the mind again.

At the end here I'm still faced with the mysteries of the mind, and, because of the mind's limits, the
universal questions humans wrestle with. I can’t help but think the Tralfamadorians have it real easy. Everything is determined and they accept it that way. I suppose life wouldn’t be interesting, though, if we thought events were already set. Perhaps that’s why we cling to free-will; it is the only way we can have some sort of influence in a universe that doesn’t appear to need us.

Matt was the most conditionally metacognitive in his paper because he viewed himself while creating his work and used the metacognition as part of his paper. Although in his second paper on his writing process he claimed that knowing the theory would not affect his writing process, his final paper is based on watching himself write as he writes. He includes a number of themes from the novel in a playful yet perceptive way. His work was the most similar to Vonnegut’s novel because he jumps around a bit, his voice is inquisitive and honest and his connections are very creative. His reasoning about the futility of man in the universe and the limits of the mind are interesting; his comment on why we cling to the concept of free will is profound.

General Conclusions on Creative Reaction. The three students observed in this unit progressed in different ways from beginning to end. Sam was insecure early on but by the end was the most prolific of the three students while freewriting. His final paper was extremely well written and sincere. He struggled to confront his topic in freewrites but came up with a
great topic in the end. Peter had good confidence throughout but his sentences improved in flow and simple grammatical correctness by the end. His last work was truly moving. He saw the impact most closely of a senseless death. Matt was a solid writer to begin with, but he opened up through observing his process and freewriting his thoughts. His final paper was far less inhibited than his earlier writing. He used this unit to free himself from some of his overly restrictive writing habits.

(The Creative Reaction papers will be included in Appendix B.)

Concluding Paragraphs

Five weeks after this unit was concluded I asked each of the three students to reflect back on his writing in the unit. Here are their unedited responses after a ten minute, in class freewriting exercise. I would like to conclude this Unit with their feelings about their experiences. They capture better than I can the effect of this writing program and the way they now feel about their writing abilities.

Ham. In working on Slaughterhouse Five and all the work we did that connected with the story I changed my view on reading and writing totally. I began to see
how these things connected from the Murray, Moffett, Berthoff and Elbow articles. By reading something that was interesting to me (sl-5) and analyzing many aspects and themes in the story I realized that the real meaning of the book was discovered within myself and how the themes relate to me and things I do in my life. With all the freewriting I realized how the words develop their own meaning and how so many different ideas can arise from freewriting (a constant revolt against intent). This was stated in one of the articles and I found it to be very true. When I begin to write about something, as I read it over and see what I intended to write, it has totally changed.

Peter. Slaughterhouse-Five proved to be an interesting book on the topic of life, death, and the time in between. This, however, did not seem to be our main discussion. Instead we studied and experimented with our writing process. Moffett, Murray, Berthoff and Elbow all presented good and valid points on our writing process that guided us to understand exactly what we have been doing all year through journals, essays and freewrights. Your thesis topic is an interesting idea which could be very beneficial for many reluctant and unknowledgeable students. Before this class I fell under this category. Maybe you can do to students what this class did for me.
Mail. Back to SL5, eh? Well, I think that whole unit really helped me in a few different ways. At first, it seemed that we were going painfully slow, but I see that it was necessary to explain everything. All of Vonnegut's major themes from every other book are represented within SL5, so a close study of it enabled us to study and extract themes on our own for the rest of his literature. The biggest help was the analyzation of the writing process. Again, while doing it I felt that studying the writing process was useless. Now, after having reviewed my journal from beginning to end, I see how much my freewriting and criticism of writing have improved. I am able to think more clearly as I write, and I can proofread papers with a new insight into their creation.
In Vonnegut's first chapter he writes, "I would hate to tell you what this lousy little book cost me in money and anxiety and time (p.2)." I kind of feel like that right now. In any event, it is time to draw some general implications from this unit and the writing it generated. This chapter will look at three elements in reviewing this project.

1. Student attitudes towards the subject matter.
2. Student attitudes towards their writing.
3. Implications for other curriculum.

**Student Attitudes Towards the Subject Matter**

**Kurt Vonnegut.** The overall student reaction to the novel, *Slaughterhouse-Five*, was almost unanimously positive. Students were fascinated by Vonnegut's unorthodox time structure and the bizarre theories he espoused about free will and time. The themes of the novel were generally well handled by them although a number of students were confused by the anti-climactic ending. They were looking for more of a positive
conclusion and were disappointed by the way the book seemed to peter out at the end. Otherwise the general reaction to this book was overwhelmingly positive.

The comment most frequently made in student Journals referred to Vonnegut's style. Students called it "jumpy but smooth," "confusing in an interesting way," or "twisted." When the point was made in class that life is like this novel, jumping from peaks to valleys moment by moment, speeding by then slowing down, looking back and seeing ahead, most students were able to connect much more easily. Vonnegut is an easy writer to read in the sense that his prose style is quite colloquial; the philosophy was sometimes hard for them, however. I would say that the novel was an unequivocal success.

Peter Elbow. By far the most popular writing theorist with my students was Peter Elbow. The idea that one can generate a great deal of writing quickly is inherently interesting to high school students. They prized most the opportunity to explore their minds unencumbered by rules or assignments. In reading their journals I was struck by how open and honest they became when thinking about their reading or the theory or just about their girlfriend. There were no pretenses in the freewrites and there seemed to be much
joy about watching themselves think on the spur of the moment.

Our Friday Freewrite was the most popular segment of the week. Not only did students love following their thoughts (usually about the weekend), they readily volunteered to read them out loud to the class. It struck me that students really crave a broad audience for their ideas, an audience that does not care about grammar but that is interested in their pursuit of ideas in life. Students quickly adapted to the freewrite form and used it fluently throughout the unit. Some even mentioned that they had begun freewrite diaries and that they had used freewriting in other classes for rehearsal stage writing on other assignments.

Donald Murray. Student reaction to Murray was mixed. They understood the principles he laid out for the stages of writing but they found his article a bit confusing to read. They were able to connect him to the other theorists, most notably Elbow and Berthoff, but most commented in their journals that they liked Elbow better. I think it is a simple case of simplicity versus complexity; students found Elbow easier to read so they liked him better.

One Murray phrase turned up a number of times in student writing in this unit. Students liked the idea
of writing as "a constant revolt against intent." Many also liked his picture of writing involving reading, writing, collecting and connecting in a constantly fluctuating way. Students enjoyed the discussion of the Murray piece but some struggled with reading it on their own.

Ann Berthoff. Student reaction to Berthoff was generally good, although some students felt her language was a bit difficult to understand at times. Students liked the idea of composing in writing as similar to making sense of the world. Many also noted her comment that we show students how to form by showing them that they form.

The general principles she espouses, "whatever you really learn you teach yourself," and, "what you really learn is what you discover," were powerful ideas to students. The fundamental confidence Berthoff showed in students by saying, "I believe that students like to think, if they think they can," was appreciated by some in their journal reactions. I would say that Berthoff and Murray were received similarly; their ideas were powerful but their prose was a bit difficult for students to read comfortably.
James Moffett. Student reaction to Moffett was universally negative. This was the one piece of theory I would change next time through the unit, although his ideas about narrative stance are exactly on target as far as connecting to Vonnegut's novel goes. Vonnegut starts off the novel very close to the reader from a first person perspective, then he moves back and tells most of his story from a distant third person narrative stance. The problem was that the reading difficulty of the passage was beyond even my best student's comprehension. Matt, one of the subjects of my case study, wrote, "I found this article to be extremely boring. His topic was interesting but it got lost in the clutter. His style was also filled with complex vocabulary which made it more painful to read."

Perhaps next time I could summarize this for my students and just give them Moffett's chart of the levels of discourse. Because I was adamant that the students directly read the theory I did not fully consider how difficult Moffett would be for them. I guess I liked the ideas too much.

Student Attitudes towards their Writing

This element was the most heartening part of the unit. Student confidence in their writing ability
improved vastly as they began to take over ownership of their own writing. They were not forced to use any of the theory they read and they were not judged on any of the 'objective' standards of an English teacher's view of perfection. The students' feelings about their ability to make meaning skyrocketed.

I think there were two primary reasons for this improvement. First, many of these students had done very little ungraded writing. They were used to being punished by a bad grade for what they thought were good ideas. They had been convinced of their inadequacies. The better students had more confidence than the poorer ones, but there were only a handful at the start of this unit who admitted to enjoying writing.

The second reason was the expanded audience for which these students wrote. Because they shared daily journals, freewrites and drafts of papers with each other they had the chance to see writing in a more social vein. The broader audience also gave positive feedback often which encouraged further effort.

At this point it is important to connect back to Hillocks' meta-analysis of writing research. He criticized the idea of mainly positive feedback, a cornerstone of process writing, because by his research criteria it was less effective than the more structured concept of what he described as the 'environmental mode.' The element he does not
consider, in my opinion, is the increase in self confidence and self knowledge brought on by process writing. The joy of discovering through writing and the spontaneity of discovering an inner self that cannot resist spewing out language on paper is the greatest gain of all. The biggest battle is to convince students they are authors worthy of an audience.

Another outgrowth of the freewriting aspect of this project was the pure fun they had in writing uncensored ramblings to each other. They could not wait to write the Friday freewrite and let everyone know what was going on inside themselves. The class attitude about subject matter seemed to improve also because they had the freedom to react negatively as well as positively to the material covered. As they began to feel better about their writing they improved as writers; it seemed their pride in creating made them more conscious of adhering to grammatical conventions so they could be more easily understood by their peers.

Implications for Other Curriculum

The experience of directly exposing students to writing theory was a new one for me. Normally the teacher is the mediator between those who create theory
and those trying to grasp it. I think of the many
comments I've heard from students who felt they had to
learn in spite of a teacher rather than because of him.
The two big lessons of this unit have to do with power
sharing and ownership of ideas.

When a teacher writes with his students and reads
his material out loud, barriers begin to fall. I can
never get out of a Friday class of mine now without
reading my freewrite. Students and teacher become part
of a group of learners. We are all trying to discover
what we have to say and we all listen to each other
trying to make meaning.

One freewrite in this unit is focused on our
worst experience. This stems from Vonnegut's odd
table at telling about his worst experience in World
War II. I wrote about the near death of my son at two
weeks old and the class was deathly still. Then they
noticed that the voice of my freewrite seemed almost
emotionless. "It doesn't feel the same now," I said.
When it happened I was almost crazy with fear but the
distance gave me some perspective. Vonnegut's voice
now was understandable to them and a number chose a
worst experience to write about for their final paper.
One can be found in Appendix B of this project. By
revealing my weakness, I helped them become more able
to be strong. The power was equalized as I became just
another human being with his own problems.
The last issue involving ownership of ideas is important too. Teachers cannot write for students. In the end, what they have to say is their own property. It is the teacher's job to create opportunities for students to experience language and to make it their own. This unit did change the way my students think about their writing. When confronting a blank page and no directions, most people are lost. I now have legions of students dying to fill those pages.
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APPENDIX A

PRE-UNIT AND POST-UNIT ESSAYS
SAM

When I write a paper, especially one that I have to pick a topic, I start by thinking about ideas in my head. Usually, for a few days, I just think about a topic and some ideas. Then I begin to write some favorite ideas on paper. After writing a few different favorites, I try to gather all the ideas together and see if they connect. Does this give me enough information to create a concrete argument or strong content in my paper? I now begin to write a first draft and put down as much information as I can. After writing my first draft, I read it over, move things around, take words away, add words, make corrections, and try to make sense out of all the information. Then I write my final draft and read it over and aloud to someone to make sure it sounds right. If I need to make corrections, I go back and fix them.

This is a good method. How do you craft sentences, though?
Sam

Post-Unit

I see writing that when I write a paper, although a topic process it usually follows, the way I go about it is often different. When I am given something to write about, I sometimes feel trapped like I have to stay focused on that certain subject. I find it difficult to explore and discover things when I am trapped like that.

I try to gather as much information as I can about the subject given to me. And if I try to educate myself as much as possible so I can support what I am writing. I usually feel like I am proving something when I'm given a specific topic. The best part of writing is exploring when given a broad subject I am allowed to explore. This is where writing expresses itself. It is like talking, as Murray describes it in his article, "how writing speaks its own meaning." This article relates closely with how I write. When I begin looking for something to write about, I think I have some good ideas about favorite and realize how many different places my ideas p...
Collecting, writing, reading, and connecting are four factors that are present in almost everyone's writing process whether they realize it or not. These factors are constantly interacting inside my head as I write, by freewriting, writing journal, reading to them, and editing them over. I can usually discern a recurring idea or theme. This idea is what I rely to expand on and develop as my topic.

My first draft tends to drift different places and discover new things. When I read this over, mind things around don't line, change words or sentences, and more pop paragraphs. My second draft I attempt to connect the new ideas I discovered and piece all of the information so it makes sense. My third draft is usually my final copy and edit. This time I become appointed because I often find myself having subtext I had done and feel like I could write about something more interesting. This process changes according to what I am writing.
about and what I am trying to accomplish in my writing. One thing I've noticed when I am writing a paper is my audience is usually not a big factor. I write from what's inside me and the reader can interpret it however he wants. My writing is often a self-indulgent kind of writing because I am writing for me, not my audience. I don't fear a reader's opinion when I state how I feel. I think if I thought about what the audience would think, my voice would not be honest and my opinions may be altered due to the fear of what my audience may think. Although this is how I feel about audience, I do realize the importance of audience in some literature. This was a shock for me. When compared to your first piece of writing, there is more fleshed out but your principles are consistent. The points you made were thought out and explained.
I feel the procedure someone uses in writing a page is very key. I assume you are not referring to a limited research paper when you ask this question. I regard the whole process of just closing the page to my room and turning up the radio so it is all that I can hear. I think the reason I do this is because it relaxes me and makes me to think and express and even make poetry. Today I just ended into my room and as they do I just jot down whatever thoughts and ideas that make me to begin to sort my story around in a rough draft. If it happens to be... Why? An assigned topic then, a bit more thought had to be put into the ideas I write down. Well once I am finished with the rough copy I move onto a final copy. In this final copy I not only correct grammar and sentence structure and all that junk, I also find myselftotalCount the old drafts around to take some from one draft onto which I can go back when? So I am nothing I don't think this
In a way, writing is a process that can be very enjoyable. When you write, you are creating something new and unique. It can be a way to express your ideas and emotions. Writing can also be a way to explore your own thoughts and feelings.

To make the writing process enjoyable, try to find a quiet place where you can focus on your writing. It's also helpful to have some comfortable writing tools, such as a good pen or pencil and a comfortable chair. Some people find it helpful to have some music playing in the background while they write.

Another way to make the writing process enjoyable is to set some goals for yourself. This can help you stay focused and motivated. It's also important to take breaks when you need them. Writing can be a tiring process, so it's important to take care of yourself.

Finally, don't be too hard on yourself. Remember that writing is a process, and it's okay to make mistakes. The important thing is to keep trying and improving your skills. With practice and dedication, you can become a better writer.
Peter

Post-Unit

Writing Process (3) 10/21

Use the pen to write this paper and, starting from the accents it will just be a blank space of space. I think the end or the outer is going to look out, but what I would be, I could have composed a work that was done in its own and somewhere a unique written around it. Donald Murray used the book open in my mother and I think 30 years ago, how I look at the writing process for the support of other things. Murray used to it as a "creative exercise". I would write the story, but I am still my supporter. He told me to keep my writer's mind in order of points. I wrote the story, or lines on writing it, words, and ask the same way. Donald Murray writes the number and writes the papers, I think about my first time, through the writing. I think out of people much quicker. As we discovered, the craft of editing. However, I realized, I would take interest and level thats on the many young points, the question I want. Say I fully understood what he was.
This will create writing with meaning, that is, information that is useful to our report today. I agree with pretty much all shown here, except for one thing. I think it is interesting that the rate of men taller than 70 is

Simplicity, we can create more

and begin a deeper, more real

of understanding. I would like it

for some people to have made

further insight into the

Once, the word was

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These findings suggest that the integration of various factors, such as policy, infrastructure, and technology, is crucial for achieving sustainable urban development. The analysis reveals that successful implementations often involve cooperative efforts between different stakeholders, including government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector. Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of community participation in decision-making processes, as it can lead to more inclusive and effective outcomes. Overall, these insights underscore the need for a multidisciplinary approach to urban planning and development, emphasizing the role of collaboration and adaptability in addressing the challenges of urbanization.
IT WOULD CREATE SOMETHING IN YOUR MIND.

Did that make sense? I don't think it went out the way I had intended.

You know what I wonder:

Would this person have turned out the same if I started 15 minutes later than I did? God knows.

And you just give em

Room for a compasion.

You love at your own will and want the story to aggrandize. Did

Deposite influence your style? They

was one of the better analyses Dr.

and in your class.
The process that I use in writing is mostly a mental one, which makes writing a lengthy and laborious project. I am a victim of the real-time writing style in everyday thought, and because I find that good on the whole I value clarity over any read and edit then back. I never put pen to paper before I begin an assignment. I sit for a while at my desk and then the general course of what I am to write. If it is a short assignment, such as this one, I plan a mental structure. If the assignment is fairly lengthy, I'll write down an outline that goes into more detail. Then for each idea I want to convey, I plan out the supporting details and how to relate it to the main theme of the paper in my head. This is where I begin writing, I say "begin" because I still haven't actually written anything. At this point I'm still thinking of ways to express what I want to say, which means I'm also already into editing. Once I have a pretty good idea of what a paragraph is going to say, I start to write. But I find that since I'm thinking about the sentences, around the idea I am writing, my writing is very structured and flowing together, and I'm trying to express, and how to do them in a way that they make sense to me. So I end up writing each sentence, and I'll write down entire paragraphs with stopping to rearrange pieces or rewrite sentences in their form. I read what I wrote as I'm writing it so much that I honestly have almost rewritten the paper as I go. Once I finish the first draft, this continual process of editing tends to be my second, and I'll review it by crossing out most of my sentences and rephrasing. But I am often not satisfied with the paper. The next step is to take another look at the paper and make sure I didn't miss and to go back to correct. Generally there are very few major changes once I have considered the paper done and given it to someone to correct. So basically, my process of writing is one of continual editing. Although this makes it a lengthy process, I find writing to be rewarding, so it doesn't really bother me.
Throughout this entire unit, I have learned quite a bit about my writing process. I had honestly never even considered the way I go about writing before this class. Now, I have read articles, written journals, and gone back and forth on every single journal entry. The double-entry method of journaling proved to be very rewarding, much more so than I had imagined. At the beginning of the year, we started discussing the writing process. I began to question my process, or I was presented with free writes, which were new to me. Then, I read some articles that went into depth on the different styles and methods involved in the writing process. All the while, my journal entries filling up with entries from all sorts of topics. Now, after having several topics original journal entries, I can see the evolution of my style, specifically in terms of first person. We have done very little prose writing, and I’m sure that process has remained the same.

As far as free writes go, I found four basic types in any journal from this quarter. These were: reactions to SITS class summaries, free writes, and rewrites on articles. After analyzing all of them from beginning to end, I have found certain patterns. My writing process for these free writes, summaries from class notes, originally very basic and straightforward, I began to inject thoughts and feelings more and more of the time. On nearly every single summary, was arranged chronologically, which reveals my process. Revisions to SITS became more revealing and thought-provoking each time. I began by discussing generalities and at the end I was discussing specific subjects in relation to generalities. From the free writes, I think best ideas that changes in my free writing process. My first free write was very unmemorable and doesn’t say anything. Later ones were progressively more comfortable and say more. Generally, rewrites to articles are the same, for some reason.

The basic pattern that I find emerging in my free writing process after looking at the various types of free writes would be improvement. I became more at ease, and I steadily discarded my traditional style of constantly editing. Not that I didn’t edit at all, but I did allow for a free flow of my thoughts into free writes as time progressed. This relates to the article by Elbow.
on freewriting. He says that the first step is allowing your thoughts to transfer from your mind onto the paper without trying to refine or edit them. This process of writing, which is freewriting, allows for a lot of garbage writing but once in a while produces something good. I found when writing my paper that the freewriting I had done were garbage but helped by eliminating clutter from my mind. So not only did I improve my freewriting style and process, but I found a use for it in relation to my process of writing.

The process I use in writing prose is, like everyone else's, a complex web of organizing and repetitious steps. I am not really able to explain it, whereas not in a paper as snowdrifts. Very basically, I go through a thought process, writing process, and a continual editing process, of course, these steps overlap and change order depending upon what part of the paper I'm on. Both Murray and Muffett discuss things relevant to the process of writing. Murray talks about the mechanics of the process involved in the actual writing, while Muffett discusses the different kinds and natures of discourse. Both of these topics are taken for granted by myself as I write. I too had never considered how I go about writing as Murray explains it - continual organizing, reading, connecting, and writing. Now I see that it is true, but I don't see how knowing about that will help me. I still write the same way, I just understand a little better how I do it. The same is true of Muffett. When I write, I never consciously figure out what kind of discourse I'm writing on and from that, what the nature and kind of affectation should be. I just do it, aim and simple. Again, I had never thought about anything like that, but I still do it the same way, subconsciously.

In short, I have gained knowledge in both of its forms concerning my writing process. As far as freewriting, I have gained practical knowledge. I can apply it to freewriting and process writing. As far as prose is concerned, I know the various steps and thought processes only for the sake of knowing them.

You explain if you please in sophisticated and thoughtfully. I don't know if you meant in summary. The knowledge of things will not come if you don't think. Don't think you do use these processes very well.

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APPENDIX B

CREATIVE REACTION PAPERS
When I am given an assignment to pick any topic I usually wish I was given a specific one. But when I am given a specific topic I wish I could choose my own. My mind seems afraid of topics that I pick because what happens if I run out of information or ideas? What happens if my whole meaning changes, my topic has to change also. I was trying to decide if I should just write and choose a topic from what I write, or if I should choose a topic and then try to write about it. These two techniques may not seem very different, but for me it is a big difference. I want to try to create whenever techniques will take the least amount of time. Not because I don't want to spend time writing the paper, but because I don't have much time to do it. It's difficult balancing everything I have to do. Because often my rule of priorities is different from my parents or my teachers.
I've been thinking so much about time lately it got me pieced off so I had to write something on it. This is the first time I've ever written something because I was made confused. I don't know what the hell actual is doing to me. I've been wondering if as you get past the age of twelve life becomes just a gradual downhill. I.e., it's just the way you look at it. If you're journal for Psychology and for the past few nights it seems directed somewhat towards the idea of time. Everything I say about growing up and time flying by has probably been said many times before, but I've never, to give it much thought before.

Time: the period between two events during which something exists, happens, or acts.

Time isn't this simple, there are too many questions about time that extend far beyond a simple definition. If a dictionary could explain accurately what time is, then people wouldn't have so many misconceptions.

In literal terms that may be what time is, but don't the people decide what...
the content of time is. Or is it already
already decided, and people just fall in what's
already going to happen? But when it
happens, and you think about something
in the past, it's too late to change it
even if you wanted to. Are we supposed to
go through life worrying about decisions
that may already be made? If they are
already made, then why worry about any-
thing? The buck stops here. The Euthanasia
Say that every thing just is. To take it moment
by moment. Free will is in a
point of view, but determinism
is also. Everyone is a product of density
and environment, but people also have
free will. To think about time brings up
many questions, many of
which have no answers. I am told that
everyone goes through life as if with me
always younger than the year I was in my
Grade when I was ten years old to see
the way I thought I couldn't do it, but
I do remember things that happened to me
when I was ten.
The topic of time is one that I have found myself writing about frequently in my journal. When I first began exploring this topic, I was concerned with how time passes and how it affects our perception of the world. Over the course of writing about this topic, I have come to understand the importance of time in shaping our experiences and our understanding of the world around us.

The majority of my writing on this topic has been in the form of journal entries, where I have tried to capture my thoughts and feelings as they arise. This has allowed me to see patterns and connections that I might not have otherwise noticed. As I continue to explore this topic, I am beginning to see how time is not just a linear progression of events, but a complex interplay of memory, perception, and emotion. This has led me to consider how we might use our understanding of time to shape our lives and the world we live in.

In my initial attempts at organizing my thoughts on this topic, I have found it helpful to create a visual representation of the relationships between different elements of time. This has allowed me to see the connections between different aspects of time and to explore how they might interact with each other.

As I continue to write about this topic, I am becoming more aware of the ways in which time shapes our experiences and our understanding of the world. I am also beginning to see how our own perceptions of time can be influenced by a variety of factors, including cultural background, personal history, and personal beliefs. This has led me to consider how we might use our understanding of time to shape our lives and the world we live in.
I. Vonnegut speaks at War Experiences.
   Edge of the war was executable.
   Last Night from Call.
II. Our war was not to real forget.
   V. It's a lot of work.
   Spec's war Memories.
III. In-Terror

Luthe Art (Dance with Death)
Albee (Mr's Wife)

To Saturday.
Saturday I was busy
Studying until Mr. Cole interrupted me with this assignment. My pen just
ran out in case you couldn't tell. I
was really busy yesterday and I hate the fact that I have classes the
rest of the day. I guess it just makes
me be more eager to get to the
weekend. I go to school on Thursday to get
to Friday and now that Friday is
here I have to get to the
end of the day having all classes
doesn't help it just slows things down.

Today is really Monday because the
weekend will fly by, it'll be busy
all weekend and before I can sit and
think about it again it will be Monday
and I'll be writing another Freewrite
but when Monday comes I'll be waiting
for Friday and when Friday finally
comes I'll wait for the end of the school day and then it will be
Monday again.
The theme of time from SH-5

get very much thinking about time

itself and that is what came out

of it. Because, my life is run

by calendars and clocks that is

the way it really seems at times.

This is a very interesting topic

and if you can swear it from

different perspectives you might be

able to get a little understanding

of it. The way I described

this is, the journey is still the

way of the world. If you

were in a very good mood when I

wrote it and you can almost feel

the emotions I had if you read it,

I can.
Today, you hear thinking a lot about time. Why do we call it time? It is a convenient thing because it allows people to plan out their lives. But what if everything wasn't run by time? Because we have minutes, hours, calendars, and years. It seems like my life goes by so fast. I wonder if it would seem to last longer if my life was not run by a clock and a calendar. I suppose it is necessary to have these things, though, it's probably more positive than negative.

The idea of time comes up again and my journals are speaking, to tell a story. But with necessary themes. It might also be like life, never life, but just stories of life. In a way, that's how I see life. I guess it is...
I can remember back when I was a little child and I spent my summers down half on the beach. There were so many kids to play with down there and there was so many different age groups. I could choose who I wanted to play with according to what my interests were at the time. Some events remain in my memory so clear; I sometimes think I'm actually there again. Others are so vague I try to search my mind to find the right channel to see the clear picture. In those days the neighborhood seemed so huge and the houses with so many more. I thought I was related to the whole neighborhood because I had so many cousins down there. Every event I take part in down the cottage has stuck with me in some way. Uncle Jim was always in charge of the coat rack and he could fix anything. Well, what I once found a small bit of excitement with the lake was brakes up a small mirror, a near and the arrival of a dead woman. We took the chest onto the court until formed waves along the shore. We admired the discovery won. I still remember the unexplainable feeling I had when my chest out there was silent with the chest in my hands. Every summer we had the annual Fourth of July races. It was a good one this when I was growing up that gave me a sense of especially over other kids. I had to be the best at always event I competed in at the races. I had to go home that day every year with a few ribbons. I had to be the boy that every girl liked. We used to play baseball at the field every weekend. One Peter Hunt was about the field watching the game with his neighbor's dog. He was the biggest dog I ever seen in some life.
It was an old St. Bernard and his teeth were discolored with salvia dripping out the sides of his mouth. Mike Ryan was playing left field at the time and was running after a ball. The dog began chasing Mike, he was no intimidant and started to cry and slow down. The St. Bernard bit into his foot and began dragging him. This whole scene comes back to me in slow-motion as if I sat there and watched a slow motion movie. I can see the agony in every part of Mike's face as he tries to run on the legs and scream for help. His older brother came with a waffle-hold bat and watched the dog in that cold until it finally surrendered and ran off.

I was six years old when my grandmother died. She lived down the hall and I still hope, for some reason, I hardly thought about her. They sometimes made me feel guilty because I don't know why I would remember so vividly the look on Mike Ryan's face, and not all the memories I shared with Grandmom.

Tom was a month older than me, but he had a serious medical problem and couldn't go to school. He lost seven years younger than he actually is. He did things very slowly and couldn't usually participate in all the activities we did that went on. But it seemed like no one ever cared what he was left behind, they just kept on doing what they wanted to do. So much as it wanted to do. What I've learned since is that even the worst stuff is better than no stuff at all.

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Every Sunday night, often, Edna Hodge would raise the lollipop flag, and all the kids would sprint to her house to receive some candy. As I sprinted to her house every Sunday, I recall myself thinking that this must be the nicest lady in the whole wide world. That’s quite an honor to have in the mind of a child. Yet, it’s such a simple task to achieve. As a child, I never wondered why she did this every week. It wasn’t important, nothing was more important back then.

One of the biggest events of the summer every year was the costume parade. Each family usually had one float. There were individual awards and awards for floats. My family always won because my mother was so creative, and spent so much time making something original. When I participated in the costume parade, it seemed...
like the whole world was watching. The only costume I remember clearly was the year I was Fagin, the Beggary from the moppets.

When I looked across the water at the city of ships from this point it seemed like it was so far away. The beach I grew up on was rocks, not sand, and the rocks appeared to extend to eternity. We would often get up early in the morning after a full moon to search for anything we could find that was floatable, then walk out to the sand-bank to search for sand dollars and if you found a fox, one that followed the direction of the顺畅 power and it would lead you to another one. This method was like a secret tradition to me, it made me feel powerful.

My favorite thing every summer was to sit on the seawall and watch the sun go down over the ocean. As a child it was the most beautiful thing in the world and I felt so close to myself. I knew who I was, and I felt powerful. No matter what happened during the day, I could always set on the wall by myself to watch the sun go down, and feel a deep sense of identity.

All of these summer events I grew up with are just memories, some more clear than others, some I have not forgotten. Everything there is different now.

Everyone I used to play with has grown up and gone their own ways, as if the memories we shared never occurred.
I can see clearly now that I am not related to the whole neighborhood, and the neighborhood is actually very small. Uncle John doesn’t drive many取得 anymore, and he has become too old to fix everything. The chest I found with Greg doesn’t seem like that big of a deal any more. Not many people attend the Fourth of July races these days, so it is not much of an honor to win a blue ribbon. None of my little cousins feel that they have to be the best. The baseball field we used to play at is all tall grass and now, wiffleball is occasionally played in the backyard. Now all follows me but she has become much more independent.

Midge has become pretty old and she is done. She doesn’t wave the lettuce flag and give out candy every week. She doesn’t see like the nicest lady in the world anymore.

The children’s parade is no longer a tradition. They haven’t had it for several years now and my mother doesn’t get much of a chance to express her creativity.

When I looked across the water to Ossen last summer, it didn’t appear to be far away at all; in fact it was pretty close. I don’t think anyone gets up early anymore and searches for small dollars and other small things until the sun is low on the sky. The secret trick is finding small dollars, that once made me feel powerful. I know now why just as I fake.

Why is everything so different? I often wonder if everything really did change at all. What changed and I now see things from a
different perspective. I suppose it could be a

My favorite thing is still

I think this is because the feeling of closeness with

myself has always been the same growing up

and hasn’t changed. The one thing that has changed

is the way I view this activity as a part of

today’s society. When I was a child it was assumed

it was normal to do this... but later I feel a little insecure about it because it might be

considered queer in this society. For someone my age
Growing up

I soon remember back when I was a little child and I spent my summers down Hill on the
street. There was so many kids to play with down there
and there were so many different age groups. I could
choose who I wanted to play with according to what my
interests were at the time. Some events remain in my
memory so clear I sometimes think I'm actually there
again. Other are so vague that I try to search my mind
to find the right channel, to see the clear picture.

In those days the neighborhood seemed so huge
and the houses were like skyscrapers, I thought
I was related to the whole neighborhood because I
had so many cousins down there. Every event I took
part in down the cottage has stuck with me in some
way.

Uncle Jim was always in charge of the cook
outs and he could fix anything. He and I once
found a small chest that worked on the side.
So, it was make-up, a small mirror, a note, and the
toes of a dead woman. We took the chest into the room
which formed small rooms along the side. He admired
our discovery and I still remember the unexplainable
fear I shed when we first sat there in silence with
the chest in our hands.

Every summer we had the annual Fourth
of July races. It was even like this when I was
growing up that made me feel like I was superior to
other kids. I always had to be the best at every
event I competed in at the races. I had to go that
day every year with six blue ribbons I had won in the
best.

He used to play baseball at the field every
weekend. One Saturday I was down the field watching the game with my neighbor. He was the biggest boy I had ever seen in my life. He had St. Andrew's and was yelling and screaming. I was watching the game from the side of the mouth. Mike Ryan was the left fielder at the time and was running to a ball. The dog began chasing Mike and he was so intimidated by it. He began to cry and run away. Everyone was laughing until I finally hit into Mike's foot and began dragging him. The whole scene came back to me in slow motion as if I sat there and watched a slow motion movie. Mike's father was kicking the dog with a ball. I felt bad until he let go and ran off.

I was six years old when my great grandmother died. She lived down Hill also, but for some reason I hardly remember anything about her. This sometimes makes me feel guilty because I don't know why I would remember so vividly the look on Mike Ryan's face as he screamed for help and not all the memories I shared with Grandma.

He is a lot older than me, but he was a few years younger than I actually am. He got tired very early and couldn't usually participate in all the activities that went on. But it seemed like more was said when he wasn't there. They just kept on doing what they wanted to do. Jim would always follow me everywhere. If half the kids were going swimming and half were going to watch TV, Jim would do whatever I did even if it wasn't what he really wanted to do. I could never leave him out like maybe she did. It would make me feel so guilty.
I don't think I'll ever know why you followed me everywhere. Because he will most likely be dead before he becomes emotionally mature enough to discuss his difficult childhood.

Every Sunday night after dinner, Hedge would raise the lollipop flag and all the kids would sprint to the house to receive some candy. As I ran to her house every Sunday, I recall myself thinking that this must be the nicest lady in the whole world. That's quite an honor to have in the mind of a child, yet if you think about it, it's such a simple task to achieve. As a child, I never wondered why she did this every week; it wasn't important, nothing was very important back then.

One of the biggest events of the summer every year was the costume parade. Each family usually had one float. There were individual awards and awards for floats. My family always won because my mother was so creative and spent so much time working to create something original. When I participated in the costume parade, it seemed like the whole world was watching. The only costume I remember clearly was the year I was Snow White from Snow White.

When I looked across the waves at the city of Boston, it seemed like it was so far away. The beach of grown up men was rocks, not sand, and those rocks appeared to extend to eternity. We would often wake up at five-thirty in the morning after a full moon to search for anything we could find at low tide. We went out to the sand bars to search for sand dollars and if you found a broken one you could follow the direction of the broken point and it would lead you to another one. This method was like a
secret tradition to me and I believed in it. My favorite thing to do down there was to sit on the railroad and watch the sun go down over the ocean. As a child it was the most beautiful thing in the world. When I sat there I felt so close to myself. I knew who I was, and I felt powerful. No matter what happened during the day, I could always sit on the wall by myself to watch the sun go down, and feel a deep sense of identity.

All of these summer scenes I grew up with are just memories, some more clear than others. Everything else seems so different now. Everyone I used to play with has grown up and gone their own way, as if the memories we shared never occurred.

I can see clearly now that I am not related to the whole neighborhood, and the neighborhood is actually very small. Uncle Jim doesn’t have many coal mines anymore, and the oil is old now to fit everything. The one I found with they don’t seem like the boy of a steel anymore. Not many people attend the Fourth of July here these days so the lack of an iron to iron a blue ribbon. None of my little cousins feel that they have to be the best. The football field we used to play at is all still green and now golf ball is occasionally played in the backyard. You still follow me but she has become much more independent.

Hedge has become pretty old and she doesn’t realize the lollipop flag and give out candy every week. She doesn’t seem like the sweet
Lady in the world anymore.

The seashore parade is no longer a tradition.
They haven't had it for several years now and my
mother doesn't get much of a chance to enjoy her
creatures.

When I looked across the water to Boston
last summer, it didn't appear to be far away at
all, in fact, it was pretty close. I don't think
anyone gets up early anymore and searches for
sand dollars and other sea creatures in the sea at
low tide. The secret tradition of finding sand dollars,
that once made me feel like I could believe in it. I
know now is just a fable.

[In the margin:]

If everything really does change, is
it me that has changed and now I see things from
a different perspective. If life, growing up, a gradual
downfall?

My favorite thing is still sitting on the
wall watching the sun go down. It's kind of the
only thing I have left down there beside the
memories.
Peer Review of Sam's Paper

The paper is very interesting. Any time a person writes about the evils of bad habits, such as smoking, a reader will be interested. I found it really down to earth. I had many of the same experiences growing up. I can remember being told many stories that later down the line were forgotten. They remind parents must use a scientific kind. Look out how it works itself out. Telling stories must be one of them. Steve brings it up a very good question. "Is life growing up a gradual downhill?" I think that it depends on how you look at it. Traditions always die out, but new traditions begin. Steve will report on these things all over again, only they will be how the previous one was.
The role which I have chosen to discuss does not directly relate to me. It was an experience that
someone else shared through but which did affect me. It necessitated me
by opening my eyes to what we problems
of social justice and other issues in
our city. It was a horrible way for
me to learn this, but it happened and
there is nothing I can do about it.

The reason I chose this was in a
Slaughterhouse Five (1971) story
from his experiences in the war, this
projected it correctly the difference
in how he learned from his own experience
while I learn from a friend.

Mark, a good friend of the family,
was killed last year on the street
in front of his car. He was walking home
from his apartment one night when
a gang of teenagers pulled his
car over near Four Street. The gang
wore hoods and started
his 22 times in the face. He died
without immediately. What was this
 motive? They wanted his wallet
which contained $100. Mark was the
All-American kid, athlete, intelligent
and one of the most caring kids.
You could have known the ironic thing
is Mark was studying law enforcement.
At Northwestern

This is just one example of how
the city made me fall in love
with Chicago.

In George Orwell's novel,
"1984," the setting of death,
and experience I had
with death, it connected to an
example of how some in religious class
are as well. The poem, "The Riddle of
the Big Apple," discussed the violence
and poverty within a society
one of the greatest cities in the
world, New York. The time in which
we grew up in two different classes, at
the same time, therefore, forced me
to give it some attention. At first,
I could buy my experience, but
now I was sitting there, right in
front of me this time, and here
where I had to be and where it was.

In the 2000s, I had to face my own
friend at the end of the
experience but the Chicago Society
I have worked a bit on this paper
and I am not entirely sure where it is
headed. I have thought for days about
this, and I think it might be worth a paper
of its own. I have been very anxious
about what I have written and the
result. I have been working on
writing, and I have been reading
about writing. I have been working
on a novel that revolves around
the theme of love. I have been
learning, and I have been
writing. I have been working on
a novel that revolves around
the theme of love. I have been
learning, and I have been
writing.
I think these chapters made a
new beginning for me in this book.
I saw this in my own life. I
not sure why it was such a problem
with 2-9. It is quite evident as
I thought these figures. How many
questions have been answered. For example
in this experiment. I can't understand
why. He is so obsessed with death.

Now, I know. This is what the
book is about. Death. What I know
that now. And the. Trip was bad.

In ending this out. It is a great
book. But all the other are in place
and the bigger picture is evident.

I don't particularly enjoy this
experiment. I don't like the way it
sounded. I kept thinking of different
topics but this amble I keep just
been about. Back into my head.

I'm with my camera and since I
walked a desert. Perhaps I went
back. It cannot sometimes
make from my thought to another.

It is simple. It will just be
because. If you are going to connect
it'll resemble that where I sit
down to the next great.
The topic which I have chosen to discuss is an important social issue of our time. I came up with this topic after reading an article called "The Slaughter of the Big Apple" in 'Time' magazine. It discusses the violence and death that is destroying one of the greatest cities in the world, New York. You may ask yourself, "What connection this topic has with 'Slaughter of the Apple'?" The subject is about war and of death which connect this paper to Kurt Vonnegut's novel. In both, war and death are the main themes. The difference is Vonnegut directly experienced war and I have not. I have, however, been greatly affected by the events in this city.

This piece hit home, but it is not what opened my eyes to the problem. I was reading 'Slaughterhouse Five' by Vonnegut. Unfortunately, it took something much more serious to make me realize the severity of the whole situation. It was something, again, that doesn't directly relate to me, but was an experience in which someone else had to suffer through. It affected me deeply by opening my mind to a delicate area which requires serious and strict attention. It was a horrifying way for me to have had to learn about it, and I am sorry. This is what it took to get me thinking. Now all I can do is try to discover some way in which I can
HEIR AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE. THIS WHOLE SITUATION DISTURBED ME BEYOND BELIEF AND IT TOOK THE DEATH OF A FRIEND FOR ME TO REALIZE THAT.

MARK, A GOOD FRIEND OF MY FAMILY, WAS MURDERED LAST YEAR ON THE STREET OF BOSTON. HE WAS ONE OF MANY VICTIMS. HE WAS WALKING FROM HIS APT. TO HIS APARTMENT BACK TO HIS APARTMENT ON WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY CAMPUS WHEN HE WAS APPROACHED AND ATTACKED. FIVE BLACK TYPH- RANT WANTED MONEY ON A MAIN STREET IN BOSTON AT ABOUT 1:30 AM. HE WAS

STABBED 32 TIMES (ALL OF WHICH WERE IN THE FACE.) HE DIED ABOUT IMMEDIATELY. WHAT WAS THE NOTION, A NICE TALL, JACKET AND HIS WHISTLE CONTAINING 150 PEOPLES IN T HE APARTMENT ABOVE HIMSELF. HIS MANY Calls FOR HELP, AN INJURED LEG, BUT NOT ONE DID SO MUCH AS TO CALL THE POLICE OR EVEN CALL FOR HELP IN DEPRESSION FOR HIS STREET TIMES WERE, EVEN MULTIPLE RIGHT ON THE STREET WHO DONT DO ANYTHING MORE THAN WATCH. FOR DAYS THEY WOULDN'T EVEN SUPPLY INFORMATION TO THE POLICE FOR FRIGHT OR THEIR OWN LIVES, ALL FIVE WERE FOUND AND IDENTIFIED IN HIS STRUGGLE, MARK WRESTLED THE SHIRT OF ONE OF THE GUYS JACKET AND TOOK IT OFF. THAT JACKET WAS LATER FOUND IN A SUSPECT'S HOME. MARK HELPED SOLVE HIS OWN MURDER. IT WAS IDENTIFIED BY THE MISSING SHIRT.
We're living in a world of constant fear. I can't imagine how it must feel to live in a constant state of anxiety, always having to be on guard. It's a way of life that's become normal for so many people. People are being asked to live their lives in a constant state of fear.

People need to stop living in fear. The government needs to take action. We need to clean up the cities. The cities are so many ways in which this is done. I'm not sure where to begin. It will take many examples. How about with the murder of 1,105 people in May alone? The government was complicit in these actions. This is a record setting pace for the victims.
FIRE OR ANY OTHER HUMAN-CAUSED DISASTER. "ONE
UNIVERSE. IN EVERY 300 NEW YORKERS, THERE IS
A WIND OR RAIN. THIS TOTAL IS
ONE PERCENT. IN EVERY 300 NEW
YORKERS THERE IS ONE. THIS TOTAL IS
APPROXIMATELY 9,000 PEOPLE STRANDBORN, FLEEING FROM
AND SUFFERING THESE CRIMINALS. ONE OUT OF
THREE CRIMES IS A MURDEROUS ONE. I COULD NOT
OVERLOOK WHAT THIS FIGURE MEANT TO
CITIES SUCH AS MY. ONE OUT OF
THE FINEST CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE
WORLD. IT IS A SHAME THAT SOMETHING SICK
AS THIS NEED TO BE GIVEN MORE ATTENTION.
MY. CREATE SMILES, MUSIC, AND BOOKS
TO NAME JUST A FEW. HOWEVER, PEOPLE ARE
DISCRIMINATED AGAINST ENTERING THE CITY BECAUSE
OF THE CLIMATE. I REALIZE MY. IS A
FATALITY EXAMPLE, BUT I HOPE IT GETS THE
POINT ACROSS.
I
I REALIZE THIS PAPER MAY HAVE BEEN
A BIT TOO SERIOUS THAN THE PREVIOUS
AND INTENDED TO BE. BUT I WROTE
IT FOR TWO REASONS: IT WAS ON MY MIND
AND I WANTED TO WRITE IT DOWN AND
TO REACH A POINT. THE POINT BEING THAT
PEOPLE ARE DYING IN OUR CITIES. FOR REASONS
WHICH CANNOT BE JUSTIFIED. THAT REASON
CANNOT BE JUSTIFIED. THE SITUATION WE
FACED, WHICH IS UNEASILY DESCRIBING OUR
COUNTRY, NO. MORE SO THAN ANY OTHER IN HISTORY.
NEED TO BE HONORED. IT IS A WASTE IN
OURSELVES. SO IT GOES.

PEOPLE IN ONE TIME
MATT
9/4/90

The assignment was to write about the topic of an upcoming paper, but I'm not sure what exactly the paper is to be about. If it can be about anything, then the possibilities are endless. I could write something about sports, music, or any other topic that interests me. I could also write about something less frivolous like politics or religion. In fact, I believe that would be much more interesting and stimulating. By the way, in case you don't already know, I'm doing this as a freewrite. Since I didn't have a solid topic, I thought I'd at least practice my freewriting skills. As such, if that seems to be the truth, then the paper does, in fact, have to relate to Vennevelt or subjects we've discussed in class. I'm not sure what I would write about. Maybe I could discuss my feelings towards war, or my feelings about the psychological effects of war, or simply murder on screen. I think that would be too limiting, though. I really don't think that after all of the freewrites we've already done on those subjects and everything else related to class, that a free page paper would be very interesting. It is five pages isn't it? I should have written it down, but the bell had rung and I figured I'd remember. Guess I was wrong. Well, that's about it for my paper. By the time this is read, I'll already have the answers I need. It seems kind of ridiculous; I suppose I should list some topics briefly. These are if the paper is about anything. The variety of messages of rap music, my views on the church, my time in Jordan, Fish, a subjective view of the American system of politics, economy, and foreign policy, the importance of grease and duck-billed platypuses, etc. etc. Basically, I'm having a hard time even thinking of a topic now. I hope my mind will be a little clearer tomorrow.

Due 9/28
Freewrites: Diana, Final

Papa
Notes from Class:
Possible Topics:
- Worst Experience (Connect gives his in Ch. 1)
- TIME: fictional representation; non-fictional rep.
- Free will / Determinism (No villains)
  - Predestination
  - Environment

PAPER

Double Entry

The entry about the paper basically useless. I didn't use it to help with the paper because it was such a mess. My mind wasn't really up to writing a one-page paper about something I didn't know anything about. I can remember writing it like one night after doing all kinds of other homework. Probably the only reason I wrote it at all was fear that it was going to be passed in. That's why it is sort of addressed to the reader. I thought the reader would be Mr. Porter. Obviously, I had no good or even sincere ideas...just words to fill the page and complete the assignment. Surprisingly, I found that any topics I wrote here were eliminated from being considered for the actual paper. Which means it was sort of successful in helping to clear my mind of some useless things. In a sense, then, it served a purpose—although it was opposite its intended one. This was supposed to give us a topic, but for me it narrowed down the topic by eliminating many other topics. "Nice America!" In a way, you were telling yourself what not to write about. Elma says this well when she comments, "Predicting is not like hashing a real, but rather getting matter to run through till finally it runs clear."

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It's time to talk about the paper. What I've done so far is think. I haven't even sat down and put out ideas on my canvas. The only thing I've been doing has been to write. I've written on possible topics, and I didn't really come up with anything I really liked. I've done some freewriting in class on the paper, but most of those were garbage. Basically, I'm still at square one. I guess I'm really not because I've cleared a little clutter from my mind by writing those things about bad ideas. I still have five days, and in those five days I have a lot to do. I have to continue thinking about a topic, and of course with that comes some ideas of what to write. It's not like I can just pick a topic and thinking about what I have to say, because the amount and value I have to say will determine the topic I pick. Obviously, once I pick a topic, I'm well on my way. The actual writing will be fairly easy, because it will be a topic I wish to discuss.

I think this freewriting went really well. I did exactly what was intended: I discussed the paper. I didn't have to fill any voids with senseless babble, and it doesn't look like I entered that much. I managed to organize my thoughts as I was writing. Basically, I did everything in proper freewrite expert. Freewriters are intended to clean bad ideas out of the way until you reach a good one. This freewrite did that, and showed how past ones had, too.
**Worst Experience**

- Mine: Fresh year [Feared socially, close to many, fight, less friends, etc.]
  - Vomits: Deregion
  - More: Strengthened me, looking back hurts but builds
  - Looks: Hurt than then, looking back bad (Egad of all)
- Xavierian
  - Mine: Deals w/ individually
  - B.R. in SHS means silver boots, shame coat (why can’t he?)
  - Mine: Deals w/ stereotypes
  - I felt similar to how minorities feel, crazy group experiencing prejudice
  - Xavierian as micro-cam
  - Harassed by other people
    - Stared at
    - Discriminated in jobs, in stores, restaurants
    - Sucks in pick-up
    - Women complaining of Smith’s

**Extra**

- Human Condition, why?

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I thought this was going to be the type of my paper, but I scrapped it and can’t remember why. It is probably because I wanted to write on time and war and all of the other big questions that had been frustrating me for some time. Although the “worst experience” theme relates to Homey, I think the other things do so more.
MATT

O.K. So I think I've got it all figured out. I've got my topic in mind, and I've got plenty to say about it. Only, I know that along the way, somewhere, somehow, it will change. My mind can't be happy with what I've already planned. It continues to work, endlessly, searching for better. And I have to say, I suppose, my brain, especially can't put new because of the nature of this paper, five written pages couldn't possibly begin to scratch the surface. How does the human mind really work? Seems like a very simple question. A scientist would say something like: "It would tell me about neurons and chemical reactions. As a matter of fact, that is it doesn't cover the part of how that I'm interested in. Maybe "why" would be a more appropriate wording. There is no why, there simply is". Thank you very much, Mr. Talmudian, but that just doesn't do it for me. For thousands of years people have wondered about the mind, and the incredible burden that accompanies it -- conscious thought. Conscious thought is joined by the most frightening sensation to being human, responsibility. At least, that is what the Christians say, and right or wrong, that is what the greater part of the world believes. All forms of laws and regulations indicate that we are responsible for what we do, and will be punished for any violation of accepted behavior. The very fact that laws exist indicates that the mind doesn't always function properly, or at least that we are capable of ignoring it when it does. It doesn't make much sense, does it? The term that separates us from all other forms of life, that is responsible for every factor, is capable of ignoring itself. As smart as it is, the mind sure is stupid. I can understand that mechanical circuits cause failures in the mind, but I also don't think it's right to punish someone who is victimized by such failures. I'm definitely not arguing for anarchy, or anything of the sort. I'm just saying that I understand that the laws are structured as best they can be, at least to a certain extent, and we will have to be accounted for to keep some sort of order. I can't say "I'm sorry officer, but I always have driven through that stop sign, and I always will. The motor is structured that way." Aside from a big fine, I might find myself in jail for a mighty two.
Why does the mind perpetually wonder why it works as it does. The question of free will versus determinism is important in one context, but on the grand scale of things, it isn’t really that relevant. Humanity exists and they attribute their minds with operating them. Society is based upon this. Was one thought ever which humans have used their minds best? Being human is basically the instinct of survival coupled with a desire to survive better than everyone else. We are animals that adapt and know that you don’t have to accept your situation. It seems to me that the knowledge of that fact dictates all other human behavior. Whether a person is good or bad, in generic terms, they are still acting on that knowledge. The really good people go about bettering themselves in the wrong way. The good people do so in a way that doesn’t hurt others. The really good people decide to help others better themselves rather than worry about their own personal good. That’s the key to understanding the great mystery of free will. The determinism factor or humans is the knowledge that one’s situation can improve. Then with that seed implanted in their heads, we are released into the world to react however we see fit.

I honestly think we trouble ourselves a great deal to figure out a good point. Whether we are free to act or not, please, or have a set like to follow, life will go on. As far back as written history goes, man has basically remained the same. Whether he was free to act or not, he was always self-centered. The human condition has remained the same. Humans act out greed either way. I’m not saying we are hopeless to act greedily forever. Plenty of people are selfless, but the vast majority of people think mostly of themselves before others, if they even consider others at all. I don’t know why, but the mind only thinks naturally of its own. Maybe the selfish instinct of survival has carried itself into every action. No one, above a certain line, really survives the instinct persevered or even being so we still look out for number one. All others looking out for yourself is fine and is to be expected, but it has gotten to a point where we either don’t think of others or even want to disregard them. Derrig’s tackles upon this issue.
when he talks about his stories in Ogilvie of Shalimar, he says that he had never written a story with villains in it. I guess that is where the key to our suffering lies. If human beings are the only ones who suffer, then we have no hope of a villain-less existence. But if we are truly free, then one of the highest goals we could set would be to eliminate villains by thinking and acting
universally, instead of personally.

Unfortunately, in the past as well, mankind has failed morally. We continue to be selfish and act senselessly. The most difficult product of the human condition is to believe that other people will believe in one another. One of the most poignant statements is that nothing intelligent can be said about a massacre. I couldn't agree more. War, or any other form of violence, serves no purpose, isn't really a solution. I honestly doubt if I'll ever understand how the mind can feel that war accomplishes anything. It is one of the greatest failures of the mind. Perhaps this is why Martin Luther King Jr. said, "Violence ends by defeating itself. It creates bitterness in the survivors and brutality in the destroyers." In the end, everyone truly loses in war. Perhaps the reason I fail to understand the reasoning behind war is that I can't imagine myself participating. I can't even imagine standing in the midst of it. However, I understand that the human mind feels war is a possible solution. Yet it is the minds of those who survive that are most deeply scarred. The death and destruction caused by war, as horrible and unexpected as they are, can be viewed as the means to an end. That can be somewhat logical to some people, though not to me. Aside from that, though, if we look at the end, I still fail to see victory of any sort. How can those who "win" have lived out normal lives, or be unaffected by the means to their end. Even if the goals are noble and proper, and in the way of right, war is not the way to go about achieving it.
We'll, after achieving several pages of writing that are the result of many hours of thought, I'm not much better off. I'm still forced by the mysteries of the mind, and because of the limits of human knowledge, the universal questions humanity wrestles with—why do all of these things trouble me, as well as millions of other people? Why have countless individuals dedicated their lives to the purpose of resolving them? I think mostly because they are so interesting, unknown, and maybe even because our eyes won't allow us to walk away from them. We feel so insignificant on the universal scale, that we have to find a purpose for our existence. Of course, that is another part of the human condition—the need for structure, order, and purpose. But that's another chapter in another book. I can't help but think that the philosophers have it right. Everything is already determined, and they have learned to accept it that way. All they have to do is live the good times. I suppose life wouldn't be as interesting, though, if we thought events were already set. Maybe that's why we cling to free will—it's the only way we can have some sort of influence in a universe that doesn't appear to need us.
O.K., so I think I’ve got it all figured out. I’ve got my topic in mind, along with plenty to say about it. Only, I know that along the way, somewhere, somehow, it will change. My mind can’t be happy with what I’ve already planned. It continues to work, endlessly trying to better what I have to say. I suppose my brain especially can’t quit now because of the nature of this paper. Five written pages couldn’t possibly begin to scratch the surface. How does the human mind really work. Seems like a very simple question. A scientist would tell me about neurons and chemical reactions. As fascinating as that is, it doesn’t cover the part of “how” that I am interested in. Maybe “why?” would be a more appropriate wording. “There is no why, there simply is.” Thank you very much, Mr. Tralfamadorian, but that just doesn’t do it for me. Is the mind really responsible for itself or is there some elusive, abstract force or being that determines it?

For thousands of years people have wondered about the human mind, and the incredible burden that accompanies it - conscious thought. Conscious thought is joined by the most frightening stipulation to being human, responsibility for actions. At least, that is what the Christians say. And, right or wrong that is what the greater part of the world lives by. All forms of laws and regulations indicate that we are responsible for what we do, and will be punished for any violation of accepted behavior. The very fact that laws exist indicates that the mind doesn’t always function properly, or, at least that we are capable of ignoring it when it does. It doesn’t make much sense. The organ that separates us from all other forms of life, that is responsible for every function, is capable of ignoring itself. As smart as it is, the mind sure is stupid. I can understand that mechanical errors cause failures in the mind, but I also don’t think
it is right to punish someone who is victimized by such failures. I am definitely not arguing for anarchy. I understand that the laws are structured as best they can be, at least to a certain extent. Free will has to be accounted for to keep some sort of order. I can't say "I'm sorry officer, but I always have driven through that stop sign, and I always will. The moment is structured that way." Aside from a big fat ticket, I might find myself in jail for a night or two.

Why does the mind perpetually wonder why it works as it does? The question of free-will versus determinism is important in one context, but on the grand scale of things it is not really that pivotal. Humanity lists and they attribute their minds with operating them. Society is based upon this. Wars are fought over which humans have used their minds best. Being human is basically the instinct of survival coupled with a desire to "survive" better than everyone else. We are animals that know that you don't have to accept your situation. It seems to me that the knowledge of that one fact dictates all other human behavior. Whether a person is good or bad, in generic terms, they are still acting on that knowledge. The really bad people go about bettering themselves in the wrong way. The good people do so in a way that doesn't hurt others. The really good people decide to help others better themselves, rather than worry about their own personal good. Perhaps that is the key to the great mystery of free-will. The deterministic factor for humans is the knowledge that one's situation can improve. Then, with that seed implanted in our heads, we are released into the world to react however we see fit.

Honestly, though, I think we trouble ourselves a great deal to figure out a moot point. Whether we are free to act as we please, or have a set life to follow, life will go on. As far back as written history goes, man has basically remained the same. Whether we are
free to act as we do or are determined to act that way, the human condition has remained the same. Humans act out greed either way. I am not saying we are hopeless, and have to act greedy forever. Plenty of people are selfless, but the vast majority of people think mostly of themselves before others, if they even consider others at all. I don’t know why, but the mind only thinks naturally of its owner. Maybe the selfish instinct of survival has carried itself into every action. We are “above” merely surviving, but the instinct permeated our entire being so we still look out for #1 above all others.

Looking out for yourself is fine, and is to be expected, but it has gotten to a point where we either don’t think of others or we even wantonly disregard them. Vonnegut touches upon this issue when he talks about his stories in chapter one of Slaughterhouse Five. He says that he had never written a story with villains in it. I guess that is where free-will versus determinism steps in. If humans are puppets, then we have no hope of a villain-less existence. But, if we are truly free, then one of the highest goals we could set would be to eliminate villains by thinking and acting universally instead of personally.

Unfortunately, in the past as well as now, mankind has failed miserably. We continue to be selfish and act senselessly. The most horrific by-product of the human condition is war. Slaughterhouse Five is Kurt Vonnegut’s attempt to comment on war. One of his most poignant statements is that nothing intelligent can be said about a massacre. I could not agree more. War, or any other form of violence to resolve problems, is not really a solution. I honestly doubt if I will ever understand how the mind can feel that war accomplishes anything. It is one of the greatest fallacies the mind possesses.

As Dr. Martin Luther King once said, ‘Violence ends by deasting
itself. It creates bitterness in the survivors and brutality in the
destroyers. In the end, everyone truly loses in war. Perhaps that
is the main reason I fail to understand the reasoning behind war.
The human mind feels war is a plausible solution, yet it is the minds
of those who survive that are most deeply scarred. The death and destruction
created by war, as horrible and unprecedented as they are, can be
viewed as the means to an end. That can be somewhat logical to some
people, though not to myself. Aside from that, though, if we look
at the end, I still fail to see victory of any sort. How can those
who "win" hope to live out normal lives, or be unaffected by the means
to their end. Even if the goal is noble, proper, and in the way of
right, war is not the way to go about achieving it.

Well, after achieving several pages of writing that are the result
of many hours of thought, I am not much better off. I am still faced
by the mysteries of the mind, and, because of the minds limits, the
universal questions humans wrestle with. Why do all of these things
trouble me, as well as millions of other people? Why have countless
individuals dedicated their lives to the purpose of resolving them?
I think mostly because they are so interesting, unknown, and maybe even
because our egos won't allow us to walk away from them. We feel so
insignificant on the universal scale that we have to find a purpose
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if we thought events were already set. Maybe that's why we cling to
free-will — it is the only way we can have some sort of influence in
a universe that doesn't appear to need us.

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I found this paper generally interesting. While writing the concept of the human mind, he connected to several issues in several directions. He went from the logic behind law and order to the irrationality of war to the argument of free will versus determinism. Because of the different directions the topic was kept interesting. Yet, too many different topics, I connected to this paper because in some ways, I was asking the same question on the mind, though on a different tangent. Style wise, I think the argument is carried out effectively. He blends personal feelings with age-old work thought with humor and irony. The only thing I am unclear on is the precise topic. Because of the different directions the paper goes in, I am a little unsure of the intended point. However, I did find it interesting to read these reflections on the human mind.

**Peer Review of Matt's Paper**