

Revision Activity: Loop Writing
In-Class Writing Workshop
First-Year Writing Program
Montclair State University

Here are a number of questions to guide students through in re-drafting and re-thinking their essays. I would never have anybody do ALL of these, just some. These ideas come from or are inspired by Peter Elbow's discussions of loop writing, found in many of his books, but first and foremost, *Writing with Power*, Oxford UP, 1981.

Directions for Students:

Please write out your responses on a separate piece of paper. Each of these questions is designed to help you with aspects of your writing. I've written in parenthesis what aspect of writing each question is intended to help you with.

1. What is your point? (thesis/focus)
2. Write a dialogue between two "characters" from your essay (analysis)
3. Write a thick description on one scene, drawing on the five senses (description)
4. Write a new introduction (thesis/organization)
5. Write down the question which you are addressing in your paper: (focus)
6. What the controlling idea which is present throughout your essay? (focus/development)
7. What is the main point you are making in your essay? (focus)
8. Write a new first paragraph based on the information you gave in the last three questions. (Again, don't look at draft.) (focus and organization)
9. Write a paragraph explaining why this topic is important to you. This paragraph might include a little story. (continue on back side) (analysis/development)
10. Stepping away from your essay, see if you can identify the issues that you are addressing in your essay. You may be writing about a very particular event, but what larger issues are you touching on, and which therefore make your essay meaningful not only in what it says about you, but which also allows your readers to connect to your essay. (analysis)
11. Summarize your main point as though you had to explain it to a Martian/older person/child. (clarity)
12. Argue the opposite side of what you are saying. (analysis)
13. Write about this topic as though you were very, very angry (style/clarity)
14. Write one paragraph on your topic all in the form of questions (development and analysis)
15. Draw a picture of your ideas (clarity)

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