Main Goal:
By the end of the Prep year, students will be able to write academic essays (and research papers) at Freshman level clearly and accurately at an acceptable speed. They will also have a critical awareness of their writing in terms of content, coherence and linguistic accuracy.

Objectives

A) Mechanics
1. Punctuation (use full stop, apostrophe, question mark, quotation marks)
2. Capitalization

B) Process Writing Skills
1. Using invention techniques (freewriting, listing, clustering etc.)
2. Writing the first draft
3. Editing (self-correction, peer correction)
4. Outlining
5. Writing the final draft

C) Organization
1. Have a clear understanding of essay organization, including introduction, body paragraph(s) and a conclusion
2. Write with appropriate rhetorical organization

D) Content
1. Develop an argument
2. Relate general statements to examples
3. Express opinions
4. Express attitudes
5. Make comments
6. Convey Information
7. Express Reasons
8. Present arguments for or against a position
9. Provide justification for an action or decision
10. Describe people, places
11. Make comparisons between two events, objects etc.
12. Evaluate ideas, evidence, or an argument
13. Make appropriate use of graphical representations
14. Transfer data from graphic to written form

E) Writing in Different Rhetorical Patterns
1. Description
2. Narration
3. The Process Essay
4. The Definition Essay
5. The Classification Essay
6. Compare and Contrast Essays
7. Cause and Effect Essays
8. Argumentative Essays
9. Reports
10. Reaction Essays

F) Lexis and Structure
1. Write phrases
2. Write clauses
3. Write simple sentences
4. Write compound sentences
5. Write complex sentences
6. Make appropriate use of discourse markers
7. Link sentences grammatically, lexically, and semantically
8. Write a paragraph
9. Write an essay
10. Write accurate and comprehensive topic sentences
11. Write accurate and comprehensive thesis statements

G) Research Paper (ADV Level)
1. Summarizing
2. Paraphrasing
3. Taking notes from a reading text
4. Outlining
5. Integrate data from library and web material into the research paper
6. Writing an abstract

THE WRITING PROGRAM

Personal Writing Folder and Academic Writing Folder:
At the Prep School, we ask Intermediate and Advanced Level Students to keep both an Academic and a Personal Writing Folder. Students are to keep both the first and the second (revised) drafts of their classroom assignments in their Academic Writing Folders. The purpose of the Personal Writing Folder is to increase fluency writing. PW Folders are not graded or checked for grammar or mechanics. The instructors just collect them and check if students have written at least two entries each week. From time to time, instructors are also expected to make some personal comments about the topic to motivate students.

PW is different from a diary or journal in that the materials in the PW folder are to function as a “bank account” that could be used as a basis for formal writing assignments in the future. In other words, along with some personal observations about life or other people; reacting to a controversial reading or listening text, which has been discussed in class, also belong to the PW folder.

The instructors may grade the Academic Writing Folder throughout the semester and count it as part of the Student Performance Grade (SPG) at the end of each semester.

**Process Writing**

Due to the notable decline in the quality of the students’ essays, Process Writing Skills have been added to the Objectives of the Writing Component. We believe that making students aware and responsible of their own work is as crucial as teaching them the mechanics or different rhetorical patterns. Students are expected to write a first draft, revise it after teacher or peer editing and hand in the second draft to the teacher again. They keep both the first drafts and revised versions of their assignments in their Academic Writing Folder.

**Reading – Writing Integration and Theme Based Approach**

“To become better writers, students need to become better readers.” (Spack, 1988)

The second semester of the Intermediate and Advanced Writing Program is made up of writing activities which are organized around a weekly theme and integrated with one or more reading text(s). The aim of this approach is to expose students to different point of views on a particular subject and familiarize them with relevant vocabulary in order to improve the content of their essays.
Monthly Projects

Each month the Curriculum Office prepares Mini Monthly Project assignments, such as Interviews, Reports, Observations, Oral History Projects etc. As these assignments are carried out outside the class and involve some research and interaction with other people, students are encouraged to prepare at least two assignments each semester. These assignments are optional but teachers may grade these projects and include this grade in the SPG.

Graph Interpretation

Although writing from data is not part of the Proficiency Exam any more, the Curriculum Office emphasizes Graph Interpretation in its Writing Program. Along with relevant vocabulary and mechanics about how to transfer information from a table or a graph, several writing assignments are also supplied to the instructors.

The Research Paper

The second semester of the Advanced Level Writing Program is virtually devoted to teaching students how to write an Academic Research Paper. Starting from the first semester, Intermediate and Advanced level students practice how to summarize and paraphrase information in a reading text, which are very important skills in writing a research paper. Advanced Level students are taken on library tours and provided with relevant handouts about how to write a Research Paper. (This activity is optional for Intermediate students).

Written by Curriculum Committee, September 2004
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