



# What's the same, and what's different?


Transfer-Level English Composition Designated for  
English Learners vs Mainstream Composition

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# The CAPacity Gazette



October 2022

Dispatches from California Community Colleges Reforming Remediation  
Because students have the capacity to succeed in challenging courses and we have the capacity to support them

**This edition of the CAPacity Gazette focuses on strategies that boost transfer-level English completion for English learners who seek a college degree.**



The October 2022 issue of the CAPacity Gazette focuses on strategies that boost transfer-level English completion for English learners.

This webinar series spotlight the collaborative work of ESL and English faculty at select colleges engaged in this transformative work.

We'll also connect with researchers to provide updates on the most recent research guiding these changes.

[Register now](#) for additional  
webinars in this series



**Webinar 2: October 28th 12:30-2:00**

### **Supporting English Learners in Mainstream Transfer-Level English Composition**

The most recent CAPacity Gazette featured innovative courses, curricula, and classroom practices that support English learners to complete transfer-level English. Join us for a conversation with ESL faculty featured in the Gazette who will share strategies to support English learners in mainstream composition classes. Bring your questions and ideas to this interactive session with Jessica Pardoe from Santa Rosa Junior College, Nicole Siminsky from Palomar College, Rebecca Beck from Irvine Valley College, and Jose Cortes from Solano College.

**Webinar 3: December 2nd 12:30-1:30**

### **AB 705 Research Update on English Learners**

Join us for updates on the latest AB 705 research focused on English learners in California's community colleges. Craig Hayward and Terrence Willett from the Research and Planning Group will discuss their research into placement of English learners who are US high school graduates, international students, and adult learners. Olga Rodriguez from the Public Policy Institute of California will share highlights from PPIC's latest report on how colleges have responded to AB 705 with changes to ESL placement and course sequences and an early analysis of how these changes have impacted course outcomes for ESL students in transfer-level English composition.

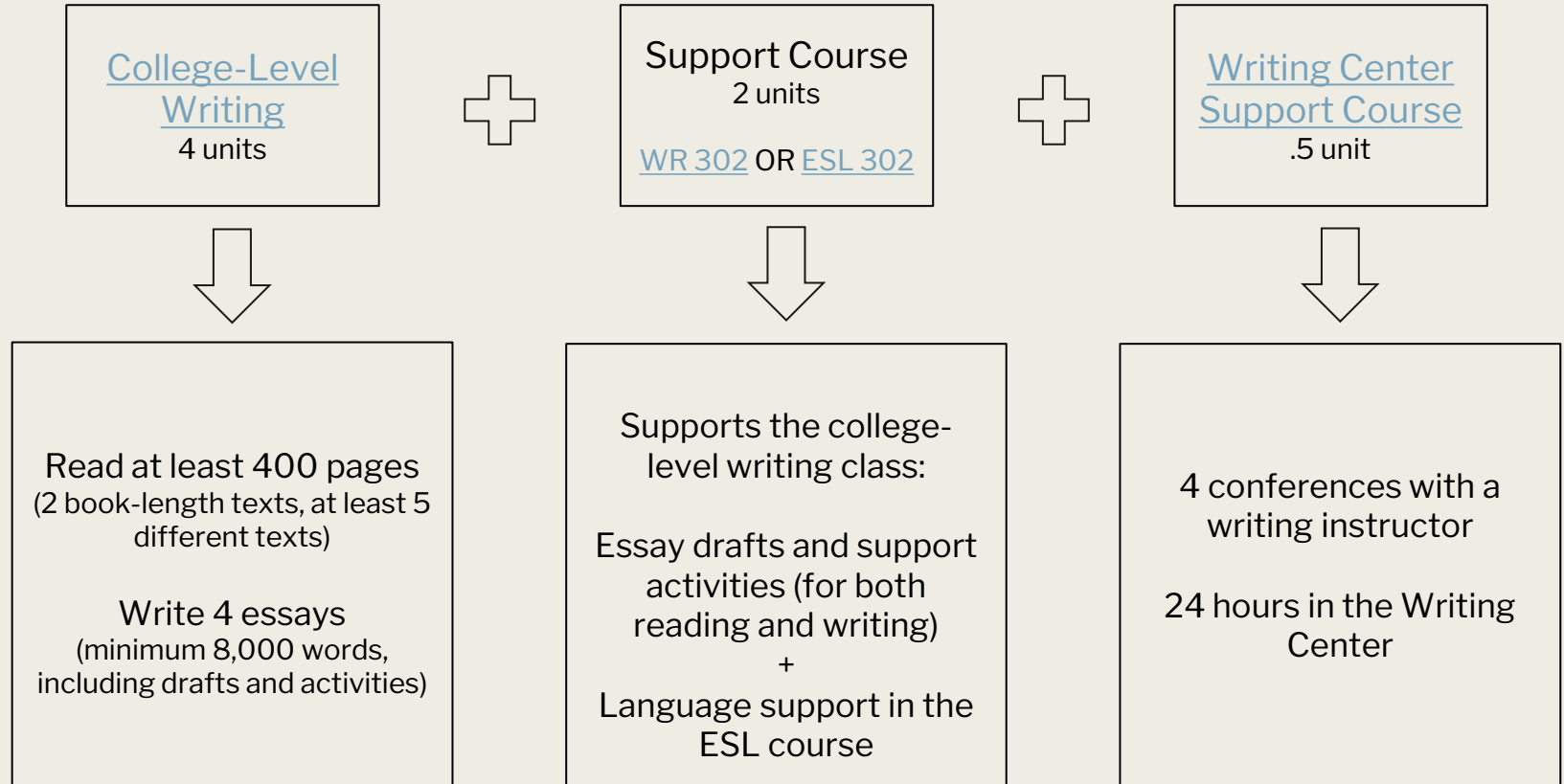
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# A Window into Our Transfer- Level English Composition Classroom

Writing 1  
Irvine Valley College

# Quick Overview:

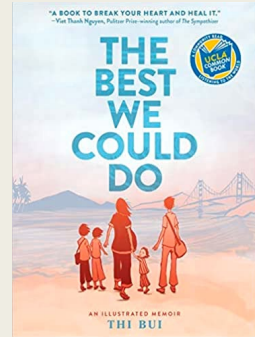
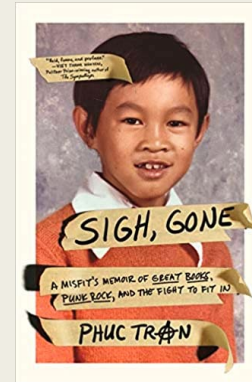
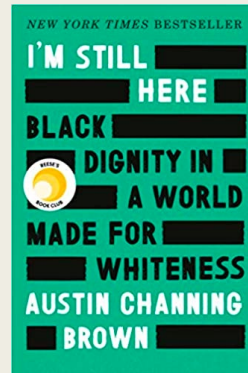
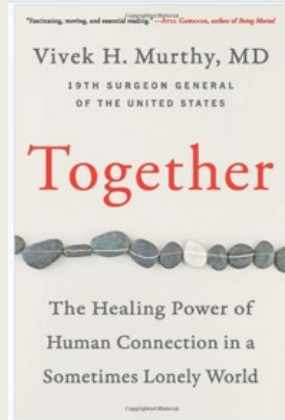
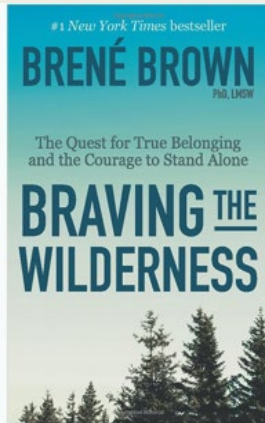
*Students are enrolled in 3 classes:*



# Course Theme: Human Connection

We read, think, write about the concepts of belonging, loneliness, and connection.

## Course Texts:



- Excerpts from *How We Show Up: Reclaiming Family, Friendship, and Community* by Mia Birdsong
- Selected episodes from *The Michelle Obama Podcast: Higher Ground*

# Essay Units

## Unit 0: Writing Sample

**Writing Goals:** *Low-stakes writing sample integrating ideas from the text with personal experience.*

## Unit 1: True Belonging

**Key Questions:** *Why are we so disconnected? What are steps I can use to build true belonging, and how do I currently use those steps in my life?*

**Writing and Thinking Goals:** *Summarize and apply the ideas in one text to your personal experience.*

## Unit 2: Better Together

**Key Questions:** *Why is human connection important? What factors influence how we connect with others?*

**Writing and Thinking Goals:** *Synthesize the ideas in multiple texts to create an argument.*

## Unit 3: Human Connection in a Memoir

**Key Questions:** *How do the ideas we learned about human connection impact an individual's life?*

**Writing and Thinking Goals:** *Apply what we have learned about human connection to the experiences shared in a memoir.*

## Unit 4: Human Connection in Action

**Key Questions:** *What can I do with the knowledge I have acquired about the importance of human connection?*

**Writing and Thinking Goals:** *Baby step into a research paper by creating an idea for a human connection project based on what we've learned and use outside sources.*



# A Window into Essay 2

Better Together





## Overview:

In [Essay 2](#), students are reading multiple texts and working to analyze the causes of loneliness and discuss why connection is important, especially today. In Essay 1, they used one book to answer the prompt, so this is a step up in terms of difficulty.

## Prompt:

For this assignment, you will analyze the importance of human connection by discussing the social, cultural, and evolutionary causes of loneliness and its impact on individuals, and then explain why it is important for human beings to connect with one another, arguing why it is important *now*, maybe more than ever, for individuals to come together and build a more connected world. The purpose of this assignment is for you to closely review texts and present a clear, claim-based discussion. You will also need to support your thesis by citing adequate examples and specific details from the texts.



# Assignments in the main course

**Preview Assignments** introduce students to the author and give them a preview of the text in order to prepare them to read.

**Reading Logs** allow students to practice critical reading skills and gather information from the text for their formal essays, and students complete activities as they read at home and in class as we discuss the readings together as a group. This is meant to be a living document, so students work on these reading logs throughout the reading assignments for a unit. I provide feedback throughout the unit, and students can revise in response to the feedback before submitting for a grade when they have finished all the reading activities for a unit.

**Sample Essays** provide students with an example of a former student's approach to the assignment. Students annotate the sample essay and answer reflection questions after reading.

**Graphic Organizers** help students to gather information for their essays in order to organize their thoughts and prepare to write.

**Final draft** of the essay is the culminating activity and main focus of the unit. This assignment is counted entirely toward their College Writing course (the main class). Students can revise if they are unhappy with their grade, but I usually encourage them to keep working on the next essays as they are worth an increasing percentage of their final grade.

**Essay Reflection** gives students the opportunity to reflect on their writing process and share any information I might need to know about their writing process. This is submitted along with the final draft.

# Assignments in the English support course

**In-class discussions of the reading** are completed each week after a reading assignment is due. Students work in small groups on activities to help them discuss the readings and make sure everyone is understanding the key ideas. I would definitely still do a version of this in a class without support, but the extra time in the support class allows me to go more in depth and take more time with the discussion.

**Prompt Review** assignments ask students to annotate the prompt and answer embedded questions throughout the prompt to check for understanding.

**Reading Wrap-Up Activity** asks students to reflect on their reading experience for each essay and think about how the reading went for them, what they learned about themselves as readers, and how they might read differently for the next essay.

**Rough Draft Submission** takes place while they are drafting. I typically ask students to draft the introduction + one body paragraph before I review. I access their draft in their Google document and provide feedback directly in the draft.

**Optional Discussion Board (extra credit)** allows students to copy and paste their rough draft (introduction + 1 body paragraph) into a class discussion board. I provide feedback on the draft publicly as a comment in the discussion board. This allows students to not only see how their classmates are approaching the essay, but also how I am responding to that essay. This assignment was inspired by this blog and webinar: [“Sampling and Remixing: Using Peer Models to Increase Engagement”](#) by Jesus Limón Guzman.

**Individual Conferences** allow students to work one-on-one with me on each essay. These 15-minute Zoom or in-person conferences are scheduled throughout the week the essay is due, and students sign up on the Canvas calendar. Often, I review the rough draft submission described above in the individual conference.

**Writing Center Conferences** are required for each essay assignment. Students work one-on-one with an instructor in the college’s Writing Center for feedback on their drafts. Then, they fill out a form discussing their conference to earn credit in the support course.

**Feedback Reflection and Goal Setting Activity** allows students to reflect on the feedback after the essay is graded and create goals for the next essay.

**Check-In Surveys** are completed at the end of each class to check in with everyone and make sure things are going okay in our class, in their other classes, and in their lives. I often respond with individual emails if students have specific questions or with whole-class announcements to address more pervasive questions.

# Assignments in the ESL support course

**Preview of Reading Activities** are designed to help students build cultural knowledge, writing style, author's background, or any other information I think is necessary to help them understand the book before we begin reading it.

**Reading Activities** are completed for each chapter of the book. These are designed to help them understand the structure of the text and how to read like a writer, which is a skill we are building after we read Mike Bunn's essay, "[How to Read Like a Writer.](#)" *I find it helpful to name the reading skill specifically, as some students may not fully understand what we mean when we say: Do active reading.*

**In-class post-reading/language discussions** are completed each week after a reading assignment is due. Students work with their Moais on activities to help them understand the key concepts from each chapter, make meaning of language, and practice the MLA format.

**Prompt Review Assignments** These assignments ask students to annotate the prompt and answer embedded questions to check for global understanding and language/vocabulary.

**In-class drafting and 1:1 meetings** take place after the reading is completed.

**Individual Conferences** Review my feedback and do **1:1 language instruction**

**Essay Completion Celebrations** We spend time as a class reflecting on the work done to complete an essay. Now that we are back in person, chocolate is part of our celebrations.

# Key takeaways

- The TLE composition course is the same exact class in the EL version and the mainstream version, revealing that the same rigorous course can be used successfully in both classes:
  - *Same course outline of record*
  - *Same content*
  - *Same assignments*
  - *Same books*
  - *Same formal assignments*
- The course theme connects students' lived experiences to their academic reading and writing and has helped students of all backgrounds build a willingness to engage in challenging assignments.
  - *This is particularly impactful for ELs by allowing them to think and write about how being a linguistic outsider impacts their feelings of belonging and connection.*

# Key takeaways

- The assignment sequence builds students' confidence in their academic reading and writing skills by building expertise in the topic and tackling increasingly difficult academic writing assignments.
  - *This helps ELs build specialized theme-related vocabulary and retain language growth while writing more complex assignments.*
- Working together to write curriculum creates a community of practice for the instructors.
  - *This allows the English instructor to look at her class through a language learning lens.*
  - *This allows the ESL instructor to look at her class through a composition/rhetoric lens (e.g. plagiarism, audience/style/tone).*
- One bonus benefit is that we can move students from section to section early in the semester if they need more or less language support.

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# Instruction in Reading ESL

# Reading Instruction: ESL

In-class guided reading allows students to discover text-organization (writers' moves) and the meaning of key concepts they will need to define in their essays.

## Main Goals for Essay 2

- **Develop** an argument (claim) based on the ideas in the texts
- **Analyze** *loneliness and its causes and effects* as presented in the texts
- **Discuss** why human connection is important
- **Explain** why it is crucial for human beings to connect in the 21st century
- **Select, quote, paraphrase, and summarize** ideas from the texts and podcast to support your key claims

- **Vocabulary instruction while doing in-class guided reading**
- **Use of cohesive devices**



# Reading Instruction: ESL

In-class activities allow students to make meaning out of language together, to think critically, and to practice embedding outside sources.

## *In-Class Reading Activity:*

Students work in small groups to answer questions about their assigned topic.

We then share with the class and have a group discussion.

We also spend time in class reviewing challenging language students encountered. We use a [collocations dictionary](#)

## Social Media

### How has social media made us more disconnected?

Social media is splitting our attention into smaller fragments then reduces our efficiency. "Research has found that humans are incapable of attending to multiple activities at once"(106).

It pushes us to be updated day and night, and it accelerates the life rhythm dramatically. We just can not be focused on others because all of these social medias have occupied most of our attention that we can not feel other things anymore. Sometimes, we just want to reply to a message from a friend but it ends up with spending hours checking other's moments and reading nonsense about strangers' posts. This makes social media a time thief in our life since it stolen our time with family and friends in person. As a result, we become dull to surroundings.

Heavy social media users were twice as likely to feel lonely as those in the low-use group...[they] are more likely to be depressed (Murthy 104). It amplifies comparison, enables bully and substitute lower for higher-quality relationships (Murthy 104). Because we are all novelty seekers, so the countless posts on social media create a sense of urgency and importance to keep using it instead of having face to face communication (Murthy 105).

## Geniuses

### Share an example not used in the text:

We used play soccer on the field more often, but nowadays we play a Playstation game called "FIFA20" We used to discuss games face to face. Now, we have group chats to talk about them.

### Language/words that you found difficult in this section:

*Jubilant-  
Sheer-  
Lavish-  
Innate-  
Neglect-  
Devastating  
Exacerbate*

Chicken-and-the egg question of which comes first? HUH

That have been honed over millennia p 105



Instruction in Writing  
ESL



# Writing Instruction: ESL

## Prewriting:

- Students review **my feedback to their reading activities**
- Review workshop on **Audience Considerations**
  
- Class review of **Language Toolkit** for each essay
- **Prompt review and unpacking language in the prompt**
  - *This assignments ask students to annotate the prompt and answer embedded questions in the prompt to check for global understanding and language/vocabulary*
- Thesis and organization work
  - *Students complete **a graphic organizer** (draft 1)*
  - *Students work on thesis and organization **in class with a lot of practice** and modeling*
- Review student sample essay
  - *Students read and annotate a former student's essay for each assignment*

# Writing Instruction: ESL

## Drafting:

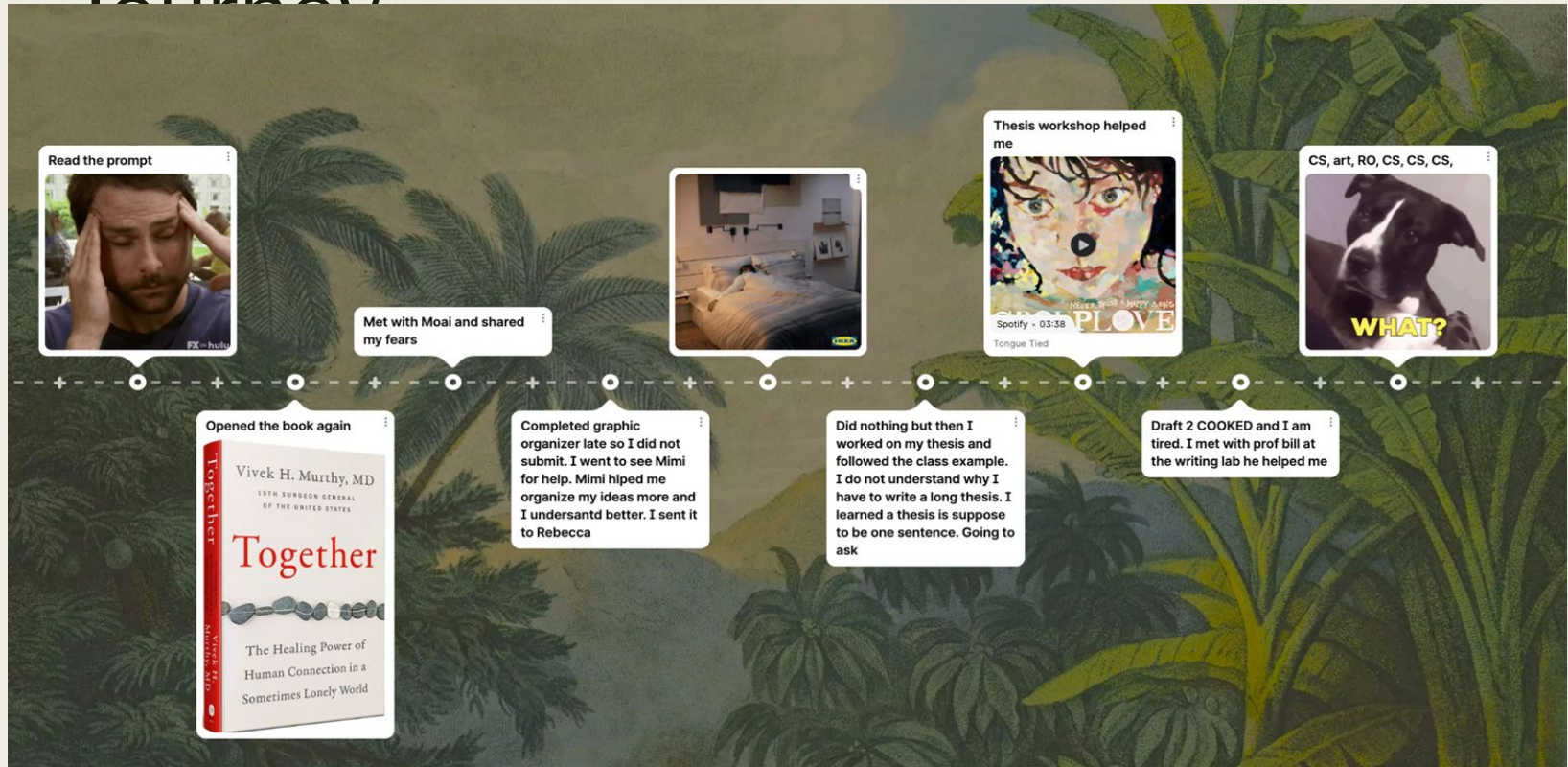
- Drafting happens in class.
  - *Students write most of draft 2 in class, and I walk around and help them as needed*
  - *Review and discuss **They Say, I Say templates***
  
- Draft submissions
  - *Students submit a draft 2 for my feedback.*
  - *I use **IVC correction symbols** to point out global/local language errors*
  - **Sample Essay with my feedback**
  
- Individual conferences
  - *I meet one-on-one with students and **review my feedback together***
  - *Use **quick grammar lessons in margins** for just-in-time grammar instruction*
  - *Assign work from **Advanced ESL Writing OER** as needed*
  - *Students also visit the Writing Center or English Learning Center (ELC)*

# Writing Instruction: ESL

## Final Drafts:

- In-class proofreading and editing
  - *Students bring their final draft to class the day it is due, and we complete language workshop focused on editing language*
  - *Sample Lang Workshop: [Simple Past vs Present Perfect](#)*
  - *Sample Lang Workshop: [Word Forms in English](#)*
  - *Sample Lang Workshop: [Clauses](#)*
  
- Metacognitive and fun activities on writing and language growth
  - *Try to make these fun, in-class work they can share if they choose to. From these activities, I create “Language Friends.” These small groups share best practices for editing, etc..*
  - *[Sample 1 Instructions](#)*

# Sample of Student's Writing Journey





Other types of support  
ESL

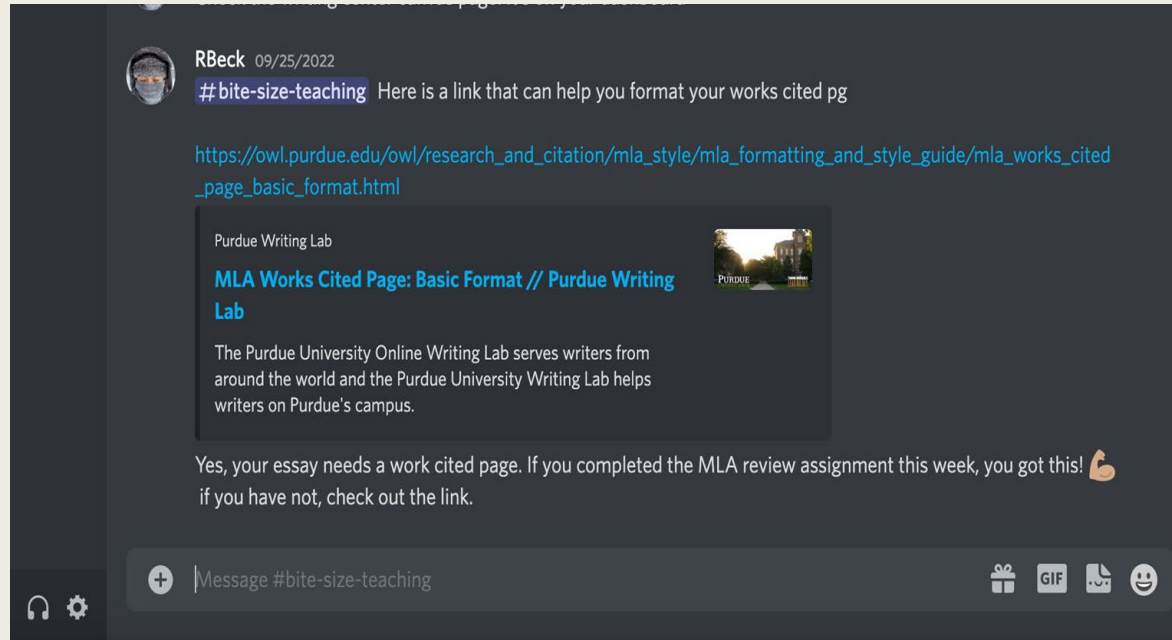
# Other types of support: ESL

- Campus Community Building: Most students enrolled in WR1/ESL 302 are new to IVC. I give them opportunities to get to know the campus and the services it offers. They do this for extra credit. For this activity, students complete the **IVC passport**
- Class Connections: I create a Discord channel for my WR 1 class every semester. This allows us to connect when we are not in the classroom.
- [Moai](#): All students in ESL coreq course are assigned to a Moai. They find these communities of support helpful to keep each other on track throughout the semester.



# Other types of support: ESL

- Bite-Sized Teaching: Mini lessons on our class' Discord.



**RBeck** 09/25/2022  
**#bite-size-teaching** Here is a link that can help you format your works cited pg

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/mla\\_style/mla\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/mla\\_works\\_cited\\_page\\_basic\\_format.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_works_cited_page_basic_format.html)

Purdue Writing Lab

**MLA Works Cited Page: Basic Format // Purdue Writing Lab**

The Purdue University Online Writing Lab serves writers from around the world and the Purdue University Writing Lab helps writers on Purdue's campus.

Yes, your essay needs a work cited page. If you completed the MLA review assignment this week, you got this! 💪  
if you have not, check out the link.

Message #bite-size-teaching

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# Instruction in Reading English

# Reading Instruction: English

## Reading logs

*Allow students to work on close, active, and critical reading skills through an iterative process that is closely tied to the prompt.*

### *Prompt Excerpt:*

You will analyze the importance of human connection by discussing the social, cultural, and evolutionary causes of loneliness and its impact on individuals.

### *Other Important Elements:*

- Reading logs are completed at home as students read or during in-class activities.
- Throughout the unit, I provide feedback in the Google doc, and students can revise, add, update, until the due date at the end of the unit.

### *Reading Activity:*



#### **Chapter 4 "Why Now?"**

Reading Activity 2.6  
Due Date: Sunday, March 6

#### **Analyzing the Factors**

As you read Chapter 4, complete the following tasks using the chart below:

- Review the factors from Murthy's Chapter 4 on the left-hand column.
- On the right-hand column, explain how that factor has made us more disconnected.

<b>Factor from Chapter 4</b>	<b>According to Murthy, how has this made us more disconnected? Be sure to use a direct quote or a paraphrase.</b>
Modern efficiency	
Social media	
Multi-tasking	
Moving (Migration)	
Human longevity	
Social polarization (Sorting)	

# Reading Instruction: English

In-class activities allow students to process readings together in a small group and with the whole class to make sure they understand key ideas in the text and are prepared to write the essay.

## *In-Class Reading Activity:*

Students work in small groups to answer questions about their assigned topic.

We then share with the class and have a group discussion.

Slides are linked on Canvas and in their readings logs, making them accessible resources as they work on their essays.

Multitasking	Group 1
How has multitasking made us more disconnected? (Use quotations and/or paraphrase to support your claims)	Share an example used in the text:
	Share an example of this not used in the text:

# Key Takeaways

Again, much of the reading instruction is the same in both the EL and mainstream class, with a focus on

- *Building comprehension and understanding*
- *Finding and analyzing main ideas*
- *Answering key questions from the prompt*
- *Finding supporting evidence*

In the ESL class, targeted language support is added to

- *Unpack language and teach academic vocabulary*
- *Build background knowledge*
- *Practice formatting*

*Note: Much of the work in both classes is focused on discovering what students, as a class and as individuals, need to support their reading skills.*

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# Instruction in Writing English

# Writing Instruction: English

## Prewriting:

- Start with reading log
  - *The reading log is really a form of prewriting, making sure students understand key ideas in the text and have evidence to answer the key questions of the prompt.*
- Prompt review
  - *This assignments ask students to annotate the prompt and answer embedded questions throughout the prompt to check for understanding.*
- Move to thesis and organization work
  - *Students complete a graphic organizer*
  - *We work on thesis and organization in class with a lot of practice and modeling*
- Review samples
  - *Students read and annotate a former student's essay for each assignment*

# Writing Instruction: English

## Sample Thesis Statement for Essay 2:

Prompt:

For this assignment, you will analyze the importance of human connection by closely studying the **social**, **cultural**, and **evolutionary** causes of loneliness and its impact on individuals, and then describe why it is important for human beings to connect with one another, arguing why it is important *now*, perhaps more than ever, for individuals to come together and build a more connected world.



Sample Thesis:

As a species, we have evolved to feel loneliness as a distressing signal that warns us we are away from our tribe. This feeling has been compounded by our country's toxic individualism and continued focus on technology to increase efficiency and connect with our peers. Because human connection is essential to our wellbeing, it is important now more than ever that we overcome this disconnection as we deal with a lack of connection to our communities that has been intensified by the extended disconnection brought on by the pandemic.



# Writing Instruction: English

As a species, we have evolved to feel loneliness as a distressing signal that warns us we are away from our tribe. This feeling has been compounded by our country's toxic individualism and continued focus on technology to increase efficiency and connect with our peers. Because human connection is essential to our wellbeing, it is important now more than ever that we overcome this disconnection as we deal with a lack of connection to our communities that has been intensified by the extended disconnection brought on by the pandemic.

**Body Paragraph 1:**  
Evolutionary causes of loneliness (Murthy Chapter 2)

**Body Paragraph 2:** The American Dream has led to toxic individualism (Birdsong Chapter 1 + Obama podcast episode 1)

**Body Paragraph 3:**  
Modern efficiency of technology disconnects us from those around us (Murthy Chapter 4)

**Body Paragraph 4:**  
Our reliance on social media compounds this disconnection (Murthy Chapter 4)

**Body Paragraph 5:**  
Human connection is essential to our well-being (Murthy, Obama)

**Body Paragraph 6:** We've become disconnected from our communities, which used to be an important part of building connection and support (Michelle Obama podcast Episode 1)

**Body Paragraph 7:**  
Pandemic compounded all of this

**Body Paragraph 8:**  
But quarantine also represents an opportunity to recalibrate (Michelle Obama podcast Episode 2)

# Writing Instruction: English

## Drafting:

- We usually start drafting in class.
  - *By starting with the thesis and organization in class, students feel like they are on the path to writing.*
- Draft submissions
  - *Students typically submit intro + 1 body paragraph for my feedback mid-week.*
- Review peer samples
  - *Students share samples on an extra credit discussion board (modeled after Jesus Limon Guzman's blog, "Sampling and Remixing: Using Peer Models to Increase Engagement")*
- Individual conferences
  - *I meet one-on-one with students during the drafting week.*
  - *Students also visit the Writing Center*

## Final Drafts:

- In-class revision
  - *Students bring their final draft to class the day it is due, and we complete a workshop focused on editing.*

# Key takeaways

Scaffolding is important.

- *Following a step-by-step structures allows us to see where, exactly, students get stuck and provide the needed support.*

Modeling supports students in the EL and mainstream class.

- *The modeling supports ELs (and other students as well) as they benefit from the samples as structural models, and they can see the language other students are using to discuss the subject.*

Individualized support is important for all students.

- *The individualized support allows the instructor to provide targeted support for language needs.*
- *It also allows the instructor to support the student in other individualized ways. Our students, ELs or not, do not just need one-size-fits-all support.*

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Other types of support  
English

# Other types of support: English

- Human connection activities
  - *Meme mood scale*
  - *Opening question*
- Reflection opportunities
  - ***Reading Wrap-Up Activity** asks students to reflect on their reading experience for each essay and think about how the reading went for them, what they learned about themselves as readers, and how they might read differently for the next essay.*
  - ***Feedback Reflection and Goal Setting Activity** allows students to reflect on the feedback after the essay is graded and create goals for the next essay.*
- Intentional check-ins
  - *Pre-semester check-in surveys*
  - *Weekly **Check-In Surveys** are completed at the end of each class to check in with everyone and make sure things are going okay in our class, in their other classes, and in their lives. I often respond with individual emails if students have specific questions or with whole-class announcements to address more pervasive questions.*

# Overall key takeaways:

The TLE composition course is the exact same in both versions.

- *This is a rigorous TLE composition course.*

Much of the support is the same.

- *Students in both classes need both group and individualized integrated reading and writing support to develop academic reading and writing skills*

Language support is provided in both classes.

- *In the EL-designated class class, it's provided through whole group, small group, and individual support*
- *In the mainstream class, it's mostly done individually in the context of the standard assignments.*

# Questions?

# Thank you!

Feel free to contact us with any questions!

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