



Using Graphic Organizers to Teach Writing

Objective: To teach students the skills to plan and write persuasive essays.

Setting and Materials:

Settings: A public day middle school only for students with severe emotional disabilities.

Materials:

- The Seven Powerful Self-Determined Behaviors chart and diagram that depicted behaviors (such as, make a good choice, set a goal and plan, self-awareness, apply problem solving strategies, self-advocacy, monitor and evaluate progress, and self-efficacy)
- A POW+TREE chart and graphic organizer containing all steps of the strategy
- A transition word chart
- Persuasive essay examples
- A self-statement sheet that helped students brainstorm positive statements they could say to themselves while writing
- Self-monitoring and self-evaluation charts
- Daily self-determination contracts

Content Taught

Teach the skills needed to write, include the following operations (a) concept mapping and (b) hand-drawn on the descriptive essay writing.

Teaching Procedures

1. Discuss the concept of self-determination by using guiding questions. Then, introduce the Seven Powerful Self-determination Behaviors and demonstrated to students how to apply these behaviors when writing (Wehmeyer, Agran, & Hughes, 1998).

The Seven Powerful Self-determination Behaviors”

- i. Decision making involves making good choices that will help with attaining the goal
- ii. Goal setting and attainment refers to setting goals and making plans on how to achieve the goals
- iii. Self-management is the ability to start and complete a task, and monitor and evaluate progress

- iv. Problem solving refers to the ability to apply strategies that will help with finishing a task
 - v. Self-awareness is the ability to identify and understand one's needs, interests, strengths, limitations, and values
 - vi. Self-advocacy refers to the ability to express one's needs, wants, and rights in an assertive manner
 - vii. Self-efficacy is having confidence in one's own abilities to attain a goal
2. Discuss counter reasons and why it is important to consider other people's perspective when writing a persuasive essay. Then teacher model how to complete the POW + TREE graphic organizer with two persuasive essays' prompt examples in which students, along with the teacher, had to come up with reasons and counter reasons.
 3. Model the entire planning and writing process using the POW+TREE strategy with the graphic organizer, the transition word chart and the Seven Powerful Self-determined Behaviors. Teacher model how to think of good reasons and counter reasons to write an essay and model the use of self-statement (e.g., What do I believe? What is the next step? I am doing a great job. Do I have all the persuasive essay parts?). Then, teacher model how to transfer notes from the graphic organizer into essay format by using the paragraph checklist sheet. Finally, model how to use the student record sheet to evaluate whether the essay had all the required components. Students will complete their own self-statements chart to be used in later lessons.
 4. Let students practice and memorize the writing strategy POW+TREE, and the steps need to write an essay following the Seven Powerful Self-determined Behaviors.
 5. Have students complete their self-determination contracts, select a practice prompt from one of two options related to self-advocacy topics, complete the graphic organizer, write an essay, and review it.

Evaluation

Using a holistic rubric with a scale from 0-10 and scoring rules. An essay received a score 0 for no essay parts and 10 for a complete essay. An essay worth 10 points has to include the following components:

- Topic sentence
- More than three reasons with explanations
- Ending sentence
- A logical sequence of writing including more than one counter argument
- Overall essay coherence

Each essay will be scored by the number of words written number of transition words, sentences, paragraphs, and parts of the essay including topic sentence, each reason and counter reason, each explanation, and an ending sentence.

Lesson Plan Based on:

Cuenca-Sanchez, Y., Mastropieri, M. A., Scruggs, T. E., & Kidd, J. K. (2012). Teaching students with emotional and behavioral disorders to self-advocate through persuasive writing. *Exceptionality, 20*(2), 71-93.

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