

Category: Getting Started Using MY Access!

It is recommended that prior to using MY Access! for the first time that students write to a MY Access! prompt in a regular word processor. That way, they can copy and paste the assignment into My Access! and practice using the writing tools, submitting their paper for a score, and viewing their portfolios immediately.

Strategies in this Section:

-Introducing Students to MY Access!

-Selecting a Prompt to Align with Curriculum

Strategy: Introducing Students to MY Access!

Online: Make copies and distribute the *Student Quick Reference Guide* (found in the teacher resources) prior to logging on and inform students of their usernames and passwords. If an LCD projector is available, model the procedures while the students work at their own computers. Instruct students to log on, and then using the *Student Quick Reference Guide* show them the following:

- How to start an assignment.
- How to copy and paste the pre-written assignment into MY Access!
- How to access the tools available to enhance their writing (My Editor, My Tutor, etc.).
- How to submit an essay for scoring and how to view their scoring feedback.
- How to access and view their writing portfolio.
- How to log off of MY Access!

Offline: Using an LCD projector while students follow along on the *Student Quick Reference Guide*, log on to MY Access! and demonstrate for the students the following:

- How to start an assignment.
- How to copy and paste the pre-written assignment into MY Access!
- How to access the tools available to enhance their writing (My Editor, My Tutor, etc.).
- How to submit an essay for scoring and how to view their scoring feedback.
- How to access and view their writing portfolio.
- How to log off of MY Access!

Strategy: Selecting Prompts to Align with Curriculum

Online: In addition to the *Prompt Catalog* found in the teacher resources, you can search for prompts by clicking on “Setup Groups and Assignments” in the navigation bar at the top of the screen. After selecting a class, click on the assignment icon and click on “Add a Prompt.” When creating an assignment you can filter through the available prompts by selecting a grade level and prompt type (persuasive, narrative, informative, literary, and informational-text based) and then entering a keyword, subject, textbook unit, or state standard into the keyword box. This is a quick way to find prompts that are in alignment with your existing curriculum.

Offline: Print out the *Prompt Catalog* from the teacher resources to view available Intellimetric and Pilot prompts. Prompts are cataloged into grade levels and are divided into different categories: persuasive, narrative, informative, literary, and informational (text based). Having this printed out and accessible when the internet is not makes it easy to quickly check for prompts that would align to curriculum. Please note that the prompt catalog is only updated periodically, therefore, the most accurate list of prompts at any given time will be accessible through the “Setup Groups and Assignments” link.

Category: Informal Writing

Using MY Access! for informal writing assignments allows even more opportunities for students to write. Informal writing assignments would include journal writes, quick writes, practice writing assignments, etc. As these are completed in a much shorter amount of time, they are easier to squeeze in especially when writing lab time is limited. Through the reports in MY Access! you will be able to track your students' progress composing without preparation and revision.

Strategies in this Section:

Using MY Access! for Journal Writing

Responding to Current Events

Responding to Literature

Responding to Art/Music

Strategy: Using MY Access! for Journal Writing

Online: Select a prompt as a journal write for your students to complete in MY Access!. Allow students 15-20 minutes to respond and let them write whatever comes to mind. You can do this type of writing assignment periodically or on a regular basis depending on access to computers. You can allow students to see their scores on these journal writes, however, the purpose is practice!

Offline: Select MY Access! prompts for journal writes topics that your students will respond to in class. When computers become available, first, select a few of these journal write prompts and use them to create assignments in MY Access!, then have your students key in the responses from their journals.

Strategy: Responding to Current Events

Online: Select a current event that impacts your students and or community and search MY Access! for relevant prompts in the prompt catalog or use a keyword search. If you are unable to find a suitable prompt, create your own prompt in the system.

Offline: Select a MY Access! prompt that addresses an important current event facing your students and or the community and have your students respond to it offline. When computers become available, have your students key in their response.

Strategy: Responding to Literature

Online: Search MY Access! for prompts that deal with themes, characters, situations found in literature that is being read in class. Have your students respond to the prompts prior to reading, during the reading, or upon completion of the reading selection.

Offline: Select a MY Access! prompt that deals with themes, characters, and or situations found in literature that is being read in class. This prompt could be used as a class discussion question or an opportunity for students to write responses in small groups.

Strategy: Responding to Art/Music

Online: Search for or create a prompt in MY Access! that addresses a certain theme, mood, character, or situation found in a work of art or in a piece of music. Display the art (or a picture of the art) or play the music that coincides with the prompt.

Offline: Select a MY Access! prompt that deals with a theme, mood, character, or situation found in a work of art or a piece of music. Using a LCD projector, have the class create a response that you key in. Submit the response for a score and discuss the feedback as a class.

Category: Assessment Writing

Using MY Access! for assessment writing provides students opportunities to develop the capacity to respond thoughtfully in a more polished manner than with the informal writing assignments. As most students are required to provide a writing sample on high stakes tests, using MY Access! for assessments following a unit of study can prepare students for future testing situations. Their progress in assessment writing can be tracked and monitored using the reports found in MY Access!.

Strategies in this Section:

Practice for High Stakes Tests

Class/School/District Benchmarks

Pre-Post Tests

Writing Contests

Strategy: Practice for High Stakes Tests

Online: Select MY Access! prompts that are similar to those used in past high stakes tests or are of the same writing genre that are tested on high stakes tests. Turn off tools such as My Editor, My Tutor, Spell Check, Writer's Models, etc. and have students compose under circumstances similar to those on high stakes tests. Encourage students to use pre-writing graphic organizers to organize their thoughts before composing. Monitor progress by using the reports in MY Access!

Offline: Select MY Access! prompts that are similar in genre or topic to those used in past high stakes tests and have students respond with paper and pencil. When computers become available, have students key in their responses to MY Access!. Also, try printing out a few student responses from the *Writer's Model* as well as an appropriate rubric (both are found in the teacher resource link) and distribute to students. Have students score the model essays using the rubrics then discuss as a class. Have them score their own handwritten responses using the MY Access! rubrics as well.

Strategy: Class/School/District Benchmarks

Online: Assignments in MY Access! can be generated at the class, school, and/or district level--making it much easier to create common assessments. These common assessments or benchmarks are generally timed with writing tools turned off to truly assess student ability. Performance on benchmark assessments can be tracked/monitored by using the reports in MY Access! This data will help teachers, schools, and/or districts determine areas of greatest need and if instructional targets have been met.

Offline: If computers are not available have students respond to the benchmark prompts by hand to key into the computer at a later date. If computers are available, but the internet is not, have students type up the benchmark in a word processor to be copied and pasted into MY Access! at a later date.

Strategy: Pre-Post Tests

Online: At the beginning of a unit of study, use MY Access! as a means to gauge writing performance. Select a MY Access! prompt, then have the students respond. Using data from the reports in MY Access!, analyze student performance and select a specific area of weakness to focus your classroom instruction. At the end of the unit have the students revise or re-respond to the same prompt. Analyze report data to measure if students have improved in the specific area of weakness.

Offline: Distribute copies of a paper from the *Writer's Model* that has received low marks. Then give students a copy of a paper that received a high score. Discuss the differences between the two papers, and then as a class re-write the paper that received a poor score. Key it into MY Access! using an LCD projector and submit to see if the class was able to raise the score.

Strategy: Writing Contests

Online: Sponsor an after-school writing contest. Create a new group of just the participants in the contest and assign them the MY Access! prompt specific to the contest. Allow the participants a specified amount of time to respond and turn off the tools. Contests create a different atmosphere than just practicing in class for an upcoming high stakes test. You'll have students getting that extra practice and writing with purpose!

Offline: Sponsor an after school writing contest in which the participants are given a sample essay and rubric from the *Writer's Model*. Participants will then score the essay using the rubric and provide suggestions for improvement. The best editor wins!

Category: Process Writing

Using MY Access! for process writing provides students the opportunity to see a paper through the pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing stages. Students will learn through this process how to fine tune and develop their essays using different traits/domains of effective writers. Students can revise their papers and watch their scores improve dramatically as they improve their understanding of the qualities of good writers.

Strategies in this Section:

Prewriting

- **Graphic Organizers (Venn Diagram, Cluster Web, KWL Chart)**
- **Narrative/Persuasive Wizards**
- **Narrative/Persuasive Outlines**
- **Overview of the Domains/Traits of Writing**
- **Research Using Iseek**

Drafting

- **My Tutor**
- **Model Papers**
- **Domain/Trait Specific Instruction**

Revising

- **Score Report Feedback**
- **Focused Revision**
- **Musical Chairs**
- **Choosing the Right Word/Parts of Speech**
- **Radical Revisions**

Prewriting

Strategy: Graphic Organizers (Venn Diagram, Cluster Web, KWL Chart)

Online: These interactive graphic organizers can be enabled or disabled when you create an assignment. If they are enabled (which is the default) your students will be able to see them when they click on the "Prewriting" heading found just above the student composition window. These widely used graphic organizers help students to generate ideas and organize them before attempting the writing task.

Offline: All of the graphic organizers can be printed out from the teacher resources and completed offline.

Strategy: Narrative/Persuasive Wizards

Online: The narrative and persuasive wizards can be turned on/off when creating an assignment. If left "on" your students will have a step by step guide through planning out the plot details of a personal narrative to creating the thesis statement and supporting arguments of a persuasive essay. These wizards

provide students a good look at the structure of narrative and persuasive pieces of writing. The information that your students type into the wizards can be saved, printed, and/or inserted into their essay.

Offline: The narrative/persuasive wizards can be printed out and completed offline.

Strategy: Narrative/Persuasive Outlines

Online: The narrative and persuasive outlines are a great alternative to the prewriting wizards if you are limited on time. These outlines allow your students to briefly plan out the most important parts of their papers. The information typed into the interactive outlines can be saved and printed.

Offline: The narrative/persuasive outlines can be printed out and completed offline.

Strategy: Overview of the Traits/Domains of Writing

Online: No matter what you call them, there are certain elements that are essential in creating a good piece of writing. In MY Access! papers are scored holistically and in 5 different domains. These are: Focus and Meaning, Content and Development, Organization, Language Use, Style, and Voice, and Conventions. For supplemental information and activities on these domains, look in the teacher resources. If you use the Six Traits, there is a Six Trait/MY Access! conversion chart available in the teacher resources under “Rubrics” and more specifically under “Utah Rubrics.”

Offline: There are many excellent books available that provide strategies and techniques to teach your students about the elements of good writing. These strategies and techniques work well with MY Access! as they help your students to develop the very qualities for which their essays are being assessed.

Strategy: Research Using Iseek

Online: Iseek is the embedded internet research tool in MY Access! that allows students to gather information from credible sites that is specific and categorized by topic, place, people, etc. Before students actually begin to respond to a prompt in MY Access!, have them search in Iseek for information that could help them to formulate strong arguments and supporting details. Once students have sufficient background information, they will be ready to complete the persuasive wizard or persuasive outline from the student composition window.

Offline: Search Iseek for articles/information that pertains to the prompt you plan to assign your students. Print out copies of the articles/information and distribute to students. Have students read through the articles and formulate arguments and supporting details. Once they have sufficient background information, they will be ready to complete the persuasive wizard or persuasive outline (which can also be completed offline).

Drafting

Strategy: My Tutor

Online: While students are composing their essays, allow them to use My Tutor to receive instructional feedback prior to or after submitting their essay for a score. This feedback is broken down by domain/trait and provides a variety of instructional suggestions to improve the essay. Start small, one domain/trait at a time and have students follow My Tutor suggestions. They can refer to the *Writer’s Guide* and the *Writer’s Model* from the “References” tab on the student page to receive supplementary information on the domains/traits and what they look like when used correctly.

Offline: Distribute copies of a student essay. Using an LCD projector or an overhead projector, display for students the My Tutor feedback that was suggested for that particular essay. Select one domain/trait and work through the suggestions as a class—discussing what particular suggestions would look like when applied to the paper. Next, divide the class into small groups. Give each group My Tutor feedback from a remaining domain/trait (you’ll have to use some of them twice), and instruct them to come up with

revisions to the student essay based on the suggestions from My Tutor. Whole group sharing and discussion should follow.

Strategy: Model Papers

Online: Before your students have submitted their essay for a score, have them open up the *Writer's Model* found through the "References" tab in the composition window. Then have them compare their essay to the model essays and select the model paper that their paper most closely resembles. Then the student should submit their paper for a score and compare the score they received to the score of the model paper they thought resembled their own.

Offline: Instead of having your students view the model papers online, print them out or display them for the class with an LCD projector. Students should have a copy of their essay on paper to compare with the model essays. Instead of having them submit their essay for a score, distribute the rubric and have them score their paper accordingly. Then, have them compare the score they gave themselves to the score of the model paper they thought resembled their own.

Strategy: Domain/Trait Specific Instruction

Online: Select a specific domain/trait of writing upon which to focus your instruction. As students write, allow them only to see My Tutor feedback from that one domain/trait. When they revise, they should revise to bring up the score in that one area only. Using the teacher reports, you can monitor if students have mastered the domain/trait and are ready to move on.

Offline: As students are writing, select a specific domain/trait to emphasize. For example, using the domain/trait of organization, you decide emphasize having a powerful lead sentence in the introduction. Distribute to students textbooks, novels, newspapers, etc. and have them create a list of lead sentences that hooked their attention. Allow students to share their favorites and then discuss what made the sentences powerful and attention getting. Encourage students to take what they have learned and apply it to their essay.

Revising

Strategy: Score Report Feedback

Online: After students have submitted their essays for scoring, they receive valuable feedback holistically and domain/trait by domain/trait to help them begin the revision process. At this point it is crucial that students understand the difference between revising and editing. Have your students select three things that they are going to revise in their next draft and complete the *revision plan* from the score report window.

Offline: After students have submitted their essays for scoring, have them print out the score report and work on the revisions/revision plan offline. When computers become available have students type in their changes and their revision plans.

Strategy: Focused Revision

Online: Rather than having your students resubmit their essay after every word or punctuation mark they change, consider requiring a specific number of submissions and articulating the kinds of changes that should take place in each submission. For example, you require your students to submit their essay three times. The first submission would be their rough draft. The second submission would focus on specific domains/traits and students would be given a list of things to work on and change in their paper. The third submission would focus on editing the paper for mistakes in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. This will cut down on the quantity of submissions, however the quality of the revision will improve dramatically.

Offline: If students have limited access to computers, have them do all of their revisions on a printed out copy of their essay offline. When computers become available, have them key in the changes and submit accordingly.

Strategy: Musical Chairs

Online: The musical chairs strategy is a different take on peer reviewing. Each student will stand up and move to another computer where they will be able to look at another student's essay. This should be an essay that has recently been submitted for scoring. Instruct the students to read the essay in front of them and then instruct them to delete and re-write on section/paragraph of the paper. After this has been done, students should go back to their original computers and resubmit their papers. Often the scores will change dramatically after having one section of the paper re-written. This is a good opportunity for your students to see that it will take more than just changing one word to change their scores. They do not have to keep the changes to the paper made by their peers unless they want to.

Offline: Musical chairs can be completed offline as well. Instead of looking at/changing another student's paper online they can look at a printed out hard copy of the paper instead. They can write their re-written section in the margins or on the back of the paper. These changes can be keyed in when computers become available.

Strategy: Choosing the Right Word

Online: As the revision process begins, it is a great opportunity for students not only to revise what they have said, but also how they have said it. When students click on "Reference" from the student composition page, one of their options is the *Word Bank*. The *Word Bank* provides students with quarter to fifty dollar words to substitute in to their paper to create more vivid descriptions, more accurate details, and more originality to the piece of writing.

Offline: From the teacher resource menu you are able to print out the word lists from the *Word Bank*. When working offline print out the *Word Bank* list you'd like students to consider in their revisions and distribute to students. You could also make a bulletin board highlighting important word lists from the *Word Bank*, or put words in a hat and draw out 10 words that your students are to use in their essay. Students will note any changes in word choice on the hard copy of their essay until computers become available to key in the changes.

Strategy: Radical Revisions

Online: With every submitted version of your students' writing saved in the portfolio, MY Access! is the perfect tool for trying something new in your writing. It is comforting to students to know they can always get back to an earlier version of their paper. Therefore instruct your students to radically revise the paper. Have them change the organizational pattern (start at the end), voice (change your paper excited to frightened), introduction (select a new lead sentence to grip the reader), etc. Have them resubmit their papers and they will be surprised to see the scores go way up or way down. This activity really demonstrates how much revision is needed for scores to change.

Offline: Students can do this offline and key in the changes when computers become available. You can also model Radical Revisions with the assistance of your students using an LCD projector. Divide the class up and radically revise a poor example from the model papers. Each group should be assigned a different part of the essay to revise and each group should have a different revision task. Key in the radical revisions and resubmit.

Card Category: Miscellaneous Strategies

Strategies in this Section

The Traveling Paper

Writing Across the Curriculum

Thematic Assessment

Role Reversal

Strategy: The Traveling Paper

Online/Offline: Share the writing experience with another teacher! The traveling paper is an opportunity for one assignment to be shared by teachers of different disciplines. One class focuses on content, the other the writing process. For example, the history teacher assigns the MY Access! prompt on The Bill of Rights and provides important background information on the historical event. When the students reach their English class, they are able to continue working on the paper by typing in MY Access! as well as receiving valuable instruction throughout the writing process. Ultimately, when the paper is due, both teachers will be satisfied with the end result.

Strategy: Writing Across the Curriculum

Online: Enter a school subject, such as “Geography” in the keyword search area to find prompts across the curriculum. If no satisfactory prompts are found, you can create your own prompts in MY Access!.

Offline: Distribute a copy of the prompt catalog to teachers in your school who teach across the curriculum and highlight prompts that deal with subject matter relevant to their classes. Or, create a list of these relevant prompts and distribute to cross curricular teachers instead. All teachers could use some assistance in providing quality writing experiences for their students; the more teachers you are able to include the more frequent and consistent the writing experiences for your students.

Strategy: Thematic Assessment

Online: Find a common thread throughout the units you have planned for the year and make it a theme for a quarter, semester, even the year. Enter the theme as a keyword search and see if there are any prompts that match. If so, consider using the prompt as a benchmark at the beginning of the quarter, semester, or year to measure not only student writing performance but also their understanding of the theme itself. Repeat this benchmark assessment at the end of the quarter, semester, or year. If no satisfactory prompt is found in MY Access!, create your own.

Offline: Searching the prompt catalog for prompts that align with existing curriculum, may not always be successful. However, consider having your students respond to a prompt that deals with themes you’ve been studying instead of a prompt specific to just one story, event, etc. For example, a group of students read the informational text *Phineas Gage* about a man in the mid-1800’s who has an unfortunate accident working on the railroad and is changed forever. There are no prompts about *Phineas Gage* in the MY Access!, however, there is a great prompt called “To Change a Day in Your Life.” Look beyond the obvious in selecting a prompt—think thematically and your options multiply!

Strategy: Role Reversal

Online/Offline: In this scenario, the students assume the role of teacher in deciding what they want to write about. Not only would they be responsible for coming up with the topic and genre, but also, they would have to provide any necessary background information (this could come from Iseek) and their reasons/arguments for wanting to write on the topic. They could do this individually or in small groups and present their ideas to the class for a vote. The winning prompt is then entered in MY Access! and written on by the students.