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2

Engaging in Dialogue

Most people will tell you that soap operas are junk, but they have educational value. They tell you about reality and the problems people have. You learn about how to solve problems from watching even if they aren't your own problems. You get all involved with the people and this is what makes you want to keep watching. What will happen next? In my dormitory, everybody rushes in to watch *General Hospital.* You could hear a pin drop. If Luke and Laura get married, we will have a party. So, you see, soap operas are a way of life.

This essay, written by a college student, leaves its readers unsatisfied. It raises but leaves unanswered many questions: In what sense are soap operas "educational"? What does the writer mean by "reality" and "problems"? What kinds of problems? How does watching soap operas help one learn how to solve problems? Who are Luke and Laura? What does the asserted "educational value" of these problems have to do with their being a "a way of life"? A more experienced writer might have considered these questions in the process of composing and consequently have made the essay more explicit, but inexperienced writers tend not to reflect on their ideas. They do not question their thoughts, and, as a result, their compositions are not fully elaborated.

Experienced writers have developed an inner monitor, another "self," that comments and questions as the writing self sets down ideas, and it is this voice that helps the writer specify and connect his ideas. "The self proposes, the other self considers. The self makes, the other self evaluates. The two selves collaborate: a problem is spotted, discussed, defined; solutions are proposed, rejected, suggested, attempted, tested, discarded, accepted" (Murray, 140). This process resembles conversation, and indeed some theorists have argued that we learn to question our writing selves, or, more fundamentally, that we develop as thinkers by internalizing the linguistic structures of conversation. Although the relationships among thinking, speaking, and writing have not yet been fully and precisely established, what we "experience as reflective thought" seems "related causally to social conversation" (Bruffee, 639).

Why then, since most writers can communicate orally, do inexperienced writers fail to elaborate their ideas? Why, in other words, do they not operate dialogically in composing? John Schafer (27), among others, has suggested that

> conversation dialogues are different from dialogues found in essays. When we converse, or at least when we converse with friends, we need not be explicit because we share a great deal of knowledge with our hearers . . . The monologues students write often have a dialogic quality, but to understand the question and answer or statement and elaboration exchanges set up, we must be able to read the mind of the writer.

Schafer's theory offers only a partial explanation of the soap opera paper's omissions. It may explain why the writer did not identify Luke and Laura: she might have assumed that all of her readers were familiar with the characters in *General Hospital,* or she might have been addressing herself, not an imagined audience. Inexperienced writers often compose associatively, as if writing down their thoughts as they occur. They do not communicate to a reader and are not conscious that their audience may not share the contexts or assumptions underlying the sentences. These writers leave out crucial information, producing prose that is elliptical or "writer-based," as opposed to prose that is directed to a reader, or "reader based" (Flower).

Schafer's explanation is consistent with Flower's characterization of inexperienced writers, but it does not fully account for the writer's failure to explain general concepts such as "educational value" or "problems." His view assumes that the writer has already formulated questions and answers that elaborate the meaning of these terms, but that she has not expressed them all in writing; if one could read her mind, one would find the missing information there, already formed. However, it may be that the author of the soap opera paper does not know precisely what she means by "educational value" or "problems." She may have used these terms uncritically, without perceiving the need to define them for herself. She may have asked herself a preliminary question, such as, "What do I gain from watching these soap operas?" but she probably did not ask the necessary follow-up questions once she decided that the programs have "educational value." In other words, it is likely that, like many inexperienced writers, she has not *sufficiently* developed a dialogic habit of mind.

Some have ascribed this kind of failure to developmental factors; other attribute it to deficient oral skill, and still others to cultural background. (For an overview of these perspectives, see Kroll and Schafer.) Whatever the cause, the inexperienced writer's "other self" exists, if at all, in a nascent state, and its growth must be stimulated if the writer is to mature. The tutorial conference is an ideal format for such stimulation because it is truly dialogical, consisting of two speakers, unlike a class, where the writer is not the sole respondent. By commenting and asking questions, a tutor can temporarily stand in as an inexperienced writer's questioning self. The writer hears and responds to the kinds of questions he should be asking himself. The conversation provides practice that will help him internalize dialogic linguistic structures and thereby develop his critical faculties. Conversation, then, is a preparation for independent thinking and writing. It is the "major means of developing language and thought" (Moffett, 73).

While such dialogue can indirectly make writers aware of the necessity to reflect on their ideas, tutors can make this point more explicitly by calling attention to the kinds of questions they have raised in a session. Tutors can also suggest that writers keep double-entry notebooks (Berthoff) in which they first write freely on one side and then comment on their ideas on the other. Such an exercise shifts the dialogic activity from speaking to writing. Just as a tutor's questions foster critical thinking, they make writers audience-aware and can help them transform "writer-based" prose into "reader-based" prose, writing that is purposefully directed to an audience. By asking for further definition or information, tutors can help writers begin to gauge what their readers need to know.

What sorts of observations and queries will, then, promote genuine dialogue between tutor and writer? What can a tutor say to help a writer qualify, alter, or expand an idea? If a tutor stands in for a writer's "other self," it might seem to follow that she should make the same kinds of comments that she would make about her own writing. Such remarks, however, tend to be too abstract and too technical for a basic writer, who lacks academic vocabulary, critical skills and an understanding of composing tasks. Tutors, after all, are usually strong writers, and if they comment as if advising themselves, they may take for granted the very skills and concepts most difficult for basic writers to master.

Consider the following example: Genevieve, a college student in a basic writing course, is asked to write a description of a person she knows well. Before handing her paper in, she shows it to her tutor, Gail, who reads what is reproduced below:

> My friend Stella would do anything for you, she is always there when you need her and listens to you. We have been good friends for years. She got married when we finished high school and now she has a darling baby boy that looks just like her. She says she wants to come to college once the baby is a little older. I hope she comes soon so we can take classes together like we did when we were little.

GAIL: This seems like a good beginning, but it needs to be more developed.

GENEVIEVE: Uh-huh. So what do you mean? Should I start over?

GAIL: No, I didn't say that. I just meant you need to say more, you know, give more details.

GENEVIEVE: You mean, hmm, like what?

GAIL: Like develop the idea that she would do anything for you.

GENEVIEVE: Well, she would. I mean, she's that way. What do you want me to say?

➤ Before reading further, write a critique of Gail's approach: What is she doing well? What should she have done differently? What else might she have done to help Genevieve expand her essay?

The Dangers of Descriptive Responses

Genevieve's paper does suffer from a lack of "development," but because she is an inexperienced writer, she does not know what that term means or what she ought to do to "develop" her paper. Gail fails to see that Genevieve is unaccustomed to talking about writing, anybody's writing, and that she is unfamiliar with vocabulary used to name or describe elements of composition. Specifically, Genevieve does not realize that in this context, "develop" means that she should add examples or specific details that illustrate her general assertions, but when Gail tells her this she still does not know how to generate them. She would be less confused and would offer more if Gail asked the kinds of questions that would produce the desired "text." Consider this alternate conversation:

GAIL: I think you have a good beginning here, but I'd really like to know more about your friend. You said that she'd do anything for you. What sort of thing did you have in mind? What special things has she done to make you think so?

GENEVIEVE: Well, um, like, maybe it sounds silly, but once my car died and it was winter and it was cold and I called her from the garage. She came right over and picked me up. It was late and she was probably in the middle of dinner and she had to come a long way. But she never thought about it. She just came.

GAIL: Great. That helps me understand what you meant. How about writing that down and using it as an example in the paper? It makes your general idea that she would do anything for her friends a lot clearer.

Instead of abstractly describing the writer's problem as lack of "development," Gail, in this version, asks a direct question that elicits the missing information. Only when Genevieve has supplied it, has said what her friend did, does the tutor use terms that describe what has been accomplished ("example" of "general idea"). To inexperienced writers, such terms mean most when applied, as in this case, to an actual text. Genevieve is now apt to grasp and to use these terms herself because she can see to what they refer. Gail, having called what the writer has supplied an "example," could then ask her to find other places in the essay that could be similarly expanded. With some practice, Genevieve should be able to check her own work to see if she needs to illustrate at any point.

There are really two adjustments in tutoring strategy here: one is that the tutor has turned statements into questions, and the other, that she has phrased them in ordinary, accessible language. For inexperienced writers like Genevieve, the specialized, "academic" language that describes elements of composition is too vague and too intimidating to be useful, but tutors can phrase the same concepts in everyday vocabulary. For example,

ACADEMIC TERMINOLOGY	EVERYDAY LANGUAGE
How can you illustrate your topic sentence?	Why do you think this? What makes you think so? Where have you seen this?
What transitional device could link these two ideas?	What's the connection between this and that? Why did you say this before that?
What is your thesis?	What's the main idea you want me to come away with? What is it that you want me to think or do on the basis of what you said?

The Dangers of Evaluation and General Prescription

Just as descriptive commentary can baffle novice writers, general evaluations can mystify and often upset them. Here is another tutor's response to Genevieve's paper. After you read it, write down some specific suggestions for the tutor. In what ways might he have been more helpful?

SEAN: I'm sure your friend is a nice person, but this paper isn't good, first of all, because it's so general, and then your topics keep jumping around. You need to organize this and make it cohere, stick together.

GENEVIEVE: Oh.

SEAN: To start with, you're going to have to give more details. She could be anybody. You didn't make her special, different from anybody else.

GENEVIEVE: I really worked hard on this. I guess I just don't know how to write.

SEAN: Well, don't be so general. Give details.

GENEVIEVE: I don't know. Maybe I should choose someone else to write about.

SEAN: I think you can write about Stella, but just be more specific, for openers.

Sean begins with a summary of the paper's shortcomings. Unfortunately, this demoralizes Genevieve, who is made to feel that her efforts were worthless and that her essay does not merit revision. Sean may have felt that Genevieve should be told what is wrong in order that she improve, but he overwhelms her with criticisms and confuses her with vague prescriptions. The more constructive approach in this situation is not, however, to ignore the writer's problems in order to spare her feelings. Rather, it is to focus more clearly and ask neutral questions instead of offering negative assessments and general advice.

Sean does not seem to realize that several of the problems about which he has commented (shifting from subtopic to subtopic rapidly, using unsupported generalizations) emanate from the same source. If he had assessed her essay more carefully, he might have focused the discussion on that issue, and, instead of criticizing, he might have asked commonsense, specific questions, the kinds of questions she should be asking herself in order to generate the missing material.

A tutor must almost necessarily evaluate a writer's work (as we pointed out in Chapter 1) in order to decide how to proceed. However, these judgments should not be voiced; rather, they should be converted into questions that educe from the writers whatever material is required. When you speak as a respondent rather than as a critic, novice writers gain a better sense of what needs to be done. They also feel less negative about themselves and their writing than if they feel judged. More practiced writers and writers with high self-esteem may benefit from the kind of evaluation or prescription that a tutor might make about his own writing, but such comments are usually counterproductive when addressed to basic writers.

Pace and Tone of Questions

If a tutor's questions are to be effective, they must be carefully timed and delivered. How would Genevieve react if a tutor trying to help her add details said, "When you said that Stella would do anything for you, what'd you mean by anything? I mean really anything, or what? And would she do this for everybody or just a close friend like you? And does that have anything to do with the sentence that says you've been best friends for years?"

Genevieve would probably feel beset by this volley of questions. Which is she to answer first? How is she to remember them all? A writer who feels cross-examined is likely to freeze or to become flustered. To avoid this, you can pace questions slowly and can add encouraging "um hums" and nods that cue the writer to continue. You can also consciously modulate your tone of voice so that your questions do not sound inquisitorial or hostile. A question such as "What do you mean by that?" can be encouraging or intimidating depending on the way it is voiced and what gestures accompany it. Such subtleties of delivery can greatly affect a writer's response, so you might want to use a tape recorder in practice sessions in order to adjust the pitch, volume, and intonation of your questions.

Using Open-Ended Questions, Repetition, and Summary

Our assertion that questions draw better responses from inexperienced writers than decriptions and evaluations is not without qualification. As we have already indicated, the questions must be well paced and worded in language comprehensible to the writer. Other aspects of phrasing must be considered, as well, if tutorial dialogues are to help writers expand and qualify their ideas. Consider the following example: Al, a student in a developmental writing course, has to write about a "personal experience you've had with pollution." He tells his tutor, Stan, that he does not know what to write. Stan, in the dialogue below, tries to help Al generate some ideas.

STAN: Well, there are many kinds of pollution. There's air and water, for instance. How about air pollution?

AL: Yeah. I read in the paper that there's a lot of it, but I don't know much about it.

STAN: Well, think about your experience. How about telling about what you're aware of in school. I notice that it's real stuffy in here. Very little air circulates. What else do you notice?

AL: The smoke?

STAN: Sure, And how about all the stuff from the chem labs? What does that smell like? It bothers my eyes. How about you?

Stan is certainly wise to steer Al toward writing about his own "experience," instead of summarizing newspaper accounts. However, Stan's comments and questions are so directive that they control Al's responses. It is the tutor here and not the writer who decides the subject (which kind of pollution) and even what details are to be included (poor ventilation and smells from the chem lab): Presumably, Stan assumes that his questions will prompt Al to begin thinking, that they will give Al some ideas to start with, but this strategy may make Al feel even less capable of generating material because Stan does it so well. Such a diffident writer could become dependent on the tutor for ideas instead of creating his own. (A person who sees writing as an unpleasant or useless requirement might even take advantage of a tutor like Stan by deliberately letting him do all the work.) Had Al been given the opportunity, he might have chosen a different kind of pollution and might have recalled different sensory details from those Stan suggests. A more open-ended approach, as indicated below, would allow the writer to choose his own topic, explore it more freely, and create original responses:

STAN: When you hear of the word "pollution," what do you think of?

AL: Well, I read an article on air pollution in the newspaper.

STAN: Do you have any direct experience with air pollution, anything you can remember?

AL: I don't think so. Let me see. Well, I come to school on the subway. It gets pretty foul in the trains and in the stations.

STAN: OK. I'm not sure what you mean by foul. Can you tell me by talking about what you see and smell?

AL: There's an awful lot of garbage everywhere. Paper on the trains and in the stations, candy wrappers, cigarettes, and God, those graffiti, I mean, they're really gross. Maybe I can't call them pollution, but they really are, sort of.

STAN: Go on.

AL: Well, pollution is a dirtying-up, isn't it? and those graffiti do that in a number of ways—real dirt and dirty words.

STAN: Yes, that's a neat idea.

AL: And then there's all that garbage.

STAN: That garbage?

AL: You've seen it. Like I said, the candy wrappers, the discarded newspapers, butts, I even slipped on somebody's spit once.

STAN: OK, great. You've mentioned a lot of stuff here, the grafffiti, the paper, the saliva, and you said that polluting means dirtying. It's good that you are starting to define it.

AL: It's . . . *[pause]* what I'm describing isn't really what experts mean when they talk about stuff, like, you know, industrial waste in the water or in the air, but it's what I'm most aware of.

STAN: That'd be a good thing to say in your paper.

. . .

The questions in the second version are quite differently phrased. They invite the writer to describe his own experience, not one that is selected for him, and to provide his own details rather than to amplify those suggested by the tutor. In this dialogue, the tutor occasionally elicits detail by repeating some of the writer's phrases as questions that ask for specification ("That garbage?" line 17, for example). Questions like, "When you hear the word 'pollution,' what do you think of?" also call for specification without controlling the content of the response. Because the tutor volunteers less, the writer offers more. As a result, the essay he writes will more truly be the product of his thinking, not his tutor's.

Furthermore, the tutor's comments allow Al's thoughts to move freely, so much so that he changes his topic. He begins talking about air pollution, but his recollections do not, as he realizes, fit that category. Instead of forcing him back to his original topic, Stan wisely lets him talk his way through to a different one and calls attention to this shift by summarizing what Al has said. This makes Al think some more about how to name or define the kind of pollution he has experienced.

A paraphrase or summary is distinguishable from and preferable to the kind of remark that reinterprets or adds to the writer's material. For instance, Stan might have said to Al, "You seem to be saying that there are figurative forms of pollution." But this does the writer's thinking for him. Even if a more sophisticated writer's "other self" might offer such a comment, it is best to let the writer add it himself. Stan could have *asked* Al to find a name for the pollution of words. The tutor, then, is a stand-in for the writer's other self only insofar as he questions or summarizes what the writer has generated. The tutor is not the answering self, in other words.

A tutor's paraphrase or summary offers a writer an opportunity to reflect on what he has said so far. This reflection is similar to what writers do as they revise drafts, and the discussion between tutor and writer is a precursor of that activity, particularly if the tutor jots down what the writer says or instructs the writer to take notes as she talks.

The kinds of questions and responses that encourage a writer to remark on her preliminary ideas (be they oral or written) include the following:

GENERAL AMPLIFICATION:	Tell me more about
CLARIFICATION:	I'm not sure what you mean by———; would you explain that a bit?
SPECIFICATION:	Which one did you have in mind? Where did that happen? For example? Like what? Would you give an instance, please?
QUALIFICATION:	What exceptions can you think of? When was this not true?
PARAPHRASE OR SUMMARY:	Let me see if I can sum up what you just said: In this paragraph, you said that You told me that

Some of these forms can be combined: "Earlier you said that Macbeth's problem is his ambition. Here you say that Lady Macbeth wants her husband to succeed. What is the connection between these ideas?" Here, summary is combined with a call for specification.

Open-ended questions, then, spur a writer to think independently. They also invite him to talk and write more extensively. A tutor's careless phrasing can restrict not only what the writer discusses but also how much he says. Consider the example below, in which Ann, the tutor, tries to help Ron generate some ideas for the "describe your experience with pollution" assignment.

ANN: You said you wanted to talk about water pollution in your area?
RON: Yes. I live four blocks from the bay, and there's a marina there that messes up everything.
ANN: Do you mean that the boats dump their waste in the water?
RON: Yes.
ANN: Do the people also throw their garbage overboard?
RON: Yes.
ANN: Has the marine life been affected?
RON: Yes it has. You can't fish anymore. It's not safe.

In an attempt to get Ron to specify what "messing up" the bay means, Ann asks a series of questions that call for a yes-or-no answer. These are problematic in two ways: first, they do not require elaboration, and second, the questions supply the details for the writer instead of eliciting them. When Ann asks, "Do you mean that the boats dump their waste?" she seems to be calling for specification or qualification but actually restricts the discussion to what *she* imagines "messing up" means. Unfortunately, in this dialogue, it is Ann, not Ron, who is doing most of the work because of the way she has phrased her questions. Before reading further, write an improved version of the dialogue between Ann and Ron, one in which Ann invites the writer to speak with greater freedom and at greater length.

. . .

If Ann had asked, "What do you mean when you say the harbor is messed up?" she would have given Ron the opportunity to speak more spontaneously and volubly. Even if Ron were to respond vaguely, for instance, if he said, "Oh, you know, people mess it up," Ann could ask a specifying question that capitalizes on his addition of "people" as the malefactors. Basing her question on his response, she might say, "Which people do you mean?" She would than be taking her lead from him, not vice versa.

A tutor's questions, then, should derive from the context created by the writer, so a tutor must necessarily listen carefully and make judicious use of the writer's vocabulary. Considerable time and practice may be required before a tutor acquires skill in questioning, but the cultivation of this art is essential for good tutoring, tutoring that enables a writer to formulate new ideas.

Dealing with Errors of Fact or Logic

So far, we have mentioned ways in which tutors can assist writers to amplify their ideas. Their "errors" are errors of omission, not errors of fact or logic. But when a writer does make false or poorly reasoned statements, the same kind of questioning that we have already recommended is appropriate. Evaluative remarks are even more destructive in this context. Comments from a tutor such as "That's ridiculous!" or "Where in the world did you get that idea?" or "Oh, come now, you can do better than that," only humiliate and offend. Instead of berating the student or the essay, a tutor can ask questions or make comments that help a writer test his assumptions or conclusions. "What evidence can you provide to support that idea?" or "Tell me why you think so?" are more promising openings for discussions in which the tutor can help the writer correct her own errors.

It is important, however, that you make certain that these questions are not covert evaluations, that instead they ask the writer for arguments or evidence so that you can help the writer detect logical fallacies or misstatements. Let us say a writer has brought to a tutoring session an interpretation of Matthew Arnold's celebrated poem, "Dover Beach." The writer asserts that the speaker of the poem is in France, standing at a seaview window and addressing his loved one in England. The speaker, however, is actually in Dover, as the title implies, but the tutor wants neither to hurt the writer's feelings nor to give away the answer that the writer should discover for himself.

TUTOR: You say the speaker is in France. Are you sure?

WRITER: *[blushing]* No, I guess not. *[pause]*

TUTOR: Well, where is he?

WRITER: I don't know. I thought he was sort of composing out loud.

The question, "Are you sure?" is rhetorical, just another way of saying, "You're wrong." The writer senses this and changes his position only because he has picked up the cue, not because he has thought the matter through. He says what he thinks the tutor wants him to say and does not question his original response. Instead, the tutor could have said, "I can see why you think the speaker is at the window, but can you tell me why you think he's in France?" This would have made the writer retrace his thinking, and in the process he might have found that his evidence did not hold up or simply was not there. The tutor could ask more questions that help the writer offer a new interpretation. Questions like "Are you sure?" "Is it really?" and "Don't you think that . . . ?" are irritating because the phrasing is disingenuous, and the tutor sounds condescending if not sarcastic. If a writer has made an obvious mistake, it might be kinder and more productive to point out the error, gently, than to humiliate her with these nonquestions. A tutor could let the writer know that she must rethink an issue and then reopen the questioning, for example, "I think you're going to have trouble substantiating that one. Perhaps if you told me what made you think so, we could go back and check the text." This approach would probably be a less embarrassing way of alerting a writer that she has erred than the rhetorical question or a confrontive remark like, "Well, then why is the poem called 'Dover Beach'?" which would probably make the writer feel quite stupid. Asking for substantiation in a nonthreatening way ("Could you explain why you think the speaker is in France?" or "What details in the text made you think the speaker was in France?") requires the writer to test her own hypotheses, to argue with herself, in effect, and thus to engage in that crucial dialogue that is basic to good thinking and good writing. If the tutor points out the right answer, if the tutor makes the correction for the writer, what has the writer learned? The right answer, but not how to determine it.

There are situations, however, in which a writer has no way of finding an answer during a conference. In such cases, a tutor can identify an issue requiring clarification and can suggest that the writer do some research before turning the paper in.

While the process of asking questions and waiting for a writer to offer a "correct" response can be tedious and difficult, it accomplishes a good deal more than telling a writer what to think or criticizing him for being wrong. We recommend questioning over evaluating, because questioning encourages writers to think dialogically and, ultimately, independently. While this chapter has introduced general strategies for engaging students in dialogue, the following two chapters discuss more formal ways in which tutors can help writers learn how to generate and shape ideas.

Summary

Inexperienced writers tend not to reflect on their ideas. They do not question their thoughts, and, as a result, their compositions are not fully elaborated. Experienced writers, by contrast, have developed another "self" that questions and comments as the writing self sets down ideas. When tutors engage in dialogue with writers, they temporarily stand in for the writer's "other self" and help writers develop the dialogical habit of mind that is necessary to good writing.

You can help a writer elaborate and refine ideas by asking thoughtful, specific questions. This practice is preferable to supplying answers, offering evaluations, or giving general advice, because it encourages the writer to do the thinking. Questions should be slowly paced and modulated in tone to prevent a writer from feeling interrogated. Questions that call for amplification, specification, or qualification help a writer expand preliminary ideas. Questions that encourage a writer to test her hypotheses and examine her evidence help her correct erroneous or illogical statements. Your questions will be more helpful to an inexperienced writer if they are phrased in everyday language rather than in technical, academic terminology. They will help a writer think freely, independently, and critically if they are open-ended and carefully phrased to avoid embarrassing a writer, controlling her responses, or elaborating for her. You can also summarize a writer's ideas to provide the opportunity for her to reflect and comment on them.

SUGGESTIONS FOR JOURNAL ENTRIES

1. Observe yourself as a writer. Do you tend to "talk to yourself" as you write, or do you have a different equivalent of the writer's "other self" described by Murray? What sort of process do you generally follow as you write? What works well? What does not? What procedures that you use might be helpful to the writers with whom you work?
2. If you are meeting with writers similar to those described in this chapter, describe your conferences. How have you helped the writers elaborate on their ideas? What

worked? What did not? What would you do differently next time? If you are working with more advanced writers, comment on the extent to which the strategies suggested in this chapter are helpful to them.

3. Try writing a "double-entry" journal of the sort described on page 29. In the left-hand column, write freely your reactions to the ideas presented in the chapter. Then, on the right-hand side, comment on your comments. This is another way to set up a dialogue with yourself as a writer and a useful exercise for the writer with whom you work.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER WRITING

1. Transform comments:

Turn the following evaluations into questions that will elicit a useful revision:

- **a.** This is too wordy.
- **b.** This doesn't have enough reasons.
- **c.** This isn't clear.
- **d.** This doesn't tell me what the outcome was.
- **e.** This fails to establish any relationship between point A and point B.
- **f.** This language is too general (too specific).

Rephrase the following questions by substituting everyday language for technical or abstract vocabulary:

- **a.** What substantiation can you provide for this point?
- **b.** How can you restructure this argument?
- **c.** What devices of cohesion could connect the ideas in this paragraph?
- **d.** What qualification can be made about this point?

2. Below you will find three student papers that require elaboration. Describe how you would draw further information from the writers or write an imaginary dialogue between you and each writer.

A. ASSIGNMENT: *Description of an experience that is "educational" or that has changed the way you think*

My greatest enjoyment is sitting and reading a newspaper. It is one pleasure I have and when people at social gatherings utter these words, "Don't believe what you read in the newspaper" I quietly think of all the knowledge I have acquired from this very hobby.

A crossword offers a challenge that could not be compared to any other hobby. It demands full concentration yet provides entertainment at the same time.

The real estate section, cars and things offered for sale section, are really interesting when I scan over them and sometimes I try to imagine the people that are offering these items for sale.

A home and garden section in any newspaper provides a world of information for those that are interested in that sort of thing.

Sports sections in most papers are very informative. This section can be addictive to those who are sport buffs.

If one ever sat and read the news they could certainly say they are getting a bargain in these inflationary times.

B. ASSIGNMENT: *Description of a place*

1. The Town Pier, the center of harbor activity, is overlooked by both the clipper Ship Hotel and Front Street, the business district of town. One of the main events that goes on daily at the Pier is the unloading of fish from the various fishing vessels. Another purpose the Pier suits is as an office for the Harbor Master who regulates everything from boat moorings to clamming licenses. A third example of the usefulness of the Town Pier is that it serves as a docking place for visiting seamen and also for the Town's boat owners' dinghies.

C. ASSIGNMENT: *Two things mistakenly believed to be unlike (500 words)*

The Armed Services and the Universities

I believe that the Armed Services and the colleges are alike in many aspects in certain areas. Taken my discussion from my friend who joined the Navy the same time I started school. We write back to each other. He explains how Navy life is to me, I in turn explain college life to him. What I found to my surprise that both of our lives are similar in many points.

I found that we both found a new life better than what we were doing before. We both found something that we want to do for the time being. I like what I'm doing now, and he also like what he's doing.

We both gained a lot of self-confidence in ourselves. To do what I must do for self-preservation. We both understand to make our own decision in life. Too stand-up on our two feet. We both learn what life is all about, we grew up alot. We both can talk intelligable on certain subject. We can understand ourselves and other better. I feel know that I help someone instead of somebody helping me.

We both learn discipline, conformity, being on time and being responsible young adults. We learn it but wanting to change and bettering ourselfs. It's better being this way in having alwas having something to do and keeping ourselves occupied.

It awaken both of us, instead of given up in life, we found what was wrong with both of us and conquered the problem.

My friend is presently attending school in the Navy. He is studying for a electrian Mate. When he get out he wants to become a electrician. I doing the same thing with my future, and seeking to gain my career in life.

We both have alot of time to party and do the things just to give us pleasure and enjoyment. I'll be traveling soon to a new school. Living in a new environment. Learning new things, seeing new things and trying to my life a little easier by learning. Also my friend will be doing the same thing only he will be doing on a ship.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASS ACTIVITIES

1. Using the sample papers provided in "Suggestions for Further Writing," do some role-playing. Ask your partner to comment on the usefulness of the questions you ask, their pacing, phrasing, and delivery.

2. Using situations you have encountered in tutoring, do some role-playing. If you try to imitate the behavior of someone you had difficulty working with, you may get ideas from your fellow tutors.

3. Bring in assignments that writers have shown you. Use them in role-playing exercises in which the "writer" needs to get started.

4. Bring in copies of initial drafts written by writers with whom you have worked. Describe how you help each writer; if you have access to the final versions, duplicate and bring them in. Or, use the first drafts for role-playing exercises in which you assume the writer's role and let your classmates practice tutoring.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

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Wilson, John. *Thinking with Concepts.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971.

Wood, David, J. S. Bruner, and Gail Ross. "The Role of Tutoring in Problem-Solving." *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 17(2) (1976): 89–100.

PART TWO

Composing Processes: Generating Ideas