
Serving the Real Purpose of Education

(Previously: How Preschool (and the Rest of Education) Can Save the World)

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1) The Purpose of Education What skills do people need in today's world?

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2) Core Executive Functions (write them to remember them)

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3) List activities or policies that improve your learners' personality traits, grit, emotional intelligence, etc.

(example: "It Changed my Life" from *Writing from Within 2*)

activity	knowledge	process

4) Make an action plan for something new you could do to improve the above.

5) Three Core Executive Functions, from which higher executive functions, such as reasoning, problem solving, and planning are built.

1) Inhibitory control

Inhibitory control is the ability to control one's attention, behavior, thoughts, and emotions to override a strong internal predisposition or external lure, and instead do what is more appropriate or needed. Having the presence of mind to wait before speaking or acting so we give a considered response rather than an impulsive one, can save us from making fools of ourselves and help us demonstrate the best of which we are capable. Self-control is the aspect of inhibitory control that involves resisting temptations and not acting impulsively.

2) Working memory (& attention focusing)

Working memory (WM) involves holding information in mind and mentally working with it. Translating instructions into action plans requires WM, as does updating your thinking or planning, mentally re-ordering a to-do list, considering alternatives, or relating one piece of information to another. WM is critical for making sense of anything that unfolds over time, for that always requires holding in mind what happened earlier and relating that to what is happening now. Thus, WM is necessary for making sense of spoken or written language...

3) Cognitive flexibility

Cognitive flexibility builds on the other two and comes in much later in development. One aspect of cognitive flexibility is the ability to change perspectives—either spatially (e.g., “How would this look if viewed from a different direction?”) or interpersonally (e.g., “Let me see if I can see this issue from your perspective.”). To change perspectives, we need to inhibit (or deactivate) our previous perspective and load a different perspective into WM. Another aspect of cognitive flexibility involves changing how we think about something (“thinking outside the box”).

Diamond, A. (2014). Understanding executive functions: What helps or hinders them and how executive functions and language development mutually support one another. The International Dyslexia Association: Perspectives on Language and Literacy, Spring 2014, 7-11

6) Activities scientifically shown to enhance cognitive function in children:

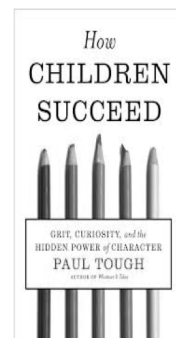
Tools of the Mind
Cogmed computer-based training
Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS)
Chicago School Readiness Project (CSRP)
Chess, Taekwondo, Dance

Diamond, A. (2012). Activities and programs that improve children's executive functions. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 21, 335-341. NIHMS602709

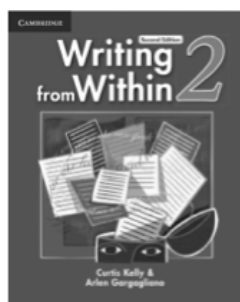
7) Suggested listening & reading

Listening: NPR's Planet Money, Why Preschool can Save the World
<http://www.npr.org/blogs/money/2012/10/19/163256866/episode-411-why-preschool-can-save-the-world>

Reading: How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character – Paul Tough



From *Writing from Within 2*: Writing about something that changed your life.



Unit

5

It changed my life!

1 Brainstorming

- What are some important events that you have experienced during your life? Brainstorm for five minutes and make a list.

Important events
my son's birth
winning a scholarship



6 Analyzing a model

- You are going to write a composition with an introductory paragraph. First, read this example composition and follow the instructions to the right.

An Important Day

Have you ever thought that you knew someone very well and then found out that you hardly knew that person at all? This happened to me with my father. I thought I knew him well, until one day something happened that changed my attitude toward him. Let me explain how I used to see my father, what happened, and how it changed me.

As a child, I was always closer to my mother than to my father. As is traditional in Japanese culture, it was my mother's job to take care of me. She fed me and played with me every day. On the other hand, I hardly ever saw my father. He would often work until late at night, and he didn't talk to me much when he came home. He got angry at me sometimes, too. I thought he was a tough, cold man, and I was a little afraid of him.

Then one day, my mother got sick. My father came home from work to take care of her and told me to go to the drugstore to get some medicine. When I returned, I took the medicine to my parents' bedroom. I looked in quietly before entering and saw my mother lying down with her eyes half-closed. My father was kneeling on the floor next to her, slowly and patiently feeding her some soup. When she finished, he put the bowl down and softly kissed her forehead. On that day, I realized that my father was really a kind and loving man.

From then on, I saw only kindness and caring in my father's eyes. As a result, I learned two important things. First, I learned that even though my father seemed rough, he was a kind man. Second, I learned that one must be very careful not to judge people. A person might look hard on the outside but be quite different on the inside.

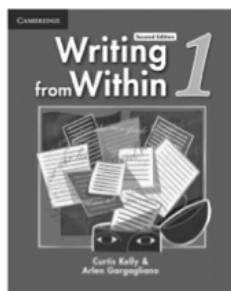
a The first paragraph is the introductory paragraph. Circle the attention getter, underline the main idea, and put a box around the guide.

b In which paragraphs do these events happen? Write 2, 3, or 4:

- _____ the event (what happened)
- _____ after the event (how I changed)
- _____ before the event (what I used to be like)

- Compare answers with a partner.

From *Writing from Within 1*: Writing about something you are sorry about.

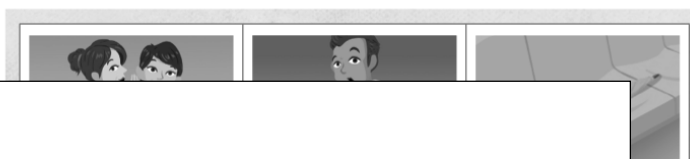


Unit 12

Lessons learned

1 Brainstorming

- 1 Look at actions people sometimes do that they regret or feel sorry about. Check (✓) the ones that you dislike the most.



6 Analyzing a model

- 1 You are going to write about something you did that you regret and what you learned. First, read about Jenny's regret and follow the instructions below.

Something I Feel Bad About

I feel bad that I lost my friend Ashley's scarf. Ashley had a very beautiful and expensive scarf that she loved. She let me borrow it one day, and I promised to be careful with it. I wore it all day. It was very nice. Then I took it off while I was going home on the train. I left it on the train by mistake. I noticed that it was missing when I got home, so I called the station, but it was gone. I felt very guilty. I told Ashley that I was very sorry. I know that she was sad, but she smiled and said she wasn't angry.

That experience taught me two things. First, I learned that I must be more careful with other people's things. Second, Ashley taught me what true friendship is. She decided that our friendship was more important than getting angry at me. I am lucky to have a friend like her.

- a Underline the topic sentence in each paragraph.

- b Order the events. Write numbers (1–5) next to the events

- 1 I borrowed a scarf.
- ___ I apologized.
- ___ Ashley didn't get angry.
- ___ I left it on the train.
- ___ I learned a lesson.

- c Put a star (*) above five words in the first paragraph that describe feelings.

- d Circle the lessons that Jenny learned.

- 2 Compare answers with a partner.

