



HELPING STUDENTS WRITE LIKE THINKERS

JO MORRIS: THE WRITE COACH



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NCEA PE Writing Support: 91328 Strategies

5 Minute Write

A short, timed writing task that students complete in response to a specific prompt. The aim is practice, not perfection.

Typically:

- at the start or end of a lesson
- after a practical activity
- to reflect on or consolidate learning

Why does it work in P.E.?

- Builds writing stamina without overwhelming students.
- Encourages personal reflection and connection between theory and practice.
- Helps show up misconceptions or gaps in understanding.
- Provides material for deeper writing later (e., paragraphs, reports)

Examples:

- What principle helped you most today, and why?
- "How did feedback help you adjust your technique?"
- "What stage of learning are you in with this skill? Give evidence."

Word Choice (Diction)

Teach the deliberate use of connecting words and phrases, and words that show thinking and judgement. These words elevate a response by showing perception, and the relationship between data and concepts.

Connecting words (conjunctions and prepositions, to be technical!):

And, but, so, since, when, because, despite (this), however, instead of...

In, between, over, under, through, around...

Judgement Words

However, importantly, better, most, significantly, although, I decided...

Sentence Starters for Critical Thinking

Use sentence starters to support writing tasks. They encourage deeper analysis and reflection.

Examples:

- This principle was crucial because...
- Compared to previous attempts, this time I...
- A limitation of this method was...
- This shows that...
- As a result of applying [principle], I noticed...
- One key factor that contributed to this was...
- This supports the idea that...
- If I did this again, I would...
- The most effective approach was... because...



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Writing Scaffold for Excellence-Level Response

This structure helps students build logical, evidence-based, and reflective responses.

Notes

- Don't fall into the trap of making them stick exactly to the scaffold - allow for individual variation, especially by those excellence students!
- The following example shouldn't be taken as gospel – amend/adapt for your own purposes/standard/context.
- In practice, this would benefit from a word limit for each section. Word limits help guide students as to the relative importance of each section.

Example:

1. Introduce the Context

- Briefly describe the skill or training programme.
- State the relevant biophysical principle.

2. Explain the Principle in Detail

- Define it in your own words.
- Include technical vocabulary.

3. Apply the Principle to Your Situation

- Describe what you did, and how the principle was used.
- Be specific: times, drills, stages of learning.

4. Analyse the Impact

- What changed? How do you know? Use evidence (performance, feedback, observations).

5. Evaluate

- What worked well? What didn't? Why?
- Would you do anything differently?
- What did you learn about the principle or about yourself as a learner/performer?



BLOOM'S TAXONOMY



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Using AI Generated Writing

Use AI as a tool to promote thinking. Get it to generate evaluate questions, sentence starters and samples for student analysis.

Activity

Highlight and annotate the sample paragraph to identify observation, connecting words, judgment words and technical language.

Discussion

What do you notice about the language features used in this paragraph?

Sample AI Generated Responses

AI Generated Excellence-Level Writing Example (AS91328)

****Context**:** Student learning how to improve their volleyball serve.

To improve my overhand volleyball serve, I applied the biophysical principle of motor learning, specifically the use of feedback and stages of learning. In the cognitive stage, I needed to consciously think about each part of the serve, including my toss and contact point. My teacher provided external feedback, which helped correct my toss height. I also used video recordings to give myself visual feedback.

As I progressed to the associative stage, I started to self-correct based on how the serve felt and where the ball landed. For example, when the ball consistently hit the net, I realised my contact point was too low and adjusted it.

This shows that motor learning principles supported my development by helping me identify specific technical adjustments. Over two weeks, my serve success rate improved from 30% to 75%. A limitation of external feedback was that I sometimes relied on it instead of developing my own awareness. Next time, I would build in more peer and self-assessment early on.

Overall, this process showed me that different types of feedback are effective at different stages of learning.

AI Generated Achieved-Level Writing Example (AS91328)

****Context**:** Student learning how to improve their volleyball serve.

I was learning to do an overhand volleyball serve. I practiced by doing lots of repetitions and getting advice from my teacher. They told me to throw the ball higher and follow through more. I tried to do this each time I served. I also watched a video of myself and saw that my arm wasn't straight when I hit the ball, so I fixed that.

This helped me get better because I started getting more serves over the net. I think feedback helped me know what I was doing wrong. I learned that practicing and getting told what to do helped me improve my serve.



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