



COLLABORATIVE WRITING TECHNOLOGIES FOR THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

A Writing in the Disciplines at Dawson
production

MENU

Key principles

What the research says

Google Docs example

Miro examples

Pro Tips

Play with Miro

Next steps?

KEY PRINCIPLES

Group work: have students produce an artifact

Feedback/course correction: Can be given in a “hands-off” way that doesn’t disrupt flow

Continuity of activities and assignments: Use class time to create classroom artifacts/reference material

Technology: easy of use, accessibility, saving in the cloud

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

- “One of the best ways to coach critical thinking—and to promote the kind of productive talk that leads to thoughtful and elaborated writing—is **goal-directed** use of small groups” (Bean & Melzer 159)

Once students understand the task, the teacher lets the students work on the problem independently. Some teachers believe it is best to leave the room entirely and not to return until it is time for the plenary session. This strategy signals to students their autonomy from the instructor and their responsibility for forming their own knowledge communities. Other teachers like to wander from group to group as a resource person or to eavesdrop from a corner of the room. Dan asks groups to post to the discussion

(Bean & Melzer 164)

RESEARCH, CONTINUED

- “The best small-group tasks are clearly related to some ongoing purpose that the teacher should make plain to the students” (Bean & Melzer 165)

CONVENTIONAL RHYTHM OF GROUP WORK

1. The teacher presents a disciplinary problem requiring critical thinking—typically resulting in a claim with argument (rather than a “right answer”) or in a group-formulated research question or interpretive question.
2. Students work together in small groups to reach consensus on a “best solution” to the problem.
3. In a plenary session, group recorders present their group’s solutions and arguments.
4. As the reports unfold, the teacher coaches students’ performance by pointing out strengths and weaknesses in the solutions, showing how the alternative claims or questions emerging from groups’ often

parallel ongoing disciplinary debates, and otherwise offering constructive critiques.

5. At the end, the teacher may also explain how this problem would be (or has been) approached by experts.

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GOOGLE DOCS EXAMPLE

Writing a paragraph in response to a
poem exercise





MIRO EXAMPLES

- Great way for teacher to annotate in front of class, like transparencies, but much better
- Great way for students to annotate a text together
- Great for sketching/storyboarding
- Great for multimedia/photos
- Great for making outlines, like this one, or this one
- You could even create a whole essay, poster, etc. on it.

A close-up photograph of a golf club head and a golf ball on a green field. The club head is on the left, and the golf ball is on the right, resting on a white tee. In the background, a red flag is visible on a pole, and the sky is blue with some clouds. The text "DEMONSTRATION & PRO TIPS" is overlaid in the center of the image.

DEMONSTRATION & PRO TIPS

CREATE FREE ACCOUNT





WORK CITED

- Bean, John C. & John Melzer. *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrated Writing, Critical thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom*. Wiley, 2021.
 - Chapter 8: Using small groups to coach thinking and teach disciplinary argument
 - Available as hard copy or e-copy in Dawson bookstore