

Highlighting for Self-Response

Goal

Students will learn how to use highlighting to identify strengths and weaknesses in their own writing.

Rationale

If students need help analyzing their own writing, teaching them to highlight targeted content and elements of author's craft can help them identify patterns, omissions, and areas for strengthening their work.

Instructional Steps

1. Provide multiple colors of highlighters or colored pencils for students to use.
2. Use a sample paragraph or essay and project the writing for students to see. Provide copies for students to use as they follow along.
3. Identify specific elements of writing to highlight in the sample text. Consider highlighting elements of writing with which students have difficulty or skills currently under development. Be strategic in deciding which elements to highlight. Examples include:
 - Topic sentences and support
 - Descriptive details
 - Elaboration strategies
 - Transition sentences
 - Action verbs
 - Claim(s) and evidence
 - Textual references
 - Counterclaim(s) and support
 - Concluding sentences or paragraphs
4. Highlight elements that are used effectively in the writing and those that are not when modeling for students. It is helpful to use a different color to distinguish between effective and non-effective. This provides students the ability to learn to analyze the writing and identify elements used proficiently and those needing revision.
5. Model for students how to revise the writing based on identified and highlighted elements not used proficiently in the writing.
6. Encourage students to refer to the writing task to identify elements for highlighting when they are working independently with their own writing.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Provide students with identified elements to be highlighted and revised in their writing.

Increased Rigor

- Teach students to identify elements to be highlighted based on their analysis of the writing task and knowledge of writer's craft elements.

Using Technology

- Use the highlighting feature in word processing programs to highlight text electronically. Multiple colors can be used to depict information according to identified areas of need.

*"You don't write
because you want to
say something; you
write because you have
something to say."*

– F. Scott Fitzgerald