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An examination of writing apprehension levels among student writers

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An examination of writing apprehension levels among student writers

Abstract

Many students dislike writing because they feel they cannot write (Basile, 1982). They view writing as an obstacle in their attempts to communicate what they know and in furthering their knowledge. This leads to frustration and hostility towards writing. Students will often develop the attitude that education should not depend on the ability to write (Basile, 1982).

AN EXAMINATION OF WRITING APPREHENSION LEVELS AMONG STUDENT
WRITERS

A GRADUATE PAPER
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by
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Table of Contents

I.	Introduction.....	1
	Background.....	1
	Problem.....	5
	Purpose.....	6
	Definitions.....	6
II.	Review of Literature.....	8
	Summary.....	17
	Recommendations.....	17
III.	Conclusions & Discussions.....	21
	References	

Chapter I

Introduction

Background

Many students dislike writing because they feel they cannot write (Basile, 1982). They view writing as an obstacle in their attempts to communicate what they know and in furthering their knowledge. This leads to frustration and hostility towards writing. Students will often develop the attitude that education should not depend on the ability to write (Basile, 1982).

Raisman (1982) termed writing as a high level, intellectual function of very low physical need where students search with desperation for ways to avoid making errors that displease the teacher. The adverse critical comments that tend to be made by teachers have become a main source for writing apprehension.

Basic composition courses on both high school and college levels place a great deal of emphasis on writing, and justifiably so (Daly and Miller, 1975). Our age demands competence in writing. Naming an occupation where writing is not a requirement is difficult. Whether or not it is composition or an essay required, most individuals daily face a demand for writing (Daly and Miller, 1975).

An inherent requirement of any college major is a certain amount of writing. There is a variation in the

amounts demanded within each major. Given the fact that the amount of required writing differs between majors, students often determine their academic major based upon the assumption of minimal writing required (Daly and Shamo, 1976). These types of students are considered to be writing apprehensive.

Daly and Miller (1975) defined writing apprehension as an anxiety about writing that manifests itself in the attitude that writing is more punishing than rewarding. Bloom (1980) defines writing apprehension as a behavior that keeps a person from writing effectively.

A certain amount of creative tension is present and necessary in all writers (McAndrew, 1986), but for some the situation brings on a destructive amount of tension or apprehension. The difference between normal apprehension and neurotic apprehension is that the former stems from a sense of what is a real threat and the latter is a culmination of repeated failure to cope with apprehensive situations (Allen, 1985). This failure manifests itself in the avoidance of writing and a preconceived notion of failure. When students with high levels of writing apprehension experience neurotic anxiety due to writing, their work is shorter, less syntactically complex, and judged to be of lower quality (McAndrew, 1986).

McAndrew (1986) speculated that the problem is a result of writing being seen as punishment and teachers giving

constant negative responses to work by either making red marks and assigning failing grades or by telling students that they are poor writers. As a result, high apprehensive students lack awareness, audience, purpose and possibly organizational strategies. They do little planning and find what they do to be less valuable.

Writing apprehension influences academic choices (Daly and Shamo, 1976). Highly apprehensive individuals prefer and choose academic majors believed not to require much writing. When or if students find themselves in a situation that demands writing, they are unhappy and often procrastinate (Holladay, 1981). Students who are forced into writing courses due to program requirements are often troubled by deeply rooted anxieties and fears about their teacher's demands as well as their own abilities.

The majority of students who write do not enjoy the process (Baxter, 1987). Their reasons why vary from fear and pain to it being tedious, boring, unchallenging, difficult, manipulative, time consuming, useless and too structured. According to Baxter (1987), these are all defense mechanisms that are masking the real problem, fear or apprehension towards writing.

Apprehension is very common among college students. According to Teichman (1985), many students enter college with a high degree of writing apprehension. This apprehension can limit career choices and contribute to poor

self-image. It also affects student satisfaction in courses requiring writing, student expectations of success in the class, enrollment of such courses, as well as out of class projects that require writing (Faigley, Daly and Witte, 1981).

Perceptions, beliefs and experiences from the past have also had a profound effect on students' willingness to write (Cleary, 1980). Research has also shown that the deficient skills training and poor or negative teacher responses to early writing have later effects on the level of writing apprehension held by students (Faigley, Daly and Witte, 1981). Research has shown that writing abilities improve with age, but with age and experience, the enjoyment of writing declined (Shook, Marrion and Ollila, 1989). It seemed that as students progressed through the school system, they tended to lose individuality and creativity. Sacrifice and self-expression seemed to be one of the reasons students began trivializing writing (Spaulding, 1989).

Students have become more inclined to become involved in something that interests them, as well as something that allows some personal control in completing the task. Because students have not found personal enjoyment in writing, it is viewed as tedious, tiring and boring.

Autrey (1989) found a lack of variety in writing topics, as well as rigid assignments, expectations and classroom practices to be some of the effects that later confront

students. By the time students have reached the college level, their performance becomes extremely stifled due to the degree of criticism found in the teacher's evaluation of the work. Due to these types of obstacles, the attitude of the students became as poor as the work being produced.

Problem

According to Fox (1980), introductory college composition classes are being populated with students embarking upon their writing experiences with not only a lack of skills, but with a defeatist attitude toward their composing abilities and the act of writing itself. Students have begun thinking that they are unable to write and that a writing weakness could be an example of a personal weakness.

As a result of their feelings of inadequacy in the area of writing, they procrastinate more, attend class less, choose different majors and careers and behave destructively when forced to write. Students must no longer be allowed to feel so inferior about their writing difficulties. If their fears escalate and their problems persist, they will have low self-esteem and will settle for mediocrity in their lives without ever trying to reach their true potential. They will be fearful to take risks and will make choices according to what they find to be simple, instead of rising to challenges. If some type of change for the better is not made, the foremost problem that exists and will continue to exist is that the high apprehensive students will never learn to write

and have confidence in their abilities.

According to Perelman (1986), part of the problem is that many instructors evaluated writing based on the effect it has on them personally. They gave no consideration to how it fulfilled some goal of discourse. Teachers have not come to fully understand the effects caused by writing apprehension. Students have, in turn, used many defense mechanisms to hide their deficiencies. Daly (1978), therefore, suggested that apprehension tests be given at the onset of classes to determine students' level of apprehension, help alleviate the apprehension and seek the best ways to combat the problem of extreme criticism and unwarranted fear. If a problem is shown to exist through testing, it can be dealt with and if there is no real problem, teachers can work to assure students that they are capable of writing.

Purpose

This research paper's purpose is to examine the existing literature regarding the levels of apprehension among student writers. It is also intended to determine whether the literature provides suggestions for reducing this problem for student writers.

Definitions

Apprehension - fear or anxiety (Merriam and Merriam, 1978).

Basic Writing - the learning and mastering of writing through exercises, prose and essays (Raisman, 1984).

Business Writing - writing that provides information in clear, direct and sequential manner for specific purposes and specific audiences (Raisman, 1984).

Communication Apprehension - an individual's fear or anxiety associated with real or anticipated communication with another person (Hillocks, 1986).

Neurotic Apprehension - fear or anxiety that becomes inhibiting (Allen, 1985).

Normal Apprehension - fear or anxiety that is protective or motivating (Allen, 1985).

Writing Apprehension - anxiety triggered by writing (Daly, 1978).

Writing Apprehensive - troubled by fears, anxiety and the uneasiness caused by writing (Daly, 1978).

Chapter II

Review of Literature

Writing Apprehension stems from Communication Apprehension associated with real or anticipated communication with another person or persons (Daly and McCroskey, 1984). Writing Apprehension plagues between 10 and 25% of college students (Bloom, 1980). Though no new figures or estimates have become available, according to O'Shea (1987), common sense and personal experience suggest a higher figure. Though this is a big problem faced by students entering college, a great deal of research is still limited to Communication Apprehension (Teichman, 1985). The majority of the research that has been published in the area of writing apprehension is of a similar type. Researchers administered the Daly-Miller Writing Apprehension Instrument (1975) to the population they wished to study, often college composition students. Those who scored one standard deviation or more above the mean were identified as high apprehensives and those who scored one standard deviation or more below the mean were identified as low apprehensives.

There have been few studies that compared the difference in apprehension levels between basic writers of composition and business writers, but previous research shows that by administering a writing apprehension instrument, it is possible to determine whether or not students are high or low apprehensive. By determining whether or not students have significant levels of apprehension and whether the type of

approach used may lessen the apprehension, steps toward providing the type of curricula that would minimize apprehension when writing could be developed.

One of the studies found that made a comparison to basic writing and business writing is Raisman's (1984) two year study, where experimental and control groups were tested to determine apprehension levels between students enrolled in business writing and basic writing courses. One hundred and seventy-eight freshmen were administered the Geer Fear Survey. This survey required them to rate individual stimuli to show how strongly or weakly a particular stimulus generated apprehension or a reaction. The survey consisted of 50 possible fear-producing stimuli such as rats, death, injury of a loved one, speaking in public, or public humiliation. Raisman slightly altered the survey by adding reactions such as English classes, writing papers for a grade, spelling words correctly, reading and teachers. Raisman added these items to indicate possible educationally-induced stimuli.

The results showed that death/injury to a loved one, fear of social disgrace and having to write papers for a grade were the top three apprehension causers. Apprehension related to having to write for a grade caused the most apprehension.

Raisman (1984) proceeded to test the two approaches for instruction. For 14 weeks, the 178 students were placed into

3 freshman writing sections. Half of the students took business writing and the other half took the basic writing course. The business writing course had no basic writing concepts in its curriculum.

The students met with the instructors three times weekly, where the classes were taught in a lecture, discussion and application format. A paper was written and submitted on a weekly basis.

The Geer Fear Survey was administered again at the fourth, eighth and thirteenth week. Each time, the stimuli were rearranged to prevent student familiarity. By the end of the semester, the two sections of business writing decreased by nearly half their level of writing apprehension, while the basic writing group dropped one fourth in the level of apprehension caused by writing.

Raisman conducted this testing for three additional semesters. Each time, the business writing group consistently experienced a greater decrease in the level of apprehension than the basic writing group. The average apprehension reduction for the basic writing group was less than half of that of the business writing section.

Olson (1990) used a treatment and three control groups to test for differences in levels of apprehension between students enrolled in business writing and basic writing. Olson believed that less apprehension towards writing would be shown by the students being taught business writing as

opposed to those receiving instruction in a more traditional manner.

Seventy-one randomly assigned incoming freshmen completed the Geer Fear Survey at the beginning of the semester and the end. There were no differences in attitude, motivation, grammar or mechanics for writing skills. The only differences that occurred were in the students' perception of the practicality of writing instruction after college. The students in the business writing course viewed their instruction as more practical for work after college than those who received traditional writing instruction.

Raisman (1984) found that business writing was over 100% more effective than other teaching approaches in breaking down student resistance to learning to write because of writing apprehension. When students were in the business writing courses, they seemed better able to learn more material in less time and with greater effectiveness.

Raisman (1984) has looked upon business writing to have real world application. He also saw it as being a possible cause for greater effectiveness in learning. He saw business writing concepts to be heavily related to the lessons learned from the real world. The differences in the two types of writing is that the basic writing group studied sentences and how they were put together and the business writing group studied sentences as standardized formulas of subject/verb/object or subject/verb/complement. The basic

writing class leaned towards work of an inventive and personality nature, whereas the business writing section worked towards standardized sentences for content form.

Raisman also noted that the students from the business writing course took less time to complete the same task as the control group. For instance, the basic writing control group required five class meetings for the mastery of the same seven spelling rules that the business writing experimental group completed in three class meetings.

Daly's (1978) study tested the hypothesis that low apprehensives performed significantly better on comprehensive writing skills tests than high apprehensives. He used 3602 undergraduates enrolled in mandatory basic composition. They completed the Daly-Miller Writing Apprehension Instrument, and a 68-item multiple choice writing competency questionnaire.

The hypothesis was confirmed. Not only did high apprehensives perform more poorly, they lacked the strong working knowledge of writing skills held by low apprehensives.

Faigley, Daly and Witte (1981) hypothesized that high apprehensives performed differently than low apprehensives on standardized tests of writing competency. One hundred and ten first semester freshmen from 20 sections of beginning composition at a southwest university were administered the Daly-Miller Writing Apprehension Instrument to determine the

two extremes for the purpose of working towards collecting the best data based on the hypothesis.

The subjects completed the Test of Standard Written English, the English Composition Test, The Scholastic Aptitude Test, subtests of the McGraw-Hill Writing and Reading Test and the Daly-Miller Writing Apprehension Instrument. The students also wrote two essays to elicit negative and descriptive writing. The essays were evaluated by a word count, mean number of words and mean number of words for clauses.

The results confirmed the hypothesis. The low apprehensives performed better than the high apprehensives in every instance. Research shows that by administering a writing apprehension instrument, it is possible to determine high and low apprehensives (Hillocks, 1986). In the same manner, research has not clearly established the best approach to take to reduce writing apprehension.

Book's (1976) study was conducted to discover if high and low apprehensives produced significantly differently structured patterns in writing, which would indicate that they encode information differently.

The University of Nebraska at Lincoln had 181 students that were enrolled in a basic writing course and were administered the Daly-Miller Writing Apprehension Instrument. The identified number of high apprehensive students were 19, and the number of low apprehensives were 21. The status of

the other students was not indicated (Book, 1976).

A list of campus issues was compiled for students to respond to within a fifty minute period. A word count from the papers produced by the high and low apprehensives revealed that low apprehensives wrote three times as many words as the high apprehensives. In addition to the amounts of words written, the differences in the two types of groups were structure, language use and amount of information conveyed.

Allen (1985) conducted a study to supply useful tools for handling writing apprehension in the classroom. The University of Missouri-Kansas City study intended to show the degree of attitude improvement during one semester of freshmen composition and to what degree Allen's composition program alleviated student's fear towards writing.

One hundred and sixty-six students were administered the Daly-Miller Writing Apprehension Instrument. The test was administered at the beginning and end of the semester.

The results indicated that students entered and left the program with essentially the same amount of apprehension. Eleven students were diagnosed/taped as apprehensive. Out of those eleven, six substantially decreased their apprehension, two made no progress and three regressed. Thirty-eight percent of the total amount of students who indicated uncertainty at the onset of testing as to whether or not writing was fun clearly stated at its completion that they

were in disagreement to the statement. Though a great deal of the students tested were neither high nor low apprehensive, the testing did show that nearly 10% was high apprehensive and over one third of the total amount of students tested disliked writing.

Fox (1980) investigated two methods of teaching writing to determine their effects on writing apprehension. One method of instruction involved teaching through writing exercises, lecture, discussion, and question and answer periods. Students adhered to traditional types of writing where the instructor was the sole evaluator and initiator of criticism. The second method of instruction involved group exercises, paired student activities, free writing, practice responses to writing and structured peer response. The instructor also had two conferences with the students.

The subjects were students of an English Composition course at the University of Missouri at Columbia. They were divided into an experimental group and received the group-type instruction, and a control group that received traditional-type instruction. The class met for fifty minutes, three times weekly for sixteen weeks.

The experimental group worked toward group consensus for topic choices, while the control group selected their own individual topics. The topics for both groups had to be clearly and concretely worded, had to elicit varied kinds of writing, had to arouse some interest and had to be

intellectually challenging for college freshmen.

For the control group, grades were assigned for each essay by the instructor. For the experimental group, two student conferences were held where students submitted written evaluations indicating the grade they felt their writings and revisions deserved. They supported their evaluations by pointing out specific improvements in their essays. Tentative grades were given through discussion and mutual agreement, and the best three out of five essays constituted the bulk of the grade.

The experimental and control group shared a significant decrease in writing apprehension from the beginning to the end of the class. The experimental group's level of apprehension was significantly lower than the control group. When all writers were compared for length, the experimental group writers wrote longer post-test compositions than their control group counterparts.

Allen (1985) pointed out that there is no particular type of class that will eliminate writing apprehension. It is possible that it cannot be reduced at all, but the administering of a writing apprehension instrument will determine whether or not a significant level of apprehension exists. By providing some type of assistance, it is possible to decrease apprehension and change attitudes about student's work and how others feel about it.

Faigley, Daly and Witte's study (1981) concluded that

apprehension definitely plays a role in writing performance and competence. It does not necessarily lead to poor writing, but apprehension and performance reinforce each other. Due to the level of apprehension shown by high apprehensives, they avoid writing and find it punishing, and they perform at a disadvantage compared to those with little or no apprehension.

Apprehension testing should not be done, necessarily to test for the differences between two groups or to determine who performs better, but for the discovering of apprehension so that a solution may be discovered.

Summary

Though there is really no clear answer about what causes writing apprehension, a step toward its solution is to administer an apprehension test to students at the onset of their coursework for an understanding of their ability, or lack of ability to perform at the expected level. The next step would be to determine ways that best benefit apprehensive students so they may be helped in the alleviation of apprehension and the enhancement of writing skills.

Recommendations

Several researchers have considered solutions to the problem of alleviating, if not eliminating writing apprehension possessed by student writers. Simard (1985) stated that an active awareness of the personal and

individual nature of writing is an approach to begin with. He stated that a slow process of allowing students to acquire the skills they know are valuable is the best way to develop the writing craft (Simard, 1985; Baxter, 1987). Baxter (1987) also stated a need for different approaches and angles to generate enough ideas for each student to find a niche. Teachers must also work to understand the students' preferred learning style and provide risk-free opportunities for the students to experiment with new structures and forms (Baxter, 1987).

According to Baxter (1987), one of the first things that needs to be done is to prove to the students that they already possess an amazing competency in their language usage. Building confidence is important in changing student attitudes (Baxter, 1987), but providing comfortable, non-threatening atmospheres that encourage participation from all students will help to alleviate apprehension (Baxter, 1987).

According to Unger (1986), students should be allowed to write freely without the paranoia of teacher condemnation. Once students are comfortable with their environment, they should receive concrete demonstrations and opportunities to work with the skills introduced (Baxter, 1987). It is necessary for each student to realize their stumbling blocks and continually work toward fluency and proficiency through practice.

Unger (1986) stated that even when students write for

evaluation, they should be permitted to write what they choose, with some parameters set by the teacher. Unger (1986) also stated that mechanics be considered secondary, with the focus on content. This will probably minimize the red marks that the students receive (Unger. 1986).

Baxter (1987) stated the importance of making writing fun. Though she did not advocate getting away from learning how to write academic papers, she stated that the necessary strategies can be developed in other contexts first. Writing should be done in comfortable modes and then group discussion and redirection can be used to help students refine their ideas and fulfill the assignment objectives.

Thompson (1979) stated that individual interviews was a way of coping with student writing apprehension. A later study of several curriculum strategies found that apprehension could be lessened with each approach (Thompson, 1980). The approaches were: traditional, a free organic, and self-paced individual interviews. Thompson (1980) theorized that if students acquire knowledge of and skill in the workings of the writing process itself, the language study approach best reduces writing apprehension. When writers understand that language is not static, they become more comfortable. When they become aware that rewrites, the use of dictionaries, the understanding of dialect and other factors are experienced by all, the process becomes easier for them.

Fox (1980) stated that workshop methods significantly reduced writing apprehension as well as allowed students to build confidence and accept evaluation of their writing. Confidence and acceptance of evaluation are two necessary attitudes needed by writers in order for relaxation to occur (Holladay, 1981).

Workshops that allow peer evaluation may also be effective (Unger, 1986). The students write for a specific audience and students and interaction and communication take place within the group. Baxter (1987) informed teachers that breaking tasks down into segments, as well as eliminating vagueness and making students completely aware of goals and expectations can give students a feeling of success.

According to Unger (1986), no student should go through life with writer's apprehension due to negative classroom experiences. Teachers should work toward developing an appreciation for writing early on that continues throughout the student's lives (Unger, 1986).

Apprehension is lessened even more when teachers listen to students express their apprehension. The teacher must then point out how the process can be made to work more efficiently for the student. The solution to the problem lies mostly in teaching method adjustment. Just slight method adjustment has helped reduce student apprehension and improve student writing (Thompson, 1980).

Chapter III

Conclusions and Discussions

The fear, anxiety, apprehension, or even hostility shown towards writing is usually a result of the inability to do so. Perhaps the problem is linked to Bereiter's and Scardamalia's (1983) concern that school misdirects young writers and fosters the unhealthy attitudes that they possess.

According to Bereiter and Scardamalia (1983), the writing process belongs to an individual and each individual writes according to individual purpose and choices. Teachers' demands and criticisms have a way of eventually causing the student to experience fear and anxiety. The teachers have become frustrated with the students' lack of ability and have become overly critical instead of being helpful.

The criticism has moved away from being constructive to constant and extremely critical. This has initiated inhibitions regarding motivation towards student writing (Cleary, 1990). Since students have been constantly told that they are not good enough, they are filled with feelings of low self-esteem, self-doubt and feelings of worthlessness.

Shook, Marrion and Ollila (1989) have found that students begin with a creative process of writing. As they become entangled in mechanics, they lose self confidence and

begin to display a poor self identity (Unger, 1986).

Writing is a task that will not disappear. Its presence is becoming more and more visible in the job market. For too long, students have tried to avoid it instead of facing it, and teachers have not been making the decision to engage in the writing process any easier with their expectations and critical views of student work (Autrey, 1989).

Because beliefs and experiences play a lot in how apprehension manifests, all teachers must restructure their teaching practices in the area of writing. Students are being done a disservice when writing apprehension is ignored (Unger, 1986). Teaching must be conducted in a way that allows students to feel a sense of ownership, yet gain the necessary theories and practices required for mastering the art of writing.

The best approach would be one that encourages an active awareness of the personal and individual nature of writing (Simard, 1985). When students are allowed to make important decisions about the substance, form and audience of their writings, they are more likely to structure their writing tasks to fit their own interests (Spaulding, 1989). Students need no longer regard writing as tedious, boring, unchallenging, difficult, manipulative, time consuming, useless and structured.

Since writing apprehension is common among college students and can affect academic majors and job selection,

teachers must realize that constant criticism and red marks do nothing to ease the fear of writing nor the assumption of failure (Emig, 1971). One of the problems is that even teachers have begun to categorize students as being less likely to succeed in their work instead of finding ways to assure and assist students (Daly, 1978).

Emig (1971) found inflexibility to be a factor that altered the attitude of students. The unwillingness to give in to overly restrictive teaching standards have usually resulted in low to failing grades. Students have begun trying to encourage instructors to consider their point. Instructors have required students to perform according to their demands and the end result becomes inflexibility on the part of the instructor. The reaction of the students range from rebellion to total surrendering of creativity and individuality. When students are denied self-expression, they begin to feel totally incapable. All that they accomplish is credited to luck, and they believe themselves to be incapable. Not only does their belief of inability affect their academic choices, but their life choices also (Daly, 1985).

Since writing apprehension reflects an individual's general disposition to respond favorably or unfavorably to writing situations (Daly, 1978), it is necessary for teachers to be constantly aware that students should be graded on how they write.

Many students have the present mentality of incompetency. Without intervention from teachers and positive reinforcement, it is possible that they may never feel confident again. The students tend to work for teacher acceptance. When they do not receive it, writing becomes drudgery (Cleary, 1990).

At times, students have created their own fear and irrational beliefs. The poor employment of skills, nonetheless, along with the fears of evaluation, poor role models and ignorance of the problem, all play a role in writing apprehension (Allen, 1985).

Since research has stated that there is no definite or immediate way to eliminate writing apprehension, the foremost concern toward alleviation is its detection. Once it is determined that apprehension exists, a method of instruction that allows the students to perform with minimum apprehension is necessary. It is important for the ultimate goal of instruction to be that all students function at equal levels of competence.

Encouragement is a start to help rekindle the desire for students to write (Cleary, 1990). The main task at hand is for teachers to supply students with the skill to write. They must not only teach, but make students competent writers. The students, in turn, must have the desire to continue to exercise their skill after school. It is imperative that they not be made skillful, then have their

desires to act through language killed (Cleary, 1990). Once this, and a steady increase of competence is established, the thought of failure and fear is reduced, if not eliminated.

It will become the duty of the teacher to determine the exercises or techniques that could best lend themselves to achieving the desired results. Each teacher should put into effect a plan that allows for versatility when the need for added attention or greater detail is necessary for mastering the writing craft. It seems that by using the student involvement method (Allen, 1985), the students become their own critics. They learn that when they closely evaluate and observe their own work, they see their strong and weak areas. They, then, become able to determine where they need improvement. They also realize that "poor" is not a word that best describes their abilities.

In order to determine the necessity of special strategies, each teacher should begin the writing course with some type of measurement for writing apprehension so that the needs of all enrolled in the class are met, not just those who seem to show a love or a tolerance for writing.

The following procedures can be tested in hopes of determining the level of apprehension felt by writing students:

*The Daly-Miller Writing Apprehension Instrument (1975) can be administered to a university population in order to determine writing apprehension.

*A college population can be polled to determine whether or not the percentage of writing apprehensive students have changed from between 10-25% (Bloom, 1980).

*The Geer Fear Survey, along with the inclusion of the educationally-induced stimuli (Raisman, 1984) can be administered to determine student apprehension levels.

*An apprehension test can be administered to a group of basic writing students and to a business group, periodically, while providing the appropriate instruction. It is necessary that neither group be previously enrolled in a basic writing course (Olson, 1990).

By administering any of these apprehension instruments at the onset of a writing course, it is possible for teachers to prepare curricula that lends itself to the various efficiencies or experiences of the students who enroll. If a determination of the percentage of apprehension that exists campus-wide is discovered, surely it would be possible to create a course that better meets the needs of high apprehensive students than any class has ever done in the past.

It also seems worth considering the incorporation of a writing course that has a more "real world application" than the traditional writing courses that have previously existed.

Perhaps if students receive that understanding of writing and how it will be used in their future endeavors, they will feel more prepared to meet the academic challenges that writing initiates. They, at that point, will rise to any and all challenges, especially those that involve writing. They will be more at ease as they develop their writing skills, and they will at all times, maintain their

feelings of esteem and confidence.

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