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## How to Learn Something New from Essay Writing

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Learning is a never ending process where all parts of a day are, in some manner, a learning experience. Sometimes these lessons are found during the academic day while other times these lessons come without realization. During the academic day, lessons do not only come from lectures, but also through the assignments that are given that sometimes do not appear to be relevant to the student. For instance, when a person writes an essay, they have to consider multiple angles to the topic. They must research and evaluate the different angles and then form an opinion through critically thinking about the evidence. Therefore, a person can learn something new from essay writing by evaluating a topic through different approaches, researching the evidence, and critically thinking about the discovered information.

Dehning (2015) explains that the process of learning through writing can occur in all subject areas in a student's curriculum. The author states that writing makes the student look at the subject matter in a way that cannot be expressed through a lecture or by simply reading a text book. Even if the assignment is not expected to count for a grade, Dehning (2015) recommends a writing log so that the student is forced to consider the course material from different approaches

than was presented in the classroom. In other words, when a student puts their thoughts about a subject on paper, they are then able to look at how they interpret the information and then bring up their thoughts in the following class session.

Researching new information is an excellent way to improve knowledge. When a person is given an essay topic, they then must take the time to look up literature that has been written about the topic. If the topic is on a subject that the student does not know much about, then they are able to learn through reading through the literature. This, according to Rider-Bertrand (2012) can improve the student's knowledge base even in subjects outside of reading and writing. In fact, Rider-Bertrand (2012) claims that reading through academic journals for the purpose of research in subjects such as math and science can greatly improve the student's ability to grasp concepts that would otherwise seem too difficult to understand. In this, researching for the purpose of writing can help the student to learn in all subject areas.

Finally, critical thinking is a skill that students need in order to achieve academic success. Fry and Villagomez (2012) explain that a student, when writing an essay, must not only research and recall information, but also must critically examine the information in a thinking process that cannot be achieved through simply hearing or reading information. Instead, the student must consider what information is the most relevant to the topic and how that information can be weaved together in a logical matter for presentation to their audience. This critical skill can then be applied to other areas of learning whereas the student is able to group relevant information and then later be able to recall the information in a cluster.

In closing, it is important to recognize the importance of learning and how writing can improve the learning process. This occurs through looking at the subject matter in different ways, researching the topic, and developing critical thinking skills. While writing may not be the

subject that is being studied, the process of writing an essay in any subject can help to solidify the acquisition of knowledge, improve the student's understanding of the topic, and help the student to develop critical thinking skills that will help them along their academic career.

#### References

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