CAP Writing: A Novel Approach to Literacy Processes for Reluctant Writers

What is **CAP writing**? CAP writing is a tiered approach to the writing process. Developed in part to address the needs of reluctant writers, it acknowledges learning style preferences that are oral in nature and attentive to cultural norms and traditions that are based in spoken word. CAP is a celebration of self in the process of writing. Empowered to incorporate patterns and principles from familiar cultural norms, the CAP process **begins with speaking**, moves to listening then reading before writing happens.

CAP is an acronym that is used differently depending on a learner's position in the writing process. It enCAPsulates elements of the traditional view of writing while existing within a framework for formal out-of-school learning context for college and career readiness (also described as the COMPASS[1] framework for learning). In this way, CAP provides a schema for reluctant writers to check for their own understanding.

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[1] COMPASS framework was developed by author for NJ GEAR UP.

Tier 1: Essential Questions frame drafts
1. What is the **content** (disciplinary) focus?
2. Who is your target **audience**?
3. For what **purpose** are you writing?

Tier 2: Language considerations build academic habits
1. Is the composition **concise**?
2. Are the word choices and themes **accurate**?
3. Is the composition **precise**?

Tier 3: Basic writing conventions allow learners to revise freely and within traditional structures for writing
1. Are **capitalizations** appropriate?
2. Can the text/themes be found in other real-world **applications**? Do subjects and verbs **agree**?
3. Does the **punctuation** enhance the meaning of the work?

Related resources:
Writing to Learn Strategy,
https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/writing-to-learn

Common Core

In the Common Core documents for English Language, students are asked to "read stories and literature, as well as more complex texts...stressing critical thinking, problem solving and analytical skills" (CCSSO, 2014). There are six standards that address the **speaking and listening** dimensions of language literacy. Covering areas of "*comprehension and collaboration*", discussion, information processing and analysis of speech embody skills in the first three standards—a convergence of both speaking and listening. "*Presentation of knowledge and ideas*" frame the second three standards.

apex

base
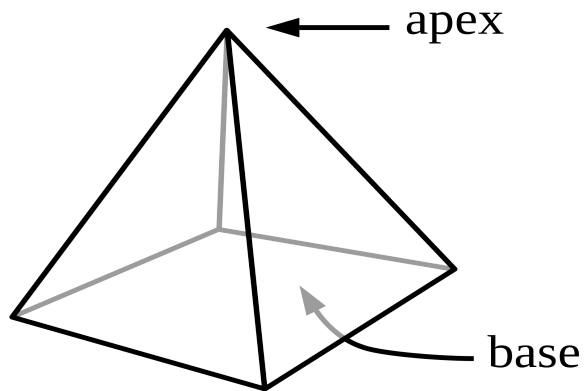
writing, reading, listening, speaking, OBSERVING (apex)

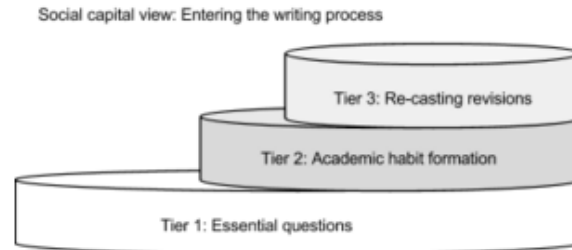**Especially in the case of ESOL.**
Square pyramid (Johnson solid)

Strategies

Transcription is described in the literature in various ways, usually related to the manual development of writing (putting pen to paper). There are various assistive technologies that have been reported to help students. Our use of the term "**transcription" is for the task of listening to spoken words and typing/writing based solely on aural skills and processing**. Without any editing, students' composed text is spoken and then transcribed.

Variation is a technique that allows writers to model their own composition after others' works. The works that are usually referenced are musical but can also be linguistic adaptations of non-linguistic models.

Perspective on Engagement

Social capital view: Entering the writing process

Tier 3: Re-casting revisions

Tier 2: Academic habit formation

Tier 1: Essential questions

The social capital view does not fully engage learner's being. The learner's **voice, rhythm and vernacular** are not allowed to roam free in a social capital view of writing because it is regulated by rules and conventions (e.g., rigid standards) of communication with and for the dominant culture.

A cultural capital view of the same process celebrates these three

Cultural capital view:
Voice, rhythm and vernacular

Macro   Meso   Micro
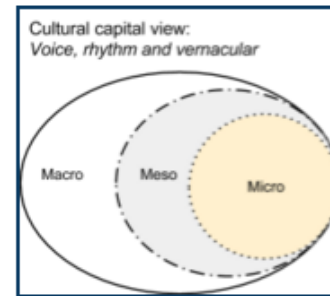
elements. Enabled by apertures between micro-level (personal) being, meso-level (community) being and macro-level (societal) being, students learn to cross borders without losing themselves. They are able to stay engaged because complete assimilation (loss of identity) is not required. The notion of cultural relevance takes on important and nuanced meaning in this cultural capital view as code-switching (a specific type of border crossing) is not only allowed, it is expected.