Writing across the Curriculum

Writing is something used in every subject area and is an area in which all grade levels need to improve for state testing purposes. We have agreed as a district to use the Jobs strategy and RACER method when having students respond through writing in every subject.

Jobs is not an acronym for anything, but is exactly what it sounds like. The students look at the prompt and decide how many different jobs there are that need to be addressed in their writing. For each job they find, they must use the RACER method to record their written response.

The RACER method is as follows:

R – Restate the question (job) at the beginning of a new paragraph.

A – Answer the question (job).

C – Cite evidence from the text or work that was used to springboard the writing

assignment.

E – Explain how the chosen evidence supports the given answer.

R – Reread the response to make sure it is relevant, makes sense, and has as few

grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors as possible. (If they can’t read and

understand what they wrote, neither can anyone else.)

Students should have a paragraph for each job they identify in the writing prompt.

For example, the students have been given one or more texts to read and then asked to do the following writing assignment:

*Summarize the position of* ***each*** *speaker. Use details from each speech to build your summary.*

Students should be able to tell that they will have no less than 2 jobs to address using the RACER method. This means that at least 2 paragraphs must be written. The introduction to the topic may end up being part of the 1st paragraph that addresses the first speaker’s position and supporting evidence. The conclusion may end up in the 2nd paragraph where the second speaker’s position and supporting evidence is addressed. As long as the information required is present and understandable, the writing process is a success to some degree.

ELA teachers may require more elements to be present in their students’ writing, such as transition words/phrases, a clear introductory paragraph, a clear conclusion paragraph, a variety of sentence patterns, the use of vocabulary used in the text, etc. Other subject area teachers may want to keep their writing requirements as simple as possible, as seen in the previous paragraph’s instructions.