Using the Jigsaw strategy in an ESL Class, Mission Campus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prewriting</td>
<td>Any activity that causes the writer to think about the subject</td>
<td>Free writing, Brainstorming, Graphic Organizers, Research, Reading, Viewing, listening, Field trip, Common experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drafting</td>
<td>The process of putting ideas on paper, without worrying about mechanics, yet</td>
<td>Taking notes, Making lists, Linking notes, lists, into thoughts, Organizing thoughts into paragraphs, Collaborative, synergized writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editing, Revising</td>
<td>Writer shares, asks for peer editing, Writer changes works, based upon feedback and careful reading</td>
<td>Peer editing, Checklists, rubrics, editing lists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publishing</td>
<td>Writer shares the final composition with others</td>
<td>Reading aloud (Author’s chair), Reading to a group, Displaying printouts in classroom, Printing newsletters, books, Web Publishing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some Insights from L1 and L2 Writing Research
From: Kate Kinsella, San Francisco State University, 6/01

- Reading widely and regularly contributes to the development of writing ability.

- Increasing reading frequency has a stronger influence on improving writing than does solely increasing writing frequency.

- Developmental writers must see and analyze multiple effective examples of the various kinds of writing they are being asked to produce (as well as ineffective examples); they cannot for example, be expected to write successful essays if they are primarily reading narrative texts and never analyzing expository models and texts.

- L1 and L2 writers benefit from clearly specified assignment guidelines and grading criteria, ideally in the form of a written description and focused analytic rubric.

- Developmental L1 and L2 writers benefit from frequent opportunities to go through the process of drafting, revising and editing shorter papers and receiving formative feedback throughout this process (ideally with a relevant, manageable rubric), rather than writing sporadic longer papers and primarily receiving summative/final feedback.

- L1 and L2 student benefit from conferencing methods, including both written and oral feedback, that coaches them through the writing process.

- Grammar taught independently from the process of writing has little or no effect on writing ability (i.e., decontextualized grammar exercises).

- Straightforward “learnable” rules on grammar for writing can and should be taught to L1 and L2 writers, as long as they don’t interfere with the composing process.

- L1 and L2 writers should focus primarily on content and organization in earlier writing drafts, and delay problems of grammar and vocabulary to later editing stages.

- L2 writers can better monitor their writing and apply conscious grammar and usage rules if teachers stipulate clear and realistic editing goals and also provide adequate and appropriate direct instruction.

L1 and L2 students both value clear and manageable teacher comments on essay content and organization; L2 writers additionally appreciate focused comments on grammar, usage and vocabulary.
Journal writing

From http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/docs/francais/frcore/sec/inst5.html

Journal writing gives students a vehicle to express their personal experiences and opinions on the topics discussed. Discussion questions may help students focus in their writing.

The teacher must decide if the journals will be looked at by the teacher. If they are, students must know that it is only the teacher who will read them and that all matter is confidential. Formal or informal evaluations techniques can be used. A particular language element could be targeted each day or alternatively, the journal could be evaluated as part of a participation mark.

**The journal can be used for two purposes:**

1. To develop students' writing skills. Some language correction within the journal can improve students' writing skills at the same time. More attention should be devoted to content, message and evaluation in relation to specific objectives. Students can also record difficulties they are having doing an activity or benefits they have received.

2. To express opinions, reflect on learning. The teacher can provide comments and feedback, but no evaluation except to verify that the task was completed. No language correction should be done if this is the sole purpose in using journals.

Specified time will be suggested at various stages within the unit to allow students to write in their journals. They are also an excellent independent study activity.

**Journal Writing Activities**

Source ED 295 127

**When students finish writing in their journals, the teacher might:**

1. Save the writings for future use.
2. Assign volunteers to read their responses and lead the discussion into the day's lesson.
3. Read each response aloud, then use class time for group revising and rewriting.
4. Use journals for closure. Allow five minutes at the end of class for students to write their own observations or summaries. During this time the teacher may wish to write his or her own reflections.
5. Interrupt a lecture with a five-minute writing to help students focus or to help them reveal their understanding.
6. Interrupt a discussion with writing to help the discussion change direction, to get back on the point, or to encourage more students to participate.
7. Use learning logs to solve a problem. Writing helps clarify thinking. Students often discover solutions while writing about problems.
8. Use writing to identify a unifying theme and support it with references to the work studied.

**Metacognitive Journal**

A higher level of critical thinking occurs when one is aware of one's thought processes. In the Metacognitive Journal, students analyze their own thought processes following a reading or other activity. The Metacognitive Journal encourages students to reflect on their reading processes, their final drafts, or their presentations.

- **Key questions:** What enabled you to gain the most from this experience? What would you do differently if you had more time?

On the left side of the paper, the student records--What I Learned. On the right side of the paper--How I Learned It.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What I Learned</th>
<th>How I Learned It</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(See Appendix for worksheet)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Double Entry Journal**

The Double Entry Journal allows students to record their responses to text as they read. In the left-hand page or column, the student copies or summarizes text which is intriguing, puzzling, or moving, or which connects to a previous entry or situation. In the right-hand page or column, the student reacts to the quotation or summary. The entry may include a comment, a question, a connection made, an analysis. Entries are made whenever a natural pause in the reading occurs, so that the flow is not interrupted constantly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Double Entry Journal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quotation-A phrase or sentence I especially like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(See Appendix for worksheet)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Reflective Journal

In a Reflective Journal entry the student identifies the activity, then reflects on the material learned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What happened?</th>
<th>How do I feel about it?</th>
<th>What did I learn?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(See Appendix for worksheet)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Learning Log

A Learning Log is a written response to literature but may be used to respond to other texts. The left column entries may be verbatim text, research notes, lecture notes, vocabulary, or questions. The right column entries are student responses to, interpretations of, or analyses of the left column entries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Log</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Note -Taking</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>(See Appendix for worksheet)</td>
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</table>

Synthesis Journal

At the end of the week's activities or at the end of a unit of instruction, students reflect on the cumulative activities. This activity encourages students to review past experiences and plan for future applications. The act of writing reinforces what was learned. Divide paper into three sections. Record "What I Did," "What I Learned," and "How I Can Use It."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What I Did</th>
<th>What I Learned</th>
<th>How I Can Use it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(See Appendix for worksheet)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Writing Case Studies for Your Students

From UC Berkeley Extension-Instructor Development Workshops
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The case study method has been used for teaching law, business and medicine for many years. Increasingly, adult educators are using this method to teach a variety of topics. Though there is an initial investment of time in writing case studies, once they are writing they can be reused in following. Students often report that the course material “really came together for them” when they had to apply it to a case study.

If you are teaching toward affective objectives, your case studies may be short stories about other people’s situations. They should be based on problems or situations likely to be encountered by students of your class.

If you are teaching for cognitive objectives, your case studies may be about problems your students will encounter in the field. It’s useful to draw from your experience in your discipline to illustrate how concepts arise in the real world.

Case studies are most effective if:

- They tell a real story
- Raise a thought-provoking issue
- Have elements of conflict
- Promote empathy with the central characters
- Lack an obvious or clear-cut right answer
- Encourage students to think and take a position
- Demand a decision
- Are relatively concise
- Are written at the reading level of the students
- Are followed by one to five questions to get the discussion going

Sample Case Study

Here is a case study written by Mark Graven, a building trades instructor:

The backhoe had just finished digging the last footing. Ironworkers were waist deep in the trenches trying wire and assembling steel rebar to reinforce the concrete soon to be poured. Jim and his partner were stringing lines from the batter-boards to give wall lines to the carpenters. With this information, the carpenters could build templates for the ironworkers to tie steel in the exact location of the future walls. Jim finished early and surveyed the work. He checked that all the perimeter walls and those short intersecting walls were accounted for. And once again he checked the overall measurements, “That’s right, north to south 120’ and 80’ from east to west.” Both checked in two places.
A week later, Jim is back, concrete is being poured, rebar stands marking the wall locations, and his job is to snap chalk lines on the concrete slab for carpenters to build wall forms tomorrow. Traveling north/south, he establishes all the longest lines first. It’s a beautiful day, one day before all the interruptions that come with a new crew. As he snaps the first east/west line, Jim sees that something is wrong. The corners of the building lines do not form a 90-degree angle. He quickly rechecks his overall dimensions, which are correct. The outside walls are parallel to each other. His superintendent is in the job trailer working on next week’s schedule. Should he ask him what’s happening? He thinks of the crew set to begin work and feels his heart beats faster. How far off can it be? He wonders.

**Discussion Questions**

How far off could Jim’s lines be?
In what area of construction has Jim made his mistake?
Why do the building dimensions work out?
How could Jim have avoided the mistake?
Should he talk to the superintendent now?

**Your assignment:**

Write a case study that would be appropriate for the group of students you teach or plan to teach. It should be one page in length, double spaced, and typed. Be sure to mention at the of the page the type of class you have designed the case study for.

If you teach students who will not be able to read one page of text, write a series of short case studies (one page full) like sample B that would be appropriate.

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**Sample Case Study A**

Here’s a case study from a workshop on how to keep a job:

John is a mail clerk at a large company. He’s been on the job for one year, and he likes it a lot. He has one problem: he is becoming increasingly angry with his boss, Carla. Every day, Carla gives John her mail to be stamped and processed at 4:30p.m. Carla expects John to run it through the mail machine and get it to the post office by 5:00p.m. Every day, he has to sprint the four blocks to the post office. This has been going on for one year. Six months ago he mentioned the problem to Carla and she said, “Yeah, it’s tough isn’t it. But you’re young and in good shape. I had to do a lot of things I didn’t like when I was coming up through the ranks.” John is beginning to think about quitting his job. He is so mad at Carla, he rarely talks to her anymore. Finally, today she comes in at 4:45p.m. with a box full of mail. John has tickets for a basketball game at 5:30. He looks at Carla walking in the door. He knows he’ll miss the start of the game if he processes that box of mail and goes to the post office. He thinks to himself, “Do it now, quit!”
1. Should John quit on the spot? What are the advantages? The disadvantages?
2. What could John do besides quitting?
3. What are John’s issues with Carla?
4. If John talks to Carla, exactly what should he say?
5. What pitfalls might John fall into if he talks to Carla? How can he avoid falling into them?

**Case Study Sample B**

Here’s a case study from an ESL class:

May Lam has two children. She is a single parent. She cleans houses for some nice people. They pay her $20 to $25 to clean the house. Sometimes they give her clothes and food, too. Today she has a problem. The woman said good-bye at the door. The woman gave her a bag of clothes and some fruit. But the woman didn’t give her any money. May Lam did not say anything.

Why didn’t May Lam say something?
Can you help May Lam?
What would you do?

**Providing Real Reasons for Writing**

Taken from Solomon, L. and Baumgartner, R.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Books</th>
<th>Messages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book review</td>
<td>Class books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author page for book</td>
<td>“How to” books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thank you notes</td>
<td>Directions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Evaluations/Critiques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipes</td>
<td>Essays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greeting Cards</td>
<td>Rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postcards</td>
<td>Invitations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Announcements</td>
<td>Get well cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movie review</td>
<td>Letters to authors, families,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggestions</td>
<td>etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posters</td>
<td>Want ads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poems</td>
<td>Commercial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sing-in</td>
<td>Comic strips</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Remember** you cannot expose students to everything at once. Model and review with students one at a time.

Audience is extremely important to writing produced.
A Process-Oriented Writing Instructional Sequence

1. Teacher establishes the pre-writing outcome: written product, audience, purpose, writer’s role, and time frame.

2. Teacher facilitates pre-writing activities:
   - discussion and tasks that help students comprehend related readings
   - idea generation: free writing, brainstorming, graphic organizers, etc.

3. Teacher introduces the critical attributes/distinguishing traits of the assigned genre, using an example of the written product and a non-example, then leads students in evaluating these models using a viable analytic rubric.

4. Students compose their first draft.

5. Teacher proceeds with a peer feedback session with a review of the assignment expectations and a unified-group critique of a sample paper. Students are assigned a partner for a peer feedback session on first drafts. Students provide written feedback using a manageable and appropriate rubric, then follow-up with a face-to-face oral summary of the paper’s strengths and priorities for revision of content and organization.

6. Students revise for higher order concerns (content, organization, audience) before proceeding to lower order concerns (mechanics, grammar, spelling).

7. Teacher provides formative feedback on drafts with the same rubric utilized for peer feedback, although sentence-level concerns may be added.

8. Teacher provides instruction on high priority problem areas: e.g., transitions, verb tenses, sentence combining with appropriate conjunctions, etc.

9. Students consider teacher’s feedback and target lesson, then revise papers.

10. Teacher evaluates final drafts.

11. Teacher distributes graded papers and provides oral summary comments to the unified group, establishing priorities for the next paper.

(Kate Kinsella, SFSU)
Writing Assignment Guidelines: A Color With Special Significance (Sample)

Part 1: For this assignment, you will first do a 15-20 minute focused free writing about colors that have special significance to you. These colors can be associated with one or more important aspects of your life: culture, ethnicity, country of origin, religion, hobbies, musical interests, favorite sports, career goals, etc. Bring your focused free writing to our next class in order to participate in a group brainstorming session. I will collect this focused free writing, along with your first draft of your paper, on the day of the day of the peer response session.

Part 2: You will write a detailed expository paragraph providing specific reasons your chosen color has special meaning in your life. Your justification paragraph must include these qualities of effective expository writing:

- An appropriate title (e.g., *Jade Green: A Link to My Heritage*).
- A topic sentence that lets the reader know that you will be discussing the relevance of a particular color to specific aspects of your life.
- Transition words that introduce each of your new points about your chosen color (e.g., first of all, also, in addition, furthermore, finally, moreover, most importantly).
- Specific reasons why you have selected this color, including showing details and relevant commentary that help the reader easily understand the color’s special significance.
- A visible effort to incorporate new vocabulary from this unit.
- An effort to use subordinating conjunctions to join related ideas.
- A concluding statement that thoughtfully wraps up your paragraph.

Proofreading goals for the final draft:

- Complete sentences (no fragments or run-together sentences)
- Correct verb tenses
- Correct spelling

Your first draft is due ___________________________. Please bring two copies of your draft for a peer response sheet.
Author Circle

From: http://www.ed.psu.edu/k-12/400block/glossary.html

Author's chair

Transitional Studies student, John Adams Campus.

This strategy is for sharing finished work. At this point, student's work is enjoyed and celebrated. Much like shared book, author's chair is the time for writers to rehearse and then read their published products of the appreciation and applause of peers and teachers. Typically, author's chair is a large group production, taking place at a regular time each week. Many teachers have a particular chair such as an old easy chair or a rocking chair that has been designated the storytelling/read aloud chair for the classroom. A stunt with a finished piece of writing uses this special chair of the sharing, hence author's chair. Sharing writing that has undergone several revisions a final editing is itself one of the ways children "publish" these final drafts. Author's chair may take place once or trice a week or as a special celebration marking the end of study or a grading period.

Author's circle

Transitional Studies student, John Adams Campus.

It is a strategy that helps authors communicate their intentions. Writers move away from the solitary experience of writing to sharing, responding, and interacting with peers in either large or small groups. This strategy is designed to facilitate students sharing work in progress. A writer requests, or the teacher sets aside, time for a small group of students to listen to one or more of them read a draft of a piece of material to be published. After listening to a writer read his or her work, members of the group respond. First, they compliment the author about something specific in the piece - for example, what they liked best. They are encouraged to use some of the language for the text in their remarks.
Then they may question specific elements of the text that may need to be clarified or amplified. In this setting, writers begin to refine their sense of audience. Authors direct the meeting, share their work, ask if it is clear, and request suggestions for improvement. This strategy can be seen as peer assistance with the content of the writing.

**Patterned Poems**


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**I. Bio Poems**

Formula:

Line 1 - Name

Line 2 - Four traits (adjectives)

Line 3 - Related to (family) (for adults can include partner, children, grandchildren)

Line 4 - Cares deeply about ________________________ (names three things)

Line 5 - Who feels ______________________________ (names two things)

Line 6 - Who needs ______________________________ (names two to three things)

Line 7 - Who gives ______________________________ (names two to three things)

Line 8 - Who fears ______________________________ (names two or three things)

Line 9 - Who would like to see ___________________ (name two things)

Line 10 - Resident of ____________________________ (original city or city of residence)

- This sample includes, in the family line, partner, children and grandchildren.

**Maria**

Friendly, curious, loving, funny
daughter of Angela and Luciano
sister of Manuel and Armando
spouse of Carey
mother of Elisa and Andres
lover of learning, life and people
who feels often lonely, loving, challenged
who finds happiness in my children, conversations and long walks
who needs encouragement, laughter and creativity
who gives a helping hand, a quick smile and loving hugs
who fears abandonment, failure and disappointment
who would like to see peace, harmony and justice
who enjoys dancing, music and cappuccinos
Resident of San Francisco
Rosales-Uribe
Another variation

I am _____________  (First name, last name)

Stanza One
I am _____________  (2 special characteristics you have)
I wonder ______________________ (something you are actually curious about)
I hear ______________________ (an imaginary sound)
I see ______________________ (an imaginary sight)
I want to ____________________ (an actual desire)
I am ________________________ (the first line of the poem repeated)

Stanza Two
I pretend _____________  (something you actually pretend to do)
I feel ______________________ (a feeling about something imaginary)
I touch ______________________ (an imaginary touch)
I worry ______________________ (something that really bothers you)
I cry ________________________ (something that makes you very sad)
I am ________________________ (the first line of the poem repeated)

Stanza Three
I understand __________________ (something you understand)
I believe ____________________ (something you believe)
I dream ______________________ (something you dream)
I try __________________________ (something you try to be)
I hope ________________________ (something you hope for)

I am ________________ (Repeat of first line)

This sample has been taken from one of the Oral/Written Communication students’ work.

I am Josefa

I am very spiritual
I wonder if there is life after
I hear my subconscious
I see myself in a place where people need me
I am very spiritual

I pretend to turn my life in 180 degrees
I feel there is a puzzle piece in my life that is missing
I worry about my kid’s future
I cry when I think of the people who are not longer with me
I am very spiritual
I understand one cannot undo things
I believe in God
I dream of been free one day
I try to learn new things
I hope one day all my wishes come true.

People Poem/Hero Poem

Line 1: First and last name of a person you admire
Line 2: Three words to discuss the person
Line 3: Place, group or activity identified with the person
Line 4: Three action words (-ing words) for the person
Line 5: When or where the actions take place
Line 6: Thoughts or feelings about the person

These samples correspond to some of the Oral/Written Communication students’ work.

Cesar Chavez
Family man, migrant worker, fighting to create a union for farm workers
UFW, Sí Se Puede
Organizing, communicating, encouraging California, 1965
Successful at making a Union

By Octavia Wilson, 2002.

Variations of People/Hero Poem:

Cesar Chavez
Leader, hard worker, loving person
He went camp to camp California Farms
Hardworking, organizing and sacrificing
Tried reasoning with the farm owners
About higher pay and better working conditions.

Began teaching the Mexican farm workers
To read, write and improve their
Working Conditions

Everybody should have courage to fight
For education and better life
To persevere until those dreams are fulfilled.

By Audelia Rodriguez, 2002.

Homenaje al 11 de Septiembre

Por Yuly, 2002

Soy una persona muy sensible.
Me pregunto el por qué de tanta violencia,
El por qué de tanto odio.
Oigo voces perdidas como si caminaran en un bosque sin rumbo.
Veo personas tristes,
Niños en las calles buscando a sus Padres sin esperanza de encontrarlos.
Quisiera ayudarlos pero no puedo,
Cada vez que lo intento, despierto de mi pesadilla.
Soy una persona muy sensible.

Students’ Writing Samples

Describe your day on September 11th, 01

By Kristen, ESL Level 7 & 8 student, Mission Campus, 2001.

It was 7:30 am, and I was sitting in the kitchen and was eating my breakfast like I do every day. I was reading the newspaper to get information before the news became old.

The telephone rang. I wondered who would call this early? Did something happen to my family? Or is it a telesales person? Who would call this early in the morning? I answered the phone. My mother was at the other end. My first thought, “What happened?” She said, “Hurry, turn on the TV. Something terrible is happening right now.” I was really confused and had a hard time finding the remote control. “What is it?” I asked. “Something wrong in Germany?” Then I saw the TV images and was not sure if I was awake. My mother talked to me, but I didn’t really hear what she was saying. Am I in the wrong movie? Is this a brand new movie? This could be
the movie to Tom Clancy’s book “Debts of Honor.” I saw one of the towers falling apart and collapsing. No, this is reality.

I called for Ulf to come and see this unbelievable scenery. We both sat shocked, speechless in front of the TV, not sure if it’s real or not. Forgotten were the newspaper and the breakfast. Forgotten was the sunny weather here in California and the easy way of life, which we love. We both stared at the TV and shook our heads again and again. This could not be the truth!

After we got ourselves oriented, we had to believe that this was real. Oh my God! What time is it in New York? Are people already on their way to their offices? Do we know how many people work in those towers or in the adjacent buildings? What about the tourists who are going to enjoy the view from “The Windows of the World?” What about Maria? Isn’t she in NY to enjoy even those tourist attractions? Do we know if something similar happened here on the West Coast? Will San Francisco be all right? Can I go to school today? In my mind were only questions over questions. I wasn’t able to speak. I sat in front of the TV, and I cried. My only solace was that nothing comparable was going on in Europe. My family and friends were safe. We started to call Ulf’s family to let them know that we were fine. We also called our closest friends to say hello and let them know that nothing had happened to us. The rest of the day isn’t really tangible. Ulf came home around noon and we tried to escape from those never ending and sad information on TV. We listened to Mozart and talked about the consequences for our lives here in California, USA. Who cared that September 11th, 2001 was our second wedding anniversary?

I’m not sure if the world will ever be the same. We as humans have to live with fear forever on, and I’m not sure what the solutions for terror, hate and disagreement could be or if the world community will ever find one!

**Un-thanksgiving Day Sunrise in Alcatraz**

*By Mario Peñate, Transitional Studies Oral/Written Communication Student, Mission Campus, 2001.*

When studying Native American history as a school subject, I learned only what the schools wanted me to learn. I didn’t learn what really happened, like the truth of Thanksgiving Day, truth that had been denied for many years.

The Pilgrims (religious immigrants from England) boarded two ships: the Mayflower and the Speedwell. After several months of sailing during hurricane season, they barely made it to land. They were now without food or shelter. Cold and sick they hardly could succeed in the new land. The Native Americans saw this and helped them, teaching the necessary skills to survive the winter so that the Pilgrims avoided their own destruction. The Native Americans, shortly afterwards, would be either killed by “white man’s,” diseases or by the gun.

With the desire of knowing more about this culture, a group of classmates and I went to the Sunrise Service in Alcatraz on Thanksgiving Day, 2001. In the late 60’s, a group of Bay Area students, mostly university students, took over the island and proclaimed their intention to turn it into a cultural educational center, but they were not successful. But a tradition was born. Every Thanksgiving, the Native Americans gather at Alcatraz at Sunrise to remember their struggle with dance, song, ritual and the telling of their struggle.
The very first feeling that I had that morning when I heard the beat of the drums and felt the heat of the fire was a great frustration and I wanted to cry. I felt annoyed about how history has treated these people and I began to feel hatred. We were trying to get into the crowd to reach the best view and to get a little warmth. There was a big circle of people with a fire right in the middle, and it really surprised me that the dancers were barefoot almost naked. They were just kids: little kids dancing, singing and keeping alive their traditions.

But then my feelings changed. I was trying to understand their dance, and I was remembered all that I had learned about Native Americans in school. Some things are lies, others are true: the killing, the pain as well as the theft of their land for so many years. My feelings of hate towards the pale faces changed into pride and happiness for the Native People. The way they want to keep alive their traditions, how they have survived all these years in this society is just remarkable and overwhelming. I admire their pursuit of happiness, their wisdom, their good sense of humor, their stories.

As we were listening to their stories, they declared that they would own their lands again one day. It is my hope that someday that can happen, that the Native Americans can live with pride, running their vast lands once again, beating their drums as well as dancing in complete peace that they can hunt the deer and buffalo, preserve their traditions and speak their languages.
La Piedra de la Sabiduría

Por Ulises Grijalva y Manuel Cornejo
ABE/GED Writing Class, 2002

Era una vez en una isla muy lejana había una piedra que tenía el poder de darle sabiduría a quien la tuviera o tocara. Nadie la había podido obtener porque los pocos que intentaron hacerlo murieron en el intento porque, según la historia, sólo los que eran puros de corazón podían romper el hechizo que la protegía.

Un mago llamado Sócrates decidió ir en busca de la Piedra de la Sabiduría en compañía de sus dos amigos, Bufón y Filósofo. Juntos emprendieron un viaje hacia la Isla Virgen donde se encontraba la piedra. El mago Sócrates no sabía que el Rey Octágono también iba en busca de la piedra de la Sabiduría junto con sus grandes guerreros Gigantón y los hermanos Moo y Shaka.

Desde el barco Bufón miró, divisió a lo lejos y gritó: “Isla a la vista”. Tan pronto llegaron a la orilla de la isla emprendieron la búsqueda de la Piedra de la Sabiduría. Mientras que en el otro extremo de la isla llegó el Rey Octágón y sus guerreros los cuales emprendieron también la búsqueda de la misteriosa piedra. El Mago Sócrates y sus amigos caminaban entre la tenebrosa selva cuando Filósofo sintió que se hundía. Bufón miró y le dijo al Mago Sócrates: -“Filósofo cayó en arenas movedizas”-
Afortunadamente el Mago Sócrates vio unas lianas en unos árboles e inmediatamente usó su magia y diciendo: -“Abra cadabra patas de cabra que estas lianas se conviertan en lazos”- Así el Mago Sócrates sacó a Filósofo de las arenas movedizas. Enseguida
emprendieron su viaje hacia las ruinas de la Isla Virgen. Iban los tres caminando cuando Bufón sintió que alguien se acercaba y le dijo a los otros dos: “Ocúltense que alguien viene”. Entonces cuando el Mago Sócrates los vio, dijo: “No puede ser, es el malvado Rey Octágón” y se preguntó: ¿Qué hará aquí? ¿Vendrá por la Piedra de la Sabiduría?- Bufón se escondió arriba de un árbol pero no se dio cuenta que la rama estaba muy delgada y que no soportaría su peso de repente! Crak! la rama se quebró y Bufón cayó frente del Rey Octágón quien dijo: ¿Quién eres tú? ¿Qué haces aquí?- Entonces Bufón se levantó y le dijo: “Mi nombre es Bufón”- inmediatamente salieron de sus escondites sus otros amigos y diciendo: “y yo soy Filósofo” y “yo el Mago Sócrates y venimos por la piedra de la sabiduría”.- El Rey Octágón le dijo: “ja ja no me hagas reir porque te mataré”.- Enseguida el Rey Octágón le dijo a sus guerreros: “ataquen y mantenganlos”.- El Mago Sócrates ordenó a sus amigos: “Espéren y ataquenlos”- Giantón levantó una gran roca y la lanzó encima de ellos y el Mago Sócrates le dijo: “Atrás de mí”- y levantando las manos pronunció unas palabras mágicas con la cual la piedra se detuvo en el aire y repitiendo las mismas palabras se la regresó a Giantón el cual no pudo detenerla. La roca cayó encima de él dejándolo inconsciente. Luego Moo con su espada en la mano atacó a Bufón quien sacó su mazo y quitándose el golpe saltó y le pegó en la cabeza a Moo y lo dejó viendo estrellas. Por otro lado, Filósofo se encargó de Shaka tocando una melodía que dejo dormido a Shaka profundamente. Mientras tanto el Rey Octágón y el Mago Sócrates fueron en busca de la Piedra de la Sabiduría pero el Rey Octágón le había sacado ventaja y adelante hizo una trampa en la cual el Mago Sócrates cayó. Al ver eso el Rey Octágón se acercó y le dijo: “jajaja nunca me podrás vencer con tu magia” y le quitó el bastón para que no pudiera hacer magia y salir de la trampa. El Mago Sócrates sabía que sin el bastón él perdía su poder. El Rey Octágón corrió hacia la cueva donde se encontraba la piedra entró y se dirigió hacia ella y gritando: “Ahora sí voy a ser el más poderoso del mundo”. Al tomar la piedra cayó sobre él la maldición y, cayendo con la piedra en la mano, dijo: ¿Qué me pasa? ¡ Esto no puede estar sucediendo! Se fue convirtiendo en estatua poco a poco y soltó la piedra.

Así fue como se confirmó la leyenda de la maldición de la piedra. Sólo el que era puro de corazón podía tomarla. Afuera de la cueva venían Bufón y Filósofo. Ellos vieron que el Mago Sócrates estaba en la trampa ya casi sin fuerza. Lo sacaron. Él dijo: “vamos hacia la cueva que el Malvado Rey Octágón fue a encontrar la piedra”. Al entrar vieron la estatua y dijeron: “Ese es el Rey Octágón”. Bufón corrió hacia la estatua tomó el bastón y se lo pasó al mago. Sócrates volvió a recuperar su poder. Miró la piedra. Esta había vuelto a su lugar. Sócrates caminó hacia ella y la tomó. Por ser puro de corazón, la maldición no cayó sobre él y levantando la piedra dijo: “Esta piedra sólo se usará para hacer el bien, nunca el mal”. Así fue que partieron de la Isla Virgen y se alejaron con la piedra de la sabiduría.
The following are samples of letters that a senior from The Senior Center and a Fairmout School student exchanged during the Pen Pal Project.

October 12, 2001

Dear Maria,

My name is Kathia Ramos. I am a student at Fairmout School. My age is 8. I like to play in school. Do you like to play in school?

Sincerely,

Kathia Ramos

November 6, 2001

Dear Kathia,

Thank you for your letter. You are very intelligent. Congratulations. I read and write English a little bit. I’m student English. I can cook. I like dancing. I like sleep.

Maria Cortez

November 15, 2001

Dear Maria,

What do you cook in your house? I don’t cook. I don’t like to cook but I like to sleep a little bit because I play with my sister. We have fun because we run and jump on the bed and he gets mad and I want to play the air guitar when I am bigger.

Kathia Ramos

Dear Kathia,

I received your letter thank you. I passed very happy thanksgiving. I like that you love your sister. How good she are like play ball or games. I like to study for because read and writing little bit English. I like take vacation.

Maria Cortez