



THE WRITING GRID

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After fifteen years of teaching in the classroom and in writing centers, I've come to respect more than a few composition theorists' and writers' perspectives on the writing process. By far, however, the most significant discussion hasn't come from a person with a Ph.D. or a writer with a mile-long list of publications. Instead, the wisdom comes from two recent undergraduates, Jonathan Mooney and David Cole: "Throughout our lives, we were haunted by the image of the perfect kid who could write a perfect essay in a matter of hours without talking it through, doing wild brainstorming, or faxing a paper to his mom. THESE KIDS DO NOT EXIST. Anyone writing a paper with so little effort isn't exploring very complex or challenging ideas."¹ Their book, *Learning Outside the Lines: Two Ivy League Students with Learning Disabilities and ADHD Give You the Tools for Academic Success and Educational Revolution*, cemented the importance of each writer developing an effective writing process.

Solid writing takes practice *and* reflection. In *Writing With Power: Techniques for Mastering the Writing Process*, former Evergreen faculty member Peter Elbow observed in his study of Evergreen writers that "conscious reflective writing can mean the difference between growing and just continuing to function at the same level."²

The exercise on the next page is designed to assist you in discovering your distinct writing process. By filling in this chart, you can identify strategies that work best for you.

At the beginning of the quarter, some Evergreen faculty ask students to write a reflective essay outlining what students know about themselves as learners. Use the grid to include information about how you write. Also check out the Writing Center's Web site (www.evergreen.edu/writingcenter) and download an "Author's Note." Answering the questions on this handout can empower you to ask for critical feedback. Your tutor, your peer review group, and your faculty can learn from you how to best respond to your draft.

1. Jonathan Mooney and David Cole, *Learning Outside the Lines: Two Ivy League Students with Learning Disabilities and ADHD Give You the Tools for Academic Success and Educational Revolution* (New York: Fireside, 2000), 176.
2. Peter Elbow. *Writing With Power: Technique for Mastering the Writing Process* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 98.

Pick up your pen; your revolution is waiting.

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STAGE OF THE PROCESS	PRODUCT	STRATEGIES	FEEDBACK
B R A I N - S T O R M I N G			
D R A F T I N G			
R E V I S I O N			
E D I T I N G			
P R O O F - R E A D I N G			

WORKS CITED

Elbow, Peter. *Writing With Power: Technique for Mastering the Writing Process*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980.

Mooney, Jonathan and David Cole. *Learning Outside the Lines: Two Ivy League Students with Learning Disabilities and ADHD Give You the Tools for Academic Success and Educational Revolution*. New York: Fireside, 2000.