

Why are Many Students Entering College Unprepared for College Writing?

1  *The purpose of this article was to address the disconnect between the expectations of high school and college instructors regarding student writing*

Expectations for High School Writing

- Use the five-paragraph essay
- Typical genres include literary analysis, analytical essays, and lab reports
- Instruction results in uniformly mechanical student writing

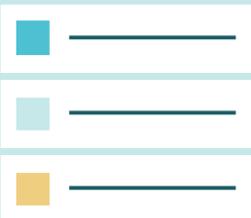
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3  **Expectations for College writing**

- Typically write research papers, narratives, news, feature stories, or book reviews
- College teachers have much broader expectations for acceptable products
- Use a process model of student-centered learning

Findings

- A significant difference in the emphasis on the writing “process” between groups
- This disconnect contributes to students’ varying experiences with writing in school, and subsequently, to an imbalance in college readiness

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5 **Potential reasons behind the disconnect between high school teachers and college instructors who emphasize writing processes**

- Lack of agreement as to what constitutes good writing
- Little or no alignment of student learning outcomes across high school and college
- The overuse of formulaic writing as a means of teaching to the test

Recommendations to Democratize Writing Instruction

- **Dual-enrollment model:** professional support to better prepare students for college writing
- **Establish uniform writing standards:** aligning goals and expectations across grades 9-16
- **Creating a community of faculty** that would strive to provide students with equal access to quality writing instruction
- **High school teachers need to resist the temptation** to focus their efforts on simply training students to produce writing pieces that fulfill standardized testing requirements
 - **Using models:** have students read mentor texts from master classic and contemporary authors and imitate mentor writing
 - **Planning:** have students use a variety of planning strategies and graphic organizers
 - **Revising**
 - **Editing**
 - **Publishing:** have students write for authentic audiences and publish their writing

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Reference: Giouroukakis, V., Kramer-Vida, L., Siegel, K., & Jaccarino, V. (2021). Addressing the High School and College Writing Gap: Democratizing Writing Instruction. *THE ENGLISH RECORD*, 30.