

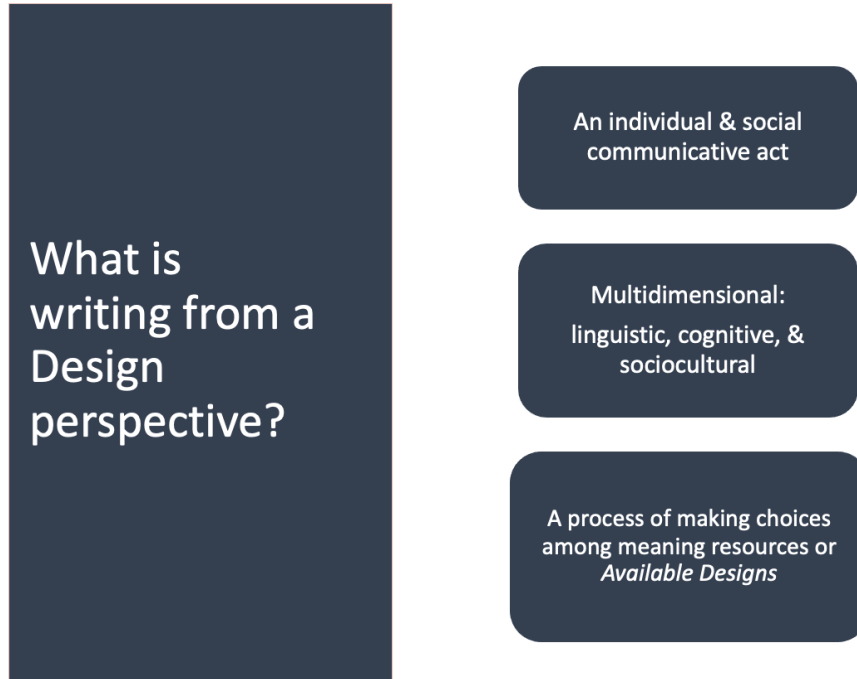
# Re-envisioning Writing Instruction Using a Design Approach

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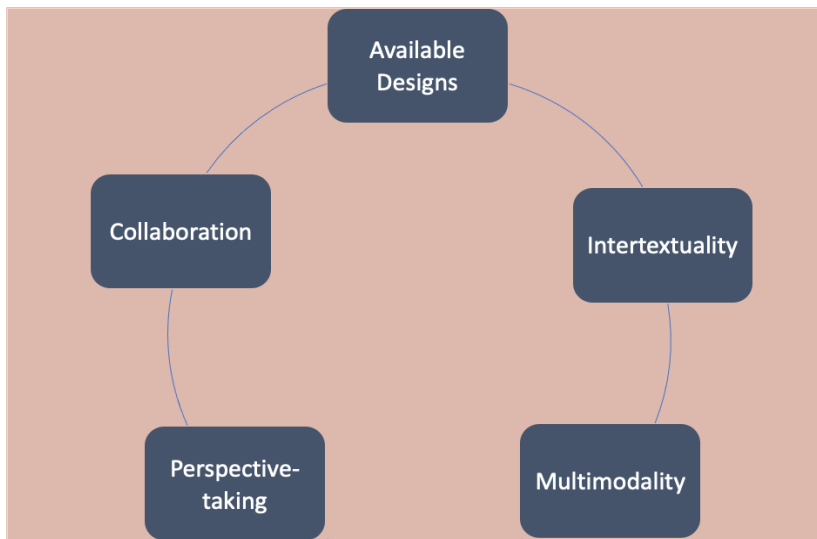
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## I. A Design Approach to Writing Instruction

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## 5 elements of a Design approach to teaching writing



Allen (2018)

## Summary: 5 principles of Design writing



### II. Example of Design Writing Instruction: “Let’s Travel With” My Hometown text

**Context:** Elementary French course; a module on work, leisure activities, and seasons during the second half of the course. Writing activities begin after students have spent several class sessions building new Available Designs on module themes and related communicative functions and reading/viewing texts such as written surveys, video weather reports, and short informational texts.

**Stage 1 (multimodality, Available Designs):** Learners are introduced during class to a travel blog site entitled “Let’s Travel With” and brainstorm, both individually and then in small groups, the site’s potential aims and audience based on its linguistic, schematic, and visual Available Designs.

**Stage 2 (intertextuality, Available Designs):** Writing workshop activities begin by introducing [a model text describing Gatineau, Canada](#), the hometown of a young Canadian named Mathilde, and making recommendations for visiting there. A sequence of reading-to-write activities occurs as learners are guided to establish initial comprehension of major textual events (e.g., Who is being interviewed? What are her favorite places to relax in her town?) and awareness of genre-specific elements such as formatting conventions and recurrent linguistic Available Designs in the model text (these include repeated uses of the expressions *il y a, À* (+ city), *il faut* (+ verb), and *Si vous voulez* (+ verb), *je vous conseille* (+ action/place) [there is/are, In \_\_\_\_, you must \_\_\_\_, If you want \_\_\_\_, I recommend \_\_\_\_.]

**Stage 3 (intertextuality, perspective taking, Available Designs):** Textual borrowing activities follow, in which learners work together to identify model text resources at the word, sentence, and discourse level for use in their writing (e.g., “the typical Québécois dish that is a must try is . . .” or use of the question-and-answer format to organize main ideas) and necessary modifications for their own meaning design, such as changing the word *Québécois* to relate to their own hometown. Planning of content for learners’ writing continues as the instructor leads an interactive instructional conversation on Mathilde’s viewpoint and how it is reflected in specific textual content, such as the elements of her hometown that are

emphasized through a confluence of specific language forms, images, and formatting conventions. Learners are then invited to brainstorm the perspective that they want to infuse into their text as well as the specific linguistic, visual, and schematic Available Designs that they will use to communicate that perspective.

**Stage 4 (intertextuality, multimodality, collaboration, Available Designs):** Completed writing workshop activities and the model text itself serve as meaning design resources for learners as they complete the planning process outside class and produce a first draft of the text along with a paragraph-length reflection on what aspects of their text they are more and less satisfied with as well as any remaining questions they have.

**Stage 5 (collaboration):** Once learners have completed a draft of the text, they participate in a paired peer review using a one-page table that each partner completes after having read and reflected on a peer's text; this activity focuses on the learner's response as a reader of the peer's text and ideas for improving the appropriateness and interest of their peer's writing. Learners then receive their instructor's written feedback on their work using an analytic rubric that balances emphasis on both task completion (i.e., completion of all prewriting and drafting stages) and appropriateness of textual content (linguistic and otherwise) before having the opportunity to revise their writing.

### III. Reflection Questions -

#### *Knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, spelling, punctuation*

- How and when do I focus on linguistic Available Designs in my writing instruction?
- Do I balance emphasis on linguistic Available Designs in writing instruction with other types of Available Designs (e.g., schematic, spatial, etc.)?

#### *Process knowledge*

- Does my writing instruction incorporate explicit information or activities that help students approach writing in a series of meaningful, manageable steps?
- Does the writing process that plays out in my course facilitate learners functioning as a writing community?
- What other forms of collaboration could I integrate in relation to the writing process?

#### *Content knowledge*

- Does my writing instruction help learners create texts interesting, engaging, & intellectually rich texts?
- Does my writing instruction include opportunities for learners to explore new areas of content that are of interest to them?

*Context knowledge*

- Does my writing instruction sensitize learners to reader & audience expectations in relation to specific text types? If so, how?

*Genre knowledge*

- Do I provide textual models to sensitize learners to how language, style, & organizational conventions are used in relation to specific text types?
- Are learners guided to leverage intertextuality to their advantage, i.e., use model text resources in their own writing?

*Feedback on learners' writing*

- How do learners receive feedback on their writing?
- Is collaboration a feature of the feedback process?

*Perspective-taking*

- Do learners in my courses have an opportunity to write creatively and play with language?
- Does writing in my course allow learners to try on different identities or to write from a variety of perspectives?

*Final Reflections*

Among the various elements of Design writing that I've begun to learn about (Available Designs, Intertextuality, Multimodality, Perspective-taking, Collaboration), which one/s do I want to integrate into my teaching?

What do I need to do next to begin incorporating that Design element or elements into my teaching? (e.g., continue learning about Design pedagogy, find local sources of support to experiment with these new ideas together, rethink my course learning outcomes, etc.)

#### IV. Selected References

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