Chapter 5 shows students how to employ various methods of development to shape their essays. Narration, description, process analysis, comparison, classification, definition, and causal analysis are presented as tools to help students explain their points, not as structures that need to be filled with information. Because writers use several of these methods to develop a piece of writing, students should realize that no one “mode” is ever used to the exclusion of others. Narratives contain description and classification; causal analyses contain narratives and comparisons. Chapter 5 presents the methods of development not as ends in themselves but as heuristics, or teaching prompts, to help students discover what they want to say in their writing.

Because students tend to see methods of development—the “rhetorical modes”—as forms of, rather than as aids to, writing, many teachers avoid mentioning them, regarding such concepts as antithetical to teaching writing as process. But these patterns provide students with useful invention and organizational tools, particularly because papers and essay examinations in other disciplines often ask for such patterns. John McPhee’s comments on page 106 can help reinforce how writing finds its own form: “The structure of a piece of writing arises from within the material I have collected.” You may want to discuss with your students how structure helps shape meaning. If you want to advocate stronger animal-rights legislation, for example, a personal narrative such as McPhee’s, backed by description and process analysis collected through outside research, provides a convincing and engaging argument.

Also instructive are the passages of Jane’s essay at its various stages of development, which show how she shapes the material for the final draft with the use of several patterns of development. All her rhetorical choices grew from the demands of the material itself, not from the demands of an assignment that required
her to “fit” the material into a particular “mode” of expression. To find the best structure, however, she had to experiment with various patterns,
sometimes working from the inside out to discover the best structure, sometimes imposing a structure from the outside in. Either way, the writer relates pattern to meaning and uses the methods to discover purpose.

If you are organizing your syllabus according to rhetorical modes, you will probably want to assign the chapter in sections, having students read and practice narration, then description, and so on. If you do not specify the method of development to be used, then you may want your students to read the entire chapter at once so they will be able to use it as a resource as they decide which methods best fit their material and their purpose in an essay. Whichever you choose, point out to students that writers rarely limit themselves to a single strategy but instead draw on various patterns of development. All three essays at the end of the chapter illustrate this point.

WHAT HAPPENED?

NARRATION

Because narration seems to be the most natural mode of discourse, the one most like the everyday order of things, teachers often choose to start the term with a narrative assignment. If this is your approach, you may want to warn your students that although narratives seem easy, they present perilous difficulties of audience and purpose. Furthermore, effective narration involves tricky matters such as plot, pace, and point of view. Far from being a literal recall of events, narration calls for careful selection and arrangement of events, along with a clear and consistent point of view.

Margin Questions (p. 109)

1. After briefly introducing the setting, Jane identifies herself as the first-person narrator, locates her physical position (“seated forward”), and reveals her attitude toward the event (it is a “long-anticipated adventure”).

2. Possible conflicts include her tendency toward seasickness, the misty weather, and the distracting loud conversations of other passengers as they try to talk above the sound of the engine.

3. The conflicts that threaten Jane’s achievement of her goal dissolve in the conclusion, when she sees the whale. Because Jane slows her narrative at this crucial moment—the tour guide shouts “Thar she blows”; her eyes follow the guide’s finger, straining and at first seeing nothing—dramatic tension builds, heightening the reader’s sense of Jane’s satisfaction when she “at last” sees a
whale. This technique serves Jane’s purpose, which is to describe her anticipation and realization of a long-time goal.

Exercises (p. 109)

The narrative topics derive from the writing samples for this section, and both are highly accessible. Everyone has intruded on someone’s privacy or reached a goal. These topics work nicely as journal assignments or as the basis for longer essays. Using the exercise questions, you might ask students to respond to one another’s drafts, offering their assessments of the writer’s point of view, arrangement of events, pace, and purpose.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

DESCRIPTION

Like narration, description is not as easy as it seems; it must serve a purpose, which governs the selection and arrangement of details. To illustrate this point, you might conduct a short, in-class exercise. Ask students to think of a house that has been important to them—their parents’ or grandparents’ house, a beach house, their first home, their current home—and then instruct them to respond to the following prompts: How might the house appear in a real estate ad? Describe the house in terms of what it means to you emotionally, using as many sense details as possible to communicate this meaning. Ask students to read the two versions aloud in class or in small groups, noting how purpose affects word choice, selection and development of details, and so on.

To encourage imaginative description, you might ask students to think metaphorically. Ask them to think of the same place and jot down responses to the following prompts:

• Give this house a name.
• This house is an animal. What animal is it?
• This house is a person. Who or what kind of person is it?
• What weather do you associate with this house?
• What sort of novel or movie might use this house for a setting?
1. The point of Jane’s description—to communicate her awe at seeing a rare whale, the finback—is introduced through narration: “The biologist hushed us.”

2. Jane evokes various senses to recapture this experience: the smell of oil and gas on the ship, the sound of silence, the sight of the mammoth whale, the feel of the boat’s movement and of her throat tightening.

3. The details are arranged from whole to part, creating first a dominant image of the whale’s awesome size and presence. Jane then moves on to specific features, culminating with the feature that impressed her the most—the “watery eye” that looked back at her. She describes the size (“monolith”), color (“sea-green,” “dorsal fin . . . speckled with white and gray spots,” “huge greenish head”), sound (“He was silent”), and movement (“He swam purposefully toward the boat. Then under”). From the beginning, the details underscore the rarity of this event: the finback was “way off course,” finbacks are “shy” and “solitary,” and they usually stay clear of boats.

Exercises (p. 111)

These two exercises grow out of the section’s writing samples. The first allows students some imaginative play. If international students are in your class, their ideas of mythical creatures may be quite different from American students’ impressions and can lead to some interesting discussion. The exercise gives students practice in integrating source material with their own ideas. The second offers practice in interviewing and in organizing and analyzing the material. Either exercise could be used as a short, in-class assignment or as the beginning of a longer essay.

HOW DO YOU DO IT?

PROCESS ANALYSIS

Two types of process papers—the “how something works” paper and the “how to do something” paper—are discussed. Of the two, the first, where the writer’s intention is to inform, is more workable, although the second, where the intention is to instruct, is particularly suitable for technical students who need practice in writing “instruction sets” for machinery or tools. Nevertheless, to avoid students’ tendency to draw up simple lists for such topics as how to make a speech, how to change a tire, and how to bake a cake, you might want to specify criteria for this type of paper and limit the topics to those of interest to serious technical-writing
students, even though the course is a basic course in writing. If students are seriously interested in writing instruction sets for business, you might want to encourage them to first research the various types and methods of such writing assignments. (You might want to look at Dwight W. Stevenson, ed., Courses, Components, and Exercises in Technical Communication [Urbana, IL: NCTE, 1981] if you have a number of students who would benefit from some instruction in technical-writing methods, for that is beyond the scope of this book.)

Whatever type of process analysis your students write, however, a major issue for them will be audience. Because most students choose to describe processes familiar to them, they often fail to accommodate the general reader’s need for explanations and definitions. Peer response groups are especially helpful for these kinds of assignments because they can let the writer know when more information is needed.

Process analysis, unlike the other methods of development, also supplies the purpose of an essay—to explain a process. Nevertheless, students will notice that to provide such an explanation, they are also relying on other methods of development, such as description, definition, and classification. Students might also frame the analysis as an argument that proves which is the most effective, efficient, or best way to go about doing something.

**Discussion Questions (p. 112)**

1. Jane cites her dilemma—she loves whale watching but suffers from seasickness—as a lead-in to her process analysis.

2. Jane suggests three preboarding precautions: (a) eat a light meal several hours before boarding, (b) take two Dramamine tablets two hours before boarding, and (c) dress warmly because you cannot go below if you get cold, for that will trigger the seasickness. In addition, she offers advice based on her own trial-and-error methods of avoiding seasickness: (a) if the smell of gas and oil fumes nauseates you, avoid standing near the engine; (b) take advantage of the cold, salty breeze that comes from facing forward because this can stave off nausea; and (c) avoid looking quickly from whale to whale, which can make you queasy.

3. In the concluding line, Jane humorously uses a play on words to remind the reader of the consequences of not taking precautions: “I avoid the green tourist who has not taken these precautions. The next ‘Thar she blows’ might be her.”

**Exercises (p. 112)**
Both assignments build on H. Allen Smith’s process analysis of how to kill a wasp. Both are usable as in-class collaborative exercises or as lead-ins to get students started on lengthy essays.

**HOW IS IT SIMILAR OR DIFFERENT? COMPARISON**

Stressing the three purposes of comparison on pages 112–113 should counteract students’ tendency to write perfunctory essays on the differences and similarities between McDonald’s and Burger King or, another student favorite, between living at home and living in the dorm. Furthermore, students should find the two patterns for organizing comparisons straightforward and relatively easy to apply. Because pattern serves purpose, you might wish to ask students what differences in effect they find between the two comparative patterns. Generally, the divided pattern (A + B) emphasizes B, drawing significance from B’s similarity to or difference from A. For example, in Jane’s comparison of the diplodocus and the blue whale, her real interest is in the blue whale. Its similarity to the diplodocus serves to highlight the characteristics of the blue whale and elicit concern for its potential extinction. The alternating pattern (A/B + A/B) is most often used to make fine distinctions between two things and to illuminate both elements in the comparison. Thus, Gretel Ehrlich presents a point-by-point contrast between the stereotypical cowboy and real cowboy to show the falseness of the former and the misunderstood characteristics of the latter.

**Margin Questions (pp. 114–115)**

1. The Marlboro ad that Ehrlich sees in New York triggers her loneliness for Wyoming and her speculation about the difference between the stereotype pictured in the ad and the real cowboys she knows.
2. In a series of if-then statements, Ehrlich heightens the irony by using parallel sentence structure to place the stereotype and the reality side by side. In this series of sentences, the initial dependent clause presents the stereotype and the main clause contains its contradiction: “If he’s ‘strong and silent’ it’s because there’s probably no one to talk to.”
3. Because the cowboy lives outdoors much of the time, close to the elements, his behavior is shaped by his natural environment just as natural objects such as stones are shaped by the environment—rained on, snowed on, climbed on. Because Ehrlich’s thesis is that the stereotype is a “masculine, cultural artifact”
and the reality is “simply a man who possesses resilience, patience, and an instinct for survival,” the stone, a simple natural element, provides a fitting metaphor for the real cowboy.

**Exercises (p. 115)**

These exercises help students develop metaphorical language as a way to view two activities or people and animals in new ways. Both can be used as individual assignments or as collaborative projects. Students might first brainstorm together to generate lists of items they can then write about.

**WHAT KIND OF SUBDIVISION DOES IT CONTAIN? CLASSIFICATION**

Like comparison, classification is a common pattern of development, a powerful intellectual tool useful in all disciplines. It also is a pattern that students often mistake as an end in itself, not as a means to an end. A student who writes an essay demonstrating that people can be divided into three classes—those who love cats, those who hate cats, and those who are indifferent to cats—will have to confront the question “So what?” The system is consistent and complete, but is it significant?

Significance is the major stumbling block in the classification paper, but do not underrate the difficulties that consistency and completeness will pose for some of your students. A formal outline can help students understand how classification can provide a way of understanding a topic and organizing complicated explanations. Desmond Morris, as the textbook points out, arranges categories of territory he has identified from the largest to the smallest: Tribal Territory, Family Territory, and Personal Space. In each category, he supplies details that help define the function of that category.

Pie charts can help some students understand these concepts as parts of the whole. As a preliminary classroom activity, you might ask students to construct pie charts of Morris’s territorial scheme and then delineate the various actions that occur within these territories.

**Margin Questions (pp. 116–117)**

1. Although Jane acknowledges that there are many kinds of whales, she claims that her principle of classification, personality, incorporates “most whales” and is therefore complete.
2. Although the “friendly” whales hunt and consume small fish with baleen or teeth, Jane reinforces their harmlessness by comparing them to the benign, playful porpoise, which also has teeth and eats small fish.

3. Jane’s classification concludes with the category that is threatened with extinction, the shy whales. Unlike the aggressive whales, they pose no danger to people but are hunted simply because they are the world’s largest creatures. By saving this category until last, she can emphasize the tragedy and irony of their impending extinction and perhaps prompt concern in the reader.

Exercises (p. 117)

The exercises rely on the concept of classification but also provide students with the opportunity to use other methods of development, such as narrative and process analysis (in Exercise 1) and definition (in Exercise 2). Students might come up with other ideas as they work in groups to outline methods for approaching the problems.

HOW WOULD YOU CHARACTERIZE IT?

DEFINITION

Your students may come to the notion of definition with a history of papers that begin with “According to Webster’s . . .” Such a definition, they believe, launches their essay with a minimum of effort and adds authority and clarity to their use of a term. What students lack is an appreciation for the complexity of language and the importance of context in language use. Therefore, a discussion of stipulative and extended definitions is important not only for their writing but also for their intellectual growth.

You might ask students to bring in definitions from newspaper articles or technical journals in their particular field of study. You might also introduce students to the Oxford English Dictionary by asking them to identify several unfamiliar words in one of the readings and then to bring in corresponding definitions from the OED. Another classroom exercise could ask students to identify politically charged words such as conservative and liberal, write their own definitions of the words, and then compare these definitions to those used by politicians or found in the OED. An examination of such terms as health care and comprehensive might provide a jumping-off point into an essay on the current debate over health-care reform in the United States.

For generating a discussion about the stipulative definition, students will enjoy Humpty Dumpty’s conversation with Alice in Through the Looking Glass:
“I don’t know what you mean by ‘glory,’” Alice said.

Humpty Dumpty smiled contemptuously. “Of course you don’t—till I tell you. I mean, ‘there’s a nice knock-down argument for you!’”

“But ‘glory’ doesn’t mean “there’s a nice knock-down argument,’” Alice observed.

“When I use a word,” Humpty Dumpty said, in a rather scornful tone, “it means exactly what I want it to mean—nothing more and nothing less.”

“The question is,” said Alice, “whether you can make a word mean so many different things.”

“The question is,” said Humpty Dumpty, “which is to be master—that’s all.”

Yi-Fu Tuan’s definition of fear also provides a good basis for a discussion of definition. You may want to ask your class how using words Alice-fashion (in conformity to general usage) or Humpty-fashion (according to one’s own purpose) can strengthen or weaken communication. If a writer uses words Humpty-fashion, what must she or he do to ensure audience understanding? As pointed out in the chapter, Yi-Fu Tuan introduces two short definitions in response to the opening question, “What is fear?” He classifies fear into categories of alarm and anxiety and then discusses the common fear reactions that humans share with animals. He then further analyzes fear by introducing other emotions within the range of fear, such as dread and guilt, which as far as we know only humans experience. He further defines fear by discussing the role of imagination in the experience of fear.

Margin Questions (pp. 118–119)

1. Jane reinforces the idea that the word *gam* needs definition with a reference to Herman Melville, who claimed to be the first to define the word officially, although it had been “in constant use among fifteen thousand true born Yankees” for many years.

2. Jane uses unusual but more familiar synonyms such as *pod* and *school* to help define *gam*.

3. A word that originally attributed human behavior to whales but now uses whale behavior to describe humans nicely rounds out the definition of the term.

Exercises (p. 119)

Like some of the earlier assignments, these two parallel the two writing samples. Students might also look at medical, music, literary, slang, or computer dictionaries.
WHY DID IT HAPPEN?
CAUSAL ANALYSIS

Causal analysis is probably the most intellectually difficult of the methods discussed in Chapter 5 because it requires the student to push a thesis forward without stumbling into the pitfalls of post hoc reasoning or oversimplified causes. But the rigorous intellectual work involved is worth the effort because much of the lively debate that goes on around us amounts to conflicting causal analyses.

Margin Questions (p. 120)

1. According to Jane, whale watching began “as a scientific enterprise” by marine biologists who were “concerned about extinction” and “attempted to chart the feeding and migrating patterns of whales.”

2. The three effects that have resulted from the popularity of whale watching are (a) people have had an opportunity to enjoy the extraordinary entertainment provided by this experience, (b) people have become more aware of the need to protect whales from extinction, and (c) the entrepreneurs who manage this recreation have made enormous profits.

3. The third effect, the economic benefits of whale watching, is potentially the most important because it is the one most likely to contribute to whale preservation, which is Jane’s real concern. Jane makes this connection explicit when she notes that American entrepreneurs are trying to convince other nations that still hunt whales of the greater profitability of whale watching.

Exercises (p. 120)

The first assignment is an investigative exercise that combines sources of information—reading, personal experience, interview data—and that could lead to an essay. It also affords a chance to write in another discipline.

The second assignment is based on personal experience and seems most suited as a journal assignment, unless the writer goes beyond his or her own speculations about the effects of this experience and actually interviews someone who has had the experience.

EXPLORING METHODS OF DEVELOPMENT
ON YOUR COMPUTER
Students’ experiences in writing with a word processor can be an ideal subject to use for practicing the various patterns of development discussed in Chapter 5. A suggested sequence of topics includes the following:

- **Narration**: Write about your first (worst, best) experience in writing with a word processor.
- **Description**: Describe your initial impressions of the computer or computer lab. Provide technical descriptions of the various components of your computer, and write a piece that weaves together factual, technical, and impressionistic details.
- **Process**: Analyze the steps involved in writing on a word processor. Write this for an audience that lacks computer literacy and that may even be technophobic.
- **Comparison**: Compare learning to write with a word processor and another learning experience that you have had, or compare writing on a computer with your former writing process. An alternative subject is to compare two or more word processing programs.
- **Classification**: Classify types of computer writers or approaches to writing with a word processor.
- **Definition**: Write a stipulative or extended definition of a computer term such as *byte*, *file*, or *hard copy*.
- **Causal analysis**: Write about how writing with a word processor has affected your writing practices.

Another general topic of interest is introducing students to the differences in “grammars” of printed text and screen text, as Cynthia L. Selfe outlines in her article “Redefining Literacy: The Multilayered Grammars of Computers.” Selfe discusses the “virtual text” that appears and disappears on the computer screen, giving it a fluid form as opposed to the more “fixed” form of a print text (7). Other differences include such things as greater use of headings, highlighting, and graphic elements in computer-generated texts (13). Ask your students to list the ways in which computers may have changed how they imagine and construct their final texts. What conventions are emerging in screen texts that did not exist in printed texts? In what ways do students compensate, for example, for not being able to read an entire page of text at once? Many of your students may note that they tend to use the “page preview” option on their computer in order to see what an entire page looks like, something that takes more time than simply glancing at a printed page of text.
READINGS

All three readings address the care and handling of animals and employ overlapping rhetorical strategies to make a point. You might want to ask students to identify the dominant patterns in all the essays and then discuss how the patterns provide convincing arguments. Which essays do students find most engaging? What features of the essays are most appealing? What ideas do these readings give students for essays of their own?

“Animals in Transit,” Peter Singer

Discussion questions (p. 122). What is the dominant pattern in this passage? What other patterns does Singer use to develop his explanation? How does his explanation make you react to the last sentence in the passage?

The dominant pattern in the passage is that of causal analysis. Singer describes the process and inhumane conditions under which cattle are shipped. Both cause extreme stress, which shows itself in two major reactions: shrinkage (weight loss from dehydration during transit) and shipping fever (a form of pneumonia contracted after transit). The animals are frightened; they have probably been handled roughly; the motion of the truck may make them ill; they suffer from cold drafts in the winter and extreme heat in the summer: “After one or two days in the truck without food or water they are desperately thirsty and hungry.” Cattle are accustomed to eating frequently throughout the day because their stomachs demand a constant flow of food to work properly. All cattle lose weight during shipping, mostly because of dehydration, and many animals die outright during transit as a result of freezing, suffocation, or other neglect.

Singer describes in detail what happens to cattle during transit, and by the time we reach the end of the essay, we are outraged at this treatment. Knowing that by now he has us in sympathy with the animals, Singer lets us have it: “The animal that you may be having for dinner tonight did not die in any of these ways; but these deaths are and always have been part of the overall process that provides people with their meat.” This final sentence, simply and unemotionally stated as fact, causes us to draw back and rethink our eating habits. Because the essay has focused so finely on the reaction of animals to stress during transit, not on the evils of eating meat, the final sentence comes with some surprise and a great deal of power.

“Watching Whales,” Jane Graham
**Discussion questions (p. 123).** Which patterns has Graham reshaped, relocated, or eliminated during revising? Is the dominant structure of her essay the most effective method for accomplishing her purpose?

The overall structure of Jane’s essay is a personal narrative into which she splices a number of other patterns of development. To accomplish her purpose—communicating the power of whale watching and the concern for whale preservation produced by this experience—the choice of personal narrative is most effective. Although she wants to offer information about whales, her primary purpose is to engage the reader’s personal interest in whales, and this can be done most dramatically through narration.

Jane opens with an idea from her process analysis passage—“The problem with whales is that they don’t fit under a microscope”—that she has reshaped as a lead-in to the history of her fascination with whales. She adds detail to this background, beginning with her visit to the American Museum of Natural History as a small girl. The opening paragraph concludes with a sentence that prepares the reader for what will follow: a narration of her long-anticipated first whale watch. Throughout the essay, however, Jane moves back and forth from narrative, to description, to classification, to definition. All these methods of development become, for a moment, the dominant strategy. (It is important that students see that a good narrative works best when it supplies the kinds of detail that come from good description, good causal analysis, and so on.) Jane restructures her essay in the various drafts that we see by downplaying certain parts (the definition of *gam*) and developing other parts (the description of the finback and the continuation of the narrative).

You might want to ask students to quickly outline the experimental drafts and compare the outlines they have made to find the differences. In addition, you might want them to do the same with their own essays because this will teach them how their own writing has been shaped through revision of the particular methods of development they have chosen. You might also ask them if there are places in their writing where they unconsciously described or narrated something because the writing demanded it.

“**Grizzly,**” John McPhee

**Discussion questions (p. 126).** Which pattern seems to emerge naturally from the material? Which pattern seems to be imposed on the material?

McPhee describes an “organic” process of writing, in which the subject defines its form. (Donald Murray calls it “how writing finds its own meaning.”) Rather than begin with a structure he wants to impose on the information he has
gathered, McPhee seeks connections between the bits of data he has collected and waits until the material reveals important relationships. Rather like a painter or printmaker, McPhee “plays” with his medium and enters into a spirit of discovery and surprise as he allows a piece of writing to form. (Students might refer back to Howard Gardner’s analysis of “introspective accounts” of the creative process on pages 19–20. In what ways might McPhee’s account of his process be similar to Mozart’s account? In what ways does it differ?)

The predominant pattern of McPhee’s piece is description, but what makes the description so compelling is the way it is intertwined into a narrative. The reader is instantly gripped by the drama of the walk through the woods and the discovery of the grizzly. The impending danger faced by the narrator and Fedeler makes the description of the powerful grizzly more immediate. Students might want to discuss how effective narrative can be as a tool for describing. The subsequent descriptions of the various behaviors of the animal appear to emerge naturally from the material: the narrator has seen the bear and observes it among the blueberries with its “fifty-five-inch waist and a neck more than thirty inches around.” The speculations (the “if” statements) about the bear seem more self-consciously imposed, but description remains the predominant pattern. The patterns break into some minor classification (a grizzly that has been wounded is likely to charge; a sow grizzly is likely to defend her cubs). This gives way to some process analysis, another way of describing the bear. McPhee analyzes how the grizzly will perform certain acts to protect his food (lie on the carcass and swat the ravens) or to eat food (remove and eat the entrails of a cow moose). By and large, however, McPhee’s descriptions do not appear forced, perhaps because the descriptions are embedded in a narrative and follow the vagaries of the human mind as it thinks about the large bear. If anything, McPhee has made his painstaking research into the grizzly appear as though it is “natural knowledge” and not carefully gathered information. This is the mark of a skillful writer.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS
Students might want to continue developing any of the previous writing assignments, using the development strategies discussed in Chapter 5. The writing assignments in this chapter could be used sequentially as a way to help students construct a sustained piece of writing. For example, assignments 1–4 provide ideas for helping students research a topic on animal care; assignments 5–10 offer suggestions that students could use in light of their own extended writing project on such topics as animal rights, care and treatment of domestic animals, and controversial issues regarding laboratory animals.

1. Narrate: This assignment might be recast as an analysis of how students respond differently to the three types of entertainment. Students might also use the assignment to work on assessing early reading experiences and determining what role television or film played in their development as readers. In addition to narration, students might compare the different genres. This assignment aims to increase student awareness of the narrative and of comparison as means to help readers understand an argument.

2. Observe: This is another useful method of gathering information. Organizations such as the Audubon Society, the Orion Society, and the Sierra Club gather information from all over the world on controversial environmental issues. By observing how a local environmental issue fits into the larger global debate, students can both expand and enrich their topic.

3. Investigate: In addition to contrasting the various roles of laboratory assistants, students might also describe the physical layout of a lab and define the various roles performed by animal lab researchers. The assignment could evolve into a process analysis of how researchers use rats, for example, in medical research on AIDS.

4. Collaborate: Students might classify the various experiments according to methods useful to medical research, keeping in mind ethical arguments. They might analyze the documents and policies for evidence of ambiguities as they seek to define specific guidelines inherent in the stated policies. They might also classify arguments from both researchers and animal rights advocates to establish a common ground for discussion between the two groups.

5. Read: Causal analysis is the dominant method for this assignment, although students might also describe the various types of zoos, classify them, and define a specific aim for zoos.
6. Respond: Cultural attitudes toward eating contribute to how we view good eating habits. Students might want to look at the current debate surrounding the classification of the four food groups, which have been defined since 1956 as meat, dairy products, grains, and fruits and vegetables. The new food group classification, advocated by an organization called Physicians’ Committee for Responsible Medicine, eliminates meat and dairy products altogether, leaving whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and legumes (*Boston Globe Magazine*). This might lead to a discussion of the arbitrary nature of classification and the role of argument in determining classifications.

7. Analyze: Students will easily see that Jane’s narrative also employs other rhetorical techniques. Description is evident throughout the essay, as she notes details about fellow travelers, the boat, the sea, the whales themselves. Process analysis is employed in the discussions of how the humpbacks eat, spout, and swim. She discusses only two types of whales, the humpback and the finback, so the use of classification is limited. The guiding questions for such development would be “What does it look like?” “How is it done?” “What kind are they?” “What happened?” The point is that students see that the methods employed emerge from the writing itself and from the aims of discourse.

8. Evaluate: Jane approaches the watching of whales through curiosity and weaves a literary perspective into her essay with thoughts from *Moby Dick*. She finds herself asking “Why couldn’t we simply watch? Why did people have to hunt, kill, and destroy?” Jane and her guide savor the beauty of the whales, with their “graceful, powerful gentleness” on the open seas, much as museum-goers savor the experience of viewing paintings, but from a respectful distance. Francine duPlessix Gray and her guide, however, object to certain kinds of watching because of the insensitivity displayed by other guides and viewers, who get too close to the animals and lack any apparent concern for the disruption this viewing brings to the natural habitat.

You might ask students to imagine they are sitting at an outdoor cafe with these writers and to construct a conversation over lunch on the subject of “animal watching,” or what Gray calls “a new etiquette of viewing.” They should include their own views and experiences with animal watching. They might also want to bring along a “guest,” or other writer, who has different views on the subject. Another approach to this assignment is to ask students to work collaboratively, with each member of the group adopting the viewpoint...
of a particular writer and arguing for that perspective. (In addition to Jane’s and Gray’s points of view, students might also use John McPhee’s perspective and their own experiences and points of view.) Then the group might integrate the various perspectives into a conversation.

9. Argue: In arguing whether or not McPhee’s comments explain the methods of development he uses in writing the piece on the grizzly, students are not asked to come up with the “right” answer. Right or wrong is not the issue here; what is the issue is how successfully students argue their case, using adequate proof from both McPhee’s comments about his process and the reading selection. Students might make notes about their own reading and writing processes as they work on this project and see if they can articulate their own work habits.

10. Argue: This might be the final sequence of a series of assignments that ask students to examine animal care in particular settings. Students might first draw up a convincing classification scheme (perhaps based on the reasons for the study—medical, recreation, social science) and then argue for particular guidelines that govern the study of animals in the wilderness. Or they might be more interested in conducting a series of interviews and then arguing a particular point of view based on the information they have gathered. They could build on previous assignments (a sequence might be assignments 3, 4, and 8, for example) and revise the work into a convincing argument. The final paper might become a proposal to be presented to a state legislature or to an animal laboratory that conducts questionable research. Students might define still other audiences by brainstorming in class together.

**USING THE WRITING CENTER**

Tutors can help students see what they often miss in their own writing—that they have something interesting to say but the writing disappoints the reader because it lacks sufficient detail. Tutors can help students determine which method of development would be most useful in their essays by asking questions that students answer by describing, classifying, and so on. If students have made it clear to tutors that their assignment requires them to work on a specific method of development, tutors can help students find ways to develop their essays using that particular method. Tutors will ask students to break down the steps of a process—for example, in ways that help the reader follow the sequence. “Wait a minute,” the tutor will say. “I don’t understand this.” Writers and tutors can then determine what needs to be added (or deleted) or simply explained in more detail.
Students often confuse methods of development with purpose. This student-tutor exchange illustrates the problem:

_Tutor:_ What’s your purpose in this essay, Jerry?
_Student:_ To compare McDonald’s and Burger King.
_Tutor:_ I’m sorry, I didn’t ask that question the right way. I mean, what are you trying to show your reader in this essay? What are you getting at?
_Student:_ I’m trying to show how the two restaurants are alike and how they are different.
_Tutor:_ Yes, but why? What is your reader supposed to get from this comparison?
_Student:_ The reader’s just supposed to get an idea of how one place is different from the other. I mean, that’s the point, isn’t it? Our teacher told us to compare two places.
_Tutor:_ Uh-huh. Let’s look at it a different way. What’s your thesis here?
_Student:_ It’s at the end of the first paragraph: “While McDonald’s and Burger King are alike in some ways, in many ways they are different.”

At this point, the tutor quite properly asks “So what? What is significant about the similarities and differences between McDonald’s and Burger King?” Methods of development are not meant to be preformed molds into which writers dutifully pour content. Properly understood, they are methods of discovery and communicating meaning. Writing Center tutors can help students understand this.

Make sure that students understand the assignment you have given them, and advise them to bring the assignment to show the writing tutor. Also stress that they should bring their drafts to the Writing Center, even if all they have are notes to themselves about what they want to write.

**ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR THE COLLABORATIVE CLASSROOM**

You may want to develop collaborative classroom exercises for each of the patterns of development. An example of such an exercise has already been offered for causal analysis. Here are other ideas, one for narration, one for definition, and one for process analysis:

- **Narration:** Ask students to write about a favorite, often-repeated family story. Every family has such stories—the ones about the clever, frightening, or funny things children in the family did, about the way various couples in the family met, or about funny incidents at family reunions. After about fifteen or twenty minutes, ask students to exchange stories with a classmate. Tell students to read each other’s stories, annotating them with reporters’ questions—who?
what? when? where? how? why? Then give this assignment for the next day: “Rewrite your story in two versions, choosing one of the following options: write two versions, one as a straightforward narrative, the other as a flashback; or write two versions, one from the writer’s point of view, the other from the point of view of another participant or of an omniscient narrator.” The next day, students can again exchange papers and choose which version they think is most effective, explaining why they think so. General classroom discussion can follow, using specific examples from the students’ work to show the importance of arrangement and point of view in narration.

• Definition: Ask students to write their own dictionary based on students’ names and to use the terms in sentences. For example, identify particular characteristics, such as tidiness or humor, and use the person’s name as a verb: if Charlie is noted for his laughter, students might write the following definition and sentence: “char-lie (char-lee) v. charlied, charlying, charlies. To express delight by forcing air out of lungs: I charlied my way to the bank.” Students might also enjoy writing a nonsense dictionary and then using its words in a short essay. They might compare their own definitions with those from the dictionary. Although these exercises are lighthearted games, they can lead to more serious discussions about words and their uses. Such exercises might also supply a break from the usually serious business of manipulating language required of students in a writing course and show them that language can be fun.

• Process: Divide the class into four or five groups, assigning each group the task of writing instructions for a new student about some aspect of life on campus. For example, one group might write about how to get through the (in-person) registration, another about how to get to a particular building or office, another about how to get a parking place or sticker, and another about how to apply for student employment. After the groups have completed their collaborative writing task, ask them to exchange their instructions with another group, which will check the instructions for completeness, clarity, needed definitions of terms, and so on.

• As mentioned earlier, you may wish to devise “primary trait” peer response sheets to guide students in responding to one another’s work. Here is an example of such a guide for descriptive writing:

  Description
Peer respondent: | Writer:

1. What dominant impression do you carry away from this piece of descriptive writing?
2. How are the details arranged? Whole to part? Spatially?
3. Does this method of arrangement contribute to the dominant impression? How? Or if not, why not?
4. What sense does the writer evoke?
5. Which sense does the writer use most effectively?
6. Are there other senses that the writer could have used but did not?

SOURCES AND ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

For a theoretical discussion of how the patterns of development relate to cognitive processes, see James Moffat’s *Teaching the Universe of Discourse* (New York: Oxford UP, 1975).

An overview of the history of the modes as the organizing principle for composition courses is provided by Robert Connors in “The Rise and Fall of the Modes of Discourse,” *College Composition and Communication* 32 (1981): 444 – 55.

For a reassessment of cognitive approaches to the teaching of modes, see JoAnne M. Podis and Leonard A. Podis, “Identifying and Teaching Rhetorical Plans for Arrangement,” *College Composition and Communication* 41 (1990): 430 – 42.

