

Grading Writing to Learn Activities

The Colorado State University WAC offers a number of useful suggestions for responding to WTL activities without spending endless hours grading.

Here are some of the tips from their site:

Because most teachers cannot read through and comment on every WTL activity students complete, we suggest the following alternatives:

1. Use an occasional WTL warm-up at the beginning of class as a "quiz."
2. Pick up a single sheet of paper or glance at a computer screen and comment briefly on students' grasp of a reading assignment or key concepts.
3. Pick up WTL material from five-ten students every day or every other day. Don't read every word, but skim quickly to identify tasks students might need help with—a reading that bogged down in class discussion, a page that has very little written, a page that has lots written.
4. Use different colored pens or highlighters to note points in selected entries. One color means "good idea," one means "consider pursuing this idea as a paper topic," another means "come back to this idea again and explore it in more detail," and so on.
5. While students are writing at the beginning and end of class, walk around the room and read over shoulders. This technique is especially easy if you have students writing on computers. Stop to talk to or jot a note on the writing of 3-4 students.
6. Ask students to select their best WTL writing for you to review.
7. Ask students to share WTL activities with one or two classmates.
8. Ask students to turn in the WTL writing that contains questions about course material.
9. Ask students to post questions or summary/analysis of readings on an electronic bulletin board or Web forum for class comment.