



Students' Processes of Gathering Information for Writing Report Texts at Darul Falah Sei Kamah II Private Islamic Senior High School

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ABSTRACT

Information gathering is an essential component of academic writing because students need to identify, evaluate, and synthesize relevant information before constructing a coherent report text. Nevertheless, students learning English as a Foreign Language often encounter difficulties in managing information systematically during the writing process. This study investigates how eleventh-grade students at Darul Falah Sei Kamah II Private Islamic Senior High School gather information for writing report texts using the *Big6 Model* as a diagnostic framework. Employing a qualitative case study design, the study collected data through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and analysis of students' written texts and analyzed them using Miles and Huberman's data reduction procedures. The findings reveal procedural weaknesses across several stages of the *Big6 Model*: students frequently bypassed task definition, relied on limited information sources, and encountered linguistic barriers when selecting and processing relevant information. These difficulties resulted in report texts that lacked systematic organization, coherence, and adequate information development. The study concludes that weaknesses in information-gathering processes directly influence the quality of students' report writing, highlighting the need to integrate information literacy instruction into English as a Foreign Language writing pedagogy.

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INTRODUCTION

Writing a report text in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context constitutes a complex cognitive activity that requires students to integrate linguistic competence with information literacy. Unlike narrative or descriptive genres, which may draw extensively on imagination or personal experience, report texts require writers to collect, organize, and present objective, factual, and systematic information to classify and describe a range of phenomena (Viona et al., 2022). Gerot and Wignell explain that report texts serve the communicative purpose of documenting the factual characteristics of a subject and employ particular grammatical features, including relational processes and the simple present tense. Students' difficulties in producing this genre, therefore, may extend beyond grammatical competence to the *pre-writing* stage, particularly when they gather, evaluate, select, and process information before constructing a text. Mugianto et al. (2017) similarly demonstrate the importance of understanding the processes involved in producing effective written texts rather than focusing exclusively on their final linguistic forms.

The twenty-first-century digital environment provides students with unprecedented access to information while simultaneously requiring stronger critical abilities to navigate, evaluate, and use that information effectively. Students who lack systematic information-processing strategies may consume digital content passively and reproduce unverified information instead of transforming relevant evidence into structured knowledge. Eisenberg emphasizes the importance of systematic and metacognitive information problem-solving in enabling learners to move from passive information consumption toward active knowledge construction (Utami et al., 2018). Information literacy frameworks, particularly the *Big6 Model*, address this challenge by organizing information problem-solving into six interconnected stages: task definition, information-seeking strategies, location and access, use of information, synthesis, and evaluation. Although Flower and Hayes' Cognitive Process Theory of Writing establishes a theoretical relationship between information processing and written production, researchers have provided relatively limited empirical evidence regarding how secondary school students in rural educational contexts operationalize these processes during authentic writing activities (Nasution et al., 2022).

Previous studies have examined challenges in English as a Foreign Language writing from various methodological and pedagogical perspectives. Several studies have concentrated on students' structural and grammatical difficulties in producing descriptive and report texts, particularly problems associated with limited vocabulary and first-language interference. Other researchers have investigated technology-enhanced instruction and interactive or gamified platforms, such as *Wordwall*, to increase students' engagement and motivation during writing activities (Gitadewi, 2024). Research on information literacy in higher education has also demonstrated that even advanced learners encounter difficulties in cross-referencing information and evaluating the credibility of digital academic sources. These findings collectively indicate that effective writing requires not only linguistic knowledge but also the capacity to locate, evaluate, and transform information into meaningful written content.

Research in secondary school contexts further suggests that conventional English instruction frequently emphasizes the linguistic product through sentence patterns, grammatical exercises, and vocabulary practice while giving considerably less attention to the strategic processes required to collect factual information. Existing studies have consequently tended to examine information literacy as an independent competence or evaluate completed written texts as final products. This separation leaves an important empirical gap concerning how students actually search for, select, process, and integrate information while constructing report texts. Researchers have particularly limited evidence concerning these processes in rural educational settings where students may have access to digital resources without receiving systematic guidance on their effective use. Yasa et al. (2024) reinforce the importance of addressing this gap by highlighting the challenges associated with information use and literacy practices within contemporary educational contexts.

This research addresses this gap by examining the procedural relationship between information gathering and report text production among secondary school learners of English as a Foreign Language. Although existing theoretical frameworks often presume that students can use digital search tools effectively, classroom practices may reveal substantial differences in how learners define information needs, identify appropriate sources, evaluate retrieved materials, and transform information into written content. Few studies have investigated the procedural breakdowns that emerge when students in rural educational contexts attempt to convert digitally retrieved information into systematically organized academic writing. This study therefore employs the *Big6 Model* as a diagnostic framework to examine students' information-gathering practices across the stages of task definition, information-seeking strategies, location and access, information use, synthesis, and evaluation. Such an approach shifts analytical attention from the final written product toward the cognitive and procedural activities that precede and shape students' report writing.

Accordingly, this study aims to investigate and analyze the processes through which eleventh-grade students at Darul Falah Sei Kamah II Private Islamic Senior High School gather information for writing report texts. The study specifically examines how students undertake each stage of the *Big6 Model* and identifies the procedural and linguistic difficulties that emerge during the information-gathering process. By locating the stages at which students experience difficulties, the research seeks to explain how weaknesses in information literacy may influence the organization and quality of their report texts. This process-oriented perspective positions information gathering as an integral component of English as a Foreign Language writing rather than as a separate supporting skill. The findings are expected to contribute to English writing pedagogy by providing an empirical foundation for developing more integrated instructional practices that combine information literacy with systematic report text production.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design to investigate the information-gathering practices that naturally occurred within the school environment. The researchers selected this design to develop a systematic and holistic understanding of students' habitual practices and the specific challenges they encountered during the *pre-writing* phase. The study specifically described the characteristics of students' information-gathering processes without manipulating the research setting or participants' activities. Sugiyono (2020) explains that qualitative research examines phenomena in their natural settings and emphasizes the depth of processes and the meanings embedded in the data rather than statistical generalization. This methodological orientation enabled the researchers to examine students' authentic information-gathering practices and interpret them systematically through the stages of the *Big6 Model*.

The researchers used the *Big6 Model* as an analytical framework to identify procedural gaps in students' information-gathering activities. This framework enabled the study to determine which stages of information literacy students frequently skipped, misunderstood, or performed inadequately during the process of preparing report texts. By examining students' natural practices, the researchers could identify specific difficulties associated with task definition, information-seeking strategies, location and access, information use, synthesis, and evaluation. This process-oriented analysis provided a detailed account of how students gathered and processed information before transforming it into written content. The qualitative design therefore allowed the researchers to connect students' observable information-gathering behaviors with the procedural requirements represented in the *Big6 Model*.

After collecting the data, the researchers reduced them by selecting, focusing, and organizing information that was directly relevant to the research objectives. The researchers then displayed the reduced data in a descriptive narrative format to present the findings systematically and facilitate interpretation. Narrative data presentation enabled the researchers to explain patterns in students' information-gathering processes and relate them to the stages of the *Big6 Model*. The researchers subsequently interpreted the displayed data to identify recurring procedural difficulties and meaningful patterns across the participants' information-gathering practices. Based on these interpretations, the researchers drew conclusions that addressed the research objectives and represented the phenomena identified throughout the study.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Observation Results

The researchers categorized students' information-gathering processes in writing report texts according to the six stages of the *Big6 Model* developed by Mike Eisenberg and Bob Berkowitz. The observation focused on students' performance at each stage to identify the extent to which they demonstrated the information-literacy processes required for report writing. The researchers calculated the frequency of observed performance and converted the results into percentages to facilitate comparison across the six stages. This calculation enabled the researchers to identify the stages that students demonstrated most and least frequently during the information-gathering process. The following formula was used to calculate the percentage:

$$P = F/N \times 100$$

Notes:

P = Percentage

F = Frequency of difficulties

N = Number of cases (total frequent)

The *Big6 Model* provides a systematic framework for examining students' information problem-solving processes. The framework comprises six sequential stages: (1) Task Definition, (2) Information Seeking Strategy, (3) Location and Access, (4) Use of Information, (5) Synthesis, and (6) Evaluation. These stages represent the processes through which students identify information needs, determine potential sources, locate relevant information, use the information obtained, integrate it into their work, and evaluate the final outcome. The researchers used these six stages as observational indicators to examine how the students gathered and processed information for writing report texts.

Table 1. Students' Observation Results Based on the Big6 Model

No.	Name	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Bella Shafira	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2	Rafa Wandiran	✓	✓		✓		
3	M. Firmansyah	✓	✓		✓	✓	
4	M. Azmi Fahrezi	✓			✓		
5	Icha Nur Zuhra	✓	✓				
6	Naysa Qaila Zahra	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

No.	Name	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	Putri Sagita Rezeky	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8	Mutya Syakila Meilany	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9	Fitri Zaskia Ningsih	✓	✓		✓	✓	
10	Icha Noviandini	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
11	Rani Nirwana	✓	✓			✓	
12	Adisya Nur Faliza Rahma	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
13	Nurmini	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
14	Septika Ramadani	✓	✓		✓	✓	
15	Fika Indriani	✓	✓		✓		✓
16	Tiara Safitri	✓	✓		✓	✓	
17	Reyhan Bima Adliansyah	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
18	Sindy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
19	Ika Syahfitri	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Total		19	18	10	15	15	7

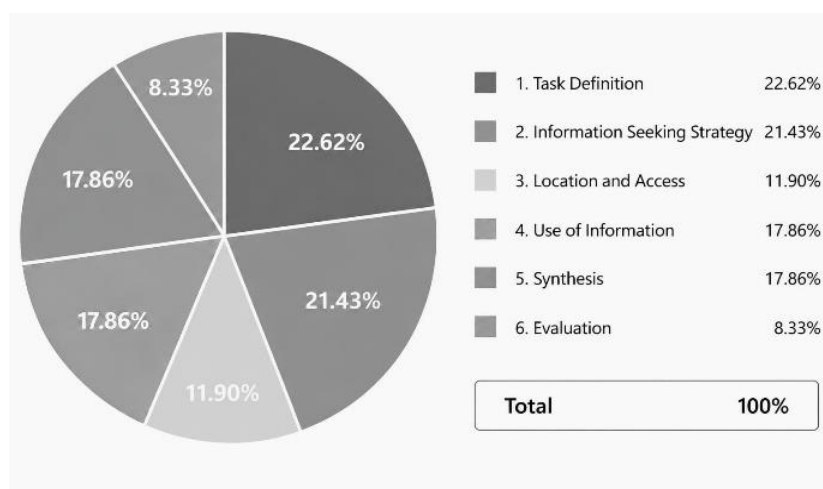


Image 1. Percentage of Observation

The observation results reveal substantial variation in students' performance across the six stages of the *Big6 Model*. Task Definition recorded the highest frequency, with all 19 students demonstrating this stage, followed closely by Information Seeking Strategy, which was demonstrated by 18 students. Use of Information and Synthesis each recorded a frequency of 15, indicating that most students could use and combine the information they had obtained. Location and Access showed a considerably lower frequency of 10, suggesting that students experienced greater difficulty locating and accessing appropriate information sources. Evaluation recorded the lowest frequency, with only seven students demonstrating evidence of reviewing or assessing the information-gathering process and the completed task.

Table 2. Data Percentage Calculation

No.	Big6 Model Stages	Total Score	Percentage (%)	Status	No.	Big6 Model Stages	Total Score
1	Stage 1: Task Definition	19	22.62%	Highest	1	Stage 1: Task Definition	19
2	Stage 2: Information Seeking Strategy	18	21.43%	High	2	Stage 2: Information Seeking Strategy	18
3	Stage 3: Location and Access	10	11.90%	Second Lowest	3	Stage 3: Location and Access	10
4	Stage 4: Use of Information	15	17.86%	Moderate	4	Stage 4: Use of Information	15

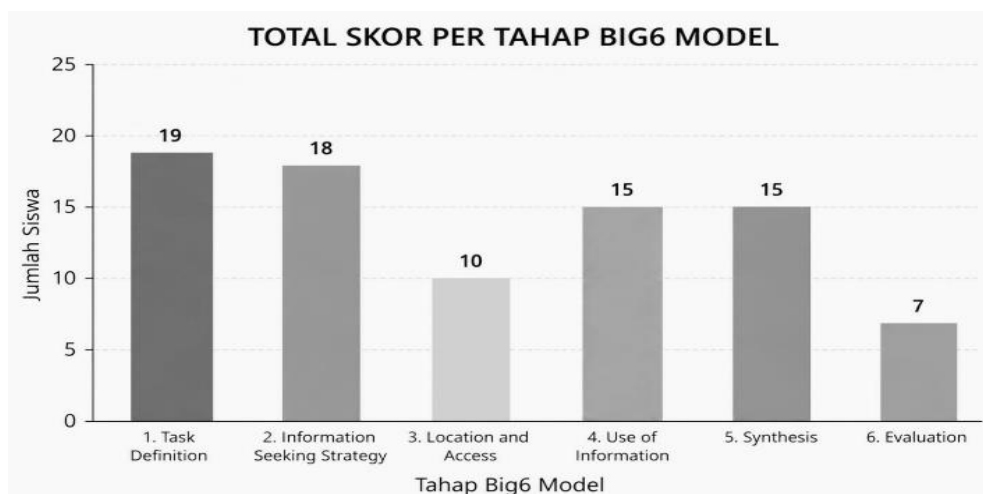


Image 2. Total Score per Stage of the Big6 Model

The percentage distribution provides further evidence of uneven student performance across the information-gathering stages. Task Definition accounted for the largest proportion at 22.62%, followed by Information Seeking Strategy at 21.43%, indicating that students demonstrated relatively strong performance during the initial stages of identifying tasks and considering potential information sources. Use of Information and Synthesis each accounted for 17.86%, while Location and Access represented only 11.90% of the total observed performance. Evaluation recorded the lowest proportion at 8.33%, making it the least frequently demonstrated stage among the students. These results identify Location and Access and Evaluation as the two stages requiring the greatest instructional attention.

The findings indicate that students demonstrated stronger information-literacy practices during the initial stages of the *Big6 Model* than during several subsequent stages. Their strong performance in Task Definition and Information Seeking Strategy suggests that most students could recognize the information requirements of the task and consider strategies for obtaining relevant information. Their performance declined substantially at the Location and Access stage, indicating difficulties in translating planned information-seeking strategies into the practical ability to locate and access appropriate sources. Although students demonstrated stronger performance again in Use of Information and Synthesis, the low Evaluation score indicates that relatively few students systematically reviewed, assessed, or corrected their work after completing the task. This pattern reveals a procedural gap between identifying information needs, accessing appropriate information, transforming that information into written content, and critically evaluating the final product.

Detailed Description of the Most Dominant Weak or Overlooked Stages

The most critical weakness emerged in Stage 6, Evaluation, which recorded the lowest percentage at 8.33%. Interview findings indicate that students frequently bypassed systematic self-assessment of both the quality of their writing and the effectiveness of the processes they used to complete the task. Rather than examining the logical consistency of their ideas, determining whether their drafts fulfilled the task requirements, or reflecting on difficulties encountered during information processing, students frequently relied on external platforms such as *TikTok* or television as convenient reference points. This practice limited opportunities for students to critically assess the credibility and quality of the information incorporated into their writing. Their tendency to equate popular or readily accessible information with reliable information consequently indicates that the metacognitive dimension of the Evaluation stage remained insufficiently developed.

Stage 3, Location and Access, represented the second major weakness, accounting for only 11.90% of the observed performance. This stage requires students to locate specific information efficiently and navigate appropriate and credible information sources, yet the interview findings indicate that students had not fully developed these competencies. Students reported relying largely on intuition and employing broad search terms, such as “chronology of the issue,” when searching for information online. They experienced further difficulties when they encountered practical constraints, including restricted access to digital devices or limited availability of reference books in the classroom. These findings indicate that students require stronger strategies for constructing effective search queries, identifying credible sources, and accessing more comprehensive information.

The weaknesses observed in these two stages reveal a broader pattern that may be characterized as *digital pragmatism*, in which students tend to follow the path of least resistance when gathering information. Students demonstrated considerable familiarity with rapidly accessible information from the surface web and social media platforms, yet this familiarity did not necessarily translate into critical information-literacy practices. Although they demonstrated relatively strong performance during the initial stages of Task Definition and Information Seeking Strategy, their engagement appeared to decline when the task required more cognitively demanding activities, such as locating, filtering, comparing, and validating information. Students frequently preferred information that appeared conveniently on social media feeds rather than deliberately seeking more credible and comprehensive sources. This pattern suggests that accessibility and immediacy often influenced their information choices more strongly than credibility, relevance, or informational depth.

The findings also reveal an important relationship between students' weaknesses in Location and Access and their limited performance in Evaluation. Students who did not carefully identify, compare, and validate information sources during the search process lacked a strong evidential foundation for evaluating their completed texts. As a result, they tended to conduct superficial assessments of their writing and frequently relied on comparisons with popular or trending information rather than explicit criteria of accuracy, credibility, and textual quality. This relationship indicates that weaknesses at one stage of the information-gathering process can influence performance at subsequent stages. A strong initial understanding of the task therefore cannot independently guarantee successful information-based writing unless students also implement systematic strategies for locating, selecting, validating, and evaluating information.

Taken together, the quantitative and qualitative findings indicate that students demonstrated stronger abilities in defining the general task and identifying initial information-seeking strategies than in locating credible information and critically evaluating their work. This pattern suggests that instructional intervention should move beyond explaining what information students need and focus more explicitly on how they can locate, verify, compare, and critically use that information. Teachers can support this development by modeling effective keyword construction, source comparison, credibility assessment, cross-referencing, and systematic self-evaluation before students submit their writing. Such instructional practices can strengthen the connection between information literacy and the production of coherent, factual, and academically appropriate report texts. These findings consequently position Location and Access and Evaluation as priority areas for strengthening students' information-gathering competence.

The Results of Students' Interviews

The interview findings reveal that the information-gathering practices of eleventh-grade students at Darul Falah Sei Kamah II Private Islamic Senior High School did not consistently follow the systematic procedures prescribed by the *Big6 Model*, which affected the quality of their report texts. Although the observational findings showed strong performance in Task Definition at a general level, the interviews revealed that students rarely developed this stage into a detailed research blueprint specifying the subtopics and information required to construct a comprehensive General Classification. Instead, students frequently moved from a general understanding of the assigned topic directly to broad and relatively impulsive internet searches. Quinlan et al. (2012) argue that learners who lack a conscious metacognitive problem-solving strategy at the beginning of an assignment may function primarily as passive consumers rather than active processors of information. This limited planning reduced students' ability to distinguish relevant from irrelevant information and contributed to introductions that sometimes resembled generic narratives or superficial personal accounts rather than objective classifications of the phenomena under discussion.

The interviews also revealed weaknesses in Information Seeking Strategies and, more prominently, in Location and Access because students relied heavily on a narrow range of digital search practices. Students commonly entered broad keywords into *Google* and selected information from the first available results without systematically comparing the diversity, authority, relevance, or credibility of alternative sources. Islamia and Arif (2024) similarly demonstrate that technical familiarity with smartphones does not necessarily indicate adequate academic information literacy among learners of English as a Foreign Language. This limitation is particularly consequential for report writing because students need multifaceted factual information concerning such dimensions as characteristics, behaviors, classifications, or geographical distribution to construct comprehensive descriptions. Dependence on a limited number of insufficiently evaluated sources consequently restricted the amount and diversity of information available for developing substantive body paragraphs (Nurfazri et al., 2024).

The transition from locating information to extracting and interpreting it represented another substantial cognitive and linguistic challenge for the students. During the Use of Information stage, students experienced difficulties identifying main ideas, drawing inferences, and comprehending specialized linguistic features, including relational processes and common scientific nouns. These linguistic difficulties encouraged some students to rely on *copy-and-paste* practices or direct translation rather than critically interpreting and reformulating information in their own words. Instead of engaging deeply with English-language sources to identify and extract relevant factual information, students sometimes reproduced substantial portions of source material without adequate analysis (Gusriani & Masruri, 2023; Indah et al., 2022). Such practices weaken the communicative purpose of report texts because students have fewer opportunities to internalize relevant linguistic features, including the simple present tense, and independently construct objective descriptions (Gero et al., 2022).

These procedural difficulties became particularly visible during the Synthesis stage, in which students needed to integrate information obtained from different sources into a coherent report text. Because some students inadequately performed earlier activities such as source validation, information selection, and systematic note-taking, they frequently struggled to synthesize collected information effectively. Their synthesis sometimes resembled *information dumping*, as they combined disconnected pieces of information without establishing clear conceptual relationships among them. Students also experienced difficulty categorizing information according to the generic structure of a report text, particularly when distinguishing the overarching General Classification from the more detailed Description sections (Mubasiroh, 2023). These findings indicate that effective synthesis requires students to establish stronger ownership of the information by interpreting, cross-referencing, reorganizing, and integrating evidence before incorporating it into a coherent written text (Baji et al., 2018; Tamin & Purnamasari, 2025).

The Evaluation stage further revealed a substantial weakness in students' information-gathering and writing processes. After completing their assignments, many students did not systematically reflect on the efficiency of their information-search strategies, verify the factual accuracy of the information used, or evaluate whether their final texts fulfilled the structural and linguistic requirements of report writing. Ahmad et al. (2021) emphasize the importance of evaluation and reflection in developing learners' ability to regulate and improve their academic practices. Limited engagement in this stage reduced students' opportunities to identify weaknesses in their own information-gathering strategies and make informed improvements in subsequent writing tasks. The interview findings therefore reinforce the observational result that Evaluation constituted the least developed component of students' *Big6* information-literacy practices.

Mapping students' observed and reported behaviors onto the *Big6 Model* reveals important connections between information literacy and linguistic competence in report text production. Students may understand the general purpose of an assignment and possess basic knowledge of report-text conventions, yet weaknesses in locating credible sources, interpreting information, synthesizing evidence, and evaluating the final product can still undermine writing quality. These findings demonstrate that the *pre-writing* process involves more than gathering readily available facts because students must critically determine what information they need, where to obtain it, how to assess it, and how to transform it into coherent written knowledge. Teachers therefore need to integrate explicit information-literacy scaffolding into English writing instruction rather than treating information gathering as an assumed prerequisite that students already possess. Such integration can help students develop both the linguistic resources and the metacognitive strategies required to produce more systematic, credible, and academically appropriate report texts.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that eleventh-grade students at Darul Falah Sei Kamah II Private Islamic Senior High School experience systematic difficulties across several stages of the *Big6 Model* when gathering information for writing report texts. Although students generally demonstrated an ability to identify the assigned task, they rarely developed Task Definition into a detailed research plan specifying the subtopics and information required to construct a comprehensive General Classification. Their Information Seeking Strategies and Location and Access practices also remained limited, as students relied heavily on broad searches through *Google* and frequently selected readily available information without systematically comparing or verifying multiple sources. More substantial difficulties emerged during the Use of Information and Synthesis stages, where limited English proficiency constrained students' ability to extract, interpret, reorganize, and integrate factual information, leading some students to rely on *copy-and-*

paste, direct translation, and *information dumping*. The particularly weak Evaluation stage further limited students' capacity to identify and correct these procedural deficiencies, demonstrating that information literacy and linguistic competence are closely interconnected in producing coherent, factual, and systematically organized report texts.

This study has several limitations because it focuses on a relatively specific group of eleventh-grade students within a single school and examines their information-gathering practices primarily through the *Big6 Model*, which limits the broader generalizability of the findings. The study also concentrates on report text writing and does not investigate whether similar information-literacy difficulties occur across other academic writing genres or educational contexts. Future research should involve larger and more diverse participant groups, compare students across different schools and proficiency levels, and examine information-gathering practices in multiple writing genres to determine whether similar procedural patterns emerge. Researchers may also integrate additional information-literacy frameworks or longitudinal designs to investigate how students' search, source-evaluation, synthesis, and self-evaluation abilities develop over time. English teachers are encouraged to explicitly integrate information-literacy instruction into writing pedagogy by teaching students how to formulate focused research questions, construct effective search strategies, evaluate source credibility, synthesize information in their own words, and critically assess their written work before submission.

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