

Small Groups: Trimble Chapters 1 & 2

Group One

Chapter One: According to Trimble, the big breakthrough for the novice writer comes when the novice begins to comprehend the social implications of writing. Define the words *objectivity*, *empathy*, and *courtesy* according to Trimble's usage. What changes must you implement in your approach to writing as you develop these traits? What do these words imply about Trimble's understanding of communication theory?

Group Two

Chapter One: Examine Trimble's list of five ways to serve your reader's needs on page 7. Take a look at how Trimble unpacks the first item on the list, paying special attention to the five bullet-points on assumptions. If you were to adopt these assumptions, how would your writing change?

Group Three

Chapter Two: Most writing teachers break down the composition process into systematic steps that may be refined and repeated at will. As such, Trimble's first five items may be categorized as *Prewriting*. Why does Trimble spend so much time on this crucial stage? What does this imply about his approach to writing? What is new to you here? What did you already know?

Group Four

Chapter Two: Analyze Trimble's ideas on the *Drafting* stage of the writing process—steps 6 & 7. Does the concept of a “zero draft” with emphasis on “freewriting” seem helpful? Consider Trimble's comments on writing as a conversation with a friend and the need to use your own voice in your writing. Are these new ideas to you? How might they be incorporated into your current writing method? To what advantage?

Group Five

Chapter Two: Trimble's discussion of the *Revising/Editing* stage of the writing process is covered in items 8, 9, & 10. Some writing teachers emphasize the value of peer editing at this stage. In addition to cultivating your own editorial skills as Trimble suggests, how might the constructive feedback of an educated reader help you in the Revising/Editing stage? What kind of work is implied by Trimble's phrase “tinkering to get the words right”?