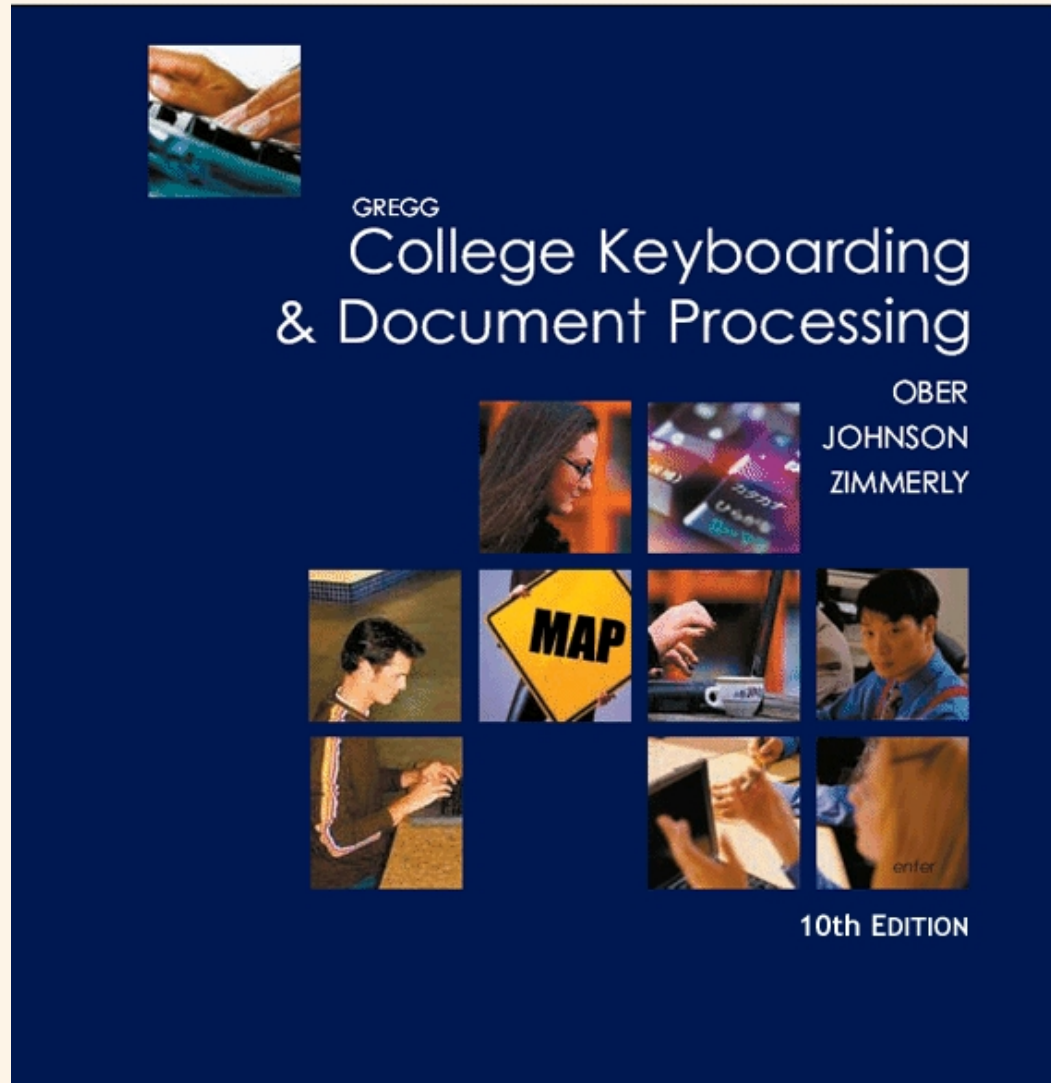


GDP10 Keyboarding Methodology Questions



Teaching Technique

Do you have any suggestions for teaching good technique?

- Technique should be emphasized frequently during the early stages of instruction.**
- Observe only one or two techniques in any one class period.**
- Use a chart to measure students' progress on technique improvement.**
- Always maintain a positive attitude with the students as to the benefits of good technique on building keyboarding skill.**
- Demonstrate good technique with the students.**

Evaluating Technique

Do you have any suggestions for evaluating technique?

- Technique should be evaluated almost daily during the early stages of instruction.**
- After the keyboard has been presented, selected techniques should be evaluated at least once every week.**
- Certain techniques are essential, such as eyes on copy, correct fingering techniques, and good posture.**
- All techniques do not have to be assigned an actual grade. Sometimes it is more appropriate to evaluate a technique as simply acceptable, acceptable with improvement, or not acceptable.**

Technique Percentage

What percent of a course grade should be determined by technique?

- In the first six weeks of instruction, a high percentage of a student's grade should be determined by technique—possibly as high as 40 to 50 percent.**
- At the end of the first semester, technique should account for no more than 5 to 10 percent of the grade.**

Using Keyboard Covers

Do you find it helpful to cover students' hands to prevent them from watching the keys as they type?

- “Keyboard covers” should never be used to prevent students from peeking at their keyboard, no more than a blindfold should be used to teach someone to ride a bike!**
- Developing locational security is absolutely essential in minimizing keyboard watching.**
- Always use positive reinforcement when encouraging students to keep their eyes on the copy.**

Looking at the Keys

How do you break the habit of looking at the keys when typing?

- First, students must be convinced that they actually can type while keeping their eyes on the copy.**
- Second, always voice positive rather than negative reinforcement (i.e., “keep your eyes on the copy” rather than “keep your eyes off the keyboard”).**
- Third, speed forcing is the best prescription for breaking the keyboard watching habit. Both Sustained Practice and Progressive Practice routines force students to concentrate on maintaining or increasing speed. When students try to type faster, they tend to look less at their hands.**
- Fourth, an excellent drill to use to “break” or minimize the keyboard-watching habit is the 12-second sprint. Administer 12-second sprints with a goal that students keep their eyes on the copy. Then move on to a 30-second timed writing...and then move on to a 1-minute timed writing, always with a goal to keep eyes on copy.**

Introducing Alphabetic Keys

How many alphabetic keys should be introduced in each lesson?

- Opinions vary, but typically it is common to teach 3 to 4 new keys each lesson, after the home row has been introduced.
- In GDP, four new keys are introduced each lesson so that the entire keyboard—letters, numbers, and symbols—can be introduced by Lesson 20. Starting with Lesson 21, then, you can start reviewing and reinforcing keyboard reaches, introduce word processing, and present the formatting of documents.

Time Allowed for Skillbuilding

How much daily/weekly time should be allowed for skillbuilding after the keyboard is learned?

- ❑ First of all, skillbuilding should continue as a daily activity in every lesson throughout the course.**
- ❑ Skillbuilding activities—which may include a warmup, timed writings, and language arts drills—should consume around 15 to 20 minutes of a 50-minute class period.**
- ❑ Encourage those students who need to improve their speed and accuracy to pursue additional skillbuilding routines, such as the MAP exercise, beyond the minimum expectations stated in the text.**

Word Per Minute Rates

Upon completion of a beginning keyboarding class, how many words per minute should the average student be able to type?

- ❑ Assuming that (a) the class is a one-semester course, (b) the student completes 60 lessons, and (3) appropriate skillbuilding activities have been included in the course, the average student should be able to type 40 words per minute on a 5-minute timed writing with no more than 5 errors.

Grading Speed and Accuracy

In timed writings, should an instructor evaluate and grade both speed and accuracy?

- Yes, both speed and accuracy should be considered when assigning grades for timed writings. However, if students are striving for speed only, then accuracy should not be evaluated...and vice versa. Above all, do not insist that students push for both speed and accuracy at the same time. The best method of evaluating timed writing performance is to measure speed within a stated limit of errors. Example: 36 wpm/3'/4e.**

Repeating Timed Writings

Can a timed writing that is repeated be an accurate predictor of a student's skill in keyboarding?

Yes, within certain limits:

- When used as a Pretest and Posttest, with prescribed drill lines practiced between the pre- and post sessions, both the Pretest and Posttest serve as accurate predictors of a student's skill.**
- If there is sufficient time between the first and second timed writing [on the same copy], the copy can be considered as an accurate predictor of student skill. Generally speaking, three to four weeks should have transpired between the first and second use of the timed writing, and no timed writing should be used repeatedly to measure student skill.**

Improving Accuracy

What are some effective techniques or practices for improving accuracy?

- Be sure that the copy consists of at least one occurrence of every letter of the alphabet.**
- Be sure that a pretest has been administered to identify errors the student makes, and then prescribe accuracy drills linked directly to the types of errors that were made in the pretest.**
- Misstroke Analysis & Prescription (MAP) is an excellent drill to use to improve accuracy.**
- Other drills that can be used to improve accuracy are:**
 - ❖ Paced Practice**
 - ❖ Sustained Practice**
 - ❖ Progressive Practice**
 - ❖ Pretest/Practice/Posttest**

Improving Speed

What are some effective techniques or practices for improving speed?

- ❑ **The copy should consist of short, easy words with a low syllabic intensity per word.**
- ❑ **Repetition promotes the development of speed, but only when realistic goals have been established.**
- ❑ **Short spurts of effort promote the development of speed.**
- ❑ **Skillbuilding drills that are especially effective for building speed are:**
 - ❖ **12-second sprints**
 - ❖ **Pretest/Practice/Posttest**
 - ❖ **Progressive Practice**
 - ❖ **Sustained Practice**

Timed Writing / Skillbuilding

Is a timed writing considered a skillbuilding activity?

- ❑ Only if there are accompanying drills designed to improve speed or accuracy after the timed writing has been administered. For example, the following student directions would categorize a timed writing as a skillbuilding activity: *“If you made 2 or fewer errors on the timed writing, type each individual line 2 times. If you made 3 or more errors, type each group of lines 2 times.”*

Timed Writing Length

What is the optimum length for a timed writing?

- The most commonly accepted timed writing length for measuring skill is the 5-minute timed writing, primarily because it is most typically the industry standard used in employment testing.
- Some instructors believe that a 3-minute timed writing is a more reliable measure of true keyboarding skill because of a fatigue factor that may impact a student's performance during the final two minutes of a 5-minute timed writing.

How Many Timed Writings?

How many timed writings can be administered in one day?

- ❑ Using either a 3- or 5-minute timed writing length, no more than two timed writings should be given in any one class period. After the second timed writing, fatigue sets in and therefore negates the possibility of any realistic improvement in either speed or accuracy that occurred in either of the first two timed writings.

How Often to Give TW's

How often each week should you give timed writing tests?

- ❑ It is realistic to expect that timed writings can be given every other class period. However, if a student's skill is to be measured this frequently, then some evidence must exist that skillbuilding occurred between the first timed writing and the second timed writing. If no skillbuilding occurred between the two sessions, then any improvement made would simply be due to a matter of chance rather than because of the impact of completed drill work.

Four Elements of Good Typists

What are four things (key elements) that a beginning typist must do consistently to become a good typist?

- Demonstrate good technique.
- Practice appropriate drills for speed or accuracy.
- Keep eyes on the copy [or screen].
- Practice in short sessions over a long period of time rather than in long sessions over a short period of time. Improvement in speed and accuracy will not be as dramatic if the student is limiting his/her practice to large blocks of time.

Backspace & Correct Errors

Do you believe students should have the freedom to backspace and correct errors when typing?

- If a drill is being administered for diagnostic purposes to identify errors students make, then the students should not be allowed to backspace and correct the errors.**
- If a drill is being administered to duplicate the activity students will experience in an actual office environment, then they should be allowed to backspace and correct their errors.**

Backspace & Correct Errors

Do you believe students should backspace and correct errors when taking a timed writing?

- ❑ **Generally speaking, students will backspace and correct errors in a timed writing. However, by doing so, they will lose the words they could have typed while backspacing to make the correction.**
- ❑ **Another consideration is that students will take their eyes off the copy when they backspace to correct an error; thus, there is a greater likelihood that they will lose their place in the copy.**
- ❑ **Finally, backspacing to correct an error is what students will do when creating copy in an office environment.**

Authors' note: Students should be allowed to backspace and correct their errors on a timed writing...because that's probably what they will do anyway. But they should be made aware that doing so will lower their word-per-minute rate.

Emphasis of Proofreading

With spell check and grammar check capabilities in most software, should instructors continue to emphasize proofreading skills?

- Yes, proofreading skills should continue to be an integral activity in preparing mailable copy. Software checking capability is not 100 percent accurate, and some errors are simply not included in the software's library of what is or isn't considered an error.**

Measuring Tests

What should be measured in a document processing test?

- You need to measure the accuracy of the work (mailability) as well as the time it took to produce the work (speed).
- You need to consider both what is typed (the alphabetic and numeric characters in the document) as well as how it is typed (the format of the document).

How Often Should You Test?

How often should you test a student's document processing skills?

- ❑ A student's document processing skills (i.e., the ability to type and format correctly a letter, table, report, memo, or similar document under an element of time) should be measured. . .
 - ❖ After the student has been introduced to a sufficient number of formatting concepts.
 - ❖ When the instructor wishes to determine if the student can demonstrate his/her understanding of those concepts by typing documents within a prescribed time period.

- ❑ In GDP, such testing (and/or reviews) occurs after every five lessons.

How Long Should a Test Last?

How long should a document processing test last (number of minutes)?

- ❑ A document processing test should be limited to the time available in any given class period, and it should be administered in one setting. Typically, a document processing test will be administered within a time limit of 40 to 60 minutes. This should allow sufficient time for students to produce two or three documents.

Giving Technique Grades

Should a technique grade be given throughout the entire semester, or just through the alphabet lessons?

- ❑ Obviously, technique is a critical factor in the development of keyboarding skills; and it should receive heavy emphasis in the early stages of the course, probably as much as 40 to 50 percent of the grade. Throughout the semester, technique should continue to be evaluated; but the emphasis on technique as part of the overall grade should probably drop to 5 or 10 percent near the end of the semester.

How Many Errors to Allow

How many errors should be allowed when a student types a 1-minute timed writing...a 3-minute timed writing...a 5-minute timed writing?

- ❑ When students are learning their alphabetic keyboard, you should be lenient in the number of errors allowed on a 1-minute timed writing—probably 3 or 4 should be allowed. And in the early lessons, students should be allowed 4 or 5 errors on a 2- or 3-minute timed writing. However, when they reach approximately the two-thirds mark of the semester, they should be encouraged to type with no more than one error per minute on a timed writing.

Weighting Grade Categories

What weights do you give to technique, timed writings, document processing, tests, etc. to determine the final grade in a beginning keyboarding class?

- ❑ **Assigning weights to the components of a keyboarding course varies by instructor; but generally speaking, the following weights are often found at the conclusion of a beginning keyboarding class: Technique (10-15%); Timed Writings (30-40%); Daily Work (20-30%); and Production Tests (25-30%).**

End-of-course Typing Speeds

How do you determine the speed that students should be typing during the course of a semester?

- ❑ Generally speaking, you should follow the skill goals [for speed and accuracy] that are recommended in the goals of every other lesson that contains a timed writing activity.

In GDP, the speed/accuracy goal for the conclusion of Book 1 is 40 words per minute for 5 minutes with no more than 5 errors. For Book 2, the goal for Lesson 120 is 50 words per minute for 5 minutes with no more than 5 errors. These goals are considered appropriate for a “C” grade.