

The Application of Performance Assessment in English Writing Teaching in China

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Abstract: In the realm of contemporary education, with the relentless evolution of teaching methodologies, performance assessment has garnered considerable attention due to its emphasis on process-oriented and competency-based evaluation. Specifically, within the context of high school English education in China, the traditional outcome-focused assessment paradigm has proven inadequate in fostering students' holistic skill development. To address this, this paper spotlights the integration of performance assessment in high school English writing instruction, using Unit 1 of the Compulsory Module 3 of People's Education Press English textbooks, themed 'Festivals and Celebrations', as a case study. It delves into the strategic deployment of performance assessment components, such as establishing authentic and precise learning objectives, devising practical and culturally immersive writing tasks, and outlining comprehensive evaluation criteria that are process-focused and integrate multiple facets of language learning. The ultimate goal is to devise a robust instructional framework that not only elevates students' writing proficiency but also deepens their understanding and articulate expression of Chinese festival culture, thereby fostering their overall English literacy. This research underscores the critical role of performance assessment in driving the reform of English writing instruction and enhancing students' comprehensive language competencies.

Keywords: Performance Assessment, Senior High School English, China Writing Teaching, Case Study

1. Introduction

The English Curriculum Standards for General Senior Secondary Schools in China (2017 Edition Revised in 2020) emphasizes that English teaching in senior secondary schools should be committed to cultivating students' comprehensive language-use ability, which encompasses language proficiency, cultural awareness, thinking capacity, and learning ability, so that students can use English accurately, fluently and effectively to communicate in real-life contexts (Ministry of Education, 2020). As a key component of comprehensive English proficiency, writing ability is of great importance to students' language development (Lan et al., 2023). PEP stands for "People's Education Press", hereinafter referred to as "PEP". PEP textbooks are educational materials published by the People's Education Press of China. Specifically, PEP English textbooks are widely used in primary and high schools in China. They are designed to meet the learning needs of students from primary school all the way through high school, aiming to provide a comprehensive and engaging English language learning experience for young learners. In summary, PEP textbooks, including those for English, are indeed Chinese educational materials tailored for students' long-term academic development. Unit 1 of the Compulsory Module 3 of the PEP English is centered on "Festivals and Celebrations". However, there are many limitations of traditional writing teaching evaluation methods in assessing students' authentic writing ability and literacy development (Hu, 2016; Kong, 2018). With its unique advantages, performance assessment brings new opportunities and methods for high school English writing teaching, whose traits are authenticity, process focused, integration (Kong, 2018; Cheng, 2023). As highlighted by Hu (2016) in his research, traditional evaluation methods often struggle to align with the demands of fostering students' cognitive development. In contrast, performance assessment emerges as a potent strategy to address these limitations and unleash students' writing potential, particularly when it emphasizes the principles of authenticity, process focus, and integration. In summary, performance assessment, with its emphasis on authenticity, process focus, and integration, stands as a transformative tool in addressing the shortcomings of traditional evaluation methods. It not only stimulates students' writing potential but also nurtures their cognitive and linguistic development, making it a pivotal component in the evolution of English education practices. My interest in exploring performance assessment, particularly in the realm

of writing, stems from several compelling considerations. Firstly, as highlighted by O'Malley and Pierce (1996), the adoption of diversified assessment methods is crucial in language teaching, as traditional methods frequently fall short in comprehensively evaluating students' language use in authentic contexts. Performance assessment, with its ability to adapt to the complexity and fluidity of language learning, emerges as a superior alternative. This resonates deeply with the challenges faced in current high school English writing instruction, reinforcing the necessity for integrating performance assessment into practice.

Moreover, the National Curriculum Standards for English Education place significant emphasis on writing skills, requiring students to demonstrate proficiency in conveying meaning clearly and effectively in various contexts. Performance assessment is well-suited to address these standards, as it enables a nuanced evaluation of students' writing abilities beyond mere grammatical accuracy and vocabulary usage. By focusing on authenticity, process-oriented feedback, and integration across linguistic domains, performance assessment aligns with the Standards' aspirations for fostering comprehensive writing competence.

Black and Wiliam (1998) further underscore the importance of effective classroom assessment in observing and providing feedback on students' learning processes, which is pivotal for fostering their development. Performance assessment aligns seamlessly with this philosophy, as it permeates the entire writing process—from initial data collection and conceptualization to drafting, revising, and finalizing. This continuous assessment not only grants teachers a comprehensive view of students' writing progress but also encourages students to engage in reflective practice, enabling them to iteratively enhance their writing skills.

Currently, high school English writing instruction often lacks a robust framework for assessing students' authentic writing abilities and their evolving processes. Performance assessment addresses this gap by offering a dynamic and holistic approach that emphasizes authenticity, process-focused evaluation, and integration across language skills. Specifically, authenticity ensures that writing tasks are relevant and meaningful to students, process-focused evaluation nurtures critical thinking and self-reflection, and integration fosters a comprehensive understanding of language use.

Despite the wealth of existing research on performance assessment, there remains a gap in exploring its application within specific educational contexts and units, such as Unit 1 of the Compulsory Module 3 of the People's Education Press English textbook centered on 'Festivals and Celebrations'. My research aims to fill this void by examining how performance assessment can emphasize the curriculum objectives, curriculum design, and assessment criteria within this unit. By focusing on the characteristics of authenticity, process focus, and integration, this study seeks to illuminate the potential of performance assessment in transforming high school English writing instruction, ultimately contributing to students' holistic linguistic development.

2. Definition of performance assessment

Performance assessment stands out as a distinctive evaluation approach by emphasizing the comprehensive and objective assessment of students' developmental levels across knowledge mastery, skill application, and attitude development, all grounded in systematic observation of real-world task performance. Unlike traditional assessments, it focuses intently on allowing students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in authentic, real-life situations (Stiggins, 1997; Wiggins, 1989). This method requires students to engage in reality-related tasks, thereby fully showcasing their abilities and understanding. Furthermore, it is uniquely defined as an assessment form that reflects students' proficiency in using language to solve problems within authentic contexts, underscoring its unparalleled value in evaluating comprehensive language use (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996). The hallmark of performance assessment lies in its emphasis on real-world demonstration, making it a powerful tool for understanding students' holistic development. In high school English writing teaching, performance assessment involves students using their English knowledge and writing skills to create works in real or simulated situations. Teachers then use this to evaluate the writing process and final results in depth, assessing students' growth in writing ability, cultural understanding, thinking, innovation, and other areas (Tan & Li, 2024). It further emphasized that performance assessment focuses on direct observation and evaluation of students' performance in authentic contexts to gain a comprehensive understanding of their developmental achievements (Zhao, 2013). This viewpoint aligns with assessing students' writing ability through authentic festival contexts in writing instruction.

Performance assessment is a distinctive and holistic evaluation approach that emphasizes the

comprehensive and objective assessment of students' developmental levels in knowledge mastery, skill application, and attitude development. It stands out by grounding these assessments in systematic observations of students' real-world task performance, allowing them to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in authentic situations. This method not only requires students to engage in reality-related tasks but also showcases their abilities and understanding fully.

In my view, performance assessment serves as a powerful tool for understanding students' holistic development, particularly in high school English writing teaching. By involving students in creating works in real or simulated situations, teachers can evaluate the writing process and final results in depth, assessing growth in writing ability, cultural understanding, thinking, innovation, and other areas. This approach emphasizes direct observation and evaluation of students' performance in authentic contexts, providing a comprehensive understanding of their developmental achievements.

Furthermore, the integration of domestication and foreignization strategies, as researched by scholars like Lawrence and Sun, can enhance the cultural sensitivity and authenticity of students' writing assessments. This ensures that performance assessment not only evaluates linguistic proficiency but also cultural awareness and adaptation. In conclusion, performance assessment is a valuable tool for assessing students' holistic development, particularly in language teaching contexts.

3. Characteristics of performance assessment

Authenticity: The performance assessment emphasizes that the tasks are closely related to real life, enabling students to apply their knowledge and skills to solve practical problems in authentic situations. This approach finds support in the works of seminal educators such as Dewey (1938), who advocated for experiential learning that is grounded in real-world contexts. Similarly, Vygotsky (1978) emphasized the importance of social and cultural contexts in learning, aligning with the notion that authentic tasks foster meaningful engagement. More recently, researchers like Hu (2016) have echoed these sentiments, highlighting the benefits of using real-life scenarios in writing instruction.

In this unit of writing teaching, authenticity is prominently reflected in the fact that the writing tasks are based on festival scenes that students are familiar with. For example, in the writing task of describing festivals, students are required to use their real festival experiences and cultural knowledge. This not only helps to improve students' ability to apply English writing to real communication but also enables them to better understand the significance of writing in real contexts. This approach resonates with Paul (2003) assertions, emphasizing that learning achieves greater effectiveness when embedded within authentic social and cultural contexts, aligning with the principle of reality-oriented performance assessment. Furthermore, Cheng (2023) has further emphasized the importance of creating authentic contexts in learning, pointing out that such contexts can activate students' existing life experiences and stimulate their internal motivation to learn. Cheng emphasized that when students engage with content that is relevant to their lives, they are more likely to be actively involved in the learning process, leading to deeper understanding and retention of the material. This viewpoint is also supported by the work of Anne L. Brown and her colleagues (1989), who found that students are more motivated to learn when they see the relevance of the material to their personal lives and future goals.

In summary, the integration of authentic tasks in performance assessment aligns with a wealth of research supporting the benefits of experiential and situated learning. By grounding writing tasks in real-life scenarios, educators can foster deeper engagement, understanding, and retention among students.

Process Focused: Focusing on evaluating students throughout the entire process of completing a task, rather than solely on the end result, has been advocated by numerous educators and researchers. This holistic approach allows for a more comprehensive understanding of students' learning journey and progress. Teachers can provide observation, guidance, and feedback at various stages of students' writing, including critical phases such as data collection, conceptualization, drafting, and revision. By engaging in process evaluation, students are empowered to discover and address problems in their writing in a timely manner, leading to more refined and polished work. Additionally, teachers gain deeper insights into students' thinking styles and learning difficulties, enabling them to provide more targeted and personalized guidance. This, in turn, fosters the gradual improvement of students' writing ability (Kong, 2018).

Furthermore, it highlighted the significance of process evaluation as a blend of formative and summative evaluation (Zhou, 2014). Formative evaluation, occurring during the learning process,

provides ongoing feedback to students and teachers, allowing for adjustments and improvements. Summative evaluation, on the other hand, assesses students' learning at the end of a project or course. Combining these two forms of evaluation, process evaluation can offer a more comprehensive picture of students' strengths, weaknesses, and areas for growth. It has also emphasized the importance of formative assessment in promoting student learning and achievement. Through process evaluation, educators can create a supportive and responsive learning environment that nurtures students' writing skills and fosters their overall academic development (Lee, 2007; Black & Wiliam, 1998).

Integration: The performance assessment is able to comprehensively test students' abilities in several areas. In this unit of writing teaching, not only the use of students' language knowledge (vocabulary, grammar, sentence patterns) is assessed, but also attention is paid to writing skills (organization of text structure, use of writing techniques), thinking skills (logical thinking, creative thinking), cultural awareness (understanding and expression of festival culture in different cultural contexts), and cooperation skills (group work to collect information and discuss writing ideas). This comprehensive assessment helps to understand students' English writing literacy in a comprehensive way and guides students to develop and improve in multiple dimensions (Feng, 2016). It emphasized the cultivation of multifaceted abilities such as thinking quality in the core literacy of the English discipline, with which performance assessment fits (Chen, 2019).

4. Case Study

After exploring the theoretical framework and the importance of fostering creativity and individuality in writing tasks, we now delve into a practical application through a case study. Specifically, we examine the 'Reading for Writing' section in Unit 1 'Festivals and Celebrations' of the Compulsory Module 3 of the PEP English textbook. This textbook is designed to provide comprehensive language learning experiences for students, covering various aspects of English language skills, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Unit 1 'Festivals and Celebrations' is categorized under the broader theme of culture and traditions. It aims to introduce students to different festivals and celebrations from around the world, fostering their understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity. The unit is structured into several sections, each focusing on a specific skill or aspect of the festival theme.

Within this unit, the 'Reading for Writing' section is particularly noteworthy. It combines reading comprehension with writing practice, encouraging students to analyse and synthesize information from a text before applying it to their own writing. This approach not only enhances their reading skills but also nurtures their creative and analytical writing abilities.

The specific 'Reading for Writing' section we are focusing on introduces students to a detailed description of a particular festival or celebration. The text provides rich contextual information, including historical background, customs, and significance. Students are then guided through a series of activities that prompt them to reflect on the text, extract key points, and formulate their own opinions or descriptions based on what they have read.

In this specific section, students are expected to engage in activities such as summarizing the main ideas of the text, identifying key details, and analysing the author's perspective. They are also encouraged to apply their understanding by writing their own descriptions of a festival or celebration, incorporating the language and structures they have learned from the text. This hands-on approach ensures that students not only comprehend the material but also develop their writing skills in a meaningful and engaging way. Specifically, we examine the 'Reading for Writing' section in Unit 1 'Festivals and Celebrations' of the Compulsory Module 3 of the PEP English textbook. This unit presents an excellent opportunity to observe how students engage with writing prompts inspired by rich cultural content, while also applying the principles of performance assessment. By analysing this particular case study, we aim to illustrate how the integration of reading and writing, coupled with an open-ended assessment approach, can enhance students' writing skills, deepen their understanding of festival cultures, and nurture their creative expressions. Thus, this case study serves as a bridge between theoretical considerations and practical implementations, offering insights into the effectiveness of performance assessment in high school English writing classrooms.

4.1 Thematic and contextual analysis of the unit

The theme of this unit is 'Festivals and Celebrations', which focuses on festivals and celebrations

around the world. The "Reading for Writing" section provides rich materials on festivals and introduces the details of the Naadam Festival, including the time of the festival, celebrations, cultural connotations, and more. This creates an authentic and culturally rich context for writing instruction, enabling students to gain an in-depth understanding of festival culture.

In terms of performance assessment, students are required to demonstrate their comprehension and application of the material presented in the "Reading for Writing" section. They are evaluated based on their ability to analyze the text, extract key information, and synthesize this knowledge into their own written work. Specifically, students are asked to write an essay or a short description of the Naadam Festival, incorporating the details they have learned from the text.

During the assessment, teachers will look for evidence of students' ability to:

- (1) Summarize the main ideas and key details of the text on the Naadam Festival.
- (2) Analyze and interpret the cultural connotations and significance of the festival.
- (3) Apply the language and structures learned from the text to their own writing, demonstrating creativity and analytical thinking.

By incorporating performance assessment into this unit, teachers can gain a deeper understanding of students' comprehension and writing skills, as well as their ability to apply what they have learned in a meaningful and culturally relevant context. This approach not only enhances students' learning experience but also prepares them for real-world writing tasks that require critical thinking and creativity.

4.2 Setting of teaching objectives and evaluation criteria

In order to effectively implement performance assessment in senior high school English writing teaching, it is imperative to establish well-defined teaching objectives and comprehensive evaluation criteria. These teaching objectives should be meticulously crafted to emphasize the holistic development of students' English writing abilities, encompassing various facets such as grammar, vocabulary, coherence, and creativity. Performance assessment requires students to demonstrate their writing skills through tasks that mimic real-world scenarios, allowing for a more authentic evaluation of their abilities.

Meanwhile, the evaluation criteria serve as a meticulous framework that delineates the performance benchmarks and associated scores for each teaching objective at different proficiency levels. These criteria should include specific, observable indicators of student performance, such as the ability to construct coherent paragraphs, use a diverse range of vocabulary, and employ grammatical structures accurately. Teachers can use rubrics that detail these criteria to provide constructive feedback and guide students toward achieving higher levels of proficiency.

This detailed categorization not only offers students clear and actionable guidance for their writing endeavors but also provides teachers with a robust tool for assessing and guiding students' progress. By aligning these objectives and criteria with performance-based tasks, we ensure that both the teaching and learning processes are targeted, systematic, and conducive to continuous improvement. For instance, a task might involve writing a persuasive essay on a current event, requiring students to apply their knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and coherence while also demonstrating creativity and critical thinking.

The following enumerates the specific teaching objectives and their corresponding evaluation criteria in detail, as shown in Table 1, which serves as a reference for both teachers' evaluation and students' self-assessment during the writing process.

Table 1 Teaching objectives and assessment criteria

	Teaching objectives	Assessment criteria
Vocabulary use	Students will be able to accurately use the holiday-related vocabulary, phrases, and sentence patterns to describe basic information about a festival (name, time, place, origin, duration).	4 points: Accurate and appropriate use of vocabulary, phrases, and sentence patterns, with a complete description of basic information about the festival. 3 points: A few errors or slightly missing information in the description of the festival.

		<p>2 points: More errors or severely missing information in the description of the festival.</p> <p>1 point: Basic inability to use vocabulary or describe information correctly about the festival.</p>
Grammatical correctness	Students are able to elaborate on multiple celebrations of a festival, including the content, participants, and sequence of events, and describe them correctly using the general present and general past tenses.	<p>4 points: Detailed and accurate description of the holiday celebration with correct use of tenses.</p> <p>3 points: More detailed description of the activity, but with a few tense errors.</p> <p>2 points: Abbreviated description of the activity or with more tense errors.</p> <p>1 point: Inability to clearly describe the activity or confusing use of tenses.</p>
Elaboration of cultural connotations	Students are able to analyse the cultural connotations of a festival in depth, elaborating on it from historical, religious, social, and national spiritual perspectives, expressing themselves clearly and logically, and reflecting an understanding of and respect for different cultures.	<p>4 marks: In-depth analysis of cultural connotations from multiple perspectives, with clear logic and fluent expression.</p> <p>3 marks: Some analysis present, but lacking in depth or with slightly confusing logic.</p> <p>2 marks: Shallow analysis or incoherent logic in the exploration of cultural connotations.</p> <p>1 mark: Inability to analyze cultural connotations effectively.</p>
Structural plausibility	Students are able to use appropriate transition words so that the structure of the essay is clear and the overall logic is coherent.	<p>4 marks: Appropriate use of transitions and linking words, with a clear structure.</p> <p>3 marks: Reasonable use of transitions and linking words, but with a few inaccuracies.</p> <p>2 marks: Less use of transitions and linking words, or with more inaccuracies in their application.</p> <p>1 mark: Little or no use of transitions and linking words in the text.</p>
Creative expression	Students are able to reflect creative thinking in their writing, such as introducing the festival from unique perspectives or using novel writing techniques to make their essays personalized.	<p>4 points: Unique perspective, novel approach, and distinctive personality of the article.</p> <p>3 points: Some innovation is present, but not prominent enough.</p> <p>2 points: Less innovation in the article.</p> <p>1 point: No innovation in the article.</p>

Table 1 provides a comprehensive breakdown of the teaching objectives and their corresponding assessment criteria used in the performance assessment of students' festival-themed writing tasks. It serves as a practical rubric for evaluating various dimensions of student performance, including vocabulary use, grammatical accuracy, cultural understanding, structural coherence, and creative expression. Each criterion is described with a clear 4-point scale, enabling teachers to assess students' proficiency levels with consistency and objectivity. This structured framework not only guides teacher assessment but also supports students in conducting self- and peer-assessments, promoting reflective learning and continuous improvement in their writing skills.

4.3 Task design

Task 1: Exploring and Sharing Festival Culture (Group Work) with Performance Assessment

Students are divided into groups and each group chooses a festival outside the textbook (It can be other ethnic minority festivals or foreign specialty festivals). Through consulting books, browsing websites, watching documentaries, and interviewing relevant people, students should collect detailed information about the festival, including its origin, historical evolution, regional characteristics, unique customs, representative food, the form and significance of celebrations, artworks related to the festival, as well as the changes and development trends of the festival in modern society.

Performance Criteria:

- (1) **Research Skills:** Demonstrate thorough research by incorporating a variety of sources (books, websites, documentaries, interviews).
- (2) **Team Collaboration:** Effectively divide tasks among group members, ensuring everyone contributes to the project.
- (3) **Presentation Skills:** Present clear, engaging, and informative slides or posters that showcase the festival's unique features.
- (4) **Cultural Awareness:** Accurately represent the festival's cultural significance and historical context.

For example, in the case of Thailand's Water Festival, students should understand its origins as a ritual stemming from Indian Brahmanism and its evolution into a national custom. They should highlight the festival's customs, such as pouring water on one another as a blessing, and its modern significance as a tourist attraction.

Based on the information collected, each group should create a detailed PowerPoint slide or hand-drawn poster on festival culture. It should be rich in content and illustrations, clearly showing the characteristics and charms of the festival culture. Group members should divide tasks and collaborate effectively. Afterward, each group will send a representative to present and share in the class, introducing the unique features of the festival to classmates.

Task 2: Creative Writing on a Holiday Theme (Individual Task) with Performance Assessment

Students should write an essay of at least 150 words about a festival shared by the group or a festival they are familiar with. The essay should cover basic information about the festival, celebrations, cultural connotations, personal feelings, etc. It should use rich vocabulary, varied sentence patterns, appropriate grammatical structures, and effective writing skills to make the language accurate, vivid, and expressive.

Performance Criteria:

- (1) **Content Richness:** Provide comprehensive coverage of the festival's basic information, celebrations, and cultural connotations.
- (2) **Language Mastery:** Demonstrate proficiency in vocabulary, sentence patterns, and grammatical structures.
- (3) **Creativity and Originality:** Showcase unique perspectives and creative writing techniques, such as story narration, scene description, dialog quotes, and comparative analysis.
- (4) **Personal Reflection:** Include personal feelings and insights about the festival.

For example, when describing the unique customs of the festival, students can use specific verbs and adjectives. When discussing cultural connotations, they should use words like "symbolize," "represent," and "embody." Students should also give full play to their creativity, starting from unique perspectives and using novel writing techniques to give their essays personality and depth.

In writing, students should aim to impress with their creativity, combining the festival with modern social phenomena or using story narration and other techniques to enhance their essays. This task encourages them to develop their writing skills while deepening their understanding of festival culture.

4.4 Implementation process

Mission preparation phase: Teachers provide students with a detailed introduction to the task

requirements, evaluation criteria, and implementation process of the performance assessment to ensure that students clearly understand their tasks and objectives. Organize students into groups and guide them in group discussions to identify the festivals chosen by their respective groups and to draw up a preliminary plan for data collection. Teachers provide some relevant sources of information and guidance on research methods, such as recommending cultural books in the library, introducing some authoritative websites on cultural studies, explaining how to conduct effective interviews, etc., to help students carry out the data collection work smoothly.

Data collection and presentation preparation phase: Students actively carry out data collection according to the group plan. In this process, the teacher regularly checks students' progress and provides necessary support and guidance, such as answering questions encountered by students in the process of data collection (e.g., how to filter valid information, how to understand some cultural background knowledge), guiding students to expand their research ideas (e.g., encouraging students to pay attention to the changes and fusions of festivals in different cultural exchanges), and so on. At the same time, the teacher encourages active exchanges and division of labor among members of the group to work together to complete the production of the display materials. The groups give full play to their creativity in the production process and use various means to display the festival culture, so as to improve the quality and attractiveness of the display. For example, some groups drew beautiful illustrations of festival scenes in their posters, and some inserted interesting video clips or animation effects of festival celebrations in their PowerPoint slides.

Writing stage: After students have completed the festival culture presentation and gained a deeper understanding of the selected festival, the teacher guides students to start their individual writing. Teachers re-emphasize the writing requirements and assessment criteria, remind students to use the materials and knowledge they have accumulated in Task 1, and encourage students to boldly express their opinions and feelings in their writing. During the students' writing process, the teacher makes rounds to identify problems encountered by students in their writing and gives them individual guidance and feedback. Teachers also encourage students to exchange writing ideas with each other, share writing experiences, and improve their writing level together. For example, students are organized to have an intra-group writing ideas-sharing session so that they can inspire each other and expand their writing ideas.

Evaluation phase:

(1) Self-assessment

After completing their compositions, students conduct self-assessments against the evaluation criteria. Teachers provide self-assessment forms to help students analyze their work in a comprehensive and detailed way in terms of vocabulary use, grammatical correctness, elaboration of cultural connotations, structural plausibility, and creative expression. Students read their own writing carefully, think about their performance in each evaluation dimension, identify strengths and weaknesses, and record their evaluation results and ideas for improvement. For example, students may find that they have quoted some vivid examples when describing the cultural connotations of the festival, but there are some minor grammatical errors, such as inconsistent use of verb tenses. In response to these problems, students can make corresponding improvement plans, such as reviewing the use of verb tenses and further enriching the elaboration of cultural connotations.

(2) Peer-assessment

Teachers organize students to evaluate each other in groups. Students are divided into groups, and each group exchanges compositions for objective and careful evaluation according to the evaluation criteria. In the process of peer assessment, students carefully read their peers' works, not only to point out the advantages, but also to put forward specific and constructive suggestions for improving the existing problems, such as adding relevant information to make the content more complete, modifying grammatical errors to improve language accuracy, optimizing sentence structure to make the expression smoother and so on. At the same time, students should respond to and communicate with their peers' comments and discuss how to improve the quality of their writing. Through peer assessment, students can learn different writing ideas and skills from their peers' works, broaden their horizons, and improve their analyzing and evaluating skills at the same time.

(3) Teacher-assessment

The teacher collects the students' compositions and conducts a thorough and in-depth evaluation. The teacher first recognizes and encourages the students' performance throughout the task, including the effort of data collection, creativity in presenting the materials, and positive attitude in writing. Then, for

each composition, the teacher analyzes it in detail in terms of vocabulary use, grammatical correctness, elaboration of cultural connotations, structural rationality and creative performance, then gives specific scores based on the evaluation criteria. In the comments, teachers should not only point out students' problems, but also provide specific improvement methods and suggestions, such as recommending related books or articles for students to read and learn, guiding students to do more writing exercises to improve their skills, encouraging students to observe and think more in their daily life to cultivate creative thinking and so on. Finally, the teacher summarizes students' overall performance in this writing task, analyzes students' strengths and weaknesses, and provides references for subsequent teaching.

5. Conclusion

In high school English teaching, the application of performance assessment is of great significance to English writing teaching. Its main purpose is to improve students' writing ability and deepen their understanding and expression of festivals with different cultural backgrounds through scientific and systematic evaluation, so as to comprehensively improve students' comprehensive English literacy. Taking 'Reading for Writing' in the first unit of 'Festivals and Celebrations' as an example, we demonstrate the application of performance assessment in writing teaching in detail. First of all, we set reasonable teaching objectives and evaluation standards, focusing on both the improvement of writing skills and the understanding of cultural connotations. The evaluation criteria, as systematically presented in Table 1, are clear and specific, which can fully reflect students' writing performance. Secondly, we should design delicate teaching tasks that are close to students' lives, stimulate their learning interest and creative desire, and effectively improve their writing ability by guiding reading, analyzing characteristics and encouraging creation. Finally, the comprehensive evaluation process is implemented, including initial evaluation, feedback modification and final evaluation, focusing on finding students' highlights, giving positive encouragement and guidance, pointing out problems and providing suggestions for improvement. Practice shows that performance assessment plays a significant role in senior high school English writing teaching, which not only effectively promotes the improvement of writing ability, but also enhances the understanding and expression of festival celebrations. At the same time, it also improves students' comprehensive English literacy and lays a foundation for future study and life. In addition, reasonable teaching objectives, evaluation criteria, sophisticated tasks and a comprehensive evaluation process are the key elements of performance assessment, which should be used for reference in future teaching. In actual teaching, teachers should fully understand the characteristics and advantages of performance assessment, scientifically formulate teaching objectives and evaluation standards, rationally design tasks, guide students to actively participate in the evaluation process, and constantly reflect on and improve writing. At the same time, continue to explore the application of innovative performance assessment, combined with diversified teaching resources and means, to provide a richer and more authentic learning situation, further optimize the teaching effect, improve the quality of high school English writing teaching, and help students better develop English writing and comprehensive language literacy.

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