

## **BEAM as a Tool to Foster Structured Revision**

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Bizup, Joseph. "BEAM: A Rhetorical Vocabulary for Teaching Research-Based Writing." *Rhetoric Review*, 27.1 (2008): 72-86.

<b>BEAM</b>	
<b>Background</b>	Materials writer relies upon as evidence, sources
<b>Exhibits</b>	Materials writer analyzes or interprets
<b>Argument</b>	Materials whose claims a writer engages
<b>Methods</b>	Materials from which writer takes a governing concept or manner of working

"Finally, BEAM can aid students in revision. . . . BEAM can serve as a critical vocabulary in written comments, workshops, and student conferences, but it can also work as a checklist for assessing drafts. Since students' papers will generally be stronger if they address specific exhibits and engage specific arguments, simply asking students to verify that they are not missing either of these elements can be all the stimulation they need to make thoughtful and substantial changes to their work" (82).

**Reviewing a Model:** Consider providing students with a model of the kind of writing you would like them to do; or select a model that they have already read in class as part of the content of a lesson. Go over it in class (for the first time or yet again if already covered). Teach BEAM, and have groups try to mark up the text as a piece of writing. Go over it together. See if they can find each of the author's major sources and mark them with a B, an E, an A, or a M. Notice the moves the author makes and how he/she builds the essay as an argument (78).

**Draft Review:** When peers review a student's paper, have them do the same kind of reading on it as they performed in the model exercise. Teachers might choose to make such sessions more discussion-based with oral feedback and questions, leaving the writer to note possible changes and work toward the revision. Other teachers might prefer a more constrained review session in which the peer reviewers have a response sheet to fill out, listing the sources used in the essay and how they were used (BEAM) with notations about possible changes and developments needing to happen in the revision.

**Writer Reflection:** Once the writer has completed a revision, have her/him do a reflection about the revision noting how feedback from peers about BEAM was incorporated or shaped the nature of the revision. Most importantly, ask the student to comment on why the changes were made, the improvements he/she realized as a result, and finally, if the student had more time, what further considerations or changes might be made?

### **Benefits:**

- 1) Method can be adapted to revise papers in various disciplines
- 2) Method builds a skill to help transfer learning from one field to another
- 3) Method helps novice writer tackle revision with an understanding of how to target work, breaking down complexity of task into manageable goals