EWP SAMPLE TEACHING MATERIALS: OUTCOME 1

The following collection of resources is designed to help you teach students the skills necessary for composition.

OUTCOME 1: DEVELOPING RHETORICAL AWARENESS

key words: rhetorical situations, audience, genre awareness, metacognition

pp. 19-128

- Analyzing Rhetorical Situations
- Understanding and Writing for Audience
- Enhancing Genre Awareness and Reflective Practice

ANALYZING RHETORICAL SITUATIONS

As a reading skill, analyzing rhetorical situations has to do with recognizing the ecologies that surround communication. Asking composition students to read for rhetorical situation means inviting them to be aware of texts as participating in particular genres, produced by particular people, responding to particular circumstances and exigencies, speaking to particular audiences, and prompting particular reactions. It also means encouraging composition students to recognize writing as a set of choices a writer or writers make in order to produce meanings, effects, and action. Practice in analyzing for rhetorical situations thus becomes a way in which students can understand how “academic” texts and artifacts are in fact relevant to the “real world.” And it implicitly prepares students to articulate their own exigencies (that is, their reasons for writing and their reasons for being read) and to become aware of the ways they negotiate the conventions of the genre and context in which they're writing to achieve their purposes.

Suggested skills/activities/exercises: rhetorical situation pyramid, appeals, genre critique, compare & contrast textual conventions

HANDOUTS/WORKSHEETS

- handout of general questions for rhetorical reading (NF3)
- worksheet for analyzing and evaluating an advertisement (XZ5)
- lesson plan and handout for small group comparative rhetorical analysis (CC14)
- tools for rhetorical analysis handout with lesson plan (AP1)
- in-class activity and handout for connecting “the what” and “the how” of a text (CC14)
- in-class worksheet and activity on reading for ethos, logos, and pathos (JR1)
- in-class activity in preparation for visual analysis paper (ROME5)

LESSON PLANS

- mystery text rhetorical analysis lesson plan (CJ10)
- lesson plan for building visual vocabulary and analyzing visual arguments (SM1)
- lesson plan for Tannen articles (AJ01)

ASSIGNMENT PROMPTS

- genre critique assignment prompt (CJ12)
- rhetorical analysis assignment prompt (Lippi-Green) (ROME1)
- rhetorical self-analysis letter assignment prompt (CC1)
UNDERSTANDING AND WRITING FOR AUDIENCE

Understanding who is reading our work and might be persuaded by our arguments is key to making linguistic and rhetorical choices that support our writing goals. Often, audience is determined by a variety of factors, such as discipline, course topics, or genre. Therefore, understanding our audience when composing becomes crucial to completing writing assignments. This skill goes hand-in-hand with analyzing rhetorical situations and fostering genre awareness and reflective practices.

*Suggested skills/activities/exercises: analyze/consider the politics, demographics, history, and cultural contexts that shape and inform audience responses, vocabulary choices, tone, critical reflection on social expectations and constraints for varying genres*

HANDOUTS/WORKSHEETS

- Useful checklist from Writing@CSU for identifying audience (Kiefer)

LESSON PLANS

- Revising for a new audience assignment prompt, with audience analysis handout (HA13)
- Lesson plan on summarizing for different audiences (XZ6)
- Lesson plan from Writing@CSU on purpose and audience in publications (Harper)
- Lesson plan for Tannen articles (AJ01)

ASSIGNMENT PROMPTS

- Personal statement for a "real-life" audience assignment prompt (SC5)
- Revising for a new audience assignment prompt, with audience analysis handout (HA13)

TIPS/EXTRA READINGS/USEFUL LINKS

- "Consider your audience" web document from writing commons (Open Text)

ENHANCING GENRE AWARENESS AND REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Genre enters the composition classroom implicitly when we ask students to write different types of texts, including "academic essays," and when we teach students to be aware of their rhetorical choices as they write. Explicit instruction in genre awareness, then, can help demystify the often invisible norms of academic writing and give students transferrable skills for adjusting to the demands of new writing tasks. Teaching genre awareness usually begins with reading multiple sample genres. One of the best practices is to have students think through the conventions of a particular genre, either based on the samples provided in class or chosen by students, before they attempt to write in that genre. In this way, teaching genre conventions can explicitly serve as an invention activity. Instruction in genre awareness need not involve the word "genre," especially if activities and assignments engage a discrete number of predetermined genres. Genre, however, can also be a subject of inquiry, and students can seek out genres, as social artifacts, to research, analyze, and/or critique.

In connection to genre awareness, reflective writing on writing or metacognition is an important part of any composition course in which students submit a portfolio of work contextualized by a self-assessment. Building in consistent opportunities for self-reflection during the course leaves students better prepared to articulate what works in their own writing at the end of it. Further, research shows that providing students the opportunity to reflect on what they have learned and why helps with learning and the transfer of skills to future contexts. Simply establishing habits of reflection, that occur outside of the classroom (in notebooks or online posts) and are largely unassessed by the instructor (except for participation), can be enough to familiarize students with critiquing their own work. But some instructors choose to make reflection more central to coursework and classroom life in order to move students away from simple descriptions and toward specific and evidenced-based analysis of their own writing with stakes for their future writing...
endeavors. This may include allotting time before papers are submitted for re-reading and reflective writing and designing assignments that include or focus on some form of self-reflective writing on writing. Reflective writing can also be scaffolded through peer review, as students are encouraged to internalize ways of talking to others about their writing.

Suggested skills/activities/exercises: writing journals, reflective memos w/ assignments, reflection on writing strategies, daily/weekly class reflections

HANDOUTS/WORKSHEETS

- handout of general questions for rhetorical reading (NF3)
- critical reflection log (on genre, peer review, and assignments) handout (SM01)
- worksheet for analyzing and evaluating an advertisement (XZ5)
- reading journals, 111 (LOF1.pdf)

LESSON PLANS

- mystery text rhetorical analysis lesson plan (CJ10)
- lesson plan and handout for small group comparative rhetorical analysis (CC14)
- lesson plan for building visual vocabulary and analyzing visual arguments (SM1)

ASSIGNMENT PROMPTS

- artifact (visual) analysis (ROME2)
- genre critique assignment prompt (CJ12)
- sequence of assignments for completing a "genre project" (CJ7)
- assignment prompt for writing in a genre using a prototype, with self-reflection (LR4)
- personal statement for a "real-life" audience assignment prompt (SC5)
- assignment prompts for building and using critical vocabulary for visual analysis (MM3)

TIPS/EXTRA READINGS/USEFUL LINKS

- Scenes of Writing (Devitt, Reiff, Bawarshi): "Using Genres to Help You Write" (Chapter 3, pp. 99-147)