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Teaching Writing

In the Common-Core Era



Catherine Gewertz

assistant editor, *Education Week*

Teaching Writing in the Common-Core Era

Expert Presenters:

Cathy Fleischer, professor of English, Eastern Michigan University, co-director, Eastern Michigan Writing Project

Kathleen Yancey, professor of English and director of the graduate program in rhetoric and composition, Florida State University

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webinar will be available at
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Teaching Writing in the Common Core Era



Cross-Disciplinary Writing and College Readiness

Cathy Fleischer, Ph.D
Professor of English
Eastern Michigan University



Kathleen Blake Yancey
Kellogg Hunt Professor of English
Florida State University



...but I Teach Science!

Anxieties surrounding CCSS College Readiness Standards and Writing in the Disciplines:

- Why can't the English teacher do this?
- I already have a lot of content to teach. How can I add writing instruction, too?
- What do I know about teaching writing? I'm not that good at writing myself.

What Does Research Teach Us about Writing?

- Writing Process
- Importance of Genre
- Context/Audience/Setting/Purpose →
Rhetorical Situation

How Do These Concepts Impact the Subject Area Teacher?

Process writing in a content area class

Help students get started in their writing

- Wonder walls
- Journals: observational, perspective, dialogic
- Circle of knowledge

Help students draft and revise

- Mini-lessons
- Peer review

Help students edit

- Check list of important conventions

How Do These Concepts Impact the Subject Area Teacher?

Genre emphasis in a content area class

Select a real genre of the discipline

- Immersion: multiple and interesting models
- Inquiry: figuring out the characteristics that make this genre unique
- Instruction: mini-lessons in how a writer can do this

How Do These Concepts Impact the Subject Area Teacher?

Context/Audience/Purpose/Setting → Rhetorical Situation

- Integration across genres: Is there something unique about writing in science? In social studies?
- Focus on academic vocabulary in your subject:
cause vs. cause
- RAFT assignments: role, audience, form, task
- Multiple opportunities to write: short and long

CCSS College Readiness in Writing

Characterizing writing in the disciplines

- **Text Types and Purposes:** argument, informative/explanatory, narrative
- **Production and Distribution:** writing that is appropriate to task, purpose and audience; writing that follows a process; writing that uses technology
- **Research:** create short and more sustained projects; gather information from print and digital sources; assess credibility and accuracy of each source; avoid plagiarism
- **Range of Writing:** write routinely over extended and shorter time frames

Putting It All Together: What We Know about Writing, Disciplinary writing, and CCSS

- Teachers need to think about how to use writing to explain, to persuade, and to convey real or imagined experiences
- Teachers need to think about how to introduce short and long writing assignments and how to scaffold the writing
- Teachers need to think about the genres of their discipline and how those impact what kinds of writing they ask students to do.

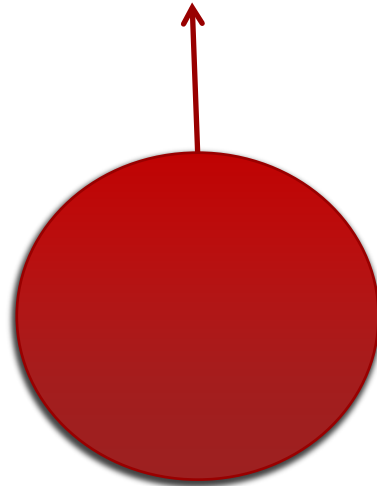
Connecting to College Readiness

What can you do to help students truly be college ready?

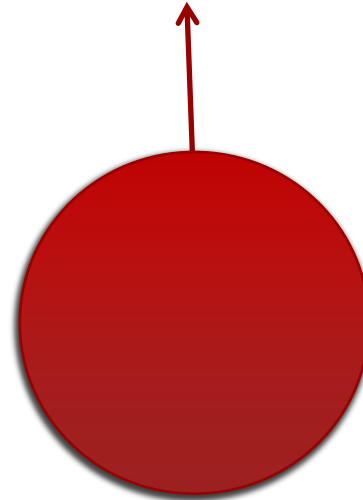
- Open conversations between high school teachers and college professors: monthly Saturday sessions and summer workshop
- Check out *The Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing* to learn more about how to get students ready for college writing: Habits of Mind and Experiences with Writing, Reading and Critical Analysis

And What about Career-Ready Writing?

Career



College



COMMON PERCEPTION

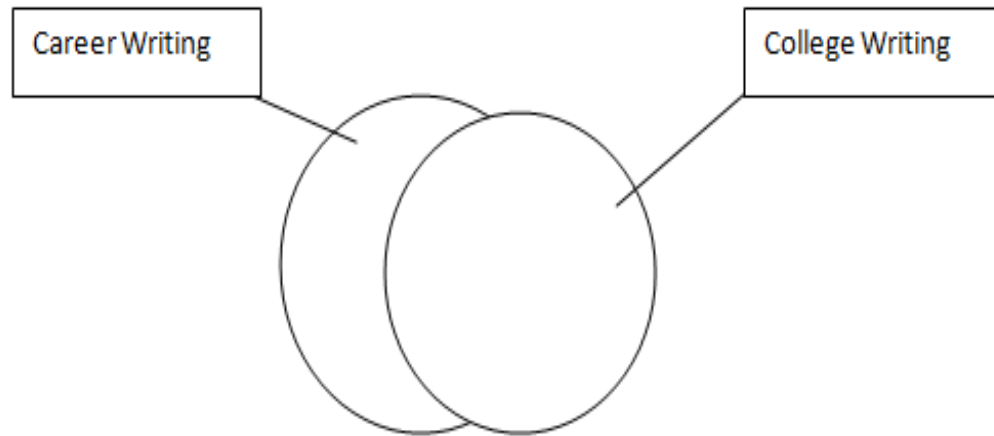
The Reality: College and Career Writing

Rhetorical Situation

Writing Process

Genres

Medium



Differences among states; local initiatives; teacher creativity

Teenagers and Career Readiness

➤ Teenagers Do Work!

About 25 percent of 16- to 19-year-olds currently are working, a drop of 10 percentage points from just five years ago, according to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#).

College and Jobs

➤ Teenagers and Their Older Siblings Go to College and They Work, Too

In October 2011, 68.3 percent of 2011 high school graduates were enrolled in colleges or universities, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today.

In 2010, about 40 percent of full-time and 73 percent of part-time college students ages 16 to 24 were employed. <US Govt.>

Career Readiness and Writing

- To be college- **and** career-ready writers, students must take task, purpose, and audience into careful consideration, choosing words, information, structures, and formats deliberately. They need to know how to **combine elements of different kinds of writing**—for example, to use narrative strategies within argument and explanation within narrative—to produce complex and nuanced writing. They need to be able to **use technology strategically** when creating, refining, and collaborating on writing. They have to become **adept at gathering information, evaluating sources, and citing material accurately, reporting findings from their research and analysis of sources in a clear and cogent manner**. (CCSS Initiative, 2010, p. 41)

Career Readiness and Writing

- Identify problems
- Conduct research
- Evaluate information
- Write to task and audience
- Share it in the appropriate medium

Career? College? Both?

Michael Tarpey

Valedictorian, Class of 2010



High School Resume

- Basic Technical Drawing (1 year)
- Engineering Drawing (1 year)
- Architectural Drawing (1 year)

Beginning with a Resume

High School Resume

Basic Technical Drawing (1 year)

Engineering Drawing (1 year)

Architectural Drawing (1 year)

Digital Visualization (1 year, in progress)

AP European History (1 year, 3 - Qualified)

AP Computer Science [Java, projects can be found [here](#)] (1 year, 5 - Extremely Well Qualified)

AP English Language & Composition (1 year, 4 - Well Qualified)

AP US History (1 year, 3 - Qualified)

AP Calculus BC (1 year, 5 - Extremely Well Qualified)

AP Statistics (1 year, 5 - Extremely Well Qualified)

AP English Literature & Composition (1 year, 4 - Well Qualified)

AP US Government (1 year, 5 - Extremely Well Qualified)

AP Physics C (1 year, 4 - Well Qualified)

AP Macroeconomics (1 year, 5 - Extremely Well Qualified)

AP Microeconomics (1 year, 4 - Well Qualified)

Japanese Language (4 years)

[Freshman English Digital Portfolio](#)

[Sophomore English Digital Portfolio](#)

[Junior English Digital Portfolio](#)

[Senior English Digital Portfolio](#)

Writing a Resume

- Resume as a Set of Slots to be Filled In OR
- Resume as a Genre in a Rhetorical Situation
- Best Buy or Web-Design Service?
- Process of Writing a Genre in Response to a Rhetorical Situation
- Reflecting on the Process and Its Efficacy
- Choosing the Medium—Monster.com; Linked In

An Example from Biology

- Report on the Current Status of Research on Genetic Alteration of Tomatoes for Group Writing an NSF Grant
- Pamphlet on “Normal” Tomatoes, Heirloom Tomatoes, and Genetically Altered Tomatoes
 - Identify problems
 - Conduct research
 - Evaluate information
 - Write to task for an audience in appropriate genre
 - Share it in the appropriate medium

Lessons from Doppel

- DJ, Researcher, College Student
- Learning from All Sites of Writing
- Outlining from Middle School
- A Writing Process Keyed to “Blocks of Texts”
Modeled on Experience as an Architectural Drafting
in High School
- Swirling Students

Some Best Practices

- Build on Prior Knowledge
- Engage Writers in the Most Logical Context
- Get Response and Revise
- Write to and Share with Real Readers—School Partners; School Write Night; Community Showcase Event
- Research (Interview and Document) Different Careers
- Reflect on What You Have Learned

A Few Resources

CWPA, NCTE, and NWP. *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing*. <http://wpacouncil.org/framework>

Middendorf, Joan and David Pace. "Decoding the Disciplines: A Model for Helping Students Learn Disciplinary Ways of Thinking." <http://www.iub.edu/~tchsotl/part3/Decoding%20Middendorf.pdf>

Moje, Elizabeth Birr. "Developing Disciplinary Discourses, Literacies and Identities: What's Knowledge Got to Do With It?" In Bonilla and Englander (Eds.) *Discourses and identities in contexts of educational change: Contributions from the United States and Mexico* (49-74).
<http://www.woodrow.org/images/pdf/echs/ECnewsitems/Discourse%20and%20Identity%20Book%20Moje%20Ch2.pdf>

NCTE. "Literacies of Disciplines: An NCTE Research Policy Brief," 2011.
<http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Resources/Journals/CC/0211-sep2011/CC0211Policy.pdf>

Shanahan, Timothy and Cynthia Shanahan. "Teaching Disciplinary Literacy to Adolescents: Rethinking Content-Area Literacy." *Harvard Educational Review*. Spring 2008.
<http://www.uww.edu/conteduc/camps/otherevents/Docs/Papers/Shanahan%20and%20Shanahan%202008.pdf>

Yancey, Kathleen Blake. "Responding Forward." In P. Sullivan, H. Tinberg & S. Blau, eds., *What Is "College-level" Writing? Volume 2: Assignments, Readings and Student Writing Samples*. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 2010: 300-11.

Q & A

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Required Reading from *Education Week*:

[Writing Undergoes Renaissance in Curricula](#)

Teachers are focusing on writing instruction like never before. More and more, they're asking students to write about what they read, helping them think through and craft their work, and using such exercises as tools not only to build better writers, but to help students understand what they're studying.

[Spotlight on Implementing Common Standards](#)

The Common Core State Standards are beginning to influence English/language arts instruction. This Spotlight focuses on reading and writing across the subjects, a greater emphasis on nonfiction texts, the debate over prereading, and criticisms of the standards.

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