



Assignment Options

- *Writing to learn and/or writing to communicate*
- School-based audience, other audience
- Exploratory/Formal
- Low stakes/ High stakes
- Group/individual
- Multimodal (writing plus visual, oral comm)

Mapping Objectives & Writing Assignments

Objective

Behavior

Writing

Understand
X

- Explain x in your own words

Animation with voiceover
Reading Journal
Textbook unit
Encyclopedia entry

Appreciate
X

- identify positive values of x

Promotional Ad
Interview expert or enthusiast

Apply x

- Use x effectively to address a problem

Product development
Research current applications
Advice column



Map writing to objectives (20 min)

*A pre-writing exercise to generate & ideas
and get peer feedback*

- List your course objectives / behaviors
- Brainstorm formal (academic and non-academic) and/or exploratory writing tasks that might support some of these objectives
- With a partner, assess each possibility, noting constraining factors such as course structure, resources, student population, time, etc.
- Select one or two of these assignments for further development



Assignment Sheets

Assignment Sheet

- Writing Task
 - Purpose/Audience
 - Steps or subtasks
 - Due Dates
 - Criteria/Checklist
 - Other specifications, resources
- *Assign longer papers in stages; reverse engineer it*
 - *Provide a rhetorical context (scenario, role play)*
 - *Include problem-focused assignments*
 - *Test-drive the assignment*
 - *Overview in class; ask them questions*
 - *Have them evaluate samples*



Scaffolding

- Break major assignment into smaller tasks or mini-assignments so students get practice and early feedback.
- Provide a framework or structure
- Assign to a group to facilitate peer learning
- Incrementally increase difficulty of tasks , weaning students from support.

EX: Students choose problem A or B and are given two useful sources.

1. **RSCH PLAN** In groups, they propose *research questions & a method for locating more sources* to address these questions (what key words, databases, primary sources will they use?).

2. **ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY** Group writes an annotated bibliography of 8 additional sources (for each entry, a summary plus implications for research questions).

3. **OUTLINE** Group outlines major headings for lit review , organized by theme or research question. Under each heading, they bullet main findings from sources, with in-text citations.

4. **DRAFT** – Individual team members write an Introduction of the problem or rsch question/s and they use the group bib and outline to write a lit review on their own.

5. **Revised LIT REVIEWS** due. Class can vote



Sequencing in a Large Lab Course

Lab 1 FULL Report
Lab 2 FULL Report
Lab 3 FULL Report
Lab 4 FULL Report
Lab 5 FULL Report
Lab 6 FULL Report

70 students

**420
FULL
Reports**

Lab 1 Results
Lab 2 Results + Discussion
Lab 3 Group Methods, PP of
Results, Discussion
Lab 4 FULL Report
Lab 5 Group PP Presentation
Lab 6 Group FULL Report

49 FULL Reports

35 Results

70 Result and Discussion

14 methods and PP slides

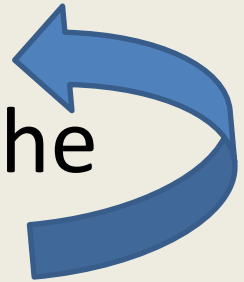
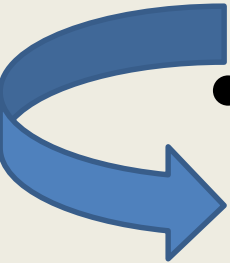
14 PP presentations or posters

Around 1250 pages plus slides vs.
6300 pages in original sequence!



Write an assignment

- Write an assignment sheet
- Map out due dates & subtasks of the assignment in your schedule
- Test drive it yourself (go through the motions); get feedback.





Formative Assessment

- Do pre and post surveys or compare pre and post performance
- Inventory the whole group of papers—see what aspects they get and which are the weakest
- Design further intervention , more...
 - explicit instruction/ demo in class
 - written guidelines, resources
 - drafts, early feedback
(from peers, you, TAs, tutors)
 - group work



Making writing visible in the syllabus and schedule

- Explain the role of writing in your course or in the field in your syllabus. Put writing resource information and disability and plagiarism policies pertaining to writing on the syllabus. Consider extra credit for writing center tutoring or help sessions.
- Note writing due dates in the schedule; note draft return dates (these are YOUR deadlines for grading!) to help you manage the paper load and give students time to respond/revise.



Questions for Assignment Design

- **What *types* of writing assignments might serve my course objectives?**
- **How much can I (realistically) manage, given my resources, students, course format? How much revision or repetition, direct instruction, can I build in?**
- **How might writing assignments be sequenced and scaffolded?**
- **Have I written thorough assignment instructions?**
- **Where might students encounter challenges? How might I intervene: incorporate preparatory activities or stagger parts of the assignment over time? demonstrate criteria and strategies before drafts are due? Build in peer planning and review? Create and annotate examples and instructional materials? Involve TAs or tutors in the planning and drafting process?**
- **How might I collect data to assess the its value and to do it better next time?**