

LE2 - Perceptions of Academic Writing/Genres in School (Unit Two)

Instructor Name

120 Section Number

Strategies:

Rhetorical Analysis: analyzing how writers use particular genres within and beyond the academy, and why; **Critical thinking, reading, and writing:** Using writing to analyze your experiences and those of others; using writing to engage in and demonstrate inquiry processes; **Processes:** using writing to describe, analyze, and reflect, and giving feedback to your colleagues' writing. **Knowledge of Conventions:** analyzing and employing genres, using MLA citations, editing.

Possible readings for this assignment:

Langston Hughes, "Theme for English B"

Earl Shorris, "On the Uses of a Liberal Education II"

Stanley Fish, "Colleges Caught in a Vice"

June Jordan, "Don't Nobody..."

Ron Suskind, "Fierce Intimacies"

Interview of one person from your home community

In this unit, you'll briefly consider your expectations of writing here in college and then focus on what kinds of writing you have encountered here, what the purposes of those genres are, and what your perceptions of their value are. Ultimately, you'll consider the following in developing your longer essay: What kinds of writing are valued here at EMU? Why are they valued, and what knowledge do you bring to bear when you encounter these kinds of writing? To address this question, you'll need to focus your analysis very specifically; the steps below are designed to help.

To begin, you'll need to think briefly about what your expectations of college writing before you arrived. What did you think you'd write here, and why did you think you'd write what you did? Then, do a very close study of what you *are* writing here. You'll want to focus your analysis in a specific way: perhaps keep a log and look at one day's worth of writing, or choose a class and look at all of the different kinds of writing you do there, or choose a specific site (like Pray-Harrod) and look at all of the different kinds of writing you do there. Whatever you choose, you'll want to gather very specific and detailed evidence from that site to support the analysis in this essay.

Once you've chosen your site and gathered your evidence, you'll want to dive into the analysis. What is valued, where, and why? What kind of knowledge and/or experiences do you bring to bear on the assignment? How and why do you think this writing is or is not different from what you expected to write in college?

Finally, you'll want to interview someone from your home community in conjunction with this assignment – perhaps about their perceptions of college writing, perhaps about

how they react to what you've learned, or perhaps about questions related to this assignment that you find relevant. When you write your submission draft, you'll need to include evidence in the draft from your interview, as well as relevant evidence from the readings for this assignment.

Exploration One:

Remember back to high school or even this summer. What expectations did you have for what college writing would be? What did you think you'd be writing? Be as specific as possible; for example, if you thought you'd be writing "essays," discuss what you thought those essays would be like—their characteristics/qualities. Then: now that you're here, what are you actually writing while you're in school? More specifically, list everything you can think of that you write for every class you're taking right now. Then, discuss the characteristics/qualities of each kind of writing that you do for school now.

Exploration two:

For this exploration, you'll use the interview you conducted with someone from your home community and X reading. What does that person think college writing is, and why does s/he think that? What are her/his assumptions about college writing? What is someone who is not in college writing? Why is that writing important, meaningful, valuable?

Possible things to do as process work:

First day of unit freewrite: what is college writing and how do you know?

Keep a log of all the writing you do in a day and bring in to analyze—what are all the kinds of writing you do? What's for school, and what's not? Etc.

Interview preparation work—discuss what you need to find out and how to go about doing that, who might be best to interview, what questions to ask; do trial runs with interview questions, do a "fishbowl" interview and then discuss it.

Backpack genres—what kinds of writing do you have in your backpack right now? What do they "say" about a college student's writing life?

Ethnography of Pray-Harrold (or some other place) – what kinds of writing are happening here?