

WRD 110 – In-Class Activities

Week One

August 28 – Icebreakers: Two truths and a lie; pass around a bag of candy, have them take as much as they want, then tell something about themselves for every piece of candy they take; a name game similar to what we did on the first day of orientation; your choice.

Week Two

September 2 – Get to know our textbook: talk about the kind of signposting and big-picture indications of structure that the textbook holds. For example, chapter headings, subheads, words in bold, graphics, etc. You might point out relevant sections of the textbook that they will find helpful (i.e. the section on MLA citations).

This I Believe: explain the concept of This I Believe, talk about how it applies to your course focus (difference and community, a way to link to what students are passionate about) introduce Frank X Walker's essay, play the essay, then discuss. Introduce This I Believe speech assignment.

September 4 – Using the library, part I: introduction to the library website

Evaluating sources: review textbook chapter (I'll give this to you).

Week Three

September 9 – *Mad Men* and audience: after reviewing and discussing a solid definition for rhetoric and the rhetorical triangle, play the clip "The Carousel" from *Mad Men* Season 1 (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=suRDUFpsHus>). After the class watches the clip, have them do a brief rhetorical analysis, filling in the categories of the rhetorical triangle you just discussed.

September 11 – Using the library, part II: you can either set up a library tour, or do a brief scavenger hunt (about 5 questions). I recommend the scavenger hunt because it makes them interact more with the research.

Week Four

September 16 – What the World Eats Photo Essay (<http://time.com/8515/hungry-planet-what-the-world-eats/>): I usually choose four or five photos from this photo essay series and have students do a rhetorical analysis of each photo as a follow-up to the understanding digital media textbook reading. Since each photo depicts a family's food for the week, there's a lot to work with – they can discuss the food itself, the family's makeup and home, and it raises lots of issues about culture, class, etc. If this takes a long time, you can always break it up and continue it to another day.

Analyzing the *Queen of Versailles* and *Hitler's Children*: I usually do the introduction to film terminology before I show clips from these for discussion. Here's the blog I use for introducing terminology: <http://wrld11lowenhorton.blogspot.com/2013/03/understanding-film-terms.html>. After reviewing this with students, I pick a few clips from each documentary – typically a few minutes at the beginning and end of *The Queen of Versailles* and one of the story threads from *Hitler's Children*, show them, then we discuss using the film terminology.

September 18 – Understanding the content of your sources: this is also from the chapter I will give to you.

Week Five

September 23 – MLK Visualization (<http://vimeo.com/18792376>) /mashupbreakdown.com exercise: this is one we discussed during orientation. You can use this one as a review of their final project pitches – have them bring in an extra copy – or you can move it to the previous class and have them do it just prior to turning this assignment in.

September 25 – Analyzing *Monica and David* and *Dark Girls*: similar to previous documentary activity on September 16.

Week Six

September 30 – What makes good writing: divide class into three groups to discuss three readings and have them pick out several specific details that would explain why you would choose to have them read these three pieces. Discuss those components of good writing and how they can integrate them. Then have them do a mirroring/replication exercise for homework: choose one piece of the three and have them write something in that style. Also have them choose their own example of good writing and email it to you – you can then use those for small exercises throughout the semester.

Integrating sources into your text: this is from the chapter I will send you.

Week Seven

October 7 – Transitions: I show students this formula for transitions: A + aB + bC + cD + dE.... Essentially, this represents a paragraph, and each letter represents an idea. The big A is the main idea; the little a is a small portion of that idea carried over to the next sentence and paired with that sentence's big idea, represented by B. This pattern happens over and over again, making a bridge of ideas from sentence to sentence. I then have the class choose four random words, and we recreate this exercise for real, finding a way to link all of those words in a paragraph using this formula. I then have them write their own paragraph for homework after choosing four more words.

5-Card Flickr (<http://5card.cogdogblog.com/play.php?suit=5card>) : This essentially replicates that transition activity using visuals – as a class, we play a round, trying to find ways to link the images with our sentences, and trying to use the formula above.

CaroMont Medical Center case study: This is a great exercise to get them to consider audience: we focus on the medical center’s “cheat death” tagline campaign from 2012 (Google it and you’ll find tons of relevant materials). What I have them do is close their eyes and imagine they are standing in a room when this slogan is revealed. I give each of them a notecard with an audience role on it, for example: doctor, nurse, PR professional, hospital administrator, community resident, and then add a second role, often: parent, cancer survivor, lost parent to heart attack, etc. You can make these up however you’d like to. I break them into groups, have them play their roles, and then we discuss how they reacted to this tagline. We then discuss some of the online and print stories generated about this new marketing campaign and look at the website of the firm that created the campaign and do a rhetorical analysis of it as well (the firm is Immortology, which can be found at: <http://immortologyusa.com/>). Tends to be a fun and engaging activity. You can find more info about this case study on page 13 of the “Using Evidence” book chapter I have put in the “supplemental materials” file folder on Google Drive.

Week Eight

October 14: Analyze Shorts of the Week: *The Mystery of Flying Kicks*, *Born into Coal*, *Flo*: same as previous documentary exercises above.

October 16: Citing sources and the politics of citations, part I: see the book chapter for ideas on how to present this.

Week Nine

October 21: Citing sources and the politics of citations, part II: see the book chapter – I usually follow up an initial discussion of this concept with the Stephen Glass case study.

October 23: Analyzing *Living a Transgender Childhood* and Shorts of the Week: *The Beast Inside* and *The Heat*: same as previous documentary exercises above.