

CompDog

The Newsletter for the Fresno State Writing Program

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... we hide the "rules of the academic game" from students by not showing them how we operate in the scholarly and intellectual communities where we fashion our reputations as academics.

Letter From the Director

First of all I want to welcome all of you to what I hope is a long running publication concerning anything related to the study, teaching, and performance of writing. Each month the composition faculty will turn out a newsletter, *CompDog*, hoping it provides a space to communicate whatever strikes your fancy about the work of writing. Clearly we have an interest in promoting Rhetoric and Composition Studies, but we also feel this little "rag" belongs to the entire Department and should represent the kind of thinking, learning, and knowing we all –students and teachers--collect as we move toward future classes, degrees, or print. In short, this is a newsletter for people who like to talk shop, speculate, and make claims about what matters to them as advocates for writing.

Each month one of the comp faculty will write a letter to the program. This month I want to write a letter about stuff I am learning. One of the things I love about being a teacher is the fact that I *have* to keep learning; if I don't, I get stagnant, bored, or worse yet, boring. My job is about all the talk, all the thinking, all the making sense of things that add to my understanding of the world around me and in me. So, I want to write about what I see and what I learn by hanging around all the people in our program.

Currently I am really hung up on a book by Gerald Graff called *Clueless in Academe: How Schooling Obscures the Life of the Mind* (Yale UP, 2003). This book makes a good argument for how we confuse people by making academic work seem so difficult, so incomprehensible, and –most importantly for me as a teacher—so far removed from the everyday lives of the rest of the world. Graff's analysis of why people read academic culture as out of touch with the rest of the world is completely convincing to me. Read it and see why.

One of my favorite arguments rises out of Graff's allegation that we hide the "rules of the academic game" from students by not showing them how we operate in the scholarly and intellectual communities where we fashion our reputations as academics. Too many teachers rely on the pedagogical conventions of behaviorist, current traditional, teacher-centered classrooms where knowledge is primarily the result of an accumulation of readings and information, as opposed to a kind of rhetorical understanding of knowledge-in-action (Arthur Applebee: *Curriculum as Conversation*), where knowledge is directed to someone or something.

And this is where I believe Graff's argument really dovetails with our program's pedagogy. Graff says we are overlooking the power of argument. I agree. I believe



Successful CompDogs can graph student progress.

too many of our students have experienced writing instruction that focuses on what I would call a formalist, or criterion-based approach to writing rather than a rhetorical approach to writing. Most of our students arrive here thinking we have the keys to success because we know all the tricks that will help them find the “best way to write it.” As we all know, many of our students believe that writing is about replicating the rigid structures of compare and contrast, or the 6 sentence paragraph; they assume writing is really about mastering the rules of an ideal form rather than communicating something that is meaningful and contextualized by conversations that matter to them as developing intellectuals.

I believe we need to un-teach the assumption that the performance of writing is about fitting ideas into the structure of a mode. Rather I hope we explain writing from a rhetorical perspective, promoting the notion that all writing is addressed writing: We want to tell students there is an audience that needs to read your writing, that understanding purpose gives you direction, focus, and exigency, and getting your readers to understand your message as well as your ethos gives you power and agency. We want to replace the idea that students write to fill out the correct form with the idea that writing is about trying to *do* something within the context of some larger, meaningful conversation.

For Graff, one of the best ways to get students to discover the rhetorical nature of communication is by teaching them about argument. Here is what he says in a recent article in *Profession 2007* (MLA):

My own candidate for the most pedagogically useful simplification comes from the title of a popular recent composition text . . . *Everything is an Argument*. If we must find a single overarching concept to characterize the academic game – and unless we do, we can forget about making academic intellectual practices accessible on a democratic scale—then persuasive argument seems to me the clearest and most comprehensive available term.

At its core, persuasive argument means listening closely to the argument of others, summarizing them in a recognizable way, and making your own argument in response. It is not just a technical skill, but an ethical imperative in a world where our survival may depend on our ability to get into the heads of those who think differently from us.

As intellectuals, we are always striving for complex explanations of the way we believe things work, and we wish to take our students there also, encouraging a more complex understanding of the way language functions in their lives. But we have to remember, many of our students come from discourse communities or educations where they have not been asked to examine ideas, discover problems, and then weigh in with their take on an issue. So, simplify, find ways to invite students into the arguments that shape the conversations of your classes by helping them understand the actual things intellectuals and academics do when they argue for the truth-value of their vision. Let’s find ways to let them in on the moves we make in our own academic writing, allowing them to see that we are not a bunch of brainiacs who arbitrarily over-analyze the nuances of gender politics, we are people interested in the way the world operates, constantly trying to understand it, explain it, and, hopefully, make it better by writing about the issues that matter to us.

. . . we need to un-teach the assumption that the performance of writing is about fitting ideas into the structure of a mode.

Blessings and good vibes, Rick

A Good Writing Class

Bo Wang

Last semester, I visited several teachers' first-year writing classes, and to my delight, I saw good teaching in many of these classes. One class in particular left me with such a deep impression that I still remember the lively classroom activities and the inspirational teaching moments the instructor conceived and created. Here I would like to share my thoughts about this class and I hope this short piece will invite more thinking and talking about teaching in our First-Year Writing Program.

At 7 o'clock on the morning of November 19, I visited Ms. M's English 5A class. In this class, Ms. M taught a set of analytical concepts to help students read a longer work. At the beginning of the class, Ms. M talked briefly about what they would try to achieve in the class period. Then, she introduced to students an analytical framework she adapted from *Writing Analytically*. To make the framework easier to grasp, Ms. M renamed what the authors call "methods" as RBSAs (R for "Repetition," B for "Binary," S for "Strands," A for "Anomaly"), which students were encouraged to look for when they read a text. Ms. M put on the board the four concepts and explained them one by one, using specific examples drawn from her life experience and from Chris Gardner's *The Pursuit of Happiness*, an autobiography they had been reading. After this mini-lecture, Ms. M passed out 3x5 cards with words and phrases of binaries such as reality and dream, childhood and manhood, and moment and years (taken from Gardner's book), asking students to find the opposite. This assignment made students leave their seats, find their binary opposition partner, and talk with classmates in small groups. Then they were asked to look for other binaries in the first chapter of Gardner's book.

Ms. M guided the discussion with some thought-provoking questions: "Why do you think it is important to notice the binary oppositions?" "How do you think some of these binaries contribute to the meaning of the chapter?"

When they reported their findings to the class, Ms. M guided the discussion with some thought-provoking questions: "Why do you think it is important to notice the binary oppositions?" "How do you think some of these binaries contribute to the meaning of the chapter?" Later, they also discussed "strands" and "anomaly" and how these concepts/strategies are used to create meaning in the book.

At the end of the class, Ms. M summarized the major points of the class, emphasizing the concept of purposeful repetitions, binaries and strands and their effect in revealing the author's purpose and message. She asked students to find out the two most important "oppositions"/ "repetitions" / "strands" in the book as homework. Several aspects of this class made it a successful endeavor. This session was well-designed to help students move from doing summary to doing analysis of what they read. It built on the previous lessons students had learned about reading and led them to a more sophisticated practice—reading with a critical questioning mind. Asking students to use an analytical tool to read an autobiography, Ms. M untaught some assumptions about reading many of our first-year writing students formed in high school. For instance, many students tend to think that we read only for pleasure/information and a good reader is a fast reader. Behind these assumptions is the notion that reading is a one-time deal and you don't have to read a text again once you have done the reading. This conception of reading hinders students from critically engaging a text and does not foster the kind of analytical and critical thinking that academic and civic participation requires. Ms. M's choice of the analytical tool provided students with an effective reading strategy that enables them to practice reading as a process of meaning-making. Finding binaries and strands is about making subtle connections between layers of meaning in a text. Looking and looking again at the ways in which the author delivers his message and achieves his purpose allow students to experience the kind of reading that helps them attend to the choices and decisions a writer makes to create meaning.

The ways in which Ms. M conducted the class show strong teacher thinking. Good teaching entails good demonstration/modeling and clear explanation. I noticed that Ms. M used her personal experiences and examples from Gardner's book to make an abstract concept understandable to students. After explaining the concepts, she gave some specific words and phrases to demonstrate how to find patterns in a text, which shows clearly what she was expecting students to do. When she asked a question which was followed by a moment of silence, Ms. M didn't provide the answer in a hurry; instead, she waited and rephrased her question. This was a good teaching moment, when the teacher encouraged students to extend their thoughts and stretch themselves as intellectuals. Another moment that caught my attention is when Ms. M played a beautiful musical piece related to Chris Gardner during small group discussion. Later Ms. M told me that she hoped to use the music to provide a learning experience that would enable students to make associations with the text through different senses, which I found, and continue to find, both interesting and inspiring.

Good Reads About Writing

Rule, Rebecca. "Conferences and Workshops: Conversations on Writing in Process." *Nuts and Bolts: A Practical Guide for Teaching College Composition*. Ed. Thomas Newkirk. Portsmouth: Heinemann, 1993. 43-65.

In this article, Rebecca Rule offers advice on how to conduct conferences without taking ownership of student work. She suggests some options for preparing in advance and records excerpts of conversations with particular students to explain her points. She includes advice for using both small and large group workshops, listing the benefits to readers and to writers. Her suggestions and views are especially useful for new writing teachers.

DeStigter, Todd. "Introduction: Unfamiliar Territory." *Reflections of a Citizen Teacher: Literacy, Democracy, and the Forgotten Students of Addison High*. Urbana: NCTE, 2001. 1-36.

This book is one of those reads that gives voice to so many latent thoughts. We all sense that our teaching has something to do with democracy, with the belief that language is power. DeStigter's "Introduction" maps the relationship between our sense of being a teacher and how that enters into a complex set of relations with students' view of the worlds they live in. If you are curious about how your work as a writing teacher is linked to theory, democracy, and the material conditions of our students' lives, this essay has a lot to say, and even more to show.

Personals

Penelope Marie Mayer was born on December 12, 2007 at 12:53 AM, to proud parents Doug and Jennifer Mayer. She weighed in at 6 pounds, 13 ounces and measured 20 inches in length. We immediately fell in love with her and while she has been with us for less than two months, we cannot imagine life without our sweet Penelope.



Penelope Marie Mayer (a CompDog in the making?)

What's Wrong With Grading and How Do We Make It Better?

Part 1: The Validity of Grades

Asao B. Inoue

This is the first of a three-part series of discussions on grading. This discussion focuses on ways to understand the validity of grades. The second will focus on grades' reliability and fairness, while the final discussion will discuss an alternative, grading contracts.

Grades pretty much do one thing well: They serve institutions as markers of achievement and failure for large numbers of students, those whom the institution needs to quantify.

From my title, you can probably see my bias against grades. I do not like grades or grading. They are not pedagogical, nor do they help most students learn much. They tell us and our students very little about the qualities in individual pieces of writing, and the competencies of our students at course's end. They unfairly hang students on hierarchies, scales of best to worst, that also happen to encourage unhealthy competition, not for learning or knowledge but for grades (Elbow; Kohn; Bleich). A good grade never gave an engineer the ability to build a sturdy bridge, nor a writer the ability to pen a beautiful poem or a persuasive piece of rhetoric. Self-assessment and reflective practices are much better at encouraging these kinds of outcomes. Grades pretty much do one thing well: They serve institutions as markers of achievement and failure for large numbers of students, those whom the institution needs to quantify. Foucault might say grading is a way of "disciplining" bodies since it leads to objectifying and dominating students – and socially stratifying them to boot. Now, I'm not going to argue that we do not grade. Of course, we are required to. I'd like to consider: How much grading do we *need* to do?

Most agree that our assessment practices and decisions must lead students to reflection which helps them improve writing practices by encouraging strategy-building. Self-assessment, like reflection in portfolios, is typically regarded by composition specialists as one way to help writers make better writing decisions in the future (Yancey; Huot). And self-assessment and reflection – even evaluation by a teacher – does not *require* grades.

I can hear some folks arguing: But wait, Asao, we need grades. Grades help our students see where they are in a course, or with a piece of writing. They tell us how individuals stack up to some standard set in the course or by a teacher; they keep things fair by providing a uniform judgment. They give a concrete, consistent, and understandable (dare I say "objective") measure that most will readily accept and know how to translate for future use. Grades are what's expected in schools and what students, teachers, administrators, employers, parents, and others expect as a product of a course or a program of study. However, we might ask ourselves *what* do they make understandable, consistent, and conventional and *how* do they produce such conclusions for students?

Recently, validity has been understood not as inherent in a test or assessment, but as something that must be inquired into and constructed (Moss), very much like a "reading" of any text. No test or argument is ever "naturally" valid. There are degrees of validity and only in relation to particular purposes (e.g., a decision to pass a student in 5B) and for particular stakeholders (Inoue). Validity is a contextualized argument, one that explains the degree to which a test, like a portfolio used to produce a final grade in Engl 5B, measures what it purports to measure (Messick; Cronbach).

For most of us in Fresno State's Writing Program, our grades are meant to be an indicator of the writing construct we'll call "academic literacy." But how do we know

that the grade, which is a decision based on the portfolio and the teacher's reading of it, is an adequately accurate indicator of academic literacy, our writing construct? The problem with grades used as an indicator of a student's, say Cecilia's, accomplishments in academic literacy is that it's actually one step removed from the original decisions a teacher makes about Cecilia's competencies, two steps removed from the reading of her portfolio, and three steps from the actual competencies (what she can or theoretically may do in any writing situation), which arguably can never be quantified. A grade is usually at least one step removed from the reading of origin because in the best scenarios a teacher reads through a framework, say an evaluation rubric, then translates those observations into evaluations or judgments of quality (usually written), then takes those quality judgments and translates them into a numerical or rank judgment, a grade. Each translation steps farther away from the original reading (and its purpose).

The more steps away from Cecilia's portfolio, the more dubious our decisions, like grades, become.

This is not the case with portfolios. This tool delays grading until the end of a semester; consequently judgments stay closer to the texts in question because we describe what we see and compare it to evaluation rubrics and lists of expectations. Descriptive assessment is more valid than grades because feedback focuses on developing writing knowledge rather than the fixed and static final judgment grading imposes. (c.f., Elbow and Bleich).

An example: Consider the ways in which Cecilia's grade can be produced. Let's call it a percentage, like 85% ; how is it produced? Typically her teacher will read her portfolio, and that will produce a judgment about Cecilia's performance based on features of her portfolio. We might even include extra-textual factors —such as participation, commitment, risk taking-- about Cecilia's performances in the class that the teacher considers when grading, which most of us would say we do and is necessary to make sense of the portfolio as a documentation of Cecilia as a learner. Strictly speaking this creates a higher chance at messing up the validity of our judgment in psychometric terms, since now the "test" (a portfolio) is randomly and unevenly expanded to include other things across different students in the class. This means the construct we are now measuring is actually different for each student because the content we consider is also different. Each grade, even within a single class, means something different, even the same 85% on two different portfolios in the same class – and surely this gap gets wider when we consider multiple teachers and sections. For example, one teacher may consider John's lack of attentiveness and participation in class when reading his portfolio, but leaves out these considerations when reading Cecilia's. Yet both may still get an 85%. This questions the validity of the writing construct (the thing we are testing for), the testing mechanism (the portfolio), and the methods used to produce the grades by the teacher (her reading-judgment practices).

Notice, however, that in a descriptive assessment the above examples do not necessarily erode validity of the assessment decisions. When we describe, we intuitively understand the rhetorical need to back up judgments and claims. We contextualize, explain readings of texts, and explicate. But what we usually do not do is say that our discursive judgment of an essay is THE only judgment. In fact, it's often assumed in our explications that it's a single teacher's judgment. Grades mask this subjectivity oftentimes. And it's not as simple as telling Cecilia: "Forget the grade. Focus on my comments." Grades confuse things by sending these mixed messages that cannot be resolved simply by a teacher's reassuring words.

A grade is usually at least one step removed from the reading of origin . . .

Grades confuse things by sending these mixed messages that cannot be resolved simply by a teacher's reassuring words.

The larger point is that even if the teacher has clearly defined what expectations are meant by “academic literacy,” her reading is an uneven translation that changes with each new portfolio. This acknowledges the way meaning is socially constructed in uneven discourse communities, where each person sits or moves in a unique position relative to the grader. Do you grade that first portfolio the same as the last one? Do you really grade John, the chronic, tardy, but strong conventional writer in exactly the same ways as you do the always present but conventionally weaker writer Cecilia? I imagine – no. If you don’t believe me on this account, see Lester Faigley’s historical discussion (*Fragments of Rationality*) of composition and postmodern subjectivity, where he demonstrates the ways teachers have discussed features of student writing and linked them to the kinds of subjectivities teachers expect or encourage in their students’ writing (see also Susan Miller’s account in *Textual Carnivals*). In short, even well justified grades, those used with clearly articulated expectations (grading rubrics), penalize the kind of writing and literacy dispositions that males and students of color generally are not accustomed to doing these days. If our grading reproduces such social stratifications, can we really say our grades are acceptably valid? When we assess in any way, we should address these kinds of issues, be reflective about them, and consider carefully their effects on our students.

So when deciding what form our assessments should take (do we grade or do something else), I challenge us all to consider: How will our assessments help our students continue to improve their writing practices in some tangible way? If you rank or grade their performances, how does this practice function in the class’s larger assessment mechanisms that produce course grades (what range of effects will it have)? In what ways does this context affect the reception of our whole assessment (e.g., our discussions/responses, conferences, class activities, the grade/rank, etc.)? How do our assessment processes allow our students to participate as *agents* in assessment? That is, how do our students help make sense of and judge their own writing practices? Are we simply doing assessment to our students or are our students learning to assess their own practices in meaningful ways?

I challenge us all to consider: How will our assessments help our students continue to improve their writing practices in some tangible way?

To sum up, grades do not offer a very valid way of representing the one thing we need to represent to our students in our writing program because they are at least a step or two removed from our readings: they mask the subjectivity of reading practices of teachers and hide the larger social reproduction of the dispositions of “academic literacy.” We still, however, need to produce course grades in our classes – I don’t question this institutional demand, **but, I ask again, how many grades do we need to give to each student?**

Note: The sources used in the above article are available upon request (email Asao at ainoue@csufresno.edu).

Vertical Views

Editor’s note: I put out a call to high school teachers in the region, asking them to write to us about what it is like to teach writing in secondary schools. Mary Van Vleet is an veteran high school teacher at McLane High School who is currently participating in the CSU’s Expository Reading and Writing Program.

Writing Instruction

Mary Van Vleet
McLane High School

I found out early on that the fear of being criticized in their personal writing kept many of my students from trying. So encouraging many types of writing that I did not read to judge or critique freed up many students interest in and ability to write.

Daily journals, quickwrites, reading responses, reading based dialectical journals -- all of these can be accepted as just personal writing, only personal writing, and they can get credit --just do it. I will scan to see if a class is on track --and then give general critique and directions to a class --not individuals. I also add personal notes when possible to comment on ideas, comments, and experiences. They love it when I write back to them.

When I later tell them that they are writing drafts for academic writing, which will need editing and processing, they write more easily and comfortably. I am afraid I have never shared the usual English teacher compulsion to read and edit everything my students turn in --it doesn't bother me. I can give credit for whatever they wrote. Credit for thinking. For agreeing or disagreeing. Cool --just write.

With a variety of skills represented in each class, I look for opportunities to help them scaffold ideas into prewriting, model paragraphing and transitions, and sometimes push them to an introductory paragraph at the end (introductions are hard --for some reason it's like getting them to jump off a high dive. They can't bear the commitment.) But only when the assignment requires that kind of structure.

In Social Studies there is a lot of writing to understand and demonstrate comprehension, which is judged first by content accuracy. Many Social Studies teachers grade writing holistically for content and only last consider whether style and grammatical errors deter comprehension. In English we often want good paragraphs, nice sentences, better grammar, accurate spelling and only then evaluate content. Some students end up feeling like they can't possibly do it right --and they freeze up.

I work with the usual Fresno blend of low income, multicultural, and second language learners and I have taught ELD 1 through English 4 including AP English 3. I now teach English 4 in conjunction with Economics and Government, and AP Psychology and I require a lot of writing. But I only edit what they ask me to edit and what they will actually need to rewrite.

In English we often want good paragraphs, nice sentences, better grammar, accurate spelling and only then evaluate content. Some students end up feeling like they can't possibly do it right --and they freeze up.

Thesis Info

Current Rhetoric and Composition MA theses in progress:

Nicholas "Spud" **Blank-Spadoni**: Invitation For Change: An Examination of Approaches to Text Production and Consumption in First-Year Composition.

Cathy **Focarazzo**: Visual Rhetoric and Its Representations in Mass Media: The Complex Web of Desire in Mass Consumerism.

Nathan **Franklin**: Critical Ethnography and the Other Compositionist: A Pedagogy For Electronic Otherness.

Jaclyn **Hardy**: Coming to Agency: Argumentation and Negotiation in Workshop Practices.

Susan **McLenithan**: Racist Pedagogy: Building Bridges and Crossing Borders within Literacy Practices.

Nigel **Medhurst**: Hybridized and Student-Centered Pedagogies: How Creative Writing and English Studies Can Kiss and Make-Up.

Tyson **Motto**: Writing is Thinking: A New Concept for College Freshman.

Andrea **Osteen**: Disconnects, Fissures, and Fractures: Vertical Articulation in High School and College Composition.

Catherine **Steel Smith**: The Visual Rhetoric of Warner Brothers Cartoons: The Whetowic of a Wabbit as Radical Discourse.

Jose **Silva**: Critical Pedagogy and Classroom Practices: How Critical Should We Be?

Where Are They Now?

Guiseppe Getto graduated with an MFA and a Comp MA in Spring 2007. Currently Guiseppe is in his second semester of the Rhetoric and Writing Ph.D. program at Michigan State University. He is using his time off from teaching due to a fellowship he received from the program to work on several articles for publication developed from his master's thesis, in addition to a new media community project. The latter, a new media oral history that will be produced for the Allen Neighborhood Center, a local non-profit organization, will help the organization build a visual representation of its history/identity as an organization at the same time that it raises significant questions about what it means to construct a new media oral history for/with a community organization. Additionally, Guiseppe is set to present at the American Popular Culture Association Conference in San Francisco with his Fresno colleague Nathan Franklin on the rhetorical effects of masculine body image in popular culture on college age men.

“The shepherd, qua shepherd, acts for the good of the sheep, to protect them from discomfiture and harm. But [s/he] may be 'identified' with a project that is raising the sheep for market.”

-Kenneth Burke, A Rhetoric of Motives

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... find ways in class for students to respond to each other's writing ... when students respond to each other's writing the reader gets ideas about others' thoughts, the writer gets feedback from an audience besides the teacher ...

Time Management Tip 1: Students Responding to Students

Ginny Crisco

Reading responses and in class writing are great ways to get students to engage with the reading for the course and to get them to prepare in advance for the conversations you may want to conduct in the class. Unfortunately, as the overachievers that we can sometimes be, we might feel that if students do these as an assignment we will need to read and respond to all of them, particularly if students are getting some kind of credit.

One way to cut some time from responding to students' reading responses and in class writing is to find ways in class for students to respond to each other's writing. Whether they do it verbally in small groups or in writing during class, when students respond to each other's writing the reader gets ideas about others' thoughts, the

writer gets feedback from an audience besides the teacher, and the transaction between the reader and writer can actually promote more discussion.

I don't want to downplay the importance of teacher response, not only to students writing projects but also to their responses to readings, but I also think that the teacher doesn't have to take on all of this responding; it is actually more productive for the student to get responses from peers.

Stuff For Your Classroom

Bo Wang

To help students talk more consciously about the relationship between the writer, the subject, and the reader, you may want to ask them to think about these questions when reading a piece of writing:

- How does the writer relate to the subject?
- How does the reader relate to the subject?
- How does the writer relate to the reader?

The following activities can be used in two or three class sessions:

1. Start the class with a freewriting and ask students to write about these questions:

- What makes good writing?
- What are the things that good writing does/poor or mediocre writing does not do?

Then you ask students to talk about the ideas they have written down, put their words or phrases on the board, and frame the discussion, focusing on the concepts of purpose, audience, and context.

2. Ask students to read a short piece and have a discussion about the relationship between the writer and the subject (You could use Donald Murray's piece I handed out tonight). Ask students to look for three things:

- How does the writer define/relate the subject to themselves implicitly, explicitly?
- How does the writer communicate to me that they know (or don't know) the subject? (establish his/her credibility as a writer)
- Draw conclusion about what you notice in the piece.

In the next class session, you can ask students to read the same piece and have a discussion about the relationship between the subject and the reader/audience. You might prompt them in these ways:

- How does the text indicate what the readers are expected to know? (the writer's assumption about the reader—what they should know to understand/appreciate her text)
- How does the text communicate the attitude to the subject that the reader is expected to have? (Does the author sound affirmative, serious, sarcastic?)
- How does the text try to change your relationship with the subject? (look at specific rhetorical appeals)
- Draw conclusion about what you notice in the piece.



Successful CompDogs make work play.

3. Then ask students to read the same piece or another piece (e.g., Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream") and focus on the relationship between the writer and the reader/audience.
 - Who are the writer/speaker's intended audiences (primary audience and secondary audience)? When and where did the author publish this piece and for what purposes?
 - What kind of rhetorical appeals (ethical, emotional, and logical) does the author use to reach the audience? (Note: these can be overlapped in a piece of writing. For example, the writer can use credible sources/statistics to both establish her credibility as an author and appeal logically to the audience/make a claim about the subject by inferring from her collected data.)
 - What specific language (vocabulary, sentence structures, tone, and style) does the author use to relate to the audience(s)?

Note: In these questions about the writer-subject/subject-reader/writer-reader relationship, you may have noticed that they are all related and overlapped; or to be more accurate, the relationship is viewed/examined from different angles.

4. In the next class session, you can ask students to read the same piece and have a discussion about the relationship between the subject and the reader/audience. Prompting them:
 - How does the text indicate what the readers are expected to know? (the writer's assumption about the reader—what they should know to understand/appreciate her text)
 - How does the text communicate the attitude to the subject that the reader is expected to have? (Does the author sound affirmative, serious, sarcastic?)
 - How does the text try to change your relationship with the subject? (look at specific rhetorical appeals)
 - Draw conclusion about what you notice in the piece.

Upcoming Events

- 2/18/08 Presidents Day, Campus closed
- 2/25/08 Distribute midterm surveys to students in Engl 5A, 5B, and Engl 10 during this week
- 2/29/08 Payday (if not on direct deposit, pick up at JA bldg, cashier's window After 4PM)
- 3/3/08 Last day for graduate students to apply for Advancement to Candidacy in order to be eligible for graduation in August 2008 or December 2008
- 3/3-4/08 Midterm Portfolios due
- 3/5/08 Midterm portfolio reading (for teachers with more than 2 sections): Engl 5B/10 meet in Residence Dinning Hall from 8AM-5PM
- 3/6/08 Midterm portfolio reading:
Engl 5A meets in UBC, room 192 from 8AM-5PM
Engl 5B/10 meet in Residence Dinning Hall from 8AM-5PM
- 3/7/08 Midterm Portfolio reading:
Engl 5B/10 meet in a TBA destination from 8AM-5PM
- 3/13/08 Last day to turn in multiple copied reader report forms from portfolios for Engl 5B and Engl 10
- 3/14/08 All midterm surveys for Engl 5A, 5B, and 10, and data attached to each survey (i.e., course progress code and portfolio reading codes) are due to Nyxy

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30	31					

APRIL 2008						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
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27	28	29	30			

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If you wish to help with the production of this newsletter, please contact the Editor. We are currently looking for one graduate student member and one adjunct faculty member to sit on the board.

If you wish to contribute a something or add information to the newsletter, email the Editor. We always welcome all personal and program related information that teachers feel are relevant to their professional work, lives, and well-being.