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Prof Hunter

Semester Narrative

When I hear “theory of writing” my mind automatically thinks of writing in a sense that it follows rules or how writing is a discipline. To be frank if I were asked what my theory of writing is, I would say that my theory of writing is that it needs to get its point across effectively. For me writing should be flexible just as how there are many forms of writing there are many different audiences to cater to. I can say that for me what separates “good writing” vs “bad writing” can be subjective and up to the reader to decide what good writing is. To be honest I always hated writing. The fact that we are being graded for writing adds to my hatred for any writing class I’ll ever take. I don’t like how there are rules and marks for writing. School has made something that’s supposed to be a tool for creative expression into a daunting chore. Though this past semester I’ve been taught that all forms of writing has certain characteristics that make it good. Things like rhetoric’s and having an audience profile make your writing better, have more depth, and get your point across to readers. In this class I was also exposed to different styles of writing like precis and writing for different audiences something I had no experience with beforehand. Although I dislike writing I can say that without a doubt what I learned from this class was to view writing towards the audience’s perspective.

My first assignment was to write a rhetorical analysis. The description for this assignment is as follows “In this analysis, you will analyze the rhetoric the author uses to address the controversial subject. You will study the chosen “text” and fully examine the author’s strategies, purposes and approaches.”. In secondary school writing about what the author says and why he does is something I’ve been accustomed to but writing about a scientific article wasn’t something I had any experience with. Nonetheless writing a rhetorical analysis about a scientific topic, which was about sound pollution, required focusing on the rhetoric the author used and understanding if it was successful for me. In this assignment I had to understand who the audience was, what’s the purpose, the medium and what’s the rhetorical situation. After being handed my first draft of this paper I saw how one of the criticisms was that I didn’t really do what was being asked of me in this paper. “You’re essentially grading the rhetorical qualities of this piece and examining through its rhetorical qualities, why it works or does not. Therefore, the fact that the article is successful or not in its purpose (as determined by yourself), is part of what would be your main thesis (and the discussion of its rhetorical qualities would be part your explanation for why the article works or doesn’t work). You’re asking: “What is this doing?” “Does this work (or not)? And “how/why does this work (or not)?””. Fortunately for me this was only the very first draft, I had another chance to work on this paper and improve on it. I needed explain how the rhetoric’s used by the author made the article effective (I said effective) or not. For my second attempt that’s exactly what I did, for example, “Based on the rhetorical decisions and purpose, personally this article is effective for me. It conveys how prevalent noise is in many different settings. The article included three type of formal settings; at work, at home, and at leisure time. The results of the interviews were easy fairly straightforward and easy to understand...”. Overall this assignment exposed me to thinking and writing in a deeper level instead of just giving an answer and then providing text-based evidence. I had to explain the

rhetoric and strategies used by the author and also explain how that made his paper successful while also adding my own input.

The 1 paper 3 audiences.

“Students will take the general focus of their group and, on their own, create an Inquiry Based Research Paper split into three equal parts, two of which are geared to particular audiences of the student’s choosing. Finally, students will participate in a brief reflection or “self-rhetorical analysis” of the different rhetorical decisions made between each part and how the chosen audience and purpose affected the final results.”

Although the 1 paper 3 audiences’ paper was pretty long, I had the most fun writing it. The point of this paper was to essentially split an inquiry-based research paper into three equal parts. The first part was the least fun for me, it was a research inquiry of 4 pages. This is another instance where I was exposed to a different type of writing, a research inquiry. The topic of my paper was on the effects of plastic pollution on sea turtles. The first draft of the research inquiry lacked my input. Putting my input into papers is something that I need to get used to. The main criticism of the first draft was **“There is no real stance and you need to not just slide a stance into the intro but wash it over the whole paper”** once again I had to provide my own input into the paper.

are, why will the reader feel involved?] Although many organisms like whales and planktivorous fish are affected by plastic, sea birds and sea turtles are disproportionately affected by plastic debris. This paper will focus on how sea birds and sea turtles are affected by plastic pollution, though I will also briefly ~~go in~~ *[try a different phrase]* on the other organisms affected by plastic.
[there isn't really a stance put forward yet. These issues are real, and so what? What should be done, or felt about it? The paper is about the answer to those questions; and it should use your research to make that answer clear to the reader]

As you can see, I expressed my points and expressed what my paper will focus on, but I hadn't included my stance, the what makes the topic of sea animals affected by plastic important. Papers need to include a reason for why readers should have an interest in it and why the topic is important. Making this mistake twice it finally got drilled to my head that my opinion and my input is important, and that adding value is important. Your opinion is valuable and it's what makes your paper unique. In my final draft of this paper I made sure to provide value by expressing how plastic pollution affecting many different animals is important to the environment. For example, “Through migration, foraging, and nesting, seabirds bring sky, island, and sea into relationship. Their ways of life contribute to the health of island plants and wildlife”. Sea turtles “roles range from maintaining productive coral reef ecosystems to transporting essential nutrients from the oceans to beaches and coastal dunes.”. The final draft compared to the original had my input expressed.

The second portion of this assignment was to recreate this information for two different audiences. My first audience were children aged 3-8 years. For this part of the assignment I had

to make sure to understand the audience profile. Knowing the audience profile aids in creating value. How you may ask well just look what I wrote for my blackboard weekly lecture submission,



Starlyn Sosa

1 month ago

RE: Discussions for 3/25/20

Creating value when writing is important as it creates a better reading experience overall. When writing you are building a relationship with the reader. The audience expects something from reading so it's your responsibility to deliver it. Value in writing is what keeps readers reading. I think it's important to note that value is subjective. So, it's vital to research your audience and understand what they want, need and expect. Like mentioned in the lecture you have to write to the reader about the world, rather than writing to the world. Essentially creating a more intimate relationship with readers and educating them about a certain topic. Word choice is important in creating value in writing. Certain words can help the reader understand the seriousness of your topic and facilitate a state of urgency. Words are powerful when adding value. As expressed in the lecture making the readers feel like they can do something and that they have the ability to affect the outcome adds value to your writing. I also feel that sharing your own thoughts and feelings on a topic that you care about adds value to your audience. Much like in a conversation when you express how much you care about a certain topic and the emotional weight it carries it signals the other person that they have a close relationship with you. Also when you write about a topic that you and the audience have in common the audience will keep in reading much like when having a conversation.

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My second audience was the general public, it was intended to be a subway ad. This was really fun just because I got to use my creative side to create something visually attractive and attention grabbing.

Overall although I really dislike writing essays, what I took from this class was that knowing your audience is key. Knowing what the audience needs, wants, and expects helps you write to them and creates a more personal writer and reader relationship. This semester has been a real rollercoaster ride. This pandemic has really affected my mental health negatively. Staying home all day and doing the same thing over and over again has taken its toll on me. There's been times where I have been extremely anxious the whole day. I've woken up in a state of anxiety and went to bed anxious. Besides that I've tried my best to give the best of my ability and if it weren't for my current mental state perhaps I could have given better quality work.