

Vlogging About Discourse Communities

Due Date:

Weight:

Purpose:

Writing is something that we do every day, whether it's through text message, in an email, on social media, in a class, or on a job. The kinds of writing that we do in each of these scenarios often depend on the discourse community we are part of. In other words, we subconsciously understand the language we should use, the style of writing that is appropriate, and the correct formatting for the text for each of the scenarios we find ourselves in. We had to learn these "rules" for each of the discourse communities we belong to. Sometimes we find ourselves in unfamiliar discourse communities--for example, an advanced science class--and it can be tricky to understand the customs of that community.

This assignment asks you to examine a discourse community you belong to or are interested in and asks you to look closely at the different kinds of writing that exists within that community. The goal of this assignment is to help you become more aware of the rhetorical situation and the culture of a specific community. As you gain greater awareness of the language practices within a specific community, you can make informed choices based on this knowledge, and you will be on the path to becoming a more rhetorically aware and flexible writer.

Task:

For this assignment, you will make a personal video detailing, explaining, and/or examining a specific discourse community. As when writing a traditional paper, you will go through a thorough writing process that includes brainstorming, pre-writing, drafting and revision. For example, you will submit a storyboard ahead of time, and you'll also submit smaller clips of your video ahead of time as part of the peer review process.

In this video, you will need to directly feature 3-4 specific instances of writing/discourse that occurs within that community. You will then analyze these instances of discourse and discuss what we can learn about the community and its use of language by looking at these examples.

The following questions can guide your discussion:

- Are there certain genres frequently used by this community?
- What are their genre characteristics?
- Are there certain terminology, abbreviations, slang, etc. that is common to this community and/or that someone who is not in this community might not understand?
- Are there expectations in regard to tone and style or multilingualism?
- Are there methods of communication (specific texts, specific places you communicate, or ways of communicating) that are unique to this community?

These questions are meant to help you brainstorm, but there are certainly other elements you could consider.

The final product can be created using a phone, gopro, or other device. You can then use YouTube's built in editor, Microsoft Movie Maker, or Apple's iMovie to edit and upload it to a video host (YouTube or Vimeo).

Criteria for Success:

All videos produced should contain the following elements:

- Length: About 6 minutes (10%)
- Multimedia: Use music/text for effective transitions (10%)
- Editing: Final polished and edited project (check sound levels, transitions, professionalism) (10%)
- Dynamism: Contains lots of movement, not just speaking to a camera
- Content: Reference a specific discourse community, directly feature 3-4 examples of written discourse from that community in your video, analyze these instances of discourse, and discuss what we can learn about the community and its use of language by looking at these examples (60%)

Notes for the Teacher:

- Suggested *Everyone's an Author* chapters for this module:
Introduction
Chapter 2 "Rhetorical Situations"
Chapter 4 "Linguistic Diversity"
Chapter 6 "Writing and Rhetoric in the Workplace"
Chapter 24/25 on style
Chapter 29 "Writing in Multiple Modes"
- Suggested supplemental readings for this module:
["A Simple Explanation of Discourse Communities"](#)
["What Is a Discourse Community"](#)
- Feel free to adjust the genre of this project. While the instructions are focused on a vlog, you can adjust the genre to fit your teaching style. This project can also be done in the form of a blog, website, reflective essay, or other presentation format.
- This assignment meets the following learning outcomes/assessment measures:

Content Knowledge: This assignment will also help you to become familiar with the following important content knowledge in this discipline:

- Discourse community
- Purpose, audience, genre
- Rhetorical context and flexibility
- Digital writing/composing

Critical Thinking: This assignment will help you develop your critical thinking skills:

- Exhibit reflective and metacognitive thinking strategies

Writing Skills: The purpose of this assignment is to help you practice the following skills that are essential to your success in this course / in school / in this field / in professional life beyond school:

- Develop effective strategies for completing a writing task
- Demonstrate awareness and use of strategic rhetorical and stylistic techniques
- Produce a written product with content that fulfills its purpose